

GRUB upstream and distros cooperation

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Presentation Agenda

- 1 ➤ GRUB maintainers
- 2 ➤ What happened last year
- 3 ➤ What is on our plate right now
- 4 ➤ Pain points
- 5 ➤ Discussion about the community/distros expectations

GRUB maintainers

- Alexander Burmashev, Oracle
- Daniel Kiper, Oracle
- Vladimir 'phcoder' Serbinenko

What happened last year

- Tons of SPARC64 and IEEE1275 improvements, fixes and cleanups, WIP, Eric Snowberg (Oracle) on Debian folks request
- Tons of ARM changes, fixes and cleanups, WIP, mostly Leif Lindholm (Linaro)
- Support multiple early initrd images, Robin H. Johnson (Gentoo) and Matthew S. Turnbull
- grub-probe PARTUUID detection support, Nicholas Vinson
- Support for XFS with sparse inodes, Eric Sandeen (Red Hat)

What happened last year

...continuation

- Btrfs RAID 5 and RAID 6 support, Goffredo Baroncelli
- Btrfs zstd support, Nick Terrell (Facebook)
- Verifiers framework, Vladimir 'phcoder' Serbinenko and Daniel Kiper (Oracle)
- UEFI secure boot shim support, Daniel Kiper (Oracle)
- UEFI TPM 1.2 and 2.0 support, Matthew Garrett (Google)
- Xen PVH support, Juergen Gross (SUSE)
- ...and plenty of fixes and cleanups

What is on our plate right now

- Close cooperation with TrenchBoot project (<https://github.com/TrenchBoot/documentation/>)
- IEEE1275 obdisk driver, Eric Snowberg (Oracle) on Debian folks request
- RISC-V support, Alexander Graf (SUSE)
- Easier Gnulib bootstrap, Colin Watson (Ubuntu)
- Native DHCPv4 support, Andrei Borzenkov and Andre Przywara (arm)
- UEFI MNP driver, Michael Chang (SUSE)
- GRUB 2.04 release...

Pain points

- Increase patches review „throughput” and decrease response delay for emails. Well, we try to catch up but more eyes looking at the patches are welcome. Anyway, IMO situation improved significantly last year and this stimulated larger community involvement. Nice!
- Reduce the number of custom patches needed by various distros to make GRUB2 upstream usable for them out of the box or at least without larger effort. WIP. More announcements will come in the following weeks. Help will be needed.
- Improve overall cooperation with distros and the other interested parties.

Pain points

...continuation

- Introduce the automatic testing of GRUB2 code from git tree. WIP. Now doing manually full x86 and arm test builds before every push. Working on something universal and more automatic. Initially it will be building all GRUB targets (no functional tests; this will be next step). It should be easy to use and flexible/configurable. So, this way everybody will be able to do full or partial builds in own environment.
- Some people start posting the patches and drop the work in the middle. This does not help. Maintainers spend their time reviewing and nothing comes out of it. So, we waste time and lose features/fixes/cleanups. And often maintainers are not able to take over work on the patches due to their workload. So, please treat us seriously and do not do that! Always finish your work!

Pain points

...continuation

- It seems to us that some people do not carefully read maintainer's comments. They post new versions of patches without all requests taken into account and then complain that their work is delayed. We understand that the authors may not fully agree with some comments. It does not help if they are skipped silently. Even it makes the situation worse and delays final patches acceptance. So, if you do not like a given comment, please complain. If you agree with it, take the comment into account in next version of patches. Silent omissions do not help and frustrate both the authors and maintainers.

Discussion about the community/distros expectations

- What do you care about?
- What is not important for you (at all)?
- Do you think our planned priorities are the same as yours?
- Are there any other community/distros expectations?

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