

# About sharing some packaging work between distros

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Feb 2011

# Outline

## 1 Current situation

# Many artifacts

- Lots of packages (20000 in Debian)
- Many distros (I gave up counting)
- Many languages (human languages)

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# Consequences

- More resources required for packaging
- lower quality of descriptions and translation
- Eventually: less users ?

# What can be done (or not)

First reflex:

- Try to reduce
  - the number of distros: not very healthy for open-source
  - the number of human languages: bad bad bad
  - the number of packages: well ... no

All above is outside control ...

# What can be done

## Share the work:

- package description and translation (cf Vincent Untz's talks)
- package legal description (copyright, license ...)
- screenshots
- Maybe: dependency declaration

## News:

- A lot of talks have recently begun <http://www.enricozini.org/2011/debian/appinstaller2011/>. Mostly focused on user experience.
- That's excellent news

## Issues:

- We don't want to increase packaging workload in each team.

# What do we need

To share the work:

- An authoritative repository of common data (Freedesktop.org?):
  - DB on network (SQL or noSQL... )
  - a way to update the data (from distro teams or a central team?)
  - a way to "connect the dots" (e.g. dependencies) (cf Enrico Zini's distromatch<http://enricozini.org/2011/debian/distromatch/> work)
- Tools to ease the merge of the common data and the distro-specific work.

First point is outside my "jurisdiction".

But I can help on the 2nd point...



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# Tools: what do we have to merge data?

Well, a tool to edit/validate some Debian packaging files:

- control file (package description, dependencies, staff ...)
- copyright file (license and copyright of upstream project and package files)

So far, nothing fancy. But they are based on Config::Model:

- Designed to edit and validate with a model (description of structure and constraints)
- Model contains default values
- Model information is "merged" with user information
- Information can be fetched on the network

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# Demo time

In case I forget ... demo of Dpkg control editor,

# what is possible ?

Using an upstream project name and a centralized DB, the editor tool can provide:

- default value for a description
- description translation
- copyright/licence for upstream files

Using Enrico Zini's work, editor can also provide:

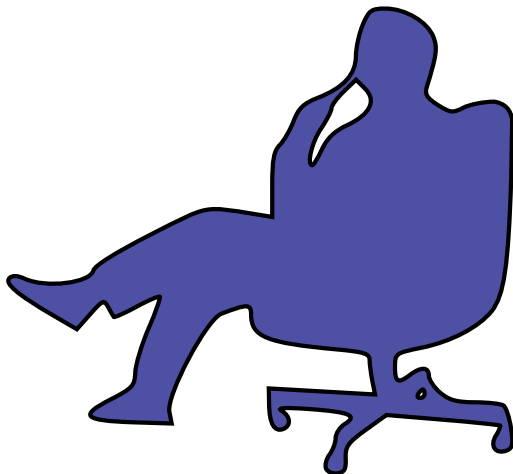
- dependencies (expressed in "common" package names)
- script snippets ?

# What is missing ?

- Spec file model
- "centralised data" model
- DB/remote backend for centralised data
- Links between "centralised data model" and Dpkg model
- Likewise for Spec file model
- Other packages specification ? (gentoo ?)

# What would you need ?

Let's talk...



# Links

- Config::Model site  
<http://config-model.wiki.sourceforge.net>
- Config::Model user mailing list <https://lists.sourceforge.net/lists/listinfo/config-model-users>
- Cross-distro meeting on application installer  
<http://distributions.freedesktop.org/wiki/Meetings/AppInstaller2011>