Mobian: to stable... and beyond!

FOSDEM'23
What is Mobian?

- A Debian derivative (or “Blend”) targeting mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets
- Separate package repository and ready-to-use disk images for several devices
- Very small overlay:
  - 44 source packages (35,000+ in Debian)
    - 7 packages to be dropped shortly
    - 3 packages awaiting Debian upload
    - 6 transitional packages to be dropped for the next development cycle
    - 9 packages (+ 4 kernel packages) carrying non-upstreamable patches
- Not a long-term project, but meant to dissolve into Debian over time
Where can I find the latest Mobian stable image?

- There is no such thing!
- Based on Debian testing: moving target
- Current Debian stable: Bullseye
  - Release date: August 2021 (frozen February/March)
    - Phoc v0.6.0 / Phosh v0.8.0
    - Chatty / Calls v0.2.0
    - No eg25-manager, mmsd-tng, libadwaita, portfolio...
  - We decided against releasing Mobian Bullseye
    - Ecosystem only starting to ramp up
    - Very few mobile-friendly applications in Debian
Going “stable”
The Bookworm development cycle

- Great progress over the past 2 years:
  - Richer (yet still growing) ecosystem
  - Many more mobile-friendly applications available
  - Graphical environments now more usable and stable
  - Lots of mobile-{friendly,specific} packages uploaded to Debian
    - Even Mobian packages are making their way to Debian!
- Early mistakes and sub-optimal choices mostly fixed
- Now seems a good time to (finally) go stable!
What will “Mobian stable” look like?

- **Supported devices:**
  - Linux-first: PinePhone (Pro), PineTab, Librem 5
  - Android-first: OnePlus 6/6T, Pocophone F1, SHIFT 6mq
  - x86: desktop PCs, Microsoft Surface Pro/Go

- **Various flavours:**
  - Phosh (GNOME 43 applications)
  - SXMO 1.13

- **LTS kernel**
  - Commitment to keep up with security updates
Semi-universal images

- SDM845-based devices
  - Device-specific firmware, no clear distribution rights: not for Debian!
  - Enters droid-juicer
    - Extracts firmware from Android vendor partitions at runtime
    - No more device-specific files in the root filesystem
      ⇒ We can switch to a single image for those devices!

- PINE64 devices
  - Very few device-specific tweaks
  - Kernel patches can easily be merged
    - Note: might be pushed back after the Bookworm release in case of regressions
Mobian during the freeze period

• Bookworm freeze period started
  – No new package in Debian starting February 12th (Soft Freeze)
  – No new version in Debian starting March 12th (Hard Freeze)
• Still able to work on downstream Mobian packages
  – Improve stability
  – Fix long-standing bugs
• Work upstream (no promises!)
  – Upstream kernel patches
  – Improve the bootloader “situation”
Designing the future
Our plans for Trixie

- Hardware support
  - Make it easier to support new devices in Mobian
  - Support 64-bit RISC-V architecture
- Keep packaging mobile-friendly software and graphical environments
  - Plasma Mobile
  - Lomiri
- Universal images
  - Merge all kernels into a single tree, building a single binary package
  - Make all device-specific tweaks configurable at runtime (tweakster)
Links

- Mobian:
  - Website: https://mobian.org
  - Community wiki: https://wiki.mobian.org
  - Developers’ wiki: https://wiki.debian.org/Teams/Mobian
  - Matrix (bridged to IRC on OFTC)
    - General: #mobian:matrix.org
    - Development: #mobian-dev:matrix.org
- droid-juicer: https://gitlab.com/mobian1/droid-juicer
- tweakster: https://gitlab.com/mobian1/tweakster
Q&A
Thank you!

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