

# LINUX WORLD NEWS

## MUCH IMPROVED 7.0 VERSION

At the dawn of the first Brazilian Linux-World Conference & Expo, May 23–25, 2006 in São Paulo, the 7th traditional International Free Software Forum (FISL) in Porto Alegre, April 19–22, had something to live up to. And indeed, the threat of competition worked: Answering the prayers of many of last year’s visitors, the quality of the talks had improved significantly.

Despite a decline in the number of major companies present, the event saw its highest attendance ever. And perhaps it would have been more than the 5000 who did attend if the conference area hadn’t been as remote as it was. Google – at every open source event in the world it seems – had a small booth, and was fishing for Brazilian talent to join their team. The Brazilian government showed off with an impressive booth area, as well.

Even Microsoft’s presence had changed for the better. The company decided to join the debate with free software developers hosted by the Brazilian Infomedia media group, and to everyone’s surprise – it was delightful. We saw Microsoft developers humbly talking about interoperability, development, security issues, and other real problems without chips on their shoulders. Of course, there were polemics about the company’s presence – but criticism doesn’t stop at the doorsteps of the free software world and especially not at Richard Stallman’s attitudes and lack of modesty that many have come to dislike.

For the first time ever, the regular non-tech media, tv and newspapers covered the event. And they managed to talk to a number of well-known open source developers, among them Keith Packard,



Aaron Seigo, Zack Rusin, Miguel de Icaza, Greg Stein, Jim Gettys, George Staikos, and Marcelo Tosatti.

Even the user groups seemed to have grown up and were no longer picking distro fights. Instead, they showed that they have learned how to create business from their donated time and hard work. <http://www.linuxworldbrasil.com.br/>  
<http://fisl.softwarelivre.org/7.0/>

## TOOLS, TOYS AND TIPS

With the topic “Tools, Toys and Tips”, the first Open Source Developers’ Conference (OSDC) in Taiwan inherited the legacy of previous P3P (Perl, Python, PHP) and YAPC::Taipei conferences and attracted hundreds of participants to the event April 8–9 in Taipei. Speakers included Jimmy Wales, the founder of Wikipedia, and Audrey Tan, a Taiwanese free software programmer best known for initiating and leading the Pugs project, a joint effort by the Haskell and

Perl communities to implement Perl 6.

Jimmy Wales’ talk attracted creative-common artists and musicians including Mr. Tsu, a singer and music producer who released his album “Rock and Roll, the Lord Jesus” under a creative-common license in September 2004. In contrast to the ban on Wikipedia in China, Taiwanese Wikipedia activities have been increasing since local Wikipedian meetups started in September 2004. Taipedia, an encyclopedia project funded by the Taiwanese government, adopted the Wikipedia participation mechanism in January, 2005. Taiwanese Wikipedians recently started a discussion board on the BBS station \_PTT\_ and a Wiki society at the National Taiwan University.

- <http://osdc.tw/english/>
- <http://www.yapc.org/>
- <http://taipedia.cca.gov.tw/> (Chinese)
- <http://www.creativecommons.org.tw/> (Chinese)

## NO LONGER LARGEST?

Has the concept of “Where .com meets .org” become outdated at a time when major companies are embracing open source for good or was it just the new location in the city of Wiesbaden? German LinuxTag, Europe’s foremost open source conference and expo, saw many disappointed faces at the paid company booths on May 3–6: Too few visitors (more than 9,000 according to the organizers), too little professional interest compared to previous years.

However, spirits were high among the more than 90 open source projects that used LinuxTag as a “family” and work meeting. With more than 250 talks, an impressive conference program covered not just Linux-related topics but also the free BSDs and OpenSolaris. Meeting criticism from 2005 about being too German-centric, about half of this year’s speeches were delivered by international speakers, among them keynote speakers, Marc Shuttleworth and Andrew Morton.

