

DevConf.CZ was a positive all-around learning experience for me. Not only did I have the opportunity to meet face-to-face with people I work with on a daily basis over the internet and attend several talks by these people that will benefit me in my day-to-day work, I was able to present my own talk to hopefully, educate the masses, but also educate me.

My favorite talks that I was able to see were Adam Williamson's [Things Fedora QA Robots Do](#), Ben Cotton's [Managing Changes in Open Source Projects](#), and the set of talks given by various people which centered around Arduino.

Being able to meet Adam in real life was great, especially since I work with him on a weekly basis, but his talk Things Fedora QA Robots Do was especially enlightening. As I work in Fedora QA and spend the majority of my time in the Fedora community manually testing, this talk helped me understand what automated processes we have available in Fedora QA and how I can begin to test and maintain some of these systems, like OpenQA and Adam's own relval (relval being something I use fairly often to pull user-stats for publication in the Heroes of Fedora articles). It was also brought to my attention that we have a project called [autocloudreporter](#), which takes results from [autocloud](#) (which I had also never heard of before this talk) and reports them to ResultsDB, which can then be audited for information concerning the PASS/FAIL results of the tests run.

Listening to Ben's talk on Managing Changes in Open Source Projects didn't directly apply to my day-to-day, but as Ben is the Fedora Program Manager, and I have worked with him throughout the F29 release cycle, I figured this would be advantageous to me to attend and see how our newest FPM thinks. It was interesting to hear his thoughts on how a change made to a large part of Fedora late in the release cycle ought to be handled to avoid breaking things at the last minute (especially considering this was an issue in the weeks before launch of F29). He also hit hard on the idea that communication between teams can significantly reduce the amount of problems in a large, community-driven project such as Fedora, and expressed frustration that, as Fedora **is** community driven, this can't be expected but hopefully encouraged within contributors. Afterwards, I had the opportunity to meet Ben in person and have some hall-chat with him, which will make connecting IRC names to faces a lot easier.

There were several talks on Arduino and IOT given that I found interesting as I have a hardware background, and the tables set up with the Python programming challenges using Arduino hardware were pretty cool. As my job in Fedora is usually software-focused, it was neat to see those in the community who are using Fedora as a basis to write code for these hardware projects.

My own talk [Getting Started in Fedora QA](#) was a learning experience for both me and (I hope) my attendees. It was well attended with what I can guess around 30 people showing up. I focused my information on how someone new to testing, or specifically Fedora QA, could go about getting into contributing to the QA department. I showed things like manual testing, how to report results using fedora-easy-karma, and talked about some easy ways to make yourself known in the community, like acting as secretary in the Blocker Review meetings. If you'd like to peruse the slides, you can find them [here](#). It was also my first talk at a large event like DevConf. This forced me out of my comfort zone, which in itself was good. However, I believe my execution was lacking and I will share some things I learned from the whole process.

One of the biggest things that impacted my talk was jet-lag. After having been awake for ~30 hours two days before, and only getting an accumulated sum of 10 hours of sleep the preceding two nights, I was having a very hard time thinking and understanding what I meant when I

wrote my slides. This made for choppy presentation due to the amount of times I had to reread the slides to understand them. This brings me to the next problem I had with my presentation.

Allow me to illustrate my second point, picture this: months before DevConf, you get the “GO” that your talk has been accepted. You have already conjured up a brief summary of what the presentation will consist of and submitted that outline, but haven’t written the entire presentation yet. With the premise of your talk thought up, you figure, “I can wait to finish this until the conference is closer”. Life gets in the way and before you know it, it’s time to pack your bags, get your ticket, and head to the airport. You know you’ll have time on the airplane to finish your presentation, so you don’t worry. You pull your laptop out as soon as the “Fasten Seatbelt” sign goes dark, sit back, and finish your presentation you started months before.

Now, there is nothing wrong with this scenario. It works for certain people, and I even know people who do this for **all** of their presentations. It just doesn’t work for me. Waiting that long between the initial idea and writing it down leaves me with large gap in the information I wanted to present. It also doesn’t allow for much time to practice my presentation, another technique that some don’t have to do to have a smooth presentation, but one that I know I personally need.

The last thing that I know adversely affected the way I presented was letting the way I felt (tired and unprepared) get to my head and scare me. You know how they say to picture the audience in their underwear to avoid stage fright? It didn’t work for me! After I got deep into my presentation, I started to think that I knew what the audience was thinking, and that what they were thinking wasn’t good. This was more or less a head game that I played with myself that I can attribute partially to lack of sleep, and part to unpreparedness, but also partly to my personality. In the future, I think getting more sleep and having more time to go over my presentation will help me greatly.

Overall, DevConf.CZ was a great experience of friends, Fedora, food, and... learning. I learned quite a lot, and not just directly from the presentations of others, but from cold, hard experience too. I know how to better prepare for the next presentation that I give, and I have some ideas on getting more sleep (don’t try to make the trip as short as you can, give yourself a day in between travel and work). I’m thankful for the opportunity to present and thankful for the sponsorship of the Mindshare committee to make my idea a reality.