Building Open Source Communities

Ellen Friedman
Twitter @Ellen_ Friedman
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The Most Important Thing

Some people think the single most important part of an open source project is the code.

But as for me… *I do, too!*

Without code, there is no product.

But without a strong community, great code may grow cold and disappear.

If community is that important, why don't all open source projects have a vibrant community?

Coordinating a Project Isn't Easy

What's it like to work on an open source project?

You work with a lot of bright people, living in different places, each with many good ideas and not enough time to do them.

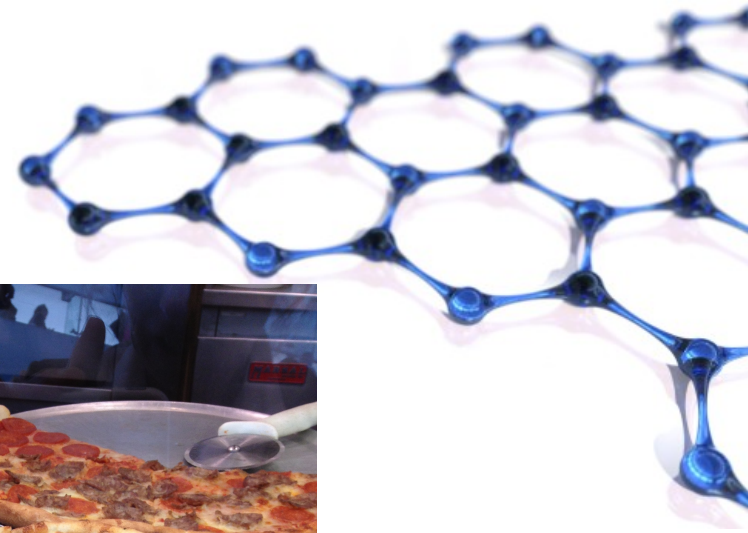*In other words, in many ways it's like herding cats...*

http://bit.ly/12qF7Te

Stimulating Project Participation
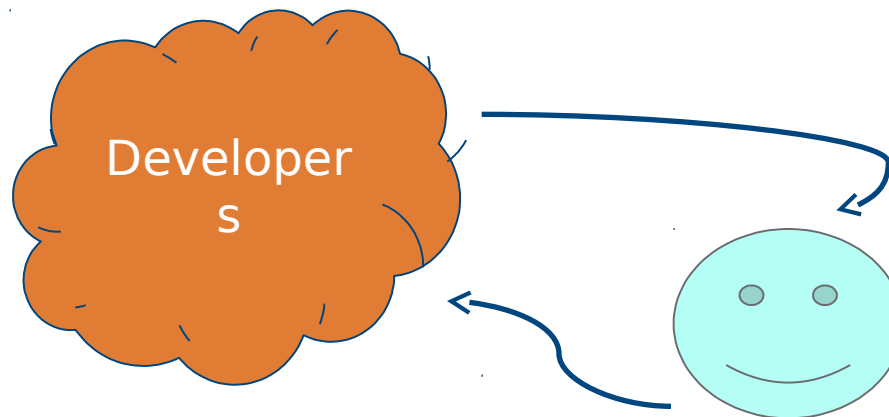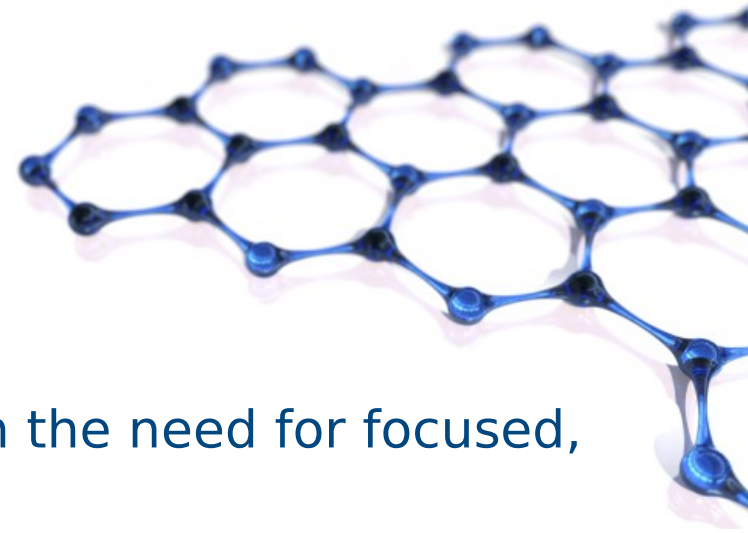
What fuels open sour

But seriously...

Quote from Apache Foundation Website:

Quote from Apache Foundation website:

"…not simply a group of projects sharing a server, but rather a community of developers and users."

Developers

The Challenge:

- **In development:**
  - Balance the goal of inclusiveness with the need for focused, experienced skill-set
 - Keep up energy and involvement over a long period of uneven progress

- **In deployment:**
  - End users must be aware of project and see benefit in trying it
  - End users need to understand how to put it to use

- **For maturity and beyond:**
  - Active exchange between user experience and ongoing development
  - Long term involvement of developers and committers after GA

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Apache Foundation Projects
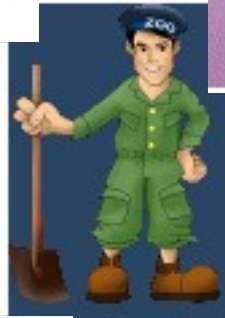
What projects are you involved in?

Building Strong Development Community

What can we do to help?

Core Developers

- Review patches
- Write documentation
- Provide and test use cases
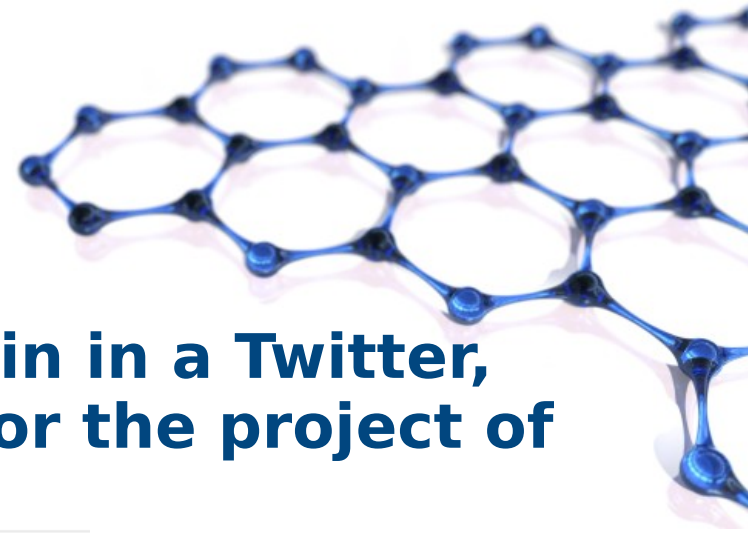- Refer other engineers
- Get the word out

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Developer or User Mailing List:

- **Subscribe and join the conversation**
- **Go to website and check out a thread**

Get the Word Out

- **Social media as yourself or join in a Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn account for the project of interest:**

- **Blogs, articles, word-of-mouth**

Building Strong Development Community

Core Developers

What can you do to help?

- Play nice: be inclusive & never be rude
- Invite discussion online
- Virtual + in person interactions
- Work with newcomers
- Work with people who write documentation
- Invite other engineers
- Get the word out

Building Strong User Community
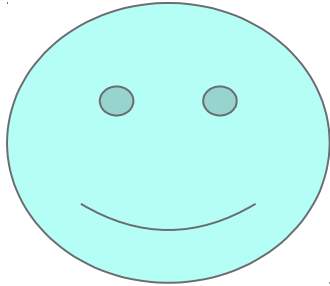
What can we do to help?

- USE IT!! Report back
- Participate in meet-ups
- Use social media to get the word out

Users in the Community

- **Try it and tell us what happened:**
  - Wired.com 18 Dec 2012 article about how Overstock.com saved millions

Mahout, There It Is! Open Source Algorithms
Remake Overstock.com

BY CADE METZ 12.18.12   6:30 AM

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- http://bit.ly/11ozBx1

  - Quote from article: "According to Ted Dunning — a MapR engineer who works on the Mahout project — the project has been adopted by "dozens" of sites to help drive user recommendations…"

Users in the Community

- **Participate in communication by attending talks**

- **Companies:**
  - **Encourage exploration of open source products/ projects**
  - **Provide venue for meet-ups and hack-a-thons**
  - **What else can companies provide?**
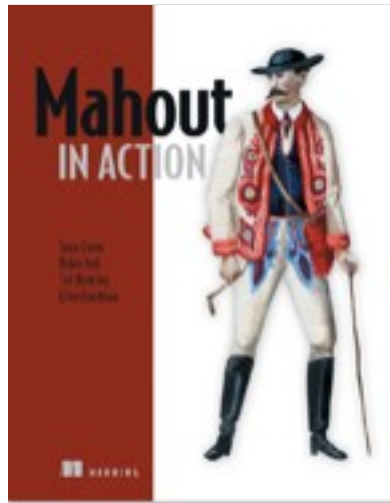
Building Strong User Community
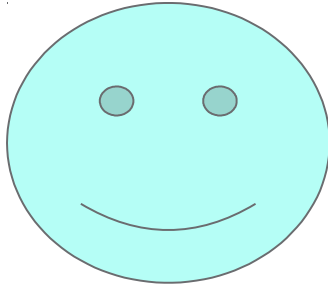
What can you do to help?

- Invite feedback
- Commit long term involvement
- Participate in meet-ups
- Use social media to get the word out

Communicate How to Use Product

- **Writing a technical how-to book is a good way to get people involved**

- **Now to give away a few copies of Mahout in Action, courtesy of MapR Technologies...**

Project Participants

The good news is that participants in open source projects tend to jump right in...

From "Cats in IKEA"

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCB7RqGS684

Berlin Buzzwords: Open Source

- Thanks to Berlin Buzzwords for the chance to participate in the conference and to you for coming

- To contact me, please email b.ellen.friedman@gmail.com

   or follow me on Twitter @Ellen_Friedman

- Apache Foundation projects discussed here are @ApacheMahout and @ApacheDrill

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