USENIX Association
Board of Directors meeting
Anaheim Marriott
Anaheim, CA
April 11, 12, & 14, 2005

Present:

Board of Directors:
Mike Jones
Matt Blaze
Clem Cole
Alva Couch
Jon "maddog" Hall
Geoff Halprin
Kirk McKusick

Staff:
Ellie Young
Cat Allman
Anne Dickison
Dan Klein
Jane-Ellen Long
Tara Mulligan

Guest:
Dan Appelman

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m. on April 11th, 2005. All of the above were present at the beginning of the meeting.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

McKusick moved and was seconded by Hall to accept the minutes of the previous meeting as written.
Passed: 7 in favor; absent: 1 (Ts'o)

Changes to the Agenda

Blaze requested that fraudulent paper submissions be added.

Action Items

The Board members reported on their action items, and they were either accomplished, or would be discussed later in the agenda.

SAGE Committee Report

Halprin apologized for no written report, and said he is in the process of preparing it. He said there has been significantly slow progress regarding SAGE Inc. since LISA '04, due to lack of motivation on the part of volunteers and lack of funds.
There are 3 key projects underway:

1. Operation Committee: this is being formed to find an Association Management Company for the SAGE Inc. They hope to have one selected by the end of this month.
2. Drafting an outsourcing agreement between USENIX and the new SAGE organization. Halprin reported that he will responsible for this, and will be talking with McKusick and Appelman. He hopes to have a draft within a month.
3. Organizing the first elections for the new organization. A committee has been formed with Greg Rose as the Chair. They hope to hold the elections in May '05.

Halprin said that he would make a proposal to the USENIX Board for bridge funding to cover two months of operations.

Appelman questioned the exemption status of the new SAGE with regards to becoming a 501(c)3, and whether the IRS had responded, since all future actions hinge on their determination. Halprin said that they have not yet heard, but that they applied as a 501(c)3, and they might look at forming a "sister" organization as a 501(c)3 to transfer assets to if the first application is not approved.

Halprin acknowledged that formal verification of Phase I being complete is not yet done, as he still needs to provide the USENIX office with copies of all documents requested in November 2004. He expects to have this done later in the week. They are proceeding with the preliminary stages of Phase II, which they hope to have completed with the transition of services by November 2005. It was the understanding of the Board that Phase I had ended and Phase II had commenced, to be completed one year hence.

Report on USENIX Annual Technical Conference

Young felt that the conference cannot continue in its current format, as it has been running deficits for the past four years, and has become dependent on training revenue, which is also declining. As USENIX has traditionally budgeted for this conference to be revenue producing, reorganization is crucial.

Discussion centered on the possible reasons for low attendance. Besides the economy, there are major changes going on in the industry. There is consolidation in operating systems, a reduction in students entering the field of computer science, fewer employment opportunities, and academic interest is being drawn off to smaller, more focused events. In some circles, USENIX Annual Tech is no longer considered a "must-attend" event. For this year's conference, it was also felt that the location and change to April versus June contributed to the lower attendance.

It was decided that further discussion would be held during the April 12th regular meeting of the Board, to determine what options to present to the strategy session guests on April 14th.

The regular meeting was suspended at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 9:05 a.m., April 12, 2005. The following were present at the beginning of the meeting, except as noted:

Board of Directors:
Mike Jones
Matt Blaze
Clem Cole
Alva Couch
Jon "maddog" Hall
Kirk McKusick
Ted Ts'o

Staff:
Ellie Young
Cat Allman
Anne Dickison
Dan Klein
Jane-Ellen Long
Tara Mulligan

Guests:
Dan Appelman (joined at 9:15 a.m.)
Glenn Sampson
Andrew Hume (joined at 1:35 p.m.)
Peter Honeyman (joined at 1:35 p.m.)

Report on USENIX Portfolio

Samson reported on the management and selection of USENIX reserve fund stocks, stating that USENIX investment is conservative, with low risk, but good returns. He explained the three differing funds USENIX is invested in (the Berkeley Fund, with a

focus on dividends that average 3%-10%, ING for the fixed income component, and the Lazard Fund, which is primarily investments in large international companies.

Appelman joined the meeting at 9:15 a.m.

Samson said the investments are geared toward five years, with our current yields focused toward international investments due to better valuations, better growth, and lower prices.

2004 Year-End Finances

Young reported on the 2004 year-end finances, saying we had planned for a break-even year, and that is what happened. With the investments doing well, we will have net of $300,000. Young reported that the final review by the CPA would be done by June. She said that it continues to be difficult to budget for the Annual Technical Conference, and the bulk of office and personnel overhead goes to that conference and LISA.

Young reported that LISA training, Linux Kernel Summit, and membership are generating income; FAST, OSDI, and Security break-even, and the other activities (SAGE, NSDI, VM, and Annual Tech) have deficits.

Revised 2005 Budget

Young reported that at the last meeting the Board agreed to our producing a balance budget. To accomplish this, we raised registration fees and member dues (while still being able to fund several large projects/good works. That budget, however had presumed that USENIX Annual Tech would break even with attendance being similar to the previous year. However, because attendance is down by 30% from 2004, new projections show a $270,000 deficit in operations this year. She expressed her hope that the low enrollment at the current conference isn't indicative of a trend that will affect the rest of our program this year.

Blaze moved and was seconded by Cole to accept the 2005 budget as presented. Passed: 7 in favor; absent: 1 (Halprin)

Break from 10:05-10:20 a.m.
Samson left the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

Tutorial Program Report

Klein reported on the low attendance at tutorials at USENIX '05, and that tutorial attendance was down relative to overall conference attendance. He felt that the major factors were the location and economy. Some tutorials were canceled due to low enrollment.

Klein said he is trying to keep the tutorial slate aligned with the tenor of the conference, and would like direction as to what to do with it if the shape of the conference changes. He suggested that future events be located "where the money is," and where there will be a high rate of walk-in attendance.

Current Program

OSDI: Young reported that the recent event, held in December 2004 in San Francisco, was successful, and there is a great team of co-chairs (Mogul and Bershad) for the next event in 2006.

WORLDS: Young reported that this was a great pairing with OSDI (it was held the day prior). The future program chairs are deciding what other conference to pair it with next, and it will possibly be FAST. Young will follow up with Vivek Pai.

NSDI: This event will be held in early May 2005 in Boston, and Young said we are budgeting for attendance of 150. Promotionally, we relied on SIGCOMM and SIGOPS and emails to the USENIX database.

MobiSys: Young felt we should try to plan now for the future and expressed her doubts about the model of sharing its organization with ACM every other year. Jones said he would renegotiate with SIGMOBILE about trying to have it run by USENIX in 2006.

HotOS: Jones reported that he was happy to have Margo Seltzer as chair, and that the program is terrific. The event is by invitation only.

Linux Kernel Summit: Ts'o reported that there was a higher acceptance rate than in years past, and program committee is trying to keep the attendance around 75, with a ceiling of 100. He said the sponsorship is going very well.

Klein left the meeting at 11:10 a.m.
Blaze left the meeting at 11:10 a.m. and returned at 11:13 a.m.

Jones asked how we could further develop the conference program, with the following actions decided upon:

Ts'o will talk with Keith Packard and Andrew Hutton regarding USENIX assisting with Desktop Summit.

Hall will talk further with the Asterisk (open source PBX, voice over IP style work) developers regarding collaboration.

Cole, Hall and Ts'o will investigate a clusters workshop.

Blaze left the meeting at 11:28 a.m. and returned at 11:30 a.m.

LISA: Young reported that David Blank-Edelman is getting into gear, and the two of them are pursuing keynote possibilities. Adam Moskowitz will be the Invited Talks co-chair. Young said that we would need to identify a chair for the 2006 event in the fall. Jones stated that the selection process would remain the same regardless of SAGE changes, as LISA will remain a USENIX event. He said that the management of the new SAGE organization would be invited to provide input.

SRUTI – Symposium on Reducing Unwanted Traffic on the Internet: Cole said that Bala Krishnamurthy is doing very well organizing the event, and has obtained an AT&T sponsorship. This first event is by invitation only, and the format of future events will be discussed.

Security: Blaze reported that there were lots of submissions, though a few were fraudulent, the overall quality of the program is good. Blaze said Angelos Keromytis is on board as the chair of the 2006 conference. Blaze said they are toying with the idea of a one day, small "hot security" workshop to be co-located with the event, and that it would compete somewhat with HotOS in terms of quality and prestige.

Co-Sponsored Events

CodeCon: Young reported that Dan Klein attended on behalf of USENIX. He conveyed that most papers could be presented at USENIX. Young said the organizers would be interested in getting more USENIX support. McKusick suggested that we "dip our toes" in the water by helping them with a web page and pre-registration, but offer no onsite management. Young will talk with the organizers.

VEE – First ACM/USENIX International Conference on Virtual Execution Environments: Couch reported that there were 65 submissions, and 19 accepted papers. He said that the organizers had suggested future co-location with OSDI or ASPLOS. Young suggested that we wait see how this one goes. Jones asked Couch to approach the organizers about it, and to let them know that if they need an immediate decision, then ASPLOS would be a better choice.

IMC: Young said that Bala Krishnamurthy is an organizer of this. It is a co-sponsored event with ACM SIGCOMM. USENIX has helped in the past with stipends and promotion, and because the conference makes money, we've gotten our stipend contribution back. This year, USENIX will do more, helping with proceedings and the Web site. The attendance is expected to be about 150-200.

WMCSA – IEEE Workshop on Mobile Computing Systems & Applications: Young reported that USENIX will be a sponsor and will help out with promotion.

Lunch break from 12:20-1:35 p.m.
Peter Honeyman and Andrew Hume joined the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

SANE: Honeyman said he would speak with the Dutch folks who are on site and will report further at Thursday's meeting.

Middleware: Honeyman reported that the conference had 107 submissions and is a success. He continues to represent USENIX on the steering committee. He said the organizers (ACM IFIP) really appreciate USENIX. We provide $5,000 for student stipends. He suggested that USENIX could also be helpful with marketing.

Goals for USENIX Participation at International Events

SUCON-SUUG – Ts'o reported that he attended the Swiss user's group meeting, (SUCON) in Switzerland in September 2004. He said that it seemed they could use some logistical help in organizing their events. He also mentioned that they seem very focused on local groups.

Grid Computing

Cole reported that he and Couch have spoken with various groups in the area of grid computing, and there seems to be a need to reach people, but that there are other Grid conferences being held. For now, it may be a good "Guru session" at a USENIX event to see how well it's received.

Couch added that those who are interested are primarily academic, for prototyping reasons, and that commercial interest is currently low.

Fraudulent Submissions

Blaze reported on multiple submissions to conferences, and pointed out that this goes against our current policy. Suggestions on how to respond to this were discussed.

McKusick moved and was seconded by Blaze to create a subcommittee to draft a letter that will state only verifiable factual information, approved by Dan Appelman, to send to those who fraudulently submit papers, which the USENIX board will sign.
Passed: in favor, 6; abstain: 1 (Cole); absent: 1 (Halprin)

Blaze will chair a subcommittee (Couch and McKusick, with Appelman as a consultant) to look at the issue. Jones offered to have the CRA look over the language of the letter as well.

Break from 2:50-3:00 p.m.

Annual Technical Conference

Jones temporarily deferred the rest of the agenda in order to have more discussion about the Annual Technical Conference. The Board discussed the problems of how the conference is currently perceived, and went over various options to make changes.

Appelman left the meeting at 3:30 p.m.
Klein joined the meeting at 3:45 p.m.

The consensus of the Board was that the conference could not continue as is, and we would meet after the strategy meeting with guests on Thursday to decide on the future.

McKusick left at 4:24 p.m. and returned at 4:28 p.m
Break from 4:30-4:40 p.m.
Honeyman left the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Executive Office Report

Young reported on recent staff changes in the Berkeley office. Young also reported that the editorship of *;login:* will shift from Rob Kolstad to Rik Farrow as with the August issue. Young looked into IP agreements with staff, and said the work our consultants do falls under theUSENIX right of ownership of programming. Young said that USENIX also had rights to the work Kolstad has done on behalf of SAGE.

Institutional Member Benefits

Mulligan summarized her report. In an attempt to retain Institutional Members, she asked the Board to consider the proposal to increase their member benefits.

McKusick moved and was seconded by Couch to adopt additional benefits for Institutional members as follows:

Educational:
- **Up to2 additional subscriptions of *;login:* per issue**

Corporate:
- **Up to 4 additional subscriptions of *;login:* per issue**
- **Five (5) member-priced conference registrations during membership term**
- **Listed on Corporate member page linked from the USENIX Membership page**
- **Greater group employee discounts registrations**

Supporting:
- **Up to 4 additional subscriptions of *;login:* per issue**
- **Access to downloadable electronic proceedings from events during the previous year**

Passed: 7 in favor; absent: 1 (Halprin)

Marketing Manager's Report

Dickison reported that LISA 2004 went well. She said that the marketing effort for the 2005 Annual Technical Conference was the same as last year. While hits to our Web site were high, she was unable to determine why there were not more registrations. She conducted a survey to past attendees who are not attending this event. The results showed that it was difficult for most to get away from their school or jobs at this time (travel, venue, and timing).

Sales Report

Allman stated that she is doing her best to get sponsors and exhibitors for Annual Tech, Security, and LISA, and that she relies on the program committee's contacting their contacts. She went over her written report.

Legal Issues for System Administrators

Couch reported that Kolstad and Nicholson researched laws and trends in this area, focusing on the viability of safe practices. They found five main issues that will be addressed in articles in *;login:*.

Awards Committee Report

Hall reported on the nominations and awards for this year. He requested input from the Board regarding guidelines for the Flame Award. Jones asked that Hall write up a proposal for consideration.

Next Meetings

The next regular Board meeting will be held Tuesday, August 2nd, in Baltimore, MD, during the Security Symposium.

The Board discussed the USENIX Annual meeting with membership. It was agreed that a statement would be made regarding potential changes for the format for Annual Technical Conference, as well as announcing that the timeframe for the event will be moved back to early summer in 2006.

The regular Board meeting was suspended at 5:35 p.m.

The Board went into Executive session at 5:40 p.m.

The regular meeting reconvened at 4:05 p.m. on April 14, 2005. All of the following were present:

Board of Directors:
Mike Jones
Matt Blaze
Clem Cole
Alva Couch
Geoff Halprin
Kirk McKusick
Ted Ts'o

Staff:
Ellie Young
Cat Allman
Anne Dickison
Jane-Ellen Long
Tara Mulligan

Guest:
Peter Honeyman

SANE

Honeyman reported that he met with Teus Hagen and Rudi Van Drunen. He came away believing that SANE has a solid future, and reported that the steering committee for the conference is being restructured. He is also hopeful that SANE Stichting will have a seat for USENIX. Young felt that if we have a seat we'd be in a position to influence the conference toward better success.

McKusick moved and was seconded by Blaze to offer a $20,000 donation to SANE Stichting for the SANE '06 conference, and to offer a maximum $20,000 guarantee for their conference in the event there is a deficit.
Passed: 5 in favor; abstain: 2 (Halprin, Ts'o); absent: 1 (Hall)

Jones and Cole requested that a letter be sent with the check stating that the funds are to enable the production of SANE '06, and to request that the organizers work with the USENIX staff for early promotion of the event.

Honeyman left the meeting at 4:40 p.m.

Snooping the Conference Network

Jones said that it was reported that password sniffing had occurred during the conference, and asked that the Board come up with a formal proposal on how to deal with future offenses.

Couch moved and was seconded by Blaze to approach offenders of our policy regarding snooping or sniffing the network at USENIX conferences with a verbal warning on the first offense, and ousting the offender from the conference on the second offense.
Passed: 7 in favor; absent: 1 (Hall)

Future of the Annual Technical Conference

Jones reported that he was happy with the result of the strategy session held earlier in the day and that the invited guests gave some valuable input. He said that the Board came away from the meeting with some clear actions for the future: namely, to consider renaming the General Track, and attempt to differentiate the rebranded "General Track" from OSDI by emphasizing "practice and experience" in the Call For Papers and marketing, and to consider morphing Freenix into the conference proposed by Honeyman. Discussion ensued regarding the proposal to have an open review process for the new open source conference or to have it done via the standard process we now use, with the final decision to be made in the future.

Variations on names were discussed, and Jones made the following recommendation:

Under the banner of the "USENIX Conference" have the following:

1. CSPE - Computer Systems conference on Practice and Experience. This will be what is now the General Track, and will focus on practical use of computing systems.

2. SECSE - USENIX Symposium on Experimental Computer Science and Engineering (tentative title). This will be a restructuring of what is now Freenix, and will focus on design, implementation, measurement, and assessment of working computing systems. It will require reproducibility in some form.

3. Invited Talks - allow for an industrial slant by having 2 or 3 industry representatives invited to give talks each year.

4. Guru track - continue as is, with the possibility of industry leaders here, too.

5. Training - continue as is, consider a potential increase the offerings.

6. Try to attract developer groups to meet concurrently.

It was felt that this model would function as a more federated conference that can accommodate a wide range of topics and be attractive to open source developers. The conference could potentially be an umbrella for NSDI, OSDI, MobiSys, etc. if they can no longer stand on their own in the future. This model will appeal to academics, industry leaders, and systems administrators. Young said that the new format will probably not be implemented for 2006, and that a better timeframe will be 2007.

Jones would like to come up with an overall slogan for the new USENIX Conference, that will position it as an event that focuses on practice and experience in the field. We should emphasize usability and short-term effects for industry. He suggested that a vote be held by email to finalize this.

Young suggested a steering committee consisting of herself, Blaze, Honeyman, Seltzer and others to begin the shaping of the new SECSE conference. Couch and Blaze agreed to serve as Board liaisons to the 2006 conference.

McKusick moved and was seconded by Blaze to adjourn the meeting.
Passed: 7 in favor; absent: 1 (Hall)

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Summary of Actions Taken by USENIX Board of Directors via email from April 15, 2005-August 25, 2005

On July 6, 2005, via e-mail, McKusick moved and was seconded by Blaze to allocate $10,000 to support the 2005 What The Hack conference.
Passed: All in favor.

USENIX COMMITTEES & BOARD LIAISONS * (rev.07/25/05)

Executive <execcom@usenix.org>: Jones, Hall, Ts'o, McKusick
A subset of the Board that may make Board level decisions between the meetings. The Executive Director consults this committee in cases of personnel termination and hiring of senior staff. Some members have signature on bank checking accounts. Usually the president and at least one member located in the SF Bay Area serve.

Nominating Committee: In the summer of the year preceding the Election, (i.e., August 2005), the Board of Directors appoints someone to serve as chair. The chair will then put together a committee (all of who agree that they will not run for office in that particular election).

Awards Committee <awardscom@usenix.org> : Hall (chair), Cole, John Gilmore, Keith Packard, Peter Salus, Jim McGinness, Jim Gettys. Makes proposals about instituting awards to celebrate special achievements in the community. It also seeks nominations for and does subsequent selection of Flame and STUG annual awards.

Fraudulent Submissions Committee <fraudsubmissions@usenix.org>: Blaze (chair), Couch, McKusick, and consultant: Appelman. Draft and implement a policy to deal with fraudulent paper submissions.

SAGE Committee <sagecom@usenix.org> : Jones, Hall, Halprin, McKusick, Parter, and alternate: Couch. Oversee and liaise with the Board regarding the future direction of SAGE.

BOARD LIAISONS:

USENIX Conferences:

Security '05, Baltimore, MD	Blaze
LISA '05, San Diego, CA	Halprin
WORLDS '05, San Francisco, CA	Jones
FAST '05, San Francisco, CA	Cole
NSDI '06, San Jose, CA	Couch
USENIX '06, Boston, MA	Blaze/Couch
Security '06, Vancouver, Canada	Blaze

Other Conferences (USENIX-related or co-sponsored):

Linux Kernel Summit '05	Ts'o
IMC, New Orleans, LA	Young

Other Liaisons:

CRA	Jones
EFF	Young
FSG	Hall

*Note: Young is the Staff Coordinator for each of the committees and is included on each mailing list.