Libre Graphics Foundation BoF - LGM 2010

Notes by John Haltiwanger

Independent graphic designer. First LGM. We discussed yesterday with international group of professional designers that a foundation might be useful. Just an idea for a project.

Reasons for a Libre Graphics Foundation:

- name is not important, its the concept

- funding. pay developers. teach.

- standards: libre graphics are considered unprofessional.

- maybe we can manage to have some people working full time on projects, documentation.

- its about making it possible for developers to live off developing free software (like the Blender foundation)

We have tools. We have a great community. There is the Blender Foundation. And a good mailing list (we are already a bit organized)

As a user, it is hard to contribute funds for specific features. To donate to GIMP, you have to donate to the GNOME project. Think its the same for Inkscape.

Scribus is attempting to finalize a 1901 association in France. In the US its easy to set up a non-profit foundation, but tax reduction is necessary for large donations (and this requires more work).

What LGF can do: - Funding for developers. - Official book-keeping (trust) - Conversations with companies for standards. - The idea is to build a tool to work together, organize ourselves in some way.

It's hard for a developer to live off FLOSS. What's needed is an income model. It's natural to look at the Blender Foundation.

How wide is the foundation's coverage? - 3D - 2D vectors - 2D photo - publishing tools - animation software

Income model: Where do we get the funding??

Krita (KOffice drawing application): an idea to have a comic book. Also an open project for animation in Russia. This is an option for LGF: to provide support for open projects (funding, logistics). Comics, cartoons, books, even crazuer stuff like hardware arts.

3 different groups that we are dealing with: - the developers - the donors - the users

In order to justify LGF we need to realize what each group will need/get from LGF. - The developers: not just money. LGF might raise the status and the visibility of libre graphics. - The donors: accounting for their money. - The users: also helping to raise the status of libre graphics. Also support for users to get a common place for information on adopting a libre workflow.

Income/expense thoughts: - the first tool is a website. this allows for donations to specific projects/goals. - documentation - teaching - organizing LGM itself

Interactions between projects at LGM is very useful, but then there is the dry season of the entire year when projects move back into their own zones. How can we connect different projects throughout the year?

Projects are still communicating through their usual channels. There are many developers who are cross-project. There is already cross-pollination.

Goals are great for generating the collaboration.

Louis: I think the foundation is a great idea, but we need the projects to get together and say that it is useful for them. LGM itself is funded and organized through an account through the GNOME Foundation. What would be a goal of funding (how much)? There is a lot of work involved in a foundation. LGM can still be done through the GNOME Foundation, and LGF could follow this route.

Teaching certificates are necessary. It is hard to do this without a proper foundation/association. Libre Graphics Magazine also would work better with a foundation. An official face for libre graphics is very useful.

We don't need to start a foundation, associations are easier.

There is a problem with the name: libregraphics.org is reserved. A guy in Montreal wishes to rent it. This is not a good thing. At libregraphics right now is just a mashup aggregator with Google ads.

Jobs for developers might be problematic unless there is tons of money (unlikely).

An association can be done in a month or less. If we don't do that, we can start a foundation, but what does it take?

Official certifications would bring people to the LGF. Certifications are not necessarily easy. We have some successes (Blender) and some failures (PHP).

When we think about this, we should not be talking about money *until we have some*. First just do the work that is volunteer.

There should be a means of pre-determining where the money should go. Krita did a great job of raising money for hiring a developer. Donations for specific goals with well-planned milestones seem to work the best. LGF is not to tell projects what to do, it should be there as the natural place for projects to go for funding.

Perhaps it is *connections*: connecting developers, connecting users to documentation and teaching.

It is a branding tool.

Let's establish a Libre Graphics Working Group to work towards a Libre Graphics Foundation.

Each project could contribute to the LGF and the LGF organizes things that contribute to all projects at once. This is the reverse of what we've been talking about. Teams would decide what funding would be used for. Minimum fee to keep the basic stuff going (web site).

Centralizing the goals of projects within one foundation will allow easier connections to universities, governments. There is a lot of enthusiasm in the public sector for FLOSS right now.

"We don't teach the software. We teach what one can do with the software." We don't teach Scribus, we teach desktop publishing.

Naming: Libre Graphics is too descriptive of only what we do. We should have a "fantasy" name. Create could work, but we have to always keep in mind the issue of domain name. graphicslab.org

The name is not meant to be solved.

Trademark "Libre Graphics" as a means of forcing those out of the domain? Threaten with court. 5 years of use means there is a chance to claim a trademark. Send Louis to talk to the owner of libregraphics.org

First talk to the guy. Second look for another name. Third go to court.

Summary:

We are interested. The idea sounds good. We will discuss it on the Create mailing list. We will discuss the name. Then we get the domain name. Set up a users forum? (No, we have Libre Graphics World Forum). With a name, we can set up an association. Less content as possible, but job boards, LGM organizing wiki, and the Create mailing list. The job board would be useful for all teams. Cross-pollination between teams through the job boards.

The association and website must be plenty-lingual. This is a good reason not to have too much information on the site.

Before the end of September we want to have created an entity (a foundation, an association, a something). We need to discover the best place to start a foundation/association.

Let's have an umbrella organization. This would solve issues of tax rebates from different nationalities and allow distribution of diverse tasks (a foundation just for the magazine, for instance).

Let's announce at the end of the last presentation tonight.

Attendees:

- Lionel Vidick

- Aileen Derieg

- Peter Linnell

- Louis Desjardins

- Gregory Pittman

- John Nordly

- Camille Bissuel

- Jose Cruz

- Andreas Vox

- Cedric Gery

- Alessandro Rimoldi

- John Haltiwanger