USENIX Association

Board of Directors

April 29, 2013, 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. PT

Minutes, 4/29/13

Attendance:

Board:
Margo Seltzer
John Arrasjid
Carolyn Rowland
Brian Noble
Sasha Fedorova - Calling in
David Blank-Edelman
Niels Provos
Dan Wallach

Staff:
Casey Henderson
Anne Dickison
Toni Veglia
Camille Mulligan
Joey Schwartz
Julie Miller
Jessica Horst

Guests:
Glenn Samson (on the phone)

9:01 Meeting called to order.

Agenda

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (5 minutes) (Seltzer)

Motion to accept previous minutes, seconded, motion forward by all present (7 BOD members) (Fedorova not on call yet).

2. PreBudget Discussion/Context Setting (10 minutes) (Seltzer)

The BOD and staff discussed current budget and ideas to present a balanced budget in the future. We believe in open access but it means we do not make money from published works from conferences and workshops. The board offered observations that could lead the organization in various directions to help support a healthy budget future.

Fedorova joins Mon Apr 29 12:04:37 EDT 2013

3. History of the USENIX Budgeting Process (15 minutes) (Veglia)

The 2002-2011 numbers are from reviewed financial statements. The 2012 numbers were our estimate, and weren't reviewed and audited yet. The 2013 column showed only our revised (and as yet not approved) budget. The organization probably should have migrated to the cloud sooner in order to save money.

For the current view of the budget, USENIX moved student stipends into the individual conference budget so it might make the numbers look different (started doing that in 2011). Sponsorship numbers include Mulligan's corporate sponsorship.

Seltzer is the current CRA representative. She volunteered to continue in that role even when her term as a BOD member ends, if the current BOD agrees at that time.

4. Report on USENIX Endowment Portfolio (15 minutes) (Samson)

Glenn is on the phone from Seattle. Mon Apr 29 12:35:51 EDT 2013

Glenn provided a summary of the history of USENIX investments and where he expects the markets to go in the future and how that impacts decisions on how to invest the USENIX portfolio.

Glenn drops off the meeting at Mon Apr 29 12:49:13 EDT 2013

5. Report on Revised FY 2013 Budget (90 minutes) (Staff and Seltzer)

USENIX added real costs to the budget for 2013 as much as possible as a revision to the original approved budget.

USENIX experienced an increase in new memberships as a result of an email reminding the community about USENIX's commitment to open access.

The organization used to automatically commit people to a USENIX membership when they attended a conference unless they opted-out. Now people can opt-in. USENIX sends out an email after the event reminding attendees of the benefits of membership. Stopped bundling

membership with conference registration after negative feedback regarding employers who didn't like having the membership fee embedded in the event cost.

Cost of conferences:

- Food is the number one cost.

Fedorova suggested that we consider reducing the cost of events by changing the venue to something like a university setting. Would the community appreciate a lower conference cost if the locale was not a high-end hotel in the middle of a major city? Instead of reserving a room block at a hotel, the conference site would list area hotels so attendees could choose lodging based on cost and vicinity to the event. Spreading lodging across multiple hotels could negatively impact the hallway track so the BOD and staff need to consider impacts to a change in the business model.

The BOD and USENIX staff discussed other ideas to reduce costs and maintain the quality of events.

Bio break Mon Apr 29 14:12:29 EDT 2013
Reconvene Mon Apr 29 14:30:45 EDT 2013

6. Conference/Workshop Modeling (60 minutes) (Staff)

The Executive Directors discussed their new financial modeling tool and provided a demonstration to the BOD.

The BOD spent time with the modeling tool figuring out what the tipping point would be for conferences and workshops if different values were changed.

Seltzer did some back of the envelope calculations and found that other comparable organizations had similar cost models.

Lunch: 12:30-1:30 p.m.; IS Committee meets to discuss the office network (no minutes)

7. Proposed Board Initiatives and Associated Costs (90 minutes) (Staff)

A sample of à la carte conference organization services were presented to the BOD. The sample did not include all costs; the final version will include these figures. These à la carte services would not be considered revenue generating or scalable. As such, USENIX would offer these services on a limited basis.

Hotel management (e.g., room block, catering, space) was not included on the sample because it gets tricky if USENIX signs contracts for liability to a hotel.

USENIX owns the videography hardware used for events. Two of three devices have already paid for themselves.

Derry Derringer put together an individual fundraising program for USENIX after contacting 11 people (including two BOD members). The next step is for the BOD to talk to Derry on one of our conference calls in order to ask questions about his assessment.

Do we have an audit committee? Yes: Dan Geer, Eric Allman, Niels Provos

The BOD and staff discussed using Adwords on videos. The BOD determined that the ROI was not high enough to make it worthwhile.

The EDs presented a new cover page for publications. The BOD liked the new cover page.

The BOD and staff discussed adding a button to generate a Bibtex entry for authors.

Action Items:
- Need to invite Derry to our next BOD call to talk to the BOD [Dickison]
- Add a button on the intermediary pages for conference/workshop papers to the Bibtex entry for authors. [Henderson, Dickison]

Break: 3:15-3:30 p.m.
Fedorova left call

The BOD and staff discussed creating a video for WiAC and how to fund it.

Action Items:
- Develop a funding writeup for a WiAC video [Blank-Edelman]

The BOD and staff discussed future of education programs. A small group of BOD members and staff will investigate potential ideas.

Action Items:
- Put together a proposal for future of education [Schwartz, Dickison, Henderson, Rowland, Arrasjid]

The BOD and staff discussed the idea of a data repository, focusing on open access to data as we do for papers. Both papers and data need to be open access.

Action Items:
- Have a conference call to talk about data repository for open access. [Henderson, Seltzer, Noble]

The BOD and staff discussed ways to encourage higher student attendance at events and in the community.

Action Items:
- Establish a student intern program. [Henderson, Dickison]

Approve revised Budget

Motion on the floor to approve revised budget [Noble]. Seconded [Provos]
All present approved revised budget [7 BOD members, Fedorova absent]

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8. System Administration Discussion (60 minutes)

The BOD and staff discussed ideas to improve the perception of system administration/operations engineers.

9. Policies Update (15 minutes) (Veglia, Henderson, Arrasjid)

Action Items:
- At the next phone call have policies ready for review. [Arrasjid, Veglia]

10. Action Items (15 minutes) (Seltzer)

Seltzer talked to BOD members about maintaining action items spreadsheet.

11. Next Meetings (5 minutes)

The next in-person BOD meeting is August 16th in Washington, DC.

Do we want to have a BOD call before the June 3rd BOD call? No, we'll keep June 3rd.

12. Executive Session (10 minutes)

Meeting adjourns at 6:00 p.m.