Care and Feeding of an Open Source Community
A MongoDB Case Study

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mongoDB

Open source, non-relational, document-oriented database
About Me

- Early employee of 10gen
- Helped grow community from 10,000 → 100,000 downloads per month
About This Talk

• Encouraging adoption
  • Is your project easy?
  • Support as marketing
• Scaling Community
• Face time
• Dealing with negative feedback
How do you encourage adoption?
Start with the project itself
Is it easy to get started with your project?
MongoDB is easy

- Easy to try without downloading anything
  - try.mongodb.org
- Easy to install and runs on your OS
- Easy to access from your language
- Easy to use
- Easy to get help
Support is the New Marketing
Support is an opportunity to wow users

• Bad experience → users are unhappy and they tell their friends :(  
• Good experience → users are happy :-/  
• Great experience → users are happy and they tell their friends :)

Questions are everywhere
Scaling Community
Overinvest in creating leaders

Time is a limited resource, so multiply yourself
The Multiplier Effect
Contribution is a broad term

- Code
- Docs
- Translation of docs
- Blog posts
- Speaking
- Organizing an UG
Turn followers into leaders

- Empower
- Encourage
Appreciate your contributors

• Say thank you!
• Public recognition
  • On their blog or your blog
  • Twitter
  • Mailing list or forum
• Send swag if you’ve got it
A little swag goes a long way
Nurture your power users

- Facilitate cross-pollination
  - MongoDB Masters
  - MUG organizers
Face to Face is Important

Get in front of your users & engage them wherever you can
Conferences

- Dozens of MongoDB Conf
- One day
- Inexpensive
- Informative
- Organized by 10gen
- Fun 😊
Running Tech Conferences

- I could give a whole talk on this, so if you want to learn more let’s talk offline
MongoDB User Group Model

• What we provide
  • Logistical support and guides
  • Promotion
  • Finding speakers
  • Securing venues
  • Financially (e.g. covering meetup.com fees)

• What we ask
  • Meet consistently
  • Share slides & resources
UG Challenges

- Finding a great organizer is hard
- Finding speakers is hard, especially in remote locations
- Finding venues is hard
  - Co-working spaces are great
  - Research where the other groups are meeting
- Staying in close contact is a lot of work
Finding speakers

- Surprisingly users rarely turn down an opportunity to present
  - Give back to the community
  - Bragging rights
  - Showcase their open source project
  - Recruiting
- Still can’t find a speaker?
  - Skype presentations
  - Book clubs
  - Unconference
Getting UG Members Involved

- Lightning talks or multiple speakers
  - Short talks are less intimidating
- Get everyone to participate with “picks, tips, and tricks”
- Polls
- Raffles
- Publisher give-aways
  - O’Reilly
  - Manning
Dealing with Negative Feedback
Trolls

• Ignore them
People lashing out

- Differentiate misunderstandings from disagreements
Public Failures

- Acknowledge
- Address transparently
- Detailed, public post mortem
- Demonstrated responsiveness
- Don’t get defensive
Questions?

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BTW we are hiring