

Patreon

Fernando Ellis - Andrew Mandula - Brendan Whitfield

Rationale

There are so many subjects you could choose to profile, so why did you choose this one? What drew you into wanting to know more about the organization? How did you/your group decide on and agree?

Organizational Details

1. **Is the subject of your profile a corporate entity?**
Yes
2. **What type?**
Private company
3. **When was it founded?**
May 2013
4. **By whom?**
Artist Jack Conte and Sam Yam
5. **Original founder(s) still active?**
Jack Conte and Sam Yam
6. **Publicly Traded? Since when? Initial Stock Price? Current stock price?**
No
7. **Has the company made any acquisitions? If yes, which companies, and what were their core products?**
 - a. Yes, Subbable. <https://subbable.com/>
 - b. Their core product is their website, which allows you to subscribe to one of their "Creators" and fund products through them. The website itself only takes enough money to support its servers and amazon's payment system. The rest goes to the creator that you would be supporting.
8. **Has the company made any investments in other companies? If yes, which ones.**
 - a. I don't think so

9. Number of Employees?

21 Employees, Here's a sampling:

Jack Conte - CEO

Sam Yam - President and Tech Head

Amanda Smock - Head of People Ops and HR

Jesse Wolfe - Engineer Extraordinaire

Kathy Zheng - Designer of All Things

Marcos Gaeta - Engineer Fantastique

10. Where is HQ?

San Francisco, United States

11. Does it have any other offices or locations?

No

12. Website?

<http://www.patreon.com/>

13. Wikipedia?

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patreon>

14. Does your organization file any annual reports? Please include links to any relevant documents (i.e. 990, Annual Report, Year in Review, etc...)

They are private and don't publish their annual reports

Communications

1. Does your subject participate in social media? If yes, please list a URL for each account, and reach within that community. (i.e. [Twitter: @RedHatNews](#) - 61.9K Followers.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/PatreonCommandCenter> - 2856 Subscribers

<https://twitter.com/patreon> - 28.7k Followers

<https://www.facebook.com/patreon> - 45031 likes

<https://instagram.com/patreon/> - 1140 Followers

<https://www.patreon.com/Patreon?ty=c> - 150 Patrons

<https://www.patreon.com/press>

2. What communication channels does your subject use to reach their public? Briefly describe and include a URL for each.

The blog and the youtube are the primary means of public outreach:

<https://www.patreon.com/Patreon?ty=c>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/PatreonCommandCenter>

3. Does your subject organize or participate in any conferences? If so, list them here, and provide links to any relevant sessions, keynotes, or content.

No, not really.

Community Architecture

Your subject likely runs or contributes to one or more Open Source products or projects. Choose one (or more) of these and answer the following questions:

a. If applicable, list and provide links to:

i. The project's IRC Channel

i. Don't think so

ii. Source Code repository

i. Can't see it; They're a private company

iii. Mail list archive

i. Can't see it; They're a private company

iv. Documentation

i. Can't see it; They're a private company

v. Other communication channels

i. Not really, see "Communications, question 2, above"

vi. Project Website and/or Blog

i. <https://www.patreon.com/>

ii. <https://www.patreon.com/Patreon>

b. Describe the software project, its purpose and goals.

Patreon is crowdfunding site allowing content creators to collect funding from their "Patrons". Patreon allows for lone and recurring donations from the patrons, and takes a 5% commission. Content creators range from youtube stars, musicians, to podcasters.

c. Give brief history of the project. When was the Initial Commit? The latest commit?

i. Patreon was founded on May 7th, 2013 by Jack Conte. Since then it has not had any major changes in design, usability, or functionality. As it is not software, there are no regular commits.

d. Who approves patches? How many people?

i. Jack Conte and Sam Yam

e. Who has commit access, or has had patches accepted? How many total?

i. Can't see it; They're a private company

f. Has there been any turnover in the Core Team? (i.e. has the top 20% of contributors stayed the same over time? If not, how has it changed?)

No, Jack Conte and Sam Yam are still with the company, and it has continued to grow

g. Does the project have a BDFL, or Lead Developer? (BDFL == Benevolent Dictator for Life)

Jack Conte, Sam Yam

h. Are the front and back end developers the same people? What is the proportion of each?

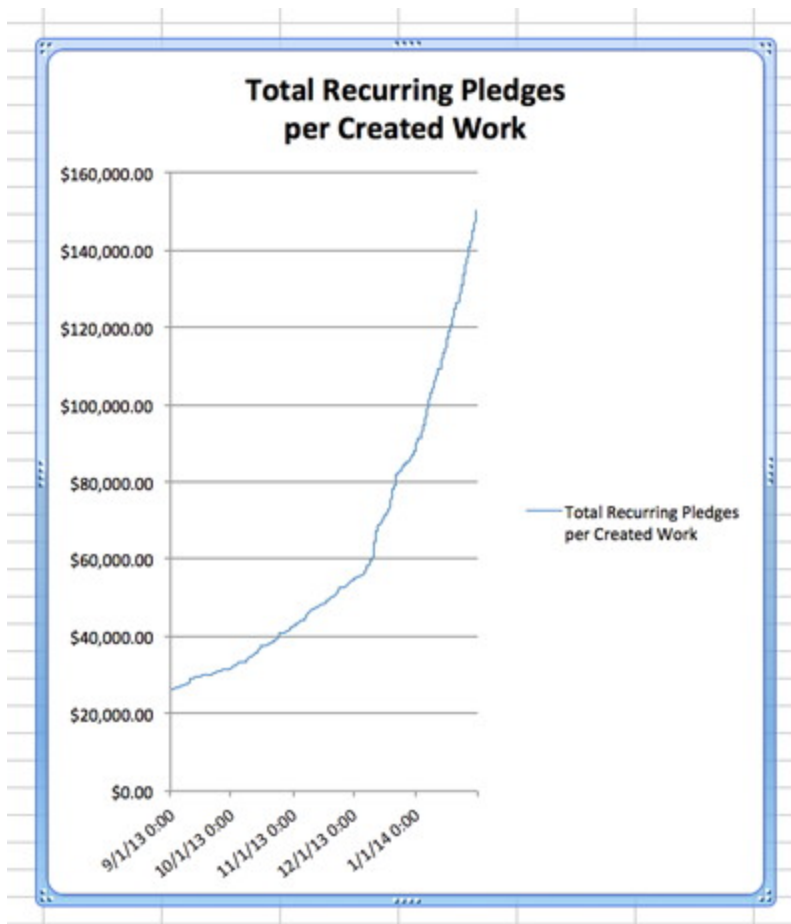
No, they have different people for development, design, and HR. They have more developers than designers.

i. **What have been some of the major bugs/problems/issues that have arisen during development? Who is responsible for quality control and bug repair?**

i. Rather than having bugs/issues, patreon more often than not will have problems with the posts of users. In December 2014 there was a policy change to no longer allow pornographic photography, but NSFW content in other forms is still allowed on the site. Now there is currently a system in place where users can request moderators to mark "strikes" on creator's content. Accumulate enough strikes, and you can have your account suspended.

j. **How is the project's participation trending and why?**

It has been doing well. It gained 125,000 patrons in the first 18 months. Recurring pledges continue to increase.



k. **In your opinion, does the project pass "The Raptor Test?" (i.e. Would the project survive if the BDFL, or most active contributor were eaten by a Velociraptor?) Why or why not?**

Yes, it would survive. While there may be a brief period of chaos while new moderators step in, most of the infrastructure is already in place, and would continue to run. In terms of the web development, since the site isn't very intensive, or unique, it's likely that new developers could pick up the code base quickly.

l. In your opinion, would the project survive if the core team, or most active 20% of contributors, were hit by a bus? Why or why not?

- i. The company would have a period of several months when content isn't as heavily moderated, the website might not support so much traffic, and the back-end wouldn't be patched, but the company could hire new employees and continue their services.

m. Does the project have an official "on-boarding" process in place? (new contributor guides, quickstarts, communication leads who focus specifically on newbies, etc...)

Simply sign up for an account: <https://www.patreon.com/signup>

Any questions can likely be answered from the FAQ: <http://support.patreon.com/>

n. Does the project have Documentation available? Is it extensive? Does it include code examples?

Patreon maintains a helpful FAQ with answers to questions regarding Creators and Patrons: <http://support.patreon.com/>

o. If you were going to contribute to this project, but ran into trouble or hit blockers, who would you contact, and how?

- i. <http://support.patreon.com/> just has a giant FAQ with information that might help.
- ii. Depending on the blocker, you could also email privacy@patreon.com or copyright@patreon.com

p. Based on these answers, how would you describe the decision making structure/process of this group? Is it hierarchical, consensus building, ruled by a small group, barely contained chaos, or ruled by a single or pair of individuals?

The company is a small group, led by Jack Conte (the CEO), and Sam Yam (President & Head of Technical).

q. Is this the kind of structure you would enjoy working in? Why, or why not?

- i. As an artistic creator, it would be pretty nice; the concept of the website is to give artists enough monetary support to have a sustainable income for their work. As a back-end developer or moderator, I don't know about their system, as they are a private company.

Technology/Product

1. Who invented, created, or sponsored the technology?

Jack Conte and Sam Yam created Patreon in May 2013. That August they raised \$1.3M in VC Funding. Patreon was founded so that founder Jack Conte could monetize his popular Youtube channel.

2. What is the technology designed to do? How is it used?

Creators/Artists can create an account and showcase their work. Artists can set a monthly limit that users can give them a month, attaching rewards/gifts to different tiers if they would like. Artists receive their pledges at the start of every month and can use

them as they see fit, no financial records are need to be shown to Patreon or the artist's pledging users. Patreon charges a flat 5% fee on all pledges.

3. Who would benefit from using this technology?

Artists in any medium would benefit from this technology, as well as open source developers. As users pledge each month, this could be used a supplemental income at first for an artist and if they receive enough pledges, it could become their full income.

4. What kinds of companies or organizations (stakeholders) might have been concerned about the development of this technology? Why?

Record labels, content networks, and other organizations that host and promote artist on any medium are probably very concerned as Patreon is cutting them out as middlemen and giving artists an avenue to their fans.

5. Does/Did an aspect of copyright law play a role in controversies about the technology? How?

There have been no copyright cases/controversies surrounding patreon.

6. Who are some of the users of this service?

Youtubers & Musicians:

<https://www.patreon.com/jackconte> (the CEO of Patreon)

<https://www.patreon.com/pentatonix>

<https://www.patreon.com/cgpgrey>

<https://www.patreon.com/scishow>

<https://www.patreon.com/CorridorDigital>

<https://www.patreon.com/minutephysics>

A handful of developers:

<https://www.patreon.com/freebsdgirl>

<https://www.patreon.com/openfl>

<https://www.patreon.com/libgdx>

<https://www.patreon.com/queenofspace>

<https://www.patreon.com/benlehman>