

Linux Plumbers Conference 2024



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A little GitLab won't hurt you

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The email workflow brought the kernel to life, saw it through immense growth, and into widespread popularity. However, it seems to be reaching its limits, prompting Linus to say we need to “find ways to get away from the email patch model” to make maintainer life easier.

Kernel workflow evolution (1991 - start, 2002 - BitKeeper, 2005 - Git, 2008 - Patchwork) seems to have stopped fifteen years ago. Another change might be due. We don't know what it will be, and a single solution is unlikely, but we know one of them works: GitLab.

We'll explore how it helps some maintainers and developers in the kernel and adjacent projects: from tracking issues, running CI, to the actual MR workflow, and demonstrate how to try all of that easily.

Gitlab is a mature integrated development platform with an MIT-licensed Open Core built by a company with open source values. Apart from the canonical instance on gitlab.com (with paid features financing development), multiple open-source communities, some companies working in open source, and many technical universities manage their own instances.

Primary authors: KOIKE, Helen (Collabora); KONDRASHOV, Nikolai (Red Hat); DA APARECIDA, Tales (Red Hat)

Presenters: KOIKE, Helen (Collabora); KONDRASHOV, Nikolai (Red Hat); DA APARECIDA, Tales (Red Hat)

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