Chapter 1

Cooperation with the open source community

During this project we have had to cooperate with loosely coupled open source communities such the Skolelinux community.

The Skolelinux community is structured around mailing lists and IRC channels and communication with them usually went through these. It is based on volunteer work and although there are a few people who are employed the vast majority work for free. This has been a key factor to us when trying to get people involved as there are no one who can tell anyone what to do. We have therefore tried to make the application appealing and to inspire people to get involved in the testing, debugging, translation and further development.

1.1 Spreading the message

As previously stated one of the most important factors, if not the most important, of an open source project is getting people involved in the project and getting them to use the software. This cannot be stressed enough as an open source application which isn't used will die. Because of this we have spent much time and effort on advertising our project. As explained earlier we had allot of incremental releases, and for every one we advertised it on up to seven national and international mailing lists as well as through repositories such as freshmeat[1] and linuxlinks[2].

We have also worked hard to get Stopmotion into repositories such as the Debian archive thereby not only making it easier for people to get it, but also getting free publicity.

1.2 Cooperation with contributors

Cooperation with contributors for the most part went through email and IRC channels. Our testers would send us an email suggesting new features and notifying us of current bugs.

Some of the people who were interested in the project and therefore contributed with suggestions, testing and bug-reports found us through the mailing lists and fresh-meat page, but some, like for example Aardman Features[3] found us through search engines and contacted us through the email at our webpages. Some of these emails are added in appendix **??** on page **??**.

When people contributed to the project in one way or another we always tried to respond as quick as possible if only to say we are on it. This way make them feel like their opinion matters and this stimulates them to contribute more.

1.3 Development gatherings

As a Skolelinux project we are expected to attend their developer gatherings. These gatherings are meant as a way for the community to come together, get to know each other and work hard for a couple of days on improving Skolelinux. The gathering, including the transportation to it, are for the most part paid for by the "Fri programvare i skolen" organization.

1.3.1 First developer gathering

The first developer gathering was held in Oslo in the weekend from the 28th to the 30th of January. On this gathering we spent most of the time getting to know people, explaining and getting input on our program and coding.

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[1] www.freshmeat.net

[2] www.linuxlinks.com/New/

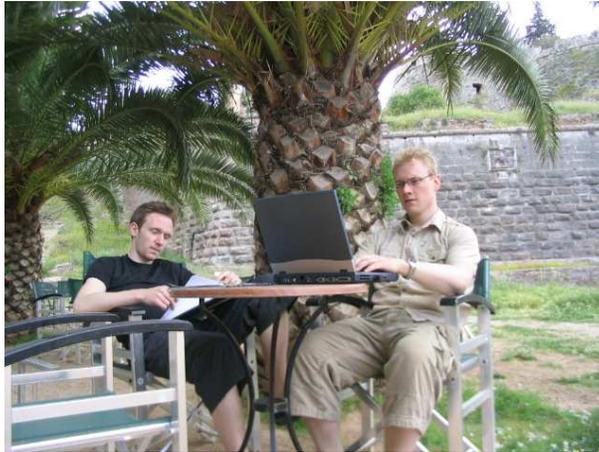[3] The Wallace and Gromit/Chicken run people

Figure 1.1: Typical open source development

The gathering was a good experience and helped us in understanding the requirements of our application and what it can become. We got a lot of suggestions on everything from GUI organization to how to manage releases and cooperation with the community. We also managed to get some people interesting and some agreed to help us with the user/acceptance testing of the software.

1.3.2   Second developer gathering

The second developer gathering was held in Nafplion, Greece. On this gathering we spent a lot of time demonstrating and advertising our software, writing user manuals as well as searching for a Debian sponsor.

We found one person, Andreas Schuldei, who was willing to sponsor us so that we could get into the official Debian repository. We also had a presentation for everyone on the gathering, which included both teachers and developers, where we demonstrated the use of Stopmotion.

In addition to this we were interviewed by a journalist from Magaz, The Greek Linux Magazine, who wanted to write an article on us. This article in will be published in the next edition of the magazine. We also spent some time staging new screenshots of Stopmotion 0.3 both for the magazine and our webpages.