

Communication tools & strategies

Session #5: Barriers and Solutions - Thurs 1:30-2:45pm - Council

<i>Please add your names</i>
Notekeeper (required): Carl Leitner
Timekeeper: Christopher Robert
Facilitator: Waylon Brunette
Everyone else: Christopher Robert, Carl Leitner, Jeff Beorse, Michael Downey, Waylon Brunette, Jake Watson, Clarice Larson

Prompt: How do you deal with multiple channels? How do you find information & knowledge easily? How can we develop community knowledge about what info goes where? As you answer these questions, try to generate specific proposals that the community can undertake.

Structured Notes

Barriers:

- Public information is not curated information. Volume is overwhelming
- Enumeration of information channels:
 - Slack
 - Forum
 - Websites:
 - <https://opendatakit.org> (Wordpress, thinking of Drupal)
 - <https://opendatakit.github.io/xforms-spec/>
 - <http://xlsform.org>
 - Old Google Group (retired)
 - Announcement Email List (to be born) (via Forums?)
 - <https://stackoverflow.com/questions/tagged/odk>
 - Github
 - Repos > 10
 - Collect
 - Build
 - Briefcase
 - Validate
 - Xforms-spec
 - Javarosa

- Opendatakit
 - Sample-forms
 - And many more...
- For each repo
 - Issues (it should not necessarily be a discussion channel)
 - Pull requests (per repo)
 - Wiki (per repo)
 - Readmes
- Newsletter
- Google Docs (maybe old, not around anymore)
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Smoke signals + pigeons
- When do we use which channel?
 - Is there a guide to all the channels?
 - Can we enumerate the scenarios?
 - There are too many to curate
- github/Wiki/repos are not curated well
- Where are the ODK2 json specs?
- How will the ODK2 json spec be maintained? (governance and communication)
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Scenarios:

- Nontech report bugs
- Tech report bugs
- JSON spec update
- XForm spec update

Unstructured notes

- Dimensions of communication: structured/unstructured; synchronous/asynchronous; internal/external audience; ?
- Jono Bacon recent blog post on structured vs. unstructured project communication: <https://opensource.com/article/17/5/much-ado-about-communication>
- OpenMRS non-technical user bug reporting form: <http://openmrs.org/join-the-community/report-a-bug/>
- GitLab has a “service desk” for non-GitLab users to create issues via email
- ODK documentation calls for help:
 - <https://forum.opendatakit.org/t/docs-structure-discussion-one-or-many-repos/7080>
 - <https://forum.opendatakit.org/t/what-docs-do-you-need-early/7081>
- How do we increase survey participation/solicit feedback for things like feedback?
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- Example of announcements via Discourse:
<https://talk.openmrs.org/c/community/announcements> (all users are automatically “Watching” the category to get direct email notification when a new “auto-locked” topic is posted by a defined group of members.)
- LibreHealth has some admin-definable custom fields at signup time in Discourse to learn more about users. <https://forums.librehealth.io/>

What are the key takeaways from your discussion?

- Need curation and clarification of which channels to use for what
- Who are the main audiences ?
- There is a lot of redundancy of information that is misorganized
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What are some ideas/proposals for addressing these issues?

- We need a tech documentation specialist to clean things up with opendatakit.org as the main landing page. (**there is one! that this is not known widely is a problem**)
- Need an information architectural plan that says what type of information should go where (so that things stay organized in the future)
- Need to make existing information more readily accessible (see <http://search.openmrs.org/> as example)
- Wikis needs to be consolidated/organized (see http://docs.baseex.org/wiki/Main_Page as example)
- Need a calendar for meetings / sprints / release dates etc.
- Need a community manager
- Need to publish opportunities for funding
- Auto-documentation from the code on read-the-docs
- Tutorials on:
 - getting started as a dev
 - Integration guide
- In-code user-facing documentation (e.g. readthedocs)
- In-code API documentation (e.g. rdoc)
- Governance docs (meeting minutes, decision making process, etc)
- Integration guide
- Slack meetings
- Remote dev mentoring with something like etherpad which then gets turned into documentation/tutorial
- Heavily curated/coordinated once a month newsletters for those interested in the platform with limited time to do so
- Announcement category, everyone automatically watching it
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What are the open questions you still need to answer?

- How will all the above happen? Who leads?
- How do we bring the community together?



Miscellaneous Notes