

How to (not) manage releases

QA Meeting 2005

Andreas Barth



QA and Release Management

- QA is about good packages, Release Management is about good releases
- lots of stuff is shared between Release Management and QA
- doing QA-tasks is basically a pre-condition for release team members



What worked well with sarge

- Debian installer
- Decent management tools during the freeze (granular hints, d)
- Decent bug squashing tools
- Partial freeze (first base+standard, later all)
- Release updates via debian-devel-announce
- Timeplaning with N+...-dates
- Use of experimental as staging area
- NMU policy
- Managing the release in large



What developers could have done better

- Don't second-guess your own freeze guidelines!
- Don't upload packages not for the next stable release to unstable
- Don't upload packages if you break transitions
- Read debian-devel-announce before uploading packages
- ...



What could have worked better

- Release team shouldn't be crushed under unfreeze requests in the final stage
- Shorter base-freeze
- Fewer packages in base-freeze
- Freezing also development-packages earlier?
- Version-tracking on bugs.debian.org
- More padding at the end (no "sorry, one week later mail")
- Prevent CD download madness on Monday
- Use code-names when you mean the release
- Even more hints
- Security after release



Further improvements in etch

- Time-based release: December 2006
- Only few blockers: toolchain, X.org, docs-in-main, firmware-in-main, ports.d.o, AMD64, secure apt
- Other issues are only pet release goals
- Lesser dependency between shlib bumps, transitions, . . .
- Less pain with specific archs
- Better interaction kernel and installer
- Better udeb-handling in britney
- Checklist with dependencies; no out-of-order processing
- Pseudo-package for release notes
- More uptodate information on release.debian.org



ongoing QA

- lintian
- buildability
- check uploads before uploading
- bug squashing
- guidelines for developers
- BSPs



new

- library manifest stuff
- statically compiled in libs
- installability (piuparts etc)
- python policy!



at etch

- check installer CDs and stable release before publishing
- Build CDs from final official archive state
- release notes?

