Building External Evangelists

One of the most critical functions of DevRel and Community Teams!
Hello!

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Mail me at matt@theyonk.com!
A word about scarf & our efforts

We help projects, maintainers, and businesses accelerate open source adoption.
Everyone Asks:
How do you Measure Community or DevRel?
My Answer is ...

measure external advocates or evangelists
Why?
What is the company expecting?
No matter the outcome we are all looking for more... users, customers, contributors, fun
Let me put on my other hat
Most commercial companies boil down to more $$$$
More users in the community

-the-

More potential customers in the future
COMMUNITY & DEVREL

- Active Contributors
- Code Contributions: PRs, Bugs, etc
- Slack Users
- Github Stars
- Posts, Questions
- Events Attended
- # of blogs, talks, etc
- Likes, follow, shares

How do you link these?

BUSINESS SIDE SALES, MARKETING

- # of Customers
- ARR/MRR
- Churn
- Expansion
- CAC
- LTV
- Net New
- NPS
- Share of Voice
The Rise of Influencer Marketing
Trust

It's all about connecting

- People trust other people over companies (big or small)
- The relationship is important
- Digital one way connections
Tech Evangelists and DevRel are Influencers
Evangelists

Internal vs External
Person A:
Works for: Delta Company
Likes: Development, Javascript, Dogs, Running, Football, and Volunteering
Social: Has 30K followers

Says: Delta’s new software is Crazy good and shows you how to use it.

Person B:
Works for: Website Co
Likes: Development, Javascript, Dogs, Running, Football, and Volunteering
Social: Has 30K followers

Says: Delta’s new software is Crazy good and shows you how to use it.

Who has more sway? Who would you watch first? Why?
Business Expectations for Evangelists

Influencer Evangelist

Followers

Those who watch

Those who try

Interested people

People Who try (Potential Customers)

Customers
Can this Scale?

More influencers or evangelists mean more reach... but can this scale?
From 2022 stack overflow survey

Different “Tribes” Or Communities

It’s not feasible To grow teams to cover all sub communities
You want your evangelists to create new ones
How do you get external evangelists?
Hiring Influencers?

Should you pay for an influencer to work with you?

Results will vary, a lot
- Works better in the consumer space than in tech
Grow User Base

Sounds easy right?

This is a classic DevRel play
Why the grow the user base?

Users → Code Contributor → Maintainer/Core → Evanglist

Devs
Get more users

● **Content, Content, Content**
  ○ Education & Training
  ○ Code Examples
  ○ Conference Talks

● **Features**
  ○ Show people cool things
  ○ Easier, less work
  ○ Can’t live without

● **Tell more people how awesome your project/product is**
  ○ The more people who know, the more potential users
Set your expectations!
Some communities are very specific and unique
Example: Haskell -vs- Javascript
Know thy Users!

Database Community Persona Needs & Targets

Developers
- 50% Newer Developers
- 35% Seasoned Developers
- 15% Architect Principals

Leaders
- 60% Tech Leads
- 30% Managers/ Directors
- 10% VP's/ Executives

Operations
- 40% Data Warehouse/ BI Analysts
- 20% DevOps Engineers

Time
- Tech Leads are both developers and leaders. They are the middle managers who have to make trade-offs between more productive work and keeping the teams more productive and the goals of the company. They often have to make decisions on budget and resource allocation.

Money
- Managers and Directors are the people who are in charge of the technical and operational teams. They have budget responsibilities and are accountable for the success of the business. They also have to make decisions on hiring and firing, and they are responsible for the overall performance of the team.

Strategic
- VP's and Executives are the people who are responsible for the overall strategy of the company. They make the decisions that affect the long-term direction of the company.

Know thy Users!
Avoid the mistakes

Classic blunders in growth

- Assuming your audience/potential user base is as large as others
- Speaking will auto generate interest
- Product awesomeness trumps story
Growing External Evangelists Best Practices
Be Real
How many people here like dogs?
Make it accessible

Your product and community need to be easy to use and get involved in

- People often develop brilliant things, that are too complicated rules
- Maintainers and devs often assume everyone thinks like them
- How do you help new users get involved?
Be Safe and Fun

People only participate and feel part of communities that are welcoming and are fun to be part of.

- Toxic people suck
- Avoid abrasive culture
- What are you doing to engage the community?
- What is the personality of your personality?
Be Transparent

Share what is happening internally, across the project and the industry

- Sharing plans, goals, and ideas is critical
- Don’t create a caste based open source project (Core -vs- Others)
- Explain yourself (prs, decisions, etc)
- Be open to feedback
Ask for Help

Many people don’t know how to help, especially those who aren’t developers (or unsure of their skills)
Give Feedback

Be responsive, give feedback, and promote your users content, contributions, and work!

- You are building a relationship, treat external evangelists as someone you want to have a long term friendship with
- Nothing annoys people like silence
  - Good or bad
- Promote people's work, if they win, you win
Reward People

While good work can be rewarding, people are all motivated differently

- People are motivated by positive reinforcement
- One reward is a simple acknowledgement
  - Release notes
  - Blogs
  - Profiles
- Physical rewards work too!
  - Shirts, hats, and swag
  - Coins
Listen

Treat your users and external evangelists like they are VIP members of the team. They will provide valuable feedback.
Don’t Be an Ass

Just because you created or maintained the project doesn’t mean you can be elitist

- People want to help and be part of something they enjoy, get satisfaction from. They don’t want to deal with attitude.
- Nobody got time for that
Follow along and get more details on everything I talk about @
https://opensourcemetrics.org/
Enjoyed this talk? Attend another
Follow the HOSS!, ask questions, or connect to chat!

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