Fedora Commons

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DLF Panel
Brief History of How We Got Here

• **In the Beginning... The Fedora Project**
  – Joint project of Cornell and UVA
  – Mellon funded 2001-2007
  – Digital Repository and Service Framework in open source

• **Transition Planning... devise a model for LT sustainability**
  – Who did the strategizing?
    • Co-directors (Payette and Staples)
    • Fedora Advisory Board
    • Inputs from other similarly situated entities in our community
  – What was the recommendation?
    • Start a non-profit organization for Fedora
    • More open project and more participation

• **Secured startup funding**
  – Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation: $4.9 million over 4 years
Why Fedora Commons?

• Serve the public good: 501(c)(3) Non-Profit
  – Effective date May 22, 2007
  – Advanced ruling as public charity
  – Board of Directors (voting officers)
  – Not a membership organization (no voting members)
  – Accepts gifts, donations, fees, contributions ($$ or in-kind)

• No cult of personality
  – Not just Payette and Staples (beyond the Sandy and Thorny show)
  – Move beyond being a university project (beyond Cornell and Uva)
  – Create governance model to bring in community participants

• Long-Term Sustainability
  – Develop revenue generating models
  – Develop partnerships with commercial, other open-source, other non-profits
Grant Funded

Board of Directors

Executive Director

Director Communication/Media

Director Community Strategy/Outreach

Integration Developer(s)

Chief Architect

Lead Developer

Developer

Developer

Web Developer

System Admin
Fedora Commons Startup Goals
Working towards Sustainability

- Increase Installed Base of Fedora Commons software
- Move toward organizational design that enables more community leadership
- Develop new revenue-generating models
- Evaluate potential of offering consulting services
- Fund-raising strategy (court sponsors/donors based on appeal of mission)
- Developing strategic partnerships and/or value-add mergers with other organizations or open-source projects
Technology Strategy

- Shared Components
- Fedora Commons Core Components
- Third Party Components

open source offerings

Solution Bundles
Roll-Your-Own

open source offerings
Challenges and Unknowns

• Is it beneficial to our communities to have a proliferation of non-profit organizations, each needing support?
  – Future mergers
  – Future failures 😞
  – Will they pay fees? Who are they?

• How can organizations plan for the true cost of open source? How can Fedora Commons help?

• Will the revenue-generating strategies keep the non-profit viable?

• Is our “public good” mission compelling to enough donors?
  • Power of open source for public institutions (open source, open communities, open information for public good)
  • Need for open and durable infrastructure components (e.g. cyberinfrastructure)