

Agenda Items

See summaries of the discussion about each item in the next section.

The number in parentheses is the number of community members who mentioned the topic.

- Video Conferencing (7)
- Reachability (4)
- Debian Pure Blend status (4)
- Email Server (3)
- NextCloud (3)
- Component framework (3)
- UI/UX development (3)
- Fediverse (3)
- Hardware Partnerships (2)
- Marketing (2)
- Music Streaming Application (2)
- Documentation & tutorials (2)
- Growing the community
- App Maintainers
- Project sustainability
- Websites
- Continuous Feedback collection
- Provide web clients
- Recommend P2P software
- Security

Summary of Community Feedback

Video Conferencing

Privacy-respecting video conferencing became an important need for the community because of the pandemic. This is the most requested feature in 2020, even beating Nextcloud.

The community feedback this year got us thinking about two distinct use cases in this area.

1. A VoIP solution, like calling your contacts from Matrix or XMPP apps
2. A video-conferencing solution a la Jitsi Meet

We misunderstood the community's demand as #1 when what they really were asking for was #2.

There is a good [discussion thread](#) on the mailing list which started with discussing a WebRTC server called Janus.

Reachability

This remains the biggest source of frustration and usability hurdle for new users. The implementation of our first-boot wizard steps for reachability is incomplete.

Debian Pure Blend status

We put in some significant work into the Debian Pure Blends framework this year in hopes of being added to the Debian Installer, thus gaining more visibility with Debian users.

However, being a Debian Pure Blend is also the biggest cost being paid by the project. It's time for a re-evaluation of whether being a Pure Blend is still worth it.

Email Server

This is a basic infrastructure component that will enable other features such as password reset and email notifications.

NextCloud

This remains an important app for FreedomBox.

Packaging Nextcloud into Debian Fasttrack will require two things:

1. initial work to package all the dependencies
2. ongoing maintenance to keep it up to date with latest upstream

Component framework

The component framework (WIP) decreases the amount of work required to create and maintain a new app by making app configuration declarative.

This can help us towards the goal of independent (and external) app maintenance, with FreedomBox only providing an App Center.

Fediverse

Epicyon remains the most viable candidate fediverse server to be packaged in Debian. The drawbacks are that it has few users and few upstream developers. Packaging it will require some work to be contributed upstream.

Hardware Partnerships

In 2020, we finished implementing hardware support for SBCs using the ARM64 architecture. It's time for a new hardware partner and a more powerful FreedomBox home server kit.

UI/UX development

There is still a lot of potential for improvement in this area. We can work on items such as queuing app installs, reducing first boot steps with notifications and pushing event updates from server side instead of page refreshes.

Marketing

A [discussion thread](#) on marketing.

Fioddor's ideas:

Strategy: I see at least 2 compatible, but different approaches:

- Seek geeks as evangelists for consumers trusting their advice.
- Consumer first approach with geek goodies as secondary extra value.

Numerically-controlled: Hard facts and metrics are key to manage anything, if you seek results, and marketing is no exception.

Music Streaming

Users have expressed interest in hosting music on their FreedomBox for both public streaming and for personal music collections.

Applications proposed: [FunkWhale](#), [AirSonic](#)

Documentation Improvements

There was a proposal to restructure the documentation based on use-cases instead of its current structure based on apps.

Providing online video tutorials in addition to our text-based documentation.

Growing the Community

Core developers might have to shift their focus from doing development themselves to working on initiatives that bring in more contributors (of all roles), e.g. Contributor Invites

App Maintainers

Core developers maintaing apps is unsustainable.

Investment into creating a framework for independent app maintainers, just like Debian has maintainers for packages.

Project sustainability

1. Financial sustainability of the project
 1. if current sponsors like ThoughtWorks withdraw support
 2. if the Foundation runs out of funds
2. Bus-factor wrt roles played by core developers

Websites

Users are unable to create websites easily because using the Apache server requires knowledge of Linux file system permissions.

Proposed solutions:

1. A file browser to upload website files which Apache can serve

2. An application like WordPress which allows creating websites with a WYSIWIG interface

Continuous Feedback collection

Find ways of acting upon user feedback provided throughout the year, not just once a year before the Summit.

Provide web clients

Some of our software only has desktop applications which aren't very friendly to new users (mumble, quassel, gobby). It will be more convenient to provide web-based clients for these applications on FreedomBox.

Recommend P2P software

Framework to recommend P2P software like Onionshare, SSB apps etc.

Jami implemented VoIP calling recently. It can be one of our recommended P2P solutions.

Security

We made a lot of progress already but we should continue with our improvements and do better container based security. We can also factor out a separate daemon for privileged actions.

References

1. [Forum thread](#)
2. [Mailing list thread](#)
3. [Mailing list thread about Janus](#)