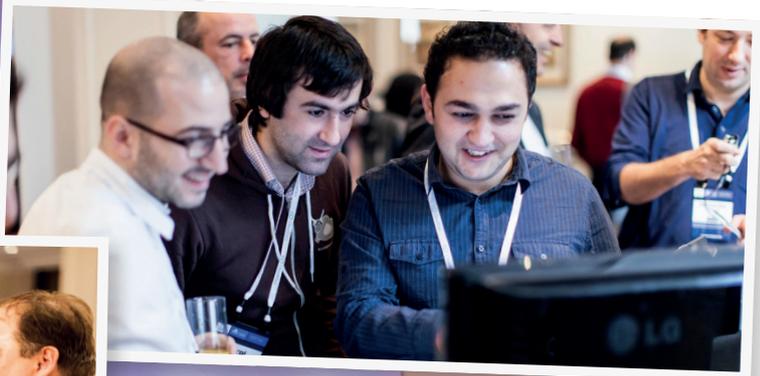




The Apache Software Foundation celebrated its fifteenth anniversary while we were in attendance.



CloudStack Collaboration Conference Europe

The Linux Foundation and the Apache Software Foundation join forces in Budapest.

Despite containing the word 'cloud', CloudStack has much more in common with a typical open source project than the world of big budget cloud hyperbole. It's a collection of software and a management interface that was at one time commercial and then become known as **Cloud.com**. **Cloud.com** began a transition to GPLv3 in May 2010 which was completed later in 2011 after **Cloud.com** was bought by Citrix, the large US-based server/networking company. The entire project was then donated to the Apache Software Foundation and successfully progressed through its incubator program before becoming a fully fledged part of Apache project. CloudStack is now one of Apache's

'top-level' projects, alongside its famous HTTP web server, OpenOffice, Hadoop, SpamAssassin, Subversion and many others.

CloudStack offers 'infrastructure as a service'. That means it manages and deploys the virtual machines that run yours or your customer's operating systems, and eventually, services and software. It also manages and dynamically deploys the resources needed by those machines such as storage and virtual networking. Cloud vendors like to call this 'orchestration', and CloudStack does all of this by harnessing lots of different open source tools, such as the Hadoop Distributed File System, the Mesos distributed systems kernel, the Cassandra database

and the Spark cluster computing engine. It's no coincidence that all of these projects happen to fall under the auspices of the Apache Software Foundation, so it's a natural fit.

It's also a stack of components that's often compared to OpenStack, the dominant platform for open source clouds. Both projects are IaaS solutions and both are used by a wide variety of companies. But they're quite different in implementation, community and marketing budgets. CloudStack suffers from the latter in particular, especially as the Apache Software Foundation is mostly run by volunteers. OpenStack, by comparison, famously had both NASA and Rackspace as initial investors.

"Certainly, it has ramifications," we were told by David Nalley, when we asked about marketing budgets. "In some ways, it's letting the market decide, it's letting the project decide, but not necessarily with the Apache Foundation's financial strength behind any given project."

David is both a CloudStack committer and a member of the Apache Software Foundation, as are many of the attendees here. His honest appraisal on the differences between how both projects are marketed is a great indicator for what this conference, and this community, is like.

"If you want to have a voice in where a project's going, you have to be doing something," he later said, "And the only people who have a voice are the people who have earned the seat at the table."

As we were told in the keynotes, "it's about users being developers," and this must have been why the conference was a relatively informal, collaborative, developer-centric gathering of geeks and geek-related enterprises, where the hotel's corridors are considered a central track and where its people care more about providing a genuine open alternative than whether there was a marketing budget.

Community meets enterprise

Remarkably, and completely in contrast to our experience, that seemed to be the prevailing attitude from companies in attendance too. When we spoke to Giles Sirett, for example, CEO of ShapeBlue, the largest independent integrator of Cloudstack, his earnestness sounded familiar.

"People don't know that 75% of the world's websites are delivered by Apache's web server and people don't really know that a good percentage of the world's public clouds are delivered by CloudStack – because it's boring plumbing and it should be boring plumbing," he told us.

It's obvious that a lot of Apache philosophy has gone into CloudStack since its migration from **Cloud.com**, and that's something you can't easily learn without being here. The custodianship of The

A subscription to our magazine was won by Michael Ducy, Global Partner Evangelist at Chef. Let us know what you think, Michael!



Giles Sirett is both the CEO of ShapeBlue, the largest independent integrator of Cloudstack, and a member of the Project Management Committee at Apache CloudStack

Budapest: home of the CloudStack Collaboration Conference and thousands of protesters fighting against an insane internet tax.



Apache Foundation, and respect for its governance model, is seen as a badge of honour for the many of the CloudStack people we spoke to and that has resulted in a project that isn't run by a limited number of vendors, and offers far greater diversity.

"People don't know that a good percentage of the world's public clouds are delivered by CloudStack."

Throughout 2014, there were 32,000+ unique downloads from

140 different countries. The historically Citrix-oriented Xen hypervisor shares dominance with KVM (34% to 31%), with CentOS being the most popular host (58%), followed by Ubuntu/Debian (26%) and Red Hat Enterprise (11%). OpenStack, by comparison, is apparently 95% KVM running on Ubuntu.

CloudStack is also being used by companies as varied as Farmville's Zynga, BT and 'a very large satellite broadcaster', with the biggest deployments remaining private. There's a smaller range in the size of deployment, though, with the a third of private cloud's running small 1–50 instances and another third running 100–500. But there are still some 3% with more than 10,000 instances, so CloudStack can scale.

In CloudStack, we've found a genuine open source project and that realisation has surprising consequences; not since Eucalyptus was bundled with Ubuntu server have we wanted to start playing with cloud installations and wanting to write about it. [L]