

The Debian Women Project



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Shout Outs

- Erinn Clark (check out our gang sign!)
- Meike Reichle
- Helen Faulkner
- Da DW posse
- LSM



Overview

- Debian GNU/Linux
- Women in computing and free software
- The Debian Women Project:
 - Why, what and how?
 - The future

Debian GNU/Linux

- Founded in 1993
- Linux kernel, GNU OS tools
- >15,490 packages
- 100% “free” software
- Developed by a group of volunteers

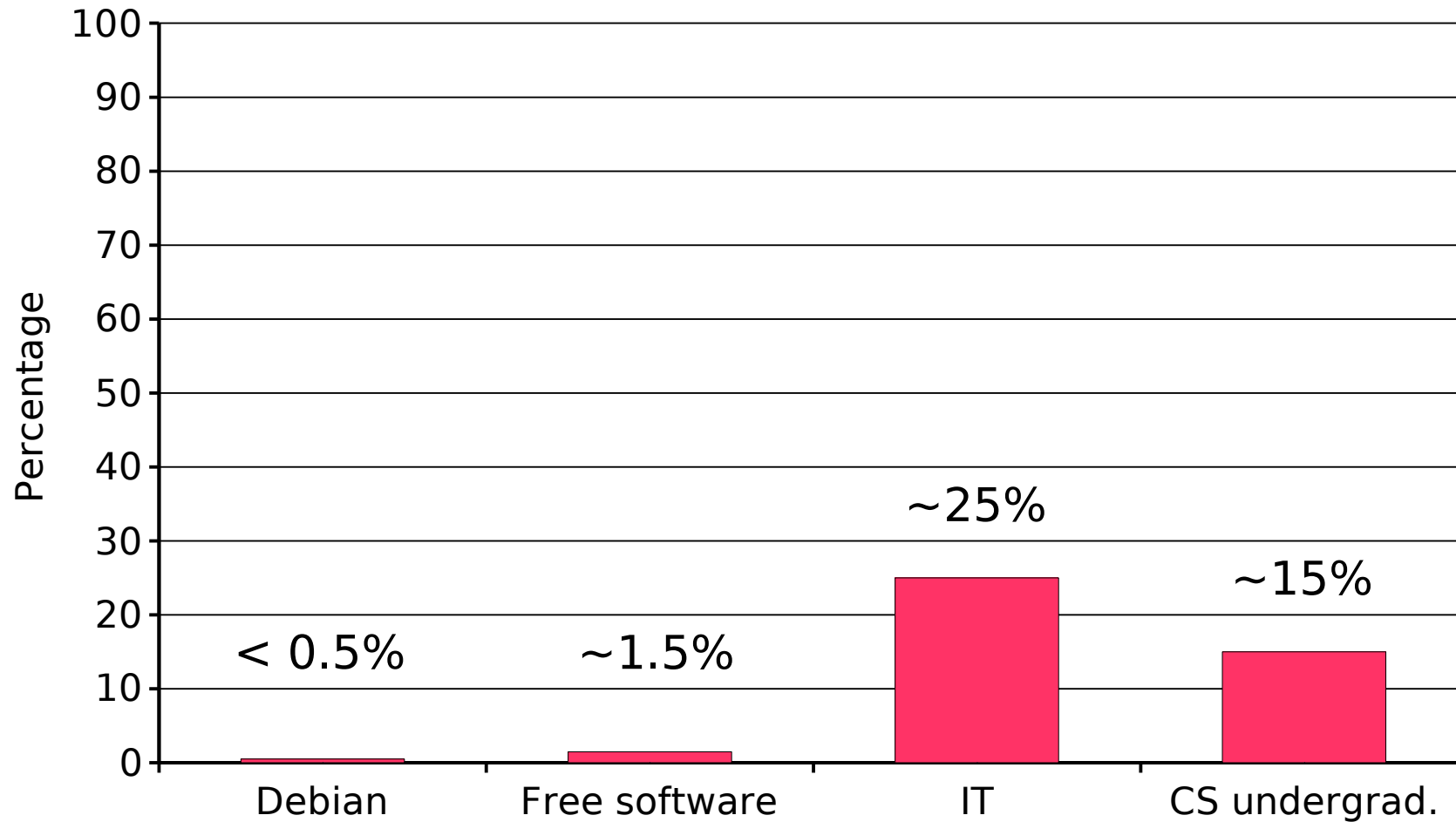
“Universal Operating System”?



“Universal Operating System”?



How Many Women?



Why So Few Women?

- No one knows
 - Lack of interest?
 - Self-doubts and lack of confidence?
 - Hard to get involved?
 - Unwanted attention? (OMFG a g1rl!!)

Why Care?

- > 52% of the world is female
- Women offer different viewpoints
 - Male team = male product
- Female developers attract female users
- Mixed teams work better together

Do The Reasons Matter?

- Yes:
 - Better understanding
 - Can tailor actions accordingly
- No:
 - Not knowing doesn't stop improvement!

The Debian Women Project




- Founded in 2004
- First such project for any distribution


Project Aims

- To encourage women to be developers
- To diversify Debian (along one axis!)
- To increase visibility of women in Debian
- To discuss relevant issues

Debian Women Isn't...

- A dating agency
 - Just about support
 - Segregated
 - An “affirmative action” project
 - Striving for a Disney-like atmosphere
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How?

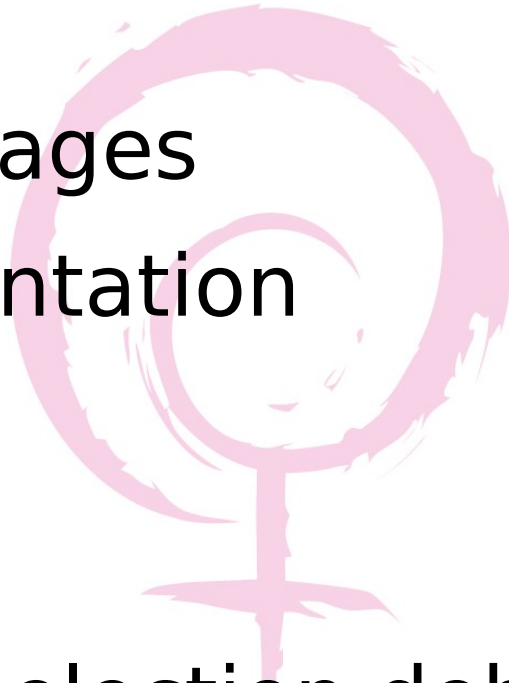
- Role models
 - Tutorials on Debian-related topics
 - Mentoring project
 - Talks and BOFs at conferences
 - Word-of-mouth advocacy
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Who Are We?

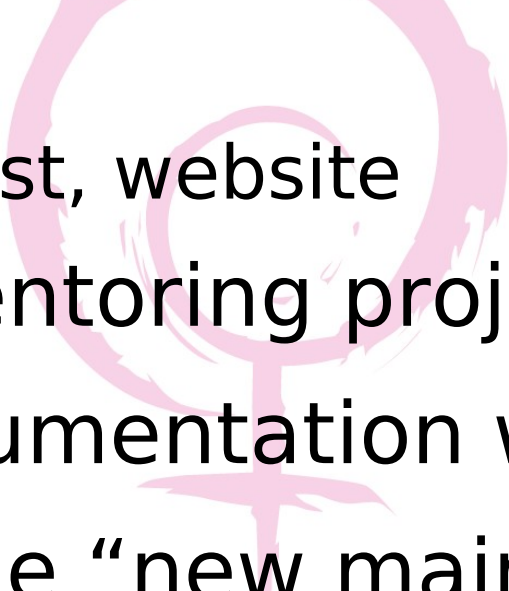


What Do We Do?

- Maintain packages
- Write documentation
- Squash bugs
- Translate
- Chair the DPL election debate



So Far...

- Infrastructure:
 - IRC, mailing list, website
 - Successful mentoring project
 - Tutorials, documentation writing, etc.
 - 9 women in the “new maintainer” queue!
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The Unexpected

- Many men involved
- Respect from the Debian community
- Collaborative, productive environment
- Good for women = good for everyone!

Get Involved

- Join `#debian-women` on `irc.debian.org`
- Subscribe to the mailing list
- Become a mentee (or a mentor)
- Attend (or run) tutorials

Supporting Debian Women

- Encourage women to get involved
- Become a mentor
- Write articles
- Debunk myths
- Spread the word!

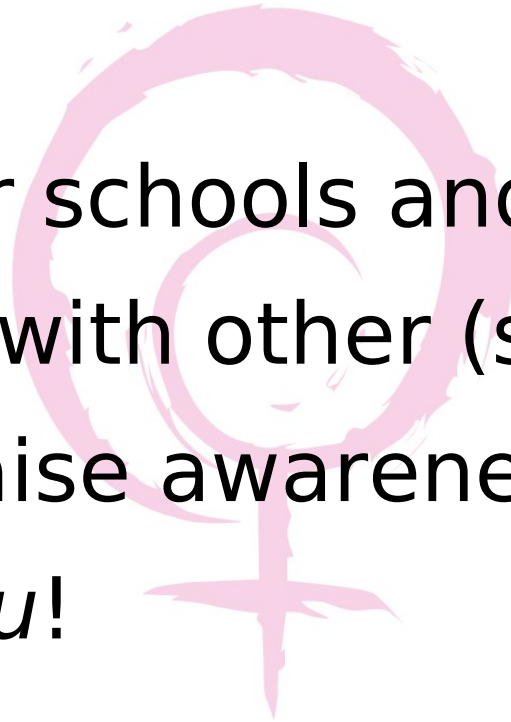


What's Next?

- More tutorials
- Move docs written by DW to debian.org
- Merge mentoring project with -mentors
- Downloadable slides/flyers about DW

Longer Term

- Workshops for schools and universities
- Collaboration with other (sub)projects
- Continue to raise awareness
- Ideas from *you!*



Resources

- <http://www.debian.org/>
- <http://women.alioth.debian.org/>
- #debian-women on irc.debian.org
- Me! (hmw26@cam.ac.uk)