

# Apache: When the Code Just isn't Enough

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# But first...

- These are just my opinions
- Not everything is Apache-specific
- Feel free to ask questions at any time
- Mostly aimed at businesses opening projects...
- ...somewhat aimed at folks starting projects...
- ...but applies to open source projects in general

# Overview

- What constitutes a successful open source project?
- The importance of community and consensus
- What not to do
- A few [examples](#)
- Where I think Apache gets it right
- The one place I think Apache gets it wrong

What Constitutes a “Successful”  
Open Source Project?

# That depends...

- ...on what you mean by “successful”
- What do you hope to accomplish?
- Why did you open source your project?

# A Successful Open Source Project...

- Has a healthy developer community
- Makes decisions by consensus
- Can survive being hit by a bus
- Can survive poisonous people
- Doesn't let the perfect be the enemy of the good
- Has a mission statement
- Documents both software and processes

And Now, a Bit of Heresy

The code doesn't matter



Seriously

Building a team of great developers is  
the hard part

# Importance of Community

# The Importance of Community

- Community is the life support of a codebase
- Makes an open source project self-sustaining
- Vital to the longevity of a project
- e.g. Apache HTTP Server

# The Importance of Community

- Lessen the importance of the corporate umbilical
- Does require that you relinquish control
- eg Subversion

# Different Facets of Community

- User Community
- Developer Community
- The latter usually comes from the former

# Building Community

- Start with a mission statement
- Document your code
- Document your processes
- The Perfect is the enemy of the Good
- You reap what you sow
- Once you trust a developer, hang on to them

# Why Consensus?

- Enfranchisement
- Ownership
- Responsibility
- ASF Contention: PMC vs Committers



# Why Consensus?

- The best developers usually aren't followers
- They want to help drive the project

# What Not To Do

# Code Dumping

- The PR benefit is questionable
- Is the codebase useful?
- Open source developers won't be dazzled
- Dubious likelihood of a community forming...
- ...and if it does, it will likely be far away from you
- e.g. NCSA HTTPd

# Push Code Over the Wall

- Development continues internally
- Every so often, source is dropped “over the wall”
- Internal bug tracker
- Doesn't attract or engage outside developers
- Not much different than closed source

# Q&A

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