It's All about Perspective

6 Things We Learned While Building Measure
Jeremy

- Datadog
- Had the idea
- Interested in community
- Interested in measuring it
  - Not to compare or rate, but to improve
Stuart

- architect and coder
- interested in community
- interested in design
The Six Things
HELLO

my name is
1. Naming things is hard
Names, good and bad

- Word
- Pages
- Windows
- Facebook
- Telegram

- Excel
- Alexa
- Medium
- Gimp
- Chrome
- Firefox
Poll for the name “Measure” of people on this stage

It’s a great name

50%

As soon as someone suggests a better name we’re switching to that

50%
2. Simple sounding things are sometimes complex (once you drill into them)
The quest for notifications

- An open source SaaS project has two sets of users: the people who use the project, and *their* users
- Use of external services is annoying to set up in this environment
- Everything is fractal: a simple-sounding thing has many ramifications
- It’s better to not do a thing and be honest about that than to do a half-assed job
3. Work closely with your dependencies and they’ll be nice to you
(Some) Modern open source projects
(Some) Modern open source projects
(Some) Modern open source projects
We’re all in this together

- Measure uses GHCrawler from Microsoft
- Some issues with the way it worked
- Fix them and contribute back upstream
- When we had questions, they listened
4. Your error paths are at least as important as the parts that work
The unideal world

● What should happen:
  ○ They download the project
  ○ It works first time
  ○ Hooray! Time for cakes!

● What doesn’t happen
  ○ That
Character is what you are in the dark

- Make your errors helpful to your user base, not your developer base
- Explain what happened
- Explain *why* it happened
- Give possible fixes
- If there’s only one possible fix, do it
- Have a switch somewhere to turn on the techie stuff but keep it off by default
5. Publicising your thing is as much a skill as writing it
If you build a better mousetrap, the world will not beat a path to your door. Stop thinking it will.
Marketing

- Bit of a dirty word among OSS community people
- This is wrong
- It’s a skill
- Learn that skill
- Getting eyes on your project is just as important as building it right
- Publicising your project gets you feedback and grows your community of contributors
6. Have a philosophy
What’s it all about, when you get down to it?

Measure’s philosophy:

- Should be simple
- Should be visually appealing
- Should offer an opinionated default experience, but be extensible
- Should be able to completely separate inside and outside contributions
- Should treat the concept of contributors as first-class citizens
Why have a philosophy?

- Really helped us decide what’s important and what isn’t
- Can say “Measure doesn’t do that; another tool may be a better fit”
- Can close issues
The Six Things We Learned

1. Naming things is hard
2. Simple sounding things are hard once you drill into them
3. Work closely with your dependencies and they’ll be nice to you
4. Your error paths are at least as important as the parts that work
5. Publicising your thing is as much a skill as writing it
6. Have a philosophy
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