

Communication and Knowledge Transfer in OSM

Introduction

About Myself

- Hanna Krüger
- Username raubraupe
- from Germany
- OSM hobbyist since 2012
- Mechanical Engineer by day

Main Activities

- OSMF and FOSSGIS member
- voluntary work for the German local chapter (FOSSGIS)
- casual mapper
- maintaining OpenStreetMap Wiki (Deleting staff)

Let's Start!

Communication

- Definition:
 - All kind of information shared about OSM related topics
- Examples:
 - Discussions
 - Blogs and Websites
 - Forums and Wikis
 - Social Media
 - Messages and Mails
 - Announcements and Ads
 - Guidance / Help / FAQ
 - Reports
 - Feedback (Fix me, Bugs...)
 - ...

Who communicates?

- Short answer: everyone
- Groups of Players
 - OSMF and Working Groups
 - Local Chapters & Communities
 - Mapper
 - Companies
 - Software Developers
 - User
 - Beginners, Interested Persons
 - ...
- Communication in and between these groups

Different Media for Different Purposes

Offline Communication

Meetings, Mapping Parties, Conferences, Regular's Tables, ...

Pros

- private and personal contact
- socializing
- strengthen communities

Cons

- higher effort to participate
- traceability and confirmability
- often no recording or reports

Group Chats

What's App, Telegram, Slack, Matrix,

Pros

- private communication
- conversations and discussions
- just in time reply

Cons

- only private access
- little visibility
- no archive

Facebook

Used mainly by Humanitarian Organisation, African and American Communities

Pros

- High reach and popularity of this media
- great for “Ad” content
- easy to communicate in groups

Cons

- limited public access
- badly searchable
- no chronology of timelines
- manipulation by spam and retweet circles

Twitter

Used by many different groups

- eg. Software Developers, Companies, HOT, Official Channels, Mappers

Pros

- Easy to consume (just 280 chars)
- high popularity
- possible to get high reach
- great for 'Ad' content

Cons

- sketchy information
- filtered content and opinions
- low attention span

Mailing List

Very popular in Europe and Special Interest Communities

Pros

- popular medium
- high accessibility
- good for detailed and long discussions

Cons

- cultural differences complicate participation
- time consuming media
- Archive = Pain in the butt

Boards

OpenStreetMap Forum, Help, Reddit, ...

Only for specific purposes

- Q and A
- Bugs / Fix me
- Guidance

Pros

- well searchable
- just in time

Cons

- only for special purposes
- not suitable for long discussions
- outdated content

Blogs & Websites

Types

- Community
 - Weekly OSM, OpenStreetMap Blog
- Companies
 - Mapbox, OsmAnd, ...
- Personal Blogs

Pros

- detailed content
- well linked
- reports, reviews, announcements

Cons

- relatively low reach
- high inhibition threshold
- time consuming medium

Wiki

OSM Wiki and Local Chapter Wikis (especially European)

Pros

- allows sharing all kind of media
- well searchable

Cons

- complicated syntax
- mobile access
- maintenance

Media for daily use

		Inhibition threshold		
		Low	Medium	High
Reach	Local	Group Chat	Face to Face	Blog
	Popular	Meet Up	Mailing List	Conference
	Viral	Timeline Based Social Media	Board/Forum	Wiki

Benefit of Scattered Communication

- easy to participate
- low inhibition threshold
- strengthen local communities
- strengthen groups of special interest

Downside of scattered Communication

- hard to find and retrieve information
- inconsistent and conflicted information
- impossible to distinguish between
 - Proposal - Current State - Outdated Version
- hard to collect, spread and transfer knowledge

Knowledge Transfer

What is important

- well searchable
- persistence
- high accessibility
- multilingualism
- high refresh period

Media for Knowledge Transfer

		Searchability		
		Ok	Bad	Catastrophic
Accessibility (for consumer)	High	Wiki	Conference	Face to Face
	Medium	Board/Forum	Mailing List	Meet Up
	Low	Blog	Timeline Based Social Media	Group Chat

Problem

- scattered communication characterize OSM
- difficult and time consuming to find information
 - private access
 - conflicting information

Solution?

- choose your communication channels more carefully
 - think about audience and reach
- stop mirroring channels & conversations
- backup important information on global channels
 - Examples: Weekly OSM, Belgian Matrix Channel
- remind yourself to keep information updated

Thanks for your Attention!

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