

From Open Source to  
a Healthy Internet

**LET'S  
ROLL  
UP  
OUR  
SLEEVES**

If you've been reading the news over the past few years, you might have a feeling something like 'Oh no! the internet is deeply broken.' Many people do. It's a very reasonable thing to feel.

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If, on the other hand, you've been reading the news \*and\* attending MozFest, you might be feeling something slightly different. Something more like: 'Oh yeah, the internet is broken. Let's roll up our sleeves and figure out ways to make it better. Come on, let's go.'

The 'come on, let's go' spirit has been a core part of MozFest since the beginning. Come on, let's use open source to improve science and education and the news. Come on, let's create a web literate planet so we can keep the maker spirit of the internet alive. Come on, let's make the internet as safe and healthy as we can for the 4 billion people around the world who now live their lives online. Come on, let's go.

Why is this important? Because MozFest was always designed to be a movement building tool – a way for people who want to build a healthier digital world to

find each other, work together, and create something chaotically and roughly akin to a common agenda. The 'come on, let's go' spirit provides a common thread. It makes this possible.

Another common thread is the 'we-build-this-event-together' model that has underpinned every single MozFest. In 2018, MozFest 2500 people showed up. Over 660 of these people were session Facilitators, Space Wranglers, Speakers, Volunteers, or had some other role in running the event. MozFest is not a spectator sport – it's something that the people who show up run together.

While these two core design principles behind MozFest – action and participation – have been a constant over the past 10 years, the world and the movement we're collectively building have both changed a great deal.



LEON,  
SGO!

Over the last few years, the call to action has become broader and more urgent: come on, let's make the internet safer and healthier. Now!

For the first few MozFests, the call to action really was 'let's use open source to improve education and science and the news'. At the time, the success of projects like Firefox and Wikipedia still felt fresh and exciting. Smartphones were a newish thing. Most of us were optimistic about the internet. The people who showed up at MozFest simply wanted to expand the edges of the open source movement to include more things – they wanted to make the world more open and free.

Over the last few years, the call to action has become broader and more urgent: come on, let's make the internet safer and healthier. Now! In the post Cambridge Analytica world, it's clear to everyone that something is broken about the internet. At recent MozFests, people have been asking just what that something is, digging deep into the problems. The technology? The business model? The lack of diversity? And, in the original spirit, they also show up to build things. Alternative social networks. Software to fight censorship. AI voice agents that are more diverse. MozFest has evolved into a watering hole for people who want to understand – and tackle – the somethings.

When you think about these people – the people who come to MozFest today – the thing they have in common is a thirst to make the internet a better place to live, love, debate, work, and play. They may or may not identify as part of a movement focused on 'digital rights' or 'internet health'. And, they may come from other movements with long and deep histories of standing up for the rights of people and the planet. However they identify, when they show up at MozFest and as they stay connected through the year, they are a group of people rolling up their sleeves and working on something roughly akin to a common agenda. Which is really all a social movement is.

As we look into the next 10 years of the internet, these people give us hope. They are creating an agenda for the future of the internet that is both exciting and possible. It's an honour and a joy to work alongside them.

*Mark Surman,  
with Allen Gunn and Michelle Thorne*

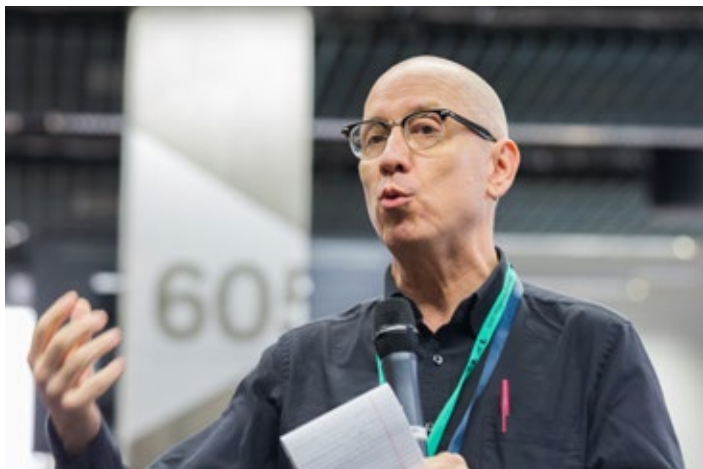
Founding MozFest Organizers



MICHELLE THORNE



MARK SURMAN



ALLEN GUNN

**... AND  
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