USENIX Board of Directors Meeting
February 15, 2002
San Francisco, CA

The regular meeting of the USENIX Board of Directors was convened at the Cathedral Hill Hotel, in San Francisco, CA, at 9:15 AM.

Attendance:

USENIX Board of Directors:
Dan Geer, Chairman
John Gilmore
Jon "maddog" Hall
Peter Honeyman
Andrew Hume
Mike Jones
Kirk McKusick
Avi Rubin

USENIX Staff:
Gale Berkowitz
Shelley Gottlieb
Barbara Freel
Jane-Ellen Long
Catherine Vegher
Toni Veglia
Ellie Young

All of the above were present at the beginning at 9:15 AM, including Rubin who attended by speakerphone.

Guests:
David Parter, SAGE Executive Committee
Lois Bennett

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Honeyman moved, and was seconded by Jones to accept the minutes. Passed: 8 in favor.

Action Items

Action items were reviewed. Most action items were either completed, are in progress, or included in the agenda, exception the following: Geer asked that the item regarding his talking to Vixie about bug report be removed.

Finances

Young gave an update on the 2001 Estimated Year-End, which showed a loss of $1,955,000 in operating and $3,282,000 overall. An audit of 2001 will be conducted in spring and the report will be available by the June meeting.

Gottlieb described her plan for restructuring the corporate and supporting membership categories, which includes: eliminating the corporate category; instituting a publications membership; increasing the benefits for supporting memberships; and expanding the drive for supporting memberships. Based on feedback received, Gottlieb will revise her proposal and send to the Board for review.

Young presented the final budget for 2002, which projects a $600,000 operating loss for the year. Two scenarios were included that projected what the budget might look like with 20% reduction or 20% increase in attendance at the Annual Technical Conference, LISA, Security and OSDI. The Association might lose up to $1.3 million or have a slight net of $100,000.

There was a discussion about alternate models for the smaller conferences and how to make them profitable. Young noted that the slate for 2002 was set, and could not be changed without significant penalties with the hotels, but that there is flexibility with the 2003 slate. She would be in a better position to make projections and recommendations by the summer.

Strategies for improving conference attendance included increasing marketing to managers; targeting marketing. Some discussion focussed on how we might produce conferences more inexpensively, but our model would have to change drastically.

The vote on approving 2002 Budget was tabled until the end of the meeting.

Break from 10:30 AM until 10:45 AM.

Update on Conferences

Current Program 2001/2002:

BSDCon. Young reported that attendance was 160 paid and 53 complimentary (vs. 300 the previous year). Leffler reported that overall the conference went well, but lacked some balance in content and attendance across tracks. He didn't see enough topics to field a 2-day event, and WIPS should be included the next time. McKusick reported that the talks were better than in previous years, and that the proceedings were appreciated. It was suggested that the conference be repeated, but at a lower cost. Young and Freel will look into this and make a proposal to the Board.

LISA. LISA 2001 had around 1700 attendees, and paid attendance was 42% lower than budgeted. The quality of the conference was high. Hume suggested collaborating with the Storage Network Industry Association (SNIA) with Alva Couch. Young would supply a contact.

FAST. Attendance was 268, and was very successful. Hume suggested collaborating with SNIA for the next conference.

NordU. It was reported that pre-registration is off by around 38%, with around 200 attendees expected. McKusick will attend. Young suggested that USENIX take more active involvement in NordU in the future.

SANE. Honeyman is on the program committee, and reported that the conference planning is proceeding well.

USENIX Annual Tech. Young reported that a keynote and closing session had not yet been identified. Larry Lessig was suggested, and both Gilmore and Honeyman will contact him. Young suggested a contacting at UC Berkeley for a closing session and Jones would follow-up on this.

JVM. Submissions were lower than anticipated. Some felt that it might be in competition with OOPSLA. If the quality of the program is not satisfactory, it was agreed to consider canceling it. Young would relay this to the chair.

Break for lunch at 12:10 PM until 1:00 PM.

Linux Kernel Summit II. Young reported that they are still looking for a venue for this event, and it may be co-located with the Ottawa Linux Showcase. OSDN will co-sponsor and is seeking funding for the summit.

COOTS/Middleware. Honeyman reported that plans are proceeding well, and there were a lot of high quality submissions. Middleware is moving into an annual cycle

IFIP. Honeyman A straw poll indicated a lack of support for coordinating more with IFIP.

Mobisys. Jones and Young reported that progress is slow

OSDL. Hall reported that OSDL, an association of companies that banded together to create a laboratory for testing Open Source software on large or expensive equipment, would like forums for pitching their ideas for technologies to allow Linux to meet the data center and carrier grade telecom markets. There was support for doing this, starting with at least one session at OSDI/WIESS. Hall will submit a proposal to the Board for review.

Internet Measurement Workshop. Young reported that USENIX is co-sponsoring this workshop and has committed to funding student stipends.

2003 and Beyond

Young reported for 2003, are the following conferences were confirmed: USENIX Annual Tech, LISA, Security, USITS, and FAST. Other areas to explore in the future might include: embedded systems, grid computing (loosely coupled data centers), ad hoc 80211. There seemed to be support for maintaining five events for 2003, but to be open-minded to new opportunities. It was suggested that, prior to launching a new conference, that the ideas be introduced as an invited talk at an existing conference and interest in the topic be assessed.

Bennett suggested that education of system administration be addressed. Hume noted that the National Science Foundation has education funds that it cannot spend, and should be approached. It was recommended that the SAGE Executive Committee suggest conference topics.

Gottlieb suggested an event targeted at high level people such as CEOs, CTOs, and CIOs. The group was challenged to bring 3-5 proposals for training-mode vs. research mode conferences.

Break from 2:15 PM to 2:25 PM.

SAGE

Parter and Berkowitz gave an update on SAGE activities. The SAGE Executive Committee appointed three new members, two to replace and Dijker and Schafer, and a third to replace Chalup, who resigned just prior to the selections. New members are: Bryan Andregg, Gabe Krabbe, and Josh Simon. SAGE has three major projects for 2002, including the website, certification, and the salary survey. Additional revenue streams will be sought, such as web-only memberships.

SAGE Certification. The core competency and UNIX modules are currently being beta tested, and will go live internationally March 26, 2002. The Certification Board met recently and drafted the architecture for the next level. With sufficient funding, which still needs to be raised, development of the next level might be underway during the second quarter of 2002. It was requested that the Board help in two areas: identifying potential patrons, as well people to serve on the Board. Hall suggested that they should send an article on the program to him, and he would distribute information at CeBit conference.

Parter suggested that the SAGE Executive Committee meet with the USENIX Board of Directors at USENIX Annual Technical Committee. The USENIX Board liaison and Parter were tasked with planning this meeting, including an agenda.

Jones asked about the process by which Berkowitz, the SAGE Director, will be replaced. This is part of the topic of the Executive Session.

Executive Session from 2:45 PM to 3:45 PM.

It was decided that Geer, Hume, Young, and Parter will interview potential candidates for the SAGE Executive Director position, and the SAGE president would have veto power. A subcommittee of SAGE and USENIX would be formed to regularly review SAGE's activities.

Linux Strategy for USENIX

Hall presented a proposal for a Linux strategy to integrate Linux into mainstream computing. Hall reported that Linux International is about to embark on a program aimed at engaging regional and local user groups, and making them more effective as advocates of Linux in their local communities, through inexpensive, one- or two-day local events. Hall felt that USENIX could get involved in the following ways: evaluate speakers, provide selected tutorials, continue to promote Linux at Annual Technical Conference, Freenix, and BSDCon, and work with LI to develop regional events. Hall asked the Board to review the draft proposal and give him feedback.

Executive Director's Report

Young summarized her report. She noted that the e-learning initiative is not showing the success that was expected. It was suggested that different markets should be investigated, other than the USENIX membership, as well as experimenting with different lengths and pricing.

Honeyman moved, and was seconded by McKusick, to accept Burr, Pilger, and Mayer (BPM) to conduct the audit of 2001. Passed: 8 in favor.

Young asked if the Board of Directors would be interested in participating in a strategic planning process. It was agreed that this should be added to the agenda of the first meeting of the next Board of Directors.

Young noted that a vote is valid by email only if all members of the Board are present and the vote is unanimous.

Young went over her report on the advantages and disadvantages of buying versus renting office space. She will look at properties, and possibly submit a formal proposal to the Board about purchasing a building.

To increase web reliability, the office will get a T1 as the first phase, followed by adding co-location as the second phase.

Award Committee

Geer will appoint the Award Committee.

ReX Program

Honeyman gave a status report on ReX, noting that no funds have been allocated for this program for 2002. He communicated to the ReX Steering Committee that we would like to shift the focus from institutional exchanges to student exchanges. They were not in favor of this. Honeyman will report to the ReX Steering Committee that USENIX will continue to contribute institutional support, but cannot support the program financially.

CRA and Leadership Summit and funding for CRA-W and Snowbird Conference

Hume gave an update on CRA activities. The proposal from CRAW-W requesting additional funding from USENIX for its Distributed Mentor Project was approved. **Honeymoon moved, and was seconded by Hall to allocate $10,000 for the CRA-W DMP. In favor: 8.**

Honeymoon moved and was seconded by Hall for USENIX to sponsor the CRA Snowbird in the amount of $3,250. In favor: 8.

EFF/Felton Appeal

Gilmore gave an update on EFF and the Felton appeal, noting that EFF lost the case. The bottom line is that academic research will not be suppressed by the DMCA.

Report Bylaws/Policies Review Committee

Hume recommended that the next board might want to look into reviewing the Bylaws. He recommends the following: that SAGE has a non-voting member position on the USENIX Board, and the USENIX Board has a non-voting member position on the SAGE Executive Committee. A straw poll indicated a lack of support for Hume's recommendation.

Approval of 2002 Budget

Gilmore moved and was seconded by Hume to accept the 2002 Budget as amended, including:

- **$10,000 for student stipends for the Internet Measurement Workshop**
- **$10,000 for the CRA-W DMP**

- **$3500 to sponsor the CRA Snowbird**

In favor: 8.

Next Meeting

A teleconference was scheduled for 4:00 PM PST on March 7, 2002.

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, June 12, 2002, in conjunction with Annual Technical Conference in Monterey, CA. The Annual Meeting with the membership would be held later that same week. The joint meeting with the SAGE Executive Committee will be held Tuesday, June 11, 2002, in the evening.

It was moved by Hume, seconded by Jones to thank Berkowitz for her service. In favor: 8.

McKusick moved to adjourn. In favor: 8.

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Secretary Date