

debian-volatile — Behind the Scenes

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Motivation

- Some packages are useless if too old
- Stable updates very conservative
- Backports.org very liberal

Carefully keep packages useful.



Objectives

- Do not surprise the user
- Configuration compatibility
- Assure upgrade path
- As few packages as possible, but not fewer
- Use like the security archive

Above all, do no harm!



Security

- Generally few packages in volatile
- Dependent on contributions by package maintainers
- Close collaboration with the secure-testing team
- Updates distributed via the volatile archive



Current Responsibilities

- Package coordination:
Andreas Barth (aba), Martin Zobel-Helas (zobel)
- Mirror coordination:
Felipe Augusto van de Wiel (faw)
- Website:
Francesco Lovergine (frankie)



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Review

- Archive size: ca. 250 MB
- Transfer volume (main archive server only): 1 GB/day
- Number of packages: 6
- Number of Mirrors: 30 (mostly European)

What now?



Contributions

- User input very important
- Improve the website
- Prepare “good” packages
- Uploads only by the actual package maintainers



Website

- Currently in a state of transition
- Content not clearly targeted, mixture between “For users” and “For developers”
- Wishlist:
 - RSS feed for new packages
 - Better documentation of the procedures
 - Semi-automatic creation of VUAs



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Good packaging practices

- Minimal changes
- Discuss changes on the mailing list
- Version number greater than in stable but less than in testing
- Document changes



Beam me up, Scotty!

- Integration into official ftp-archive
- Accept low impact packages into stable point releases
- Consider data volatility when creating packages in main



If you can use volatile, do it!



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