Free and Open Source Software Expo and Technology Conference FOSSETCON

Event; FOSSETCON (Free and Open Source Software Expo and Technology Conference) September 11th through 13th

Location; Rosen Plaza Hotel, Orlando Florida

Ambassadors; Andrew Ward(award3535@fedoraproject.org), Julie Ward (jward78@fedoraproject.org)

Day 1 Training day no exposition

Day 2 Expo hall opened 1030 – 5pm

Day 2 Expo Hall opened 1110 – 5pm

Attendance; 500+

The first day was reserved for training only for those who were attending as training; no EXPO booths were open that day.

We arrived at the Rosen Plaza for the event at 0700 am on Friday to setup the booth. We arrived early to field any problems that may have presented during the drive to Orlando or with the expo hall. Julie commenced setting up the table while I unloaded the vehicle. We noticed that the booth was sufficient enough for only two people to sit behind the table. Everything conveniently fit under the table without a problem. Sufficient power feeds were present and ready for use. We did not experience any difficulty with the set up or area. The Fedora booth was located directly across from the Red Hat booth and just to our right with CentOS. We owned the corner.

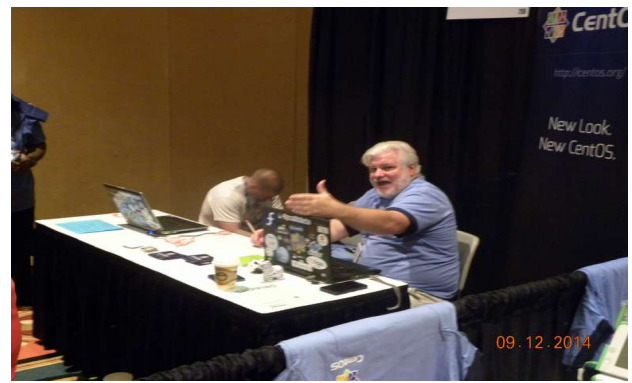*Julie is an expert on table set up*

There was only one expo hall for the conference. This is the first since 2009 in the area and the event coordinators first planning one altogether. The area had ample support for everyone that was present. As with any new event there is always going to be some difficulty with equipment, rooms, or scheduling. We also had showed up early enough to get checked in with the event staff and get our registration taken care of. That is where we met our first hurdle. They had difficulty in getting the badges to print. Seems like they only have two machines that could print, one was being set up in the keynote room, the other no one could log into. Minor difficulty and it was something we could live without, eventually, the system was able to get our badges to us and get us checked in for attendance.

We were ready to go at 9 am on the first day and already had some of the other booth's exhibitor's show up at our booth. They were really glad to see us there and had questions for us right away. There were not a lot of O/S booths in attendance. Ours, CentOS and Ubuntu were in attendance, as well as some of the other folks we normally see in the area Omnibond, HP Open source, Free BSD just to name a few. As we got rolling, John Dulaney showed up to help out with the booth. We had our standard run of swag stickers, pens, case badges, and I had a few Beefy Miracles left to hand out (they were quite popular). I also had a few other items that I handed out to those who were truly interested in Fedora and what Fedora does for them. I gave out about 20 USB Key's to those who were really interested in our product. The first day proved to be quite busy for all three of us at the booth answering question and handing out media. Also as usual, the OLPC was running and drew lots of attention; there were several questions on how to get one. The Think pad was also set up to show the different versions of desktops Fedora provides with the Multi-DVD. It also proved useful in the acceptance of what we do. I gave out one full box of media on the first day, and about another third of the other box on the second day. Many of the people that stopped by the booth were unaware of the other spins available from our website. This alarmed me in the fact that there are many uses for the Security Spin. I use the security spin for my personal business in looking at how secure small business' are and what they can do to improve. They were also unaware of the media (graphic), JAM, and the Electronics lab Spins. This is an area I think we as ambassadors could improve in. There is no promotional media or fliers that would help us at the events. I plan on using another of my personal laptops to load one of the less known spins to promote more options. After a busy day, the booth slowed down to a crawl after the afternoon break, we closed up shop at 5pm.

The Competitors

09.12.2014

Our Family

On the second Day, the EXPO hall did not open until 1110. We were ready to go at 10am. Although the hall was not open (publically) people still showed up and we were ready to help and distribute Fedora. No one else was there except the CentOS folks. I guess during that time we had the corner on the market. The second day was slower than the previous day but it had its advantages. We had some repeat individuals that had more questions about other issues that they were seeing on the install. Nothing that we couldn't handle there at the booth. Throughout the second day we noticed that there was not any really new individuals there, a few but not as many as expected. Our Red Hat Folks had talks on the second day and we had some conversations with them on how they felt the conference went. They were a little disappointed with the equipment issues that presented themselves during talks. Frustration on not having things work the way it should have to begin with. Bugs and Gremlins are always present and hopefully the next year they will have them all worked out to make for a smoother running conference. I had had a conversation with the event coordinator with the plus side and the down side of what was going on. I discussed the Hotel and equipment issues briefly. The hotel could not have been more accommodating; there were available snacks and drinks in a small on property quick mart, full restaurants, fast food, and a mini coffee shop. The accommodations were more than satisfactory (in fact pretty darn good) for a very reasonable price.

This conference I tried a few different ideas on how to gather information on what users want out of Fedora and anything they would like to see in the operating system. I used a simple note book to have people write down how they felt about the software and asked if they would write down their email address so that we could get back to them on what they inquire, statements, or wish list/requests.

Here are the ones that volunteered to participate;

Christopher Griffith (christopher.e.griffith@gmail.com) Referencing GNOME 3.X
"For GNOME 3.X I would like to keep it just as it is"
This individual was quite pleased in our use of GNOME
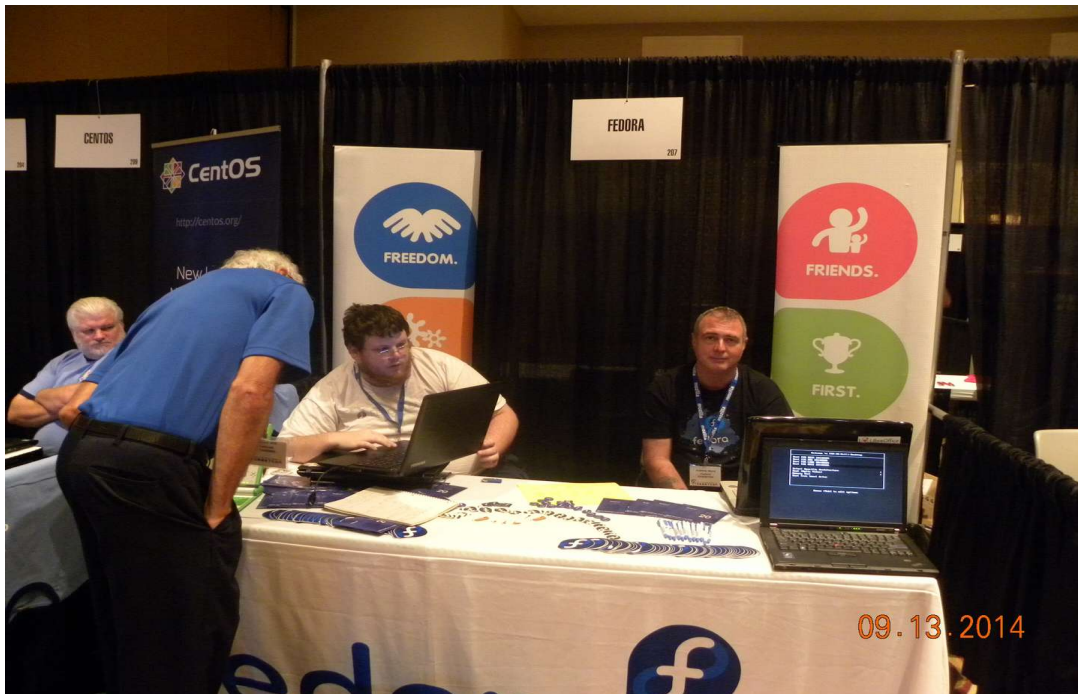
Michael Schultheiss (schultmc@cinlug.org)
" I would like Broadcom Wireless Cards to work out of the box"
This person was quite frustrated with how Broadcom wireless requires manual configuration

Stephan Gross (stephangrossb@gmail.com)
"I love Fedora 20, Would love to see more integration with Open- box"
I had a great conversation with this person, he was quite happy with our product

Manning the both Me and John, helping a new user with broadcom wireless problem

Adnan Raja (araja@atlantic.net)
"We provide Fedora as an O/S on our cloud www.altantic.net, we would like to be listed on the Fedora Website"
Adnan is the director for Business Development for Atlantic.Net hosting solutions. This one I will have to kick to our legal team.

Aaron Honeycutt (aaronhoneycutt@kubuntu.org)
"We need Flash! Options to install non-free if we wish"
I answered this on the spot, this user was unaware that you could install Adobe Flash and that they offered the software in various formats for linux, i.e. rpm, and tar. We discussed this further, and the issue was that the request was to have it part of the base installs and that it should work after the first start up. We discussed the legal and license process and how that effects what is included in the O/S.

Chris Crisafulli (itnet7@ubuntu.com)
"Citrix Leacuent easier installation packages that can do better SSL handling"
This person had some difficulty in citrix installations with Fedora, I tried to get the specific information but could not get the details on what he was having specific problems on.

Thomas Michrud (Thomas.michrud@gmail.com) CHEF/Docker/ETC
"Data base package easier for users than RPMs? And a Larger selction?"
I had to kick this one to our package teams, I think he was looking for an integration solution for CHEF

Samuel GreenFeld (Samuel@greenfeld.org/greenfeld@laptop.org)
I would like to extend a special Thank YOU to this individual. We spent some time talking about the OLPC. Since this person had worked for the company that made the unit, he inspected ours and said he would be back. When he came back he donated a new battery for the unit and updated XO to 13.2.1 release (Fedora 18). He also showed us the new product the company had produced, he still preferred the OLPC over the tablet.

Summary. The event overall was productive and informative. We feel that the event will only grow to a larger event if the coordinators can reach out to the surrounding larger cities such as Tampa, Miami, West Palm Beach/Ft Lauderdale, Tallahassee, and Jacksonville areas. These larger areas in fact do have a large Linux community and would probably travel if the correct advertising and reaching out to local Lugs is achieved. We will definitely attend the next FOSSETCON. Here is the pro's and con's of the event.

CON's
Equipment issues
EXPO area to open earlier and possibly larger booth areas
More incentive to attract everyday users (door prizes, drawings)
WiFi (little slow)
Cost for attendance for attendees (may want to drop the price)

PRO's
Resort and location (clean, fair pricing, and parking)
Availability of food and restaurants on and off site
Booth setup and amenities
Event Staff friendly and helpful
Communications (event staff) Had answers for questions or problems.