

Bits from the Debian Project Leader

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Three sides of Debian

- ▶ The **technical project**
 - ▶ Building a successful distribution
 - ▶ With a real impact on the world



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- ▶ The **philosophical & political project**
 - ▶ Promoting and Defending Free Software
 - ▶ With frequent reality checks



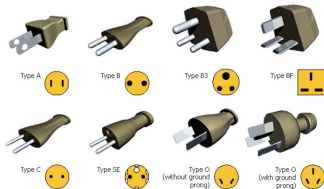
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 - ▶ Thousands of volunteer contributors all over the world
 - ▶ Building this community is a key outcome of DebConf



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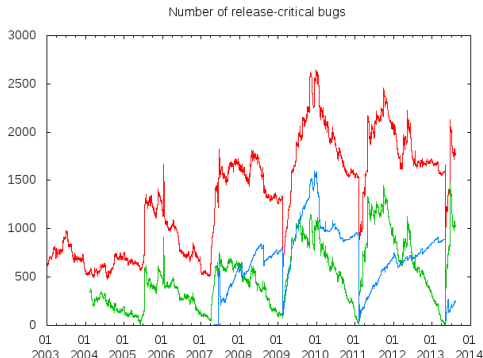
- ▶ Most of the project is working well
 - ▶ Ftpmasters deserve kudos: 7 members active in NEW since July, 284 packages processed in August 2013 (vs 73 uploads)
- ▶ Wheezy released!
- ▶ But this release cycle was quite painful

release	cycle	freeze
etch	22 months	17 weeks
lenny	22 months	28 weeks
squeeze	24 months	26 weeks
wheezy	28 months	44 weeks



How is Debian doing? (2/2)

- ▶ Jessie development started!



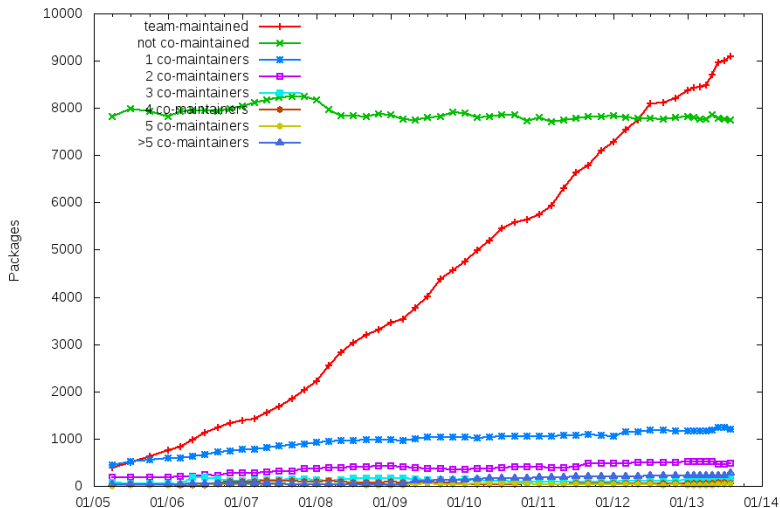
- ▶ Challenging cycle:
 - ▶ Return to shorter freeze
 - ▶ Some difficult decisions ahead (init system, architectures)



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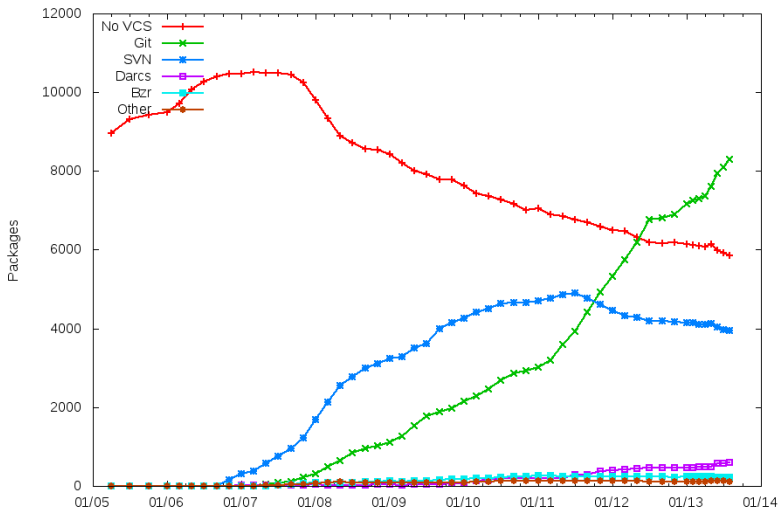
Debian is still changing: team maintenance



Team maintenance is the new standard
But what about MIA teams?



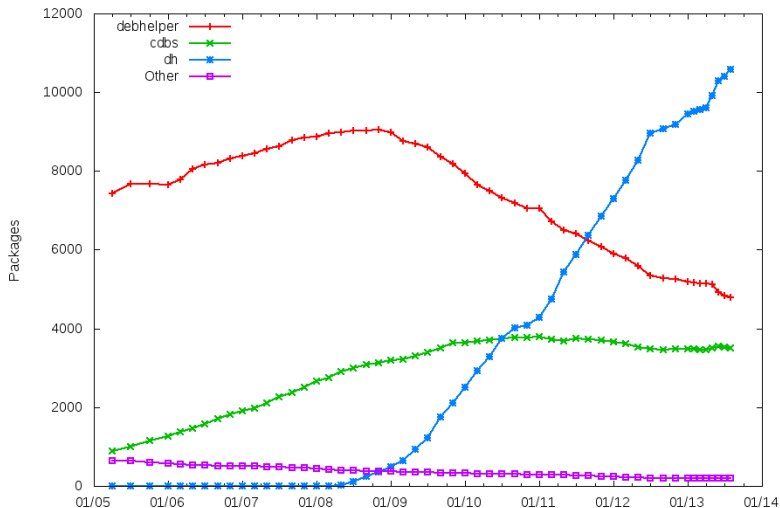
Debian is still changing: VCS usage



Git is the new standard
But with which workflow?



Debian is still changing: packaging helpers



dh is the new standard
But should we migrate our old packages?



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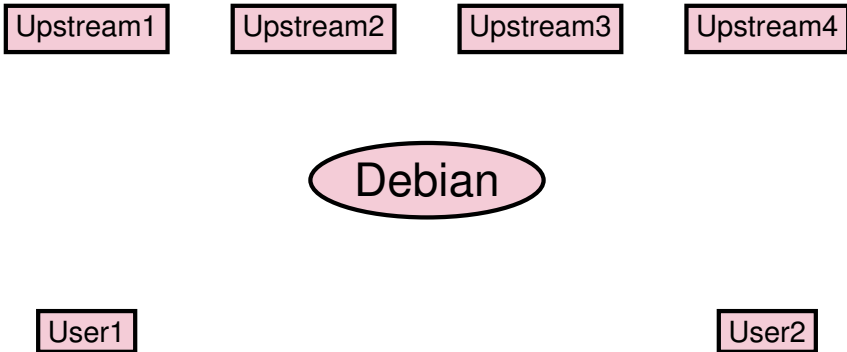
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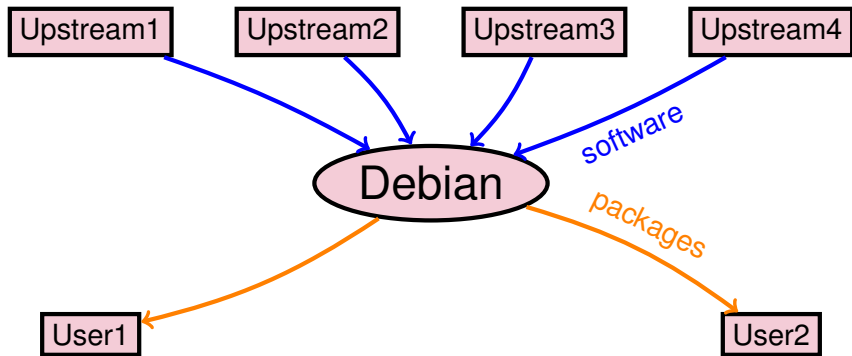
Or even better, during the 2-5 next years?



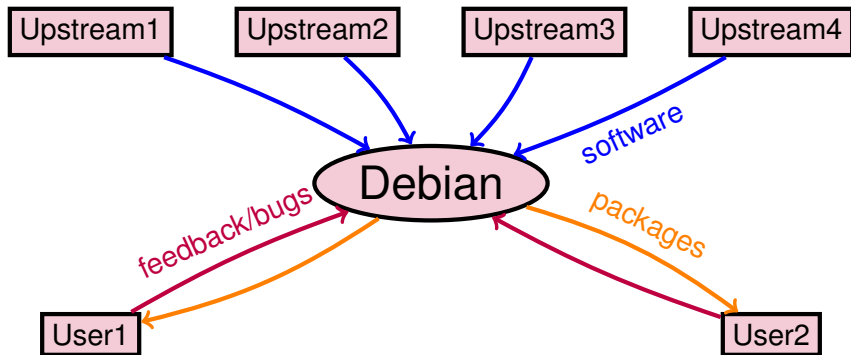
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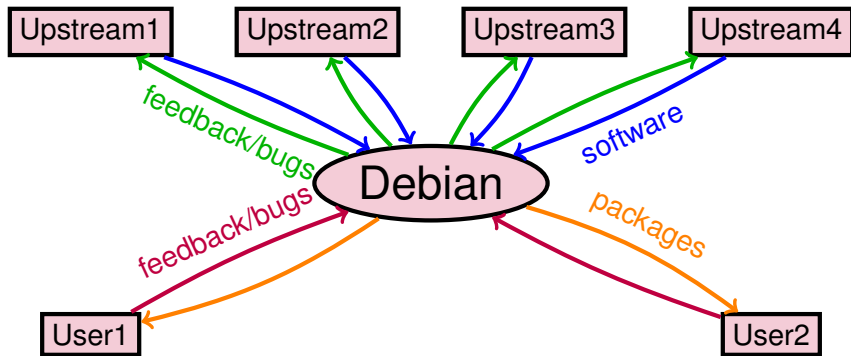
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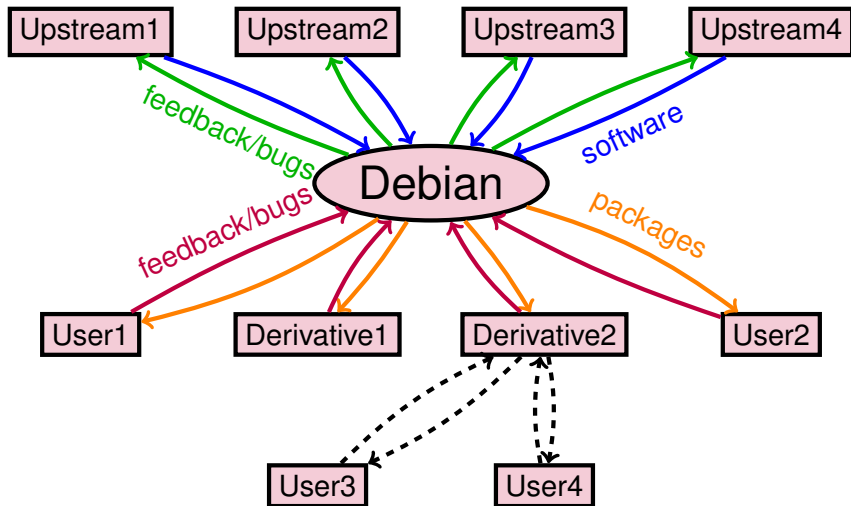
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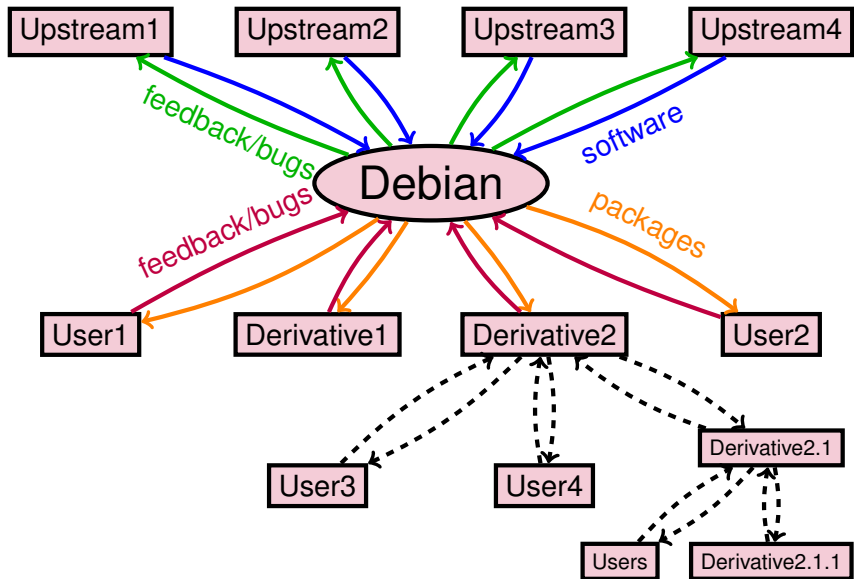
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Be(come) a real Hub for Free Software (2/2)

- ▶ Are we really always:
 - ▶ A **good downstream** (for our upstreams)?
 - ▶ A **good upstream** (for our derivatives)?
- ▶ Simple things to do:
 - ▶ Contact your upstreams
 - ▶ Talk to them, ask them to review your plans
 - ▶ Provide them with feedback and bug reports
 - ▶ Mention <http://patch-tracker.debian.org/>
 - ▶ Ask them to subscribe to the packages on the PTS
 - ▶ Look at our downstreams' bugs and patches
 - ▶ Attend the Derivatives panel at DebConf13 (tomorrow)
- ▶ More generally:

**Debian is also about improving Free Software as a whole.
Let's be a good player by collaborating with all entities.**



Reinforce our role in a changing ecosystem

- ▶ **Cloud** $\leadsto$ virtualization & elasticity of infrastructure and software
 - ▶ Deprecates "*Install a system once, upgrade many times*"



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- ▶ Many **challenges** for **Debian**:
 - ▶ How to **help preserve freedom in the Cloud ecosystem**?
 - ▶ Packages for IaaS private clouds?
 - $\leadsto$ Complex packages with custom config of services
 - ▶ Ready-to-use PaaS stacks?
 - ▶ Ready-to-use SaaS stacks?
 - $\leadsto$ Problems of web applications packaging
 - ▶ Which **role for packages, package managers, debconf** in a world of Puppet and Chef?
 - ▶ (Official) **Debian images on public Clouds**?



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 - ▶ (Official) **Debian images on public Clouds**?
- ▶ 8 Cloud-related sessions at Debconf13



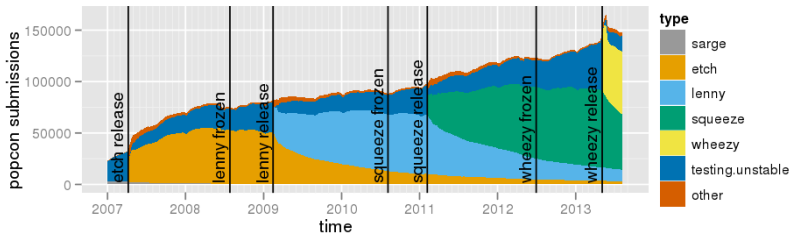
Meet all our users' needs: rolling distribution

- ▶ **Debian *testing*: the first and the best *rolling* distribution**
 - ▶ Acknowledge that, advertise it as such



Meet all our users' needs: rolling distribution

- ▶ **Debian *testing*: the first and the best *rolling* distribution**
 - ▶ Acknowledge that, advertise it as such
- ▶ *testing* is already widely used:
 - ▶ ftp.be.d.o users¹:
squeeze 42% - wheezy 60% - **testing 12%** - **unstable 11%**
 - ▶ popularity-contest submitters:
lenny 8% - squeeze 36% - wheezy 42% - **testing/unstable 10%**



¹distinct IPs fetching each Packages file - <http://deb.li/zXfy>



Many good reasons to go *rolling*

- ▶ Provide more recent software to users
 - ▶ **Shorter feedback loop** to upstream developers
- ▶ More testers of the next stable release $\leadsto$ **find bugs earlier**
 - ▶ Ubuntu's bug reporting rate higher than Debian's
- ▶ Attract **different users** $\leadsto$ prospective contributors
- ▶ **Low-hanging fruit**: do we need to change anything? $\leadsto$ only PR?

Challenge: co-exist with stable releases, without harming them



Keep up with the load: recruit new contributors

- ▶ *We lack manpower*: regular (justified) complaint
- ▶ It's **hard to contribute** to Debian²:
 - ▶ Efficient but complex processes and tools
 - ▶ Very high quality requirements
 - ▶ Misalignment between contributors' goals and our goals
 - ▶ Very hard to get sponsored outside of teams

²Survey of new contributors: <http://deb.li/60ye>



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 - ▶ Misalignment between contributors' goals and our goals
 - ▶ Very hard to get sponsored outside of teams
- ▶ You can **help change that**:
 - ▶ Sponsor people on debian-mentors@ (**mistakes are OK!**)
 - ▶ Improve infrastructure around sponsoring
 - ▶ Help advertise tasks suitable for new contributors
 - ▶ Design better/simpler processes and tools, document!
 - ▶ Develop peer-mentoring and internship programs
 - ▶ In short: **Help Debian become a more welcoming project**
- ▶ 7 related events during DebConf13

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Sustainable Debian governance

- ▶ Many DPL tasks are short tasks where low-latency is better
 - ▶ e.g. money handling, email redirection, poking people, legal
 - ▶ Hard to delegate or share, high coordination overhead
- ▶ But some tasks can be delegated totally or partially
- ▶ DPL helpers initiative $\leadsto$ distribute those tasks
 - ▶ Government for the Debian project?
 - ▶ So far not very active (2 participants at the last meeting ☹)
 - ▶ **Basis for a more sustainable governance model?**
- ▶ DPL helpers BOF during DebConf13



Things mentioned during this talk that you might want to comment:

- ▶ Big challenges of the jessie cycle
- ▶ Debian new "standards": teams, Git, dh
- ▶ Challenges for the next years:
 - ▶ Be(come) a real Hub for Free Software
 - ▶ Reinforce our role in a changing ecosystem
 - ▶ Rolling distribution
 - ▶ Recruiting new contributors
 - ▶ Sustainable Debian governance

Thank you!
And enjoy DebConf!

Please use DebConf to come and talk to me.

- ▶ `leader@debian.org`
- ▶ IRC: lucas

