



Ubuntu LoCo helps its community

TEAMWORK AND MORE ...

Everyone is welcome to join an Ubuntu LoCo Team, which can serve not only its own membership, but its greater community, too.

BY JONO BACON

communities that surround these different methods of contribution, each helping to grow their community, share ideas, and help each other be successful.

LoCo Teams For Local Change

Of all these sub-communities in the Ubuntu world, one of the fastest growing and most exciting are our Ubuntu Local Community (LoCo) teams [1]. These are local Ubuntu user groups that get together to help spread the word about Ubuntu in their local area, provide support for their members, organize events, put together open days and installfests, and more. We have more than 200 LoCo teams and they never cease to surprise me in just what they manage to achieve.

One such story that we showcased recently on the Ubuntu Fridge was the New Mexico Ubuntu LoCo Team [2], which persuaded the Charter Bank of Albuquerque to donate 25 used computers that were provided to the Endorphin Power Company (EPC), a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of people, with special focus on those who are substance-dependent and homeless. It didn't take them long to get up and running:

Working as a true team, the New Mexico folks set up a page for the project in the Ubuntu wiki, defining milestones and getting organized through their mailing list. The first big milestone in the culmination of this amazing effort came in February 2008, where they met to install and set up some of the workstations in

the EPC computer lab. Of course, with the operating system we all know and love. That installation was a success, and provided a solid foundation to base the subsequent efforts on.

Fast forward 2009: a functional Ubuntu network at EPC, wi-fi, a wealth of side-projects, ideas for other initiatives, regular updates on the project, negotiation of a support and training agreement, and the satisfaction of doing a good job while having fun and helping others. [3]

This story is just one of hundreds and hundreds of similar stories that I have heard over the years from our incredible LoCo Teams. They convey tales of real people working together and sharing their skills and passion to bring the spirit and ethos of Ubuntu to their local area, and stories like this are an inspiration to us all.

I encourage all of you to get involved in your local Ubuntu LoCo Team. The list of teams is available on the Ubuntu wiki [4], and if no team exists in your area, go ahead and create one! I can't wait to hear your stories too! ■

When many people think of how they can get involved in an open source project, they almost always assume that you need to be technical. They assume that getting involved requires being well versed in a programming language such as C, C++, Python, or Perl; that they know the ins and outs of computer science; and that they find jokes about binary trees funny. It is easy to see why, too: 10 years ago, this was very much the case, at least in the Linux world. To be part of the Linux community, you needed programming chops, and those without them often felt locked out in the cold.

As time has gone on, this picture has changed. Sure, there is still more than enough room on the train for those with mad programming skills, but our world also recognizes and welcomes a variety of other disciplines, too. This include documentation writers, translators, testers, artists, interaction designers, marketers, and more.

In the Ubuntu project, we have worked hard to build and embrace a culture of diversity and to welcome anyone with a burning desire to contribute and figure out a way in which they can get involved, whatever skills they possess. This has resulted in an explosion of teams in our community – little sub-

INFO

- [1] Ubuntu LoCo teams: <https://wiki.ubuntu.com/LoCoTeams>
- [2] New Mexico Ubuntu LoCo Team: <https://wiki.ubuntu.com/NewMexicoTeam/>
- [3] The Fridge: <http://fridge.ubuntu.com/node/1915>
- [4] Ubuntu wiki team list: <https://wiki.ubuntu.com/LoCoTeamList>