

meta::hack

The MetaCPAN Hackathon

Sponsor prospectus

The first dedicated MetaCPAN hackathon will be held in Chicago, from November 17th through 20th. The primary goal for this hackathon is to complete MetaCPAN's transition to Elasticsearch version 2. This will enable the live service to run on a cluster of machines, greatly improving reliability and performance. The hackathon will also give the core team a chance to plan work for the coming 18 months.

The meta::hack event is a hackathon where we're bringing together key developers to work on the MetaCPAN search engine and API. This will give core team members time to work together to complete the transition to Elasticsearch version 2, and time to discuss gnarly issues and plan the roadmap beyond the v1 upgrade.

MetaCPAN is now one of the key tools in a Perl developer's toolbox, so supporting this event is a great way to support the Perl community and raise your company's profile at the same time.

This hackathon is by invitation only. It's a core group of MetaCPAN hackers. We are keeping the group small in order to maintain focus on the v1 API and maximize the productivity of the group.

Why sponsor the MetaCPAN Hackathon?

- If your company uses Perl in any way, then your developers almost certainly use MetaCPAN to find CPAN modules, and they probably use other tools that are built on the MetaCPAN API.
- The MetaCPAN upgrade will improve the search engine and the API for all Perl developers. As a critical tool, we need it to be always available, and fast. This upgrade is a key step in that direction.
- This is a good way to establish your company as a friend of Perl, for example if you're hiring.

What is MetaCPAN?

MetaCPAN is really two things: a search engine for finding (information about) CPAN distributions and modules, and an API that lets you get at all that data programmatically.

The search engine not only provides access to the metadata and documentation for modules, it provides convenient links to all the other tools in the CPAN ecosystem. As a result it has steadily become the default search engine for modern Perl developers, gradually taking over from search.cpan.org, which has served us for many years.

For tool developers, curators, and other people working on the ecosystem, the API is an invaluable resource, providing a single way to access information about CPAN distributions that is sourced from many different systems.

Sponsorship levels

Each level includes all the relevant benefits from the levels below.

Platinum: \$3000 / €2700

- Your logo will appear on the MetaCPAN front page above the search box throughout 2016. For the first half of 2017 we'll retain it on the footer of all MetaCPAN pages, along with other sponsors.
- You can provide a poster: we'll put it up at the event, so it will appear in the background of photos.

Gold: \$1500 / €1350

- Your logo will appear on the front page of MetaCPAN through to the end of 2016, and will also appear on a dedicated page about the event.
- We will do a dedicated blog post about your support for the event, which we're happy to iterate on with you. This could be primarily about your company, or can be on a technical subject related to Perl / MetaCPAN / Elasticsearch, topped and tailed with information about your company.

Silver: \$1000 / €900

- Your company name will appear on the front page of MetaCPAN through 2016.
- Your company logo and a paragraph of text about you will appear on the sponsors page.
- You can provide branded t-shirts and other swag, which we'll do our best to get people to wear during the event, so they'll appear in photos.

Bronze: \$500 / €450

- There will be a paragraph about you on the sponsorship / event page, which will be linked off the MetaCPAN front page.
- Tweets acknowledging your support, before, during, and after meta::hack.
- We're happy to support you if you want to do your own blog post about supporting MetaCPAN.
- We'll acknowledge your support in a blog post about the event, posted after it.
- Everyone attending will be asked to blog about it. You'll be mentioned in all such blog posts.

Participants

There will be 8 people taking part, including Olaf Alders, the founder and leader of the MetaCPAN project (on the left of this picture, taken at the QA Hackathon 2015 in Berlin). Everyone taking part is an experienced senior-level software engineer, and most of them have already spent a lot of time working on MetaCPAN.

As noted above, this is an invitational event with a very specific focus.



What is meta::hack?

MetaCPAN was created in late 2010. Version 0 of the MetaCPAN API was built on a very early version of Elasticsearch. For the first 5 years, most of the work on MetaCPAN focussed on

improving the data coverage, and the web interface. In that time Elasticsearch has moved on, and we're now well behind.

At the 2015 QA Hackathon in Berlin, Olaf Alders (founder of MetaCPAN) and Clinton Gormley (who works for Elastic) started the work to move MetaCPAN to Elasticsearch version 2. This work was continued at the 2016 QA Hackathon in Rugby (see picture below), and as a result we now have a beta version in live usage.

The primary goal of meta::hack is to complete the port to Elasticsearch version 2, so the public API and search engine can be switched over. There are a number of benefits:



- Switching from a single server to a cluster of 3 servers, giving a more reliable service and improved performance.
- Once we decommission the old service, we'll be able to set up a second cluster of 3 machines in a second data centre, for further improvements.
- We'll be able to take advantage of new Elasticsearch features, like [search suggesters](#).
- We'll be able to use a new endpoint that has been developed specifically to speed up cpanminus lookups. Cpanminus is probably the most widely used CPAN client these days, so improving this will benefit a large percentage of the community.
- If and when search.cpan.org is decommissioned, we'll be able to handle the extra traffic that will bring with it, and we'll also have the redundancy to do this safely.
- We'll be able to shift focus back to bug fixes and new MetaCPAN features.

Contact information

Please contact Neil Bowers if you would like to discuss this further:

neil@bowers.com

+44 7880 741 899

I'm in the UK timezone, which at this time of year is the same as UTC