BeVolunteer ANNUAL REPORT 2013

1. BoD report: Short overview of main activities and milestones

1.1 BW website & members

* BeWelcome reached over 50.000 members. 25,000 members joined us last year.
* BeVolunteer has 53 members (23 elected to vote, 28 chose "Supportive", 2 "friend members" and 1 member resigned.
* Clean-up of invalid BW accounts.
* Inactive BW members (not logged on > 365 days) were contacted and inactive profiles do not show up on basic search but in the advanced search.
* Suggestion tool is active, new BeWelcome decision making process| was accepted by BeWelcome members. This is now active
* New BW front page when not logged in
* Activity Tool

1.2 Volunteer teams

* Volunteer code of conduct was put in place
* New NDA was sent to all volunteers that have access to sensitive information
* 2 Volunteer Cafes where held
* 3 UnConferences were held: Brussels, Bamberg and Firenze
* Forum moderators revised forum and groups rules
* New teams: Suggestions and New Member Welcome

1.3 Technology

* New BeVolunteer website running on wordpress
* BeWelcome switched to OpenStreetMap
* Closed & fixed: over 230 bugs + feature improvements of our software engine ROX
* development of Welen: our next software engine was started

1.4 Communications & Design

* New front page photos & format
* Newsletters sent in December 2013, March 2013, July 2013. Work started on the December 2013 NL.

1.5 Finances

* Yearly donation goal of 1,260 euro for running our website was reached within 4 months
* Donation goal of 500 euro for BeActive campaign reached in less than 2 weeks.
* When the donation bar is not visible, almost no donations are given.
* Treasurer tool was implemented to allow treasurer to add bank transfers during the donation campaign for better transparency
* The guidelines for the BeActive campaign were finished and implemented.

1.6 Legal

* Legal insurance for BeVolunteer was signed
* Terms of Use: they were updated and reviewed by a lawyer. If approved by the GA they will now comply to the French law about data retention.
* BeWelcome has been registered as a trademark
* BoD met 9 times officially. All BoD reports were published on the wiki

2. Support Team Report

2.1 Statistics

- **Number of valid tickets:**
    - Approximately 1,400 last year (average 3,8 per day), not including spam.

- **Languages of tickets:**
    - Most requests are in English, but also in French, Spanish, and German.
    - Extra queue introduced French and Spanish tickets
    - Sometimes also requests in Dutch, Portuguese, Italian, Russian, and Turkish.

- **Languages spoken by team members:**
    - French (4), Dutch (3), German (3), Italian (2), Portuguese (2), Spanish (2), Russian (1), Swedish (1).
    - Biggest bottlenecks: Russian and Turkish.
    - Looking for one more team member for Spanish.

- **Response times:**
    - The average response time is 70 hours.
    - Half the tickets receive an answer within 24 hours.
    - Only 8% of the tickets take more than 1 week to respond.
    - Response times were vastly improved compared to last year.

2.2 Types of questions

- **Categories:**
    - Changes have been made to the categories
    - The most popular categories are: Account issues, Safety & Abuse, General Feedback, Software Issues and Volunteering)

2.3 Volunteers

- Statistics**:**
    - Members in the "Support Volunteers Group": 39
    - Members having access to the Support Team Queues: 15
    - Actively answering: 9
    - 2 Team coordinators (one new this year)
- Introduction of a training & mentoring phase
- New Training Manual
- Many new volunteers drop out before finishing the training phase

2.4 New templates and procedures

- Many new templates + FAQs were rewritten

2.5 Open tasks for the coming year

- The foundations are there for solving the growing number of questions
- Improve criteria for accepting new Support Volunteers
- Finding 5 more active volunteers
- Finding Volunteers who can deal with Spanish, Russian, Turkish).

2.6 What can BeVolunteer do for the team

- A server with more space (currently OTRS runs on the BeWelcome backup server
- Regularly call for new volunteers (Newsletter?)

3. Annual Report Translation Team

* Changes in the Translators Team and tools gave positive results:
        * A participation survey updated the team members' current status
        * Guidelines to join the team were rewritten
        * New procedures and How-To
* Newsletters are now translated by teams of a least two volunteers
* Sub-groups were created per language
* Bugs were fixed by devs, making it easier to translate and to update static pages
* Possibility to translate in local variations of a language (example Chinese, Portuguese)

Currently 45 languages are available, the following list orders them by amount of translation achieved (descending):

- More than 90%: English, Portugese, French

- More than 60%: German, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, Catalan, Serbian

- More than 30%: Croatian, Lithuanian, Esperanto, Polish, Simplified Chinese, Finnish, Russian, Basque, Portuguese (BR), Turkish, Hungarian, Czech, Traditional Chinese, Swedish

- More than 10%: Greek, Slovak, Danish, Latvian, Arabic, Romanian, Bulgarian, Persian, Indonesian, Norwegian, Armenian, Japanese, Swahili

- Less than 10%: Hebrew, Irish, Korean, Pashto, Estonian, Malay, Hindi, Breton, Urdu

Notes: New pages, like Safety, Suggestions tool, updated FAQs,… explains the sudden drop of languages above 90% completion when compared to last year.

* From this list not all languages have volunteers maintaining them at the present time, in the next period we will try to address this issue and find a solution.

4. Safety Team Report

4.1 Overview of the Safety Team activities (Oct. 2012 – Sept. 2013)

Safety Team takes care of

- spam reports

- problematic profiles:

- duplicate profiles

- inappropriate profiles

- incorrect mandatory information

- checking comments (especially negative ones) and contact members in cases of inappropriate comments (insults, libel, etc.)

- handling abuse cases and reports

- is consulted by the forum moderators and suggestions team when appointing new team members

4.2 Changes in the team in 2012-2013

* Every Safety Team member was asked to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA)
* Two new members. Team is composed of 6 members now (3 men, 3 women)

4.3 Work on documents, guidelines, safety information

- drafted and published the Safety pages

- drafted internal guidelines how to deal with different types of spam reports

- drafted Comment Guidelines

- helped drafting the proposed Terms of Use

4.4 Handling reports

- 345 tickets handled in OTRS. Compared to last year this is a rise in tickets of about 100%.
- Response times average around 100 hrs (issues are sensitive and require consultation among the team members. This will probably remain this way).
- 66 messages sent immediately to the safety team
- No statistics available about spam reports.
    - Impression: the number of commercial spam (including Nigeria scams and the like) has decreased (especially since it is no longer possible to sign up multiple times with the same e-mail address)

- reports about unsolicited invitations, unfriendly messages and unpersonal hosting requests have increased - as could be expected by the growing number of active members. Since those types of reports require more communication the work for the Safety Team has increased in this field too.

- No statistics available about the number of negative and reported comments.
    - Impression: there is an increase in line with growing number of messages.
    - Issues range from personal conflicts (online and offline) without relevance to the safety of other members, to allegations of severe abuse and criminal offenses.

- No statistics available about banned profiles.
    - Facts: quite a few profiles have been banned for spamming, a lot of duplicate profile have been removed, 4 profiles have been deleted for documented abuse (e.g violence, sexual harassment - none of which has taken place through BeWelcome though) to protect other members. We also sent out several "last warnings" to members for repeated violations of the Terms of Use. In a few cases members deleted their profiles themselves after conflicts.

5. Software Delopment & testing

5. 1 Rox

- There are 3 active coders at the moment
- Bug fixes and new features/improvements are communicated on a regular basis through the Community News and Newsletters.
- Important changes include
  - The new Activity Tool
  - Suggestion Feature
  - Search Features
  - Updated Statistics
  - New Safety Pages in the menu
  - Separation between Group discussions and BeWelcome discussions
  - Possibility to link Groups
  - New privacy options on the forum
  - New languages (including sign language)

5. 2 Welen

Finished Activities: Project Initiation and Setup

- Registering the domain welen.org.
- Setting up a secure server for the project.
- Setting up a git repository.
- Setting up a mailing list (devel@welen.org).
- Establishing a wiki team page using JIRA Confluence.
- Establishing issue tracking and project activity visualization using JIRA Issue Tracking + JIRA Agile.
- Developing and implementing a pipelined and tailored Scrum and Kanban project process for Welen.
- Developing a blueprint for the requirements documents.

Finished Activities: Development

- Welen architecture overview.
- Requirements for user login/logout process.
- Design for user login/logout process.
- Requirements for the user registration process.
- Design for the user registration process.

***Current Activities: Development ***

- Current website: dev.welen.org
- Preparing a hackathon in Portugal starting December 2013.
  (http://www.bewelcome.org/activities/475)
- Requirements for the user profile.
- Prototyping and designing the user profile.
- Coding for the user login/logout process.
- Coding for the user registration process.
- Refining the project coordination processes.

***Following Activities**

- Implementing a backup solution for the project.
- Detailed architecture plan.
- Testing the user login/logout process.
- Testing registration process.
- Coding the user profile.
- Testing the user profile.
- Collecting old user requirement for Rox in the BW groups and in trac.
- Encouraging new user requirements for Welen.
- Strengthening the developer base for Welen.
- Prioritizing further activities.

6. Forum Moderators

- 2 new moderators joined, 1 moderator stepped down. At the moment there are 6
moderators (4 active ones)
- Forum Rules and Guidelines were rewritten and approved by the BoD
- Closer collaboration between Forum Moderators and Safety Team to remove spammers
- New internal procedures and Templates were created
    - a Decisional Tree, making it easier for moderators to follow strict guidelines and respect
deadlines
    - a Procedure for members to apply for the role of Forum Moderator
- We temporarily keep a link to deleted posts: to allow restoring and/or documenting if the
original poster appeals our decision
- Response time after receiving a complaint about a post is less than 24 hours
- There is an increase in work following the split between Discussions and Groups: we need
to move threads manually to the appropriate groups

7. Communication

7.1 Overview

The communications team works within the overall strategic choices made by the Board of Directors (BOD) and their recommendations for marketing and communications objectives.

The main job of the communications team is to put out messages about BeWelcome (BW), its activities, tools and its core values. While BW has relied on Word of Mouth (WOM) since 2007 to attract new members, it has not led to critical mass, and has limited adoption in countries outside Western Europe. The communications team with BOD support seeks to amplify WOM, by taking BW message to new offline/ online channels that are relevant to BW members and non-members. This is called Word of Mouth Marketing (WOMM).

7.2 Channels used

Last year the Communications Team used Newsletters, Twitter, Facebook and the BW Front page (Community News) to inform members and potential members about important changes in BW.

Many communications team members, whilst volunteers, could use their experiences in marketing, but sometimes have not sought to use these experiences. For many members, 'marketing' may be a dirty word; and not worthy of BeWelcome. However, even the most benign non-profit markets itself for particular purposes (build membership, fundraise, create awareness)**.**

7.3 Suggestions for 2014

Suggestion: BOD support for a Marketing Plan and following on from that an integrated communications marketing plan. The team requires objectives (i.e. engage current users to engage more actively with the site, spread the BW message to countries outside Europe).

Suggestion: We require BOD support to carry out a member survey to find out whether the values in which BW markets itself (Open Source, Transparent, Non Profit) has resonance amongst members. Whilst we might hope so, it may be that these values only have a resonance amongst a subset of members in Western Europe. Do they have resonance in Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, and China? Do they motivate members and particularly, non-members and lead them to take action. The survey would members what attracted them to the site in the first place?

Suggestion: A video explaining to new members and WOMM why BW is different.
 i.e. BE-FREE, BE-PART OF A COMMUNITY, BE OPEN , BE CURIOUS, BEWELCOME