R&D: Getting Hackers Laid*

*Other side effects may include better quality software

Paul J. Adams,
Research Zealot,
Sirius Corporation PLC

August 10, 2008
1. Introduction
2. Growing User Base
3. Growing Developer Base
4. Cross Platform
5. Getting Formal?
Introduction

Growing User Base
Growing Developer Base
Cross Platform
Getting Formal?

Some things in life...

... are unavoidable truths.

- Death (Unless you happen to be Elvis or Captain Scarlet or Sebastian Kügler)
- Taxes
- Success makes you attractive!

Paul J. Adams, Sirius Corporation PLC — R&D: Getting Hackers Laid*
Some things in life... are unavoidable truths.

- Death (Unless you happen to be Elvis or Captain Scarlet or Sebastian Kügler)
- Taxes
- Success makes you attractive!
... are unavoidable truths.

- Death (Unless you happen to be Elvis or Captain Scarlet or Sebastian Kügler)
- Taxes
- Success makes you attractive!
Some things in life...

... are unavoidable truths.

- Death (Unless you happen to be Elvis or Captain Scarlet or Sebastian Kügler)
- Taxes
- Success makes you attractive!
Some things in life...

... are unavoidable truths.

- Death (Unless you happen to be Elvis or Captain Scarlet or Sebastian K"ugler)
- Taxes
- Success makes you attractive!

John Prescott

- Some time Deputy PM
- Object of desire for Whitehall secretaries
You only have a few days. So be quick! If you’re going to convince people you are successful, remember…

Success is a Free Software project is:

- Regular, useful contribution
- Team player
- Good humoured
You only have a few days. So be quick! If you’re going to convince people you are successful, remember...

Success is a Free Software project is:

- Regular, useful contribution
- Team player
- Good humoured

The solution..?
Convince people that you’re Kevin Ottens

The “John Prescott” of KDE
You may remember me from such talks as:

- The Software Quality Observatory for Open Source Software
- R&D: Killing the Imp

I am:

- Researcher of software quality
- e.V. member
- blogger of research issues

Green Eggs and Ham
Eating Into The Onion
(or understanding where \(\text{we}\) are)

Passive Users
Active Users
Co-Contributors
Primary Contributors
Benchmarking:  
- planned  
- (simple) measurements  
- regularly  
- published  
- compare  
- react

Konsole: Short Example

'cat' the en-GB dictionary:
- 1.411, 1.374, 1.412 for KDE 3.5.8  
- 1.063, 1.046, 1.079 for KDE 4.0
The big software houses spend a minor fortune on market research. They frequently deliver software which didn’t meet the users’ expectations. Somehow they still pay for it!

- Users are as much a part of the onion as we are
- It’s /their/ freedom we are protecting, so we should protect their opinion, too
Keeping An Eye On The Community
(or "Little Sister Is Watching You")

Paul J. Adams, Sirius Corporation PLC — R&D: Getting Hackers Laid*
Re-Introducing Paul’s Law
(or academic narcissism at its most blatant)

A new developer within a given project will is more likely to remain an active developer for longer if they commit in each of their first three weeks.
Try To Be Flimsy
(or please stop hardcoding "/proc")

There are a few known solutions to this problem. They don’t all encapsulate everything we need from every target platform. This is all a specific case of a more general problem.

Be platform aware or platform agnostic! Just make your choice and make it now!
Managing Expectations
(or yes, Paul, you are the UK’s only Plan9 user)
KDE e.V. received direct funding for its participation in SQO-OSS:

- AFAIK, PyPy is the only other Free Software project to do this.
- We got through! (Words cannot describe how big an achievement this is!)
- The result is something almost, but not quite, entirely unlike useful?
Despite the successes of taking part in SQO-OSS, KDE Research is /not/ about milking €millions out of the tax payers.

- Although funding is /always/ an option

- Education

- Helping
So what’s your point, Paul?
(or get on with it. Yes, get on with it!)

- Research is a skill, but does not need to be formal
- KDE is full of cool people who do cool stuff /anyhow/
- Let’s be aware of the trouble ahead (because it /is/ there)

Ideas drive development, so....

SHARE AND ENJOY!

Idea: Nokia, please may I have Qt supported on Plan9? I’d do the work myself but my boss would kill me.
Research is a skill, but does not need to be formal
KDE is full of cool people who do cool stuff /anyhow/
Let’s be aware of the trouble ahead (because it /is/ there)

Ideas drive development, so....

SHARE AND ENJOY!

Idea: Nokia, please may I have Qt supported on Plan9? I’d do the work myself but my boss would kill me.
Proud to continue supporting the KDE community and KDE e.V.