

WR222 - Essay 3

Interview with Curt Pederson

Director, OSU Open Source Lab

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The Oregon State Open Source Lab (“OSL”)

1. When was the OSL founded? In late 2003. I had worked for the Oregon State Government as the state CIO. Data center used to be for Banner. Coincided with IS paying off debt of \$6 million. \$1 million cut a year. \$1 million came back, \$500,000 used to fund 21 miles of fiber optic cable. Network Services needed more room. 21 miles of fiber optic.
2. Why was the OSL Created? Decided to host debian and gentoo. Word of mouth spread that we were providing hosting. Early projects Firefox. Up to 200 million downloads. 160 projects hosted. Grew organically and strategically. Day 1 goal: provide students with real world experience.
3. Who was involved in the founding?
 - Curt Pederson
 - Shay Dakan - Network Services director. Wizard behind curtain. Didn't want/care for recognition.
 - Paul Risser - Saw www.orst.edu sign on highway.
 - Scott and Jason were Yin and Yang. Scott was bouncing off the walls where as Jason was calm and collected.
 - Scott Kveton - Hired to change domain name from www.orst.edu to www.oregonstate.edu. Former student/employee. Created Maintain. Now CEO of Urban Airship.
 - Jason McKerr - Now VP of Puppet Labs. Operating Systems, Programmatic Business.
4. How did the laying of dark fiber effect the creation of the OSL? Key. Gave a huge pipe to outside world. TDS Telecom was looking for bandwidth, looking at us, saw amount of traffic putting out. Created 3 mirror sites for ftp. Chicago, New York, and Corvallis. TDS 2Gbs bandwidth no charge. Worth \$300,000 a year.

5. There are multiple stories surrounding the history of the OSL. What is your version?
Created open source lab from www.orst.edu. Academics didn't agree with osl creation. Felt space could have been used better. Why was osu turning resources towards outside vs. campus. Focused on camps benefit. Drupal deployment, helpdesk, etc. 600,000 downloads a day. 50 some students/former employees in major positions in OS companies.
6. Explain the financial disaster the previous CIO caused and how you handled the debt.
University didn't know \$6 million dollar deficit. Curt previous/first state CIO. Understood finances at the University has greatly increased. Curt previous CFO for Shnomish County, PUD. Had a breadth of knowledge. Mile wide, inch deep. Eliminated least used services. Nicked away.
7. Future of OSL Focus is on mentoring and hosting.