



The Secret to Great Developer Experience is Killer Content

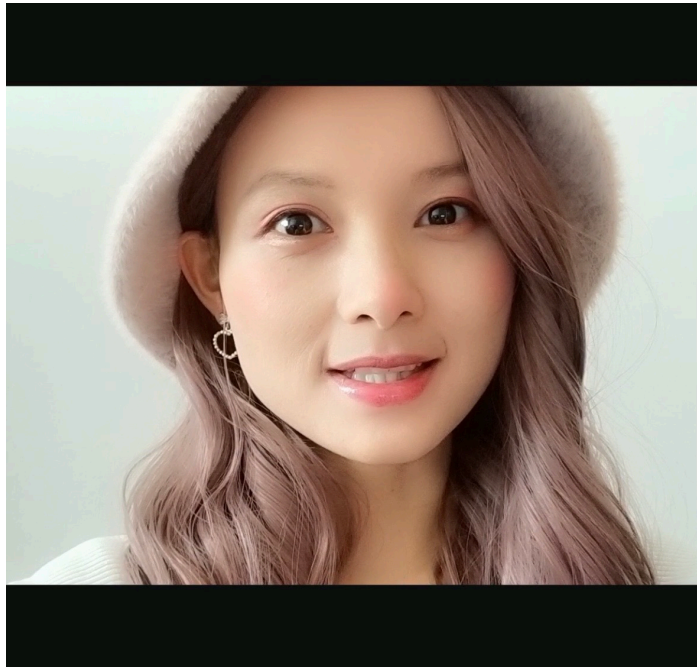
Yu Liu

Apache Pulsar PMC Member

Oct 28, 2023



Self intro



— Yu Liu

Name



— Technical Writer

Job



Roles

— Apache Pulsar PMC Member
— Apache Trafodion Committer



Talks

— Cracking the Code of Information Architecture
— Inside Apache Pulsar's Content Strategy
— Success Beyond Code: Optimizing Developer Experience Through PR Titles
— Code the Docs: Continuous Integration for Docs
— Growing a Company to be a Top Open-Source Contributor
— Building a Welcoming Community

Why should you attend this sharing?

- Shape system thinking
- Reuse efficient solutions



Agenda


1. What is DX (Developer Experience)?
2. Why Does DX Matter?
3. How to Design DX?
4. How to Evaluate DX?
5. Thoughts



1. What is DX?

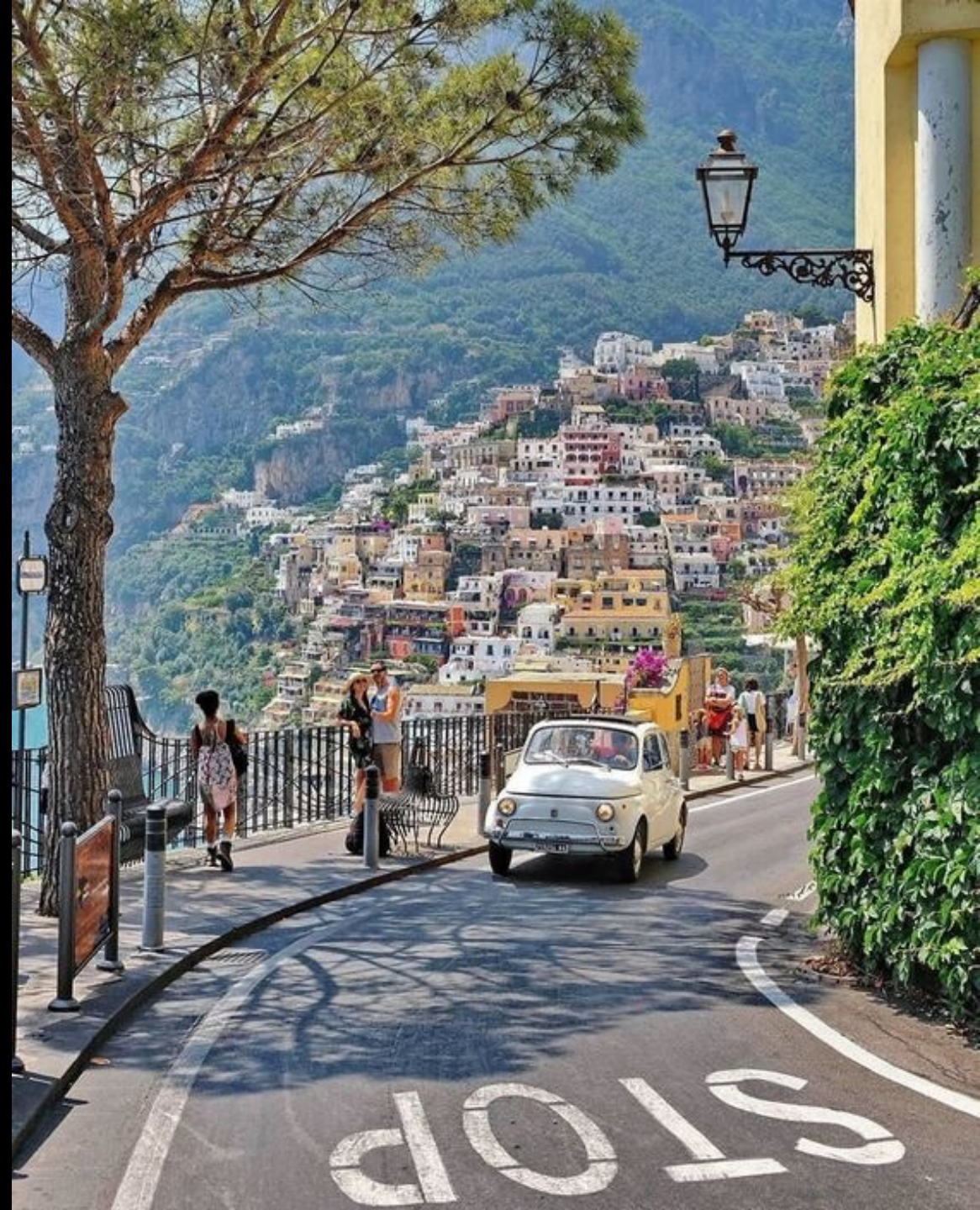


Comparison

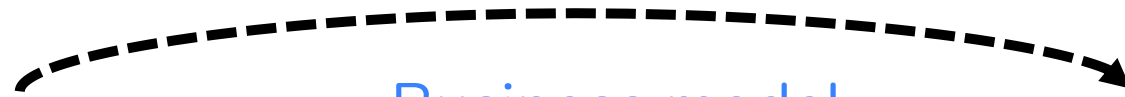
Field	UX	DX
Audience	End users	Developers
Object	Consumer goods e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iPhone 	Software products e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • API (mostly used) • SDK • Library • Framework
Goal	Use products e.g., use apps	Create software products e.g., create apps



2. Why Does DX Matter?



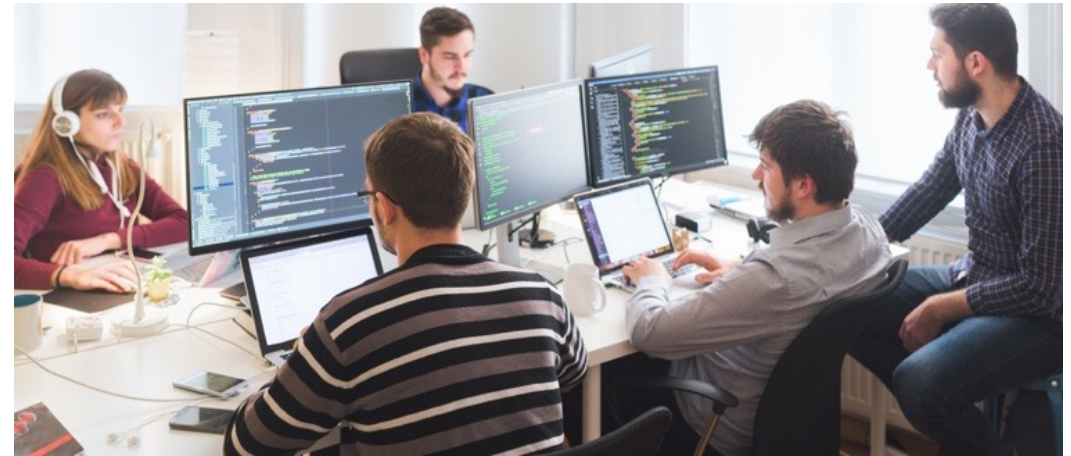
Developers tries, business buys



Business model

Business to Business (B2B)

Business to Developer (B2D)



CXOs

Decision makers

Developers (Devs)



Developers are rockstars of API economy

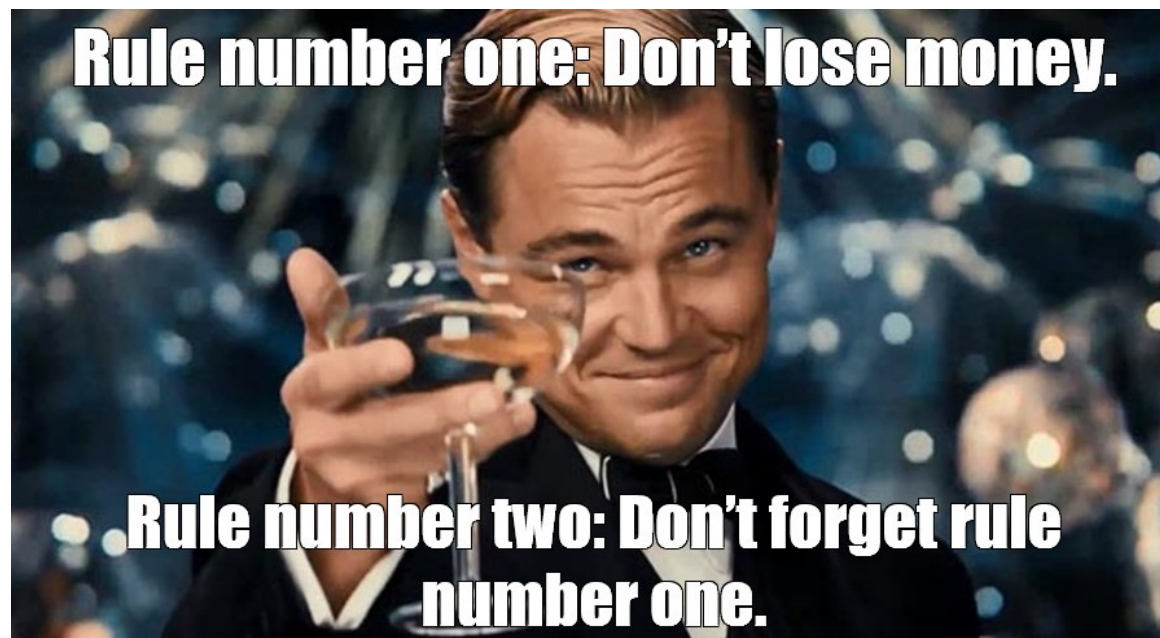
89 %

Of Developers Use APIs

(and there is 27 million of them)

Valued by API Market

\$ 5.1 Billion



Source: DXHEROES

3. How to Design DX?

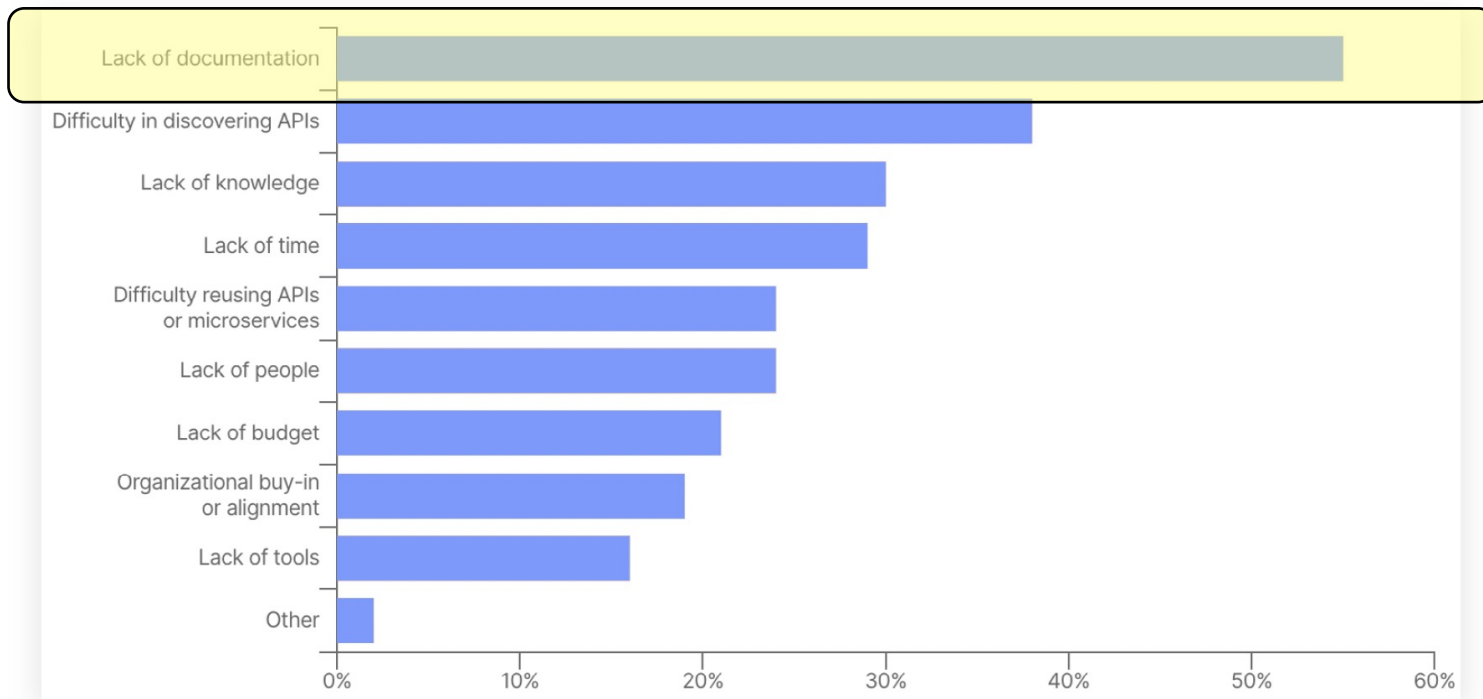


3.1 Issues



Issues from API content consumers

Obstacles to consuming APIs



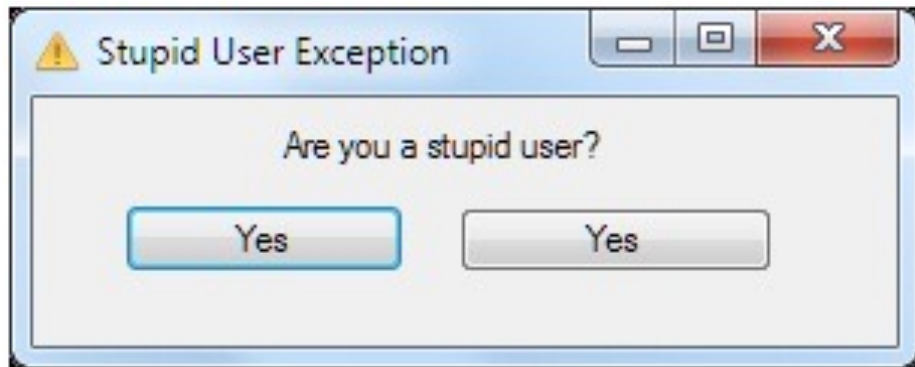
Source: 2022 State of the API Report

11 JULY 2011

PayPal, You Suck, Your API Sucks, And So Does Your Documentation

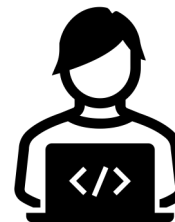
For the past two weeks I have been grappling with creating a PayPal integration for [Gameolith](#). PayPal's documentation (located at [x.com](#)) is frequently outdated, inaccurate, incomplete and even contradicts itself many a time. Their sandbox is buggy and broken, and went down shortly before I was about to launch, forcing me to delay its launch for more than a week.

Issues from API content producers



Customers weren't technical enough.

We just couldn't get them to understand our APIs.



Pulsar API Reference

The screenshot displays the Apache Pulsar API Reference page for the endpoint `GET /broker-stats-base/allocator`. The page is organized into three main sections: a left-hand navigation menu, a central description and parameter section, and a right-hand response samples section.

Navigation Menu: Includes a search bar and a list of endpoints under the 'BROKER-STATS' category. The selected endpoint is 'Get the stats for the Netty allocator. Available allocators are 'default' and 'ml-cache''.

Endpoint Description: 'Get the stats for the Netty allocator. Available allocators are 'default' and 'ml-cache''.

PARAMETERS: A table of path parameters is shown below the description.

Parameter	Type	Required
allocator	string	Required

Responses: A list of possible responses is provided below the parameters.

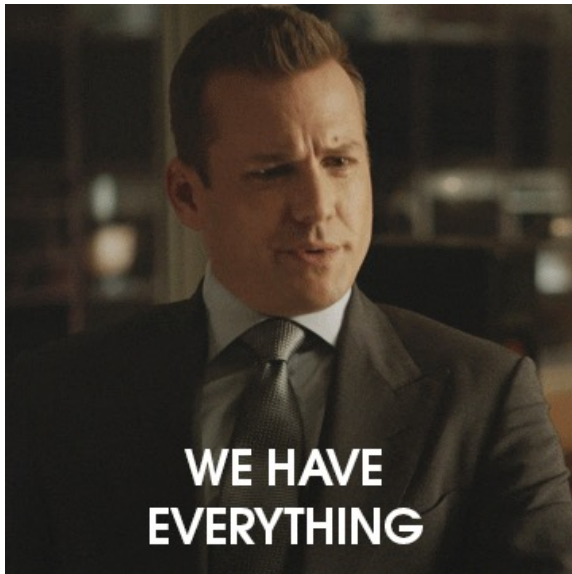
- ✓ 200 successful operation
- 403 Don't have admin permission

Response Samples: A sample JSON response for a successful operation (200) is shown in a dark-themed box.

```
{
  - "directArenas": [
    + { ... }
  ],
  - "heapArenas": [
    + { ... }
  ],
  "normalCacheSize": 0
  "numDirectArenas": 0
  "numHeapArenas": 0,
  "numThreadLocalCache
  "smallCacheSize": 0
}
```

Context gap

API content producers



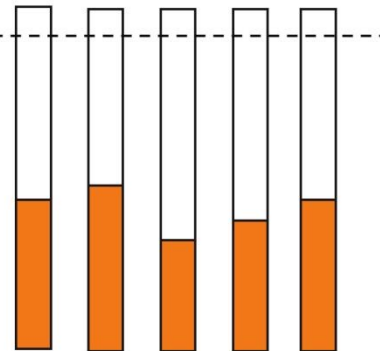
API content consumers



Curse of Knowledge



When you know a lot...



It's easy to think everyone knows, too.



3.2 Design Thinking



What is context?

5W

WHO ?
WHAT ?
WHEN ?
WHY ?
WHERE ?

2H

HOW ?
HOW MUCH ?

All info that strengthens users' comprehension and prevents miscommunication, e.g.,

- High-level product info
- Hidden considerations
- Environment when using products

Content often fails to tell context

- Good at writing "How"

Requirement: Put the elephant into the fridge.

1. Open the door



2. Put it in



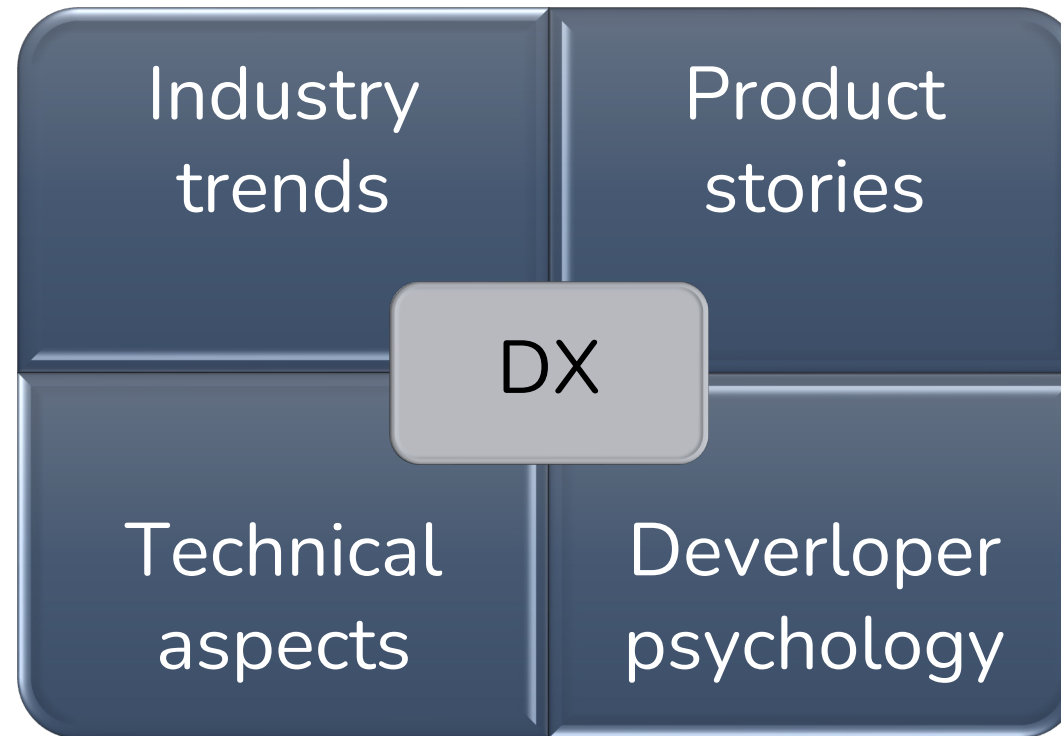
3. Close the door



- But fail to consider "Who/What/Why/When/How/How much"
 - Who cares about putting 🐘 into 🧊?
 - Who put?
 - Why put?
 - Which 🧊?
 - When put?
 - How much does put cost?

How to create context?

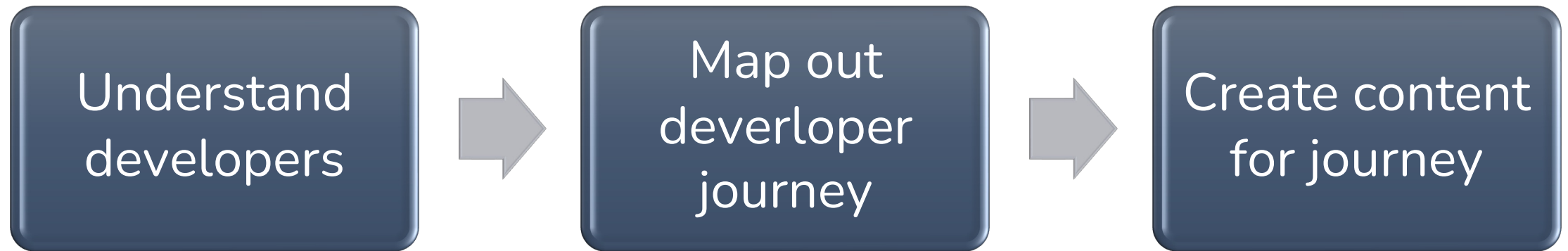
Building comprehensive context requires writers to understand



3.3 Design Process



Overall steps



3.3.1 Understand Developers



Developer decision-making unit

- Context ([Who](#))

Roles	Job titles	What will they do?	Content needs	Content deliverables
Initiators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developers (coders)• DevOps	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Begins the process by raising awareness internally, e.g., a developer who found your product via a Google search to an internal purchasing.2. Use and interact with your product.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Functionalities that answer specific needs• Customizations and customer-integration• Level and quality of technical support• Internal willingness to embrace	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quick start• Playground / Free trial• Code samples / Tutorials• Use cases / Blogs• Trainings / Best practices• Knowledge base / Forums• Community / Events• Newsletters / Weekly reports
Influencers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PoC / solution engineers• Customer support• Developer evangelists	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Try your product firsthand and provide input.2. Influence the overall decision though they do not have explicit decision-making authorities.		
Decision-makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CTOs• Architects• Tech leads• Product managers	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Evaluate the technical aspects, such as compatibility with existing resources and the fit with the company's technical strategy, security, reliability, and so on.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How it compares to other competitive choices in the market• Credibility & stability of the product & vendor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competitor comparisons• Success stories• Whitepapers• Release notes• Roadmaps
Budget holders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CXOs	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Evaluate the commercial aspects including pricing, business model, and ROI and gives approval to make the purchase.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overall ROI cases• Contractual terms & conditions• Reputations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pricing info• Terms of use• Usage policies• PR blogs

Developer mindset

Commonalities in characteristics

✓ Like facts not marketing

✓ Main motivator: I made it!

✓ Enjoy laziness



Developer mindset

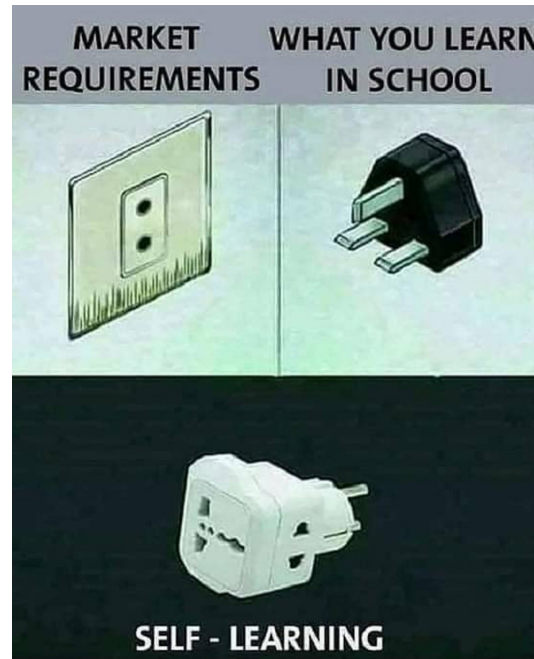
Commonalities in learning

- ✓ Refer to docs when they have problems

When you start coding in a new language without reading the documentation



- ✓ Self study with code samples



- ✓ Kinesthetic learners

Me trying to fix my problems



Developer archetype

- Who is reading your content?

	Systematic	Opportunistic	Pragmatic
Summary	<p>✔ Gather needed info and then coding.</p> <p>Get a deep understanding of technology and read docs before using APIs.</p>	<p>✔ Gather needed info in parallel to coding.</p> <p>Solve problems and more willing to experiment with APIs without consulting docs.</p>	<p>✔ Falls in-between systematic and opportunistic.</p> <p>Use docs alongside exploration.</p>
Learning habits	<p>1) Review concepts, architecture, and features to understand the system and follow proposed suggestions closely.</p> <p>2) Prepare dev environments.</p> <p>3) Start tasks.</p>	<p>1) Search info in a very coarse-grained manner. (e.g., search for a specific piece of info and scroll briefly through some docs).</p> <p>2) Check available solutions and tools.</p> <p>3) Start tasks.</p>	<p>1) Learn just enough to start a task.</p> <p>2) Refer to docs and other info resources to solve problems as they encounter them.</p>

Developer archetype

- **Systematic**

Summary

Get a deep understanding of technology and read docs before using APIs.

1. Gather needed info and then coding. Take some time to explore APIs and read docs and examples carefully.

- Review concepts and architecture docs to understand the system as a whole.
- Study the individual programming features to understand how pieces of the system work.
- Follow proposed process and suggestions closely.
- Form hypotheses about possible solutions, clarify terms they do not fully understand.
- Notice docs that are not directly relevant to current task, however, still read it as a way to learn APIs.

2. Prepare a dev environment.

3. Start a task.

Behavior



Developer archetype

- Opportunistic

Summary

Solve problems and more willing to experiment with APIs without consulting docs.

Behavior

1. Gather needed info in parallel to coding.

Search info in a very coarse-grained manner:

- Do not take time to get a general overview of product.
- Search the web to find answers rather than resorting to docs.
- Search for a specific piece of info and scroll briefly through some docs.
- Do a lot of searches while developing solutions and opening many browser tabs.

2. Check available solutions and tools.

3. Start a task.



Developer archetype

- Pragmatic

Summary	<p>Fall in-between systematic and opportunistic. Use docs alongside exploration.</p>
Behavior	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Learn just enough to start a task.2. Refer to docs and other info resources to solve problems as they encounter them.



Implications for content design (all types)

The screenshot shows the Starburst Documentation website header with navigation links: Get started, Starburst Galaxy, Starburst Enterprise, Ecosystems, and Resources. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main content area features a quiz titled "Which crew member best describes you?" with three options, each represented by an icon and a description:

- Data consumer**: You use data from Starburst with your BI and data science tools to create important business insights.
- Data engineer**: You provide the source data to data consumers using SEP, and ensure its quality, availability, and performance.
- Platform administrator**: You install and manage the clusters that serve the data, and ensure everything is performing well.

Design role-based learning paths

Implications for content design (all types)

The screenshot shows the Apache Pulsar documentation portal. A yellow rounded rectangle highlights the left-hand navigation menu, which lists various topics like 'About', 'Get Started', 'Concepts and Architecture', etc. A yellow box highlights the search bar at the top right, containing a search icon, a search input field with 'K', and a 'Download' button. A yellow box highlights the 'Choose your path....' button in the main content area. A black box at the bottom contains the text 'Provide a transparent navigation and a powerful search function'.

Version: 3.0.x

Get Started ▾ Docs Contribute Community ▾ Learn ▾

Q Search K Download

Version: 3.0.x

Welcome to the Apache Pulsar documentation portal

This portal holds a variety of topics, tutorials, guides, and reference material to help you work with Pulsar.

Choose your path....

Select one of the content blocks below to begin your Pulsar journey. If you ...

- Are new to Pulsar, start with **About Pulsar** to learn about features and concepts.
- Want to jump to the quickstart, select **Get Started**.
- Are an operator responsible for architecting and supporting Apache Pulsar, start with **Install, Deploy, Upgrade**.
- Are a developer who wants to master Apache Pulsar, select **Pulsar for Developers**.
- Want to try out Pulsar, select **How To** for access to the "hello world" tutorial.
- An experienced Pulsar coder looking for API, metrics, or configuration documentation, go to **Reference**.

[About Pulsar](#)

[Install, Deploy, Upgrade](#)

Was this helpful?

Choose your path....

Continuous Improvement

Help Improve These Documents

Join the Community!

Provide a transparent navigation and a powerful search function

The screenshot shows the Apache Kafka documentation page. It features a top navigation bar with 'GET STARTED', 'DOCS', 'POWERED BY', 'COMMUNITY', and 'APACHE' links, along with a 'DOWNLOAD KAFKA' button. The main content area is titled 'DOCUMENTATION' and 'Kafka 3.5 Documentation'. It lists 'Prior releases' with links to various versions (e.g., 0.7.X, 0.8.0, 0.8.1.X, 0.8.2.X, 0.9.0.X, 0.10.0.X, 0.10.1.X, 0.10.2.X, 0.11.0.X, 1.0.X, 1.1.X, 2.0.X, 2.1.X, 2.2.X, 2.3.X, 2.4.X, 2.5.X, 2.6.X, 2.7.X, 2.8.X, 3.0.X, 3.1.X, 3.2.X, 3.3.X, 3.4.X). Below this, there are sections for '1. GETTING STARTED' (with sub-sections 1.1 Introduction, 1.2 Use Cases, 1.3 Quick Start, 1.4 Ecosystem, 1.5 Upgrading) and '2. APIS' (with sub-sections 2.1 Producer API, 2.2 Consumer API, 2.3 Streams API, 2.4 Connect API, 2.5 Admin API). A section for '3. CONFIGURATION' is also visible with sub-sections 3.1 Broker Configs and 3.2 Topic Configs. A 'What is event streaming?' section is partially visible at the bottom.

GET STARTED DOCS POWERED BY COMMUNITY APACHE

DOWNLOAD KAFKA

DOCUMENTATION

Kafka 3.5 Documentation

Prior releases: [0.7.X](#), [0.8.0](#), [0.8.1.X](#), [0.8.2.X](#), [0.9.0.X](#), [0.10.0.X](#), [0.10.1.X](#), [0.10.2.X](#), [0.11.0.X](#), [1.0.X](#), [1.1.X](#), [2.0.X](#), [2.1.X](#), [2.2.X](#), [2.3.X](#), [2.4.X](#), [2.5.X](#), [2.6.X](#), [2.7.X](#), [2.8.X](#), [3.0.X](#), [3.1.X](#), [3.2.X](#), [3.3.X](#), [3.4.X](#).

1. GETTING STARTED

- [1.1 Introduction](#)
- [1.2 Use Cases](#)
- [1.3 Quick Start](#)
- [1.4 Ecosystem](#)
- [1.5 Upgrading](#)

2. APIS

- [2.1 Producer API](#)
- [2.2 Consumer API](#)
- [2.3 Streams API](#)
- [2.4 Connect API](#)
- [2.5 Admin API](#)

3. CONFIGURATION

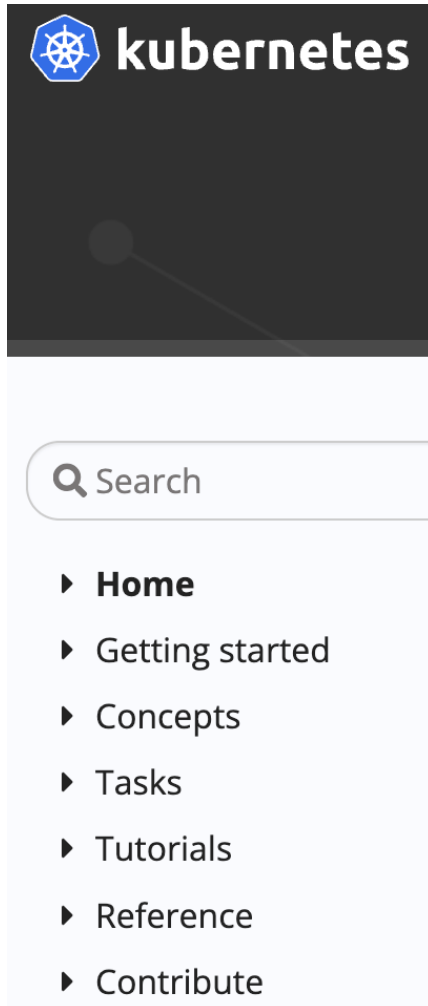
- [3.1 Broker Configs](#)
- [3.2 Topic Configs](#)

1.1 Introduction

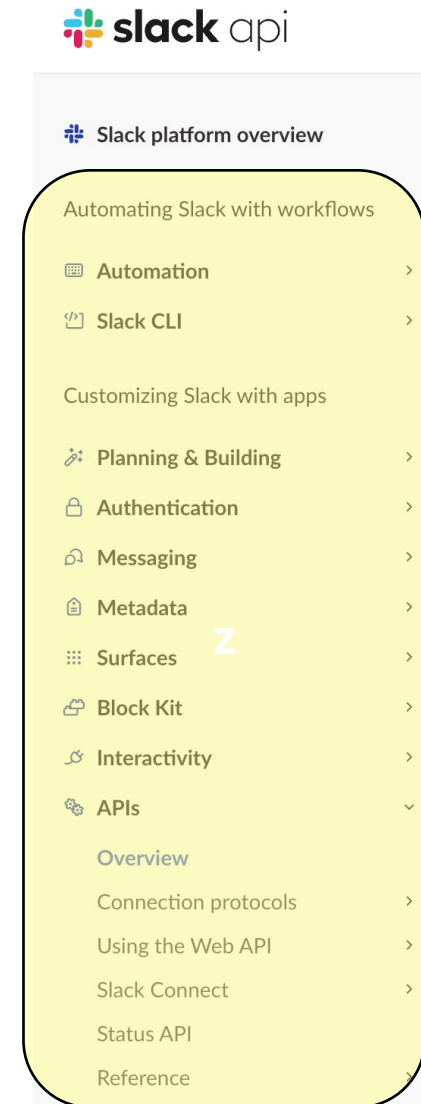
What is event streaming?

Event streaming is the digital equivalent of the human body's central nervous system. It is the technological foundation for the 'always-on' world where businesses are increasingly software-defined and automated, and where the user of software is more software.

Implications for content design (Systematic)



Organize the content according to API functionality or content domain rather than info type



Implications for content design (Opportunistic)

- Present code examples in small chunks
- Integrate critical pieces of conceptual info into the code examples or source code with comments explaining what the code is doing

Java

C++

C#

```
producer.newMessage()  
    .key("my-key") // Set the message key  
    .eventTime(System.currentTimeMillis()) // Set the event time  
    .sequenceId(1203) // Set the sequenceId for the deduplication purposes  
    .deliverAfter(1, TimeUnit.HOURS) // Delay message delivery for 1 hour  
    .property("my-key", "my-value") // Set the customized metadata  
    .property("my-other-key", "my-other-value")  
    .replicationClusters(  
        Lists.newArrayList("r1", "r2")) // Set the geo-replication clusters  
    .value("content")  
    .send();
```

Implications for content design (Opportunistic)

- Pulsar IO >
- Pulsar SQL >
- Tiered Storage >
- Transactions >
- Deployment >
- Administration >
- Observability >
- Security >
- Performance >
- Client Libraries >
- Admin API >
- Overview >
- Use cases >
- Features >
- Tools >
- Get started >
- Tutorial >
- Adaptors >
- Tutorials >

Input

List topics in `public/default` namespace.

```
bin/pulsar-admin topics list public/default
```

Related topics

- To understand basics, see [Pulsar admin API - Overview](#)
- To learn usage scenarios, see [Pulsar admin API - Use cases](#).
- To learn common administrative tasks, see [Pulsar admin API - Features](#).
- To perform administrative operations, see [Pulsar admin API - Tools](#).
- To check the detailed usage, see the references below.
 - [pulsar-admin CLI](#)
 - Pulsar admin APIs
 - [REST API](#)
 - [Java admin API](#)

- Provide important info redundantly
- Show domain-related background knowledge on-demand and integrate with the description of tasks and usage scenarios

Implications for content design (Opportunistic)

stripe DOCS [Create account](#) [Sign in](#)

Home [Payments](#) Finance automation Banking as a service Developer tools No-code All products APIs & SDKs Help

Overview ←

Architecture: [JavaScript SDK](#) [iOS SDK](#) [Android SDK](#) Frontend: [HTML](#) [React](#) [Next.js](#) Backend: [Ruby](#) [Node](#) [PHP](#) [Python](#) [Go](#) [.NET](#) [Java](#)

1 Set up the server

Install the Stripe Ruby library

Install the Stripe ruby gem and require it in your code. Alternatively, if you're starting from scratch and need a Gemfile, download the project files using the link in the code editor.

[Terminal](#) [Bundler](#) [GitHub](#)

```
Install the gem:  
$ gem install stripe
```

[Server](#)

Create a PaymentIntent

```
server.rb checkout.html checkout.js checkout.css  
1 require 'sinatra'  
2 require 'stripe'  
3 # This is a public sample test API key.  
4 # Don't submit any personally identifiable information in requests made with this key.  
5 # Sign in to see your own test API key embedded in code samples.  
6 Stripe.api_key = 'sk_test_wU7nrJCZspk1NPDxiQgAF05q'  
7  
8 set :static, true  
9 set :port, 4242  
10  
11 # Securely calculate the order amount  
12 def calculate_order_amount(_items)  
13   # Replace this constant with a calculation of the order's amount  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18
```

Signal text-to-code connections

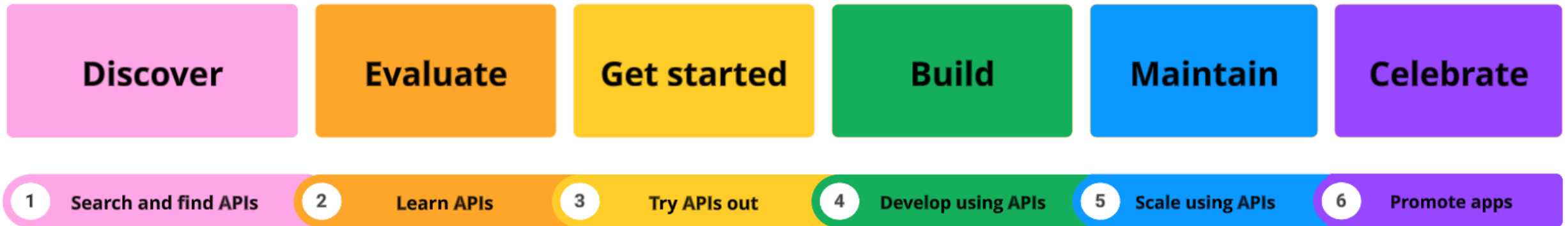
Use separate columns for code examples that are aligned to the columns containing the text blocks referring to the code examples, making it easier to jump to relevant code examples directly.

3.3.2 Map out Developer Journey



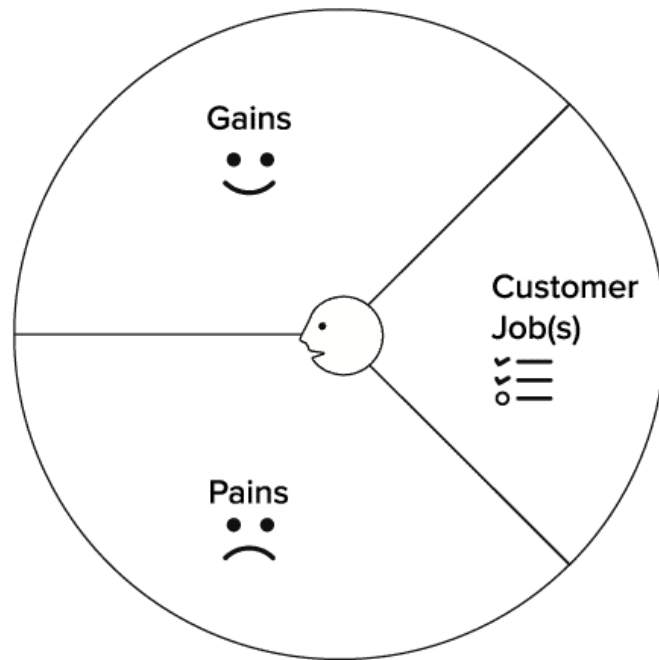
Map out developer journey

Process: how developers use APIs

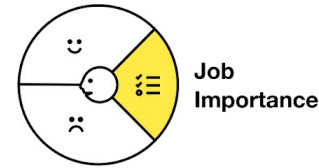


Analyze needs for each stage

Value Proposition Canvas



CUSTOMER PROFILE



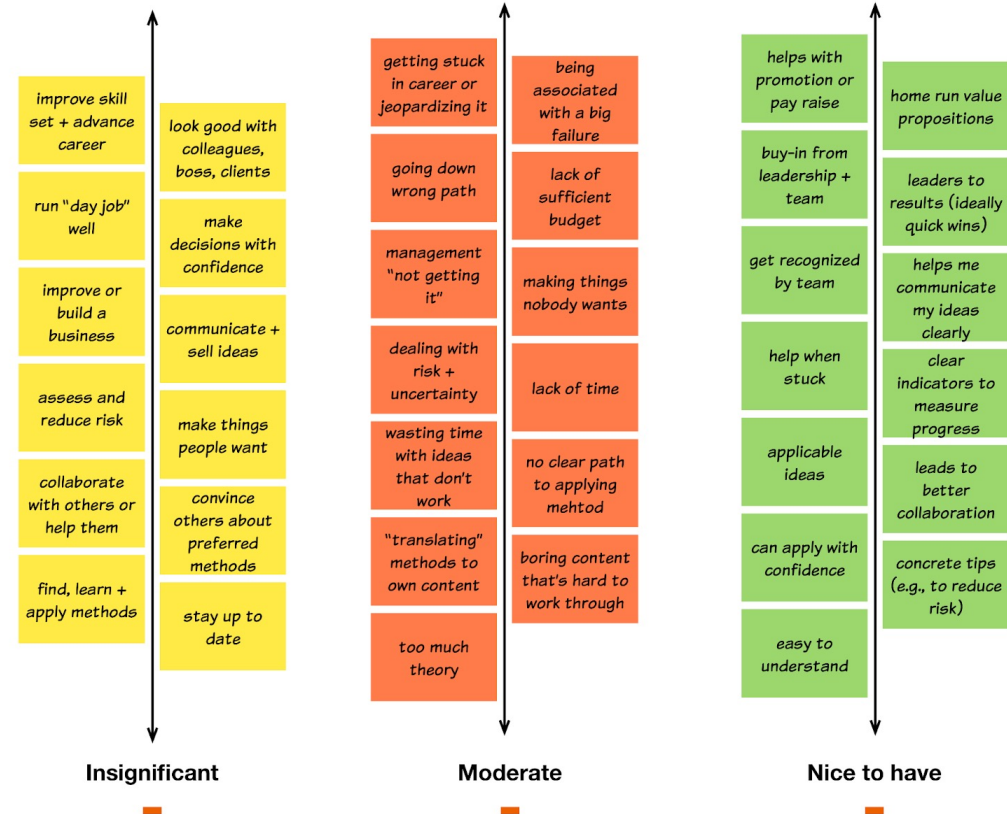
+
Important



+
Extreme



+
Essential



3.3.3 Create Content for Developer Journey



1. Discover

2. Evaluate

3. Get started

4. Build

5. Maintain

6. Celebrate

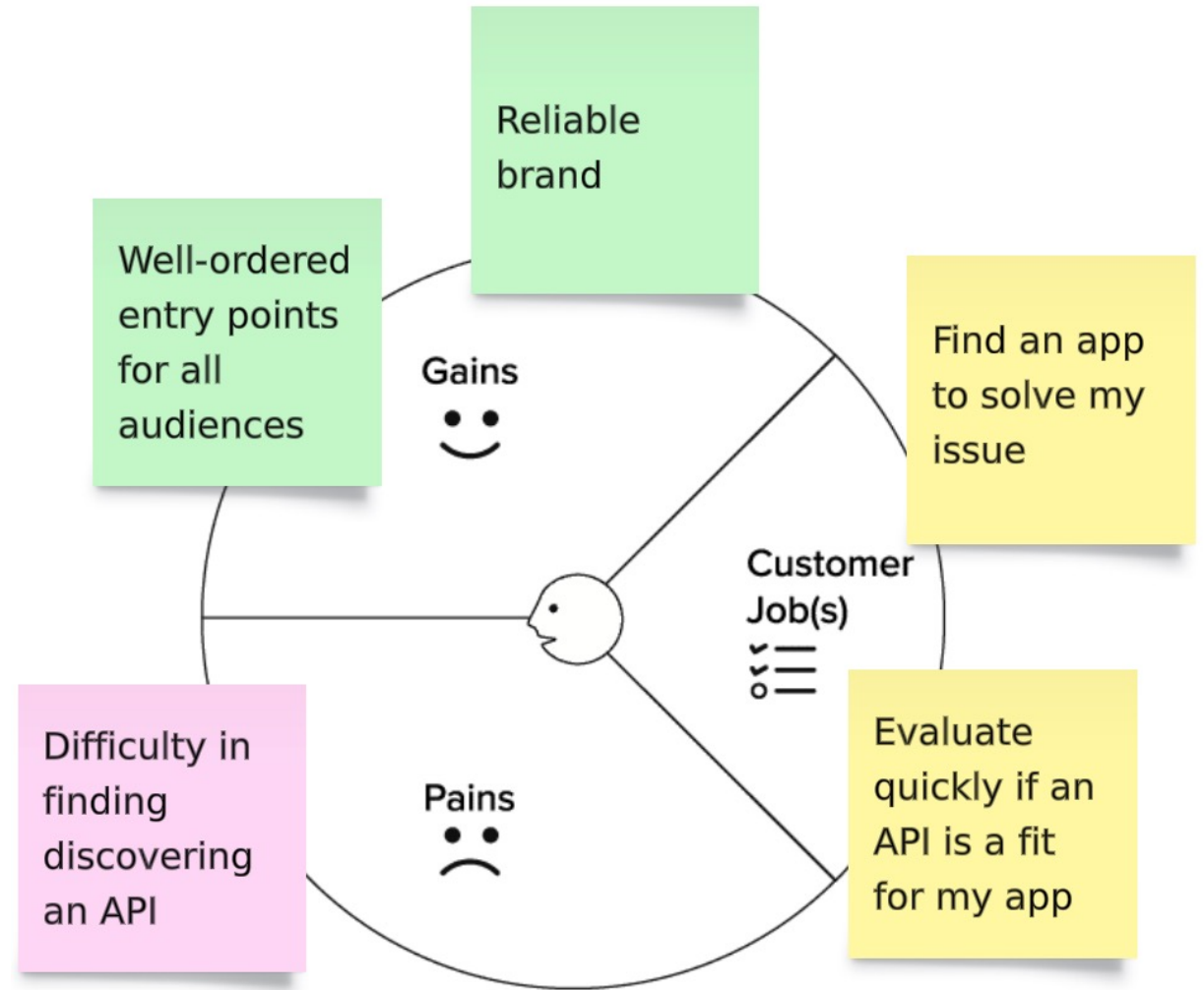
40



Discover + Evaluate

Developers' questions:

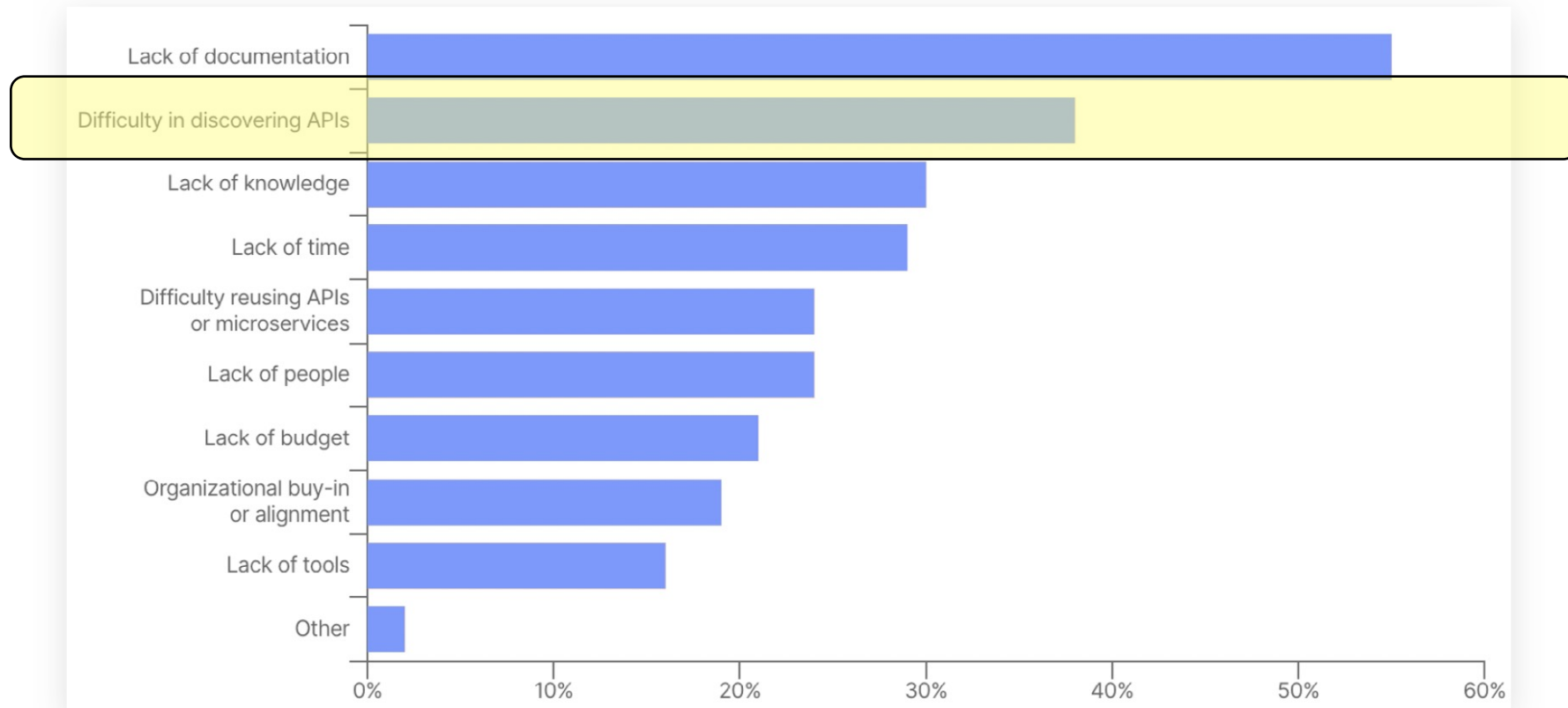
- How does this API solve my specific task?
- Can I trust it?
- Is pricing a barrier?



Discover + Evaluate

Issue

Obstacles to consuming APIs



Source: 2022 state of the API report

Discover + Evaluate

Landing page

A Modern, Trusted Payments API

Ensure the financial systems work for you. By choosing Dwolla as your payment solutions company, our payment API eliminates any roadblocks and gives your business the flexibility to innovate and accelerate your time to market with an account-to-account solution.

✔ Validated, continuously tested controls, including SOC 2 Type II and PCI DSS Level 1.

✔ Configurable to connect bank accounts, different fund flows and user types.

✔ Scalable to millions of users and thousands of payments at once.

✔ Developer-friendly with three easy endpoints and strong tools to enhance the experience for all parties involved.

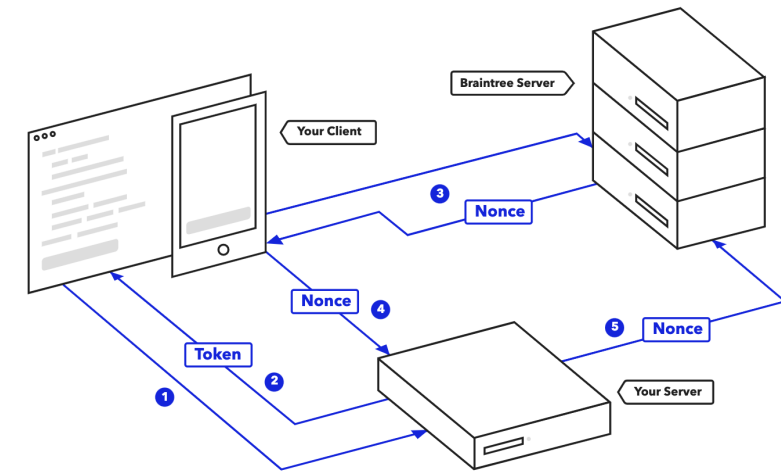
Test the API

• Product intro

Key features

- Lightweight SDK
- Authentication
- Always-in-sync Playback (via the Spotify main application)
- Offline support *
- Built-in networking, track relinking, and caching support

• Feature intro



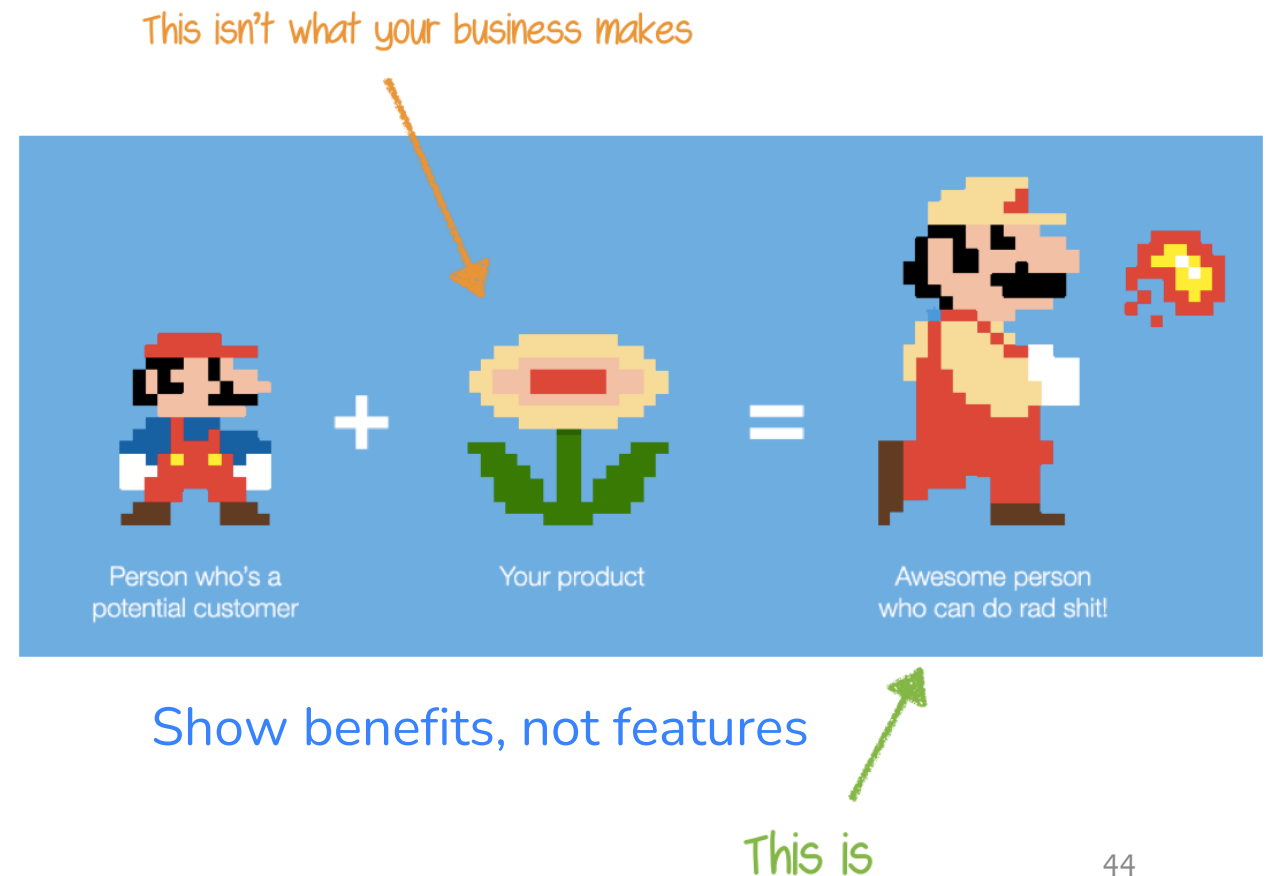
• Implementation intro

Discover + Evaluate

Q: Why do developers have difficulty in finding APIs?

A: Because your content does not contain the info that developers care most about, i.e., lack of **contexts**

- **What** developers' issues do this API fix?
- **Why** should developers use it?



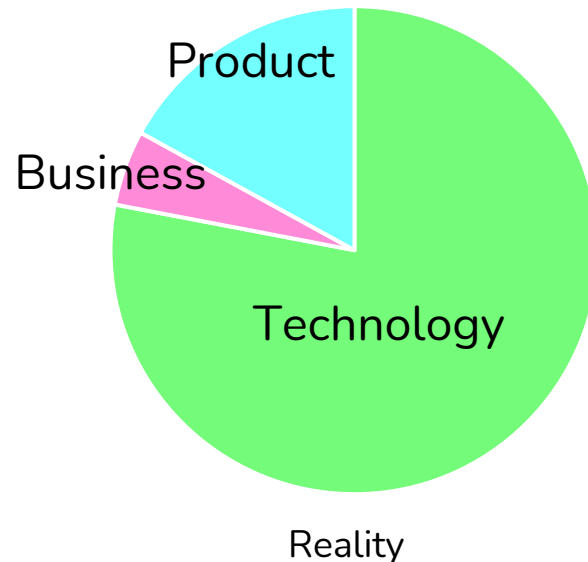
Discover + Evaluate

Content issues

- Focus most on the technical aspects (**How**)
- Not enough on the product's capabilities (**What, Why**)
- Business is always under-documented (**What, Why**)

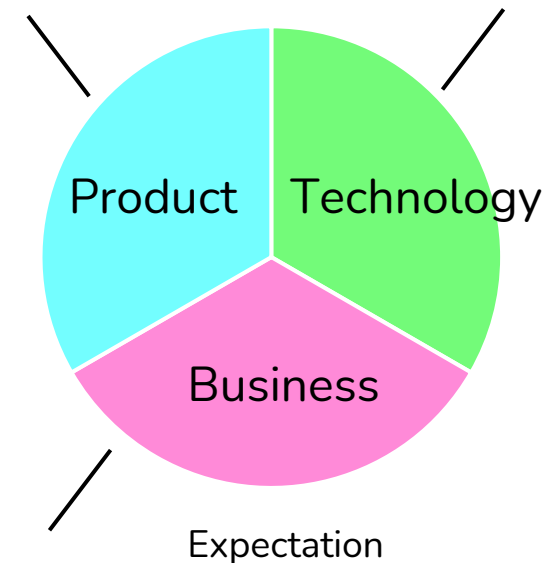


**Content solutions:
focus more on these**



How developers evaluate APIs before using them

- What does it offer?
- What capabilities?
- What use cases does it cater to?
- How to call an API?
- How to implement it?
- API specs and paras



- Business rules
- Pricing info
- Usage policy (SLA, security, legal, privacy, partner...)

Discover + Evaluate

Solution 1: developer messaging (Product "What")



It is different than messaging to consumers or businesses.

- Keep messaging developer-friendly.
 - ❑ Developers don't want to be marketed to.
 - ❑ Messaging needs to be practical and speak to developers' needs.
 - ❑ Developers want to understand very quickly if an API is for them.
- Messaging should help developers decipher questions.
 - ❑ What does API do?
 - ❑ Why should a developer use it?
 - ❑ What advantages does it have over competitive offers?
 - ❑ How does it make a developer's life easier or better?

An easier way to develop!

Ineffective in enticing developers because it fails to answer many questions and brings up more questions 🤔

- What type of development is easier?
- Define easier?
- What part of the development process is easier, all of it?
- Why is it easier?

Discover + Evaluate

Solution 1: developer messaging (Product "What")

💡 Best practice

- ✅ Refrain from using superlatives around benefits.
- ✅ Messaging: 80% features + 20% benefits.
- ✅ Use "you" rather than "we".

Developers don't care how good you say you are. They care about what you can do for them.

- "We are trustworthy", "We have the best API", "We deliver..." ❌
- "You will be able to do xxx with our xxx API" ✅

- ✅ Show your unique selling point (USP).

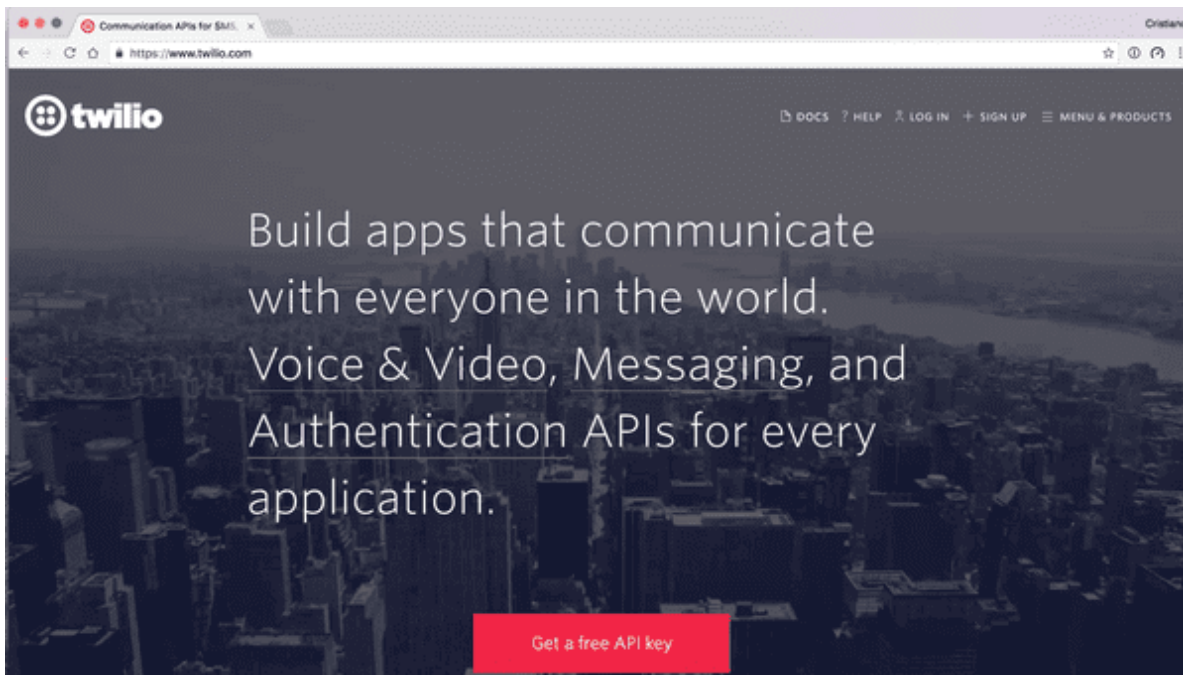
If product space is commoditized, try to differentiate on the **service** that is wrapped around your API.

e.g., great DX, comprehensive docs, timely technical support, or marquee customers.

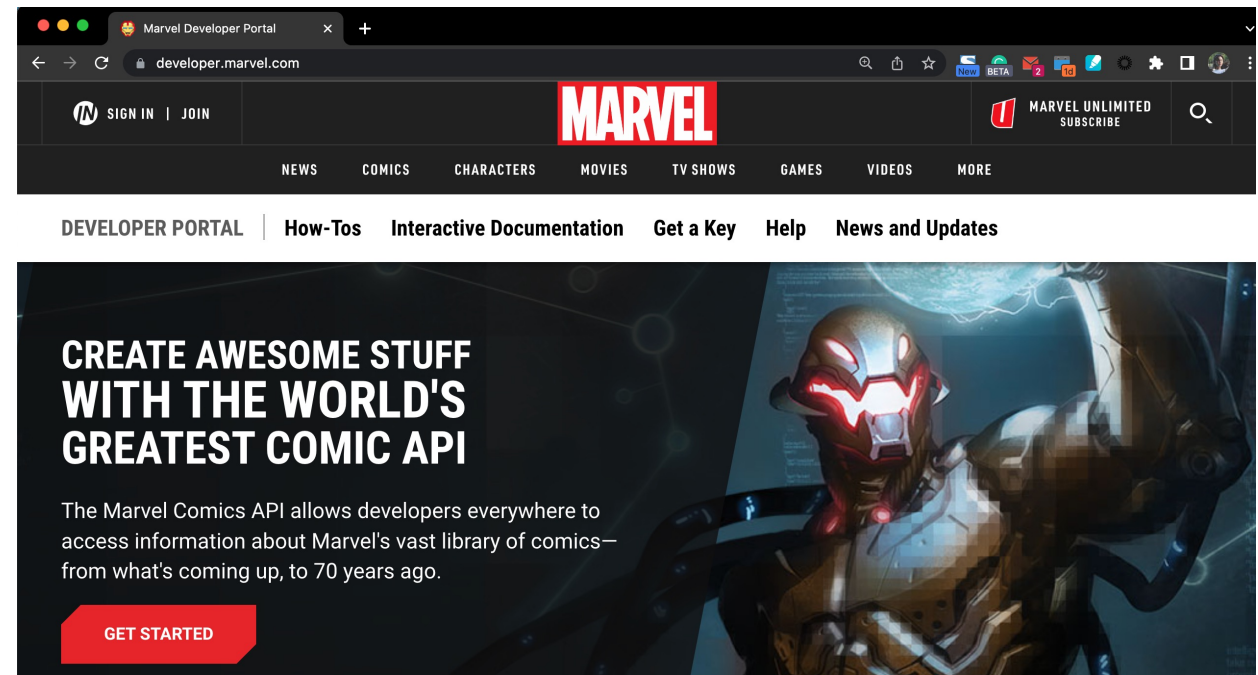


Discover + Evaluate

Example: developer messaging (**Product "What"**)



Twilio



Marvel

Discover + Evaluate

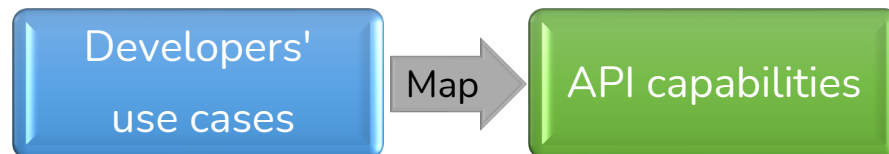
Solution 2: use case (Product "Why")

- ❑ Developers care about use cases, not the product itself.

Example

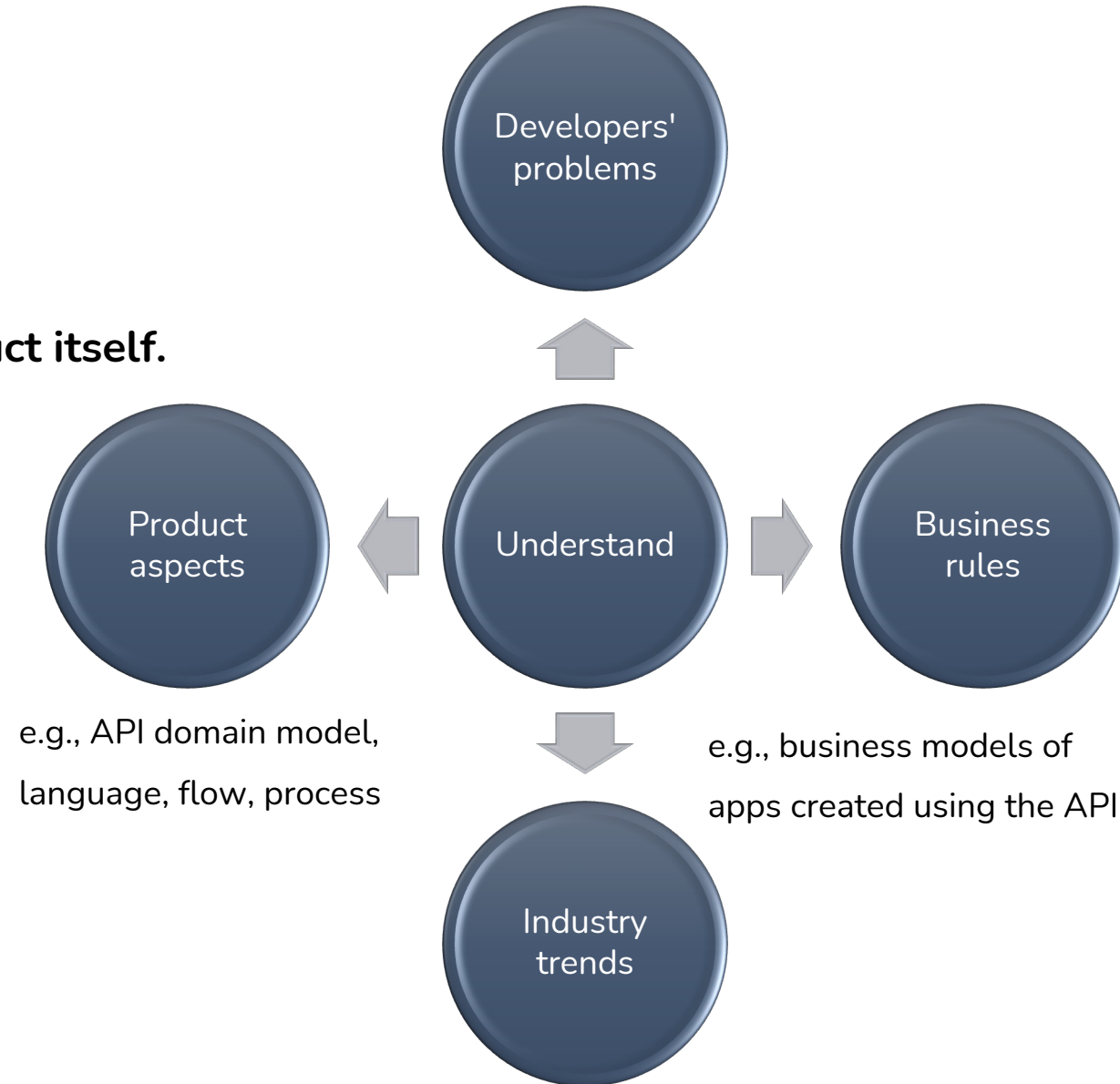
- Feature: Payment API
- Use case: collect money easily and securely

- ❑ Pre-analyze all for developers in advance.



- ❑ Benefits of use cases

- Show business value directly
- Unlock developers' productivity
- Extend developers' imaginations



Discover + Evaluate

Example: solutions + use cases (Product "Why")

The screenshot shows the Twilio website with a navigation bar at the top containing the Twilio logo and links for Products, Solutions, Developers, Services & Support, and Pricing. On the right side of the navigation bar are buttons for 'Contact sales' and 'Start for free'. The main content area is divided into three columns: 'By Use Case', 'By Industry', and 'By Business'. The 'By Use Case' column is highlighted with a yellow rounded rectangle and contains the following items:

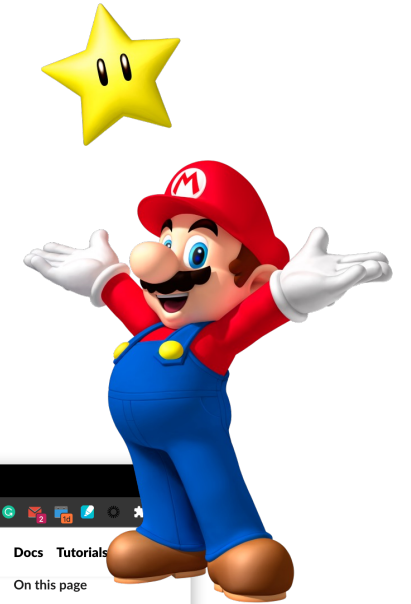
- Customer Engagement Platform**: Build durable customer relationships with personalized, data-driven engagement
- Marketing**: Keep customers engaged on any channel
SMS Marketing →
- Product & Engineering**: Connect with target users reliably and securely
Alerts & Notifications →
Identity & Verification →
- Customer Experience**: Deliver personalized customer experiences at scale
Contact Center →
IVR & Bots →

The 'By Industry' column lists: Financial Services, Healthcare, Hospitality, Public Sector, Real Estate, and Retail. The 'By Business' column lists: Enterprise, Startup, and Nonprofit. To the right of these columns is a 'Resources' section with links to 'Why Twilio', 'Customer Stories', 'Resource Center', 'Twilio Beta Center', and 'Trust Center'. The Twilio logo is also visible on the left side of the page.

Twilio

Discover + Evaluate

Example: use cases tutorials (Product "Why")



Slack

A screenshot of the Slack API homepage. The browser address bar shows 'api.slack.com'. The page features a search bar and navigation links for 'Docs', 'Tutorials', and 'Your apps'. A large section titled 'Be inspired' contains a grid of four tutorial cards: 'Announcement Bot', 'Give Kudos', 'Virtual Running Buddies', and 'Request Time Off'. Each card includes a brief description and a 'View tutorial' link. Two yellow circles are drawn on the page: one around the text 'for common use cases.' in the 'Be inspired' section, and another around the 'View tutorial' link for the 'Announcement Bot' card.

A screenshot of the Slack API 'Announcement Bot' tutorial page. The browser address bar shows 'api.slack.com/tutorials/tracks/announcement-bot'. The page has a left sidebar with a navigation menu and a main content area. The main content area is titled 'Announcement Bot' and is marked as 'Intermediate'. It includes a 'Tutorials' section with a list of sub-topics: 'Custom and built-in functions', 'Datastores', 'Workflows', 'Custom types', and 'Triggers'. Below this, there is a 'Before we begin' section with prerequisites. A 'Step 1' box titled 'First things first' is visible at the bottom of the page.

Discover + Evaluate

Summary

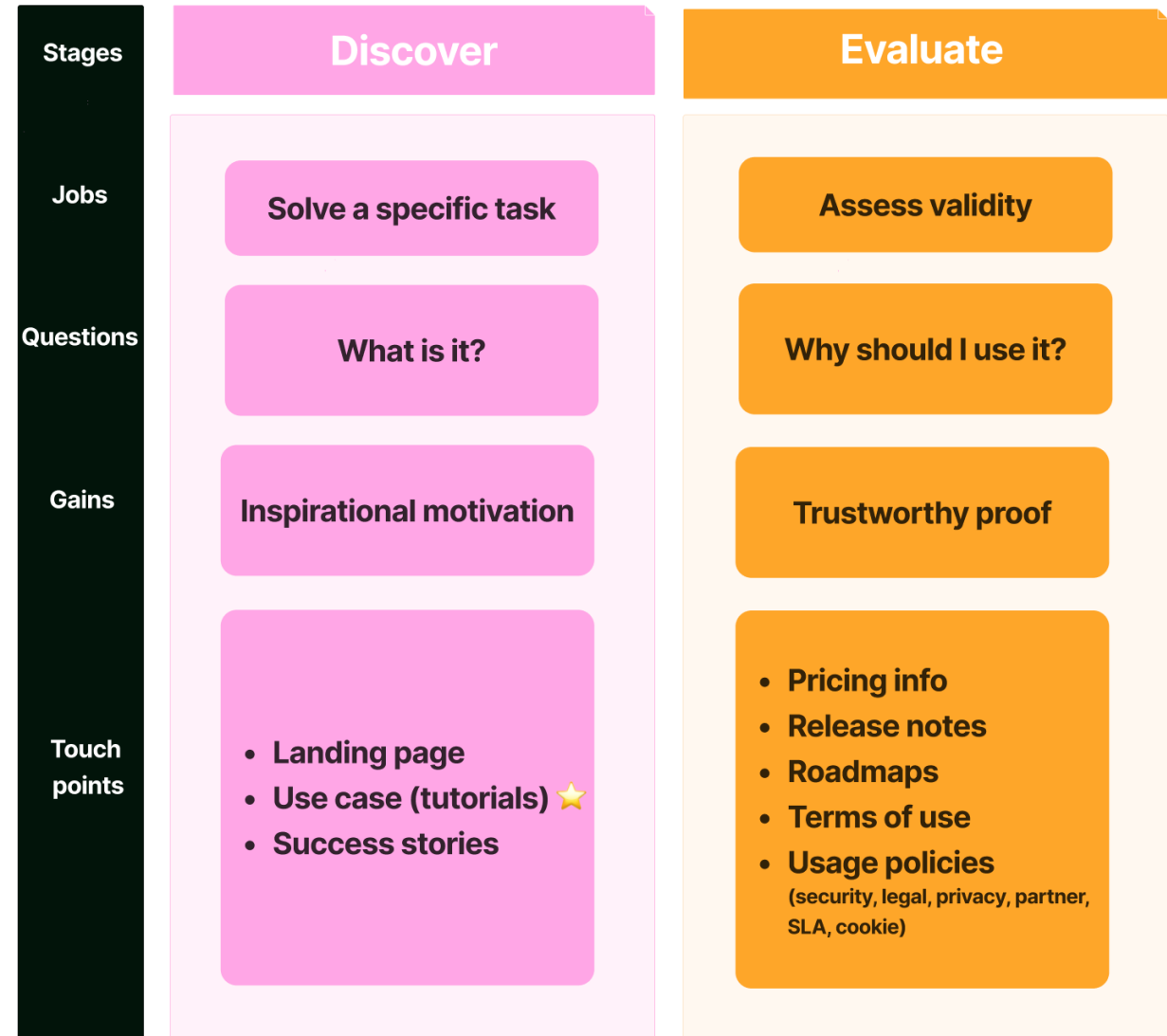
Best practice

Dos

- Ignite developers' imaginations to create and find commercial success.
- Focus on real-world problem-solving, not product promises.

Don'ts

- Outrageous marketing pitch.
- Exhaustive technical details.



1. Discover

2. Evaluate

3. Get started

4. Build

5. Maintain

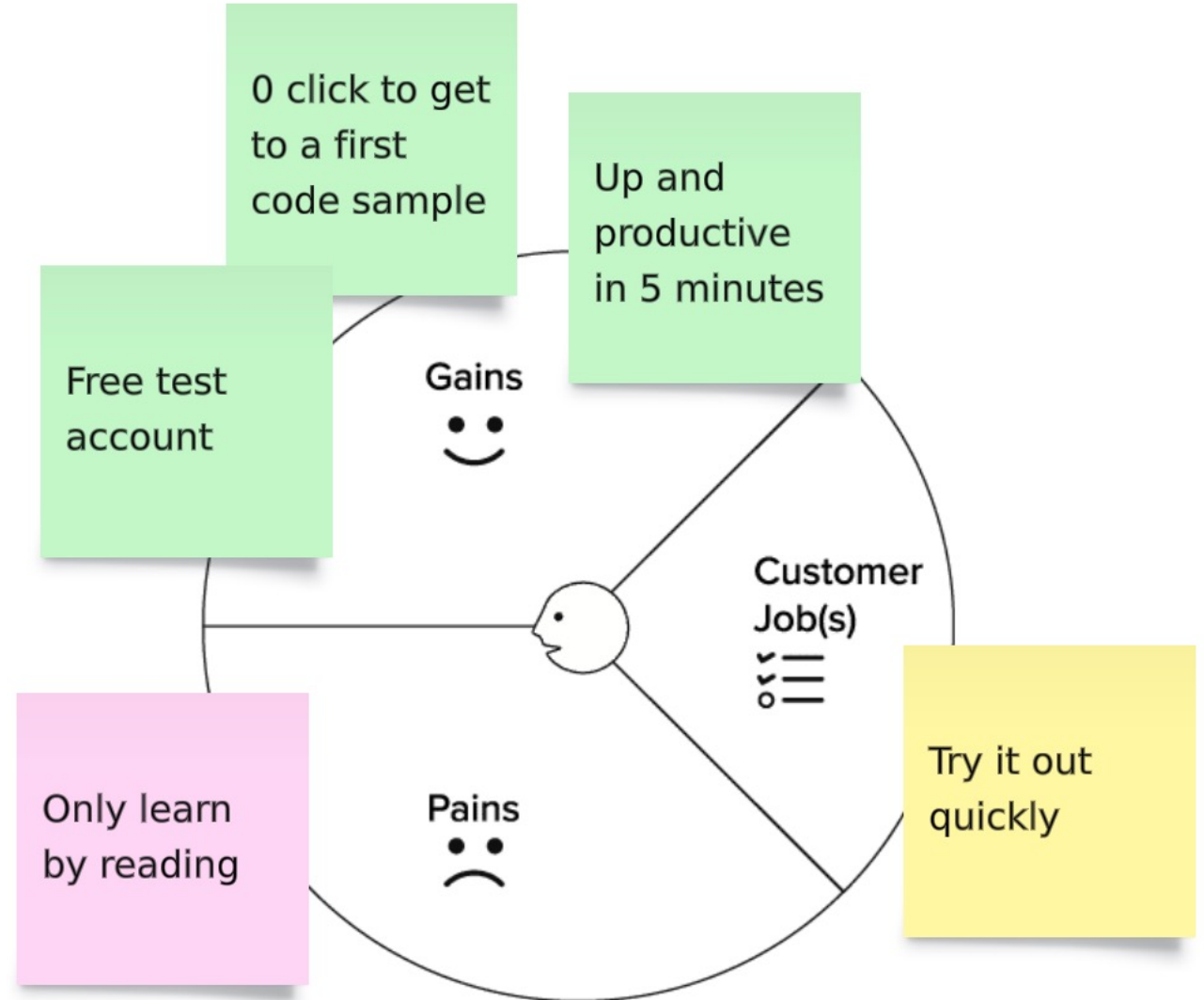
6. Celebrate



Get started

Developers' questions:

- Where do I start?
- Does it provide fast try-out and test options?
- Can I get "Hello World" in 3 minutes?



Get started

Issues

- Developers need to prepare test environments and materials
- Static learning
Struggle to keep concentration

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the GitHub REST API Quickstart page. The browser's address bar shows the URL `docs.github.com/en/rest/quickstart?apiVersion=2022-11-28`. The page header includes the GitHub Docs logo, a version selector for 'Free, Pro, & Team', and a search bar. The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with 'All products' and 'REST API' sections. Under 'REST API', there is a dropdown for 'API Version: 2022-11-28 (latest)'. The main content area is titled 'Quickstart for GitHub REST API' and includes a sub-header 'Learn how to get started with the GitHub REST API.' Below this, there are links for 'GitHub CLI', 'curl', and 'JavaScript'. The main text describes how to get started with the REST API using GitHub CLI, JavaScript, or curl. A section titled 'Getting started using GitHub CLI' includes a numbered list of steps: 1. Install GitHub CLI, 2. Use the `auth login` subcommand, and 3. Use the `api` subcommand. A code block shows the command `gh api repos/octocat/Spoon-Knife/issues`. The right sidebar contains a section 'In this article' with links to 'Getting started using GitHub CLI' and 'Next steps'.

Get started

Content solutions - design context "Where"

- Find developers' **flow** status
- Create an interactive learning environment

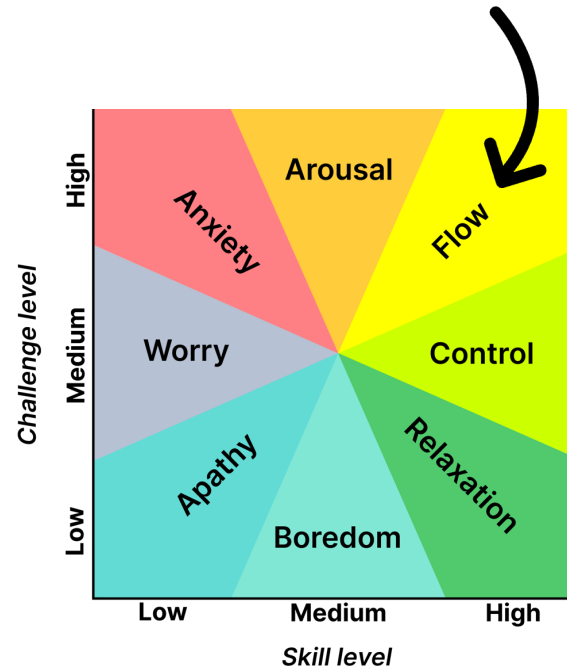
Flow trigger

- Challenge–skill balance
- Clear goals & immediate feedback
- Concentration focused on one thing only
- **Learn by doing**

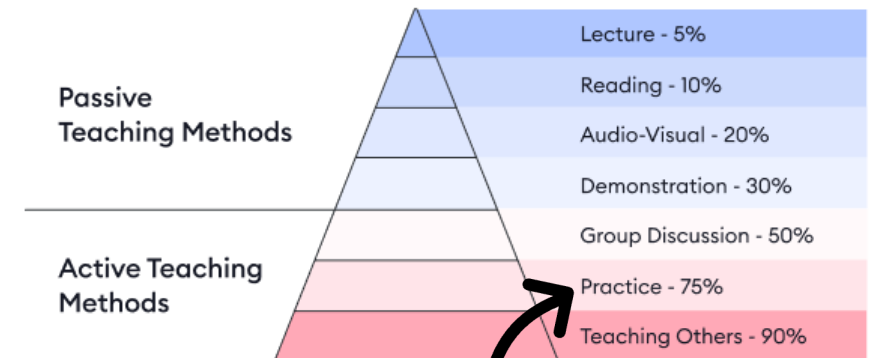
UX in games: satisfying



We like playing games because experiencing the **flow** of focus and stimuli creates a pleasant feeling.



The Learning Pyramid



Get started

Example

Stripe

1 Interactive learning environment with sandbox

Frictionless onboarding experience

The screenshot shows the Stripe documentation page for a "Custom payment flow". The page is organized into three main columns:

- Left Column:** A navigation menu with sections like "Overview", "Online payments", "After the payment", "Payment Links", "Financial Connections", "About the APIs", and "Implementation guides".
- Middle Column:** The main content area titled "Custom payment flow". It includes a "Prebuilt checkout page" and "Custom payment flow" selector, a "Download full app" button, and a "1 Set up the server" section. Under "1 Set up the server", there is a sub-section "Install the Stripe Java library" with instructions and a code block for a Maven dependency.
- Right Column:** A "Preview" section showing a live code editor for "Server.java". The code includes a method to calculate order amounts and a REST client to create a payment intent. A green callout box highlights a test API key: `Stripe.apiKey = "sk_test_wU7nrJCzspk1NPDxi0gAF05q";"`.

1 3-column layout

2 Live code editor

3 Multiple framework or language selectors

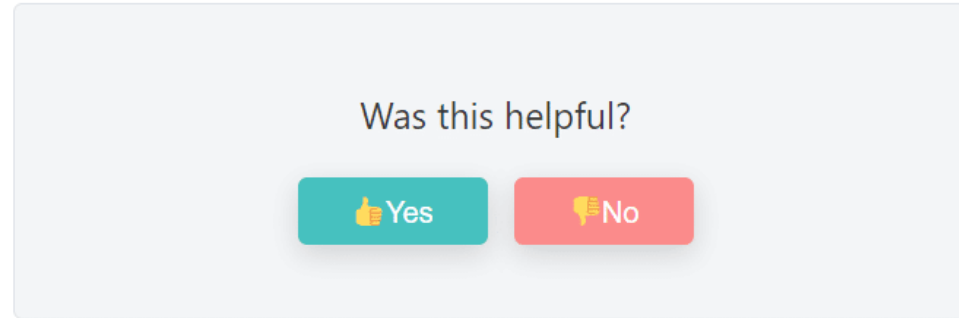
2 Progressive disclosure info with comprehensive contexts

2 Side-by-side code examples with color highlighted

Get started

Tip

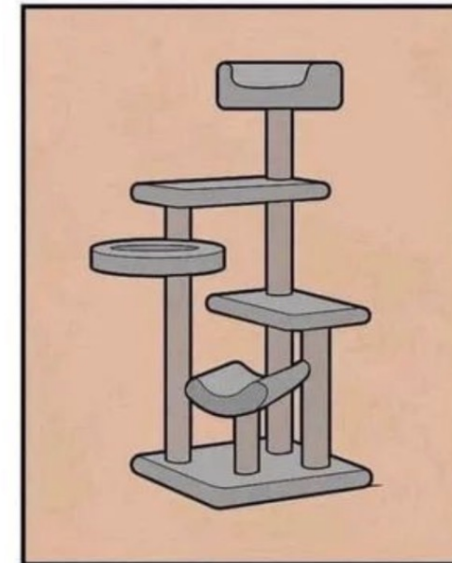
Many sites ask



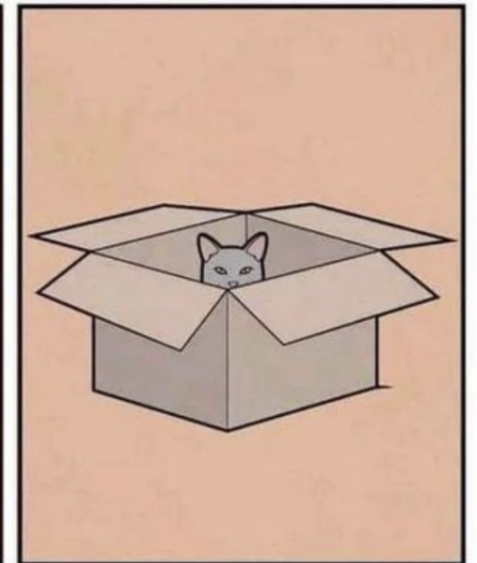
How about asking:

- "Are you considering this API?"
- "Are you starting creating an app using this API?"

Product features



User needs



Get started

Summary

Best practice

Dos

- Get developers to "Hello World" as soon as possible with minimum steps and effort.
- Provide a sandbox environment to "kick the tire".

Don'ts

- Lengthy onboarding process with paid test accounts.
- Steep learning curve.



1. Discover

2. Evaluate

3. Get started

4. Build

5. Maintain

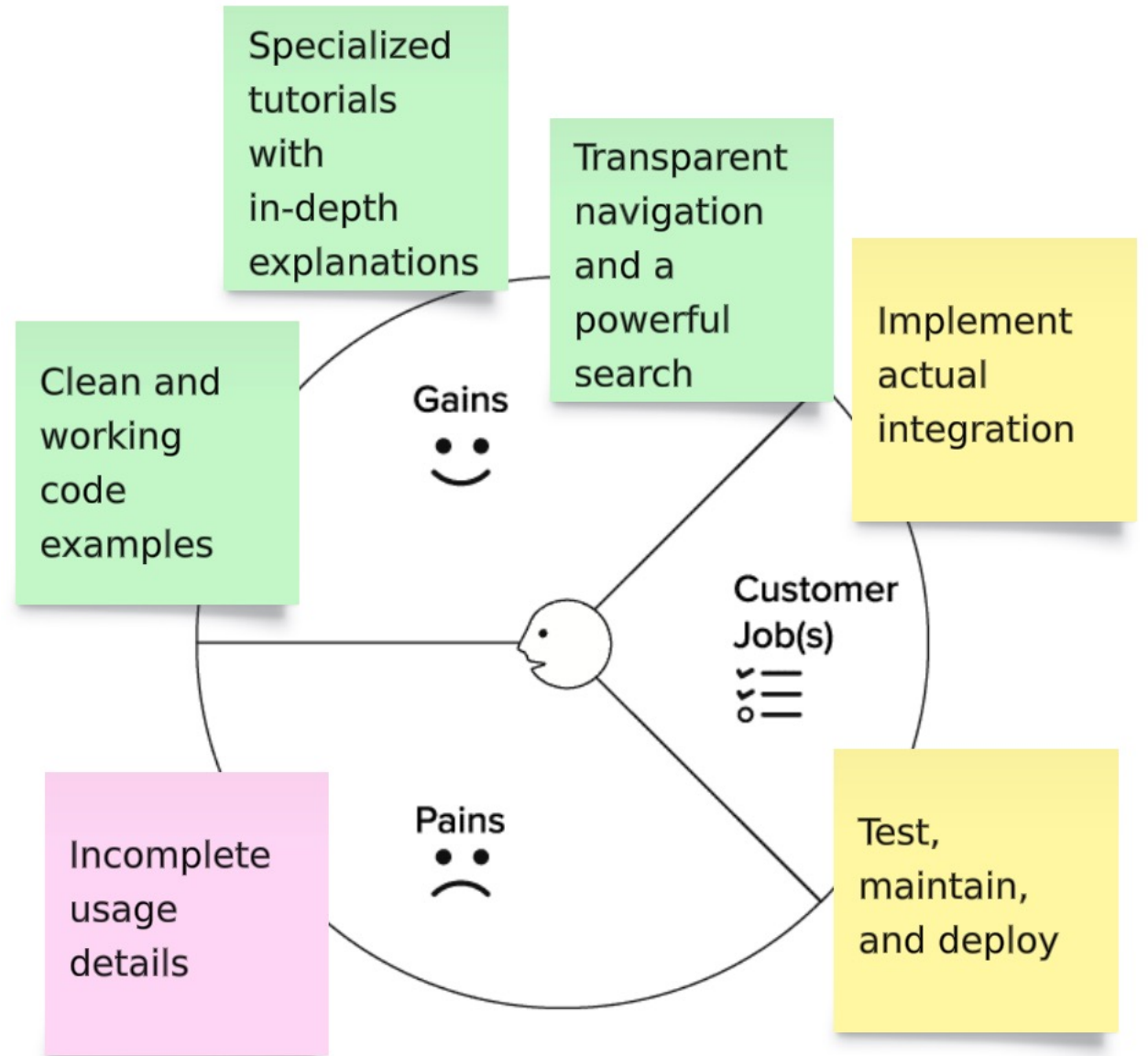
6. Celebrate



Build + Maintain

Developers' questions:

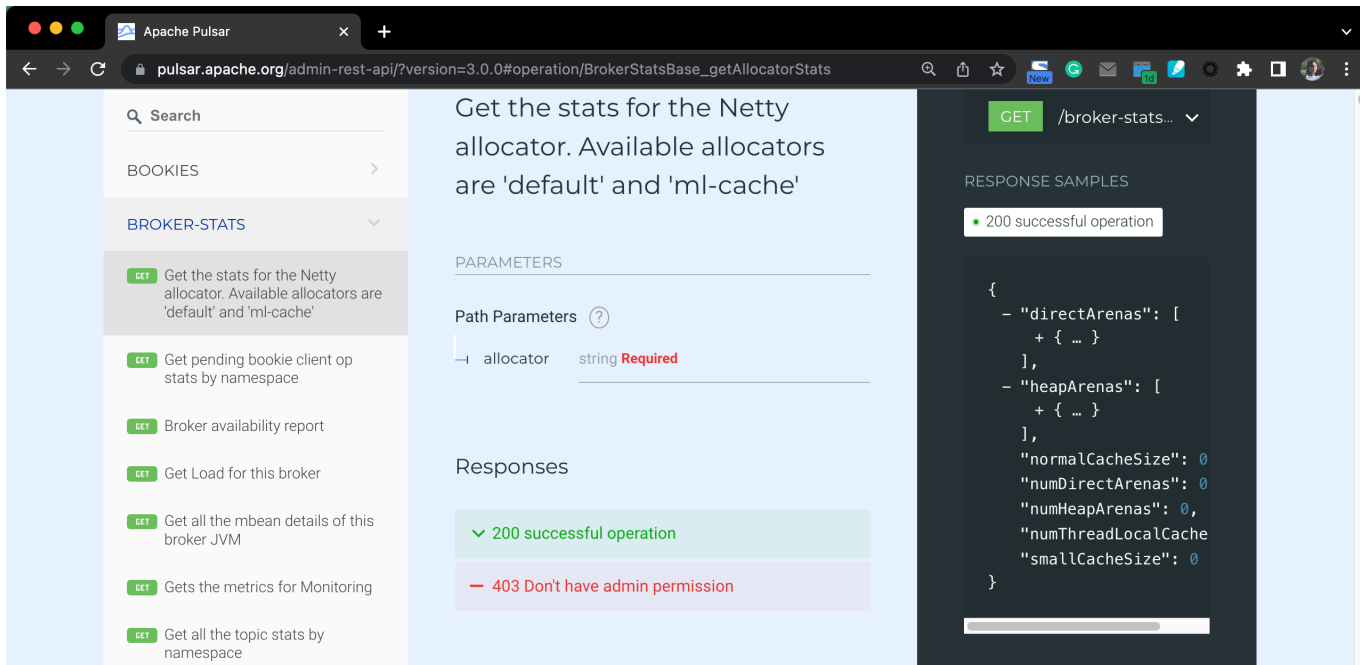
- How to do X with Y?
- Is it easy to keep running?
- Is the support reliable?



Build + Maintain

Content issues

Lack usage details ("What, When, How")



The screenshot shows the Apache Pulsar API reference page for the `GET /broker-stats` endpoint. The page is titled "Get the stats for the Netty allocator. Available allocators are 'default' and 'ml-cache'". It includes a search bar, a sidebar with navigation links, and a main content area with parameters, responses, and a code editor showing the response body.

Parameters:

- Path Parameters: allocator (string, Required)

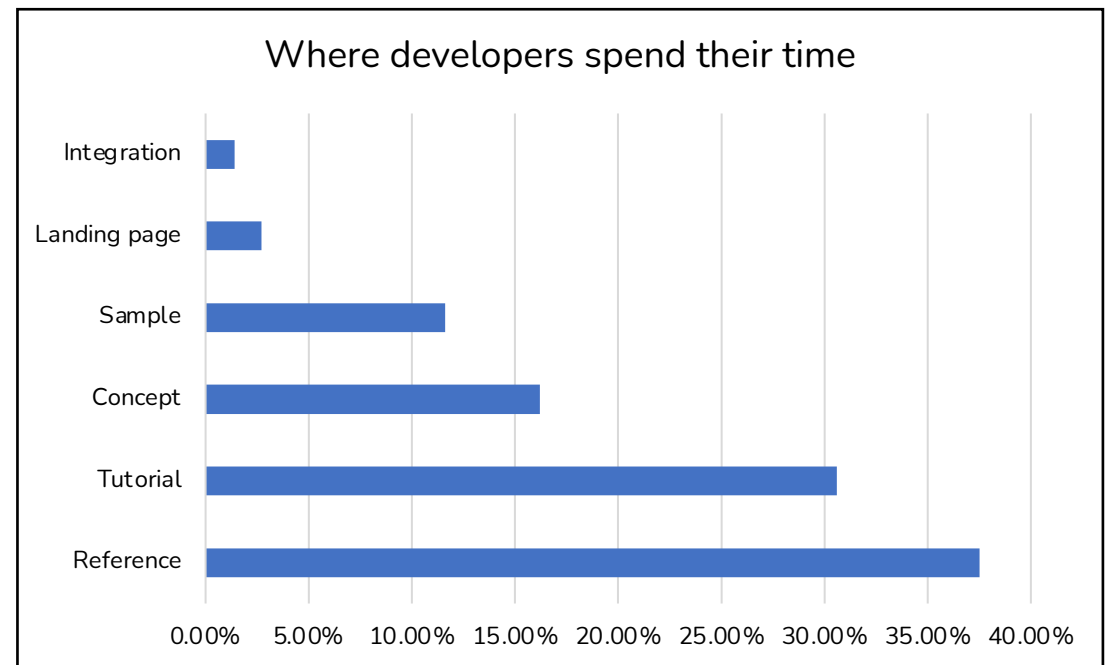
Responses:

- 200 successful operation
- 403 Don't have admin permission

```
RESPONSE SAMPLES
200 successful operation

{
  "directArenas": [
    + { ... }
  ],
  "heapArenas": [
    + { ... }
  ],
  "normalCacheSize": 0,
  "numDirectArenas": 0,
  "numHeapArenas": 0,
  "numThreadLocalCache": 0,
  "smallCacheSize": 0
}
```

Pulsar API Reference



Source: 2019 API observation study

Build + Maintain

Issues – lack context "What, When, How"

1 Lacks context "What"

What is it? Need to explain items that look "obvious".
Programming is nothing if not uncertainty.

PetStore API by spec.io

Search

Introduction

Demo API Example

Operations

Pets

- Add a new pet to the store
- Update an existing pet
- Finds Pets by status
- Finds Pets by tags
- Find pet by ID
- Updates a pet in the store with form data
- Deletes a pet
- uploads an image

Pet

Object

- id** Integer int64
- category Category
- name String Example: *doggie*
- photoUrls Array of String
- tags Array of Tag
- status String pet status in the store Enumeration:
 - available
 - pending
 - sold

2 Lacks following contexts:

- Why does the number need to be so large?
- Can it be zero or negative?
- Does it need to be unique? If yes, how do developers verify?
- Is it required or optional? If required, does it have a default value if is not specified? If yes, which value? If no, does it return an error? Which error code?

3 Lacks context "How"

No code examples

Build + Maintain

Solution: **thinking like a developer**

Understand what's important to developers, anticipate their questions, and add those contexts.

Example

Process of playing with an API call

1. Copy and paste sample codes. The immediate goal is a get a clean compile.



2. Start tweaking parameters trying to understand the nuances.



3. Look at the larger picture and make calls from it, or have it accept calls.

Not thinking like a translator



Build + Maintain

Example

1 Simple description
Concise "What"

4 Code examples
Clear "How"

2 Usage explanations
Detailed "When"

3 Complete clarifications
Rigorous "What"

The screenshot shows the Stripe API documentation for 'Create a PaymentIntent'. The page title is 'Create a PaymentIntent' and it includes a search bar, a sidebar with navigation links, and a main content area with a description, parameters, and code examples. Callouts highlight specific parts of the page:

- Callout 1:** Points to the main description: 'Creates a PaymentIntent object.' and the paragraph: 'After the PaymentIntent is created, attach a payment method and confirm to continue the payment. You can read more about the different payment flows available via the Payment Intents API here.'
- Callout 2:** Points to the 'Usage explanations' section, which includes the paragraph: 'When confirm=true is used during creation, it is equivalent to creating and confirming the PaymentIntent in the same call. You may use any parameters available in the confirm API when confirm=true is supplied.'
- Callout 3:** Points to the 'Parameters' section, specifically the 'amount' parameter: 'Amount intended to be collected by this PaymentIntent. A positive integer representing how much to charge in the smallest currency unit (e.g., 100 cents to charge \$1.00 or 100 to charge ¥100, a zero-decimal currency). The minimum amount is \$0.50 US or equivalent in charge currency. The amount value supports up to eight digits (e.g., a value of 99999999 for a USD charge of \$999,999.99).'
- Callout 4:** Points to the 'Code examples' section, which shows a Ruby code snippet for creating a PaymentIntent and the corresponding JSON response.

Build + Maintain

Summary

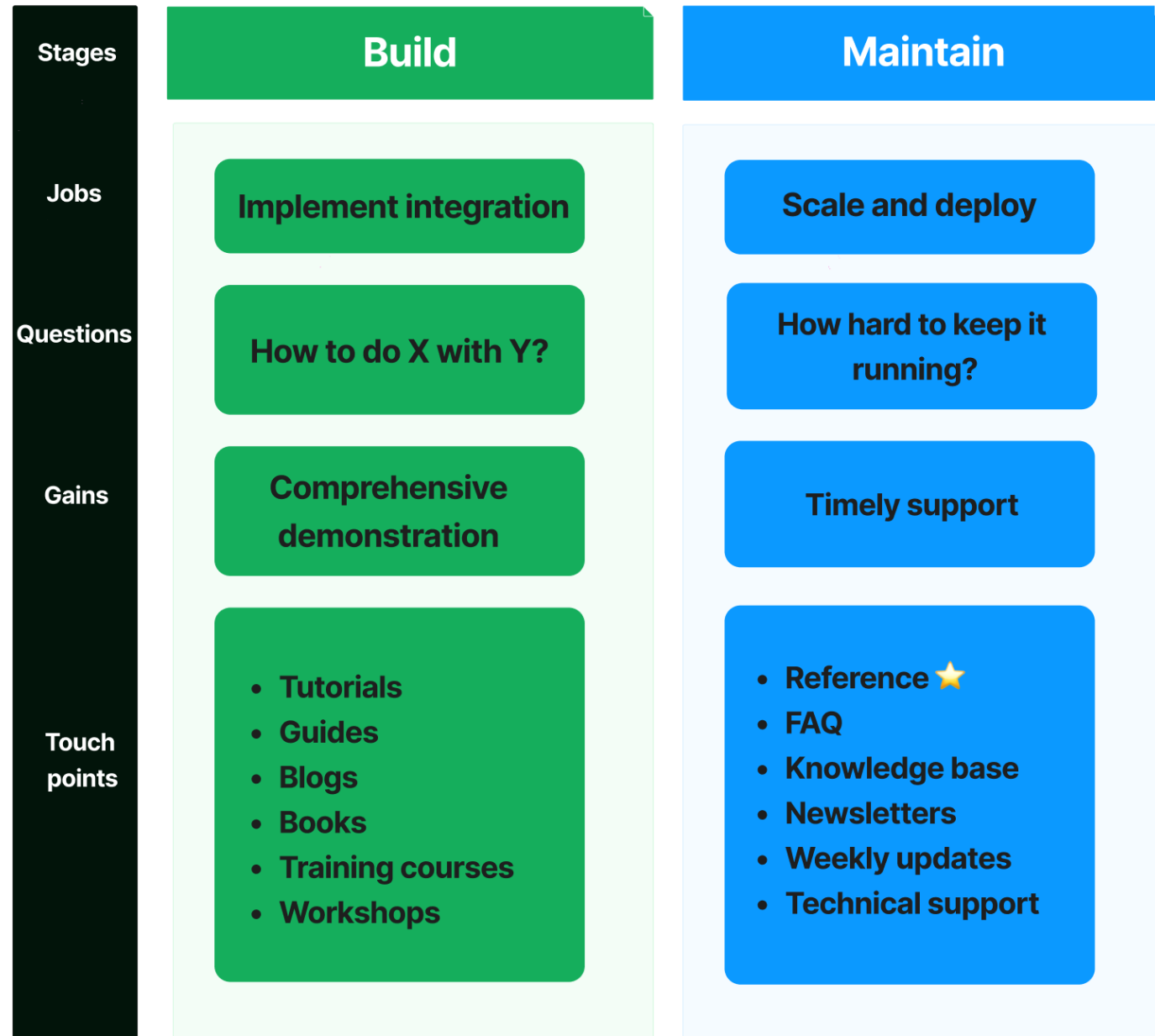
Best practice

Dos

- Provide specialized references, tutorials, and guides with comprehensive contexts and in-depth explanations.

Don'ts

- Incomplete and inaccurate content.



1. Discover

2. Evaluate

3. Get started

4. Build

5. Maintain

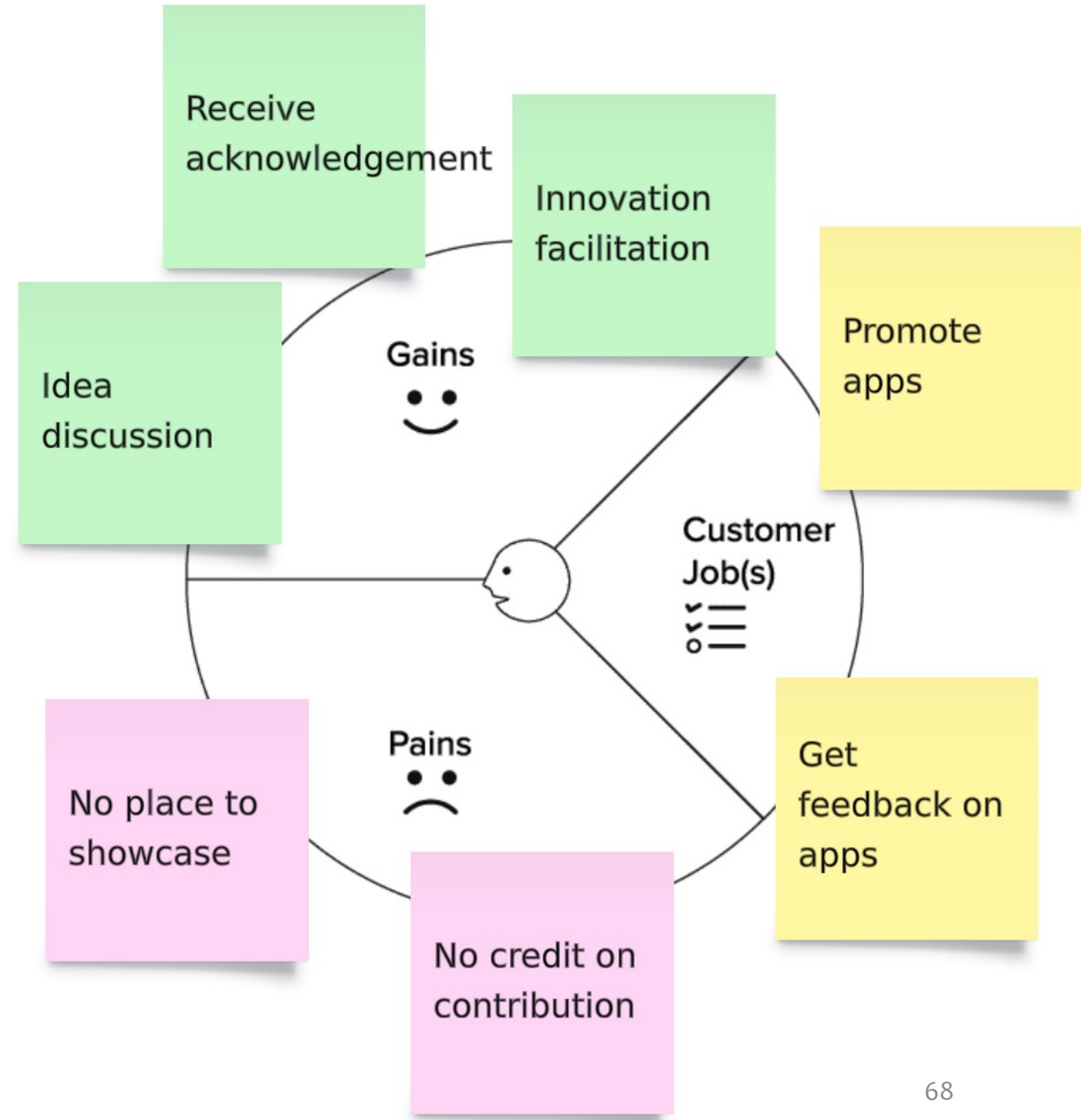
6. Celebrate



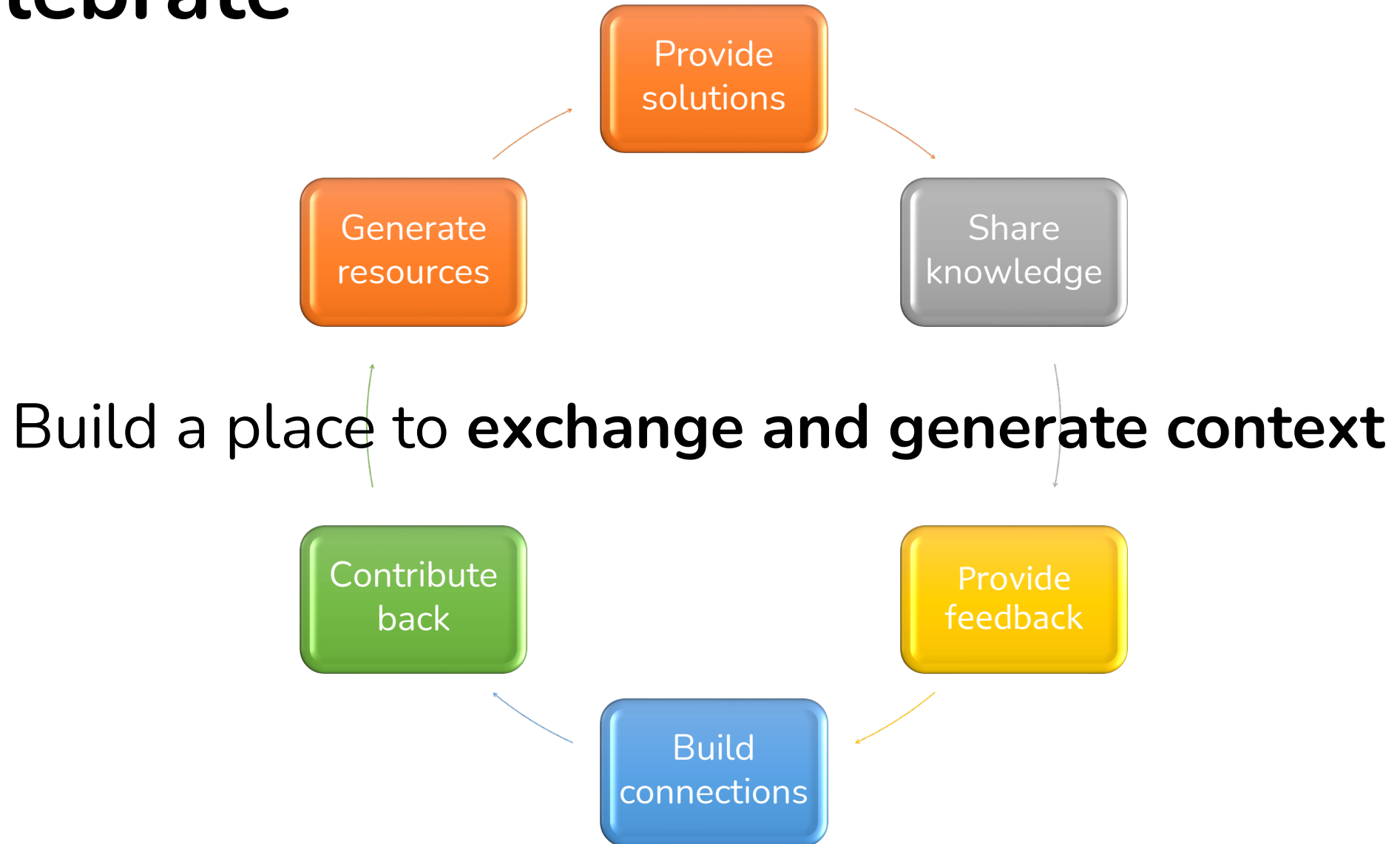
Celebrate

Developers' questions:

- How to promote it?
- Does anyone care about my work?
- How can I get effective feedback?



Celebrate



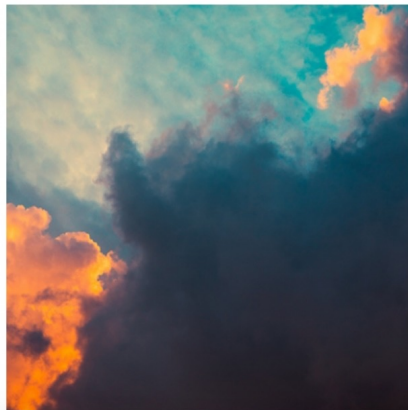
Celebrate

Example

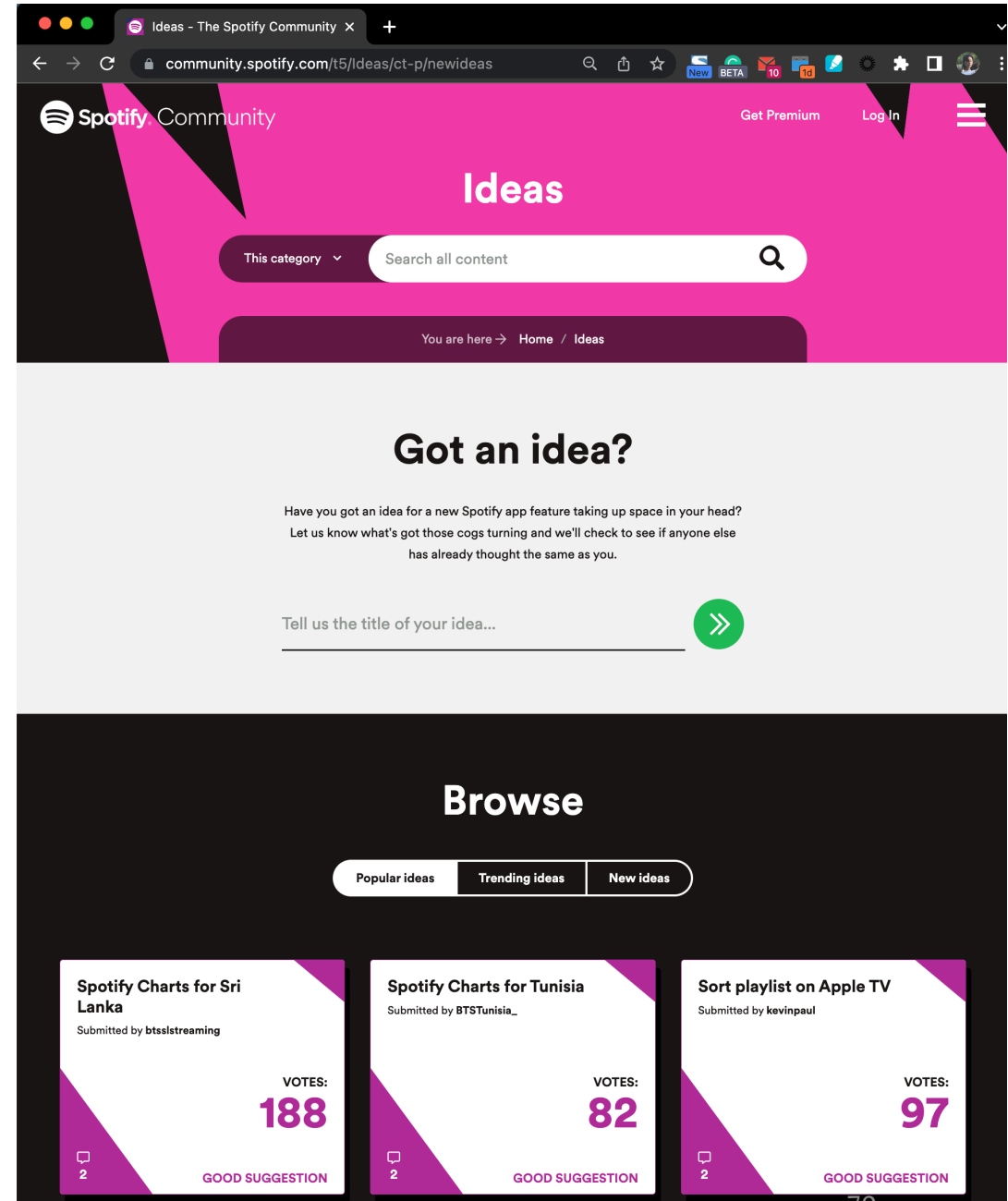
Developer Showcase

Looking for inspiration? Take a look at these outstanding apps, all built using our APIs, SDKs and other developer tools.

SUBMIT YOUR APP



Spotify developer community



Celebrate

Summary

Best practice

Dos

- Provide a centralized place to build connections between developers and encourage them to exchange info and contexts.

Don'ts

- No place to showcase.
- No credit on contributions.

Stages

Celebrate

Jobs

Promote apps

Questions

Does anyone care about my work?

Gains

Respectful recognition

Touch points

- **Community**
- **Forum**
- **3rd party resources** (SO, GitHub)
- **Social media** (Hacker News, DZone, InfoQ)
- **Conferences**
- **Hackathons**

Developer Learning Journey

Summary

★ means MVD (minimum viable deliverables)

Stages	Discover	Evaluate	Get Started	Build	Maintain	Celebrate
Jobs	Solve a specific task	Assess validity	Try out quickly	Implement integration	Scale and deploy	Promote apps
Questions	What is it?	Why should I use it?	Where do I begin?	How to do X with Y?	How hard to keep it running?	Does anyone care about my work?
Gains	Inspirational motivation	Trustworthy proof	Strong confidence	Comprehensive demonstration	Timely support	Respectful recognition
Touch points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landing page Use case (tutorials) ★ Success stories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pricing info Release notes Roadmaps Terms of use Usage policies (security, legal, privacy, partner, SLA, cookie) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quick start ★ Playground Code samples Demo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tutorials Guides Blogs Books Training courses Workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reference ★ FAQ Knowledge base Newsletters Weekly updates Technical support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Forum 3rd party resources (SO, GitHub) Social media (Hacker News, DZone, InfoQ) Conferences Hackathons

Content strategy comparison

Design content for developers (OS vs. Commercial)

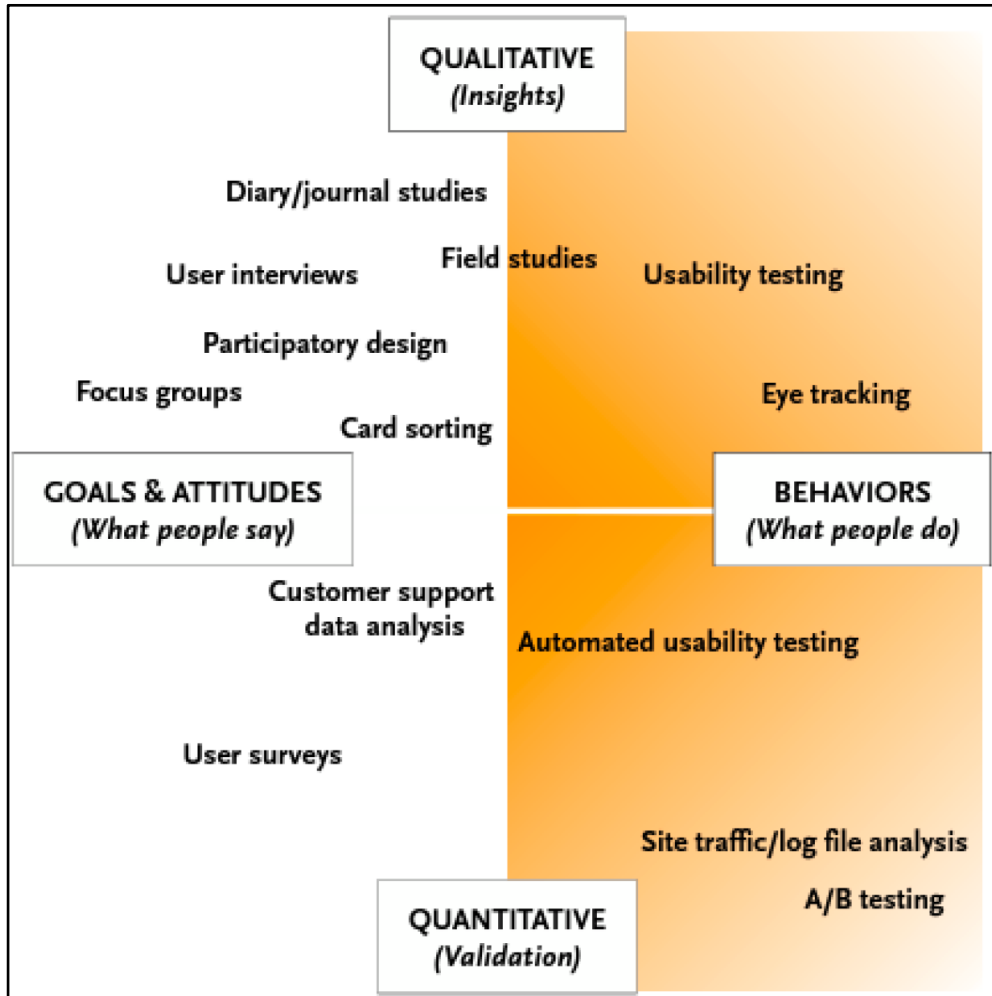
Content strategy	OS projects	Commercial products
Target user	Entry level <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic• Intermediate	Advanced level
Content goal	Address access path for different skill levels	Address learning/knowledge gaps
Content positioning	Comprehensive references	Up-level skills
Content focus	Basics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Core fundamentals• How-to guides• References	Value-add content with detailed contexts (5W2H) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use case tutorials• Case studies• Code examples• Deep dive blogs• Specialized trainings• Video courses
Content quality	Good enough	Production quality

4. How to Evaluate DX?

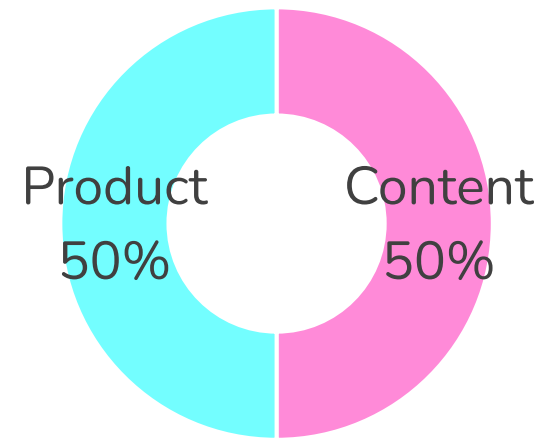


Evaluate DX

UX Research Method Landscape



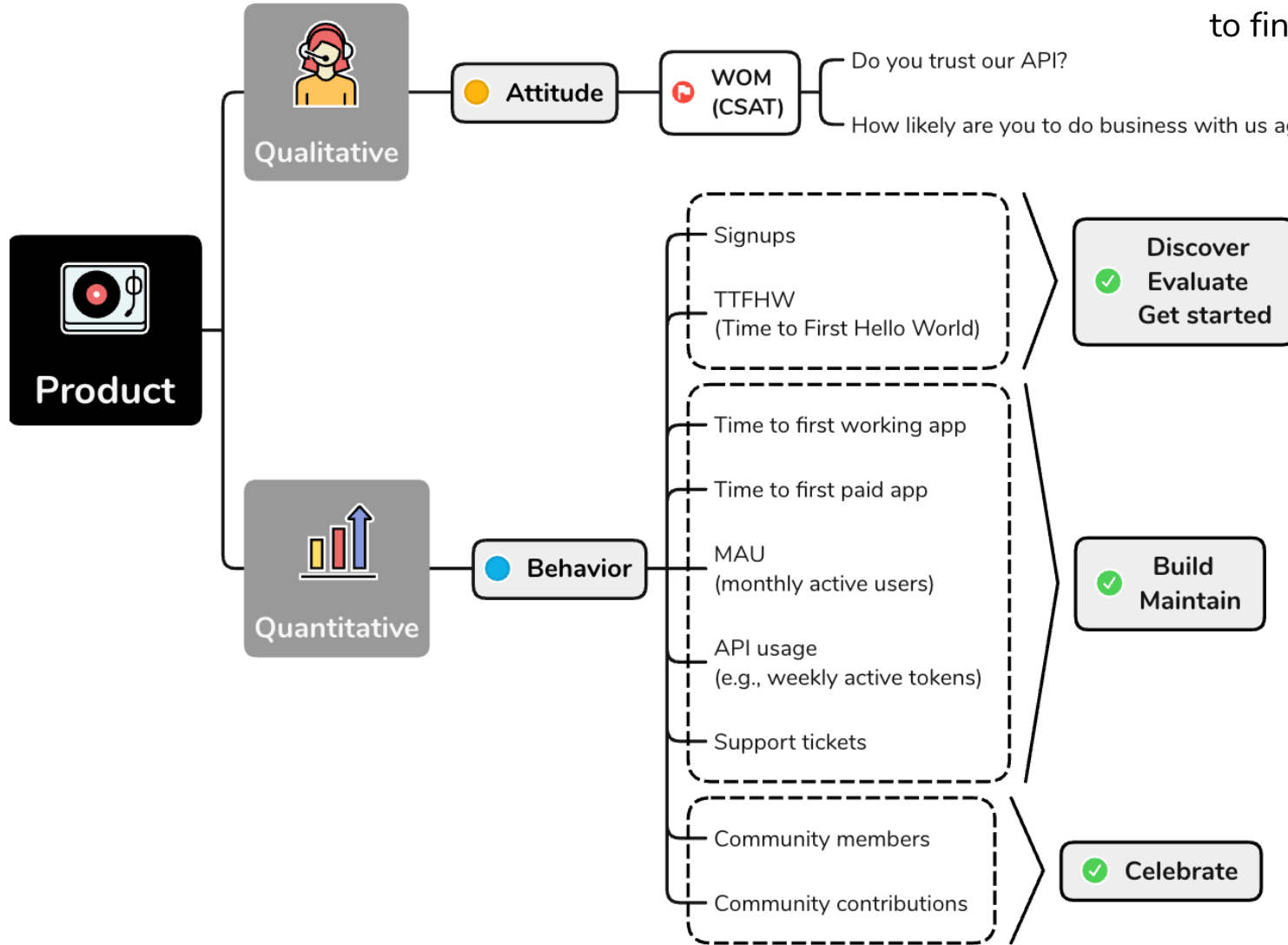
Evaluate both sides



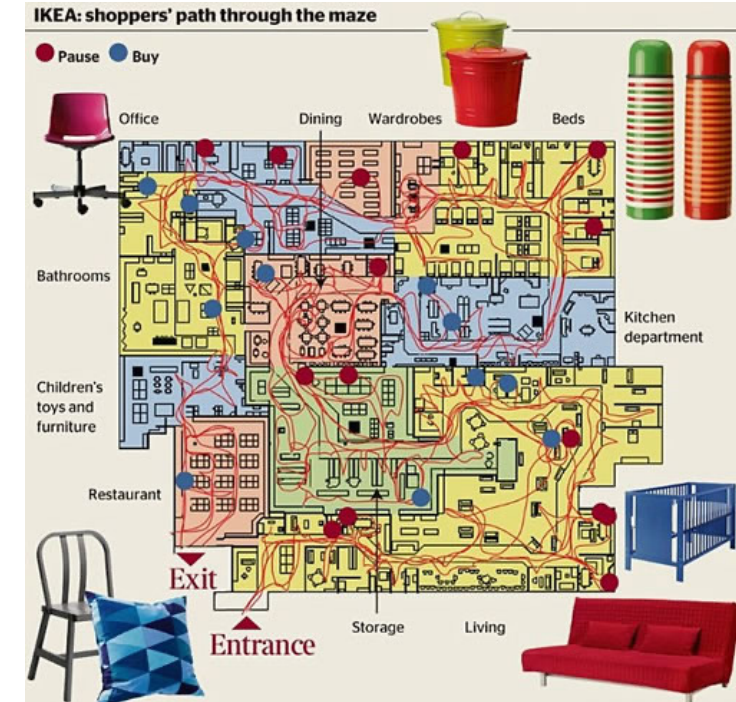
Shared OKRs with both teams



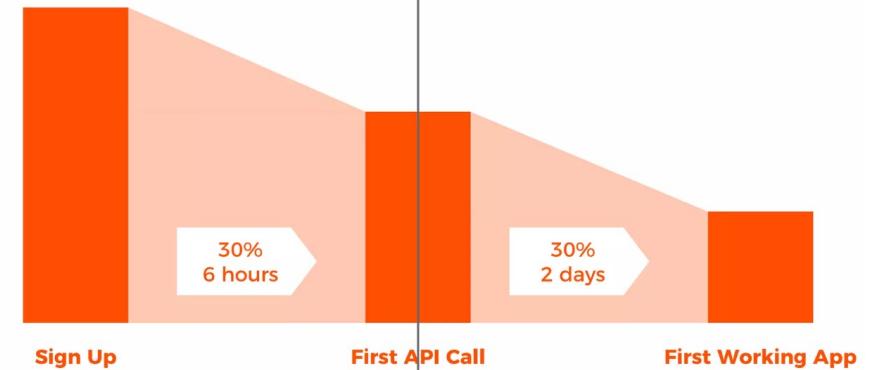
Evaluate DX



Sometimes, UX \neq spend less time and effort to finish tasks

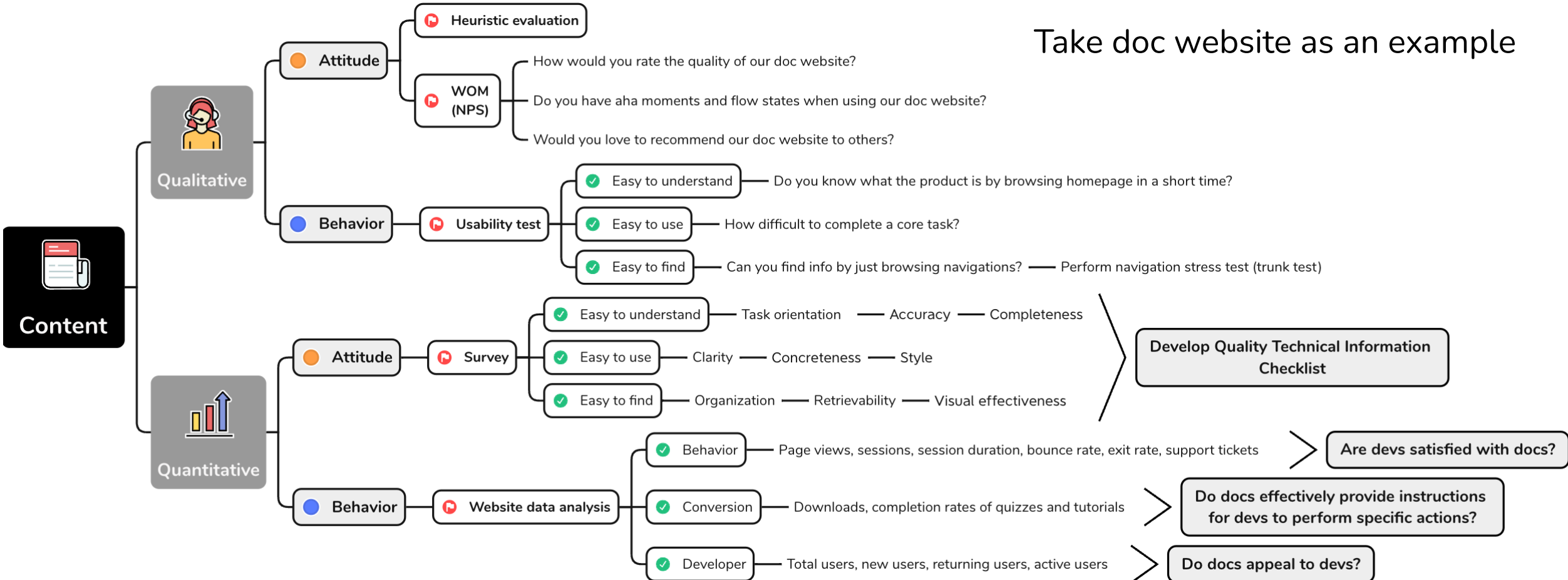


Track both conversion rate and time to next step



Evaluate DX

Take doc website as an example



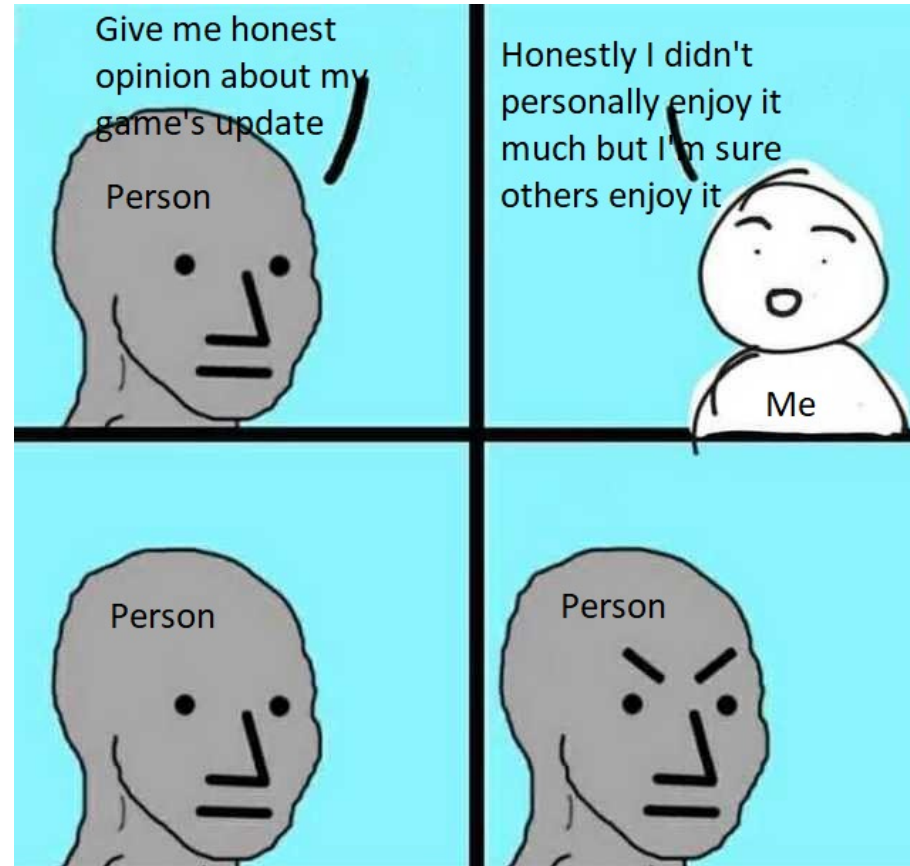
Evaluate DX

Qualitative + Quantitative = Sweet Success

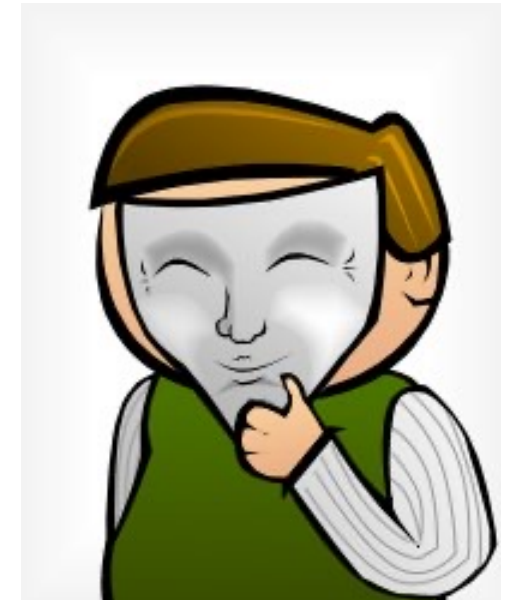
✓ Reveal truth



✓ Get honest opinion



✓ Understand user feedback



5. Thoughts



Thoughts

AI is changing the way of producing and consuming next-generation API content.

How to level up DX with AI?

SONOS DEVELOPER

Plan & Build Reference Tools Blog Sign in

Reference

- Authorization API
- Control API
 - Control API list
 - audioClip
 - favorites
 - groups
 - groupVolume
 - homeTheater
 - households
 - musicServiceAccounts
 - playback
 - playbackMetadata
 - playbackSession**
 - createSession
 - joinSession
 - joinOrCreateSession

Describe your need

playbackSession

Sessions let one or more apps load and control playback of a cloud queue.

The `playbackSession` namespace includes commands and events that enable apps to create a new session, or join an existing session in a group. Once your app has joined a session, it can load and start playback of an item in a cloud queue. Your app can also skip or seek to a specific item in a cloud queue, ask the group to re-fetch items in the cloud queue, or disconnect from the session. Your app can also get notified with a session error that your session was evicted or terminated at any time, for example, when another app starts playing something else.

The tables below list the commands and events available in the `playbackSession` namespace.

Command	Description
<code>subscribe</code>	Subscribe to events in the <code>playbackSession</code> namespace.
<code>unsubscribe</code>	Unsubscribe from events in the <code>playbackSession</code> namespace.

SONOS DEVELOPER

Plan & Build Reference Tools Blog Sign in

Reference

- Authorization API
- Control API
 - Control API list
 - audioClip
 - favorites
 - groups
 - groupVolume
 - homeTheater
 - households
 - musicServiceAccounts
 - playback
 - playbackMetadata
 - playbackSession**
 - createSession
 - joinSession
 - joinOrCreateSession

Play music on my speaker

Use this code in your app:

```
Play music code
```

```
1 const profile = await sdk.getProfile('Music');
2
3 const result = await profile
4   .getUseCase('Play')
5   .perform({
6     file: 'OPEN',
7   }, {
8     provider: 'sonos'
9   });
```

Copy code

Command	Description
<code>subscribe</code>	Subscribe to events in the <code>playbackSession</code> namespace.
<code>unsubscribe</code>	Unsubscribe from events in the <code>playbackSession</code> namespace.

Thoughts

✔ Suggestion 1: Grow your mindset + Polish your creativity

AI won't take your job if you always think outside the box



Some content is a XXXL t-shirt — everyone can wear it but not comfortable with it.

Instead, we should
→
think developers as



Developers were stereotyped as special nighttime dungeons-and-dragons playing populous who feed on beer and hackathons.

Developers are pioneers who are

- Looking for opportunities and ways to interact with business.
- Building new bridges for technology and business to adapt and grow.

Thoughts

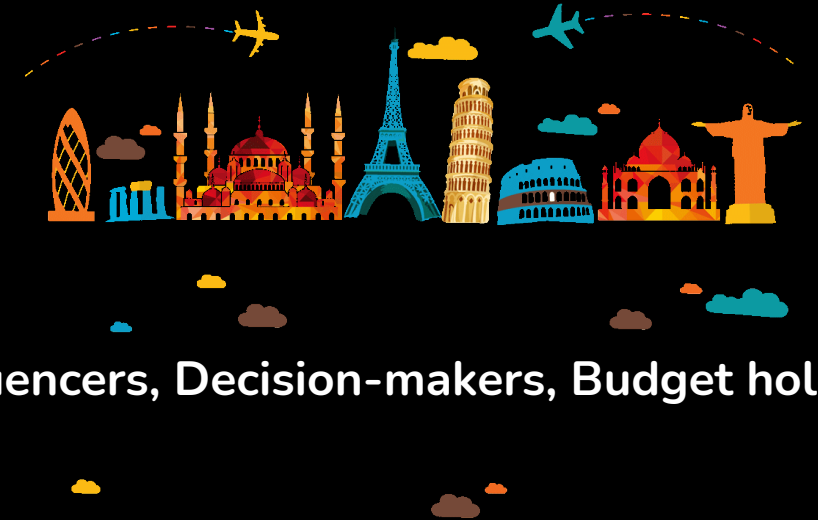
✅ Suggestion 2: build more connections and contexts

AI can not do the full job of writers because

- AI produces content based on existing content.
- So much of what writers do isn't writing, it's relationship building:
 - The ability to empathize with users at every level.
 - The ability to build emotional intimacy and gain trust.
 - The ability to see the content as an entire product, not just discrete words, sentences, and topics.



Takeaways



✓ Design DX

1 Understand developers

- DDMU (Developer Decision-Making Unit): Initiators, Influencers, Decision-makers, Budget holders
- Archetypes: Systematic, Opportunistic, Pragmatic

2 Map out developer journey (6 stages)

- ▶ Discover ▶ Evaluate ▶ Get started ▶ Build ▶ Maintain ▶ Celebrate

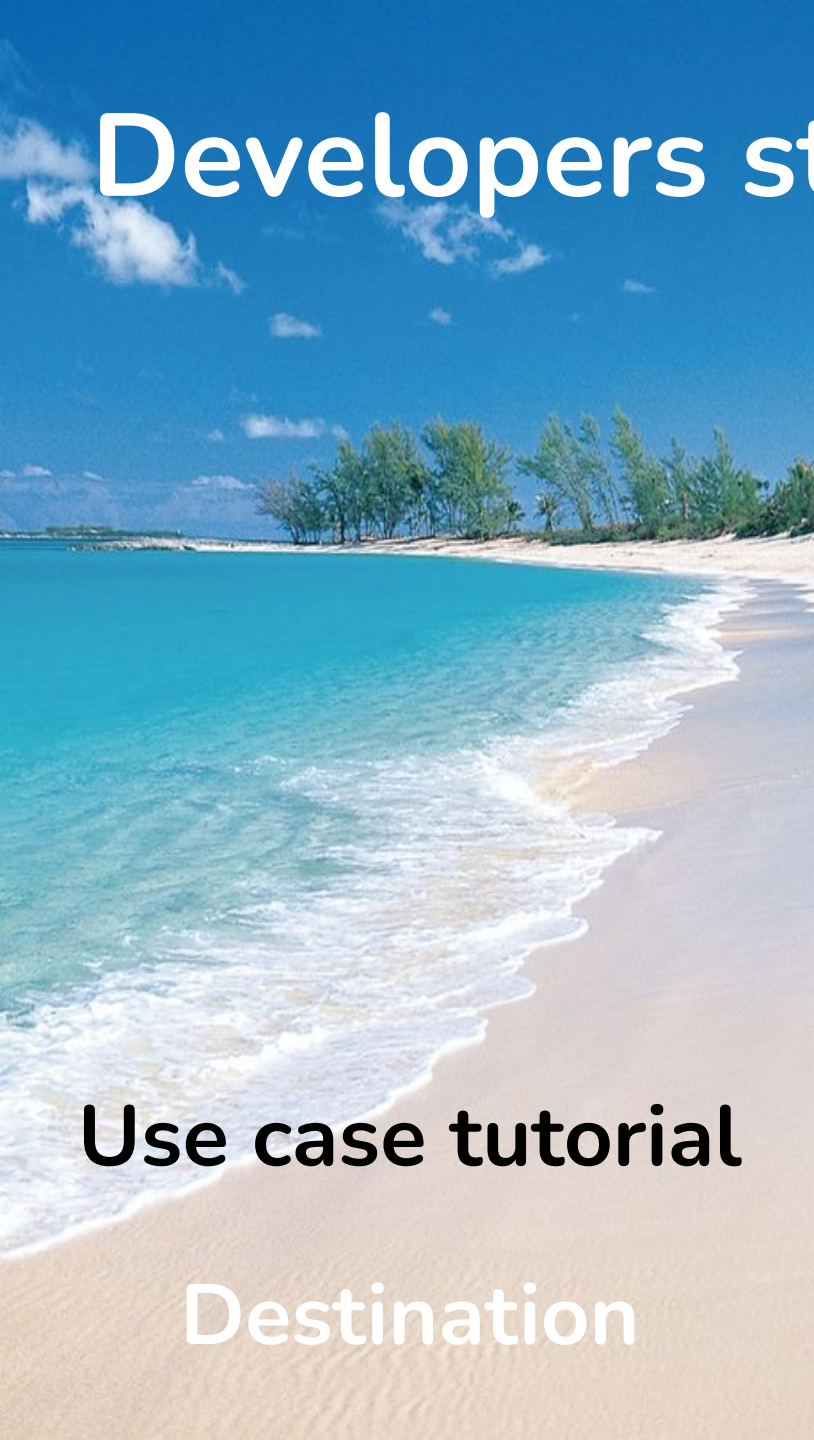
3 Create content for developer journey

- Choose deliverables and prioritize tasks using the Value Proposition Canvas (Jobs, Gains, Pains)
- Provide MVD: use case tutorials, get started, and references
- Differentiate content strategies for open-source projects and commercial products

✓ Evaluate DX

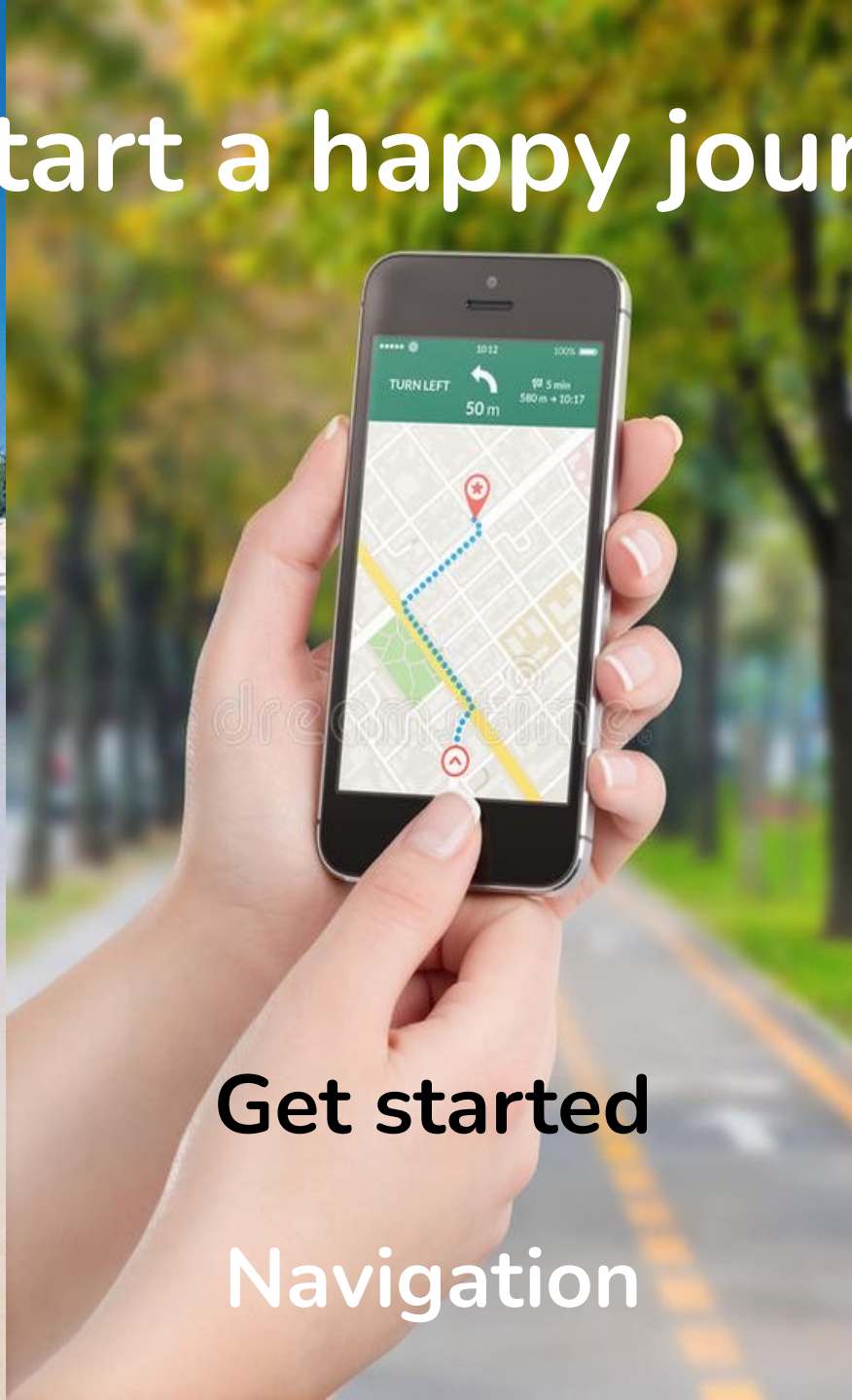
- UX Research Method Landscape: qualitative + quantitative, analyze attitudes + observe behaviors
- DQTI (Develop Quality Technical Information): easy to understand, use, find

Developers start a happy journey 🎉



Use case tutorial

Destination



Get started

Navigation



Reference

Car

References

✓ Books

- [Developer Relations: How to Build and Grow a Successful Developer Program](#)
- [Information Architecture for the World Wide Web](#)
- [The Elements of User Experience: User-Centered Design for the Web](#)
- [IBM Design Thinking](#)

✓ [Yu's talks](#) (videos and slides are available)

- Cracking the Code of Information Architecture
- Inside Apache Pulsar's Content Strategy
- Success Beyond Code: Optimizing Developer Experience Through PR Titles
- Code the Docs: Continuous Integration for Docs
- Growing a Company to be a Top OS Contributor
- Building a Welcoming Community



Scan the QR code to add me on WeChat

THANK YOU

QUESTIONS?

WeChat Official Account: 开源社KAIYUANSHE

WeChat Channels: 开源社KAIYUANSHE

Weibo: 开源社

Bilibili: 开源社KAIYUANSHE

Jianshu: 开源社

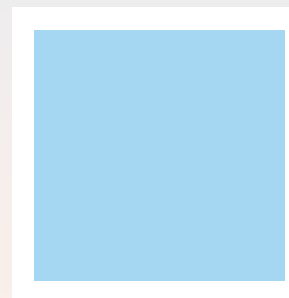
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