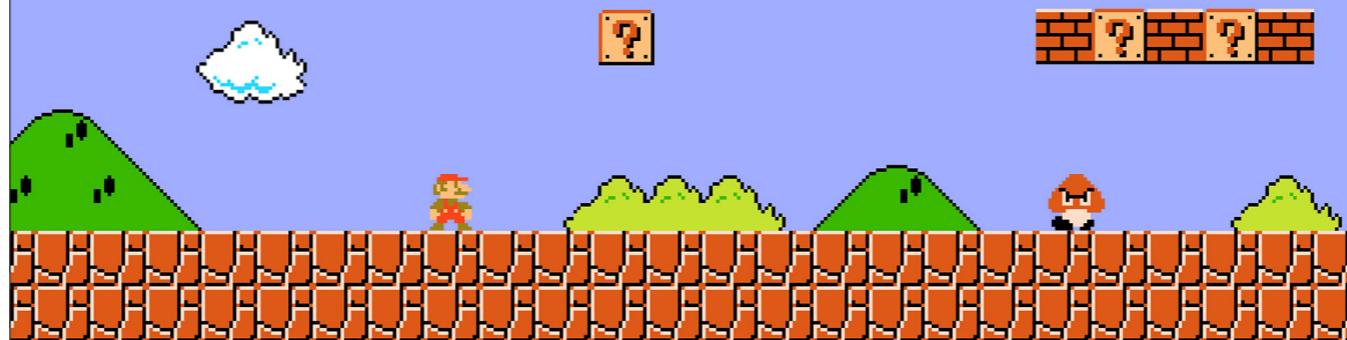


STARTING, RUNNING & GROWING A SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPER MEETUP



Welcome!

Michael Zornek

@zorn



Long time Apple Developer, first on Mac and then iOS.

Currently I'm self employed and do a mixture of consulting, education and product development.

When I'm not working, I like video games.

Before we get started here talking about meetups, **a little backstory of my own meetup.**



This story begins on Dec 9, 2010

Thursday, the second Thursday of the Month which meant the monthly PhillyCocoa meeting.

PhillyCocoa



PhillyCocoa was a small group two years old (6-10 people) who were Mac devs or new iPhone devs.



Most of the members came from our meeting venue, IndyHall, a coworking space.



The meetings were organized by Andy, who worked as a Mac developer for a local scanner company.

**“IF YOU CARE ABOUT PHILLYCDOA
AT ALL - PAST, PRESENT, AND
FUTURE - THIS IS A MEETING YOU
REALLY DON’T WANT TO MISS.”**

Andy sent the reminder email for the meeting and said...



Andy announced he was headed out to SF for new job. And the meeting needed new leadership.



I didn't want to see the meetings die so I volunteered along with another Mike and we took over.

2010

MEETING FORMAT CHANGES
NEW WEBSITE
EMBRACE COCOAHEADS BRAND
PROMOTING SHOW AND TELL
MEETUP.COM
SIDE PROJECT SATURDAYS
WORKSHOPS
APPLE STORE
COCOALOVE CONFERENCE
VIDEO RECORDING
BOOK CLUB
RETURN TO INDYHALL
MORE FORMAT CHANGES

2017

As someone who really enjoyed the meetings, I put some extra time into the job.
Lots of projects, many successful. And I Want to share what I've learned



Philly COCOAHEADS

STATS

- ✗ ~220 ACTIVE MEMBERS (1,100+ ON MEETUP.COM)
- ✗ MONTHLY MAIN MEETING (35-45)
- ✗ MONTHLY SIDE PROJECT SATURDAY (8-16)
- ✗ WEEKLY BOOK CLUB (5-10)

Current main meeting attendance grown from from 6-10 to 35-45

1,184 members on Meetup, 220 active member.

While I'm happy we've grown in our reach, it's not a numbers game.

<http://mikezornek.com/2016/01/21/philly-cocoaheads-history/>

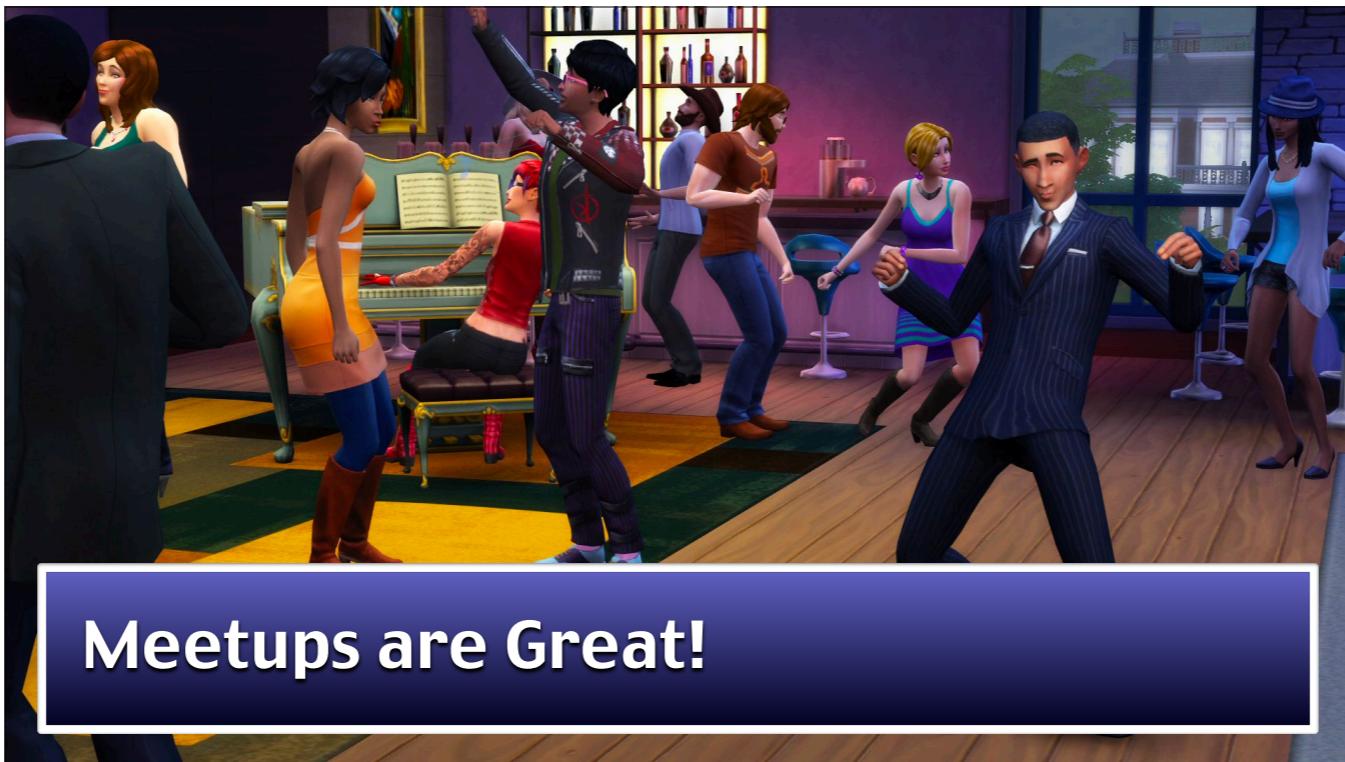
Build the Campfire



Build the Campfire

Creating the environment so members can create value themselves.

Create opportunities for opportunities.



Meetups are Great!

Great for **solo developers** to avoid isolation, get new ideas.

Great for **teams** to challenge internal beliefs and echo chambers

Great for **you**, become a better speaker. Become a beacon/connector for the community.

Meet peers. Most career growth happens via **opportunities from people you know**. The more people you know the better.



What did Zelda say to Link when he couldn't open the door?

Triforce.

Many believe the names of the three triforce pieces are wisdom, courage and power



But of course we really know they are starting, running and growing
OR I just need a nice visual way to break up my sections...



STARTING A MEETUP

NAME — LIFE



-



-



-

REGISTER YOUR NAME

ELIMINATION MODE



Take notes on what you like and dislike.

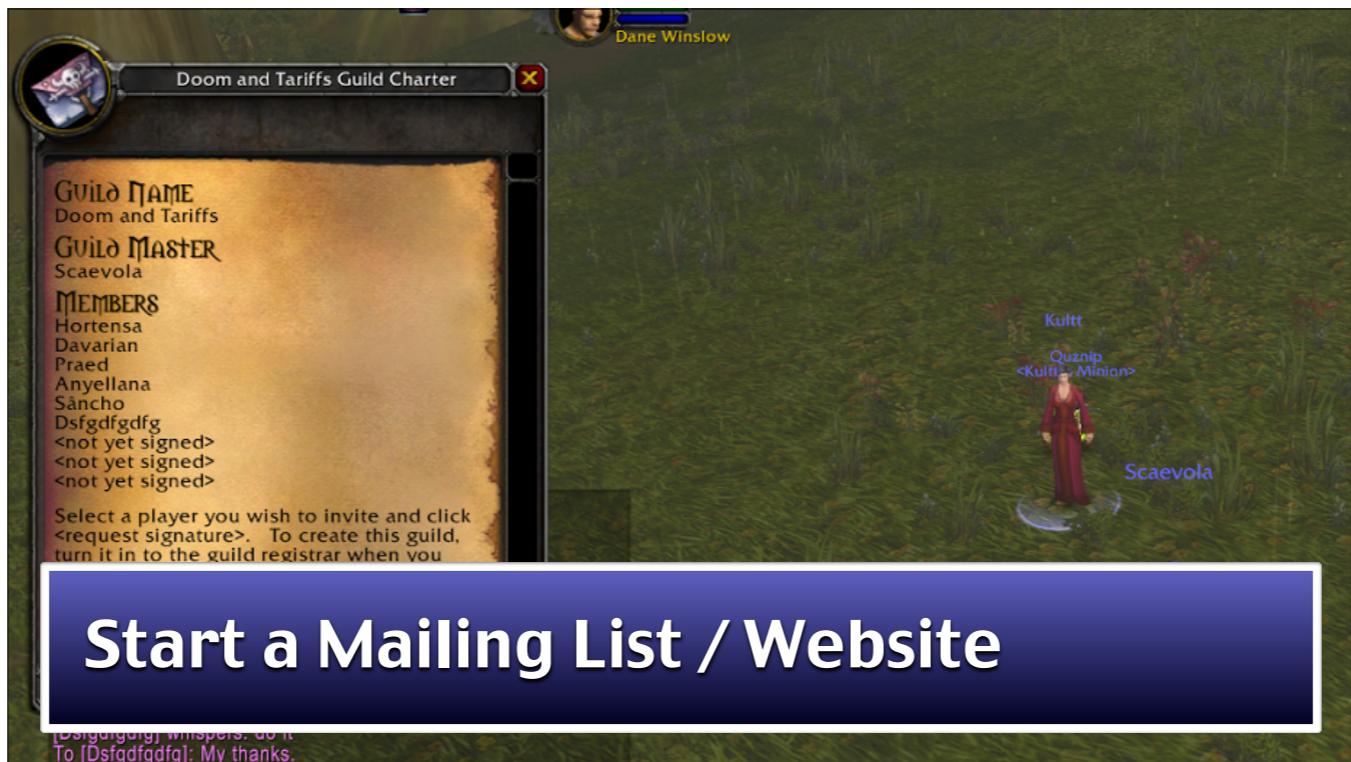
Introduce yourself to the organizers.

Introduce yourself to the other attendees.

Start a mailing list for your own group.



Computer Programmers is too vague
Core Data is too specific
iOS Developers is just right.



A simple discussion style mailing list is a great start.
meetup.com may be overkill for the early days. Will discuss later.



Like any new endeavor, Set some goals.

A large attendee count may not be your goal.

Eg: NYC CocoaHeads is 12-15 people.



My own time:

- shaking down for speakers
- sending out agenda
- ordering food
- running the meeting
- posting videos
- misc project
- 4-6 hours a month + reload day

Finding a Good Venue



What makes for a good venue?

Easy to find and enter. (Temp signs help.)

Room to grow but doesn't feel empty.

Basic AV needs.

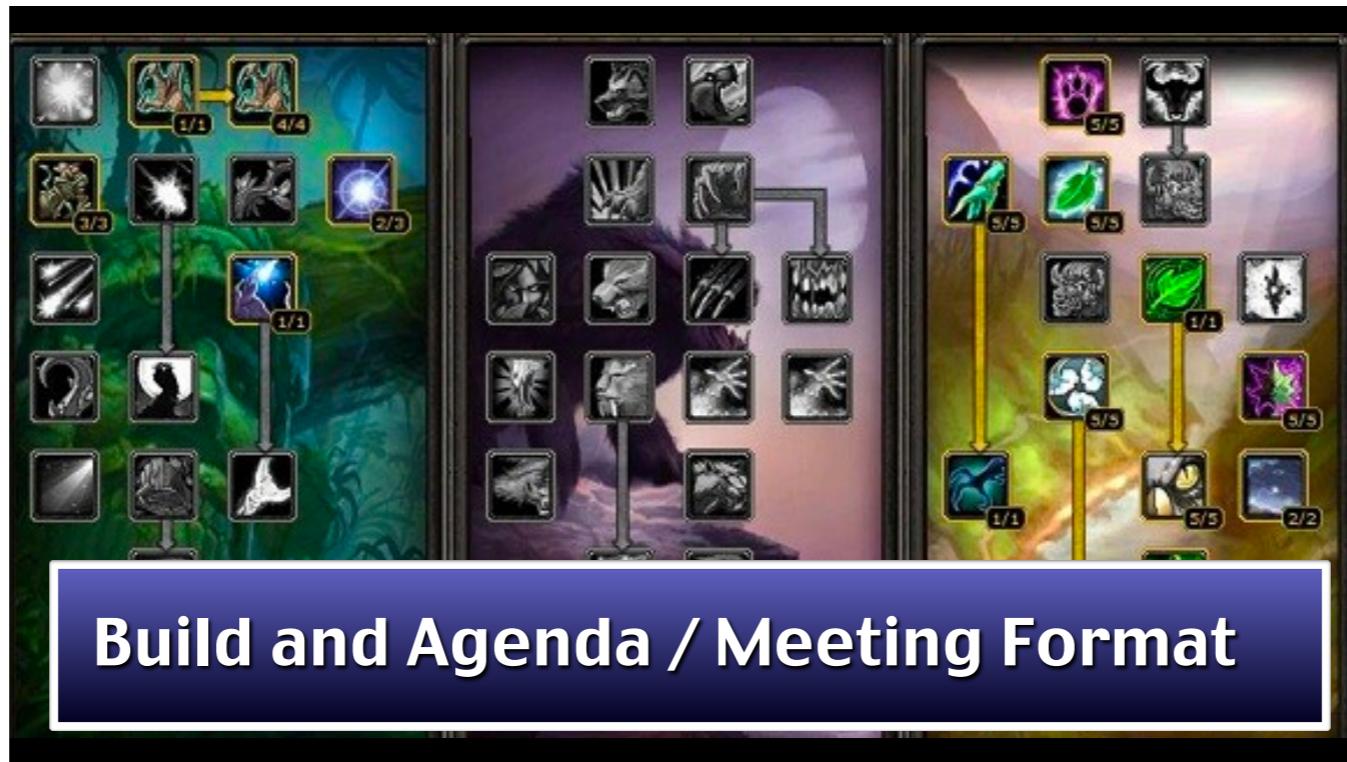
Free / low cost

Public Libraries, College Campuses, iOS Dev Studios, Coworking spaces, Coffee Shops



Bring projector dongles.

Consider borrowing if venue does not have.



Having and posting an agenda ahead of time helps to make sure it's clear you value other people's time and attention.
It's good to repeat the basics at every meeting so new people have some expectations of how things work.

Have Lots of Time for Socializing



Avoid presentations only. People need time to mingle.



Doing Early Talks Yourself

Be prepared to do some early talks yourself. This is good in that it lets you set the tone of the events but you want to avoid making the meetup your own show. Need to get others to do talks.

Let's you define the expectations for speakers and topics. If not, work close with your guest speakers ahead of time.



Promote Your Meetup

College Universities, Coworking spaces, iOS studios, other meetups, local tech news?



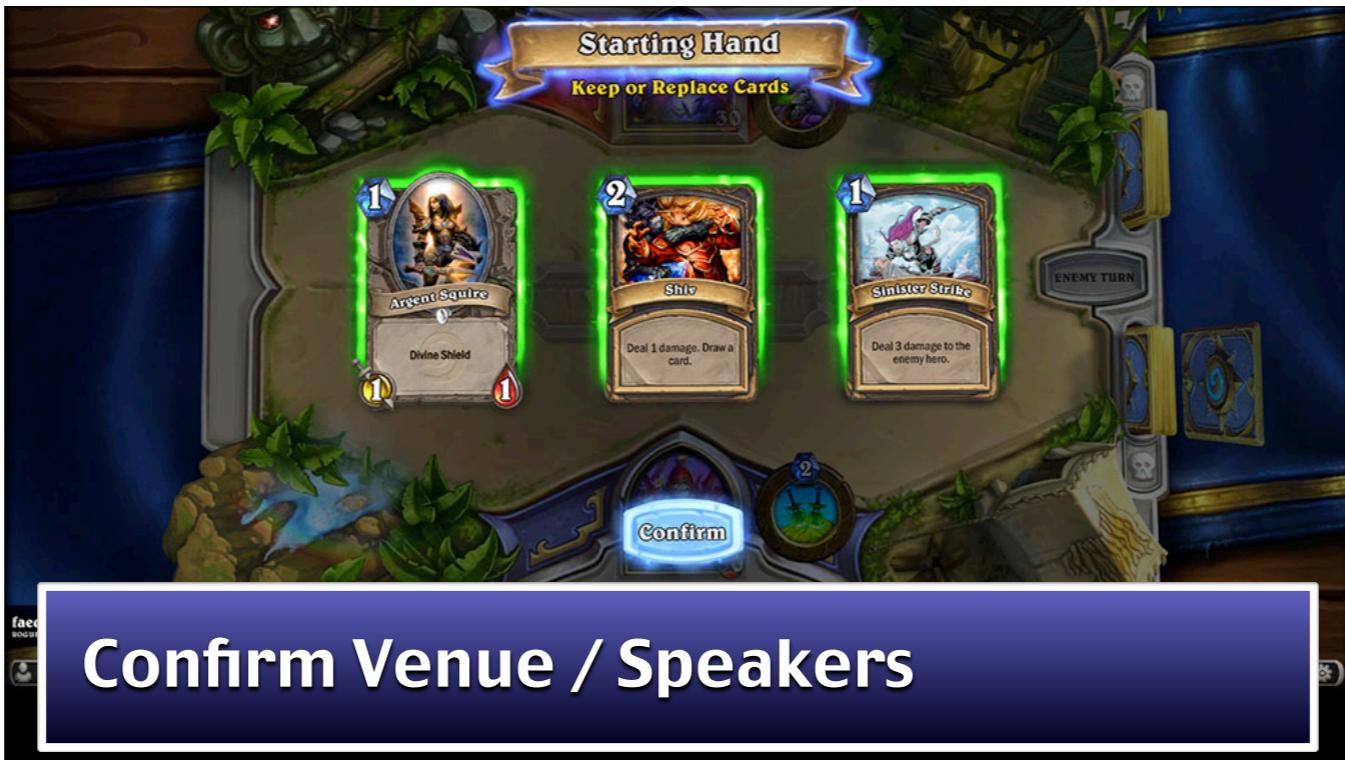


It's usually easier to get **commitment from people months ahead of time.**

Don't wait for people to come to you, **ask people to speak.**

Consider smaller talk slots, more causal show and tell.

Push beginner talks. Lots of your attendees will be new, or hobbyists.

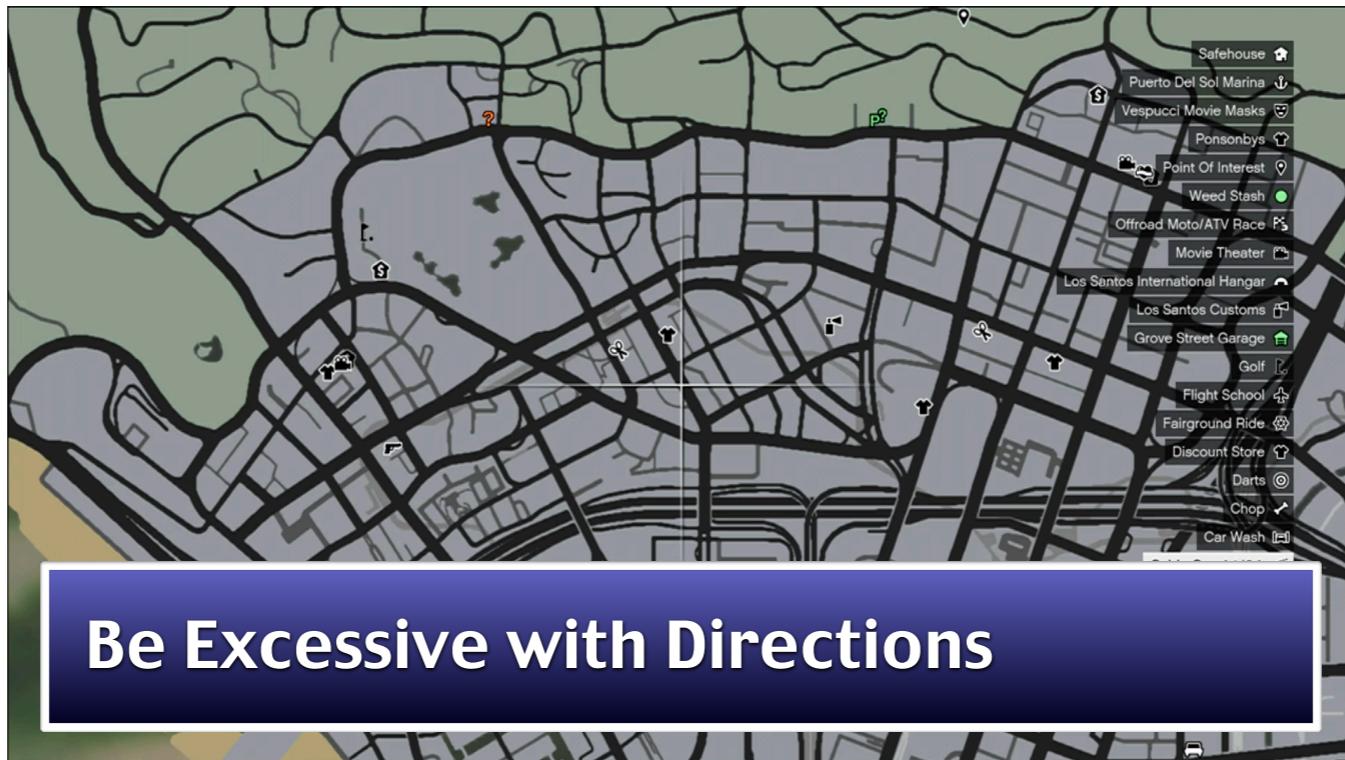


As the date gets closer confirm your venue and speakers.



Send Out Reminder Email

Be sure to send out a reminder email for first your speakers and then your attendees.
I usually do the Monday before the Thursday meeting.
Try to repeat the announcement/agenda on Twitter/Slack to reach all people.



Take photos of the front door

Post temp signs so people know where to go



People will RSVP and not show up. If you have an attendee cap you need to remind people to update their status.



Your job is to offer the people a bite to eat, not a 5 course meal.

Many people have to come to the meetup right from work so we want to give them something so they aren't starving.

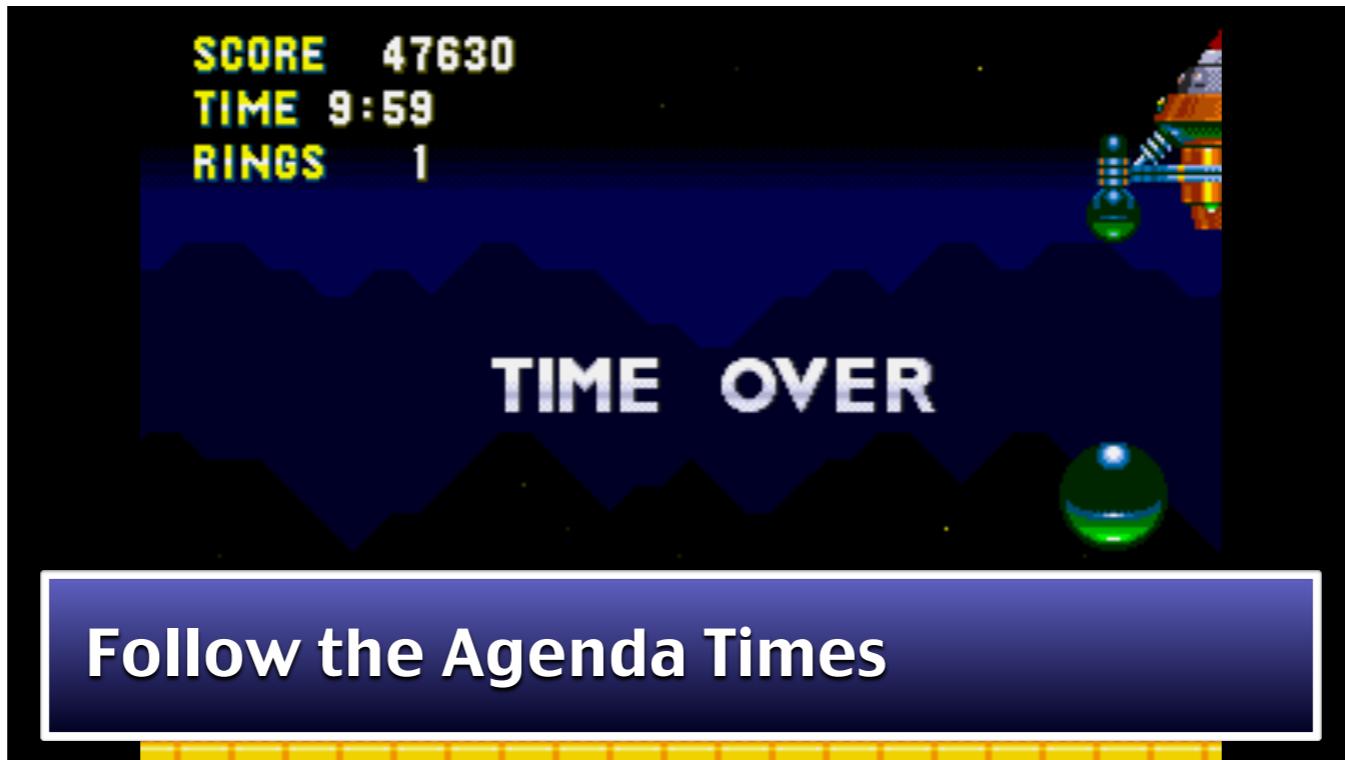


Show Up Early



Welcome People. Be a Good Host.

Be visible. Go out of your want to introduce yourself to new faces.



Come up with a standard agenda and open the meeting with plenty of standard info so new people have expectations.

Having an agenda is a sign you value people's time.

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



We use name tags these days to help since we have so many people.



Try your best to have the same meeting days every month, listed well in advance.
Repeat the basic info of your group every meeting as if people are there 1st time.





Add to the Leadership

Getting people to own certain aspects of the group, make this “our” group. Lots of little responsibilities to share:

Food

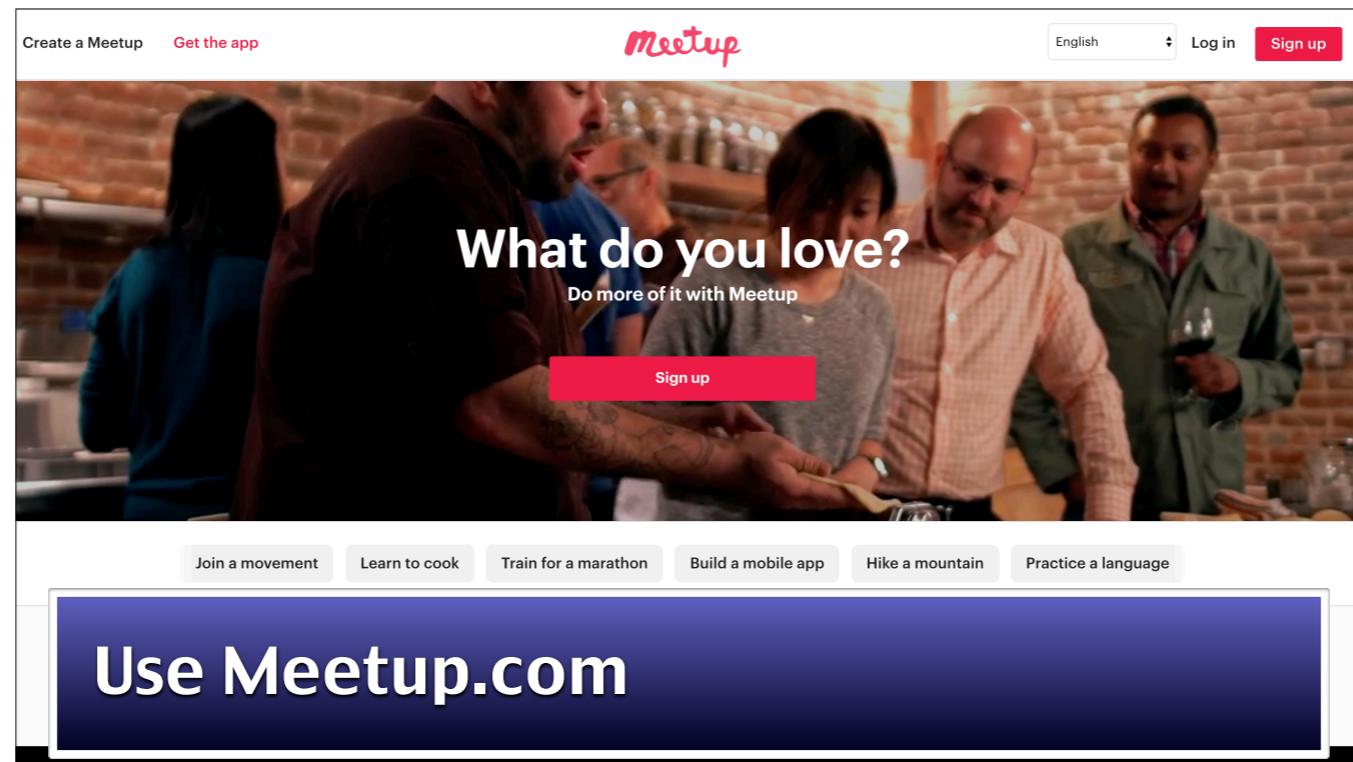
Social Media

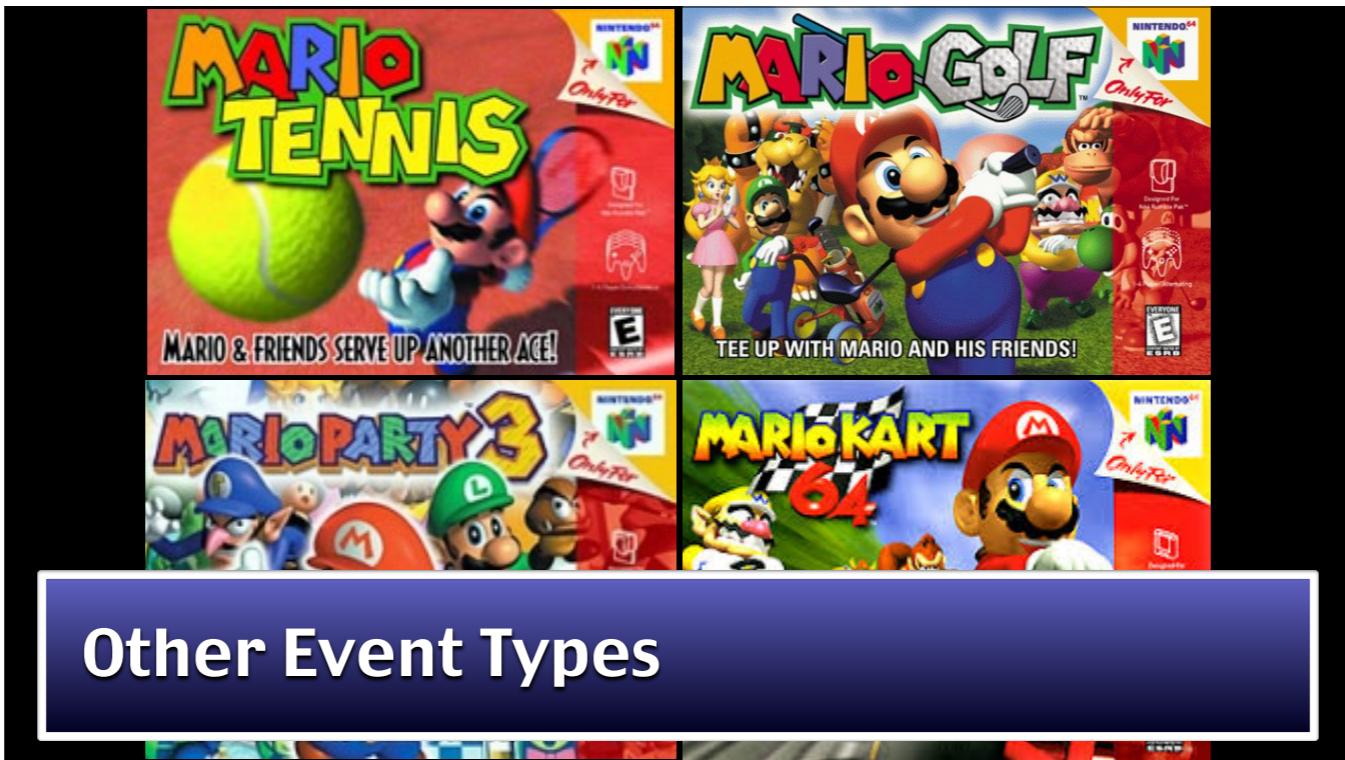
Website

Marketing

You might be alone on day one but try to find people to share the responsibilities asap. Not only does this help you spread out the load but having something to do really starts to break down the ownership perspective from “Mike’s Group” to “Our Group”.

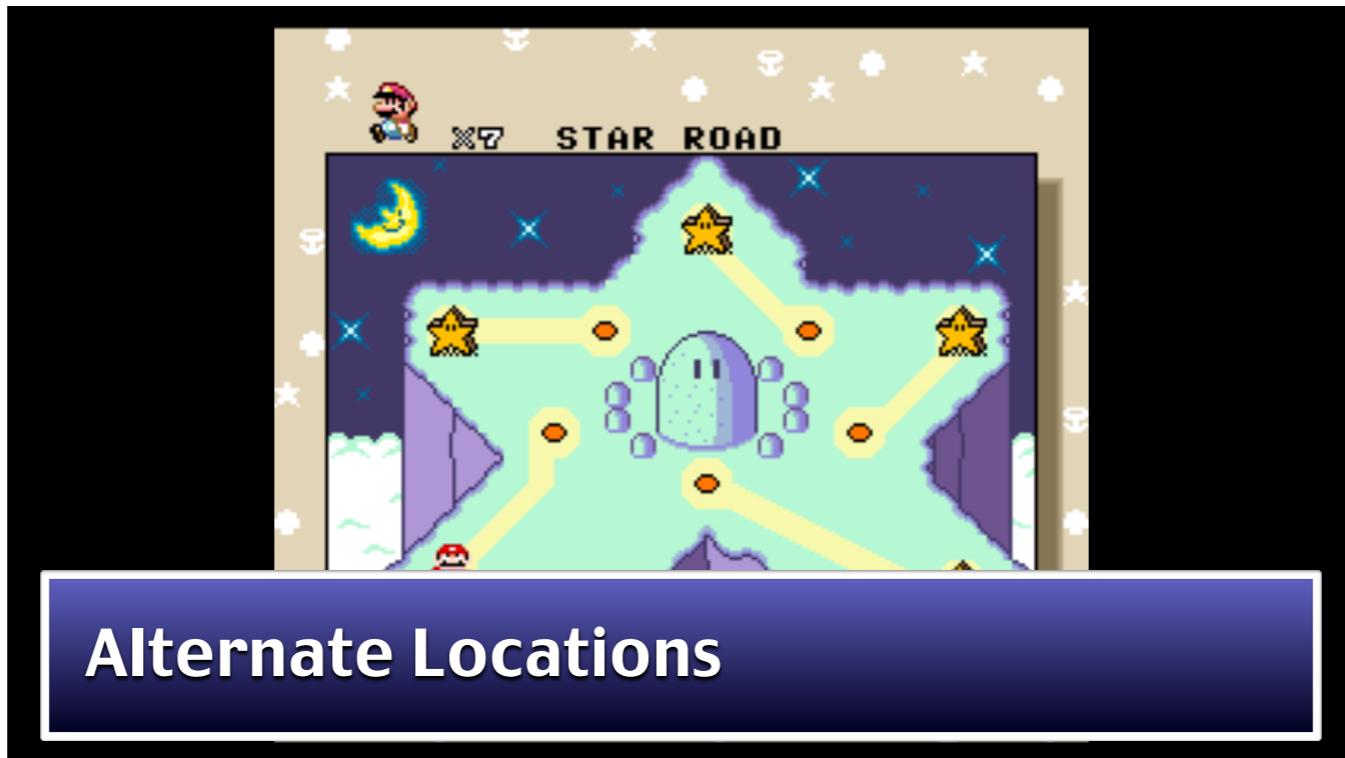
* Pizza, website, twitter, meeting notes, etc.





Other Event Types

SPS, Book Club, Special Focus events Wikipedia, iOS 7

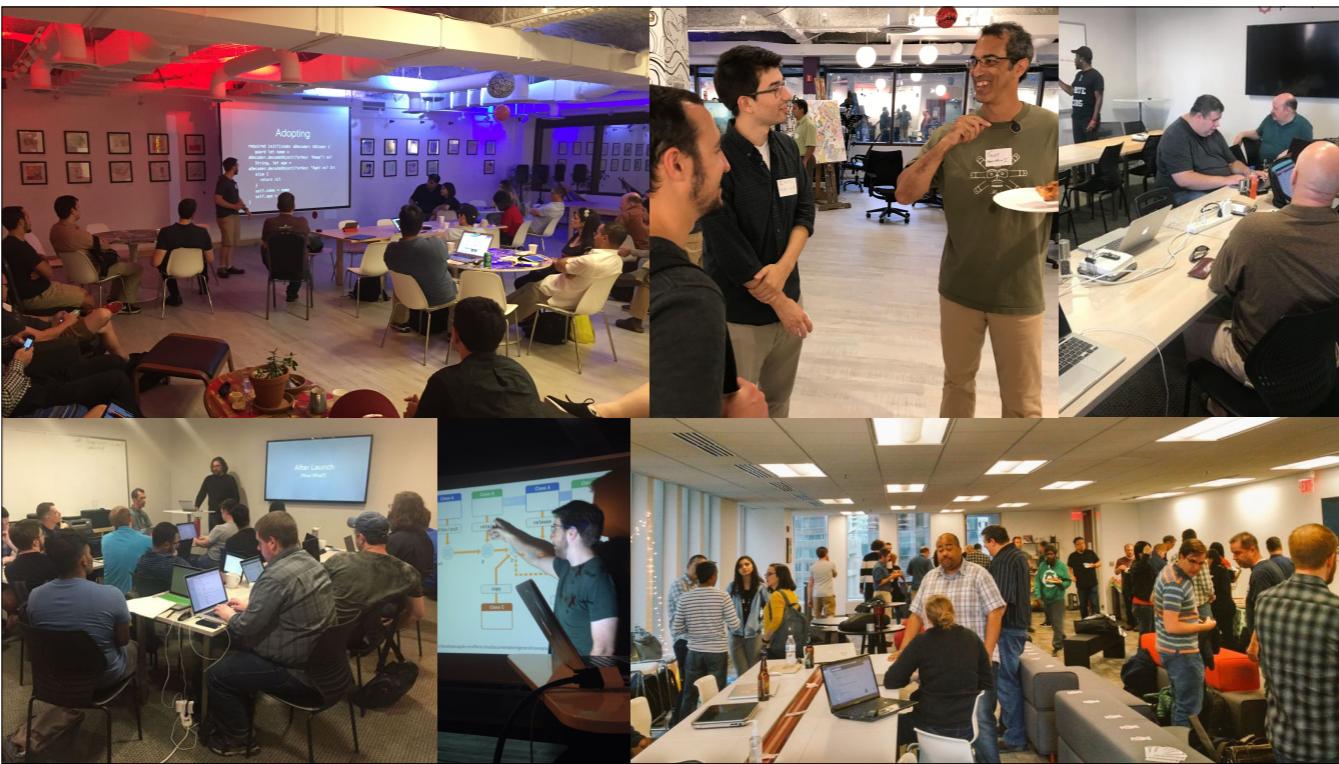


Alternate Locations



Take and Post Photos

Really helps people get a feel for the atmosphere.



Some photos from PhillyCocoa



My favorite photo.



Sponsorship + Taxes

We don't want to charge membership. Sponsorship helps cover costs without too much shameless marketing. Helps we have good companies sponsoring us. I run under my company and its pretty much a wash so I avoid income tax.
Non Profit status seemed like to much work but you should investigate.

Crossover Meetups



We've partnered with Android Alliance. I've also done work with Girl Develop It.



And with that we've assembled the Triforce, and can make a wish.
I hope your wish is to go home and start or otherwise grow your own meetups.
If we have any time, I've to take some questions here or in the hall ways.
Thank you.



And with that we've assembled the Triforce, and can make a wish.
I hope your wish is to go home and start or otherwise grow your own meetups.
If we have any time, I've to take some questions here or in the hall ways.
Thank you.