

The ASF and Open Source Communities

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The ASF

— [ASF == The Apache Software Foundation

— [Before the ASF there was “The Apache Group”

— [The ASF was incorporated in 1999

The ASF

— [Non-profit corporation founded in 1999

— [501 (c)3 charity

— [Volunteer organization

— [Virtual world-wide organization

— [Exists to provide the organizational, legal, and financial support for various OSS projects

The ASF - then

— [Started with 21 members

— [2 projects

— [All servers and services donated

The ASF - now

— [We have >300 members...

— [>70 TLPs

— [~25 Incubator podlings

— [Tons of committers (literally)

— (Over 2300 people)

— [Very large and growing infrastructure

The ASF's Mission

— [Provide open source software to the public free of charge

— [Provide a foundation for open, collaborative software development projects by supplying hardware, communication, and business infrastructure

— [Create an independent legal entity to which companies and individuals can donate resources and be assured that those resources will be used for the public benefit

The ASF's Mission

— [Provide a means for individual volunteers to be sheltered from legal suits directed at the Foundation's projects

— [Protect the 'Apache' brand, as applied to its software products, from being abused by other organizations

— [Provide legal and technical infrastructure for open source software development and to perform appropriate oversight of such

How We Work

— [The Apache Software Foundation provides support for the Apache community of open-source software projects. The Apache projects are characterized by a collaborative, consensus based development process, an open and pragmatic software license, and a desire to create high quality software that leads the way in its field. We consider ourselves not simply a group of projects sharing a server, but rather a community of developers and users.

How We Work, Take 2

— [Community over code

— [Our code should be exceptional

Structure of the ASF - dev

— [Volunteer Driven Organization

— [Software Projects are managed by Project Management Committees (PMCs)

— [PMCs vote in new PMC members and committers

— [At the end of the day: People / Individual focused

Structure of the ASF - legal

— [Member-based corporation - individuals only

— [Members nominate and elect new members

— [Members elect a board - 9 seats

— [Semi-annual meetings via IRC

— [Each PMC has a Chair - eyes and ears of the board (oversight only)

ASF "Org Chart"

Development

PMC Members

Committers

Contributors

Patchers/Buggers

Users

Administrative

Members

Officers

Board



The Apache Way

- [Although the term is deprecated, “The Apache Way” relates to how the ASF (and its projects) work and operate
- [Basically, the least common denominators on how PMCs operate

Basic Memes

— [Meritocracy

— [Peer-based

— [Consensus decision making

— [Collaborative development

— [Responsible oversight

Meritocracy

— [“Govern by Merit”

— [Merit is based on what you do

— [Merit never expires

— [Those with merit, get more responsibility

Peer-based

— [Developers represent themselves - individuals

— [Mutual trust and respect

— [All votes hold the same weight

— [Community over code

— Healthy communities create healthy code

— Poisonous communities don't

Why Community > Code

— [Since we are all volunteers, people's time and interests change

— [A healthy community is "warm and inviting" and encourages a continued influx of developers

— [Poisonous people/communities turn people off, and the project will die

— [End result - better code, long-term code

Consensus decision making

— [Key is the idea of voting

— +1 - yes

— +0 - no real comment

— -1 - veto

— [Sometimes you'll also see stuff like -0, -0.5, etc...

Voting

— [The main intent is to gauge developer acceptance

— [Vetos must be justifiable and have sound technical merit

— [If valid, Vetos cannot be overruled

— [Vetos are very rare

Collaborative Development

— [Code is developed by the community

— [Voting ensures at least 3 active developers

— [Development done online and on-list

— If it didn't happen on-list, it didn't happen

Collaborative Development

— [Mailing lists are the preferred method

— Archived

— Asynchronous

— Available to anyone - public list

Collaborative Development

— [Other methods are OK, if not primary

— Wikis

— IRC

— F2F

— [Always bring back to the list

Success Stories - HTTPD

- [Apache HTTP Server (“Apache”)

- Reference implementation of HTTP

- Most popular web server in existence

- Found in numerous commercial web servers

- Oracle, IBM,...

- Influenced countless more

Success Stories - Tomcat

— [Apache Tomcat (Servlet Container)

- The default standard servlet container
- Each version maps to a specific spec.
- Bundled with numerous Java apps out there
- Likely a major influence on the diminishing relevance of JEE

Success Stories - Others

— [Apache CouchDB and Cassandra

— [Apache Hadoop and Lucene

— [Apache Ant and Maven

— [Apache Logging, Axis, Struts, ...