



Building, growing and sustaining ML communities

Martin Andrews
martin@RedDragon.ai

Sam Witteveen
sam@RedDragon.ai

Thought Process

Goal :

- ▲ MLOSS project success

Community-related sub-goals :

- ▲ Find new contributors
- ▲ Get people excited about project
- ▲ Advertise your project

Ideas :

- ▲ Build via on-line presence
- ▲ Spread the word personally
- ▲ Get other people to spread the word

Enabling 'Evangelists' :

- ▲ Simple on-ramp to something working
- ▲ Clear vision for project
- ▲ Enough flexibility to build a story

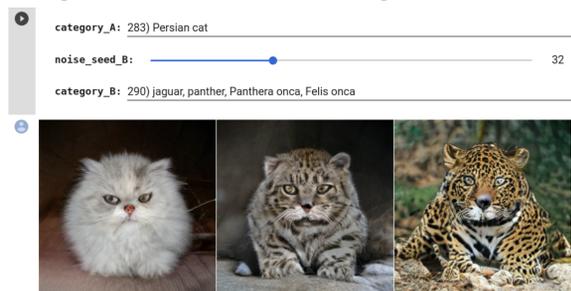
Help the Community to Help You

Do This

Be welcoming :

- ▲ State that you welcome outsiders

Emphasise Visual Examples



Recognise your supporters



Don't Do This

"Dead-End" Examples :

- ▲ e.g. "from datasets import IMDB"

Too-Clever Examples :

- ▲ Not fair to name names...

Unbalanced Documentation :

- ▲ Make simple things simple
- ▲ Explain where there are corner-cases

Dehumanise the Community :



Sow Confusion :

- ▲ Show the 'cleanest' approach first
- ▲ Explain why other approaches exist

Lessons from a successful in-person community

Holding Events

Why do people attend ?

- NB: No free pizza...
- ▲ Understand best practices / know how
- ▲ Learn something they can apply
- ▲ Hear about new projects / features
- ▲ Want to be entertained

Content Mix (consistent messaging)

- ▲ Something for beginners, something from the bleeding edge, and lightning talks

Consistency

- ▲ Make sure events are "reliable"
- ▲ Social proof of other people going
- ▲ Talks accessible at different levels

Audience Mix

Understand your audience :

- ▲ Ask them questions
- ▲ Answers may be unexpected...
- ▲ Make sure you meet their goals



Things to celebrate :

- ▲ Different experience levels
- ▲ People being people (diversity)
- ▲ Willingness to participate

Finding Speakers

Problem :

- ▲ People dread public speaking
- ▲ Many are never "ready yet"
- ▲ Speaker quality difficult to guarantee

Solutions :

- ▲ Make Lightning Talks all about fun
- ▲ Talk about what doesn't work
- ▲ Have multiple speakers per event

Persuasive Arguments :

- ▲ Deadlines create action
 - > Best way to learn is to teach people
- ▲ Thematic events
 - > Talk now, or miss opportunity
- ▲ Social standing & resume value
 - > 90:9:1 ~ lurk:participate:create

About our community

- ▲ The authors run the Singapore TensorFlow & Deep Learning MeetUp
- ▲ The group has over 3,200 members (in a country with fewer people than Toronto)
- ▲ Have also held Deep Learning events in Thailand, Philippines, Malaysia, NYC, SF, ...

Contact

martin@RedDragon.ai
+65 8585 1750
http://RedDragon.ai