

Attracting and retaining contributors

Asheesh Laroia

Scalathon 2011

asheesh@asheesh.org

Part 0.

Me, you, and this
talk





Miro Community



debian

paulproteus on

freenode

openhatch

asheesh@
asheesh.org

Why I care

Part I.

Attracting contributors

<1.1>

There are people
out there

Pop quiz

“My involvement
with open source is
primarily composed
of unabashed
admiration and
adulation.”



TM

**Goal: attract at least one
contributor every 3
months**

BI-WEEKLY BOUNTY



DESIGN TEAM

invited

clear and urgent

offer help







**NEW
NINJA!**

Christian Brassat
FEDORA DESIGN BOUNTY NINJA #3

This only works if
you care

<1.2>

Focus on a few
people at a time

Documentation is...

Documentation is...
okay

Helping people and
chatting is...

Helping people and
chatting is...
better

Creating
relationships is...

Creating
relationships is...
best

Do:
Tell people
what to do

- I want to help with Python in Debian

- I want to help with Python in Debian
- Looka here:
<http://wiki.debian.org/Teams/PythonModulesTeam>

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<http://wiki.debian.org/Teams/PythonModulesTeam>
- I've already seen that page but didn't find any specific tasks.

(then I told Andrey
to work on
expo.debian.net)

<1.3>

How to get people
to show up

Walk around
and ask

Ask for: code help

Ask for: mailing list
and IRC
participants

Be human

“You can file a bug at...”

vs.

“I will send you a
postcard if you file a
bug”

Advertise to users

<1.4>

Run events

Build It

GIMP:
1 attendee

Vidalia:
8 attendees

Debian:
26 attendees

“I... never really knew
where to begin...

It's nice to have
somewhere to turn
when you are
struggling with
something 'simple'.”

Part II.

Retaining contributors

<2.1>

“Thank you” is a
renewable resource

Be specific

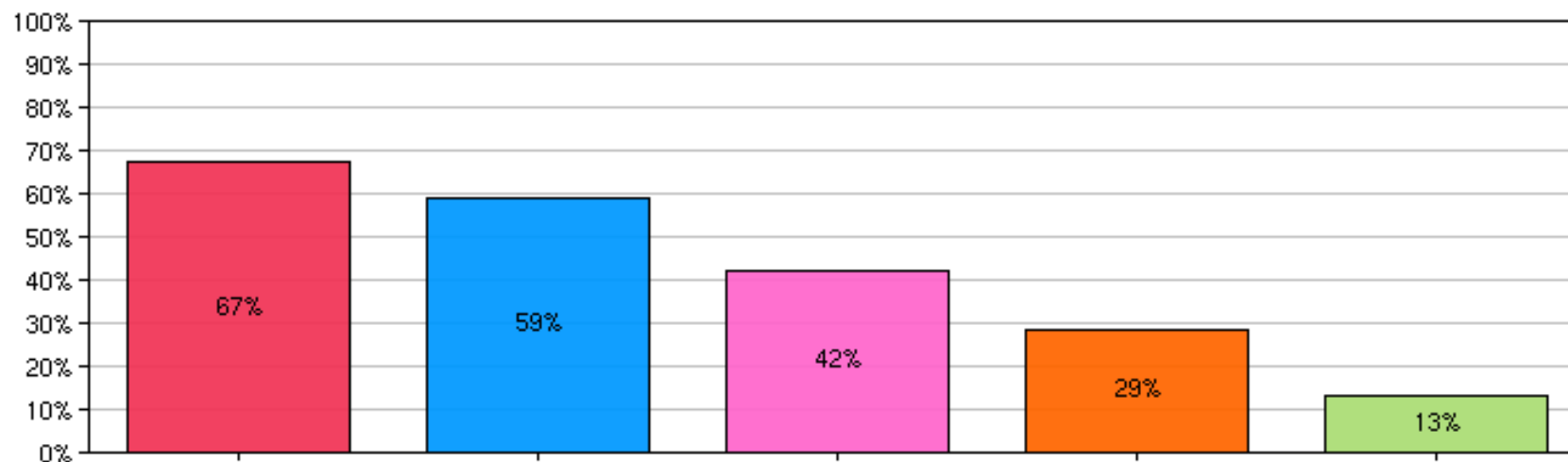


<2.2>

Tap into people's
motivations

Do they want to
learn?

Do they want to
work on software
that is widely-used?



Helping millions of people	67%
Helping further the Mozilla mission	59%
Being able to solve problems for me or my organization	42%
Being part of the Thunderbird team	29%
Other	13%

<2.3>

Don't let them
forget you

“Send an email to
devel@
lists.openhatch.org
granting us
permission to use
your work”

<2.4>

How to make it not
suck

Paperwork sucks



Broken builds suck

Closed
communities suck

Being stuck sucks



<2.5>

Unhappy
communities suck

Do:

Decrease latency
(and terror)



for shy
people

debian



-mentors

debian



debian

-mentors

Sep 2010

280 messages

26 unanswered



-mentors

Oct 2010

debian

“Four days” goal



debian

-mentors

Nov 2010

600 messages

3 unanswered



debian

-mentors

Dec 2010

500 messages

7 unanswered



debian

-mentors

“Four days” project

Messages +200%

Unanswered -90%

It “just” takes work

EOF

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<http://openhatch.org/>

Attracting and retaining contributors

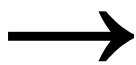
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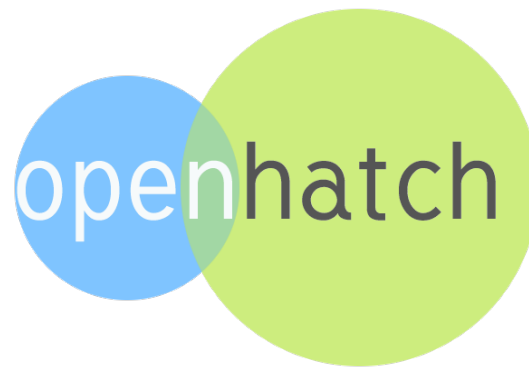


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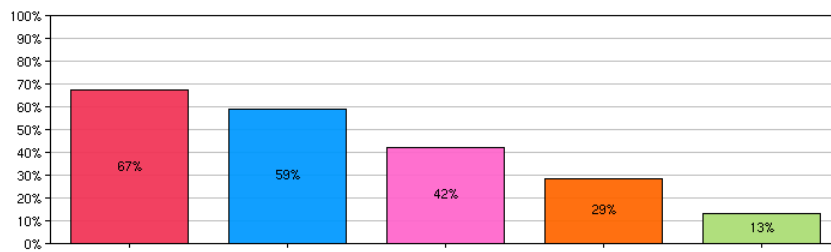


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