BeVolunteer Annual Report 2014-15

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

1.1. BeWelcome website & members

- There were roughly 15.000 new members
  (84.215 on November 1st 2015; 69171 on November 1st 2014).

- 54.267 members, who did not login for 365 days or more, have again been contacted in October 2015. Approximately 25000 new members received a reminder. Out of those login reminders, more than 1400 members logged in on BeWelcome.

- We've had a big influx of spamming accounts. Most of them are removed within 24 hours.

1.2. BeVolunteer organization

The French authorities pointed out some issues to BeVolunteer in summer 2015. Jean-Yves handled their requests. As a result four major aspects were criticized where BeVolunteer has to act:

1. We promised that donations would be tax deductible but to achieve this legal status there are some steps and applications missing from our side. We have immediately removed this false information from the website in all languages.

2. Part of the Terms of Use are not valid. Even though a French lawyer had checked them the paragraph about going to court against BeVolunteer is not according to French law. The lawyer had mistakenly treated us like a company, the regulations for associations are different. Adrien who is a jurist volunteered to re-write the ToU pro bono and made them comply with the French law.

3. As BeVolunteer is registered in France the legally binding Terms of Use cannot be in English. We will present a French version of the Terms of Use at the GA.

4. We will have to add a telephone number, not only a postal address.

1.2.1. Board of Directors

- The new Board of Directors started with much enthusiasm. The roles and tasks were divided over the new directors.

- At the beginning of the term, all teams and volunteers were asked for feedback. This was used to get a view on the teams, their work and their problems. The BoD tried to organise volunteer coordination, but after negative experiences, it was clear that this was not going to happen on a short term. The BoD tried their best to

keep in contact with the many teams and volunteers. Unfortunately, this was not always possible as much as the BoD had wished for.

- The BoD had 11 meetings in total. The BoD meetings were not public, as the BoD did not see a realistic possibility to include many other non-BoD-members in the meetings without complications (private informations; interruptions). The BoD decided to have a public meeting on IRC afterwards to share the outcomes of the meetings and give an opportunity for questions or input. The BoD used VOIP, Etherpad, BeWelcome Wiki and later Trello for its meetings.

- The BoD initiated and guided the Suggestion Review Process. The outcome was shared within different groups. The BoD suggested some changes within the Suggestion Team and Moderation Team. Unfortunately, so far there has been no changes in the suggestion process and the tool is idle.

- The BoD started a new donation campaign in February 2015. See 1.3 Finances for more detailed information. After some hassle, BeVolunteer received the status as non-profit at PayPal. Therefore, we pay less fees for every PayPal-transaction.

- The BoD (re)installed an Ombudsperson. This position will be open for candidates during the General Assembly and a vote of the participants will be needed to assign an Ombudsperson for the next term.

- The BoD initiated and guided the change of mail servers. We are not using the services of Ecobytes anymore, but our own server to distribute e-mails and collect tickets in OTRS.

- The BoD changed the wording and content of forum rule #5, on request of the Moderation Team. There now is a clear guideline on how to appeal decisions and actions of the moderation team.

- The BoD made some advertising for the unused BeActive campaign. Some reactions found their way to the BoD, but so far none of the budget is assigned to any projects. The BoD made a questionnaire to help with the applications. The questionnaire has been uploaded on BeVolunteer.org, where a BeActive page got a permanent place in the navigation of the website.

- The BoD hopes to include more translators into BeVolunteer. A list of potential members to be invited has been made and will be handed over to the next BoD.

- After some tests, the BoD decided to use Trello as a project management tool to register and assign tasks, to-do's, ideas and drafts. The knowledge and Trello-board will be explained and handed over to the next BoD. They may decide to use it or not and whether to continue with the to-do's.

1.2.2. BeVolunteer members

- Between November 2014 and October 2015, **5 new members** joined BeVolunteer. There were **2 resignations**. The BoD had to **reject 3 membership applications** as the members had not met the condition of volunteering for 3 months. Those applicants were advised to file another application once the condition is met.

- In the September meeting, the BoD agreed to **actively invite translators** to BeVolunteer, as they are least visible within the volunteering teams. The BoD hopes to have the manpower to stay up-to-date on new volunteering candidates for BeWelcome and potential BeVolunteer members. A list of potential BeVolunteer members has been made and will be offered to the new BoD.

- The BoD received **5 Non-Disclosure Agreements** (NDA)

1.2.3. Statistics on General Assemblies and active members

Year	BV members	Active members	BoD candidates
GA 2011	43	21	5
GA 2012	45	16	4
GA 2013	50	22	7
eGA 2014	60	34	3
GA 2014	60	22	6
GA 2015	64	22 ?	5?

1.3. Finances

- The donation campaign was officially initiated on February 18th 2015 and the donation goal was reached on June 5th 2015, so the campaign took less than 4 months.

- The donation goal was reached in half of the time it took last year, however the donation goal was approximately halved, compared to the year before.

- Last year we got one donation of € 700 and one of € 740,57; without these it would have been difficult to reach the goal. This donation period, the biggest single donation was € 114.

- We were able to reach the donation goal with small donations; all in all it means a donation goal of € 1500 is not a problem, but a donation goal of € 3000 is already hard to reach in the current situation.

- We received 59% of donations by PayPal, 37% by bank transfer and 4% by BitPay.

- For every PayPal donation we pay a base amount of € 0,25 + 1,4% of fees (normally); as we got accepted as non-profit recently, we had to pay € 32,40 in fees to PayPal (= 3,15%).

- Crédit Coopératif is expensive; until June 30th 2013 we had monthly fees of € 6,90; these fees increased to € 7,22 per month. Additionally we pay € 2,- per month for having the Cartes Sesames, so a total of € 9,22 per month; also we paid € 13,80 for buying 2 card readers and € 15 for registering the new president and the new vice treasurer.

- Crédit Coopératif does not save the transactions for a long time, so it's necessary to make screenshots every 3 to 6 months.

- The treasurer decided, that we should keep some money on the PayPal account, in case we have problems with the bank account; but the transfer to the bank account was made after September 30th 2015, so it does not appear in the financial report; € 500 were left on the PayPal account.

- In 3,5 months with the donation bar on the website, we got € 1515,04. In 7,5 months without the donation bar we got € 218,32.

- On the new landing page the donation bar will be much smaller than before and less visible, but it will not disappear after the donation campaign is completed; The treasurer has concerns that the donation goal may not be reached.

- The € 800 reserved for the review of the privacy policy by a lawyer were not used.

- The money from the BeActive campaign was not used and is still available in the next year.

- The BoD decided to put more money in the emergency fund, now we have € 2000 in the emergency fund instead of € 1300.

- We made a gain of € 433,71 compared to € 2338,24 last year, so we met the budget pretty well. The treasurer will try to lower the yearly gain even more, so next year we might have a small minus.

- The BoD decided to have a regular financial year from October 1st to September 30th. To achieve this for the next period, the actual financial year is from November 1st 2014 to September 30th 2015.

2. BeWelcome Volunteering

Volunteers are the base of BeWelcome. That's why we need to cherish every volunteer's input, big or small. It's not easy to find new volunteers, and it can be hard to keep motivation up. Especially when the workload increases, yet the number of volunteers or their time invested decreases.

To motivate more members to volunteer, the Get Active page was updated this year, including more teams, a direct contact person and when available more information on how to join the team. The page was renamed to 'Help BeWelcome', as hosting or traveling are also forms of being active on BeWelcome. The NMBW Team placed several messages in specific groups to attract more volunteers, both the NMBW Team and the Support Team were mentioned in a post in the community news. This resulted in an increase of volunteers.

A regular update of the 'Who Does What'-wiki will create an overview of the current volunteering status. As of October 2015, **at least 30 members** can be called active volunteers for BeWelcome.

2.1. Software Development Team and Testing Team

- In between November 2014 and November 2015, **4 volunteers** have committed code to BeWelcome.

- The biggest developments this year were the new navigation-bar and footer; a group and topic subscription page; update of the group pages; mail template updates.

- Multiple bug fixes were made.

- We now have certificates for every server.

- Since March 2015 GitHub is used as the main code repository and platform to register issues. Trac will no longer be used for these issues. Some information (tickets / documentation) needs to be transferred to GitHub in the near future.

Framework and redesign

At the moment a complete redesign is being made. Symfony will be used as the new framework for the BeWelcome website (in stead of Rox). The code will be reviewed and cleaned up, to make it easier to read.

The 'trips' feature is newly coded. A new opening page has been designed and the unfinished version can be seen at alpha.bewelcome.org. The dashboard page (opening page after logging in) is currently being written, using Bootstrap (front-end framework). See 2.3 (Re)design Team for more information on the redesign.

Testing Team

Release 2.8 was tested by 6 members. There was no other big release to see if there are really enough testers for new releases.

2.2. Sysadmin Team

- Mumble was installed as a non-commercial, independent VOIP alternative for teams.

- A mail server was installed (exim4)

2.3. (Re)design Team

In the unconference of Lyon in 2014, one topic discussed was a redesign (of the landing page after login). Inspired by this event, OctoberTales took the liberty to design a landing page before login, and a 'dashboard' page after logging in. Generally, the designs were received with positive comments. The dashboard page was subject to discussion, and eventually a suggestion (#137) was processed on what information should be included on this page. In the meantime, a small liftover was given to the navigation-bar and footer of BeWelcome.

In February 2015 OctoberTales made a call, searching for a new team to redesign the website. Those interested were included in a new group (Redesign Team) in August 2015. The first steps have been taken.

2.4. Forum Moderators Team

Since the last report at the previous General Assembly (GA), the Mods have been contacted in **176 topics/threads***. This involved about **300 – 350 reports**. Some topics (threads and/or posts)produced a single report, some others produced many reports, and finally some were discussed among the mods without receiving a formal report from members. Roughly estimated, around 40% of the reports were spam or inappropriate posts, around 30% were posts that needed admin action because, for instance, they were in the wrong group, around 20% were personal attacks, and most of the remainder were differences/quarrels between members, often reporting each other. The Mods took action in slightly more than half of the cases, leaving the rest as they were (with an explanation to the member who complained). Only **2 forum bans** were issued, both for the same person: a 3-day ban and a 7-day ban. This activity was not evenly spread over the year.

Team size and workload

Around the beginning of the year, the team lost three out of six active members (two of them to the BoD). One new mod was recruited during the year but the team was still left stretched during busy periods. The team was only able to cope because there was an overall drop in workload of about 25% compared with the previous year. This may reflect a general drop in forum/group activity. For instance, the Suggestions Group has been inactive for a large part of the year and, although Suggestions was moderated differently, these threads generated a lot of disputes with consequent work for the mods.

Clarifying rules and guidelines

During the year, the mod team has also worked to clarify and define forum rules and mod guidelines. Examples of this were work on what constitutes 'commercial' posting and work to better define the respective roles of forum mods and group admins in relation to the BW groups.

Difficulties

We met the problem of "giving edition rights" to poster to edit their post. As the post will be automatically lock again after a some time, and it will probably happen before the poster use the rights, resulting the post cannot be edit by OP. Need to get this problem solved.

Disclaimer: Since the Moderation Team has no access to statistics about the number of threads, posts, reports and edits, these numbers and figures are based on manual calculations. However, we feel they are reasonably accurate.

2.5. New Member BeWelcome Team

- Over the last year, between 20.000 and 25.000 new members have been welcomed.

- At this moment there are **15 volunteers** (+7), of which 3 have not shown activity for some time.

- The team writes welcoming messages in 8 languages: dutch, french, spanish, italian, portuguese, russian, greek* and english.

- The team organizes information in a private BW group, BW wiki, several Piratenpads, a Gmail address, Skype (and between some members other means like Team Viewer, Mumble etc.) with 5 admins for the private BW group.

- The team has regular meetings to exchange information and to discuss issues.

- The team shares volunteers with the BoD, Safety Team, Support Team. The team operates in different time zones.

- The overall experience is positive. However, newbies hardly ever write back. The team gets a "Thank you" here and there, but rarely get any longer feedback from the greeted members. The team sometimes shares the nicer messages with all. So far, only one new member complained about the work of this team.

* inactive member

Issues

"One issue I believe we are facing is the one of intra-group communication: We're lacking a tool that allows sending messages to more than one person without having to use the forum (which could be inappropriate for some technical things and so on)."

„I personally find it a problem that the team meetings are a European affair only. We have not found a solution for spanning timezone. Also at the moment the team meetings are an "admin only" thing instead of all colleagues."

2.6. Support Team

Statistics

Languages of tickets: most requests are in English but we regularly receive requests in French, Spanish, and German. We have an extra queue for French and Spanish tickets, which helps the respective volunteer to answer more quickly. We received **114 messages in French** and **107 messages in Spanish**, last year this was 80 (F) and 51 (SP). German

requests have no extra queue, so we have no statistics about them. We also, from time to time, get requests in Dutch, Portuguese, Italian, Russian, and Turkish.

Languages spoken by active team members: English (all), French (4), Dutch (3), German (2), Italian (3), Spanish (3), Swedish (1). Tickets in other languages are usually machine translated and answered in English.

Types of questions

Currently we use the following categories (number of questions per category for the past year in brackets)

- Account: 14915 (411)

- Board of Directors: 44 (15) - confidential, not handled by Support Team

- Forum moderators: 42 (33) - confidential, not handled by Support Team

- French: 114 (80) - questions of all categories

- General feedback: 155 (86)

- Login Reminder: 806 (NA)

- Media: 48 (22)

- Other: 192 (55)

- Safety and abuse: 682 (268) - confidential, not handled by Support Team

- Software issues: 2862 (81)

- Spanish: 107 (51) - questions of all categories

- Suggestions: 85 (61)

- Volunteer: 63 (13) - this no. was 137 two years ago!

So all in all a considerable increase for all queues. The high numbers for the account queue may also be due to the bounces after moving the mail server away from Ecobytes.

Volunteers

The "Support volunteers" group has 63 members. 12 members have access to the Support Team queues (not including the confidential queues "Board of Directors", "Safety and abuse" and "Forum moderators"). These 12 members include some (formerly active) members that only help out in emergencies and on request. Out of these 12 members, 6 have regularly been answering support tickets in the past year, another 2 on demand or only specific queues.

The Support Team currently has two coordinators, claudiaab and railslide.

Two new volunteers were successfully recruited and integrated in the team. Some others expressed interest in volunteering, but they have not managed to even start the training.

New templates
We created a few new templates and added some translations.

New practices
In the last year we have started having regular team chats. This helped solve some minor technical issues, improve the team atmosphere and motivation and reduce frustration e.g. about the server migration issues, since volunteers could at least vent it. It is certainly something we want to continue.

Problems
Moving the mail server away from Ecobytes has been cause of several problems, such as:

- volunteers no longer receiving OTRS notification

- email from BW erroneously interpreted as spam by email providers

- high amounts of bouncing tickets cluttering OTRS queues

- high numbers of spam email arriving in OTRS without the possibility to automatically route them to spam queue

- real emails ending up in the junk (spam) queue in OTRS

- bouncing OTRS notifications. The sysadmin's suggestion was that volunteers should use a different email-provider or switch off notifications, neither of which we consider practical and 'volunteer-friendly'

Some of these issues have been somehow solved, but others not and currently still present a source of frustration for volunteers (real mail in spam, communication with sysadmin about bouncing emails requesting volunteers to change their email provider...). In addition, some of the proposed solutions implied some 'ethical' decision that support volunteers did not feel very comfortable in applying without the ok from the BoD. Unfortunately in this matter the communication with the BoD turned out to be vague and slow, so it took several reminders from our side to get a clear answer on this issue. (The problem was that after moving away from Ecobytes a lot of group notifications of some members bounced, the suggestion was that support volunteers (with a special right) should switch off notifications for those members.)

Suggestion tickets have also been a source of frustration for support volunteers. Due to the current situation with the suggestion tool, it makes no longer sense to redirect BW members to that. Falling back to the Features group did not look as a feasible solution either since it is unclear, whether the group is still functional. So, without a clear process for handling suggestion emails, volunteers have gradually stopped handling those tickets, which eventually translated itself into not looking to the suggestions queue at all.

Many members contacted the Support Team because they are not able to login with a newly generated password. Volunteers have been trying to investigate the issue and/or to identify a pattern, unfortunately with no luck. The problem, however, seems to be quite widespread as the increased number of account tickets clearly shows.

Open tasks for the coming year

- Recruit new active team members to increase quality of service and response times, especially for languages like Russian, Polish, German

- Clean up the Support Team group, change it into a closed group and open a new open group to channel members interested in volunteering

- FAQ revision

- work on a more efficient first contact with potential new volunteers (templates, step by step instructions for team coordinators)

What can BeVolunteer do for the team

Since the move away from Ecobytes, OTRS has not exactly been stable. It would help a lot if BV took care to secure a stable server situation.

Faster responses from the next BoD would also spare volunteers from a good amount of frustration.

Thanks to the promotion/recruiting campaign of the BoD the Support Team gained a new valuable member. This is certainly something that the Support Team is grateful for and would like the next BoD to repeat, both for the Support Team and/or for any other team in need of new volunteers.

2.7. Safety Team (01/10/2014-30/10/2015)

Team

The team currently has 5 members. During this year, one Safety Member resigned because he was asked to take up a new role within BeWelcome that was not compatible with membership of the Safety Team. In March we welcomed one new member , We consider our current team composition as adequate in view of the current work load.

Sub team

In view of the increased spamming, we created a sub team called "spam checkers" that actively looks for spammers and ways to decrease their activity. The team is composed partly of Safety Team members and partly of trustworthy volunteers who have all signed an NDA (non-disclosure agreement).

These extra volunteers only have access to a tool showing the last signups and allowing them to suspend or ban spammers.

683 cases handled

This is 2,5 times more than last year (268 tickets). The increase is almost completely due to the increase in reports by members about spammers (one member alone reported over 90 profiles).

In the past year BeWelcome experienced a huge increase of fake profiles. On average the Safety Team had to disable between 40-60 new fake profiles every day. Most of these profiles have links to commercial websites.

Spamming can take on many forms. So far the Dev team has been able to react to and sometimes even anticipate the increase. However, it is always difficult to find the right

balance between protecting our members against spammers but not limiting the experience of genuine members.

So called "scamming spam messages" have been handled efficiently with the implementation of technical barriers and have been stopped almost completely.

Adding extra volunteers to the Spam Checkers team, some in different time zones has also improved our response time.

We would like to ask to reconsider putting a "report this profile" button on profiles. Several members have asked this, since it is easier to flag a profile than to contact the Safety Team.

The Safety Team issued several warnings to real members who misunderstood the nature of BeWelcome by asking for visa, jobs or offering paid accommodation. Some of the latter changed their profile and made clear that for BW members their offer is free, others quit BW or were banned after they failed to comply with our request.

On several occasions the Safety Team was involved in disputes between members. Most of those cases were based on misunderstandings, miscommunication or cultural differences and the Safety Team was able to moderate between the members.

On two occasions the Safety Team got in touch with the responsible people within other hospex networks and established contact to prevent members from community hopping in case they have been excluded from a platform.

In one case BeWelcome received information about a man sexually abusing guests by putting rape drugs in their drinks. With this information the Safety Team was able to detect that this person had already set up a profile on BeWelcome but luckily it seems that this profile had not been used. This member was immediately banned.

The team is pleased with the low number of serious issues that could have put members at risk. The team is vigilant and ready to act if such cases are reported in the future.

Response time

Because of the varying nature of safety tickets requiring more or less consultation within the team a meaningful analysis of response times is not possible at the moment. Especially the urgent, safety related issues (see above) were dealt with swiftly, however.

2.8. Communication Team

Members

Generally, there is no shortage of communication team volunteers. There were 141 members in the communications team before the GA in 2014. There are now **176** (October 2015).

Over all the activity of this team is very low. A few members take the initiative of taking care of specific tasks which works quite well. But there has been hardly any real teamwork and the communication team as such is pretty dormant and needs to be reactivated (and cleaned from inactive members).

Each member is at the moment a lone operator. This is because of the horizontal leadership style that all teams utilize. While it ensures no one is a team leader it does create a vacuum in direction. The workload system currently depends on a person coming

up with an idea, promoting it and gaining support. Often ideas come and go without completion if there is a lack of motivation and action. There is no real team/project management system to initiate tasks and allocate tasks to members.

Suggestions
- The communication team is not working to any clear objectives, or isn't communicating any big image or narrative. It is important that the BoD / BV create direction. After direction, the communication team can create objectives and the specific tasks to reach those objectives.

- Have a small, dedicated team that can function as a catalyst for the members of the communication team.

- Create a work flow/ project management system, to show project ideas and enable people to join sub-teams within groups.

Internal Communications
Most communication remains internal with the aim of motivating existing members to use the site for hospitality related activities and events as well as inform members of updates. While it is a necessary and important task, it is also born out of not having direction for external communications or a budget to carry out any such direction if given. The primary means of internal communication is through the newsletter. These 'newsletter' updates are not as regular as expected in the past year, given a fall off in volunteers and a lack of 'news' to communicate. It would be nice to check whether newsletters are an effective means of communication - a technical analysis of click-through rates would be interesting.

Also collaboration with translators is sometimes problematic because the newsletters are often very long and require a considerable effort from translators (we have had problems finding translators available for some "key" languages this year.

Newsletters
Two newsletters have been sent out in 2015, versus one in 2014 and four in 2013. However, the year is still young, as we can aim for a December Newsletter. However, there was a lack of communication between the communication team and the translation team resulting in the BoD getting involved and pushing forward the second 2015 newsletter.

Suggestion
- Create a system in which the communication can work with others teams. For example, the design team could help with creating fresh sticker and poster templates for the communication team to publish or event print. A BeWelcome Open Data team could indicate the effectiveness of newsletters and click through rates from the BW Facebook, twitter pages and individual online news articles.

Community News
The communication team also uses the front-page 'community news' which is only seen if members log in to the site. Community related news has been quite slow in the last year, as it is unclear what is considered to be news and what kind of news is wanted to be published on the main page.

Suggestion

- The BoD could approve a list of news topics suitable for the front page 'community news. They may include new platform releases, new platform tools, featured events, featured members, featured volunteers etc . It would also be possible to have guest editors of the community news.

External Communications

The communication team works together to drive push consistent messages through internal tools such as the BW newsletter, and external tools such as Facebook and Twitter.

Facebook

There were 2,600 likes before the 2014 GA. There were 1777 'likes' at the time of the 2013 GA. This has increased to **3,576** (October 2015).

This does reflect growing interest in BeWelcome, given the team doesn't use paid FB advertisements. The team uses the page to motivate BW users in their everyday life to engage more with bewelcome.org (i.e. fundraising drives on the main site, building awareness of new site developments, calls to action). Due to a BoD strategic decision, Facebook posts do not contain 'general' information related to travel, tourism, hospitality. BW doesn't use Facebook in any commercial sense, since we are not driving users from BeWelcome to Facebook, but vice-versa. There is no host-guest interaction on the Facebook page. The communication team is constantly looking for more interesting input and it is a task for the team to encourage members to let the team know about their stories if they want them published.

There is a public BeWelcome group (https://www.facebook.com/groups/BeWelcome/). It had about 1,400 members in 2014. This has increased to **2005**. However, it has seen less activity. Some people complained that there are too many off-topic discussions not directly related to BeWelcome. But spam and scam were removed immediately by the 7 admins.

Twitter

The @BeWelcome account had 450 subscribers in 2013, 535 subscribers in 2014 and **727** in 2015 (october). The administrators can tweet through their website and smartphone app. Like the Facebook account, 'tweets' reflect readers back to bewelcome.org. Followers and readers 'retweet' positive messages like hospitality experiences or stories related to BeWelcome. Same as with FB: The communication team is constantly looking for more interesting input and it is a task for the team to encourage members to let the team know about their stories if they want them published.

Spreadshirt

The BeWelcome shop at Spreadshirt is being reactivated. Both the US as the European shop already contain some t-shirts with interesting new designs. It would be good to have more designs - so far no designer stepped forward and it is a task for the coming year to organize this.

Conferences/Talks/Events
BeWelcome has been asked three times to take part in events about the "hype" topic "sharing economy". None of the communication team was able to attend. So the BoD tried a new approach and involved "normal" BeWelcome members by asking in local groups for willingness to represent BeWelcome. The results were positive: Each time one or several members stepped forward and presented BeWelcome at events in London, near Paris and in Turin.

Media requests
Interviews and information were handled by members of the BoD.

Other
The team continues to support members and non-members who wish to communicate about BeWelcome though BW posters, flyers and badges, Get Buttons, a Promotion Kit and press support. Over the previous twelve months there have been increased mentions of BeWelcome.

BeWelcome Outreach Team
The Communication team created a new outreach group in 2014. This group is open to all BeWelcome volunteers who want to help in spreading the word about BeWelcome through outside communication.

Stickers
Subaculture sent 10 BeWelcome stickers each to about 50 people at his own expense. Seven people sent back pictures of them using the stickers. These were used in promoting BW on Facebook, to show, BW was active and had active members. Further stickers will be sent out, given to those attending hospitality camps in order put stickers on their laptops / iPads; getting the BW idea out there and creates positive association for people.

Suggestions
- We hope that the 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 nonmembers and lead them to take action? The survey would members what attracted them to the site in the first place? It may not be open-source or privacy for example?

- We would like to have members create and spread more videos/ graphics and stories about BeWelcome. This could come through the provision of free promotional material at KEY hospitality events like Couchcrashes.

- We hope the design team could create sticker and poster templates so that individuals can self-fund and print, distribute.

- Nominate an official BV/BoD spokesperson, to which we can direct blogger and journalists inquiries / questions. Or, have regional spokes people (Africa, Europe, North America, South America, and Asia Pacific).

- Google Ad Grants is a program that gives nonprofits $10,000 every month to advertise on Google.com. It is also open to French non-profits. BoD should consider approving an application to the program.

- At the moment, the communications can't communicate anything that doesn't link directly back to the BeWelcome website. This limits the BeWelcome narrative. For example we can't mention new travel books, support causes (Climate change, low carbon lifestyles, green travel, petitions for good causes), because we maybe accused by a member of being 'political.' We need BoD / BV approval to communicate on topic areas. Why not start by allowing the team to mention, for example, inspirational travel quotes' or pictures.

- Use the BeActive Campaign funds to support communications. Use the funds to offer BeWelcome promotional material to members organizing and attending hospitality related events.

- Many hospitality events are phrased as CS events. We should seek to influence camp organizers to rename events in more neutral terms.

2.9 Suggestion Team

Although the suggestion feature/team was still active in the time of the last GA, the situation in the team wasn't optimal for a longer time. The team has had no team coordinator since February 2014. There were internal disagreements on how to proceed on certain issues. One topic that caused most controversy was the review of the suggestion process, using the suggestion tool for it. Some were in favour of proceeding, some were in favour of having a review before discussing and processing it further. The team discussed some more suggestions for (dis)approval, but it has been quiet since March 2015 (just before the Suggestion Process Review). Not all internal discussions lead to appropriate actions. At the time of writing, 26 suggestions are in the queue awaiting (dis)approval.

In July the BoD tried to find out why the suggestion tool/team seemed idle. A lack of motivated members and clear guidelines (what should be approved and what not) were named as main causes. One other reason mentioned was the inability to work together on the team.

There are no signs that this situation changes on itself in the near future. It is included as a topic to discuss in the GA of 2015, as BeWelcome could benefit from a working suggestion feature.

2.10 Translation Team

Translators

So far, **230** members have given rights to translate the website. Of those, **157** still had an active status on October 30th 2015. Of those translators, 94 of them logged in in the last 3 months. **73** were set inactive (20 in 2014).

It is not possible for the coordinators to see how the activity is spread, i.e. how much each member with translation rights has translated and over what time period.

Languages

BW has been (partly) translated in 40 (or say 39, if Traditional Chinese and Simpified Chinese are counted as one language):

English 100.0%	Czech 41.0%	Swedish 12.7%	Armenian 4.4%
Portuguese 99.3%	Simp. Chinese 34.6%	Polish 12.5%	Indonesian 3.3%
Dutch 97.0%	Catalan 26.7%	Lithuanian 12.2%	Bulgarian 2.6%
Spanish 88.3%	Croatian 21.3%	Hungarian 10.7%	Latvian 2.5%
Russian 86.1%	Portuguese (br) 20.3%	Finnish 9.9%	Romanian 2.1%
Italian 84.0%	Arabic 17.9%	Danish 8.4%	Norwegian 1.8%
Serbian 83.6%	Esperanto 17.3%	Slovak 7.1%	Swahili 1.8%
German 83.2%	Turkish 15.3%	Persian 7.0%	Hindi 1.7%
French 63.1%	Trad. Chinese 15.3%	Japanese 5.3%	Breton 1.2%
Greek 54.2%	Basque 13.5%	Kurdish 5.0%	Malay 0.7%

Difficulties

- When multiple translators of the same language translate texts, it's difficult to find out how certain returning words are translated exactly.

- Working from the volunteer pages, when translating, more context is required. A link to the page(s) where the code can be found would be of great help.

3. BeWelcome Meetings and Unconferences

378 activities were announced through the activities tool between November 10th 2014 and November 8th 2015. Of those, there was one meeting with the BoD and one bigger event: Seek the Duck. Unfortunately, most activities showed little interest from other members.

3.1. Seek The Duck - Toulouse, July 2015

Like every year, the BeWelcome members of the Toulouse area organized which is the longest running event of BeWelcome: Seek The Duck. This year, it runs from the 1st to the 3rd of may. As the event was organized a bit more last minute than usual, it was decided to invite people from Couchsurfing to the event. Some of the activities of Seek the Duck where announced on Couchsurfing, inviting people to come and have a look, in order to meet people from this « other » website. The idea was to give more visibility to the event, but also to BeWelcome. On the few members of CS who joined, a couple were actually quite interested by BeWelcome.

The event in itself was a success. Up to thirty participants at some activities. It also leads to the organization of another event later in the year, in Ariege. It also motivates members from Lyon to organize other events there (the unconference there was a great success, and members in Lyon want to organize more events).

3.2. BeActive

This year, none of the budget reserved for the BeActive campaign has been allocated by the BoD. After advertising the campaign in a newsletter and in the community news, several messages of people interested reached the BoD, unfortunately, just one with real concrete plans. This member wrote an application, but was rejected at first for not meeting the conditions. A second application was too poor on information. The BoD wrote a questionnaire, helping future applications. The applicant used this questionnaire, but the BoD had too many questions and doubts to allocate a budget on a short notice.

The questionnaire has been uploaded on BeVolunteer.org and the new BoD will be handed a list with all members who showed interest, to be contacted with this new application aid in the hope to get more concrete applications.

3.3. Presentations at conferences

With the rise of the so-called "Sharing Economy" BeWelcome has been asked several times in the past months to participate at events, festivals and conferences.

First in a row was the alternative festival Alternatiba which took place not far from Paris, France, in St Quentin en Yvelines June 6th and 7th. Several BeWelcome members like OctoberTales, zorrolepunk, Babs, Luria, NicZeChemist took the chance not only to present and talk about our way of travelling and sharing hospitality but also to meet up and get to know each other better.

About a month later "Commons Rising" (http://commonsrising.uk/the-commons-taster) invited to a one-day event which took place July 11th at Goldsmith University in London, Great Britain. conrado888 and jalon attended on behalf of BeWelcome. They had prepared

a slide presentation which became the base now for our future presentations. More than 30 attendees were involved in intensive discussions which lasted the whole day.

Ianto and girandoliere presented BeWelcome October 15th in Torino, Italy, at the "Sharing Economy: Traveling and Living" event which was organized by the local newspaper "Vicini". Amongst the other participating organisations were Homelink and Workaway. Due to very bad weather conditions only about 20 people attended the event.

4. Conclusion and suggestions

After a tumultuous 2014 for BeVolunteer, 2015 has been the year of stabilisation. The number of volunteers in BeWelcome slowly grew, although it doesn't count for all teams. Also the number of members of BeVolunteer grew with 3, whereas the amount of active members stayed more or less the same. From this base, BeVolunteer can and should improve the involvement of more volunteers. Finding new volunteers and motivate them to help BeWelcome is one of the top priorities of this organisation, just as keep the experienced volunteers motivated.

Suggestions

The BoD has some suggestions for BeVolunteer and for the next BoD:

- Comply with the requirements of the French government (see 1.2).

- Create a list of less visible potential BeVolunteer members and invite them to join the organisation.

- Clarify roles and responsibilities for teams, including the BoD.

- Make the development / redesign of the website more visible, for example by communicating with the community from time to time through community news or forum.

- Decide and make the decisions visible.