

Colm ? def. An Open Source building block.

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At the Irish Open Source Technology Conference, there's some very impressive people lined up - evangelists from the US, England and Wales, 19yr old 'self made' millionaires and even one or two special guests (more on June 1st). So, how about a local Dubliner to add into the mix.

Colm MacCárthaigh, a technologist at Joost.com, is an active contributor to many open source projects. He is a member Apache Software Foundation and contributes on the development team for the Apache httpd server. He has been involved in projects as varied as the Exim mail server and the Debian and Ubuntu Operating Systems.

As busy as he is, one of Colm's aims is to try and encourage more and more people to get involved in Open Source Projects. Not so long ago, it was possible to count all of the Open Source developers in Ireland, and he knew most of them personally. But not any more.

Colm said "I'm presenting at IOTC to continue hopefully to get across to people the best ways of getting involved and making the most of Open Source. A lot of emphasis is placed on the cost-effectiveness and reliability of Open Source, and those are true - but what many people miss are the benefits that come from actually getting involved in an Open Source project. Even steps as light as voting for bugs, or a simple mail to a development list can make an enormous difference."

Barry Alistair of IrishDev.com, event organizers of the IOTC 2008 said, 'A few months ago on a trip to the US, I was amazed at seeing youths as young as 15 and 16 years in Starbucks with their 'Airs' - socialising, latte and open source. They were in their droves; it was an eye-opener to say the least. Starbucks are popping up around Ireland now and all we need is the culture of young 'geeks' to add to the mix. It's encouraging seeing committers like Colm who, with their drive and passion, are evangelising the Open Source movement and ultimately bringing it to our next generation of developer. If Ireland is to sustain its dominance in the global software market, the 'youth' are essential."

Locally there are large companies such as IONA Google and SUN advocating OSS, but there are many Open Source projects having important Irish contingents; Wordpress Apache Spamassassin and GIMP for example. Colm, whose past career has included a stint as a Senior Network Engineer at HEAnet, believes that we definitely punch above our weight but feels more SMEs should make more use of Open Source.

In his spare time (!) Colm enjoys photography, is a campaigner for digital rights and secure electronic voting and by night is a very keen musician.

No stranger to the stage then, make sure if you can't get along to the IOTC on June 18th through 20th to meet Colm personally, then you tune in to IOTC Websitewhere you can see him in full OSS flow on the 19th and 20th of June ? LIVE.

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IOTC2008@IrishDev.com and we'll be happy to send a reminder, weekly updates and even chances to win complimentary tickets.

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