**IT Profession Scavenger Hunt**

**Meeting #1: IOS Developer Support Group – App Developer Presentations on Success and Experiences.**

Needless to say the name of the group said everything you need to know what the group is about. The IOS Developer Support Group is a group that comes together to help each other with issue or future foreseeable issue that they might encounter with the IOS platform. They meet on a regular basis at Gangplank in Chandler to pitch problems they are having with their current project and during the meeting they form groups to discuss possible solution. The meet I went to was on October 27 at 7:00PM in Gangplank HQ in Chandler.

In the informal meeting I went to, they had a special guest presenter named Michael Smith who was app developer known for Sudoku Book App in the Apple App Store. Michael started by providing his beginning as a c programmer, his CAD app and moving to California to learn the film business. He went on to explain that his company, Bad Weasel, was initially a production company and that he always wanted to make games. To follow this passion, he paid a teacher $600 to teach him various languages like Objective C and open GL. Once he was familiar with programming games, he decided to start programming games for the new released iPad and went over the process/struggles that came with developing games with no hope of success. He ended his presentation by demoing a new app he was developing and providing tips that worked for him.

Although this meeting was informal, I could get a sense of what the meeting was like during a professional setting. Even though I understood nothing about developing apps for IOS, the meeting felt as though I could ask dumb questions and not be judge for it. The community was very supportive and the presentation taught me a lot about the business of developing apps.

**Meeting #2: Arizona WordPress Group – Google Analytics/Conversion Tracking and AB Testing/Conversion Rate Optimization.**

Arizona WordPress Group is a WordPress community of professional, hobbyists and users that gather together in support of their passion for content management and the WordPress blogging platform. They hold meetups throughout Arizona from Chandler to Scottsdale to Tucson and showcase/cover a wide range of useful plugins and toolkits. The meeting I went to was on November 13 at 5:30PM in Gangplank HQ in Chandler.

In this meet, they had one presenter (April Holle) who discussed the basic of Google Analytics and how to use google analytics to track your conversion rate or the rate at which someone on your website performs a certain action like sign-up or click on an advertisement. The presenter was very through as she went over every chart, graph and page as well as explained their function to the typical user. She ended her presentation by giving us tips and goals to stride for in using google analytics such as a focus on the duration a user is on the website, their destination on the page, the event that is performed on a page and the number of pages or screens that the user accesses per session. She emphasized the importance of giving value to you and your user by setting up goals and knowing what happens on your site.

The other presenter (John Gough) discussed the many ways the conversion rate which was covered in the first presentation could be optimized. He started out by reminding us that marketing is data-driven design and proceeded to explain the difference between quantitative and qualitative data. He briefly went over Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO) and then broke it down into 4 easily explained parts: Site, Purpose, Activities and Events. Site is the website, Purpose is the main idea of your website, Activities is what inspire people to your purpose and Event is the thing they do to share your purpose. He shared example of existing website such as EBay who auction things by bidding, listing and watching sales. The presenter ended his presentation by sharing some tips like talk to a human and get user testing before presenting the content, minimize variation by testing on the most populous pages, and to not be discourage if the needle doesn’t move or things don’t change.

Overall, I found this meetup to be very informative and educational if I ever plan to make a WordPress website. The community sounds like they know what they are talking about and I liked that the presentation seemed to flow together as they cover one thing and expand on it in the next.

**Meeting#3: Arizona WordPress Group –Event Calendars, InfiniteWP and Pagely**

As stated in my previous meetup, Arizona WordPress Group is a WordPress community of professional, hobbyists and users that gather together in support of their passion for content management and the WordPress blogging platform. They have meeting around the valley and cover a wide range of topics. This meeting was on November 20 at 6:30PM at Axosoft conference room in Central Scottsdale.

In this meetup, they planned on going over some plugins that are useful in managing events and multiple WordPress sites. Their first presenter was Josh Mallard, WordPress Developer with Modern Tribe Inc. and he demo a plugin called Event Calendar which is a plugin installed on WordPress that allows you easily set up events like meetup. He also went over some of its paid feature like the ticket feature that lets you set up events that require its customer to purchase a ticket before participating. Other features include recurring events, additional views and additional fields.

Their next present was Maura Teal, Developer with RadiateWP, and she demo a plugin called infiniteWP which allows you to manage multiple WordPress websites with a single admin panel. She began by showing us how to link your website to infiniteWP via an installation of a plugin on the website you wish to link. She continued by presenting how easy it was for infiniteWP to search through all the sites and check for plugin updates and install them. To finish her presentation, she had a Q&A session where she would answer any question about the plugin and its functionality as a user.

Their last presenter was Sean O'Brien, Director of Sales and Marketing at Pagely, and he presented a potentially high-end WordPress hosting solution called Pagely. Sean started by going over their pricing plan and what is included in each plan. He continued with the services Pagely provides alongside the plans a customer might choose and what plugins will/will not work with the hosting solution as well as suggesting alternatives to popular plugins that might don’t work with Pagely. The last part of Sean’s presentation showed the migration process to move your site to Pagely and a comprehensive admin panel tutorial as well as their billing/support ticket process.

This meet had much more information then I initially anticipated but again it was very informative and, aside from the Pagely, was easy to understand from a developer’s perspective. I noticed that since they broadcast their meetup that most of their members rather interact via online chat then meet in-person. Overall, a great meetup and I can’t wait to go to the next meeting.