GNOME 3.4 accessible: Status, news, future

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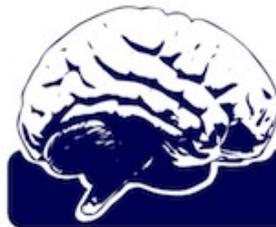
Hey guy, this room is called CrossDesktop Devroom, you know?

Let's try it again ...

CrossDesktop accessibility: GNOME and others

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Introduction, terms and stuff

Accessibility?

- Means remove barriers to access

- Related to universal design

- We want a product usable to the greatest extent possible by everyone

Examples please

- Visual-only user interfaces

- Fixed display sizes or styles

- Audio or Video-only prompts

- Dependance on mouse, multi-key gestures

What can we do?

- Programs require to provide:
  - Programmatic access

  - Keyboard navigation

  - Themes

  - Etc.

Accessibility? Why?

- It increases your user base

- It helps you address accessibility guidelines
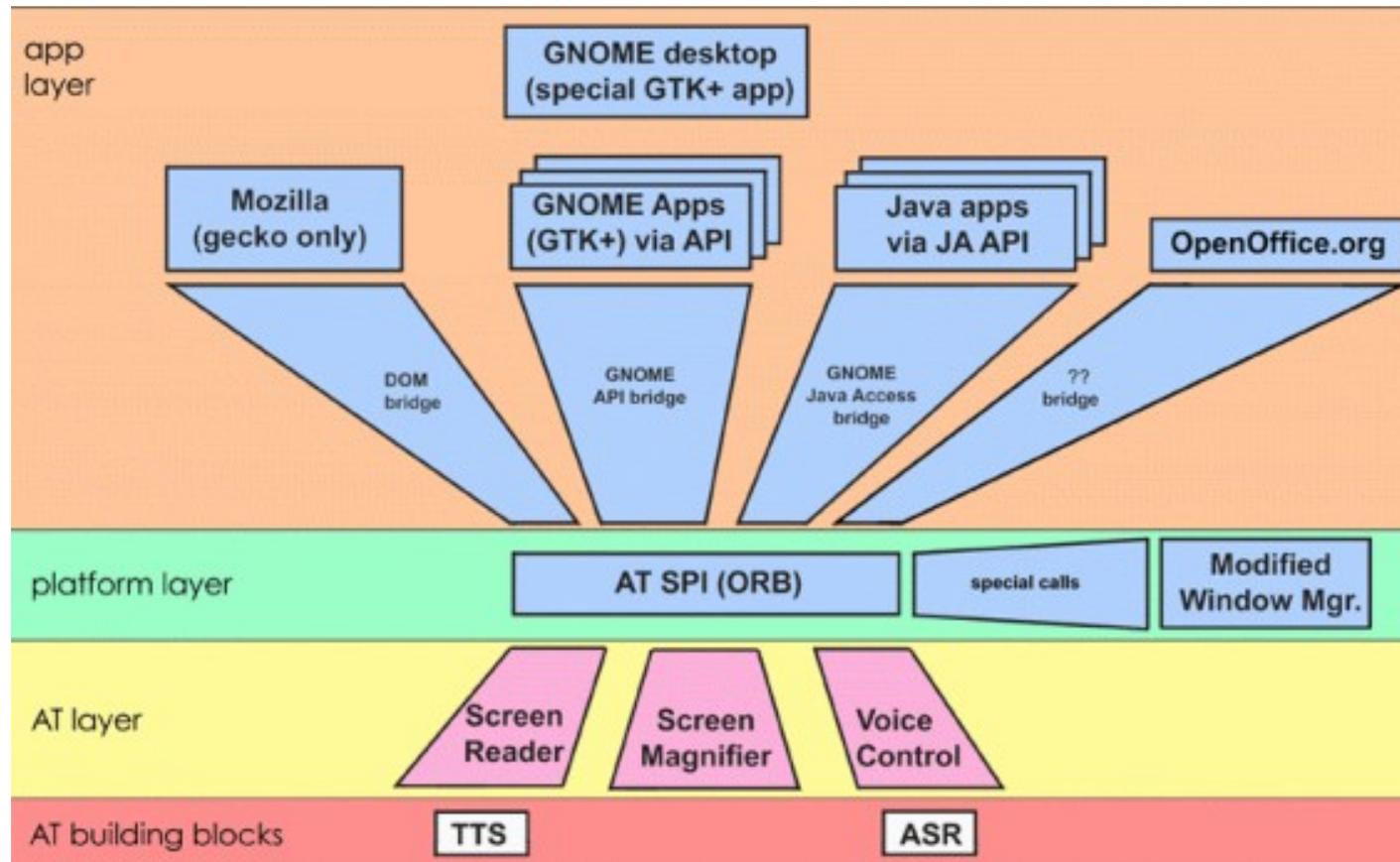
- It's the right thing to do

The long road to cross-desktop

(Some history)

At the Dawn of Time

- 16 Oct 2000, "GNOME Accessibility Summit"
  - Sun, IBM and others joined the party
  - Accessibility had a really big push

- A lot of new stuff 2000-2005
  - ATK, AT-SPI, Gail, Gnopernicus, LSR

That old GNOME 2.0

So, why just GNOME?

- Well, Sun had enough with GNOME

- KDE people were also interested but …

- AT-SPI was based on CORBA
  - At that time CORBA/Bonobo were "stars" technologies at GNOME

- KDE didn't like too much CORBA …

... in fact

- Seems that nobody liked CORBA/Bonobo

- GNOME decided to deprecate it on 2007

- Accessibility community worried
  - Mail from Ariel Rios, May 2007
    - http://mail.gnome.org/archives/release-team/2007-May/msg00030.html
  - Boston Summit 2007

DBUS is coming

- DBUS is the new and shiny IPC

- But this port is not something trivial

- That would require a good amount of resources

- Resources, now that you mention that word ...

Bad times

- 1 Jun 2007, IBM "change strategies"
  - LSR dies (Orca survives)

- 27 Jan 2010, Sun is acquired by Oracle
  - Sun decreasing workforce is mostly removed
  - Willie Walker stops to be a11y leader and Orca co-maintainer
  - Orca survives as a community-driven project

There are still some hope…

- Codethink starts AT-SPI2, funded initially by Nokia
  - Developer: Mark Doffman
  - http://blog.floopily.org/2008/04/23/codethink-d-bus-based-accessibility/

- Then other contributions from Novell or OpenSuse

- Right now is mostly volunteer-driven

- AT-SPI2 not "functional enough" until 2010

The past is boring! What happens now?

GNOME 3.X

GNOME 3.0

- GNOME 3.0 was a challenge
  - New AT-SPI2 (major component)
  - New toolkits like Clutter
  - Major updates on old toolkits, Gtk3
  - New Desktops: GNOME Shell, Unity
  - Gsettings VS Gconf
  - etc
- **CSUN 2010 Accessibility Summit**

GNOME 3.2

- Stabilization of the resulting 3.0 stack
  - Now with a real environment
  - Working on the functional regressions

- Some new features
  - GNOME Shell on-screen-keyboard
  - Built-in magnifier

- ATK-AT/SPI2 hackfest 2011

KDE

AT-SPI2 is DBUS based

- So, KDE became accessible ?

- No: qt-bridge required a lot of work

- Frederik Gladhorn retake the work on Qt and the
bridge on 2011
  - http://labs.qt.nokia.com/2011/04/01/not-yet-accessible/
  - http://labs.qt.nokia.com/2011/08/23/accessibility-on-linux/

Is something working?

- Right now things start to works

- People started to poulish apps, like Kate or Unity 2D

- Still not fully functional, but almost

We love Accessible Tools!

- GNOME has Orca, lets start Korka!

- Eeemmm, ... why?

- KDE people are testing all the stuff with Orca

- Remember: cross-desktop! Reuse stuff!!
  - Note: probably Orca would require some kind of Qt GUI

XFCE

Status

- Thanks to be GTK+ based, XFCE is largely accessible

- The tricky part is getting accessibility enabled

- Current accessibility stack is really GNOME-alike

- They included accessibility on his roadmap
  - http://wiki.xfce.org/releng/4.10/roadmap/accessibility

So, what we have here?

- Most big distros includes GNOME, KDE and XFCE

- Users will soon be able to get three accessible(ish) desktop environment

- This would mean more testing and feedback

- Still some work required on how enable accessibility

Future

GNOME 3.4

- Like 3.2: working on stabilization and performance

- New features:
  - Zoom dialog
  - Brightness and Contrast functionality

- More ATK support for GNOME Shell

ATK/AT-SPI2 Hackfest

ATK/AT-SPI2 Hackfest

- People from GTK, ATK, AT-SPI2, Mozilla, WebkitGTK, Qt

- Conclusions:
  - Still a lot of work to do
  - Not a lot of people
  - Still a lot of questions without answer
  - Stop to use the bridge as a module/plugin => 3.6

A summary?

Current status

- We have an accessibility framework

- We already have users

- But: Not enough ATs or people
  - Bus factor of one in several cases

- What we need: improve the base, more ATs, more people