

Open Source Stars



Now in its ninth year, the Southern California Linux Expo (ScaLE) continues to gain ground as its popularity grows throughout the open source community. *By Amber Graner*

SCaLE 9x, featuring a star-studded crowd of open source speakers, vendors, and attendees, shared the city of Los Angeles, California, with the 83rd Annual Academy Awards when it held its conference February 25-27, 2011. A venue change this year moved the event from the familiar Westin to the Hilton, and as with any change, a few bumps in the road met organizers and attendees, who adapted and overcame as everyone pitched in to help. In the end, ScaLE 9x proved worthy of any wait people endured in the registration line and ended up being exciting, educational, and fun.

Attendance grew this year to more than 1,800 pre-registered attendees, as did the number of speciality events [1] and speakers [2]. With more than 25 talks per day, the ScaLE 9x sessions crossed all technical skill and knowledge levels, whether you were just curious about what open source is, just installed your first Linux OS yesterday, or are a seasoned developer.

The exhibition hall was full of movement as people stopped to talk to representatives of social media groups, hardware manufacturers, Linux distros, software developers, open source communities, publishers, and recruiters.

Friday's specialty event line-up grew this year and included everything from education and training, birds of a feather gatherings, and community-specific meetings to the UpScaLE five-minute talks. The FOSS mentoring track [3] on Friday brought speakers such as Red Hat's Tom Callaway and Robyn Bergeron, BSD's Dru Lavigne, and Larry "the Free Software Guy" Cafiero.

The lighthearted and fast-moving UpScaLE talks continued to entertained and raise awareness about people, projects, and issues within the open source community. The WIOS (Women in Open Source) track was conspicuously missing this year, but with 15 women lined up to speak, including two keynote speakers [4] – Leigh Honeywell, President of HackLab.TO, and Jane Silber, CEO of Canonical Ltd. – ScaLE 9x demonstrated its inclusiveness of women. Instead, the FOSS Mentoring track covered ways to encourage a variety of people to participate in open source projects.

Saturday opened with "Hackerspaces and Free Software" by Leigh Honeywell. Many people in the exhibit area commented on wanting to find out more about hackerspaces in their areas. The schedule for the rest of Saturday was jam-packed with talks, color-coded for a variety of interests [5].

Jane Silber opened Sunday with her keynote – "Cloud for Human Beings" – and kicked off another exciting lineup of talks. Ruth Suehle, writer and editor in Brand Communications and Design at Red Hat, spoke about moving "Beyond Linux: Changing the World with Open Source," and Robyn Bergeron, Fedora Program Manager, discussed "Decentralized Collaboration with Open Source Tools: Technical and Cultural Implementation." The Sunday presentations continued through the afternoon.

Although those who attended weren't walking the red carpet, ScaLE 9x did its best to make every participant feel energized, motivated, and enthusiastic about free and open source software and the part everyone can play. ■■■

INFO

- [1] ScaLE 9x Speciality Events: <https://www.socallinuxexpo.org/scale9x/special-events>
- [2] ScaLE 9x Speaker List: <https://www.socallinuxexpo.org/scale9x/speakers>
- [3] ScaLE 9x Foss Mentoring: <https://www.socallinuxexpo.org/scale9x/special-events/foss-mentoring>
- [4] Link to ScaLE 9x Keynote Videos: <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/scale-9x-keynotes>
- [5] ScaLE 9x Schedule: <https://www.socallinuxexpo.org/scale9x/schedule>