

Manifesto for Marketing and Communications Department Coordinator

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My involvement in Joomla has been from the very beginning.

My clients have included Shell, NHS, UK Police and other large organisations as well as international charities.

I have been running the London Joomla User Group for over a decade. One of the largest Joomla User Groups in the world and running monthly meetings.

My involvement with the CMS release team has been fun and educational, both as a member and then the team lead. I identified a brilliant successor, Sigrid Gramlinger, who has made the role her own and taken it forward.

Then I moved to Google Summer of Code, GSoC when that position became vacant and with the help of Benjamin and Shivam, took on that role and managed to get a successful application and five slots for this year's GSoC with the help of the team.

World Conferences, Joomla Days and J&Beyond are events I have attended, sometimes as a speaker and sometimes as an attendee.

A member of production for the last five years.

Recently joined the new events team as its assistant under the leadership of SD and look forward to pushing that forward with others help.

I started the Bugs&Fun@Home channel on Glip as well as several other channels which are IDE related. Any channel I am involved in is a place for open and friendly conversation. I have and expect no place for any toxic behaviour.

This helps those channels to succeed.

I did not apply for Marketing DC last time as I had committed to the work of getting Joomla accepted as GSoC slots and was on a steep learning curve in that role.

Now that we are in a place of stability in that project. Shivam Rajput has agreed to take over the position of team lead and has been as instrumental in its success as anyone in the organisational team.

I have absolutely no problem with changing my focus knowing that GSoC will be a success with its new team lead.

So what can I bring to the role?

Like GSoC and CMS Release lead before. I joined a group as a lead or potential lead so am happy to take on a group and to organise if need be. My role would be to understand any existing problems and listen to those that have been doing the hard work with fresh ears and eyes. To then canvas others who are more expert than me and see if we can get their perspective to help solve the issues.

I am happy to roll up my sleeves and get on with any job, but the role of Marketing & Communications DC is a big job, so I will be relying, as I have in other position, on a team to help fulfil that role.

So let me break the job down into the parts I would expect to do myself and those I would want to get help with.

Attending OSM meetings.

I cannot remember a Production meeting that I have missed and I would expect to attend every OSM meeting that the post is invited to.

I would convene a Marketing and Communications Department meeting for the department team leads and any other parties that would be important to developing a holistic strategy to get our message out to the widest audience.

I would also attend the meetings of the teams under the department

- Joomla! Optimisation Team
- Marketing Team
- Social Media Team
- User Research & Strategy Working Group

This would allow me to become familiar with the work they are doing and see what can be done to strengthen their work and ideas.

I would also like to attend the Production Department meetings to hear what is the pipeline and formulate the marketing plan with the department. This is something identified by Sandra Decoux in her manifesto and I think is essential to get the message out to the Marketing and Communications channels.

As I have served in that department for five years, I am in a good place to know how it works and know the importance of that balance between allowing space to develop ideas and plans but also informing the wider audience to engender excitement and anticipation of what is to come.

It is vital to also know what's happening events wise and so, as I am already on that team, the Marketing and Communications team would have a direct link to any events planned.

That's a lot of meetings...but to stay informed and to be a conduit for all the strands of Joomla over the 4 release, I think its vital there are no road blocks to communications.

What's the plan?

Situation

The first Release Candidate of Joomla4 is due to be released very soon with several iterations until a final stable version soon after.

The launch of Joomla4 is a big opportunity to promote the platform that should not be missed, as such an opportunity will not present itself again until the launch of Joomla5.

With a limited budget for the marketing and promotion of Joomla4, a time and cost-efficient method of marketing and promotion of the latest version needs to be put in place.

Objectives

As well as announcing the arrival of Joomla4, a major objective of the marketing campaign will be to build the global community and promote Joomla as a CMS to potential users who are not aware of it. To do this, we need to be raising awareness of the product with not only the existing Joomla community but also webmasters and users of competing CMS along with IT/marketing influences within potential organisations.

Opportunities

The marketing of Joomla4 provides a number of opportunities to highlight why Joomla is the CMS of choice for vast numbers of users and position it as an open-source CMS of choice.

There are also opportunities to demonstrate the use of Joomla and to encourage users to join the growing community.

We have many fronts to work on and will need the cooperation of many people to make it work.

Joomla4all

Many agencies or budding developers find which CMS to use from awards and listings. Joomla has to use its community of users and developers to push its place in those awards. I would produce and maintain a year round awards events list that would feed the communications and marketing schedules. Articles are needed about the awards for the community and developers to get involved with and vote for Joomla's place in these awards. This has to be a coordinated and systematic approach that allows us to push Joomla's place in the CMS world.

Joomla4developers

The reason I chose Mambo and then Joomla over any other CMS at the time was because of its ease of development. The Joomla team had put the effort in, so I could reap the rewards. And there are many features in the latest Joomla4 that push this further. Joomla developers have a market share of the Joomla ecosphere, and the smaller Joomla's market share the smaller their share of the market. So it's in their interests to shout loudly about

Joomla and to help it grow. But we have not addressed this whole user base and their needs well.

Miscommunications lead to loud and public upset, which damages both Joomla and the developers market. We need to see how we can listen to their concerns and deal with these grievances before they boil over into a public argument.

As DC I would write to all the main contributors to offer a channel to air their grievances and try to find a way to mitigate the issues before they become a public issue. But more than that, I want to help developers to grow their market with Joomla. Our marketing should champion our ecosphere of developers and extensions and help them to promote themselves by promoting Joomla. Coordinated promotions around each RC, each major and minor release should all be opportunities to push the brand and help push their market further.

Joomla4accessibility

With organisations and governments looking more and more for accessibility in their websites and communications, Joomla is at the forefront of pushing these standards. With Joomla4 we need to shout about the effort that's gone into accessibility.

With the help of others I would want to see outreach to all relevant accessibility organisations. We can position ourselves internationally as a standard in accessible websites. Those who would welcome such an a11y first CMS may use their networks to make our standards better known. We should also use these contacts to feed back into our accessibility team. Such networks are win-win.

Joomla4privacy

With the improvements made in Joomla's privacy suite and those rolling into Joomla 4, it's a great time to push awareness of those features. More and more areas of the world become aware of the privacy issues surrounding websites and personal data and will embrace our efforts.

Joomla4api

With the API Joomla4 has the advanced features it needs to become a syndication platform with satellite sites consuming the central content. It's a very powerful feature that again needs a plan, user cases and a strategy to push and shout about it.

Joomla4work

With workflows, I will be using this brilliant feature on my client sites and we should use it to the maximum in our own marketing and communications workflows. We have a large user base, so producing and promoting case studies will be a brilliant marketing tool. Helping to push both workflows and using Joomla for medium plus organisations

Joomla4charity

The charity sector is a large group, one that has made extensive use of Joomla. With my own clients including some international charities, I intend to form alliances and virtual workshops to show how Joomla4 can work for the charity and not for profit sector to bring professional and well-structured websites to the attention of those that need these features in order to help them grow.

How will it be delivered?

Strategic approach

The tight budget means that the most efficient approach will be to utilise inbound marketing techniques, focused on distributing content that will be published on www.joomla.org, magazine.joomla.org and community.joomla.org. The content will need to be suitable for sharing across various platforms and must repeat key messages regarding Joomla and Joomla4. These key messages will aim to reach a broad range of target audiences and stakeholders including:

- Website developers and agencies
- Hobbyists self-builders and individuals, start-ups, small and rapid growth of businesses
- Those with a "side hustle" business looking to scale up from the likes of Shopify and Squarespace.
- The B2B market including third-party web developers and agencies
- Large businesses, SMEs and other organisations, charities
- Educational establishments

To help attract new users to Joomla, the key messages will need to be published in an easy-to-understand, non-technical style that does not use jargon. This can be very off-putting to potential users and can alienate those who do not have a deep understanding of the technology.

To ensure that the content published on the Joomla website is capable of being distributed widely on social media and other platforms, it will be necessary to provide it in a number of formats including written documents, blogs, articles and news releases, graphics suitable for easy distribution on social media, video and audio content.

To maximise the impact of the marketing and publicity surrounding Joomla4, it will be necessary to focus on two key milestone dates:

- The Release Candidate
- The Joomla4 stable release

With teams of people. We have many resources to help us, not just the current teams in the departments, but also past members. With a new DC and a new product on the close horizon, I would be happy to approach old hands who have left to see if they would like to come back for another go. People burn out and I believe that managing the burnout and allowing them to walk away, but also come back, is part of a volunteer organisation.

With the GSoC students, only five of the 200+ students will get a place, but many have been enthusiastic, and we should invite these young new members of the community to cut their teeth in helping to spread the message.

Friday afternoons!

Something I tried a while back. Suggesting that Friday afternoon is dedicated to patch testing or some other Joomla involvement. It's not always possible, but it's a great way to wind down and end the week giving back to the community. So I would open a Friday afternoon room, so that people can drop by virtually and take up any tasks that they feel they can achieve.

To this end my company will, if I become DC, devote work time to the Joomla Project. My assistant and I will shut-up-shop at midday and then, after lunch, our time will be devoted to Joomla and the marketing and communications planning and strategy. In this way, it's not a matter of finding the time in personal time, but there is regular weekly time put aside to get the work done.

Tactical approach

The tactical approach outlined below is relevant for both the launch of the release candidate and the release of Joomla4 stable at a later date.

Broadly speaking the tactics will necessitate the production of content based around key messages which will focus on the features and advantages of Joomla4. Once these key messages are in place, then they will be used to produce news releases, blogs, website articles, graphic illustrations, infographics, videos and podcasts (which could take the form of interviews with senior members of the Joomla team, much like the "Getting extensions ready" series in the excellent community magazine).

Once this content is prepared, sound bites, excerpts and other useful information will be identified and used to generate suitable social media posts with the aim of driving traffic to the relevant article on the website.

In addition, information regarding the release candidate and Joomla4 will be used as part of an email campaign directed at developers and website builders who will need time to prepare for the launch of Joomla4.

The social media campaign surrounding the release candidate will also focus on a call to action for developers and website agencies to prepare for the main launch.

To help spread the circulation of the content on the website, members of the Joomla community will be encouraged to share and distribute the content. To help achieve this, certain social media accounts and organisations will be tagged within the posts.

My team

Stacey Cox.

My young assistant joined SoftForge as a marketing apprentice which is just one of her roles in SoftForge. Stacey will be doing further qualifications in marketing, so helping with Joomla marketing fits well with her skill set, and she has agreed to come on board to help with the workload and will be given work time in order to do what is needed

Andrew Barber.

Andrew is someone I have worked with for many years and who has a good working knowledge of Joomla and also some other CMS's. He has agreed to be my assistant DC, if I am elected, and work with me in forming an ongoing Joomla4 launch strategy. He is someone who regularly wins airtime on national TV and Radio programs for his clients and has a strong professional background in PR and Marketing.

It's in the Job title, Department Coordinator!

It is a post that's designed for networking and coordinating with others. It is only with others in the community that I will succeed in this post.

I would like to be judged not just by how much marketing and communications take place for Joomla4, but also by the team that's produced and successors I bring on when I leave the post.

It would be an honour to represent the Marketing and Communications Department and help the department do its bit in making Joomla4 a great success.

Yours sincerely,

Phil Walton.