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Interview with Jon “Maddog” Hall about the upcoming LinuxWorld UK

By Tony Mobily

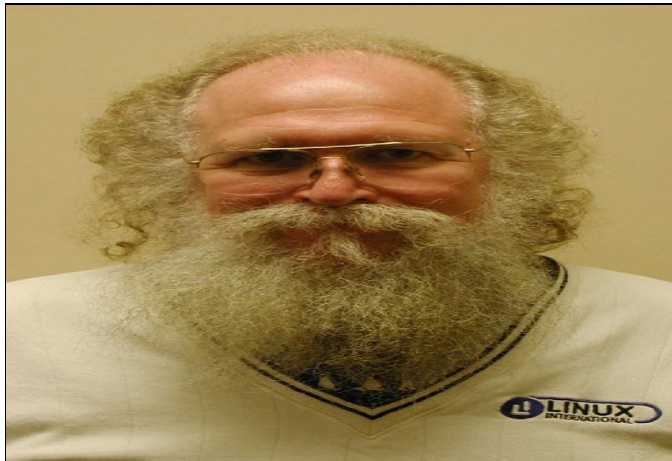
I was lucky enough to interview Jon “Maddog” Hall, one of the speakers of the upcoming LinuxWorld Conference & Expo in London.

TM: Your name is so well-known that you don’t even need an introduction. How are you keeping yourself busy these days?

JH: I do consulting for a number of companies, as well as trying to switch Linux International from a vendor organization to an end user organization. Linux International has never been a paying position, I have always had it as a volunteer job. I still travel ’round the world talking about free software, but lately I am talking more about techniques of migration and integration than just how to make money, save money and increase software value with free software.

TM: You were working for Digital and managed to get Linux’s first port (to Alpha processors). So, you must have been truly excited about Linux from day one. Are you still as inspired today?

JH: It was interesting. I met Linus at a DECUS in New Orleans in 1994, and when I first logged into Linux I felt it was a really good implementation of a Unix system. It was responsive, and the systems I expected to find were all there. It all just “felt” right. And of course the warmth and the welcoming of the FOSS community was also great. I liked Linus immensely from the very beginning, and I still do today.



Jon “Maddog” Hall

I continue to be astounded by the things that the free software community develops. Asterisk, Firefox, other projects. I look forward to the constant improvements that go on in the community, and I am looking forward to the improvements in the TCP/IP stack that were discussed at the Linux Conf AU conference last year in Dunedin, New Zealand.

TM: It’s universally accepted that conferences are important. What do you think makes LinuxWorld especially crucial for Linux? Which aspect is the most valuable one?

JH: I think that Linuxworld is the place where free and open source software technology comes together with the business community. It is where the person who is not fully into spending their entire lives following all of the web pages, mailing lists, forums and other news media of the FOSS community can find out what is crucial and interesting for them. It is a place where people can be exposed to multiple solutions instead of just “the one”, and get help in understanding which is the best solution for them. It is a place where people new to FOSS can “kick the tires” and listen to those who have boldly gone before them, for both what has worked and what has not worked.

TM: What’s your talk at LinuxWorld going to be about?

JH: I am actually giving two talks, one a keynote and one a “master talk”. The keynote will be about how to convince a Windows user to use free software, and the “master talk” will be about how to generally integrate free software into your existing environment in a relatively painless way.

TM: When did you write them, and why?

JH: Who says I have written it already? I hardly ever give exactly the same talk twice. Sometimes I write the talk the night before. I may reuse some slides from other talks to cover some similar ideas, but I really try to tailor the talks to the environment, audience and time allocated.

TM: One last question. Can you give our readers three reasons to come to the LinuxWorld conference?

JH:

- It is the place where you can quickly compare different choices in FOSS software and choose the one that is right for you.
- It is the place where you can get advice on how to tackle a particular situation with FOSS software.
- It is the place where you will get to talk to me! :-)(and other FOSS knowledgeable people).

TM: Thanks a lot for talking with me and answering my questions.

Biography

Tony Mobily (/user/2" title="View user profile.): Tony is the founder and the Editor In Chief of Free Software Magazine

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