LinuxWorld Conference & Expo 2003

Linux in the Big Apple

The IDG LinuxWorld Expo took place from 21-24 January at the Javits Center in New York. The fair and conference, which happened at the same time, attracted more than 19,000 visitors, according to IDG sources. **BY MATTHIAS KRANZ**

Despite greatly reduced exhibition floorspace, the fact that over 60% more attendees were willing to pay registration fees is indicative of growing acceptance within business circles. Of course, this can be attributed to the solid presence shown by global IT players such as IBM, SUN, Computer Associates, Silicon Graphics, HP, Dell, AMD, Intel and many others.
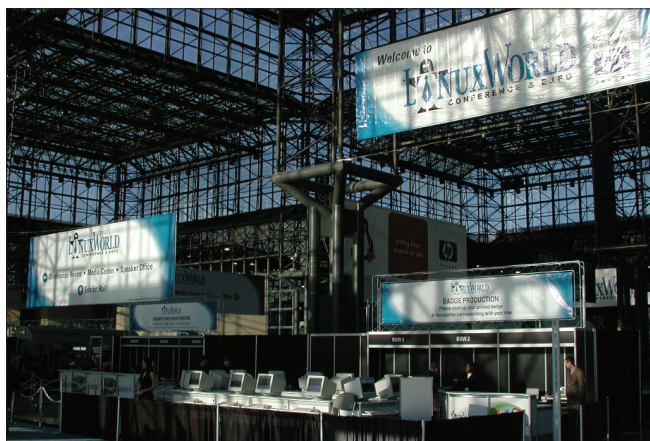

Figure 2: Calm before the storm – The Javits Convention Center in New York

the attendees' positive responses. SCO caused an uproar by releasing a press statement to the effect that the company had mandated a well-known law firm to look into violations on intellectual property and its rights to the UNIX trade mark. A "SCOsource" division has been founded to this end.

It remains to be seen what effect this will have on Linux distributors, developers and users.

Keynotes by AMD, IBM, and Dell

This year's Keynotes were presented by Hector Ruiz, President and CEO of AMD, Steven A. Mills, Senior Vice President at IBM, and Randy Mott, Senior Vice President with Dell. The common denominator was commitment to Linux and the desire to promote innovation. A further Keynote by Red Hat CTO Michael Tiemann, with Jeffrey M. Birnbaum, focused on Morgan Stanley's Unix to Linux migration.

One of the main attractions was the Enterprise Solutions Center, organized by Wild Open Source. This area featured a virtual financial services company designed to demonstrate practical Linux

and Open Source applications in all areas of the enterprise. (A similar demonstration will be presented in the LinuxPark section of CeBIT, to be held in Hannover, Germany in March. Linux International, Linux Magazine and sponsor Hewlett-Packard will be providing a practical demonstration of Linux@Work.) In addition a Financial Summit took place for the first time this year, and achieved its primary aim of attracting customers and supporters from the world of finance.

And the Winner is ... Microsoft

The biggest surprise at this year's annual Open Source Excellence Awards was the fact that Microsoft won the "Best System Integration Software" category with their "Services for Unix 3.0" product. Other winners were IBM and Ximian (2 each), SuSE, Red Hat, Computer Associates, HRsmart, SCO and SGI.

SuSE had a pavilion of their own for the first time this year, and were obviously delighted at

Geeks and Nerds at the Golden Penguin Bowl

The Golden Penguin Bowl has by now become a tradition at the LinuxWorld Expo; it involves two teams, the Geeks and the Nerds, answering sensible and nonsensical questions for points. Chris DiBona once again hosted the show, a purely fun event. Amongst others, this year's participants were Dan Quinlan (LSB), and Stacy Quandt (Giga), while Rob 'Cmdr Taco' Malda (Slashdot) held sway in the jury.

Over the course of the last two years, the LinuxWorld Expo has quite obviously shifted its focus from a Community to a business event. Although you might still meet well-known Linux experts at some manufacturers' booths, you will more often find that the focus has moved to eloquent and rhetorically trained demonstrators. However, this is not necessarily a bad thing, as the aim is to promote the capabilities and power of Linux and Open Source Software to a wider audience.

Additionally, the .org pavilion still offers a meeting point to renew those old acquaintances and provides a platform for one or two innovative, or just down-right crazy, projects. ∎

Figure 3: The Golden Penguin Bowl hosted by Chris DiBona