



# **Birmingham Perl Mengers**

## **A Feedback Response**

### **of the**

# **2006 YAPC::Europe Perl Conference**



## Introduction

Firstly, it was great to see so many positive comments. After the three years of planning, it was very gratifying to know that the conference had been a success.

This document includes many fragments from comments that were received by the organisers of the 2006 YAPC::Europe Perl Conference during their survey. Each survey provided the attendee with the ability to provide suggestions for future events and feedback on the 2006 event. As it turned out the attendees who used these boxes, pretty much used both interchangeably.

Following each set of fragments are our perspective on theme of the suggestion and feedback we received. These are our own personal thoughts, and merely stated to hopefully explain why some things happened the way they did.

As part of the organisation of the conference, Birmingham.pm became incorporated as Birmingham Perl Mongers Limited, a non-profit organisation. Three of the principal organisers became directors or officers of the company and in UK law, directors of non-profit organisations are not allowed to receive payment for work. As such, everyone's time and effort in putting on this conference was given freely. We have since been staggered at how much someone can be paid for organising a conference, so we may well become consulting conference organisers in the future ;)

However, for this event we all did it because we love Perl and wanted to give something special back to the community. We all have full time jobs and were fortunate enough to have partners and family who were willing to lose us for several nights each week for nearly a year prior to the conference.

So with that introduction out of the way, what follows are just a selection of the comments we received from the survey and our thoughts, which will hopefully provide a glimpse of the effort involved in organising a conference and why not everything always goes according to plan.

The organisers of YAPC::Europe::2006



## Suggestions and Feedback

**"Only the Morgan Stanley Hall was big enough for any talk. I failed to attend 2 or 3 talks because Camel and Onion rooms were too small :-/ "**

**"The smaller rooms have been too small."**

Barbie:

This was a common complaint. Unfortunately our choice of venue was fraught with many problems, not least of which was cost. Due to Birmingham being such a popular destination for conferences, there are over 40 venues we had to choose from, all varying in size and cost. Our first two choices could easily have accommodated everyone, but the costs became too prohibitive when we were unable to secure any major sponsorship early on.

The CBSO Centre were willing to provide the complete venue at a very reasonable cost, and certainly one we felt we could afford. It's worth noting that up until a few weeks before the conference started, we still hadn't covered our costs by a considerable sum. At this point the organisers themselves were preparing to fund the last few thousand pounds themselves. Thankfully a few last minute sponsors and a large number of attendees came through for us.

Some have mentioned that we should have approached the Universities, and bizarrely enough our first choice was Aston Uni, which also happened to be the most expensive. Just to give you an idea, the following are approximate costs simply for hiring the venue only:

Aston University	£25,000
Birmingham University	£20,000
University of Central England	£20,000
Birmingham Conservatoire [1]	£16,000
CBSO Centre	£ 7,000

[1] - The Music School part of UCE, where GUADEC will be held in 2007.

As you can see, holding a conference is not cheap. Even if we had an "in", as in someone who was on the inside, it would not have helped. We did have people on the inside, but for



the numbers of attendees we expected and got, they would not have been able to authorise the use of the buildings. In the UK, insurance for events can be extremely high and while Colleges and Universities are happy to support events (local user groups, etc), they need official agreements and documents signed before allowing an event like YAPC to take place.

We did approach a number of smaller venues, including schools, but we feel we got the right venue for the right price. It might not have been perfect, but for the most part people enjoyed the talks and speakers, so feel we didn't do too badly.

Steve:

In addition to Barbie's comments, A great deal of time was invested to try to find a suitable venue ( probably measured in terms of man weeks rather than days ), and a number of venues were contacted. Although some had sufficient space for the cost, there were significant downsides to all of the alternatives within our budget ( accessibility, location, security, etc. ), and the CBSO was by far the best option within the scope of affordability.

I can appreciate this being frustrating for some people, and we would have liked a venue with larger secondary and tertiary rooms. We did try our hardest, but unfortunately it just wasn't possible.

JJ:

The Onion and Camel rooms were criticised for being too small, and for several of the talks (most notably the DBI session and "Barely Legal XXX Perl") they were. But please do not underestimate the difficulties we had (and the amount of time spent) on securing a venue at a price that would still let us charge a low admission fee for attendees. We explored all available options, and it is a simple fact that if we had selected a venue with larger rooms then we would have had to significantly increase the admission fee, making YAPC into a commercially priced conference rather than a grass-roots event. On balance I believe we made the right decision.

**"If there was cheaper place to stay that should have been superious."**

Barbie:

We did promote nitenite as the cheaper option. Unfortunately there aren't any cheaper places we had access to, which we could promote. Had we known about them we would certainly have let you know about them.

As we were not at a University we didn't have access to any Halls of Residence, but even the rates at Aston Uni, which is the closest to the city centre, were on par with the regular hotels.



**"When bargaining special conference rates with the Hotels near the venue, please try to include internet connection."**

Barbie:

We did try, but the hotel doesn't do special deals just for guests. Had we held the conference at The Jury's Inn (our second choice venue), then we would have been able to arrange something. This is the same for all the hotels we approached, who had some form of separate payment system for internet broadband. nitenite I believe had free WiFi though.

**"Organized sight seeing after or before the conference"**

**"More structured social programme to help new people (like myself) get to know more people."**

Barbie:

Organising a conference is extremely time consuming, the few days leading up to the conference, we still had lots of things to deal with. After the conference our partners and families wanted to actually spend some time with us. All four organisers have day jobs, and even took time off as holiday in some cases to ensure that the conference happened. Taking the extra time to arrange sightseeing tours was just not possible. Plus we needed the rest.

We did try and promote things for people to do on the website and in the newsletters, which had some interest on the wiki. Many places to visit were in or close to the city centre. Some took the chance to visit the Sealife Centre and at least one person visited Cadbury World.

We tried to ensure there were some evening meetups, should anyone wish to head to a restaurant or pub to get together before and after the conference, but we really didn't have the time to organise anything else.

Steve:

I think there is two issues here - one is an "after hours" style event, and the other is meeting people. The issues facing "conference virgins" on a getting to know people front is discussed elsewhere in this document. I personally feel that the other issue, a social programme after the main event, for me at least is a little too much of a luxury given the nature of the event (voluntary organised and run), partially for the reasons that Barbie has already mentioned (the desire to see loved ones and the time taken to organise such events), but also for the "Sods Law" factor - the more things that are planned, the more likely it is that something will go wrong. We were quite stretched at many points during the conference and introducing more potential issues to deal with, isn't something I'd fancy. Imagine if we had



arranged a bus tour and the bus broke down. The phrase "Keep It Simple Stupid" (KISS) is popular amongst project managers for a very good reason.

**"More effort not to schedule talks on similar/related topics at the same times ('testing' seemed to collide a few times)."**

Barbie:

We were a victim of our own success. We had a tremendous wealth of talks submitted and we were delighted to be able to allow every speaker who submitted a talk the chance to speak. We are aware there were some talks that did overlap, but as the schedule changed a few times, for a variety of reasons, it was difficult not to end up clashing somewhere.

The fact that several people were saying they were having to choose which talks NOT to go to, made us feel we'd actually got that part right. We wanted people to feel like they had a good reason for getting up early in the morning to be at the venue for 9am and then staying right until the end of the day.

**"More guidance about the level of Perl skill that each talk was pitched for"**

Steve:

I don't think we asked for an anticipated audience in the call for speakers, but I think it might be a useful addition to the mandatory submission requirements in the future.

Barbie:

Some speakers did state the audience level, and that was included in the abstracts that were available online. However, I'd agree with Steve, this would be useful to have as a mandatory field in future talk submissions.

**"Personally I would have quite liked a little more "unscheduled" time during the day for more spontaneous meeting of folk. I had too many interesting conversations that were cut off as people ran off to different talks."**

Barbie:

What can we say, except again that we were a victim of our own success. If we hadn't had so many great talks, then yes I'm sure we would have either made breaks longer, or left one room available for BOF type discussions. However, we had over 70 great talks to schedule. We'd rather have too many talks to schedule than not enough.

Plus gaps don't work for everybody.



**"Some guidelines to organisers of BOF or workshop sessions so as to maximise their usefulness for attendees. Something which starts with almost no structure is asking for trouble."**

**"The BoFs seemed a bit constrained on time"**

Barbie:

BOFs by their very nature are extremely ad-hoc. Normally the BOF sessions only happen at the end of the day, and often in the pub or hotel bar. We wanted to encourage more ad-hoc discussion during the day, so made the workshop room available for the BOFs.

How long a BOF lasts is entirely up to you. Just because we had to close the building at a certain time, didn't mean the BOF had to stop. Arrange to reconvene at a restaurant, pub or bar for the evening if you feel you need to continue the discussion.

Please bear in mind that BOFs are your event, not ours. Consider them an ad-hoc conference within a conference. We just made space and time available during the day for you to hold them :)

Steve:

If anyone wants to write a document titled "Organising a BOF or Workshop so as to maximise their usefulness to attendees", then release it under a Creative Commons licence, perhaps that could be referenced by future organisers whilst still retaining the open self-organising approach to such things. Or alternatively this could be a subject for a BOF at the next YAPC ;)

**"What is needed is some sort of straw poll mechanism just before the conference starts, to gauge the interest in the talks and thereby possibly swaps talk rooms."**

**"Get people to indicate beforehand which talks you might be attending so that the organisers can allocate the correct size rooms"**

Barbie:

Hmmm. Take some time to think about that one. Did you plan out all the talks you would be attending at least a month before the event? Did you go to all the talks you planned to? Were there any talks you attended on the spur of the moment? Were there some you missed because you wanted to carry on a discussion, or were too tired?

Traditional tutorial style conferences do have sign-ups and it works, but short talk type conferences are a lot more free style. People often choose a few talks ahead of time that they



really want to see, but the rest are very much decided on the moment, based on mood, company, hangovers, interest and recommendation.

Having a straw poll would be next to useless, as it is extremely doubtful whether all, or even a majority, of attendees would have responded. Unless at least about 75% of attendees respond, you are unlikely to get any kind of flavour of what talks are going to be popular.

Steve:

We did initially consider creating some software to do this for us, but with everything else to do we simply didn't have the time available to write it. If anyone wants to write a module for ACT that accomplishes this, or wishes to take it on as a Perl module, then I'll be the first to congratulate them.

In addition to Barbie's comments, I'd like to add a few extra thoughts - firstly, some speakers have preferences about when they speak. As the majority of speakers spoke for free ( or rather had their attendance fee waived ), some of these speakers made quite reasonable requests on when they could attend, which we had to respect, while others had to cancel at last minute, causing us to reschedule talks.

When you consider all of this and the effects on trying to manage sessions of different lengths, accommodating visitor feedback into the scheduling process becomes quite an administrative burden, which we did not have the resource to manage.

I am also very sceptical if the data could be collected early enough to be effective.

**"A couple more "celebrity" speakers. E.g. Damien Conway, Mark Jason Dominus and Gisle Aas."**

Barbie:

We had hoped to approach around 4-5 "celebrity speakers", but unfortunately we didn't get enough early sponsorship to guarantee speakers that we could cover their costs. Thankfully, Google very early on said they would like sponsor Larry Wall to attend, which we are very grateful for.

Had we had sponsors asking to sponsor other international speakers, we would certainly have tried to get some of them along. We did try and find out if Damian would be able to make it, but unfortunately his travel plans were scheduled around EuroOSCON a few weeks later. We actually had a list of about 10 people we wanted to approach, and thankfully a few international speakers came under their own steam anyway, for which we are extremely grateful for, and now owe all of them lots of beer :)





Steve:

I'd have loved this, but our cash-flow was very tight, and until the last minute it looked like the organisers faced personal financial loss to cover the conference costs. Hence it was not possible to approach these speakers.

**"More power points"**

**"more mains power outlets available."**

Barbie:

We had hoped to get more power strips, but unfortunately we were under subscribed.

However, it should be noted that it is worth bringing your own. In the spirit of these events, it's very much a grassroots thing. I personally have taken at least one power strip with me to every conference I go to, and adapters. It has meant I've been able to plug in virtually anywhere, and have been able to provide more sockets for people to use should they not have thought about their own power consumption.

Brian:

It is hard to get EU power strips in the UK. The organisers of Braga YAPC::Europe were asked if they could bring along the excess they had from last year, but unfortunately this didn't happen.

**"It would have been great if you had temporary provided electric plug adapter, I had many difficulties to find one. The one I had taken from France was not working."**

Barbie:

We actually had a few on the reception desk. but nobody asked for one. To be honest this isn't really our problem, but we did try and think of these things. If you are travelling to another country, you should always ensure you have a suitable travel adapter with you.

Steve:

I had a similar problem in Paris and was wondering around everywhere trying to find one. Whilst I accept it was my fault, It's somewhat comforting to know I'm not the only one who has forgotten such an essential item. Its a nice to have, but perhaps a list of common items requested at YAPCs could be sorted - a where to buy what FAQ of sorts.



**"The details on how to get wireless connection should be available on a wall"**

Barbie:

This has completely lost me! Did you not see the signs (see below) on the wall? We also had an instruction leaflet in EVERY attendee bag. If you didn't see them, then I'm really struggling to find any other way of advertising the instructions. Actually I can think of a few ways, but they wouldn't have been popular ;^)



Steve:

In hindsight think it would have been a good idea to have a central point for notices rather than having several things spread out over the reception area ( BOF board in one place, notices in another, schedule on another wall ). Keeping it all together may have increased usability ( at the risk of overcrowding ). It may have also have been an idea to project the software used on the flatscreen through the projectors in the rooms during breaks.



**"Ask attendees, the paying ones, whether they would mind lending a hand if necessary. Add a field to the registration form: "if the organizers need extra hands, would you like to help them out"."**

Barbie:

This is often difficult. While we would greatly have appreciated help, it was often hard to know what to get people to do. Much of the jobs required the organisers involvement. We did ask various members of Birmingham.pm to help out, but largely the only jobs we could handover were for timekeepers, for which Andrew, Richard and Dave did a magnificent job.

To be honest the biggest help would have been for anyone to have got involved with the organisation several months before the event. Even talking to pubs, hotels and the like would have helped to spread the load a little. We would suggest to future organisers that they have a "runner". Someone not involved in the core organisation who is willing to go and get anything deemed necessary at short notice. Even sandwiches at lunchtime :)

Steve:

On the opening morning there was a lot of stuff going on. Whilst the help would have been appreciated, unfortunately I don't think there would have been time to try to organise a team of volunteers on top of everything else. So such requests may have ended up being counter productive.

Brian:

I should also like to thank Simon Cozens, who stepped in to help with a number of aspects of the conference at very short notice.

**"This was my first YAPC. I've found it very good. The only "difficulty" is the integration when you know nobody. "**

Barbie:

This is always a problem, and if you have some suggestions of how to make this better, please contact the YAPC::Europe conference committee. The organisers of future events would also be happy to hear of things that can be done to improve the whole conference experience for newcomers, and we'll certainly be passing on our suggestions.

One thing to remember is that the organisers themselves will be extremely busy during the event. I personally had wanted to meet a lot of the newcomers, partly to understand why they came, but also to encourage them to get involved afterwards too. Unfortunately I had so many things to do, I think I only really got to meet a few new attendees.



Steve:

Here's a challenge for someone then. Help out the newbies by organising a conference virgins BOF following the close of play of day 1 in Vienna ( unless this years organisers their have own competing plans ).

Brian:

I remember feeling the same at my first YAPC. This is why we asked José to do the keynote session. This talk was in fact the only talk at the conference that was “commissioned” by the organisers rather than being submitted.

**"The pubs that the organisers took us to sucked (All Bar One? And the initial night's venue was terrible.)"**

Barbie:

Unfortunately the venue is in a part of town that isn't geared towards geeks. We do apologise for this, and hopefully when we organise another event, we'll actually pick the pubs that we ourselves use, both personally and for Birmingham.pm events.

Our main reason for the choice of bars was simply location. All were within stumbling distance of the venue and hotels. Had we chosen places like The Wellington, Bennett's, The Old Joint Stock, etc., we thought it might have been too big a trek for some.

Steve:

We tried. As Barbie has said, a lot of it is down to the area. We visited a great number of the pubs, in the hope of getting somewhere suitable, but there is a bit of a catch 22 situation - without people registering early and paying we don't have money or numbers of attendees, either of which we would need to reserve space. By the time we had the money and knew how many people were coming it was too late to do any better.

In future everyone can do there bit by registering early and paying as soon as they are able to.

**"A pub with free wlan access afterwards would be a good idea :-)"**

Barbie:

Many Birmingham pubs were approached several years ago by chains such as The Cloud, to provide wireless at a price. At the time the pubs themselves had no interest in providing wireless networks (free or otherwise) and often had no idea how to do it. These chains



provided all the set up and gave the pub a nice commission. As far as the pub is concerned, it's a nice little extra. Thus they have no interest in trying to broker a deal, even if 100+ geeks with laptops are about to descend on the place.

Had we had the time and resources available nearer to the event, we might have been able to pay for several accounts, but we were too busy organising other things at this point.

The UK has a different culture when it comes to pubs. We eat, drink and socialise there, therefore there is a low request for anything like free wireless. Perhaps in a few years time, when more and more people are relying on mobile wireless technology will pubs see it worth their while, but at the current time we were out of luck.

**"Catering: not just coffee, thee and cookies."**

**"Better interval snacks"**

Barbie:

This gets to be a common complaint at YAPCs. Unfortunately refreshments have a significant cost, bearing in mind that not everybody wants the same thing. Braga were very fortunate that a sponsor came forward, enabling them to provide fruit and the like.

Some said that they would be willing to pay more for us to include better refreshments and snacks, but not everyone would. Its the same old story, you can't please everyone.

Brian:

The fact that we had spare funds was not apparent until very late on, by which time we were too rushed off our feet to organise better refreshments. Sorry.

**"I think that the conference dinner was an excellent ice breaker - perhaps it should be held earlier, say on the first night?"**

**"The meal rocked."**

**"Curry was great"**

Barbie:

This was something that I'd seen work well at YAPC::NA, so we felt it was worth doing. Braga pipped us to the post by putting on the first YAPC::Europe conference dinner, but as it was such a great success, it only reaffirmed that this was one aspect of the conference we really had to do.



We glad you liked the curry idea, which aside from being a personal favourite, was also appropriate for Birmingham. If you weren't aware, the Balti style of curry was invented in Birmingham by Indian workers at the now long gone Leyland car factory. The Indian restaurant business in Birmingham is one of the largest in the UK.

**"There needs to be boards plastered around the place with the schedule on (useful for when you've lost your programme after some drunken fool ran off with it the night before.)"**

Barbie:

We did initially have some extra programmes, but these quickly ran out. Steve and Brian did try and make an effort to print out the days events and put them up near the front desk, but it was a bit ad-hoc. Had we thought about it, we would have provided a special board.

However, it may not have been obvious, but the flat screen that was behind the front desk, was promoting all the talks that were on at the current moment and the next ones, in each room. We originally hoped to have this running on several screens around the building, but in the end it just wasn't possible. The software will be passed on to future organisers, should they wish to use it.

Steve:

We should have had the large print one on the wall from day 1 - The flat screen was a nice idea but in practise a few technical niggles diminished its usability. Whilst it was on the web, not everyone has a laptop, and its something I think we could have done better in hindsight.

**"The expo was a bit thin,"**

Barbie:

We didn't have a lot of space either. Seeing as no other YAPC::Europe has ever done this, I actually find it a rather hollow complaint. It was an idea we came up with soon after deciding to do the conference, as all of us had been to Linux Expos and thought that it would be nice to get a similar feel, albeit on a smaller scale, at our conference.

We originally wanted more OpenSource/Perl projects involved, but we're happy that sponsors found it useful for recruiting purposes too. YAPC::NA also had a similar success, and I think it will be interesting to try and accommodate the expo idea for future events, as aside from getting sponsors more profile, it also makes people more aware of just how other companies are using Perl. It also might encourage other sponsors, who have never sponsored a Perl event before, to get involved. As far as I'm concerned, the more the merrier, as it all



helps to promote Perl. However, it shouldn't be at the expense of the conference itself.

Steve:

It was the first time its been done at a YAPC::Europe, and I quite liked it. Personally I'd like to have seen more space and time devoted to it, so as to create a more informal environment with less competing talks for peoples attention. That's just my opinion though.

I do hope that it can be built upon to become a regular fixture. We would have liked to have seen more projects, but not all the people we invited turned up, and such an event does add additional difficulty on top of the required organisation in terms of insurance, and the venues health and safety requirements.

**"The auction was a bit long."**

Barbie:

It was. Having witnessed the YAPC::NA silent auction, in retrospect we should have done something similar. There was a large amount of items given to us for auction, even some we didn't even get around to, so it seemed only fair to give them all a chance.

In future, I think books should be part of a silent auction, leaving the bulk of the time for the fun and bizarre stuff. However, we are very grateful for all the book sponsors, as with their donations we did help to raise a notable amount of money for next year's organisers.

Steve:

I'd agree with this. I think organisers need to pay close attention to this to ensure a shorter time frame in the future.

**"Accept euros, even in countries that does not use it yet."**

**"Another thing is the repeated "Sterling pounds only" line ... this is just costing more to each individual without gaining you anything."**

Barbie:

Actually, it would have cost us more to accept Euros. We made the decision to only accept Sterling, as the costs of administration would have meant we were reducing the amount of money we would receive noticeably. Fees were already high in some cases. On the reverse, UK attendees, who have made up over half of the attendees at every YAPC::Europe event, have never complained about having to pay in Euros for other non-UK based YAPCs ;)



Steve:

As Barbie said, accepting Euros would have been prohibitively expensive. All I can suggest that if a similar situation happens in future, then individuals may gain by coming together, pooling funds and buying tickets in groups to reduce these fees.

Brian:

It would have been unfair to expect those paying in pounds to subsidise those paying in Euros. As such we'd have had to set the Euro price to cover the costs and it's unlikely that Euro-zone visitors would have been any better off.

JJ:

A few delegates complained that we were not accepting foreign currency. Now with an event such as YAPC that attracts an international audience, currency conversion is simply going to be a fact of life for a proportion of the attendees, whether these are Europeans coming over to the UK or Brits travelling to Europe (not to mention visitors from the USA and further afield). No matter how the payment processing is organised, at some point a currency conversion will need to be made as the various suppliers (venue, insurance, refreshments etc.) will obviously only accept payment in the legal tender of the host country.

However, as YAPC is run by volunteers on a non-profit basis, any suggestion that the organisers accept foreign currency and pay the costs of conversion from conference funds is completely unacceptable.

The organisers work with the aims of putting on a great event and hopefully raising some money for TPF, future conferences, and other good causes. Subsidising the bank charges of a minority of attendees in no way fits into these objectives.

**"The main grief I have is the payment methods, which were too limited: PayPal is not acceptable for many people"**

JJ:

There were a few comments about the payment processing, both for the conference fee and the auction. Some people have issues with PayPal, and as organisers we had some problems with them as well. However, when we evaluated the different options for payment, PayPal does offer the best balance between transaction and setup charges. For a single event, it is simply not worth the additional effort and fees involved in setting up a merchant account with one of the banks.

For the future though, it may be worthwhile for YEF to investigate the possibility of opening





a merchant account, together with both Euro and Sterling bank accounts that could be used by conference and workshop organisers.

**"The photo-direction from the airport to the hotels and the venue were \*VERY\* helpful. A great idea well executed."**

**"The detailed travel instructions were excellent."**

Barbie:

Thank you. We're glad you found them useful. Birmingham has changed a lot over the last few years, and is still changing, so we were very acutely aware that looking on Google maps, Streetmap or Multimap, would be extremely confusing. The city centre road layouts have changed in parts so having a photo guide meant we were able to give you visual clues as to where you should be heading.

**"PS thanks also for a non-black t-shirt :)"**

Barbie:

I've personally had this comment since the event, so hopefully future organisers will also bear this in mind. Although not pink. Definitely not pink! And preferably not orange either ;)

**"A printout "glossy" brochure (PDF) would be nice to have to convince PHBs of the need to go to YAPCs, but I understand how much work brochures are."**

Barbie:

This actually a damn good idea, and something I personally plan to work on. There used to be a similar part of the Geek Cruises site, which helped to persuade the boss why it was a good idea to attend. I will certainly look into working with future organisers to see what we can come up with.

**"Many congratulations and thanks to the whole team on a great job well done!"**

Barbie:

Thanks. despite many of the suggestions and feedback listed here, much of the overwhelming response was that we did do a good job and that you did all enjoy yourselves. At the end of the day, we knew we'd not get everything right for everyone, but if people went away feeling like they'd learnt something or met someone they really wanted to hook up with or even felt inspired to write a Perl Module, form a Perl Monger group, or simply



come to next year's event, then we'd succeeded. I think we did that and more :)

Steve:

Cheers!

I'd particularly like to thank the individuals that came up to us at the conference and offered thanks - it was quite stressful in places so a smiling appreciative face went a long way to reminding me why I was doing it.



## Summation

All in all the comments were positive, and some included some good suggestions that we intend to pass on to future organisers. While we felt we needed to explain ourselves, please don't feel we have picked on you specifically if you recognise a comment you made, it was just your particular statement enabled us to give a suitable response.

Of the 226 attendees the survey was sent out to, 122 responded. From external sources we have been told that this is exceptional and we shouldn't have expected anything more than about 10%. The fact we got over 50% is amazing. So thank you to everyone who took the time to submit your surveys and contribute to making the YAPC::Europe a better experience for everyone for the future.

See you in Vienna in 2007.