Measuring the health of your open source project

For your employer, for your community, and for you

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Why open source health measurement?
Corporate VS Community
Assumptions/lenses in this talk

1. Github-based code repositories
2. Corporate involvement in open source
3. Community as separate from profit
How to Measure Open Source: Corporate and Community

1. Why Metrics Matter
2. Metrics Anti-Patterns
3. Finding Good Metrics
4. How to Use This Data
Why metrics matter for Community
Open source software needs community.
Why metrics matter
Community

“Engagement?”
Community can be as data-driven and iterative as code itself.
Why metrics matter
Community

Better data = Better decisions
Agreed-upon ways of defining success
Why metrics matter for Corporate
There Are Overlords
Why metrics matter

Corporate

There Is An Agenda
Why metrics matter

Corporate

There Are Budget Cuts
Why metrics matter

Corporate

There Is No Time

“Just Give Me The Numbers”
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Metrics anti-patterns for Community
Metrics Anti-patterns

Community

Vanity vs Health
RELYING A BIT TOO MUCH ON VANITY METRICS?

Magic mirror on the wall... whose page views are the greatest of them all?

Source: www.entrepreneurfail.com
Vanity Metrics Examples

- Github repo stars
- Subscribers to a mailing list
- Members of a chat room
- Page views
Metrics anti-patterns for Corporate
If It’s Easy To Count
It’s Easy To Discount
Numbers Don’t Lie.
(We just lie on their behalf).
“We use it everywhere!”
Metrics Are Rules
Rules Will Be Gamed
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Finding good metrics for Community
Finding good metrics

What do you need to know to make future decisions?
Put people first.
Finding good metrics

Community

Qualitative data from community members
Finding good metrics

Community

Passive // Active // Champion
Finding good metrics

Community

Open Source Community ≠ Developer Community
Community can’t be "growth hacked"
Use community guidelines as a foundation.
“Participate in an authentic and active way. In doing so, you contribute to the health and longevity of this community.”

Source: www.stellar.org/community-guidelines/
“If you see someone making an extra effort to ensure our community welcomes all participants and encourages them to contribute, we want to know! ”

Source:www.stellar.org/community-guidelines/
Finding good metrics for Corporate
Finding good metrics

Corporate

Why?
Know The Question

or you won’t recognize the answer
Know The Answer
Before You Are Asked
Finding good metrics

Corporate

Learn From XD
(Experience Design)
Use Multiple Metrics
Use Bad Metrics

(WHAAAT?)
Play A Deeper Game
(Anti-Anti-Pattern!)
(We need to go deeper!)
(Metriception!)
Finding good metrics

Corporate

Account For Project Maturity
Finding good metrics
Community

Case Study: Stellar.org

Money could move like email.
Stellar is an open platform for building financial products that connect people everywhere.

START DEVELOPING
Finding good metrics

Community

eva  6:51 PM

next up: the SCP white paper as told by emoji
David would love that 😊

vanessa  6:52 PM
OMG

eva  6:53 PM

🌸 = 😞
itched = 😎

matschaffer  6:59 PM

😈 (bad actor) + ☁️ still = 😊
Finding good metrics

Community

- Unique members
- Member growth MOM
- # of messages
- Message growth MOM
- # of users who go inactive
- Qualitative assessment of conversation
Corporate Hypothesis 1:
Open Source Rewards Employees
Corporate Hypothesis 2: 
Open Source Creates Mentors
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How to use this data

Hypothesize → test → analyze → iterate
How to use this data

“Failure” = more data
Thank you!

Questions?

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@EvaGantz
Tools that can help

- Cauldron—biterg.io
- Metrics/VizGrimoire—bitergia.com
- github.com/amznlabs/oss-dashboard
- Spreadsheets
- Lithium (proprietary, $$$)