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

James Bottomley [James.Bottomley at HansenPartnership.com](#)
Thu Sep 6 22:29:49 UTC 2018

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On Thu, 2018-09-06 at 14:41 -0700, Linus Torvalds wrote:
> On Thu, Sep 6, 2018 at 2:13 PM James Bottomley
> <James.Bottomley at hansenpartnership.com> wrote:
> >
> > However, I really think for an orderly succession plan, you need to
> > be part of it rather than having a palace coup which could end up
> > being really messy and divisive.  I suspect people treated your
> > proposal last year as more of a joke last year because they didn't
> > think you were serious.  If you're really serious about doing this,
> > let's try to come up with the succession process in Edinburgh in
> > October and see if we can run a Maintainer Summit with the new
> > Leadership in Vancouver in November.
>
> So I do want to make it clear that it's not like I am all that
> serious about it, because I'm perfectly happy to continue to do what
> I've been doing for the past almost three decades.
>
> It's not like *I* care about the bus scenario, pretty much by
> definition.
>
> Honestly, I think the real issue is when *others* have serious and
> practical proposals.
>
> In many ways I think that is the real issue: people who feel like
> there would be advantages to new models.
>
> The advantages could range from just the "I'd really prefer to work
> with somebody else" to more of a "look, Linus isn't getting any
> younger, so to make for a smooth transition we should start moving
> towards xyz, because then in <N >years we'll be ready".
>
> Regardless, I don't think _my_ opinions matter all that much on this,
> and I honestly think some people might be more willing to speak their
> mind without me in the room.
>
> And guys, it's not like my ego is all that fragile.  I think people
> do know that.  So the only thing I *do* want to be serious about is
> that if people actually come up with something that they honestly
> agree is better, you don't need to worry about me throwing some
> hissy-fit, and "take my ball and go home".
>
> That said, I think we all might have some very real doubts about how
> practical it's going to be, and getting people to actually agree on
> anything.
>
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> What I do *not* want to see is some random flailing discussion while
> we're all in the same room. Because I can think of more productive
> things to do in Edinburgh, and most of them involve drinking.
>
> So I think people should have some real suggestions before-hand, not
> some "let's leave it to an open discussion for the summit itself".

OK, so here's a practical suggestion: let's propose two people to have
ongoing push rights to your kernel tree from a vote of the maintainer
summit invitees in Edinburgh. You establish the day to day ground
rules (say X takes the drivers and Y takes the -rc fixes and you do the
rest) and we simply see how it works out. If it works out reasonably
we have our succession and also a distributed maintainer model. If it
doesn't work out we try something else next year.

James

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