

DEVELOPER ECOSYSTEMS: BUILD YOURS FOR PROJECTS BIG AND SMALL

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ECOSYSTEMS

EXAMPLE ECOSYSTEMS

Win32. TAPI. MFC. C++. COM. ATL. .NET/C#. WinForms. WPF. Visual Studio.

Oslo. WinJS. Google Cloud Platform. Android. Jetpack. Flutter. Meta Spark Studio.

OSS: Genghis, RegexDesigner.NET, go_router

DEFINE: ECOSYSTEM



Ecosystem: everything

- your team
- releases, applications, extensions
- docs, samples, videos, blogs, tweets
- your users

WHAT KIND OF ECOSYSTEM DO YOU WANT?

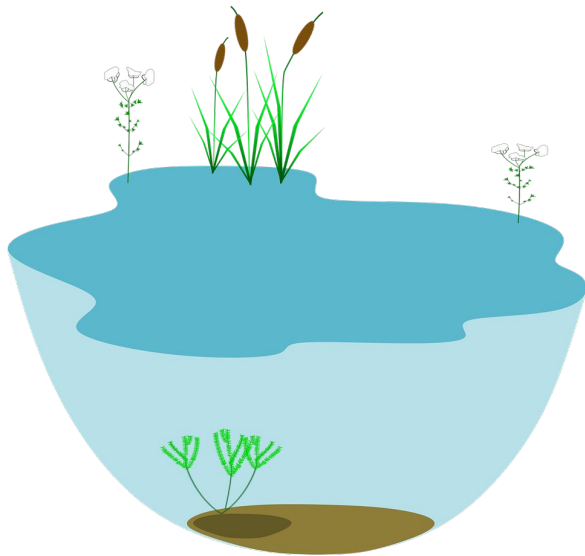
Unmanaged: focus on the eng

Node

React

Minecraft

99% of OSS



Managed: focus on the users

MFC, .NET, WinJS

Android, Jetpack, Flutter

iOS, macOS, iPadOS

1% of OSS

WHAT KIND OF ECOSYSTEM DO YOU WANT?

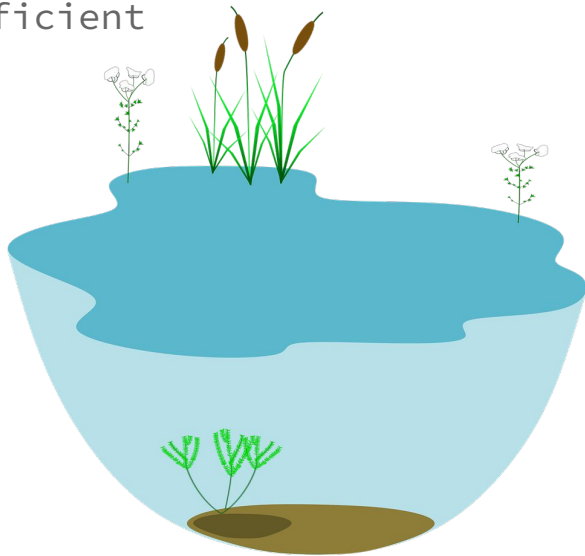
Unmanaged: focus on the eng

engineering == necessary

engineering != sufficient

Managed: focus on the users

engineering + user focus ==
ecosystem



DEFINE: USERS



contributors
(champions)

consumers

FOCUS ON YOUR CONTRIBUTING USERS

1. Speak effectively
 2. Listen actively
- ...
- N. Profit!



**Speak then
listen**

SPEAK EFFECTIVELY

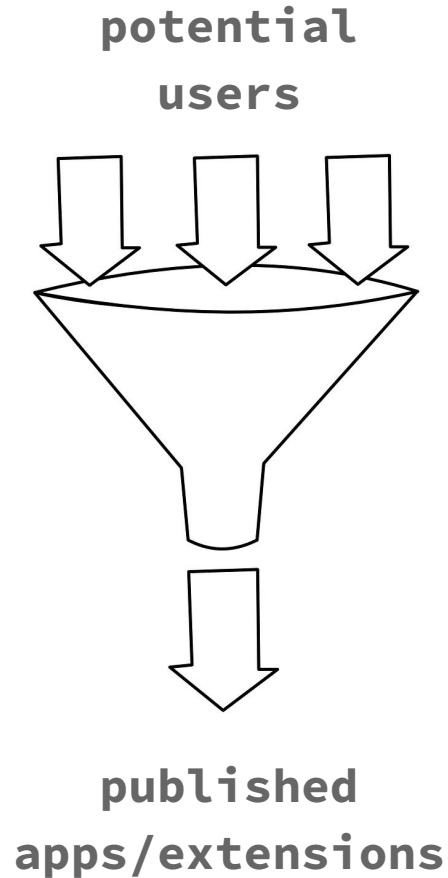
SPEAK TRUTH TO ENG

"Attracting contributors to a project is about marketing, but you cannot lie. You really must deliver on what you claim about your project."

—Guy Kawasaki, 1989,
OG Developer Evangelist



BUILDING THE FUNNEL





LAUNCHES, NOT RELEASES

Release == new bits

- “*Ship early and often.*”
-Chris Sells, all the time

Launch == a reason to care

- Regular drumbeat == confidence
- Existing users => new features
- Funnel += new users
- Call To Action

REASONS TO CARE

You care about them

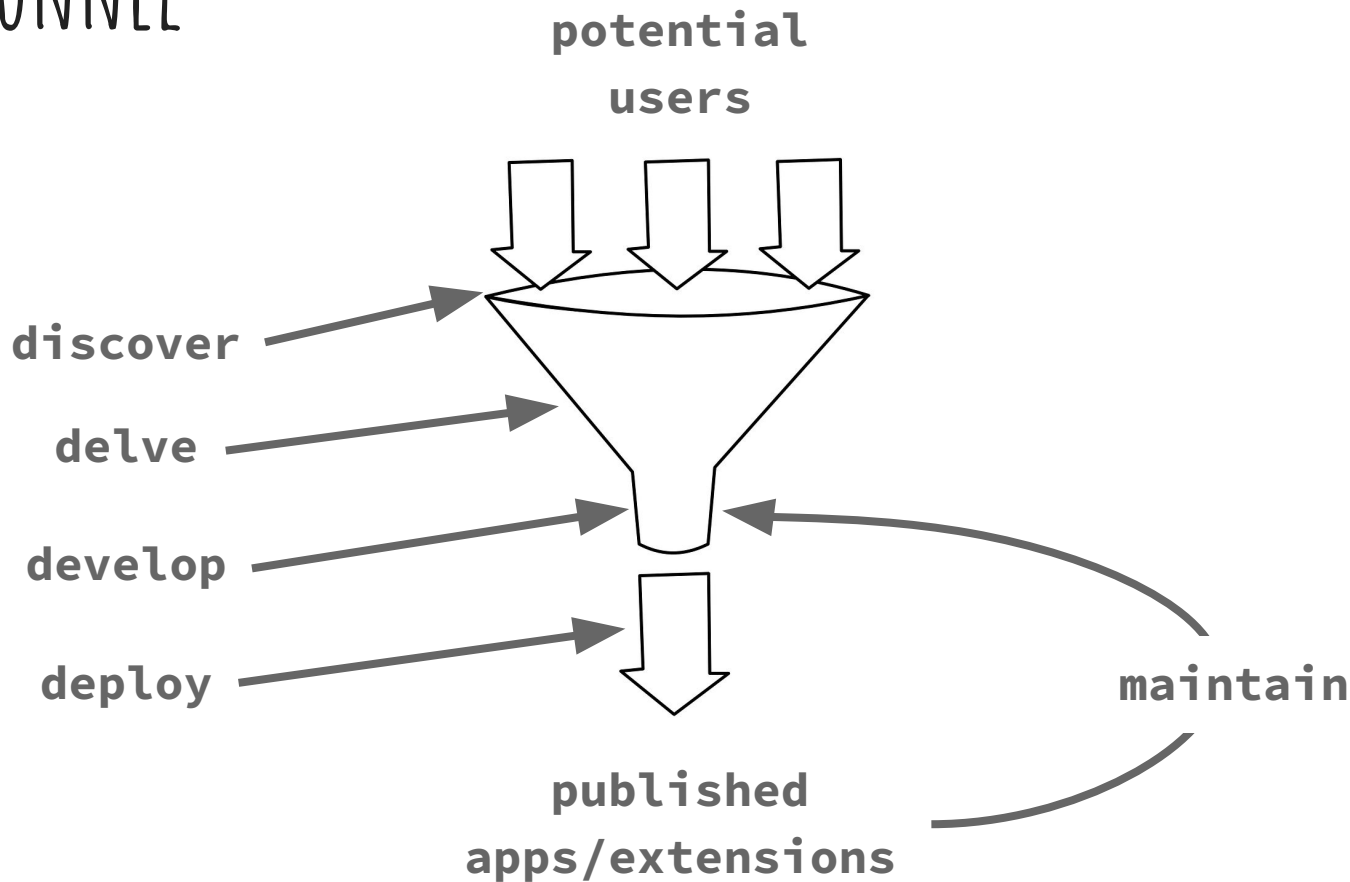
- New major version == maturity
- New features == new scenarios
- New polish == --bugs, ++perf
- New productivity == ++easy
- Celebrate contributors

Others care about you

- Increased user base (mass usage)
- Lighthouse customers (recognized usage)
- Eating your own dog food (your usage)
- Brag about awards, rankings, stars, likes, downloads, etc.



THROUGH THE FUNNEL



THROUGH THE FUNNEL

- **Discover:** attract them to your site w/ solutions
 - Use social media, event, video, in-product ad, inspiring sample, etc.
 - Mixed media: prose, code, screenshots, testimonials, animations, etc.
- **Delve:** make it easy to get started
 - Easy download, install, update, samples & tools
 - Wizards & migration tools
- **Develop:** how to solve their problem
 - solution-focused docs & samples, API reference
 - IDE integration, CI/CD integration, etc.
- **Deploy:** how to package your thing with their app
 - considerations for your thing in production in their app
- **Maintain:** How they improve their app with your thing
 - support them for the life of their app

LISTEN ACTIVELY

CONTRIBUTORS WANT TO TALK *TO* YOU – LISTEN & RESPOND



Channels to listen

- Social media (tweets, comments)
- Q&A forums
- Bug reports
- Feature requests

Protocol for responding

- “Thank you for your feedback”
- Ask clarifying questions
- Let other users participate
- Follow up

CONTRIBUTORS WANT TO TALK *FOR* YOU – REWARD THEM

Channels for them to talk == scale

- Responding questions/bugs/PRs
- Promoting launches
- Bringing your tech to their org
- Posts applying/extending your project
- Customers telling their (your) story

Reward the behavior you want

- Celebrate their success
- Promote them to MVP/admin/maintainer
- Meetings with the team, swag, etc.



WHERE ARE WE?

SHOW ME THE MONEY!



SHOW ME THE MONEY!

users == necessary



users != sufficient

WHAT YOU WILL GET



RESOURCES

- “The Macintosh Way”
by Guy Kawasaki
- “Androids: The Team that Built the Android Operating System”
by Chet Haase
- “Developer Marketing Does Not Exist: The Authentic Guide to Reach a Technical Audience Kindle Edition”
by Adam DuVander
- “Uncurled” ([https://un curl.dev/](https://un	curl.dev/))
by Daniel Stenberg

CALL TO ACTION!

To build your ecosystem, you need to:

- 0. Solve a real problem
- 1. Speak effectively
- 2. Listen actively
- ...
- N. Profit!

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