

# DebianEdu presentation



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## Debian-Education

- ❑ How it started ... a french "fork" of Debian
- ❑ Later a subproject of Debian itself
- ❑ How it could evolve ... my dreams for the future
- ❑ What it really is ... not so much yet
- ❑ Open discussion: do you know how to make something happen ?



## 2 : Linux & Pédagogie

- ❑ Group of french teachers (lead by Yves Potin)
- ❑ They selected free software that can be used for teaching
- ❑ They wrote the corresponding documentation



## 2 : Logidée made a distribution including all the selected software

- ❑ I was involved in the realization of this new distribution
- ❑ We decided to use Debian because we work daily with it
- ❑ We packaged missing applications
- ❑ We created a specific installer



## 2 : Main features

- ❑ Mostly automatic installer
  - ❑ Will automatically resize FAT partition if needed
  - ❑ Takes about 15 minutes for a full install
- ❑ Pre-configured desktop
  - ❑ Links to the documentation on the desktop
  - ❑ All education applications available in the menu(s)



## 2 : Technical description

- ❑ Installer based on debian-installer framework (hopefully the upcoming installer for sarge)
- ❑ With autopartitioner (module "autopartkit") using libparted
- ❑ Graphical install (i386 only...)
  - ❑ Rootfs on CD with Xfree (filesystem is gzip compressed to save space)
  - ❑ debconf like configuration but with gdialog (GTK+-based dialog drop-in replacement)



## 2 : Limitations

- ❑ CDROM install only
- ❑ It's impossible to fine tune the selection of packages to install
- ❑ For French speaking person only



## 2 : Results

- ❑ DebianEdu installed on 5000 PC in a single department in France
- ❑ Distributed through magazines
- ❑ Thousands of downloads on the net
- ❑ Very few negative feedback, many people impressed by Debian's ease of use after installation :-) That's because they have always heard that Debian was for expert only ...





## 2 : Lessons learned

### About Debian

- ❑ Debian already had 80% of the education related packages
- ❑ Debian can make a good desktop system

### About educational software

They tend to be :

- ❑ not well internationalized
- ❑ adapted from other platforms
- ❑ scientific applications not adapted for teaching

DrGeo and GCompris are exceptions, of course !



## 3 : What is a subproject ?

- ❑ It's not a fork, it's not a separate distribution.
- ❑ Its intent is to enhance Debian to make it fit for a particular purpose.
  - ❑ Debian-Junior is for kids
  - ❑ Debian-Edu is for teachers, students and whoever works within schools



## 3 : Advantages

- ❑ You benefit from a broad review because Debian's development is actively tracked by numerous people.
- ❑ You will have less maintenance work in the long run since you don't fork and you won't need to update the packages.
- ❑ You can share some work with other subprojects (Demudi/Debian-Junior/Debian-Med/DebianEdu). A common structure is emerging:
  - ❑ metapackages
  - ❑ tasks for tasksel
  - ❑ ideas for the future: possibility to have more control over the menus (specific menu for each user profile: teachers, students, ...)



## 3 : Disadvantages

- ❑ It generates more "communication/synchronization" work. You may need to get in touch with a maintainer not involved in the subproject itself and have him include a change that you need.
- ❑ That's the price of a supplementary level of peer review.



## 4 : What DebianEdu could be

### **Or rather what I'd like it to be ...**

Debian's motto is "The universal OS". DebianEdu's motto can be deduced: "The universal OS for education related tasks".



## 4 : DebianEdu could be

- ❑ for single desktop computers at home
- ❑ network of computers at schools
- ❑ servers for education related services
  - ❑ online training (e-learning)
  - ❑ document sharing
  - ❑ collaborative work



## 4 : Resources for enhancing educational software

Debian has the required infrastructure to coordinate work with many people:

- ❑ Bug Tracking System
- ❑ Package Tracking System
- ❑ CVS repositories
- ❑ Mailing lists
- ❑ Wiki

That's why DebianEdu can be a good tool to enhance existing educational software ...



## 4 : DebianEdu can't do everything

The scope of DebianEdu is so broad that we're not able to do everything ourselves. Many initiatives already exists and DebianEdu could be good way to federate several of them.

### **Debian is suited to federate initiatives**

- ❑ Debian is not going to disappear any time soon (no bankruptcy, etc.)
- ❑ The Debian Free Software Guidelines document is a very solid ground to build up things with people who love free software but who otherwise can have very different opinions.





## 4 : Federating can be a huge task

- ❑ Selecting and packaging software : SEUL/edu, OFSET
- ❑ Network of computers for schools : Skolelinux, K12LTSP, ...
- ❑ Provide educational applications : KDE-Edu, tux4kids, many individuals
- ❑ Other associations promoting free software for education : Schoolforge, FSF, LUGs ...

And I miss dozens of other initiatives that have been brought to my attention but that I forgot ...



## 5 : What it really is...

### A set of metapackages

- ❑ education-astronomy - DebianEdu astronomy related applications
- ❑ education-chemistry - DebianEdu chemistry related applications
- ❑ education-desktop-\* - desktop applications (Gnome/Kde/others)
- ❑ education-electronics - DebianEdu electronics related applications
- ❑ education-geography - DebianEdu applications for geography
- ❑ education-graphics - DebianEdu graphics related applications
- ❑ education-language - DebianEdu language related educational applications
- ❑ education-logic-games - DebianEdu logic games
- ❑ education-mathematics - DebianEdu mathematical applications
- ❑ education-misc - DebianEdu miscellaneous applications for education



## 5 : What is really is...

### A set of metapackages

- ❑ education-music - DebianEdu music and sound applications
- ❑ education-physics - DebianEdu physics related applications
- ❑ education-services - DebianEdu services for educational institutions

### A wiki: <http://wiki.debian.net/DebianEdu>

A simple tool to let users share their experience about the use of some educational software... also used to keep track of which software needs to be packaged and so on.

### A mailing list

Many interested people are subscribed to [debian-edu@lists.debian.org](mailto:debian-edu@lists.debian.org)...



## 5 : What it will really be

### **DebianEdu is only what you make out of it !**

DebianEdu needs many volunteers and in particular volunteers who are already involved in other education related projects and would like to share the work with DebianEdu !

