ownCloud Conference Team FAQ

Audience: ownCloud contributors and ambassadors who present ownCloud at events. Keep this to ourselves, it is not for distribution! Use it to answer questions. Read it once or twice before you start your first day at an ownCloud booth or before going to an event.

Q: Why did you choose PHP, it is horrible!
ownCloud is for everybody. We picked PHP because:
- PHP runs anywhere and is supported everywhere. Even the cheapest hosting provider should support ownCloud and PHP makes that possible
- PHP is easy to learn. That means a low barrier to contribution but also a low barrier to checking the code that runs your ownCloud and it is easy to make changes that you need.
- In short, PHP lowers the barrier for using, auditing, modifying and contributing to ownCloud. And that is important!

Q: I see so many security issues, it is horrible!
- We put a lot of effort in security, leading to a lot of issues being found and fixed lately.
- We are an open source project so you see it all - in closed projects these issues would perhaps not even be found.
- We are doing more and more security audits and changing how we write code by having somebody full-time on board to take care of security, things should improve a lot and soon.

Q: Why can't I write proprietary apps for ownCloud? Can I, in the future?
- You can, if you pay for the Enterprise version. The deal is simple: either contribute in code (follow the AGPL license) or money (pay Inc. which then uses the money for ownCloud development).

Q: You don't do Free Software, see your proprietary, evil Enterprise editions!
- First of all, the Free Software Foundation is quite OK with the business model of selling exceptions to the (a)GPL: http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/selling-exceptions.html
- The Enterprise edition is build off the same code as the community edition. We do all our development in the open - this is neither an open-core model, nor a dump-your-code-over-the-wall model.

Q: why don't you just use rsync
- rsync is a one-way syncing protocol. For example, if you have two server and you delete a file on one side, and you run rsync, it will pop up again. You need one-to-N sync, which only csync does. Moreover, csync handles conflicts (and not just by always just overwriting one of the files, but with smart algorithms).

Q: why don't you encrypt the files when you sync them
- use SSL for sharing files... So they are encrypted during transmission. No need for an extra layer.

Q: why doesn't ownCloud support encrypting files on the server?
- It does, but the server always has the keys. You can't have a web interface if the server can't read the files. You will always need to control the server to be able to 'own' your data.

Q: why do you use http, isn't that slow?
- http goes through every firewall and proxy and if you use it smart and parallelized it is not so slow.

Q: why do I get conflict files with syncing
- It might be a bug; but we're not aware of any syncing bug at the moment so file it if it is wrong!
- most likely: there really IS a conflict and you and perhaps an other user edited two files at the same time or before they got synced.
- We do NOT merge changes to files like for example git does: we don't modify user files, ever. Your files, YOUR DATA. You should be able to trust ownCloud with your files!

Q: partial file syncing (only syncing changes, eg only metadata of movie)
- It is in development. We introduced chunked, parallel up- and download with ownCloud 7 and the ownCloud 1.6 client already. Help is welcome, see github!

Q: do you do de-duplication?
- no, that is the job of the file system.

Q: why does calendar stuff not work on Android?
- iOS has native ical/caldav support, Android does not. You have to use a app that works but unfortunately all apps we're aware off that support caldav/ical are paid. You can find the apps in our documentation.

Q: isn't bittorrent sync far better, it doesn't require a server!
- It is closed source and unauditable which nullifies the primary argument that it's more secure/privacy protecting.
- It also lacks a webUI, most of the sharing options and needs a client to be online to work.
- It is used by some as a sharing backend with ownCloud as front.
- It doesn't do such smart syncing as ownCloud/csync: it will overwrite files.

Q: Seafile is much better!
- Sure, C solves everything! Seriously, see the reasons why we choose PHP.
- And certainly not security-wise. If you've had a look at the code you'd see the people writing it have no idea about security. Being written in C doesn't automagically mean it is any more secure than PHP... There has not been any auditing (like ownCloud has had, as we have big customers who demand it).
- stability and feature-wise they are not ahead of us either.
- Last but not least, where ownCloud has 60-100 regular contributors, seafile has less than 10.

Q: why does $MOBILEAPP not support $Feature
- The Android and Mac OS X apps have auto-picture-and-video-upload and give access to your files but don't support the contacts, calendar and other features. These are either under development or we'd welcome your patches.

Q: What big customers does ownCloud have?
- Public are at least: tu Berlin, surfnet, switch, aarnet and cern