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
  - 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

- 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
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/
Is something working?

- Right now things start to work
- People started to polish apps, like Kate or Unity 2D
- Still not fully functional, but almost
We love Accessible Tools!

- GNOME has Orca, let's 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
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-SP12 Hackfest

- People from GTK, ATK, AT-SP12, 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
Questions?