YAPC::Europe 2008
Copenhagen, Denmark
Feedback & Suggestions

YAPC::Europe 2008

Copenhagen, Denmark

Feedback & Suggestions

a joint production by

Copenhagen Perl Mongers

& YAPC Conference Surveys

YAPC::Europe 2008
Copenhagen, Denmark
Feedback & Suggestions

Table of Contents

YAPC::Europe 2008
Copenhagen, Denmark
Feedback & Suggestions

An Introduction

This document includes fragments from comments that were submitted by attendees of the 2008 YAPC::Europe Perl Conference, for a conference survey. Each survey provided the attendee with the ability to provide a snapshot of the Perl community, together with their opinions, feedback and suggestions, which could be used for future events.

One thing to bear in mind while reading this report, is that everyone's time and effort in putting on the conference was given freely. The organisers put on these events because they enjoy programming Perl and want to have the chance to give something back to the community. All the organisers have full time jobs and were fortunate enough to have partners and family who were willing to put up with losing them for several nights over the last year prior to the event, in order to bring the conference to Copenhagen. So a big thank you both to the organisers and to everyone who supported them.

Not everything goes according to plan, and the trials of hosting a conference for several hundred people are not without frustration on the part of the organisers. What follows might be considered negative in some parts, but while they might highlight issues with the event, they can hopefully be used by future organisers to avoid some previously unexpected problems, or even include tasks not previous considered. Not all the feedback is negative, and there are positive comments too, and it is worth bearing in mind that you can't please everyone. It will be a rare occasion when something doesn't go wrong, outside of the organisers control.

To those who submitted their feedback, many thanks for doing so, as it really is very much appreciated. YAPC::Europe has now been running for 9 years, and this feedback has help to improve the event every year. Long may it continue.

Barbie

Conference Survey Administrator

Rating The Conference

After asking attendees to rate the conference, the survey then asked the attendee whether there were any strong views.

- Yes. Where was the vegetarian lunch?
- No, I won't mention the wireless net. Promise.
- There was a big problem with WiFi, which is a shame, as limited CPAN contributions during the conference.
- You did a great job!
- Price for conference was ok. Price for hotels was amazingly high. Website was cluttered and confused. Not enough time for BOFs to be truly effective.
- The auction needs to be rethought. it was long and there was a lot of boring content.
- For Speakers: It would be great to have an extra screen to watch for those whose notebooks can only show ouput either at their TFT or the external output. (No, i won't switch to windows =)
- When you get a bunch of perl hackers in one place, the network will be severely strained. :) Wifi and wireless services need to have greater capacity that was available at CBS.
- As a vegetarian I had a though time finding something acceptable to eat (the university staff helped out a lot). Please think of us next time (I fear Lisbon is even more carnivore-oriented as Copenhagen).
- "Value for price" is a relative concept in Copenhagen - everything's so expensive, but that's got nothing to do with YAPC::Europe. I had a good time and plan to attend the next one as well.
- The BOFs were mostly ignored from the schedule, and no opportunity was made to make them more visible for new attendees.No easily accessible venue map, and the 2.07 (?) rooms were too far away from the main rooms.
- I feel the conference lacked enough communication during the year.Also, registration opened way too late.I also felt the absence of selected hotels by the organizers so that most people could be together at an affordable place.
- I especially liked the free lunch bags. :)
- There were no vegetarian food.
- The auction went very wrong. Undressing contests, totally boring BooK's ugly T-shirts sale and the whole length of the event. Please, bring Greg McCarroll next time to be the auctioneer :)
- As a vegeterian, I disliked the lunched utterly: sandwich with cucumber, with tomato, with lettuce, with shrimps (WTF?). Not tasty. Vegetarians can eat cheese, egg and many sorts of sauces. The attendees dinner had nothing special for vegetarians (yeah, vegetables and potatoes, wow, I'm so honoured). Power outlets!!! So many people could not use their notebook because of the lack of sufficient numbers of power outlets. Good bag: there wasn't one. Pity. Schedule: everything was 30 minutes. Speakers could hardly go deep into their subject. Next time please also 45 and / or 60 minute items. Directions: it was not clear where

the venue was (the entrances to the building, what building exactly). Schedule: maybe next year a beginner's track? And some rooms extra for hackathons, BOFs and other meetings. Ravelinen: just Carlberg's beer was no fun. Those idiots had Leffe on tap and refused to sell it to us, it was just for the "real clients" inside the restaurant. Morons, that's what they are.

- I would have liked the key talks to have been held during the day - not in the morning were I was unable to attend.
- YAPC::EU is going from strength to strength
- It was excellent that there was sponsored lunch - not only it saved time, but also helped to socialize - almost everyone eating together
- It sucks that year-after-year attendees continue to have chronic wireless problems, either no network ar a terribly overloaded network. I realize that this isn't a very solvable problem since the network comes with the venue and setting up custom network hardware would be expensive, but still.
- I was a speaker, so didn't pay for the conference, but the value/price of Copenhagen in general is not great.
- I did not have any idea of what to expect from the conference, and I would not have taken it if it weren't in the Copenhagen area. I must admit, I was very pleasantly surprised at the quality and overall atmosphere :)
- Overall an excellent conference.
- Parking in CPH was somewhat complicated, but that's my own responsibility, being aware that the conf was in a major city. Hotels w/parking are rare, it seems. But it wasn't a big problem. YAPC was excellent.
- Weak WiFi.
- A diner for 300 people could have more variance, more to choose from.
- At launch the website was just a default ACT install - no design or stylesheet was applied. This unfortunately does not portray a good image of YAPC, especially when compared to Perl's competitors. Now of course I realise that the majority of programmers are not designers, but if the organisers do not have these skills then asking for help on use.perl.org or the conferences mailing list may have helped. See http://conferences.yapcasia.org/ya2008/ for an example of what can be done with ACT. The food service was fantastic - such a good idea to provide catering on-site. This meant that people were not disappearing to the pub etc and so ensured that the afternoon talks started on time with no latecomers. I would love to see this repeated at future YAPCs.
- The wifi was a bit flaky.
- The organization seemed less focused then in Vienna, and it relied on people checking the website instead of sending out more stuff by email.
- Very well run and organised. Vegetarian food options were sadly limited. It was harder to meet up and socialise than at YAPC::EU Wien, maybe because hotels were spread out. Also seemed to be little activity on the Wiki?
- Not just 30 min talks. No lightning talks from regular speakers (you know who you are). Auction way way to long.
- There should be two or three hotels that hold the majority of participants to facilitate the Fluxx track. This year we were split all over town. The bofs were almost non existent this

year. We really need the organizers to provide several time slots and locations that bof organizers can choose from. Copenhagen is too expensive.

- The auction has been terrible. Too slow and boring. All those books and silly stuff should really be out of the auction.
- The wifi was too weak.
- Make it easy for companies to pay for several attendees. Put a level on the talks to give a heads up - specially about beginner stuff.
- Web site: I would have wanted more detailed journey plan. Overall experience: the danish girls look beautiful. :-)
- Vegetarian options should be asked upfront on registration and not made the responsibility of the attendee.
- On the website, the location and map links in the navigation to the left should be merged.
- Please make a reliable and sufficient WiFi available. In these times, more and more talks will depend on available access.
- Again, no printed proceedings available. web site: I missed detailed info how to go to the venue. talks: I want talk alternatives when Larry Walk is talking (no keynote)
- 1) I think that 30 min per talk is not enough. Most talks were very light without going deep into the matter at hand. 2) Copenhagen was very expensive.
- The "perl culture" bits of the conference w/o any technical content get tiresome quickly.
- Quite good conference, except for the wireless coverage and the lack of a printed programme. Some talks were very good, others a waste of time. Some speakers don't have anything to say or don't know how to present it (e.g. reading slides or white text on red background on a blurry projector).
- Parking was excellent! Never had trouble finding a space, and all for free! However, there was absolutely no parking information available on the webpage, which is essential information for local attendees. Registration was impressively efficient. Even though I registered the day before the conference after bank hours, the process was registered correctly, and a badge was ready and printed. Having just attended the $2,000 OSCON, a registration fee of 900DKK including lunch & dinner is impressive value for money. Keep it up!
- Social event needed a microphone or other way of greatly amplifying the signal-to-noise ratio of the french guy making competitions for gifts.
- I would have liked some conventions with hotels, like they did in Vienna (and Copenhagen is more expensive than Vienna). Moreover, I think that directions could have been better in the web site: putting a map without some clear indications of where to take the Metro, where to go, etc. makes all the attendant do the same work by their own. And no, the wiki's no help here, because all of us did it at the very end :D
- food service was not good for vegetarians. I was lucky as I do eat fish and could find food by looking through the bags but I know several vegans had a hard time and even I had to pick the bits of meat out of the salad. hotels: Copenhagen is an expensive city, not your guys' fault ;-) I had a problem with the venue change for the tutorials after the conf. Did not get the email that brian d foy said had been sent out on Friday. I really think that when a change like that is made at short notice you should have made certain that the registered

attendees were aware, probably by announcing it in the conference platform. Just updating the News page on the wiki was not enough - there were guys on both days who were inconvenienced because they just did not [or were unable to] look at that page. That's the only reason for my 'staff' rating above; other than that I thought that you guys were great ;-) But my overall impression of the week was good enough to override these gripes.

- Altogether: a very pleasant experience.
- The WIFI..............(non-existent)
- very poor WLAN at Copenhagen Business School, otherwise excellent venue...
- I really liked the fact there was a 10 minute break after each talk, and that all the talks were of the same length. This greatly reduced the number of people moving around during the talk. OTOH, having only one length of slot available made it harder for speakers to prepare. Sometimes, you need at least 45 minutes, or it turns out that 20 minutes is enough. I scored the 'social events' very negatively, due to the really poor auction this year. I will come back to that in a separate email - this text box is too small to list all the grieves.
- The number of Perl conferences is increasing, and this is great ! Perhaps now is the correct timing to expand: in addition to the current YAPC::Europe conferences (which in my opinion should not change), should there not be a separate "Corporate" Perl conference, specifically designed for Perl users ? I mean, IT professionals who just use Perl for their job ?
- Showing pictures of the hotel rooms and facilities would be of great help.
- You don't do an "economy" conference in a city or even country with prices like Copenhagen, sorry. 150-200 Euro/night in a decent hotel for a double bedroom?! The low registration price suddenly doesn't mean so much.
- Some of the salads sucked!
- I found 30 mins was a little short for the talks, a lot of the time the speakers had to rush to finish everything they wanted to cover. perhaps 10 or 15 mins longer would have helped.
- Internet access was poor. Wanted to buy stuff in the auction, but it took too long and I lost interest and left even before it actually got started.
- About the website: why did you write the dates in MM/DD/YY format? Dates in this format are difficult for the majority of YAPC::EU's attendees, who are more used to DD/MM/YY or DD/MM/YYYY dates. And the best format, of course, is YYYY-MM-DD (with a 4-digit year), which everyone understands, even the few people from across the Atlantic. Another possibility would be to use the month's full English name.
- I was quite irritated by the silly games, both at the dinner and before the auction, to give away a few trinkets. It felt like being held hostage by an annoying salesman. Time at a conference like YAPC is extremely precious, so wasting it is really a shame.This is definitely not what I came to YAPC for. I realize that it is quite difficult for the organizers to deal with that kind of problem though.
- Don't put so much stress on beer.
- The organization of the conference seemed to be very smooth. I know it can't have been because it never is, but as far as I know, not a single glitch made it through to the attendees. The organizers did a great job!
- The biggest problem with the venue was lack of power points, for people with laptops. The

assumption was that they would exist, so a lot of people never managed to take notes.

- The conference signs weren't too perceptive - they should have been bigger or more often placed. The wireless network left something to be desired.
- The web site lacks too much for a conference that pretends to be professional. - The conference fee (individual rate) was too high.

Editor Notes

- There are always problems with the Wifi. Unfortunately, despite being an educational establishment, many conference facilities do not anticipate that several hundred devices are going to contect to a Wifi network at the same time, and all be transferring considerably more trafic that the average room full of students. Many event organisers have tried to prepare venues for this, but all too often they don't anticipate so much traffic.

- While the conference attendance fee is purposefully kept as low as possible, the other costs, such as hotels or restaurants, are outside of the control of the organisers. They do make every effort to recommend reasonably priced hotels and eateries where possible, but cannot be held responsible for attendees not preparing themselves for the full cost of attending a week long event.

- As has been experienced by organisers more and more, diets are becoming a very important part of attending events for some. Many more people are vegetarian, vegan or require a special diet on medical or religious grounds. While it can be difficult to accommodate everyone, it should be possible to ensure that there are at least vegetarian options. However, these options should be clearly labelled. It is also worth providing a significant portion of any provided food options as vegetarian, as some many choose to have a vegetarian option as they do not like a particular meat option.

- The auction didn't go well. Unfortunately we didn't have any of the regular auction-masters to maintain control, and no-one felt confident enough in the audience to make a stand and put a stop to events when things started to get very uncomfortable. When YAPCs first began, the auction was a way to help raise funds for any shortfalls covered by organisers. With these events being much more well funded now, the motivation for auctions has changed. Changing the structure of auctions is something future organisers are looking into. They should be engaging, fun and entertaining for everyone.

For Future Organisers

In the final section of the survey, we asked attendees "Do you have any suggestions for improvement (please give examples where possible)?"

- It would be good to have a single map with all the points of interest related to the conference, including the hotels, bars, venue, transportation and places to eat.Please don't kill the auction! After 3 days people tend to be very tired so either you ignite the auction or the auction is ignited :)
- 1. reliable wi-fi with good coverage
  2. *lots* of power sockets
  3. maybe a "luggage store" on the last day for people checking out and having to haul suitcases
- Ask the organisers of the next years YAPC not to present all the great things they are going to do at the end of the current YAPC. It seems a little rude and unneccesary. Wait until later!
- The future organisers should make announcements earlier than the CPH organisers. I would assume that there would be more attendees if the information about costs, hotels, venue etc. would be made earlier.
- Use the mailing lists and updates to registered people, open payment earlier, announce tutorials before people buy flight tickets.
- The survey should (1) integrate the "which talks did you miss" question with the ratings section. That would make filling it out much easier and efficient. And it should (2) provide at least 10 rating levels per talk. I mean they all were good or great but some were excellent and some were less intriguing and with only 4 options I cannot express this.
- Great keynote talks by Larry & Damian !!
- The auction was too long, and the auctioneers were not experienced enough. Next time, the auction could happen at some other time during the conference (social event?), and there could a "Town Hall session" after the closing session.
- Wireless Internet at the venue must work. Name Badges: The paper slip must make use of all the available space of the holding sleeve. The writing on the paper must use a large font face that is readable from a distance >60 cm. Fill all the available space. By default the writing on the paper must include the name, PAUSE id, Mongers group; but show the attendee a preview how it is going to look like before you print it.
- I can't be bothered to rate each individual talk now, next year, please let us rate them during/right after the talk online, just like the attendance option.
- Make sure the welcome pack mentioned at the end of YAPC2008 is mailed out to everyone - this is a GREAT idea. See below for more!
- Vegetarian food (and labeled as such)
- Try and keep the conference rooms as physically close together as possible. Make sure you have huge wireless capacity.
- Copenhagen was great fun, the schedule was very good and I enjoyed myself (and learned, and schmoozed), and I am very much looking forward to Lisbon. I would have preferred the

talks to start (and end) a little later in the day, but I liked the 30-minute format a lot; it felt just right (although some of the talkers, like Kennedy, I could have listened to all day -- please get him back for Lisbon 2009, please, please ;-)) Working wifi would be nice, but the organised (sponsored) lunch more than made up for it.

- Auction: Find a way to make it no more than 1.5 hours, maybe even shorter - also stop with the T-shirts, dull books (e.g. this time everything except Damian's and Leon's) - maybe have a computer in the hall where people can bid for them DURING the conference and then announce at start of Auction who won what and get them to pay then (have list of second highest big incase someone is not there)

- A suggestion for the conference dinner: If you're making it a sit-down dinner, don't have a buffet.

- This year the auction of the tradtional "prank" to next year's organizers was forgotten. :-(Or was it not really forgotten because the person moderating the auction was on the organizing committee for Lisbon? I think Greg is still by far the best guy to do the auction.

- please make an shorter auction

- Please oh please, make BIG, even HUGE badges so that they can be read by those with not so perfect eyes.

- The tutorials before the conference were wonderful. Not many attendees, but still, wonderful. Add a page to the website where organizers (who know the city best) and attendees can mention good restaurants and pubs in the neighbourhood. And where you can find an ATM / bank. Where to rent a bike. Have a goody bag. Even when sponsors do not deliver goodies. Electricity for notebooks! Good chairs for people with a bad back. The seats in the main room where fine, but room 2.01 had awful chairs. Be at least as good as this year's organisers! Please have good food for the poor vegetarians. Not just lettuce, tomato and cucumber. Please!

- I would have liked a better Q&A section on the website. The personal schedule function on the website could also easily be improved.

- 1. make a plan for auction - it should be at least partial list of available items available before the auction. Selling stuff that half of audience have no idea about (and even guy who runs the aucion does not know) is pretty pointless and makes most people bored. Selling 100 books in a row during the auction also gets people bored (in Copenhagen many attendees left auction during that phase).
  2. Having four tracks is a bit too much, IMO three tracks (as in Vienna) worked much better. Even if that means that not all talks are accepted (some talks were poor in Copenhagen, even some from well-known people).

- Please keep the 10m buffer between talks that was used in Copenhagen. It was an excellent idea. The auction is just too long. (This was true in both Copenhagen and Vienna.) I think the particularly entertaining items should be auctioned live, and the rest should go in a silent auction or some such.

- Not really - Excellent work! Maybe make the conference could span over a whole week ;)

- Larry only gave one talk, and it was very technical. I think too technical for the opening keynote, and somewhat intimidating to newbies. I would have preferred the opening keynote to be more high level, with another talk more low level talk focussed specifically on P6.

- Make the conference run 9:30 to 6:30 instead of 8:30 to 5:30, especially in countries where the time is already UK+1.
- There was only one hotel suggestion (CABINN). After that being fully booked, one had to go look for a hotel on one's own. I'd rather have a list of hotels in the neighborhood of the venue, even if not discounted.
- Select three different pubs as meeting place: a different one for each evening. This will make it more attractive to come together in the evenings. 30 minutes slots are too short to explain new projects. They are only long enough to show new angles to well-known things. Maybe more 20 minutes and a few 45 minutes blocks.
- Have (a lot) less items to auction off on stage, maybe list them online (the day) before the auction. That way people a) know what they might want to bid for in advance b) can think of things in advance (like fun *.cpan.org domains) c) know roughly how long the auction will take and during the auction know how much and what's still to come And some of the items can of course be listed as "surprise" items, if they would be less fun when known ahead of time.If there should be more than $x (and more boring) items, don't auction them on stage, but online only during the conference.
- The auction really needs to be planned in advance so that the auctioneer can keep flow and get some buzz going. It's generally the last "comedy" item which raises the most money - thinking of past greats such as Fishnet, and the Birmingham auction where Marty got four teams bidding in corners of the room. However this years T-shirt auction was quite frankly embarrassing. As soon as those complicated designs were being drawn on the blackboard the atmosphere just went flat. The room was deathly quiet - apart from the sound of people walking out. After the designs were finished Cog did his best to get things going again, but the damage had already been done. So for next year I would suggest that no-one apart from the auctioneer should be allowed to get on stage and use the microphone. The auctioneer can then filter suggestions to get a couple of simple, funny options that will get people bidding in teams to raise the final price.
- Mailing instructions may be a good idea, but make sure the same content is available on the website, too (for those who lose, or don't get the mailed instructions).
- We could do with a way of specifying dietary requirements, especially if lunch is going to be provided. Probably should be built into ACT.
- Please, Please organize some vegetarian food apart from salad and potatoes. (Copenhagen didn't have vegetarian food at all, and Vienna had by far not enough - which however was not the organizers fault). Try to auction uninteresting items (books, t-shirts) in a silent auction. No lighting talks for regular speakers. Include a writing pad and a pen in the goodie bag (if there is any) Order more small/medium shirts then you would expect. The t-shirts used for printing tend to be somewhat bigger and many people take a smaller size than they usually wear.
- No strip-tease please :-)
- Could we possibly have a keynote that's relevant to production perl5 users? Larry's perl6 grammars address and Damian's "here's a bunch of clever line noise" aren't really that useful to most people - Larry no longer exactly speaks for/to the perl5 community and Damian while entertaining is really talking about the sort of crazy code that gives perl5 a bad

reputation.

- Conference dinner needs multiple places where food can be got and tables set to encourage mingling, Braga had it right.
- The auction should be shortened to max 20-30', and only with "special" items. It was ok to sell books at the o'reilly desk. Also, I feel it a bit unfair to sell copies of the same books in the auction for different prices.
- Provide detailed local journey descriptions. From well known points like airport or central station to the venue.
- 1. Vegetarian menu option should be a question on registration (eg: do you have any special dietary requirements)
  2. Invoices need to have more detail, as they cannot be used without the line items of what is being invoiced for. Example: it needs to say: DKK900 - YAPC conference in Copenhagen.
- The registration process should have a field for specifing food requirements, eg. vegetarian, lactose intolerant. I think that not giving out a conference bag was a good idea. Having the lightning talks on two days was also good - I am still not quite sure whether they should be moved to day 2 and 3. The route to the venue should have been described better - Birminghams idea of a photo-guide was good.
- 1. Make the beamer specifications known to the speakers. What was told me on IRC was not what we got. It turned out I could have used a higher resolution.
  2. Make stress and load tests for the WiFi, as that was very very poor in the venue
- Please provide printed conference proceedings. The conference fee for indiviuals should definitely be below 100 EUR.
- Ask the talker to put the talk in context. The short time (30 minutes) make people skip the "introduction" and just starts in the middle of the topic.
- Having the food in seperate bags is a great idea. That way there is enough food for everyone =)
- Scrap the auction--it's a waste of time. Simply ask people for donations instead, or have stalls in the lobby selling things.
- I'd find it interesting to have more "split talks", eg 30-40 minutes introductions for those who don't know about, followed by 30+ mins for those who already use the module/feature/... to get the very best out of it, so a 'beginners/overview' and an 'expert' part (I don't see a need for a half-way-around part, since that's the point where you can easily learn by yourself ;))
- More talks for beginners. Please post the schedule on the outside of each door. Please indicate how to get to rooms. Please cut the auction to 30 minutes or less.
- The plan about a partner program sounds really cool :)
- Since the next subject will be corporate perl, I advise the future organisers to create a more professional jobfair. Try to get more companies to attend, so you really have a small jobmarket. This year was too small and a bit unprepared.
- Solid wifi is of course very useful - maybe get a sponsor who's name is on the line so they have an incentive to provide a very good connection?
- 1) Don't start the keynote speeches before 10:00. Socializing in the evenings is half the point of the conference, and we often have to travel far to get to the event. And please finish by

17:00 so we have time to get back to the hotel before going out for dinner.
2) Make sure the FULL programme INCLUDING descriptions is available so we can check which track to attend even if the network isn't up. If you can't afford to print it, make it available as a PDF or at least a single downloadable HTML file.
3) Working wireless network is a must. However, I've never been at a single conference where this hasn't been a problem, so this YAPC wasn't particularly bad in that respect.

- A lot of lighting talks were offtopic. Start conference not at 8:30 but at least at 10:00
- Make sure the internet connection can handle all the people at the same time and that there is good coverage across all places.
- Have more power outlets and better internet connection. It was ok, but sometimes very slow.
- Ease attendee's life during the very initial minutes in the new city - I think cog learnt this lesson quite well and I was pleased that he talked about it.
- Announce essential details like pricing and venue location as soon as possible. Provide illustrated instructions for reaching the venue from the nearest subway/train station or bus stop. In case of a station with multiple exits, indicate which one to take. In case of a venue with multiple entrances, indicate which one to take. Make flyers available to organizers of Perl workshops. PDF is fine. It'd be nice if there wasn't so much overlap between main website and wiki. Maybe just put links to wiki pages in the navigation menu.
- As in the 'views' above ... allow for dietary options; allow for ways to communicate changes. also maybe just a bit more information for first-timers - but next year I won't be one of them! ;-)
- For better selection of the talk: Urge speakers *strongly* to write good outlines - ones that help!
- Better Internet? WIFI. A large set of powerpoints and extension cords (taped to the ground in the Auditoria)
- Maybe buy a few WLAN range extenders just for the event to get them bits flowing smoothly
- A YAPC with continouus, working, stable, non-flaky WiFi would be great (and probably a world premiere ;-))
- As a parallel option to the formal tutorials a beginners' hackathon where beginners and intermediate level Perl programmers can bring along their projects and get informal help from more experienced programmers. My working title for this is "PerlMonks Live". Ideally this would run in a bar with free WiFi, power and *cheap* *beer*. Just as well next year is in Portugal!
- It is sad that most speakers do not make their presentation publicly available. Perhaps publishing of the presentation content on the web should be a requirement for speakers - "Corporate Perl" ? Great ! I'm sure a lot of people have been waiting for that one... The title being rather precise, permit me to suggest that the rules used to accept talks will have to be slightly modified. If you don't modify them, you will very probably end up with the usual mixture of talks, and the conference will only be "Corporate" by name, not by content. Are Obfuscation/Perl for Fun talks "Corporate" ? Will Perl 6 be "Corporate" in 2009 ? This is up to you to decide. In any case, the choice of programme for a conference entitled "Corporate Perl" will surely contribute (positively or negatively) to the image of Perl in the eyes of

European corporate managers/deciders. Again, thank you very much for tackling this challenge. I am sure a lot of persons in the Perl community, as well as mere Perl users, were waiting for this. We are counting on you.

- There should be a talk about how to talk. Some people where boring and used terrible colors. There should be a audio team to attach the wireless mic to the speaker. Maybe some speakers could be allowed to speak in their native language and use a translator.
- Check the web site for usability. Add the most important facts on the homepage. For example, there is no ADDRESS of the venue on http://www.yapceurope2008.org/ I asked several attendees and all had the same problem: where is the conference?! It may be obvious for Copenhagen inhabitants where CBS is located, but not for tourists.
- Longer talks 40-45mins
- Internet needs to work better.
- plz reorganise schedule I felt friday didnt have much, wednesday was great but a lot of overlapping, thursday was mostly well done as it was
- Use 4-digit years, use either fully named months or YYYY-MM-DD dates.
- Please make the auction shorter. Having to watch people sell books and uninteresting t-shirts off one by one is boring and kills the energy in the auction. Please don't have prize giveaways that humiliate members of the audience and that also seem to be targeted towards men. Please have vegetarian food options that are easy to find and not hidden in brown bags. There should also be a least one vegetarian option at the conference dinner instead of expecting vegetarians to make do with salad and side dishes.
- Please provide any choice with food! There was no option for vegetarians, only meat in every sandwich. Even those, who eat meat, like sometimes to find vegetables :) Good, big building with great rooms, poor projectors :) Auction far too long. French-man should lead the next one :)
- Try to find a pub/restaurant, or several close by (in a square for example), with some open space to facilitate socializing.
- You should introduce some new Perl sports, looking at average Perl programmer I see Perl golf is apparently not enough.
- Most of the talks were introductory in nature, more intermediate/advanced talks would be good.
- I have already discussed about this with Alberto, José and other people from the YEF cabal: given the amount of money the organisers have each year from the sponsors, we don't understand why the conference fee is increasing. Also, the organising group should give back some money to YEF so it can help small workshops. I don't think I have anything more to say here because I know Alberto and José already have some interesting ideas they want to test for next year's conference.
- I get the impression that a beginners track would be useful.
- Make sure all talks are related to Perl. This year's Working in the cloud and Understanding Malware were, in my opinion, not.

Editor's Notes

- Regarding the survey, the format of the talks evaluations is changing to allow a rating out of

10. They will also be available from the beginning of the conference too. Also we'll be including the Lightning Talks in the evaluations too.

- Starting and finishing times have always been a fine balance. Bear in mind that the conference **is** a working day, it isn't a holiday, and most employers would rather their staff get as much out of the event as possible. Most want to learn as much as possible in the time they are attending the event, and as they can't see everything, having more time in the day for talks gives them the opportunity to see, discuss and learn more. However, the balance does have to be right, as information overload can be just as problematic, so getting the breaks right is just as important.

- Following on the above, the evenings are a great time to get to know other attendees, and particularly the more well known in the Perl community. That doesn't mean you need to go to excess, and expecting the organisers to accommodate those who are going to party into the night (and following morning) is both unreasonable and unfair on those attendees for whom 4 or 5 hours of friendly socialising is fine.

- The organisers want to provide as much exposure to Perl and Perl projects as possible. Every year they try something different to find alternative formats to engage people. Creating a schedule is hard. Organisers do try and schedule common themed talks on the same track, which can mean that they may have some tracks that overlap. They do try hard to avoid clashes, but with so much to try and cover, sometimes it just can't be helped.

- Although this is a Perl event, that doesn't mean we have to accept only Perl talks. Over the years we've had talks on Linux command line tools, documentation, HTML and some times even other languages. These are often very well received, particularly as most attendees don't write Perl to the exclusion of anything else. Plus these talks can generate ideas for Perl projects too.

- On a biased note, while Understanding Malware may not have been specifically a Perl talk, the talk was an example of Perl being used in the real world. All the malware protection being discussed was actually written in Perl, as was mentioned during the talk itself.

For The Copenhagen Organisers

For the final question of the survey, we asked "Do you have any feedback you would like to give specifically to this year's organisers?"

- There is no spoon!! :-)
- Overall an amazing conference. It's a shame that the schedule slipped so much on the Friday afternoon; stopping for an unscheduled coffee break before the (already late starting) auction. I'm only sad because I couldn't see all of it.
- Brilliant idea for the lunch ;)
- Very well run! Only a slight problem with the sun in one auditorium on monday, otherwise pretty much perfect! Ah, well, the lunch was a little light, but mostly okay - especially when succeeded by a couple of pieces of cake.
- Thanks.
- Although you made the announcements a bit late, you have done a great job. It was a very good idea to have just one length for talks. That led to fewer "clashes" in the personal schedule.
- Thanks for the conference!
- THANK YOU FOLKS!
- hmmmm, should have announced the relocation of the b.d.f tutorial by email - could have saved 4 of us a rush tour thru' Copenhagen to catch up at CBS.
- Good job.
- The biggest problem of this year's conference was not severe: it was the lack of regular news updates.
- I felt communication was poor. By this I mean the basics were missed:- explaining the conference dinner location (I did not have a laptop so how do I check the wiki? Not everyone had a laptop although I found no problem with asking someone if I could write the info down as I am not shy, others may be shy)- food - explaining that there was vegetarian options (some of us are vegetarians, vegans, Jews, Muslims...)- who to contact if any questions (any organizer or just one?)I think each talk should have one slide explaining who the speaker is, and their background. Not all speakers did this. This does not apply to lightning talks.Maybe there should be 50 minutes long talks for some topics. Or "30 minutes-break-30 minutes" on the same topic.Lastly - I do thank all the CPN team for from the bottom of my heart for organizing the conference, my first and definitely not my last.
- Do it again =)
- Nope, well done!
- You did a great job guys -- I had a fantastic time. Well done, and thanks!
- Thanks alot. All in all it was a terrific conference!
- Thanks for all your hard work.
- It was a very good conference; thank you for your hard work!
- Thanks for the conference! :D
- Oh, nearly forgot: great job organizers, big thanks to all!!

- Great venue, fantastic work, thanks!
- Real food, not that stylish food that containes nothing nutricious and isnt even much healthy in real.
- This was great! Thanks to all Cph.pm. The organization was so smooth it was invisible. Very impressive.
- Thank you for a wonderful YAPC! Apart from having vegetarian "lunches" with tomato, cucumber and lettuce which left me wondering why people think that vegetarians are rabbits, and the poor vegetarian food at the Globe and the Ravelinen, everything else was wonderful: the cake, cookies, apples, bottles of water, tea, milk. Are all Danish friendly? I didn't meet a grumpy or depressed Dane. Wow. My apologies for not giving you flowers as a thank you.
- Encore !
- 1. Overall very good organization, almost everything was on time, and no one was hungry :-) Almost no technical problems - excellent!
  2. Auction was too chaotic - no plan, no list of items, no schedule of items. I was hoping for some t-shirts from previous events, but after long auction I really had to go to catch my ferry... :-(Selling so many books (that had nothing special about them) really take very long and bored a lot of people.
- Very well done on having lunch provided, and on the idea of having a 10 minute buffer between talks.
- Great conference. I want to thank you all for a very good experience. Godt arbejde, drenge :)
- The catering service was a great time- and money-saver for us attendees. Thanks for the great job, and see you in Lisbon!
- The only thing that I felt was lacking was the lack of offline information about the conference dinner. It would have been easy enough to write the address on the board. Also, while I think Nadim is great, and have a lot of time for him, the auction dragged out a lot without our usual auctioneer.
- Great job, thanks :)
- Great work guys, I had a fun time :)
- I missed the session chairs. Often, speakers were in doubt whether to start or not. Gladly, most speakers were experienced enough to cope, but not all of them. There was no chance for BoFs. This has been a problem with the schedule of most recent events: delays in the program leave no time for BoFs before diner. I do not know a good solution.
- Even though some things (like the price of the conference) were announced a bit too late, once the conference started everything felt very well organised and it was a joy to attend the conference. The lunch bags were very yummy indeed.
- Just thanks for putting on another great YAPC::Europe!
- The route from the airport to the hotels was not described anywhere on the website. No goodie bag? Striptease was going a bit too far. Job faire was almost invisible, especially compared to Vienna.
- Excellent conference, many thanks.
- Everything went absolutely smooth!
- More details on the Wiki on suggested places to go/do/see in Copenhagen would have been

good. We did find places, but nothing beats having a local person make recommendations ;-)

- Consider having a rating sheet for every talk printed out resp. having that online, so I can give my talk ratings immediately after the talk.
- 15/30min sessions suck. 20/40 are much more comfortable, and more common so easier to reuse - I simply cut my talks to match.opening registration late was a complete disaster for people who're going as company delegates and hence need to seek approval from finance
- Great conference.
- Thanks. It was really great. I especially liked the food supply at lunch, the fruit baskets and pretty everything else. The only minor drawback was some uncertainty about local travelling, public transport, walk descriptions, etc., but don't worry that was really the only little minor thing.
- Great work, thank-you very much for a good conference.
- You've done a wonderful job! Could the speakers get the results for the rating on their talk(s)? And if comments on their talks are entered, those?
- Great conferences. Everthing was going smooth.Thank you all!!!
- Lunch bags were fab!
- Great, well-organised conference with good talks, food and drink. Conference dinner was great. Don't start the conference so early though, and start it later on the 2nd and 3rd days.
- the beer was WAY to expensive! ;)
- Thanks, it was great!
- Thanks for my first YAPC :)
- Thanks for all your help!!!
- On site lunch a >great< time saver. The conference dinner could not have been any better – excellent. Less "fun" content that goes on too long - auction pace too slow
- At my last YAPCs and other conferences we got a proper book with not only the programme described in full, but also containing articles by the speakers which added a lot to the conference value. Even the workshop in 2004 had a better handout than this year's. Since the schedule handouts didn't contain any descriptions of the talks and the internet connection was unreachable much of the time it was impossible to find out which talks to attend. This resulted in much waste of time and missing several interesting topics. The programme was interesting, but had too many talks. It started too early, finished too late and 30 mins is too short to cover the interesting topics in depth. I think the programme would have benefitted from a reduction to only three tracks, partly since room 2.07 was too far away. In the end both I and my colleagues were exhausted from all the running around, and ended up falling asleep during some of the talks. We would have liked to socialize more with the speakers and other attendees, but we were all so tired that we ended up spending most evenings at the hotel.
- Changing the location of the Saturday tutorials the day before, not sending an email and having people go at the other side of town in the morning is kinda lame. Please make sure in the future you try and contact individuals and let them know. (after all, we were only 5 people).
- Thanks! I had a wonderful time.
- In the future, I'd suggest to make an effort and pretend to be someone coming from abroad...

but not too much. The first thing is something related to my lazyness: I'm used to pay in Euro, and I didn't check that Denmark didn't "join" it - I would have liked to see some banner in the website :) The other one is more seriuos: in a lot of places (e.g. train and metro stations) you have to provide your PIN code to use your credit card, which is something unusual (at least in the places I've been to). Some shops required it as well. It really was a PITA, because I never carry the PIN with me (I have my debit card if I want to withdraw cash). These kind of info should have popped somewhere, like some "attendee survival kit" linked with a big title from the home page.

- Generally, guys, you did a great job! Much appreciated!
- Great job. Given the Danish people's excellent reputation, you outperformed even that!
- Thanks!
- Well done !
- Thank you for suppliying power strips, that was very helpful!
- Only a very minor finishing touch, the communication of the addresses and directions were a tiny bit awkward :-) For instance, the school's name was mentioned only once on the site, but the address could not be found in text format on the yapc site nor in the provided google maps. Also upon arrival at the site the first morning there was no indication visible from outside where to enter which building. An ordinary A3 print with a logo would have been sufficient. A lot of people lost about 10-20 minutes due to this. Otherwise it was very well organised and planned according to the cities' subway infrastructure. Many thanks for this great effort by all involved! With kind regards.
- First of all, thank you for giving us one of the best organized YAPC::Europe conferences. I noticed that most, if not all, talks where filmed. It would be great if you could release at least some videos of YAPC::Europe 2008 on the web. Currently, searching for 'YAPC::Europe' on Google Video yields only a few results, and only one of them containing material from talks ("YAPC::Europe 2007 Lightning Talks Day 3"). Have a look at the results of this Google Video search : I believe that the current situation is sad, and gives a bad image of YAPC::Europe conferences, especially to managers/deciders.
- Parking within CBS would help a lot!
- Go sweden :)
- Thank you for a great conference http://blogs.sun.com/cphcampus/entry/yapc_europe_day_2
- Good job :)
- The tutorials were announced when almost everybody had already bought their flights.
- Excellent facilities, except for poor bandwidth on internet access. Cabins beds were awful. Excellent dinner
- All in all all was good :)
- You should have used 4-digit years and either fully named monthsor YYYY-MM-DD dates.
- There was few problems, which I pointed above, but overall feeling is: really good job! Great conference. Thanks a lot!
- Good job guys, the venue was great and the organiztion excellent.
- Great 5 days in Copenhagen. Gay parade, blonde cyclists, ... and a bit of Perl.
- Thanks for the hard work! The conference was great!
- You all did a great job!Thank you.

- The social event worked fine, with enough food and a venue who knew how to serve beer fast enough. :-)
- Thank you :)
- I have already discussed about this with several people from this year's team and people from the YEF cabal: the goodies giveaway games and the next year's t-shirt were off limits. Regarding the goodies giveaway games, I think we all agree that Nadim caught everybody by surprise, because we all thought he was the "corporate guy in suit". He probably just wanted to top the fun of previous conferences, but push-ups and strip-teases? However, I won't put the blame on him because each and every one of the regular attendees should have said something. At the very least, I would have expected that the organisers asked him what he had in mind before proposing such thing. The problem was that Nadim was alone, with nobody to tell him "no". Regarding the next year's t-shirt, well, I can only thank brian very much for coming with an *actual* idea. Also, as I told Philippe, I think the "$foo is my bitch" thing should die. Heck, this meme is so old that it started before I began attending YAPC::Europe (in 2003) and it still doesn't make me laugh (even though I then found the fishnet thing quite funny). What gripes me here is that, even though Philippe wanted this to be a joke, I had to bid 4 or 5 times (up to 80 or 90 euros) so that brian's idea had more money behind it than the "is my bitch" t-shirt. That's too much money for a stupid joke. Summing up, I think you (the Copenhagen organisers) did a pretty good job for organising this conference, except for this auction where your one true mistake was to not ask the people you gave freedom to act what they actually wanted to do. I know the work required to organise a conference, but given it was more expensive that previous years', given I pay for my own pocket, and given there was these problems which killed part of my fun, this YAPC was not as enjoyable as I hoped it should have been. On the bright side, to finish on a more positive note, I really enjoyed the attendees dinners and more generally the social events.
- BIG thanks!
- Great work.
- Thanks. Great conference!

Editor's Notes

- Having paper copies of the talk evaluations has been considered before, but this then requires someone to do data entry, and doesn't prevent multiple entries. Although as only the speaker sees this have multiple entries may not be an issue. However, the data entry is time consuming, particularly for potentially several hundred responses. The evaluations are available for a few weeks after the conference, so hopefully you have made enough notes to still give an appropriate review once you're home.

YAPC::Europe 2008
Copenhagen, Denmark
Feedback & Suggestions

Copyright & License

Copyright on the original data (c) 2008 The Perl Foundation.

This document and data are available under a Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike licence.