

# [Ksummit-discuss] [MAINTAINER TOPIC] Succession Planning: Is It time to Throw Linus Under a Bus?

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Sat Sep 8 10:47:08 UTC 2018

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Em Thu, 06 Sep 2018 12:51:15 -0700

James Bottomley <[James.Bottomley@HansenPartnership.com](mailto:James.Bottomley@HansenPartnership.com)> escreveu:

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> On Thu, 2018-09-06 at 21:47 +0200, Daniel Vetter wrote:
> > On Thu, Sep 6, 2018 at 9:44 PM, James Bottomley
> > <James.Bottomley@hansenpartnership.com> wrote:
> > > Since our fearless leader apparently can't even remember the dates
> > > of
> > > the only conference he goes to, perhaps now might be a good time to
> > > talk about how we'd run an orderly succession process (purely
> > > theoretically, of course ...)
> > >
> > > I think a vote amongst the Maintainer Summit attendees might be the
> > > way
> > > to elect a new leader, but others probably have different ideas.
> > >
> > Why I single leader?
> >
> > This group maintainer ship thing ... it works.
>
> I also note that group maintainership seems only to work for you in
> DRM; most of the other subsystems seem to have single leader
> hierarchical maintainership.
```

If we're seriously thinking on have a plan for maintainership replacement with a group, we need first to answer:

Q: How many Kernel developers does it take to replace Linus?

That's said, I doubt that the DRM model would work outside DRM subsystem: too many people with commit rights can be hard, specially if they all can touch the core. Btw, we tried a similar model in the past on media (by the time we were using Mercurial, about 10 years ago): all core developers had commit rights. It worked smoothly for years, until one of the developers decided to commit a very intrusive patch touching all drivers at the subsystem and stepping on everyone else feet. Handling it was really painful. If our official model would be a group maintainership, it would probably take months for us to put the tree on a sane state. I ended by using my maintainership status

to revert the patch, returning the tree to a sane state and allowing the others to keep sending patches. Yet, it took months, even years for us to recover from the disaster. Also, due to the heated discussions, we end by losing several developers due to that.

A triumvirate like x86 and arm might work, but I suspect that it would be easier to start with a more hierarchical model, like for example having one (sub-)maintainer for arch, another one for core and a third one for drivers.

Also, if we want to consider the bus scenario and other disaster threats, it could be worth to consider having them geographically distributed (if possible even on different Countries).

Thanks,  
Mauro

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