

# A proposal for a community-based openSUSE testing team

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# Outline

- Why a testing team?
- The current situation
- Possible improvements
- What the users community can do?
  - Testing team
  - What do we need?



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Why a testing team?

# Why a testing team?

- Have a better feedback during the whole development process.
- Increase the quality of bug-reports.
- Make testing more systematic, to ensure minimum level of qualities of the distribution.
- OpenSUSE wants to be the best and most usable distribution!



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The current situation

# The current situation...

During development phases:

- Community testing is concentrated in the beta stage, and extremely limited in alpha stage.
- Problems are often reported too close to the release
  - Blockers and critical bugs are fixed, but testing is limited.
  - Non-critical but very evident bugs goes in the final release too frequently.



# The current situation...

After release:

- Patches are released with a complicated process, not completely transparent to the community:
  - Complicated approval mechanism
  - Approval does not account for users needs.
- Slow release of non-critical patches
  - To a user not only security is important, but also functionality.
  - Redirecting users to the buildservice is not a solution.



# Short problem analysis

- Problem 1
  - Alpha are not tested enough
- Consequences
  - The alpha stage is lost from a testing point of view.
- Causes
  - Alpha are sometimes barely installable
    - Solution → Improve the quality of at least the last alpha releases.
  - Not enough people with sufficient experience to test alpha releases
    - Solution → Write guided tutorials to teach users how to perform testing of development releases
    - Solution → **Have a stable group of users that performs tests on development releases**



# Short problem analysis

- **Problem 2**
  - Problems are reported too late in beta stage
- **Consequences**
  - Short time to fix bugs and to test fixes.
  - Bugs risk to be present in the final release.
- **Causes**
  - Limited testing in alpha stage → Already discussed.
  - Users are not involved in early development stages
    - **Solution** → **Have a stable group of users that performs tests on development releases.**
    - **Solution** → Involve more users **providing them easy documentation** so they can learn and **making them feel part of the project**, which should target their needs.



# Short problem analysis

- **Problem 3**

- Patches are released with a complicated process, not completely transparent to the community

- **Consequences**

- Non-security related problems are fixed too slowly or not fixed at all.
- Users perceive their needs are not listened to.
- Possibly negatively influences participation to the community and number of users.

- **Causes**

- Complicated approval mechanism
- Approval does not account for users needs.
- Solutions → **It is a Novell internal problem. Discussion is necessary with decision-makers.**



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What the users  
community can do?

# Testing team

- What is it?
  - A relatively small group of users and community members.
- What is its role?
  - Coordinating the testing activities.
  - Performing systematic testing in critical areas.
  - Write documentation for new potential users/testers.
  - Help newcomers to perform testing and to report their problems.



# What do we need to start?

- Volunteers
  - Motivated
    - Many things need to be done
    - A lot of things need be learnt.
  - Patient
    - It will take time to set it up.
    - It will need “testing” ;-)
  - Reasonable
    - Do not expect advantages in having your problems fixed or quick bug fixes.



# What do we need to start?

- Collaboration from Novell developers
  - Testers and users expect fixes
    - Reasonable time frames.
  - Re-discussion of the patch release policy
    - It has to become easier and more efficient.
  - Some help
    - Support in revising tutorials.
    - Reduction of procedure complexity.



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