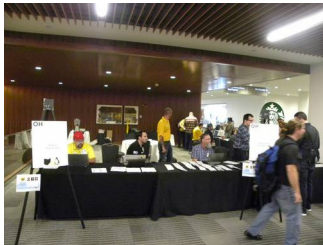


## Ohio Linux Festival, Hyatt Regency Columbus, Ohio 29-30 September 2017

### Event Report:

Andrew Ward (award3535), Julie Ward (jward78), Ben Williams (kk4ewt), Cathy Williams (cwilla)

The Fedora community has been a steadfast supporter of this event for the past 6 years. Ohio Linux Festival is the only major Linux community event that is located in the Northern Midwest region, with no Texas Linux Festival this year it is the only major event in the Midwest. The event attendance in the previous few years has gone down due to venue changes and event staff changes, but in light of 2017 the event brought just under a thousand registered enthusiasts as the OLF event president Beth Lynn Eicher (also a Fedora Ambassador) informed us the morning of 30 September while we were getting set up, which this did not count the walk-ins that showed up the morning of the EXPO opening. So the attendance was most impressive as compared to the previous year's events and could be soundly stated that there was upwards of 1100 at the event.



Registration

The first day was arranged for Professional Registrants interested in training and was

only targeted for that specific group. This gave us the perfect opportunity to explore the venue and find out where our booth was located and when set up could commence for the Expo. The time also allowed us to check in with the event and get our badges settled. I did peek into a couple of the training sessions to get an idea of what the attendance was like. The rooms were approximately 40% capacity during the talks, which was not a bad showing for the professionals. You can look at what was scheduled at <https://ohiolinux.org/schedule/>. The Expo opening on the 30<sup>th</sup> was the main event and had a full schedule of talks and with the expo hall opening at 8 a.m. we had got there early and set up the table for the days business to begin. The first talk was not scheduled to begin until 9 a.m. The expo showed a slow start to the day but rapidly began to come to life after the first talk was over. We decided to make a few DVD's using the duplicator for the most common desktop environments for distribution to interested individuals and the Fedorator was set up and ready to go as well.



Registration

Our focus for the event was centered on the many varieties of desktops Fedora has to offer and the versatility of the desktop environments. Many who visited our table were aware of the Workstation environment and were already using the software but were looking for something similar to the previous Linux software

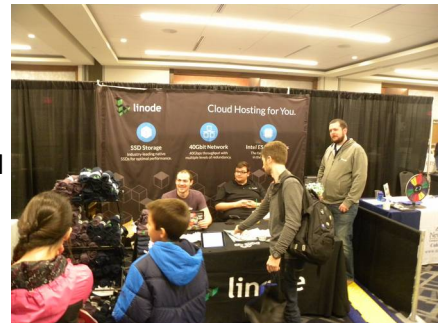


Getting the day started

they were using. Once we inquired on what they were previously using we directed them to the desktop that was most similar to what system previously installed on their computers. For example, we had quite a lot of Mint users that installed workstation and were not familiar with GNOME. This was an easy

explanation and pointed out the features in Cinnamon and Mate. Needless to say, they were unaware that desktop environment was available from Fedora. It seemed to be the most common point of our day. Cinnamon happened to be our most popular desktop to handout with 70 DVD's given to those who were interested. When asking questions on how they felt about Fedora almost all were very pleased with what they were using within the Fedora community (those who were already running Fedora) and with what they saw at our booth.

The Fedorator was a talking point as well. We did have a lot of inquiries on what the function of the unit was. After showing off the equipment used and purpose we demonstrated how to use the Fedorator. The unit had a definite positive impact on the table. Several individuals went off searching for USB drives so that they could use the Fedorator to create a bootable USB Key. We did have one individual that was really interested in getting one for use in his classroom. He currently is a High School teacher that has incorporated Linux Distributions in the curriculum for the Computer technology class. He was very interested in how to get one or put one together. After a long conversation with how he has the students try a Linux distribution in the labs, most of the students have retained the Linux distribution for their personal computers and taking home the media to use on other machines. I will provide his contact information via sepcor to those who can provide required material and specifics on, and, maybe a Fedorator can be donated. We made no promises but would get him pointed in the right direction. I believe this is exactly why we attend these community events, this enthusiastic teacher was helping high school students with a wide variety of software and was very impressed with Fedora and what we do, and furthermore I also believe that we could help him with his community with the promotion of Open source software and Fedora is a prime opportunity to deliver a stable and usable Linux operating system. It is hard to describe this teachers enthusiasm in words, his expressions said it all to us.



Throughout the day we answered many questions on what desktops are available and some of the upcoming changes with Fedora. There were many questions relating to how Red Hat is involved as well as why I should use Fedora over what I currently use. Every event that we attend the why should I use Fedora question comes up at some point, not as often as when the Ubuntu group attends events, because you always get the hardcore Ubuntu users when they have a table set up. This year Ubuntu was not present, but the same question did come up as well (always does). This time the Debian user asked why I should shift to Fedora. We do explain the differences between the two operating systems and the support network set up with Fedora, but we leave the decisions to the user. On almost every occasion that same person comes by the table again and will pick up a DVD or Fedora Stickers and make the statement I will give it a try. With that one person coming back to pick up media from our table is always the reason why we (Fedora) are there to support those who want to switch. One comment did stick out during the event. We had one individual approach us and ask why our table was so busy, everything is happening here so I had to come and see why, the other side of the expo has no one was really there, everyone is at your table.



Throughout the day we answered many questions on what desktops are available and some of the upcoming changes with Fedora. There were many questions relating to how Red Hat is involved as well as why I should use Fedora over what I currently use. Every event that we attend the why should I use Fedora question comes up at some point, not as often as when the Ubuntu group attends events, because you always get the hardcore Ubuntu users when they have a table set up. This year Ubuntu was not present, but the same question did come up as well (always does). This time the Debian user asked why I should shift to Fedora. We do explain the differences between the two operating systems and the support network set up with Fedora, but we leave the decisions to the user. On almost every occasion that same person comes by the table again and will pick up a DVD or Fedora Stickers and make the statement I will give it a try. With that one person coming back to pick up media from our table is always the reason why we (Fedora) are there to support those who want to switch. One comment did stick out during the event. We had one individual approach us and ask why our table was so busy, everything is happening here so I had to come and see why, the other side of the expo has no one was really there, everyone is at your table.



The day continued on with various questions and individuals who were curious of what and who we are. Truly we had a very busy day with the festival. Throughout the day we had a survey available for those who desired to give us feedback on our product, the booth, and anything they wished to feed back to Fedora. We tried to complete this electronically, but found that most did not want to enter any information and have it publically sent out on the internet or the fear of social media posts. The response that we received for having hand written surveys seems to go over a lot better than expected. We didn't think that the overwhelming response that we did have with the surveys. All of our printed copies were filled out and returned to the booth. There was a wide variety of questions relating to how you heard about Fedora to what operating system do you currently use. We also inquired about if the individuals would be interested in getting involved in the project with some surprising results. Here are some of the results from the surveys;

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Great</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Fedora Booth Experience	6	17	7	0	0
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Maybe</b>	<b>No</b>		
Fedora Future Involvement in the Project	9	12	9		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>			
Availability of Various Desktops	27	3			
	<b>Already using</b>	<b>Internet/Online</b>	<b>Festival or Event</b>	<b>Other/Word of Mouth</b>	
How Did you hear about Fedora	9	6	6	9	
	Linux	Fedora	Windows	Mac	
O/S currently using	24	15	11	4	Some Users Identified Dual boot
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	Unanswered		
Member of Linux Users Groups (LUG)	6	19	5		

There were some significant statements identified on the surveys, one in particular that a user read the Linus Towards preferred to use Fedora, so the user identified that he immediately shifted to Fedora and has been using it since. The most interesting discovery from the surveys was the word of mouth discovery of how they heard about Fedora. This truly showed that Fedora is gaining popularity within the Linux and open source community just with person to person communications, this small sample of the community growing. It's hard to say what made the





popularity of Fedora other than its stability and technically advanced, or it could be the support channels available, even the project itself could be the flagship.

Another good point that was revealed from the survey was the probability of future involvement in the project. Most were favorable, while the no's were limited to the insufficient time to get involved or experience level being a factor keeping them from being involved. Whatever their reasoning the number was less than 33% of not any interest in becoming involved with the project. Interesting enough the survey also pointed out that most of the individuals that filled out the survey were not members of any Linux Users Group. This number is quite surprising considering that the area has several groups that are community involved. For those who traveled from Indiana and filled out the survey also have a few groups that are quite community active.

In summary, we felt that the Ohio Linux Festival was a very successful event. The fact that attendance was up significantly did show the area growing in the Linux community interest. The attendance truly shows an interest in the open source community and we can safely state that Fedora made a large impact on that event and the community as discovered by just how many did visit our table during the Expo, and by our survey that shows a very good experience was given to all who visited the Fedora Table.



*The Fedora OLF Team: Cathy Williams, Julie Ward, Andrew Ward, Ben Williams*