Feedback & Suggestions

from the attendees of the

YAPC::NA 2012 Perl Conference

a joint production by

Madison Area Perl Mongers

& YAPC Conference Surveys

Introduction

This document includes many fragments from comments that were received from attendees of the YAPC::NA 2012 Perl Conference during a survey taken after the conference had completed. Each survey provided the attendee with the ability to provide suggestions for future events and feedback on the 2012 event.

It should be borne in mind while reading this report, that everyone's time and effort in putting on the conference was given freely. All the organisers have full time jobs and we are fortunate enough that they have partners and family who were willing to put up with losing them for several days and nights over the previous year, while they organised the conference for the benefit of the Perl community. A big thank you to everyone involved.

Suggestions and Feedback

Rating the Conference

Would you like to expand on any strong views?

- website was confusing and the way we used the venue scattered us too much
- 10 minutes to walk a couple blocks between buildings is not enough. Means there's no bathroom, coffee, chat, etc. time. The cleaning staff at the lowell center kept waking us up at 8 am >:|
- A search box on the web site would have been handy.
- A very nice and well organized conference. The BOFs seemed to be a bit disorganized but I suspect that is always true. Perhaps having the bulletin board more out in front where we walked to and from the talks would have been better. I never went back to the registration room after the first hour, so if there were any important announcements then I missed it.
- Best YAPC I've been to so far in terms of both organization and talks.
- BOFs should have had more visibility and facilities for organizing them.
- Chairs in the buildings were terrible; many wanted to lean forward, most couldn't be set to have a fixed/rigid back. The auditorium seats were far too close together.
- Everything was very good. The only bummer was the expensive air travel to Madison, which meant I had to take a bus to manage the cost.
- Excellent power & wifi availability, very well done. Spread-out venue (among buildings and floors) made getting to sessions in time a challenge. Other than that, Madison was a very nice setting for the conference. Auditorium had very uncomfortable seating. Minor nit with the A/V setup: several speakers had their desktop views clipped on the sides by the projectors; an aspect ratio problem maybe?
- Excellent. Madison seemed to be a very good choice.
- Exceptionally well run conference
- Extensive and effective advertising, internet service, overall helpfulness and professionalism.
- First, I think it was an excellent conference. The registration site wouldn't let me log in for a while, so I never had a chance to buy tickets (mostly due to the frustration caused by that situation). By JT's good graces, I was able to be added to the roster at the last minute. I don't believe it was in the registration, but please inquire about dietary restrictions. At one of the events, I was unable to eat the main course due to the presence of sesame seeds, which cause me to break out in hives.
- Food: Bagels were cold, with no microwave or toaster. Soft pretzels were cold. Price: Good. Schedule: Maybe make it four days, and cut down on the number of talks at once.
- Game night was in conflict with movie night. that was unfortunate. The rooms were very spread out. I would have liked to see a "Hacker Lounge" during the conference, not just before and after, where people could hang out at all hours.
- Great YAPC this year. This community has momentum. I do think the selection of vibrant cities like Madison, Asheville etc. helps a lot to increase the spirit and profile of the event. Medium sized college towns seem perfect.
- Having a room with water around at all times was amazingly nice. Having only 10 minutes between talks kinda sucked (I'm a slow walker, and I didn't leave any presentations early).
- I am pre-diabetic and have to watch my sugar/carb intake and I have to avoid wheat, so the

snacks didn't really work so well for me :(
- I didn't know there were BOFs... or that I could create them. I didn't read the wiki. :(
- I find the ACT software difficult to work with.
- I missed all lightening talks this year because they were so late in the afternoon, I just got too tired.
- I strongly suspect that this conference selling out was due in large part to the promotional efforts of the organizers. Posting something *every* day was a brilliant idea, and should be adopted by future YAPC teams wherever possible. We have been saying for several years that Perl would greatly benefit from better +Marketing. It turns out that Perl *conferences* also have that critical need. Fantastic job!
- I think it's a great value for a conference like this!
- I thought JT and the rest of the organizers did an awesome job! Loved the little touches like the five minute Emacs/vi mysql/pgsql battles and the game night. Loved the casual outdoor rooftop banquet, much better than the indoor sitdown banquets in previous years. Felt full of positive energy.
- I thought that this conference was expertly run, in general.
- I thought the Madmongers did a great job of orgnizing and running this conference. Being a newbie I appreciated how helpful they were. It inspired me to look up my local perl monger group and get involved
- I understand the necessity of splitting the conference between two buildings, but it was a bit of a nuisance at times to have to get from one to the other quickly in order to make the start of a talk.
- I was pretty put off by the club. It was just so damn loud. I left after a few minutes and hung out with people outside the club. That said, hanging out outside the club was fun. I love the idea of reserving a venue for a social event that encourages mingling, but I don't think it needs to be a club with music playing. I'd have liked to see labels on the food, but I talked to JT about it, and I understand the problems they had with the venue's food service. My rating of the web site is mostly based on the fact that ACT is not so great. The wiki is kind of terrible, the user registration flow is completely confounding, and it's just missing a bunch of valuable features. The veneer over ACT that this year's orga's created helped in some ways, but hurt in others. YAPC would benefit from a better web experience, but I get the whole lack of tuits thing. Overall, I had a great time, so I don't have any strong complaints, just wishlist stuff.
- The dorm room was SO TERRIFIC. I felt as if I were at a deluxe hotel. The dorm staff was so helpful, the cafeteria staff practically escorted me through the facility and recommended the best items, the daily sheet/towel service (and even making of my bed!) was awesome, the bathrooms were immaculate, the rooms were quiet (actually, too quiet -- sometimes I felt like the only one at the conference; I was on the 10th floor), the elevators were fast and responsive... I was disappointed that the website didn't spell out how and when to get on the bus at the airport (#20), how to get on the right bus to UW (#2 at the N. Transfer Point), and how much it would cost (only $2)... ditto for the return trip (which involved going down to the Johnson street bus stop). I also didn't like the "banquet." I really missed having the chance to sit down with 8 or 10 other guys, and to hear the funny auction (as in Asheville). I did meet some people at the rooftop event, but I would like to see a combination of such an event plus an auction. I really missed the auction. I am betting that the Foundation didn't raise much money with the raffles, which were frankly a little annoying. I wish we had heard more from JT -- great guy. I wish the conference had included a session on WebGUI, and the ability to identify some of its developers; I am still intrigued with it, but not sure it's keeping

up with the other platforms.

- Ian's Pizza was a great touch
- In the conference bag, in addition to the note pad, an ink pen or two would be very useful. If you're going to be spread across two building which are that far apart, more time between talks is needed. A wireless network that didn't go down every 3min. Something was misconfigured as it was like clockwork. up for 3min then down for 15min then up for 3min then down for 15min etc. Snacks and Drinks should be in the same place throughout the conference. I couldn't find any snacks on Thursday, had to run to State St. and missed an entire session b/c I picked a slow place. The hotel room and the hotel staff were both awesome. The conference staff were awesome too. The speakers were really good. I learned something new in each session I attended. Overall y'all did a great job.
- It was a great conference. For the cost it was a ridiculous value.
- It was an amazing experience overall. I wish tracks were more theme-based instead of level-based. This might have made organizing for them a little better, since sometimes glancing at the title doesn't give away what it is about.
- It was outstanding. I'm a geek who doesn't always socialize much, but the social part was great. The free alcohol helped, I suppose, but as long as there are similar geeks at the next one, I will definitely be coming back.
- It would have been nice if my previous ACT account would have worked.
- It would have been nice if the snacks were a little more varied. It also would have been nice if they brought out enough Mt Dew to last more than 30 minutes in the afternoons (of course, they brought enough of other sodas that lots were left at the end of the day).
- many, many of the speakers needed more time. consider making the sessions longer, or breaking them into two parts. the 20 minute sessions were WAY too short.
- My biggest beef (and it's a good problem to have) is that I ended up standing in a lot of talks I went to attend. The flip side is that some talks were in very empty rooms. I think organizing the rooms (at least on some level) by which talks might be popular would be helpful. I realize this is very difficult to do, but personally I rarely stayed in the same room for more than one talk so sorting by track really wasn't helpful to me. Like I said, it's a high class problem and shouldn't be seen as a criticism of the organizers who put on, let's be honest, a pretty amazing conference.
- One small thing They schedule layout should have kept the 2 lowell sections together, and preferably as the first or last listed. The Job Fair should have had been running a few hours outside of the talks.
- Only major gripe was that the space was spread across buildings, adding travel time and forcing speakers to cut off shorter than the full time slot in some cases.
- Please use <label> tags on the surveys.

  [editor's note: Thanks for the suggestion. It had been something I had intended to do for this year, but didn't get time to do. I will update the templates for next year.]

- Problems with food service relate primarily to the arrival dinner, but I'm not sure whether that was officially part of the conference or if it was entirely Uri's private affair.
- Some talks were excellent. Many ... not so much. I don't know what "Schedule efficiency" means.
- Submitting a talk was not obvious. But I figured it out... so I guess it wasn't that bad.
- The #1 missing feature on the conference web site is for presenters to upload or at least provide a link to their presentation / accompanying documentation. I will probably have to

personally email several presenters to get their material for reference.
- the badly-formed auto-spamming of the blog posts into the mailing list was awkwardly embarassing.
- The climate control system at Lowell was not the most predictable.
- The conference facilities were very good, possibly the best we've ever had in YAPC::NA. The only downside was that four of the five tracks were in one building while one was in another. This meant a trek within a 10-minute time-span, following another trek possibly 30 minutes later! This was the first time since Buffalo that I had absolutely no problems getting wireless Internet access throughout the conference. The fact that I (and I think this pertains to most folk) didn't have to think much about it (in contrast to say, IIT in Chicago or U. of Houston), is a big plus for this facility.
- The conference was a bit too much of a party. My biggest issue was the lack of Conference Staff to walk drunk programmers home. If you are going to plan and serve that much you better have a couple of sober staff member stay until the lights come on to hail cabs or walk people home.
- The dinner food was good and the location was beautiful. But the lack of locations to sit made the night more difficult than it should have been. The night club seemed like an odd choice, something like D&B would have been a lot more fun for me.
- The number and frequency of speakers who cursed/cussed seemed a little too casual. I don't have an issue with cursing, but it diminishes the respectability of a semi-professional conference.
- The registration process is knocked here because I could not use my normal YAPC account to register (prior to conference). The registration at the event was easy and friendly and if that is the real meaning of your question then "Very Satisfied".
- The tightness of the scheduling kept everything moving along very well, but at some points it was hard to choose between staying to talk to a speaker after his or her talk and going to the next talk, which was due to start so soon. Still, this conference was amazing for the registration price, and my only complaint there is that there's no option for more satisfied than "very satisfied".
- The website does not have some links that are available in the original ACT, although most of the links work if you can remember what the page is by looking at an older conference. Switching between buildings is not good, but you do have to work with what is available. Food service much better than Asheville. Nice support for movie night.
- The website never seemed to have what I was looking for where I was looking for it, but I eventually found the information.
- The whole of YAPC was absolutely spot on. You guys did such a great job organizing, notifying, providing so much goodness. I loved the lunch with a celeb idea and got to enjoy lunch with Schwern & Norin. Really, there was so much there it was difficult to choose - a much better situation than nothing going on at all. Way to go.
- There was a case of harrassment, where somebody new was harrassed by a regular attendee, twice. A complaint was filed and not handled correctly.
- This conference is a real bargain!
- This was the best YAPC ever. Wonderful, amazing value!
- We are open source. I do not think anyone should be able to anonymously sponsor anything at the YAPC. If you don't feel comfortable having your name attached to it, maybe you shouldn't do it then. The same goes for talks. The one talk I went to where no recording was allowed didn't even seem to be proprietary in nature. We need to benefit everyone in the community, including those who cannot come. Making all talks available online and

unavailable to be closed room is what we should be doing. Again, if you don't feel comfortable letting everyone see it, then maybe you shouldn't be talking about it.

[editor's note:

Firstly, if people want to donate or sponsor Perl in anyway, but wish to do so anonymously, why should this be a problem? Not everyone wants to be acknowledged for the good deeds they do.

Secondly, there are many reasons why people do not wish their talks to be recorded. In some cases, even though the content may not appear to be proprietary, the speaker may be presenting on behalf of their company, who do not wish videos to be released on the internet, without approval from their legal department. In other situations the presentation may be by a professional trainer who does not wish their presentation to be available freely on the internet, when they normally earn a wage from presenting the talk. Some are just uncomfortable about their presentations being online. Preventing them from speaking just because of this, would be an even greater loss to the community.]

- We had a hard time finding the conference parking the first day. After that it was no problem. The registration opened later than I usually expect for a conference; then again, I usually go to scientific conferences; often you can register almost a year in advance.
- Would've been nice to have the ACT instance on the mongeurs.net instance so the account tied into my existing ACT account.

Feedback

For the Madison organisers

Do you have any feedback you would like to give specifically to this year's organisers?

- GREAT conference this year. Madison is a great city and this conference was a huge improvement over past YAPCs... no small achievement.
- Congratulations on organizing a fantastic YAPC.
- You rock!
- Great job! Game night was really fun.
- Despite my comments above, I think the conference itself was well organized. Most everything seemed to run smoothly with few significant problems.
- Amazing work. The location was very key in my overall happy experience. Something that would of saved me a little time would of been knowing where to watch the soccer games at, but a few tweets led me to the right place.
- A very good job. It would have been nice to have all the organizers come forward and be recognized by name at the final session.
- Great job guys, I hope to come back to another YAPC here
- Great job JT!
- Excellent organization
- Every single one of them was great. Always warm, always helpful, always smiling. They deserve a big thank you.
- You guys did a FANTASTIC job!! Madison is wonderful, specifically right around the

campus. The whole thing was very well organized and went very smoothly.
- Awesome job, everyone!
- As a female, I think you were on the right track to focus on the lack of women in perl, and platform bias (e.g. against windows) as 2 themes that should be pursued. However there was still residual anti-female crud in the talks. For example one speaker Robin Darby likened php to "Perl's fat ugly sister". Most of all the guy seemed to have a thing against fat people which was very out of place since many attendees were of the hefty persuasion. Which was ironic as the speaker was anything but a hunk himself. That is trademark cs bias to refer to all personnel as "guys" and term anything bad as feminine, similar to always likening the ultimate bad user as "your mother", "your aunt", "your grand mother" etc. I was on the fence about coming to this conference because the names of the people who were attending talks seemed to be nearly 100% male so I expected a male-bonding windows-hating festival. It would be a great idea for perl to avoid developing such a female hostile culture as afflicts unix/linux. I wouldn't go to a unix/linux themed conference if it was the last event on earth for that reason. I think the best way to get more buy in from women is to emphasize perl integration with enterprise software like oracle, sap, iis, sqlserver etc. Often developers get over-motivated about "open source" and will only implement interfaces to sqlite or something like that. That is destructive to the language! Most people don't spend all their time programming for the heck of it. It needs to be related to a job they have or want to get. The more people can use perl to do job activities, the more valuable perl is and the more diverse it will be. Historically perl was probably mostly supported by university employees. Universities are the most sex-biased realms on earth. (I know because I unfortunately work for one which I would describe as '25 years of being treated like pure S**T'.) Perl has to get away from those roots and get more towards the business realm where there was not as much bias. It is also the case that in business people expect products to work on windows and work with windows products. Get over the mac/linux/unix obsession in perl would be my advice. You can get a fair idea of what perl stuff doesn't work on windows with what activestate perl does NOT deploy via ppm. It's not about what is the best platform. No one cares about that. It's what is the platform where the programming has to run? The rule should be develop to the platform demographics not to the bias.

  [editor's note:

  Firstly, it is a great shame that we are still suffering from stereotypes and bad analogies, particularly when many of us in the Perl community are trying to distance ourselves from them. Everyone should feel welcome in the Perl community, and while the majority of attendees are male, that is no excuse to devalue the experience for females. Perhaps ACT needs to have some guidelines for speakers, before they submit a talk, so that its quite clear that degrading remarks are not wanted.

  Secondly, Windows is the most popular OS for the desktop, and while some would wish it otherwise, that isn't going to change anytime soon. Perl is well used on Windows, and projects such as Strawberry Perl and PADRE have made a big point of supporting the OS. It would be interesting to see some talks specifically aimed at working with Windows, as this should be of interest to module authors to help them write better cross-platform code.]

- Thank you for this well-organized conference!

- 4G service was terrible. This negatively affected my ability to stay in touch with Corporate office.
- Excellent job
- Everyone did a great job - staff was unobtrusive but available to help. Wish speakers would have had introductions (would have helped talks start on time, too).
- GOOD JOB
- thank you!
- Thank you! You city is beautiful!
- JT did a fantastic job with the updates and format. The best YAPC/Perl Conference I've attended as far as organization goes.
- This conference was amazing. From the venue to the talks to the fact that everything was streamed (even though there were kinks that still need to be worked out, to be expected for a first run), this was a great show you guys put on, and I'm very excited to attend future YAPCs.
- Thanks for everything! I had a blast.
- Fantastic job running this conference. It was informative, stimulating, fun, friendly, and everything was convenient. I was amazed. Many thanks.
- You guys did so great.
- Very good job with the wireless access. It was only a little shaky the first day but was very reliable after that point.
- Good communication, though cross blogging to blogs.perl.org got to be too much. Overall really a good experience. The organized lunches were a _fantastic_ idea.
- Great job, guys (and any others who may be put off by the non-gender-specific use of "guys" as an informal term for a group of people in general)!
- You all were awesome. Your hard work and effort shined through the entire conference. Thank you so much.
- Good job!
- Hats off to JT and the rest of the team
- Madison is really nice, and I think you could pimp that harder in the future!
- Excellent work. Everything went smoothly.
- Best YAPC I've attended. Everything was very well organized. Website, blog, schedule, down to the nuances like a QR Code on the badge and funny flares ... well done, thanks!
- Great job. Very professional and I think the fact that you pulled in so many sponsors show's how much work you put into making this great. Thanks!
- This was my first YAPC, and I was very pleased with it. I was lucky enough to have my company send me, but I would be interested in going again even if I had to pay for it myself. A very worthwhile experience.
- Great job. Best YAPC I've been to so far!
- Awesome work on the logistics, felt very well-organized and provisioned. JT also did a terrific job of promoting the conf throughout the year leading up to it. Dumping the auction in favor of raffles was a big win too.
- Great job!
- Thank you so much. This conference is probably the best one I have attended to date. I love that some video's are already up and viewable- that's impressive. Also the social events were fantastic! Thanks for all your hard work and dedication. I loved it! P.S. The spouses event was a success too. I have heard great things about it and hope there is another one next year!
- Good Job!
- This was my first YAPC but I thought it went really well.

- The wireless kicked ass. This is pretty much the only conference I have been to where it wasn't crappy, slow hotel service.
- excellent job everybody! one of the best-run conferences I've been to great job getting lots of new people in what a great keynote madison was surprisingly awesome
- Great job!
- Not enough of a break before the lightning talks.
- Excellent work!
- Outstanding job! Thank you!
- Power seemed to be a problem this time. Lack of outlets, power strips mentioned by several people.
- The conference was the best one I've been to. I have only attended 3, Columbus in 2010, Ashville in 2011 and this one in Madison in 2012. It was obvious great effort was put forth to make this an awesome event. Thanks for all the hard work!
- From the start this yapc was JT's yapc. Yes there needs to be a leader but it was a bit much.
- While I was not there, it seems that perhaps some issues regarding the CoC were not handled very well. This disappoints me. In general I had no issues, but I get the impression I was the lucky one.
- Great job
- The conference venue was very nice, but the spread-out, two-building approach (and the way, for instance, the break rooms were mostly way the heck out of the way) was sadly not very friendly to disabled folks (myself included) and the accessibility features (ramps, elevators, barrier-free entries) weren't clearly marked. I would have liked to see the area used by the conference be more compact and accessibility information more clearly posted in both the venue and the program/website.
- I really would have liked to have an alcohol-free socialization event Wednesday night. (The game night Thursday was very appreciated, even though I couldn't attend!)
- Madison was fantastic. I'd come back just to visit.
- Excellent job done
- MadMongers did an EXCELLENT job!
- This was a well organised and wonderfully presented event, particular kudos for streaming it live. Well done JT.
- Having organized a couple of much smaller events, I know it involves a lot of hard work. You have my gratitude, my respect and my admiration. Thank you very much!
- I thought that this conference was expertly run, in general.
- Excellent Conference, Thank You!
- You guys were *awesome* and I had a terrific time. Wish it lasted longer =(
- Split locations was not fun.
- Overall, it was very well put together. I applaud the organizers for all the efforts put into this operation, knowing that the hardest parts are those that no one ever sees.
- Great job! Thank you for organizing such a nice event.
- I wasn't quite sure how to participate in (or aware of) the many social events.
- Fantastic job! Very professionally done. Very well organized.
- Great Job!!
- Keep it grassroots and inexpensive.
- Awesome job! From my point of view, was very well done. Great bandwidth too. And very, very, VERY happy the talks were streaming and posted to Youtube.
- Great job overall.
- Great job. I was really impressed by the overall logistical organization, for example the great

- signage all around the venues.
- Thanks! It was a wonderful experience.
- Great job. You did an amazing job with this.
- Great job!
- THANK YOU!!!
- This conference was spectacular. Specifically the organization, the wifi and the streaming.
- Excellent job. I had a great time at this year's conference.
- It's allot of work to pull this off. You guys did a great Job!
- One word: incredible.
- Be neat if there were a way to get email addresses from local attendees for the PM.
- A 9:30 am start time would have worked better for me for keynotes.
- Wireless network was AWESOME (with only minor issue of having to login again every day on every device)
- Good work.
- Internet access was very helpful. Sponsorships was greatly appreciated. Well done (I'm from WI so it was a bonus from my perspective for WI).
- I received a complementary admission to YAPC because I am an unemployed older student who could not afford the fees. I am grateful for your charity. I did not attend any workshops or the dinner.
- I'm not excited about the T-shirt this year.
- Please consider gathering one evening, equipped with one audio recorder and many drinks, and just tell stories to each other of all the things you did as YAPC organizers, both pre-YAPC and during YAPC. Then make MP3s of your storytelling available to future organizers. Every year, important "organizational knowledge" is lost; you could be the hosting team that starts a new growing body of knowledge: "How to host a YAPC"! PS. Fantastic job, one and all!

  [editor's note: Please see the book Perl Jam (http://perljam.info) for up-to-date information on how to organise a conference. The book was written to capture exactly that kind of knowledge.]

For future organisers

Do you have any suggestions for improvement (please give examples where possible)?

- Keep rocking!
- It's nice to end things early on the last day because so many of us have to leave for the airport and it's sad to miss the closing stuff.
- Try to increase talk quality. Encourage speakers to have a point or purpose to their talk (even if it is only here are a few cool modules that I use). Too many talks that I went to were disorganized ramblings about a person's project at work with no real purpose or point.
- Have display resolutions and frequency posted ON each speaker podium, in ADDITION to emailing this info ahead of time. Provide a method for the conference organize to communicate without using phones (can't be used in the rooms without being disruptive). Use lapel mikes to make sure people watching remotely can hear everything.
- Raffle was a good improvement over auction. Recording/streaming++ Sponsors kicked ass Larry talk was a dud Speed up plenaries and do more lightning talks Lightning ads++
- I wonder if a speakers' training course might help (via webinar? Skype/Google hangout?). Many folks seemed to have great information, poorly organized.

- My only complaint is that it is getting increasingly hard for me to find talks to go to at an advanced level.
- You should have coffee/water/soda/whatever break planned in the scheduled so that people can mingle after a talk. Here, we had to hurry to the next building or just wait in the room. With a plan break, people usually go out and go checkout the bar which make them more likely to talk to each other.
- More morning events: bike rides, runs, yoga. I'd have liked an option for an infant/toddler sized onesie or shirt. Contact the AirWave.com team to see about getting Aruba Metworks to supply a decent wifi backbone for the next conference. Aruba does this for much larger conferences, and their AirWave tool is written in Perl, so they should be able and willing to help you out.
- Quite often (probably due to the volume of attendees), I wished there was 15 minutes between sessions. For somebody like me, who attended as many talks as I possibly could, I was running around a lot. but, since that would reduce the number of possible talks, I don't know if I'd actually ask for 15 minutes. :)
- Do what these guys did!
- Catered lunches would be nice.
- An Android app with real time schedule (updates, descriptions) and maps, filterable by (beginner | intermediate | advanced | wild | job fair | food | bathroom | etc.). Basically a way to engender "A vs B" type decision making. Also count down timers synced to the schedule.
- I missed the Ashville YAPC::NA due to the travel being complicated and expensive. Please factor that into it. Also it is cool that you all do bulk hotel rates. Is it possible to do that with airplanes? This might make YAPC::NA more accessible to people from farther distances. I am not sure how it would work tho. :-/
- Just two small nitpicks: The schedule layout in the program did not have headers on the second pages for any given day, which made the locations of talks in the later parts of the day just a little frustrating to locate. When the topic came up, I didn't talk to anyone who could successfully scan their badge QR codes, so I think they should be fixed up or the information should be converted back to direct text/images.
- Something I've never seen done, but I wonder if it would work -- actually print 10 or 15 "business cards" (or some kind of little chit) with the attendee's name and email address on it, and stuff them into the back of the nametag, so that it would be easy for people to trade them. The 2D barscan was a brave attempt, but it didn't work. I guess people aren't ready for that. I would have enjoyed a reminder of the BOFs, shortly before they took place. I missed a lunch BOF that I didn't know about. Schwern is a good speaker, but this "I only got one hour's sleep" stuff is getting old from some of the YAPC speakers (as is the "I just finished my slides at 6 this morning, so you'll have to excuse me," which I didn't hear this time). Guys, you've agreed to do a job, and it's not cute to have you give less than 100%. The listeners are collectively giving you about 600 hours of time, which is probably $20,000 to $30,000 worth of collective attention. Schwern's PC speech was a little too strong, and almost off-topic as the keynote. Then again, I guess I just disagree that it's as important as some people believe, so I can see how it could be chosen as the keynote. So many Perl beginners, but no presentation that shows "Here's what Perl does very well, and how it can make you look like a hero, or provide you with some fun and coolness." Go ahead and show off in at least one session, and set the hook. Larry Wall had nothing to say. VERY disappointing! Again, about 600 people wanted to hear what he had to say. And he had nothing to say. Um, could you spend time in thinking about what you'd like to say, and provide useful and interesting overheads for it? I have heard Larry make great presentations,

so I know he's capable of it. I was actually discouraged about the future of Perl after hearing him; I guess I want to hear from some of the new generation of movers and shakers who are passionate about improving Perl 5 and already are doing so.

- Remember to reach out to IRC as well.
- Do the organized lunches again, but setup from the beginning. Tweak as needed, but mainly this was just a really great way for people like me who didn't know anyone to not sit by myself while everyone else hung out with their buddies. There was some discussion of a kids track (or spouse+kids). Obviously this is full of logistical challenges, but I like the idea. I see there was a Hackathon before the conference, but I still have no idea what happened there. I would have loved to spend 2 days before the conference doing some sort of Perl hacking. Maybe just hanging out working on my stuff with some company/help/sounding-boards, maybe with someone giving some guidance on making good modules, best practices, CPAN submission. Or, perhaps an organized goal, like the Moving to Moose hackathon.
- Should have a 'work fair', in addition to a job fair. A describe a work-fair, as an opportunity for project leads and package developers to host a table, and members to talk to the authors, and sign-up to help. This should also be online, so developers not attending the conference will have an opportunity to learn about the projects, and sign-up to help develop, test, refactor, document, etc.
- I got a little lost, maybe it could have been easier to find links to google maps or something?
- It was very valuable to have the mix of 20min and 50min timeslots. I have been at other conferences that only had 45-50min timeslots, and talks were sometimes obviously padded to fill the longer timeslot and could have made for excellent 20min talks.
- print attendee names on both sides of badge, in a larger, non-times font. Some rooms were a little dark, or badges got flipped over, making them hard to read. If possible, try to schedule all of the longer (1+ Hour) sessions at the same time. If there are not enough to fill all the rooms, try to form the other rooms into a bit of a 'track', say two web app framework talks back to back.
- 1) recruit people who enjoy and are good at conveying information in a teacher-type role. 2) have more sessions that bring us old-timers up-to-date. i'd say AT LEAST four sessions (two about perl, and two about packages). 3) if many sessions will assume that one uses OO programming, offer an OO session.
- Please try to keep the presentation rooms as close together as possible; if they have to be split between two buildings (or even between floors), put different *kinds* of events in the different places (e.g. short/medium presentations in one, workshops/hackathons in the other).
- The raffles were a good replacement to the normally chaotic auctions during the banquet. The winner picking did seem to drag on and ruined the pace. I would pick the winners offline and then post the numbers on the projector to speed things up a little.
- Bring back the cookies that were in the snack rooms. They were good.
- ability for presenters to upload their presentation materials to the website.
- less dad rock please be mindful of distance between rooms when scheduling breaks no stupid gimmick events like the mysql vs postgres crap raffles are so, so much better than the auction
- Snacks in morning and afternoon are a good idea. No less than 10 minutes between sessions. Lightning talks need a nice break before them for the herding of cats. Blogging daily is nice, but we could probably do with just a weekly email summary rather than an email for each blog post.

- It was really cool that there was so much to do within walking distance.
- Live streaming of the talks seems like it was a big hit. It would be nice to keep but sound quality needs to be improved where possible.
- It was very nice having everything in one building in Ashville NC. I know it's not always possible but I believe having everything in one building/center makes it the experience much better.
- Don't try to out do this YAPC. Let your YAPC be something that you can stand on and be proud of.
- Offer pop (soda) in the mornings. Not all of us drink tea or coffee for our caffeine. In the future, if you are going to do an event with a bar, here are a few things to keep in mind:
    1. Not all attendees will be of legal age. I have to wonder how many people fit into this category this year. If you're going to have alcohol, make sure people are carded.
    2. If you're going to do a nightclub thing, limit the free drinks. Say, give everyone a couple of tickets to turn in. This doesn't completely stop someone from getting plowed for free, but I suspect it would limit it. Some people just don't know how to drink responsibly, and it showed.
    3. Have some things available that don't have alcohol at all. In general this year things were done pretty well to have alternatives, but I still feel like the alcohol was pushed quite a bit.
    4. Have the menu for food up. Allow people to make suggestions as a community on what is available for food. Possibly allow people to "order" what they want before they show. Buffets can sometimes short people who try to be considerate of others and don't grab a ton of stuff their first pass through.
    5. You need better vegetarian/vegan options. I'm neither, but even I could tell you the options for this year were downright insulting for these folks.
    6. ENFORCE the CoC. Telling someone to stay away from someone on the SECOND offense, while decent advice, should not be the end of the issue. You don't have to say who, but maybe at the plenarys each day, if someone had to be talked to regarding the CoC, remind everyone that behaviors like the ones that happened will not be tolerated. A CoC that doesn't get backed up is useless.
- Add another day
- Code of conduct policies need some work. In short, it needs to have repercussions spelled out, needs to be more clear (no "inappropriate" touching...hard to define, just say no touching!), needs to be more prominent. Also, YAPC needs to have this information (about violations, etc) communicated from year to year. Probably a TPF thing, or some other group that is meta-YAPC so that individual organizers don't have to deal with it? Otherwise, this was a fantastic conference. I very much enjoyed myself.
- Accessibility information (location of ramps/elevators/barrier-free entrances) should be posted clearly in both the venue and the program/website, and the conference should be in as compact an area as possible, for those of us who are not fully able-bodied.
- Please have alcohol-free socialization options available each night for those of us who don't or can't drink.
- Learn from this years staff
- Better shirt logo. Seriously.
- Learn about wifi and streaming.
- Please have a designated contact person and some room (maybe even a track) for community-organized, grassroots, "unconferencing" initiatives! :)
- JT started several new trends this year. Regretfully, they were met with resistance from the

community. It takes a while for people to accept change, but in this case the change was good. I hope next year's organizers resist the urge to fall back to the way things used to be.

- Hey! Thanks for taking up on the challenge, I'm pretty sure YAPC::NA 2013 will rock! One suggestion: separate tracks per theme, not (exclusively) by skill level. Good luck!
- Offer a FULL VIRTUAL CONFERENCE OPTION.
- Have tutorials/examples/inspiration for how to give a good talk. Raise the bar for speakers, letting them know what constitutes a good talk.
- Please ask speakers to use large fonts and high contrast in their presentations, unless they are showing a slide that we do not need to pay attention to. Please continue to stream the talks for future YAPCs, and please continue to post them to Youtube. This way, I felt I did not have such an enormous opportunity cost for selecting a particular talk to see in person.
- Don't do multiple buildings, pick a place that has parking (or more hotels that don't involve a 20-30 min hike each way), don't split up the job fair into two rooms so far apart. I know why each of those things happened, but they were all inconveniences, and you asked :D
- I'd really like to see more vegan food. This ticks a lot of boxes (vegetarian, lactose-intolerant, healthy, etc.). That means food besides a few sides. It's really really easy to have a vegan entree or too. I would be happy to help any future YAPC organizers coordinate the menu. I'd also like to see more effort put into getting the community involved in organizing stuff. The whole kerfuffle about the wiki and the email list was way over the top in anger level, but I think some valid points about inclusion were raised. Other than that, I think that 2012 was excellent, and future organizers should take a page from Madison's book, especially in terms of advertising, getting people to attend, and logistics. -Dave Rolsky
- Have a very good code of conduct and uphold it. In the introduction, make clear: no touching of people who don't want to be touched (no is no!) ; everybody please intervene in harrassment going to take place or already taking place ; when a complaint is filed, act immediately and give feedback to complainer. Please have some more vegeterian / vegan food. The hardware hackathon during YAPC::NA 2012 was awesome. So were the hackathon, the workshops, the beginner's talks, the keynote by Schwern, the lottery (maybe a bit more auction too to raise some more money!), the lunches with VIPs. I do like the way the YAPC::EU sets up their website: there is always a list of participants that all attendees can check. It is a nice way to find out if that particular Perl person is present too.
- I'd love to see a yapc twitter bot announce up coming talks in real-time.
- I don't have any feedback on pricing since my company didn't pick up the tab on the conference. Since this place is turning into a Ruby shop I doubt that will change in future. Also, regarding the email list, I think opting in attendees is a good idea. Also, I didn't like that ACT didn't have my other conference info this year. Maybe merging the changes back from the fork and hosting an ACT with all the other conference info in it would be helpful. I hope that makes sense (and that I've understood the problem with ACT correctly).
- It a new high bar! The wifi and streaming video are something I hope will continue
- I wish there would have been some better games night organization, but this is just as much my fault as anyone else's. A good wiki place to find others who would like to play specific games. Again, perhaps this was there, but I didn't see it (readily, at least) on the wiki.
- I would really like to see a better grouping of break out and group meetings. IMO, chicago's lay out was the best I've ever seen with 1 big auditorium and 3 separate session rooms just around the corer and all next to each other.
- Hire DoIT to run your wifi.
- N/A
- Retain the existing Code Of Conduct (it's from Open Source Bridge). Its a good one, it

makes a lot of non-mainstream people feel safe, and it sucks to have that fight every year. Put a simple feedback box on the front page of the web site. Don't rely on any speaker or attendee to be subscribed to any mailing list. Push any vital information to people via email several times. Keep public conference discussion lists low traffic to avoid chasing off people who don't want to invest a huge amount of time into Perl or YAPC. Use Twitter + a blog for announcements. Most of them are entirely ignorable. Twitter is designed for that. Consider using meetup.com, Facebook and other non-Perl and non-mailing list places to announce the conference to reach more people outside the mainstream community.

- I strongly suspect that this conference selling out was due in large part to the promotional efforts of the organizers. Posting something *every* day was a brilliant idea, and should be adopted by future YAPC teams wherever possible. We have been saying for several years that Perl would greatly benefit from better Marketing. It turns out that Perl *conferences* also have that critical need.

Summation

Thank you to all the attendees who completed their surveys. These comments and suggestions have been passed to the organisers, both to the current and next year's hosts. They are also used to help supplement thoughts and suggestions for the book "Perl Jam – how to organise a conference and live to tell the tale" (http://perljam.info).

Thank you too, to all the organisers and their staff for putting on the event. Without their efforts the conference wouldn't have taken place.

While there are always common factors that receive complaints within the surveys, it is worth noting that while the organisers may have taken great pains to negotiate sponsorship or technical support, it is sometimes beyond their resources to provide everything that you expect of a conference.

At its heart the conference is about bring people together to discuss a common interest. In our case this is Perl and all the many projects that it has inspired. It is also about bringing new people into the community and providing a supportive and inspirational event to which they will return and/or encourage others to attend. Anything additional that organisers can provide for attendees is a bonus.

If you are interested in running a YAPC::NA event in the future, read the book to get a feel what is involved, talk to previous organisers or read previous proposals online. See if you can possibly organise a small technical event or even a Perl Workshop to give you some experience. If you do submit a proposal to host a future YAPC, don't feel too disheartened if you don't get the chance to host straight away, you can always submit again the following year.