

# Running A Successful Local User Group

# Warning

This isn't a technical talk.



Hello

my name is

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# JS.LA

A monthly user group focusing on all things JavaScript  
in Los Angeles



EdgeCast.com



DollarShaveClub.com

#js.la

on PC

@JSdotLA

on Twitter



# Successful User Group?

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# Professional

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## Support Group



Stitch-n-bitch

It can be helpful to just talk

# Craftsmen



# Guild / Union

# Stay Healthy

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## Mix it up

Make an effort to keep things diverse and include  
passionate people.

So do you want to start a  
user group?

# First

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Lets talk about community

# Community doesn't "exist"



## You participate in it

# Culture doesn't "exist"

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You participate in it

an organization's culture is an emergent thing.  
communicate and collaborate if you want to shape or  
change it.

→ @sixwing

YOU NEED TO BE ONE  
OF US

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Not an opportunist



ONE OF US



DIY ethic



DO IT YOURSELF

# Temporary Autonomous Zone



WAT?

There's tech in LA?



There's tech in [your locale]?

Your people are not from  
here





Tech is not just for people  
with time and access

Why aren't things better  
in my town?

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content - leadership - consistency



Where are my people?



jsla init

Knowing what you don't  
want isn't enough

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Take the time to really analyze what's  
missing

# Don't ask for permission



## Instead ask for help!

Other local groups are not  
competition

Have a clear vision

# Content

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Curate, don't regurgitate

Don't pander to the status  
quo

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It's a recipe for mediocrity

BUT



Be responsive to feedback

Don't cater to beginners

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Instead nurture a community that is  
welcoming



Blow people's minds

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Or at least try to

A man with short brown hair and glasses is shown from the side, looking down at a laptop screen. He is wearing a light-colored, long-sleeved button-down shirt. The laptop screen displays a presentation slide with the title 'Mad Science' and a subtitle 'Show people exciting things'. The background of the slide features a dark blue gradient with a faint network of glowing nodes and connections.

# Mad Science

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## Show people exciting things

Remember programming is  
supposed to be fun



Be excited as an organizer

Curate things that inspire you

# Passionate Speakers



# Book speakers in advance

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They can and do cancel, be prepared

# Venues



Don't need to be perfect

# Treat venus like sponsors

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Exchange their time and space for  
something

# Don't burn out

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Get help, lots of help.

# Join Forces

- LA Dev Ops
- Spec.la
- Data Viz LA

Seeking consensus is the  
enemy of getting things  
done

Split things up instead

Have a single, omni-directional information authority

Don't allow participants to garble your  
message

# Get sponsors



Pizza for 80+ people is expensive!

It's okay to have more than one  
sponsor

Balance sponsors interests with your  
audiences'

A black and white photograph showing a group of people in what appears to be a professional kitchen or food preparation area. In the foreground, a person wearing a dark cap and a light-colored apron is seen from the side, holding a plate with food. Behind them, several other individuals are visible, some wearing aprons and hats, suggesting they are staff or cooks. A large, round metal pot sits on a stand in the lower right corner. The background shows more kitchen equipment and possibly a window or doorway.

# Food and Beverages

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2 slices and 1.5 beers

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Don't forget water

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a clear glass filled with beer. The glass features a logo for "ANGEL CITY" with a stylized sunburst above the text. The background is dark and out of focus.

Beer is nice but not crucial

Do not use meetup.com



Or anywhere opportunists lurk

Recruiters can sometimes be okay  
though...

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If you are genuinely excited and participating I don't care  
what your day-job is.

But really

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Don't tolerate opportunists

# Be consistent



Don't be confusing.

Don't loose your mind

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It's easy to burn out

# Emails

- Use a single subject line per event
- Move introductions to BCC
- Respond quickly
- Be professional

A photograph of a person standing in a dark room, facing a white projector screen. The screen displays the word "Hello" in a large, bold, black font. A camera on a tripod is positioned in front of the screen, pointing towards it. The room has wooden beams on the ceiling and some equipment visible in the background.

Hello

Produce Artifacts

A dark, slightly blurred background image of a person sitting at a table, looking down at a laptop screen. The person is wearing a light-colored shirt. The overall mood is focused and professional.

# Provide Extra Time and Space

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Drinks.js



If you build it they will  
come

# Thanks

- @jxson
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## js.la contact info

- hello@js.la
- @jsdotla