

The secrets of building and participating in Open Source communities

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Drupal founder and project lead

Acquia co-founder and CTO



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“Among the most significant open source projects not a single one was born in Silicon Valley.”

Matt Assay

Open Source communities can be truly amazing



Artist: Julian Bever



Artist: Julian Bever



Artist: Julian Bever

Meet Dries ...

- founded Drupal
- co-founded Acquia
- co-founded Mollom
- holds a PhD in CS



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Software to build websites with

Meet Dries in 1999 ... (10 years ago)



TV.CO.UK

the ONION
America's Finest News Source

Forbes Office Pranks

Spread Firefox!
The Home of Firefox Community Marketing

LINUX
JOURNAL

SONY & BMG
MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT

HarvardScience
SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

THE NEW YORK OBSERVER



MIT



ubuntu



Google™



YAHOO!



JAVALOBBY
DZone The heart of the Java developer community



GREENPEACE





Hundreds of thousands of websites

Thousands of developers

1000+ shops

4400+ modules

200,000+ downloads/month

1.5M+ unique visitors/month

100% year over year growth

24/7

Free

This is passion



1400 Drupal developers
DrupalCon DC
Washington, 2009

This is not passion. This is boring.
This is not Drupal.



This is Drupal



Lullabot recording the Drupal podcast at Yahoo!
Sunneyvale, 2007





* Yes, that is a Drupal sticker
No, it is not me!





Thursday 26 March 2009





Dimitri, 12 year old Drupal developer.
Owns you in 12 seconds!



Thursday 26 March 2009





Drupal is a former rockstar turned awesome.



Thursday 26 March 2009

Community can help make the difference between this and ...







Software to build websites with





A community



A coovernmenty



NEED COMMERCIAL SUPPORT?



acquia™

Commercial-grade support for Drupal



redhat.®



ubuntu

Launched 15 months ago
Open for business for 6 months



Boston



Thursday 26 March 2009

50+ customers
50+ partners
30 employees











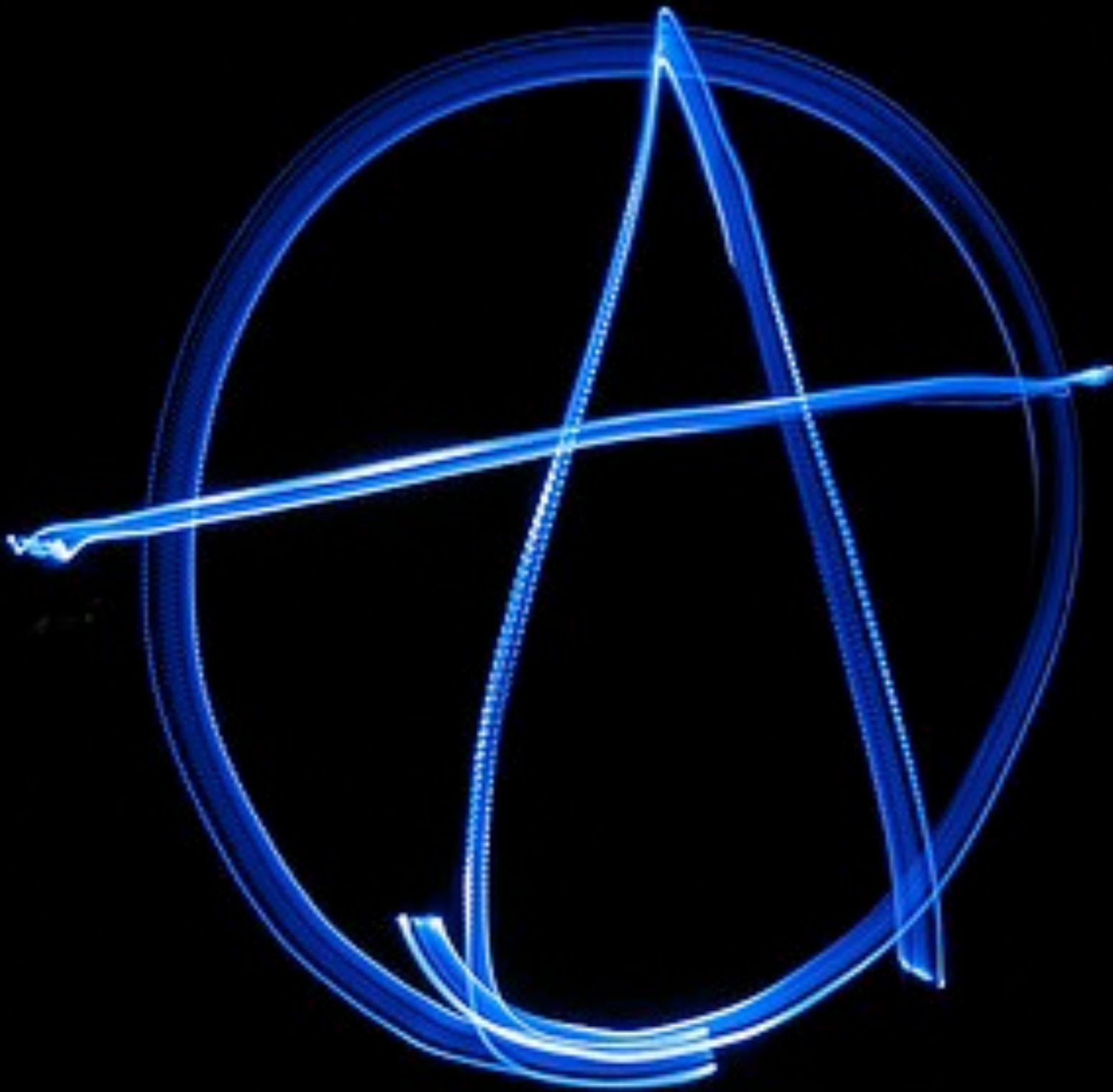
COMMUNITIES CAN BE A BIT DAUNTING

Open Source development and communities are always a bit broken

Dysfunction is natural, not abnormal







**Built by everyone, controlled by no one,
... and it actually magically works**

Mmm, it is like the internet.

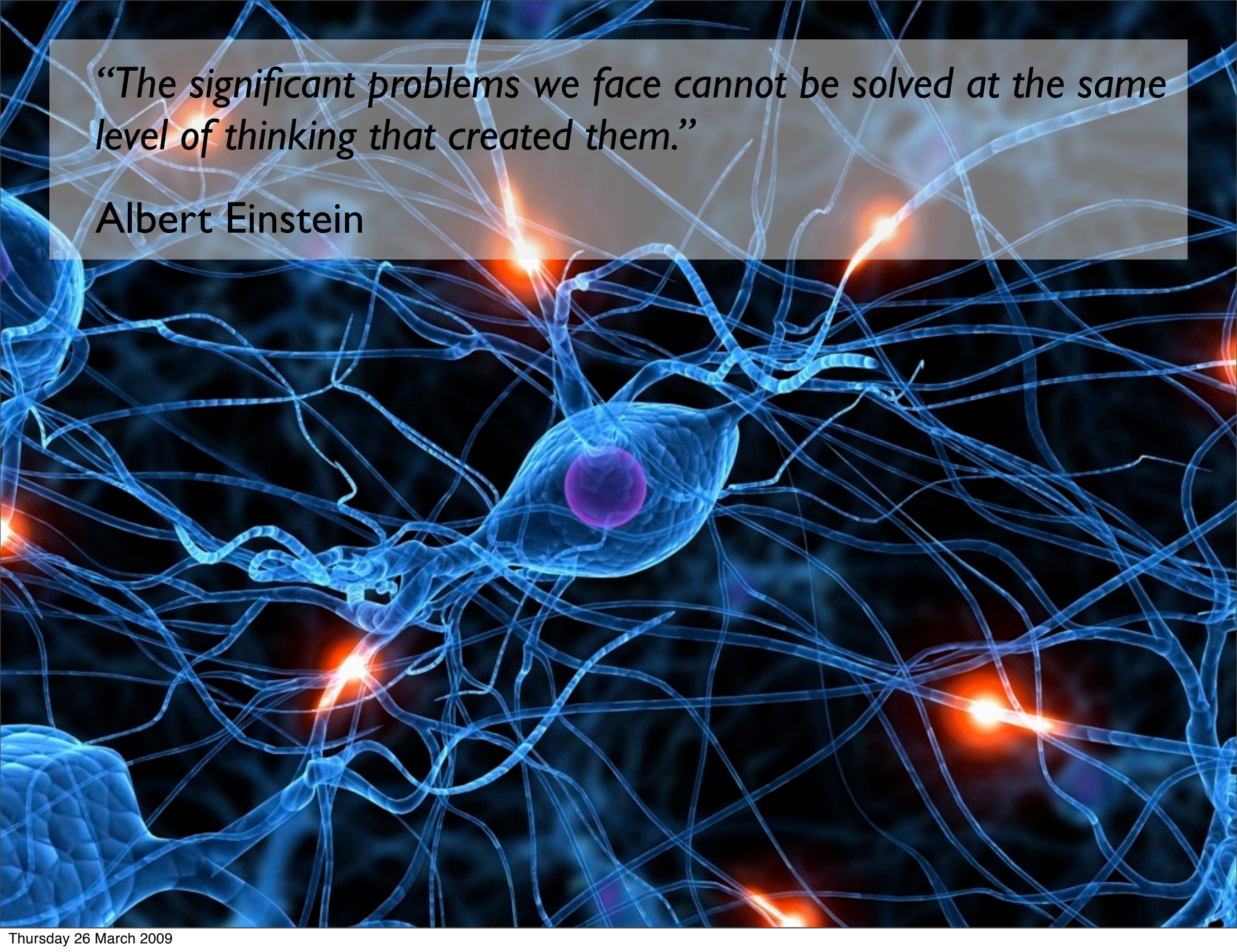
WIKIPEDIA



So an Open Source communities work ...

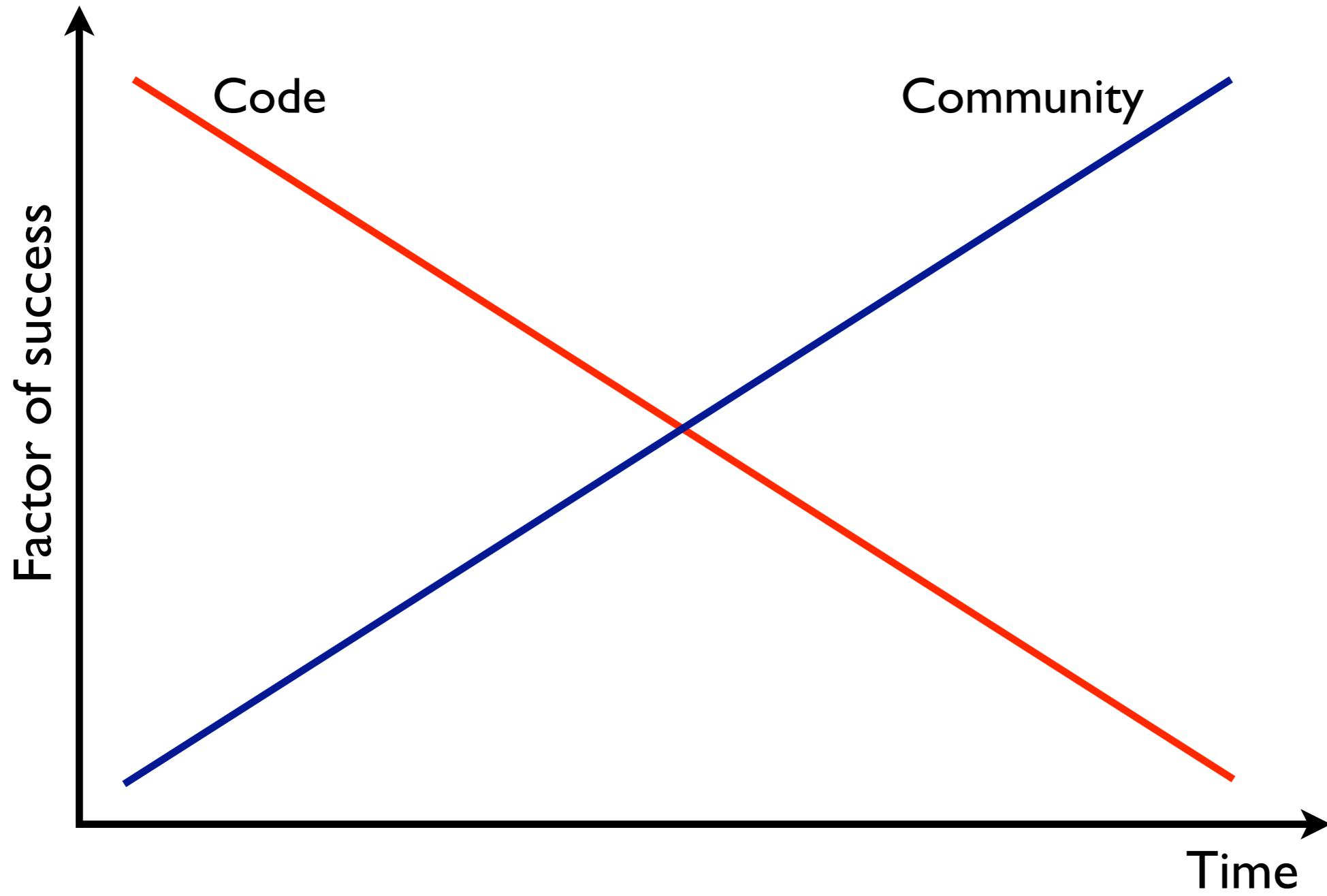
... but why build one?





“The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking that created them.”

Albert Einstein



Credit: J. Aaron Farr

Community is source of innovation



Community is source of competitive advantages



Open Source companies will never fail because of lack of community, but they will never be great either




Open Source software - Open Source community
= conventional legacy software

BORING

From “Build vs buy” to “Share vs buy”





Building and managing an Open Source community should be a core competency of every Open Source company

Difficult?






“The desire to be part of a group that shares, cooperates, or acts in concert is a basic human instinct.” -- Clay Shirky

Free and Open Source software

A young girl in a pink dress is running on a grassy field. The image is used as a background for the slide.

1. Freedom to run the program
2. Freedom to study the program
3. Freedom to modify the program
4. Freedom to re-distribute the program



Free and Open Source leads to collaboration
Collaboration leads to community
Community leads to growth and innovation

Dries' seven "secrets"



Dries' seven "secrets"

1. Time
2. Software architecture
3. Ecosystem
4. Tools
5. Mission
6. Culture
7. Leadership

Secret #1: time*



(*) There is no “get rich quick” formula

DrupalCon after 4 years ...



25 Drupal developers
DrupalCon Belgium
Antwerp, 2005

DrupalCon after 8 years ...



1400 Drupal developers
DrupalCon DC
Washington, 2009



The Big Drupal Server Meltdown in 2005

PayPal[®]



Thanks!



The **Drupal** community would like to thank more than 250 donors who came forward in less than 48 hours to **triple** our fundraising goal. Thanks to your generous contributions, Drupal.org will now have a new home at the Open Source Lab at Oregon State University!

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Open Source development and communities
are always a bit broken



Growing pains help build community



Secret #2: software architecture

Secret #2: software architecture

- Use a modular design
- Centralize the source code



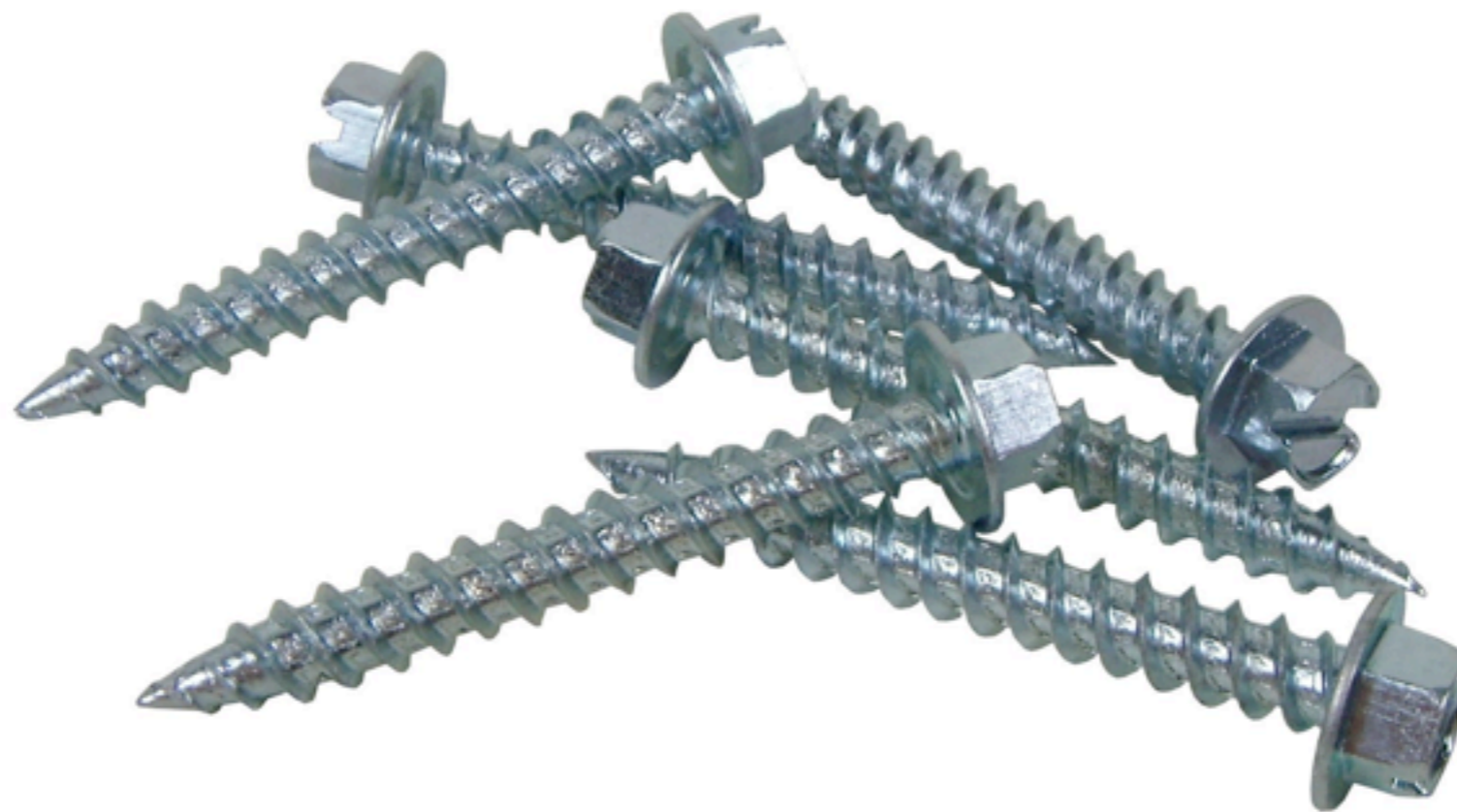
Secret #3: ecosystem

Everybody is equal

Put the community in control



Screw roadmaps



The image shows five white, rectangular letter tiles with rounded corners, arranged in a horizontal line to spell out the word "TRUST". Each tile has a single letter embossed on it: 'T', 'R', 'U', 'S', and 'T'. The tiles are resting on a dark, textured rock surface, possibly sandstone or a similar natural material. The lighting is dramatic, coming from the upper left, which casts long, dark shadows to the right of each tile, emphasizing their three-dimensional form and the texture of the rock.

Make trust the currency of your project
(and not money)

Make trust flow



Secret #4: tools

Community design patterns

- Adoption: easy registration, RSS feeds, documentation
- Identity: profiles, avatars, buddy lists, contacts
- Group support: issue queues, trackers, activity streams, reputation
- Conversations: messaging, comments, forums, blogs, interest groups, planet / aggregator
- Development: CVS/SVN, issue queues, release management

*Drupal is what you need
customizable, and interact
the world. Assuming you
to guide you on your way*





Ingredient #5: mission

Find a higher purpose as a project



“Don’t chase the paper, chase the dream.”



“Whatever you’re thinking, think bigger.”

Ingredient #6: culture



- Open to change / persuasion
- Collaboration
- 100% transparency



Communities are like the real world ... Be authentic, be honest



© Scott Adams, Inc./Dist. by UFS, Inc.



Ingredient #7: leadership

Leadership is not management



There is a difference between
telling people what to do
and creating a movement



Help your community kick ass

Get out of the way of the community ...



“Replace planning
with coordination”

Clay Shirky



Dries' seven "secrets"

1. Time
2. Software architecture
3. Ecosystem
4. Tools
5. Mission
6. Culture
7. Leadership

Oh, a bonus secret ...

Join your own community!





Realize and accept that a good community is out of control

Open Source development and communities are always a bit broken

Dysfunction is natural, not abnormal



Embrace the chaos



Unlock the power of community



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/83307029@N00/53648963/>



A close-up photograph of a hand holding a yellow sticky note. The note has the words 'thank you' written in a cursive script. The word 'you' is underlined with two parallel lines. The background is a blurred teal color.

thank
you



Happy community building!