The ASF and **Open Source Communities** Jim Jagielski Member and Chairman, The Apache Software Foundation



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

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Structure of the ASF - dev

Volunteer Driven Organization

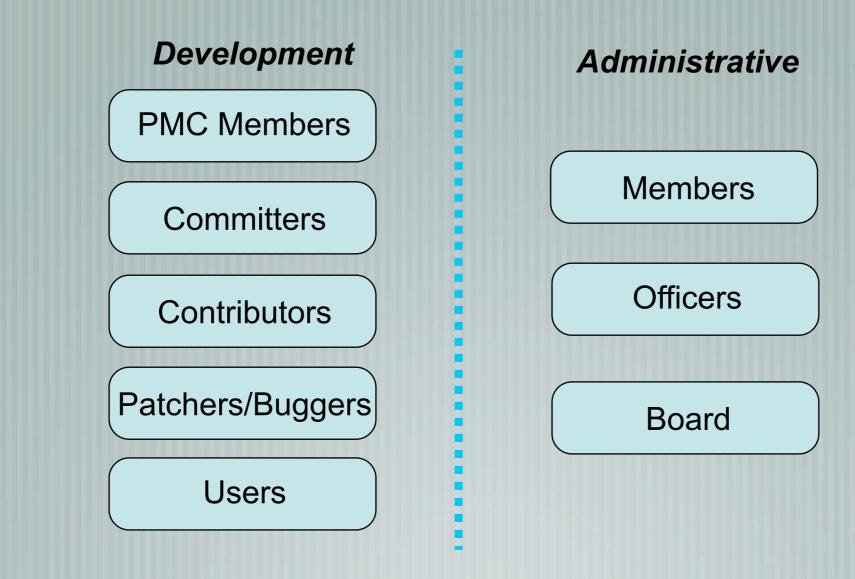
Software Projects are managed by Project Management Committees (PMCs)

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"



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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

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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 existance
 - 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, ...