



The Search for an AOSP Developer Community

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- AOSP is used in many different types of device: phones, tablets, TVs, cars, and many other things besides. Most of these require customized platform support
- Consequently, there are a large number of AOSP developers
- But where are they? It's like the Fermi Paradox, but for software engineers
- Contrast this with the community around, for example, the Yocto Project, which is active and vibrant
- Open source should be more than just free code
 - share
 - communicate
 - contribute - code, bug reports, information (blogs, READMEs, HOWTOs)

The problem

- Every AOSP developer is an island
- Little communication between teams, even in the same company
- Little opportunity to get together with others, either in person or online
- Little sense of there being a community of fellow developers

App developers, on the other hand, are well catered for

What do we mean by "community"?

- Community means sharing information about the platform and infrastructure
 - non competitive
- Community means a place to ask questions, reply to questions, share information gained ("I just found this neat way to ...")
- Community requires leadership to coordinate and promote

Why community is a good idea

- Open source is a two way street
 - download
 - upstream patches
 - share experiences
 - ask questions
- win-win
 - for the individual dev: recognition; satisfaction
 - for the team: problems resolved faster; changes merged upstream do not have to be reapplied next release
 - for the company: opportunity to influence the project (AOSP) and get your solutions integrated, plus happier and more efficient teams

Note that all of this benefits Google as well

How do others do it?

- Take for example Yocto Project, which has a lot of similarities with AOSP
- Yocto community
 - mail lists, most mails are answered in 24 hours, lots of helpful discussions
 - open to patches to fix bugs, add features
 - dev day conferences, often in conjunction with larger events, to train developers, and meeting point for platform devs
 - yocto advocate and community liaison officer (Josef Holzmayr)
 - open decision making, minutes of TSC are public

What do we have? 1/2

From Google

- Google groups - seldom answered, useless
<https://source.android.com/setup/community>

Community efforts

- Stack overflow - somewhat useful, but information often out of date
- The AOSP and AAOS Meetup <https://aospandaaos.github.io/>
- The AOSP Developer's Community
<https://aosp-developers-community.github.io/>
- Android Developers Backstage podcast <https://adbackstage.libsyn.com/>
and other podcasts
- Meetings at conferences: ELC, LPC Android MC, Linaro Connect, Droidcon (Berlin)

What do we have? 2/2

- A vast collection of resources (many way out of date):
<https://github.com/Akipe/awesome-android-aosp>
- Community supported boards - each have their own community to support the board
 - Glodroid
 - Raspberry Pi
 - etc
- Community supported phone ROMs, community to support the OS
 - lineageos,
 - grapheneOS,
 - etc

What could we do?

- Stuff that requires minimal effort - so long as enough people contribute
 - set up a github to share code/info/blogs/howtos/etc. Amongst others, we have:
 - <https://aospandaaos.github.io/projects.html>
 - <https://devboardsforandroid.linaro.org/>
 - set up discord/matrix/irc channels
 - set up Mastodon and other social media channels
 - online meetings
 - in-person meetings, maybe associated with larger events: Linaro Connect, LFOSS, etc
- All of us: become advocates for an independent AOSP community
- ? Lobby Google to take the AOSP community seriously

Discussion points

- Quick fixes: things that we can do today with relatively little effort
 - just talk to each other, see previous slide
- Things that need some effort
 - find someone (or multiple someones) to volunteer to take on a leadership role
- Things that require substantial effort
 - create a not for profit organisation
 - get sponsorship
 - fund key posts