

My first approved Fedora Package, yippie!

ec2-instance-connect

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A while ago I was asked if I want to package **ec2-instance-connect** for Fedora and eventually EPEL. More specific *"with Packit"*, which did send me down a weird path as I explain in more detail in *Fedora dist-git packit onboarding* <<https://dominik.wombacher.cc/posts/fedora-dist-git-packit-onboarding.html>>. After learning what Packit can and can't do for me, I started to make good progress ;)

I spend quite some time to learn about Fedora Packaging. The does and don't when writing spec files. How package testing, reviewing and publishing works. More about this in a later Blog, now I focus on my first approved package.

I was lucky that my Reviewer was Neal Gomba. People describe Neal with *"he is just everywhere"*. And that's true in the most positive way. It's nearly impossible to be active in the open source world without crossing paths :) He has a lot of experience and is a great mentor. Receiving feedback from him is always a great opportunity to learn.

First I thought [ec2-instance-connect](#) will be an easy package, great for the first one. Technically it's just a handful of files and a systemd unit. How hard can that be? Spoiler: Very hard.

The challenge is the way how ec2-instance-connect works. It adjusts the authcommand from sshd so that, by default, all authentication attempts go through it. This is fine for brand new systems but becomes a problem when you deploy on existing systems with a already customized config. Or if someone wants to apply a custom config after the initial deployment and ec2-instance-connect installation.

So there are a lot of ways to break ssh login to the system which is discussed on [GitHub](#). But keeping this fact aside, there is obviously demand for a [Fedora and EPEL package](#). So I was encouraged to improve the user experience and make it available :)

Upstream has a [generic spec file](#) so this became my starting point. But I had to learn quickly that shell snippets and nested if/else statements are not what is expected from a high quality spec file in Fedora. So I had to find a way to replace the pretty unique logic that was implemented with rpm macros and in a way that aligns with Fedora packaging guidelines. The result is a good compromise, not perfect but it gives users flexibility and reduces the risk of problems.

So after a couple iterations and very valuable feedback from Neal, he approved my request and I was good to bring my first package into Fedora :) If you are interested in the details, feel free to take a look at the [Fedora Review Request](#) ticket.

In the meantime the package is available in all Fedora and EPEL repositories. It is also on it's way to be pre-installed in Fedora Cloud images in future :D

It was an awesome experience and I can't wait to work on more packages!