

Libre Software Communities: An Approach

Master on Free Software

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Based on the presentation given by José Gato and Teo Romera titled as "The rising figure of the community manager", 2007.
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FLOSS Communities

- Increasing complexity
- Increasing commercial interest
- Relations between communities and corporations
- There is a need to bring the two worlds together
- Dedicated new figure: The Community Manager



Importance of Communities

- *Collaborative Internet has taken us from a Read/Only culture to a Read/Write one*

Says Lessig

- *Architecture of participation: nature of systems that are designed for user contribution*

Says O'reilly

- Examples of this kind of cooperation and communities?

Important Communities

- Think about:
 - Wikipedia: anyone can edit
 - Last.fm: based on what you listen to
 - Flickr
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - etc, etc...

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What is a community manager?

- *The online community organizer (or community manager) is one of the most important jobs of the future*

Seth Godin

- Who is Seth Godin?
The ultimate entrepreneur for the information age

Business Week

- Not sure what it means, but I'd like to be one of them!

What is a community manager?

- It is a figure useful for both, FLOSS communities, but also corporations
- Highly correlated to the FLOSS development model (distributed by definition)
- Hybrid business models where everyone could potentially participate
- Someone has to link all this together

What is a community manager?

- Cares for the health of the community
- Interacts with users
- Interacts with developers
- Interacts with stakeholders
- Organizational aspects of the project
- Is the liaison between the company and the community
- Different hats in different moments

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Rationale

- Companies want to establish communities around their products
- They want people to engage with the company
- *Community managers work with a number of stakeholders and perform many different activities. They have no power over contributors and have to find interesting incentives, such as contributing to a meaningful project, in order to motivate contributors.*

Martin Mychlmier

Roles of a Community Manager

- Facilitation.- Connect people, get started.
- Delegation.- Motivation
- Marketing.- Advocacy, press, conferences
- Listening and observation.- Information flow
- Creating vision.- Shared culture
- Reporting.- Community \neq Company

Skills of a Community Manager

- Communication
- Marketing
- Management
- Technical Skills
- Patience and helpfulness
- Being visible and present

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Building community

- Face to face meetings
- Stands at conferences
- Online training events
- Bug squashing parties
- Newsletter, planet of blogs



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Exercise

- Adam Williamson (Not the soccer player!)
- Jono Bacon
- Joe Brockmeier
- Greg Dekoenigsberg
- Jim Grisanzio



Exercise

- Adam Williamson (Fedora)
- Jono Bacon (Ubuntu)
- Joe Brockmeier (Open Suse)
- Greg Dekoenigsberg (Fedora)
- Pascal Chevrel (Mozilla)

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Conclusions

