Survive and advance: The life of a community manager

A better understanding of the glory and stresses of community organizing

Jason Hibbets
Community Architect, Opensource.com, Red Hat
The power of community

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/17/4/community-leaders-gather-advance-art-community

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Best meeting ever!

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/18/7/weekly-top-10-july-22
Creating value for others

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/18/8/visualizing-devops-essentials-mindset
No one really *starts* as a community manager
What is community?

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/17/4/community-leaders-gather-advance-art-community
Pro tips

- Share a monthly report with your metrics
- Share your successes!
- Keep the balance
What gets measured is what gets done
What non-metrics to document:

- High touch interactions
- Value of events
- Contacts
- Monthly report
- Big wins
What does success look like?

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/18/7/high-impact-teams
What are the different roles of a community manager?

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/17/4/top-5-april-21
Cat herding, email, and much more!

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/18/6/copying-files-go

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A variety of tasks...

- Cat herding
- Communications/Email
- Meetings and conference calls
- Social media
- Project management
- Editorial planning
- Editing
- Documentation
- Reports
- Shipping

- Order SWAG
- Handwritten thank you notes
- Hosting meet-ups
- Travel and travel planning
- Expense reports
- Public speaking
- Presentation preparation
- Drupal administration
- Sprint management
- Website testing
Get stuff done!

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/18/8/tools-container-security
A variety of tasks...and the tools to get the job done

- Cat herding
- Communications/Email
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- Email, reminders, SMS, chat, calendar invites
- Thunderbird, Gmail., IRC, Slack
- BlueJeans video, Zoom, Hangouts, mobile phone
- Hootsuite, Buffer, Sprout, social media platforms
- Spreadsheets, calendar, Waffle.io, Trello
- Trello, Google Docs
- Google Docs, Libre Office, GitHub
- Mojo, Google Docs, email
- Spreadsheets, Drupal, Adobe analytics
- Red Hat’s shipping tools

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How I get stuff done with Waffle.io
So many tools!

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/18/8/must-read-tech-newsletters
A variety of tasks...and the tools to get the job done

- Order SWAG
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I use a vendor called Planet Logo
Pen and thank-you cards
Meetup.com, EventBright, email, Google Docs
Mobile phone, travel websites, Google, Yelp, Lyft
Concur expenses, Expensify
Voice, presentation software
Research, presentation software (Libre Office, Google slides), people for feedback
Drupal
JIRA, Trello, email
Drupal, JIRA, website
Pro tips

- Use the right tools
- Use tools that make you productive
What’s stressful about these different roles: priorities

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/18/6/linux-remote-desktop

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Pro tips

- Time sensitive
- Prioritize tasks to enable others to get things done
  - Remove blockers
What’s stressful about these different roles: change
Pro tips

- Be change ready and adaptable
- Carve out time for unplanned work
- Assume positive intent
What’s stressful about these different roles: seasons

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/18/6/tornado-framework
Pro tips

- Plan for seasonal work
- Build in time off and vacation
Surviving burnout

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/17/4/testing-certificate-chains-34-line-go-program

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Surviving burnout

“Community doesn’t stop at 5:00 pm on Friday” 🐦

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/17/4/testing-certificate-chains-34-line-go-program
Signs of burnout

- Chronic fatigue
- Insomnia
- Forgetfulness
- Increased illness
- Loss of appetite

- Anxiety
- Anger
- Loss of interest
- Separation from people
Have a plan

Image credits: Jason Hibbets, location: Nags Head, NC
Pro tips

- Highlight after hours work and need for a flexible schedule
- Don’t suffer in silence, shared your struggles

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Pro tips

- Don’t suffer in silence, shared your struggles

“You can’t be effective an community organizer if your batteries are drained.”

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Staying motivated: Passion

Image credits: https://opensource.com/open-organization/17/4/how-branding-decisions-open
Pro tips

- Align work with passion
- Find passions outside of work
Staying motivated: The open source way

Image credits: https://opensource.com/open-organization/18/6/explaining-your-why
Pro tip

- Be an advocate for open source beyond your team

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Staying motivated: Flexible schedule

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/18/7/sysadmin-guide-networking-commands
Pro tip

- Take care of yourself first
How to improve communications


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Improve communications: short and concise

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/18/8/postfix-open-source-mail-transfer-agent
Pro tips

- Prioritize responses to community members
- Prepare in advance
- Automate, but realize when a personal touch is needed
Tips for working with community

Keeping things transparent
Communication cadence

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/18/6/first-media-company-broadcast-linux
Breaking up is hard

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/18/6/arduino-robots
Pro tips

- Be transparent
- Avoid surprises
- Have frank conversations
Feedback is a gift
I'm excited to announce that Aaron Rinehart and I are putting together a new security guide (a content bundle that will be a PDF download) called The open source guide to DevSecOps. We had an awesome meeting last Friday to brainstorm and produced an outline.

We are happy to share the outline, based on existing content already published, and a few articles/chapters that still need to be written.

Our goal is to put a draft together over the next 3 weeks. We'd love your feedback. For example:

- Are chapters in the right order?
- What are we missing?
- Should anything be cut?

All feedback is welcome. Check out the draft outline below and feel free to reply to the list or preferably, add comments or suggestions directly to the document.
The community response

Image credits: https://opensource.com/open-organization/18/6/building-professional-social-networks-openly
Bonus: Grow your career and sharpen the stone

Recommended books

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/18/7/book-list-sysadmins
- *The Art of Community* by Jono Bacon
- *5 Dysfunctions of a Team* by Patrick Lencioni
- *Simple Rules* by Donald Sull and Kathleen M. Eisenhardt
- *Cognitive Surplus* by Clay Shirky
- *Strengths Finder* by Tom Rath
- *Open Leadership* by Charlene Li
Other ways to sharpen the stone

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/18/5/command-line-data-auditing
Your most valuable asset

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/17/2/mysql-8-coming
The joys of community management

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/18/7/interactive-fiction-tools
The joy ride

- Meet great people
- Be a connector
- Rewarding
- In-person is awesome

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Questions?

Image credits: https://opensource.com/article/18/6/proprietary-tool-alternative
Questions & contact details

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Slides: https://github.com/jhibbets/presentations

Book: http://theopensourcecity.com