

LINUX WORLD NEWS

OSS CONFERENCE IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE MORAKOT TYPHOON

Only a week after the Morakot typhoon hit southern Taiwan and resulted in hundreds of deaths, the 4th Conference for Open Source Coders, Users, and Promoters (COS-



CUP) took place in Taipei, August 15-16, 2009.

Several attendees took an interest in disaster relief technologies. An outstanding example was "xdite," the pseudonym of female PIXNET Rails developer and blogger Yi-Ting Cheng, who demonstrated the website disastertw.com. She developed the site for exchanging information in disaster areas and handling large amounts of data from different sources by integrating Google Maps, cloud computing, the web framework, and other Web 2.0 tools. The example of disastertw.com shows the importance of open source Web 2.0 tools for supporting victims and rescue networks in times of

emergency. Another example was Plurk, a Twitter-like microblogging service that is overwhelmingly popular in Taiwan. Plurk played an important role in documenting the conference and enabling social networking in affected areas.

LXDE/xPUD, a lightweight operating system for Netbooks that uses the Firefox core for browsing the Internet and playing multimedia files, attracted massive attention at the conference, because it allows anyone familiar with HTML, CSS, and JavaScript to write programs for it. Investment in mobile devices and multimedia environments has grown rapidly in Taiwan. This trend was reflected in the COSCUP09 program by five Android and embedded systems sessions on the afternoon of the second day, as well as by the presentation of several projects linked with creative industries, such as OpenWrt, Arduino, and Pure Data. Overall, COSCUP 09 showed the growing involvement and investment from Taiwanese Linux communities and companies specializing in Android and embedded systems, cloud computing, and web technologies.

August 16 a number of COSCUP participants also paid a visit to the very first Taiwan OpenSolaris user group meeting. <http://coscup.org/2009/en/>
<http://disastertw.com/> (in Chinese)
<http://www.plurk.com>

NEW SWISS LINUX DISTRO

Linux users in Switzerland now have the opportunity to use a Linux distribution adapted to the needs of this multi-lingual country. The Swiss Open Systems User Group, /ch/open, has published an extended version of Ubuntu 9.04, "Jaunty Jackalope," targeted at Swiss users. This special version contains French, Italian, German, and English language packs, and, of course, support for the Swiss keyboard layout (although this is not the default). The distro, dubbed "Swiss Remix," is, however, missing a Rhaeto-Romanic language version, thus failing to support the fourth official language of Switzerland. A complete localization for Swiss-German, a variant of the German language written and spoken in Switzerland, is not available either. Instead of extended minority language support, the DVD boosts Creative Commons-licensed multimedia extras, OSS-related e-books, and additional software.

Download the ISO image free of charge or order the latest version by mail for only CHF 5 per DVD, at a minimum order volume of 20 DVDs. The DVD can function as both a Live system and an installation disc. <http://ch-open.ch/presse/pressemitteilungen/pressemitteilung090820.html> (in German)

LINUX PODCASTS A SUMMER HIT

Podcasting is a trendy way to learn about Linux and other open source software, and a glance at the Podcast Alley podcast aggregator's top 10 chart of technology-related podcasts shows that open source software was a hot topic this summer among podcast consumers. Throughout the entire summer, the users of the portal voted two Linux-related podcast sites, namely "Linux Outlaws" and "Going

Linux," into the top 10. In August, the two sites ranked #4 and #5.

Targeting Linux newbies, "Going Linux" is co-hosted by Larry Bushey and Tom Chaudoir. "Linux Outlaws," hosted by university student Fabian Scherschel from Bonn, Germany and programmer-musician Dan Lynch from Merseyside, UK, aims to be more diverse rather than just focusing on technology.

According to Podcast Alley, the success of these two Linux podcast shows reflects the current economic climate because "people want to switch their computer's operating system to Linux, a free alternative to the Windows and Mac operating systems."

http://www.podcastalley.com/top_podcasts.php?num=50&genre=1&year=2009&month=8