

The slides that almost succeeded

Joey de Villa
July 2025

I didn't land the job, but I'm proud of the journey.

Recently, I interviewed for a DevRel leadership role at a company whose product I use and truly admire. They make the kind of tool that blends deep technical value with elegant simplicity.

As part of the process, I created two presentation decks:

- A Q3–Q4 Developer Relations strategy (69 slides)
- A tactical execution plan for community, content, and advocacy (45 slides)

I made it to the second round, but ultimately wasn't selected. That being said, I'm proud of the work and grateful for the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations with a smart and passionate team.

I'm now back on the market and looking for a new opportunity in Developer Relations leadership, developer marketing, or platform product. If your team is building something meaningful for developers, I'd love to talk.

🧠 I'm sharing my slides below as a way to keep the conversation going, and because I believe good ideas are meant to circulate.

👉 Curious about how I approach DevRel strategy and execution? Check out the decks,

and I'd appreciate any feedback you might have!

Want to reach me? I'm pretty findable online:

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I didn't land the job, but I'm proud of the journey.

In July 2025, I interviewed for the position of Developer Relations Manager at a company. I admire both the product and the company, and out of respect, I'm going to refer to them as "HypothetiCorp."

It was a three-round interview process. I made it to round 2, but *not* round 3.

I'm still honored to have been considered for the role, and grateful for the opportunity to have conversations with an exceptional team at a great company.

I really can't add more to this slide in these notes.

100+ slides from two interview rounds

This deck contains over a hundred slides from two decks that I made for the interview process. They've been anonymized.

- The first deck was for round 1, where my assignment was to present a developer relations strategy for HypothetiCorp for Q3/Q4 2025.
- The second deck was for round 2, which took place 3 days after round 1. It was a panel interview with the developer relations team. I used it as a form of interview notes (notes as slides are easy to read). I also created some slides to use as visual aids.

I've clearly marked where each deck begins, and where necessary, I've annotated them in the speaker notes.

Why did I do all this?

Because most of the time, ordinary effort produces ordinary results, and extraordinary effort produces extraordinary results.

I got this email the day after the Round 2 panel interview:

I really appreciate your time speaking with the team. I am on the Recruiting team, and I had a chance to gather feedback from the group and heard so many positive things. **But, ultimately after some discussion, they decided not to move forward.**

I wanted to let you know as soon as I did but I am always available for a call if you'd like to talk through at all next week, just let me know.

It's the nicest rejection email that I've seen in a long time. They got back to me so quickly, instead of leaving me hanging for weeks (or never getting back to me), and they even offered to give me feedback!

HypothetiCorp's process was quick. I went through my entire interview process in 2 weeks total:

- I had my initial "screener" interview on a Monday
- The Round 1 interview was on the following Monday
- They told me I made it to the Round 2 interview on Tuesday
- The Round 2 interview was on Thursday
- They told me I didn't make it to Round 3 on Friday, and someone offered to talk with me on the following week.

I can only name two other times when someone from a company that turned me down took the time to give me post-interview feedback.

I have yet to hear from companies who interviewed me weeks and months ago. From a candidate-interviewing standpoint, HypothetiCorp stands head and shoulders above them!

THIS WAS MY WEEK

100+ slides
(You're looking at them now!)

**30+ hours of
research and
preparation**

**Some of my
best
interviewing**

**Blood, sweat
and neurons**

From customizing a
resume and cover
letter to talking to
people to installing
and using the
software to
preparing slides to
doing test video
recordings and then
doing the actual
interviews.



**A lot of
caffeine**

**1 low-sleep
night & 5
stages of
grief**

**...and in
the end...**

A summary of what last week (July 20 - 26, 2025) was like.

**In the end,
I almost
succeeded**

**And for that,
I am grateful**

I got lucky, because I knew someone at HypothetiCorp who'd vouch for me. I'm grateful for their recommendation and for the opportunity to show HypothetiCorp what I could do for them.

All this work *shouldn't* be for nothing

I know that there are a lot of people looking for work right now. If you're reading this, you're probably one of them.

There are some good ideas in this deck. You might find them useful. Go ahead and use them; that's why I'm sharing this!

There are probably some things in this deck that could be improved or that I got wrong. I, along with other readers of these slides, could use the feedback. Tell us about them!

I'm also sharing this to let you know that you're not alone in looking for your next gig.

As I mentioned a couple of slides ago, I put over 30 hours of work into the entire process, which included:

- Talking to my friend at HypothetiCorp and getting a referral from them
- Customizing my resume and writing a cover letter
- Preparing for the initial screening interview with their VP of Marketing
- Working on the "take-home assignment," which involved:
 - Doing extensive research
 - Crafting HypothetiCorp's developer relations strategy for Q3/Q4 2025
 - Putting together a presentation for that strategy
- Delivering the aforementioned presentation in the Round 1 interview to a panel of six people (45 minutes)
- Preparing for the Round 2 interview, which involved:
 - Doing more research
 - Putting together a combination slide deck/set of notes for that interview
- Doing the Round 2 interview with the team (1 hour)

I'd rather that all that work didn't simply languish in obscurity. By publishing it, there's a chance that:

- **Someone out there might benefit from seeing it.** Maybe there's someone who's got a similar take-home assignment or presentation to make who needs some ideas. Go ahead and take them!
- Someone out there might see it and think: **"Now *there's* a gem that**

- **HypothetiCorp passed up. But maybe HypothetiCorp's loss might be our gain."**

All this work *isn't* for nothing

In every attempt, there's a lesson.

I either *win*, or I *learn*.

I'm proud of the work and grateful for the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations with a smart and passionate team. I'm curious to learn who they pick for the role, because that person is *seriously good*, and I'm going to learn from them.

So I'm sharing these slides as a way to keep the conversation going. I believe good ideas are meant to circulate.

I welcome your feedback!

This time, I *learned*. Next time, I might *win*.

This gun for hire

In the meantime, I've got my side-hustle consultancy and a couple of clients while I look for my next full-time gig.

If you're looking for work and need an ear to listen...

Or if you're looking for someone to work for you and I fit the bill...

...you know the drill:

joey@joeydevilla.com



Once again, here's how you can reach me:

joey@joeydevilla.com

<https://globalnerdy.com>

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<https://www.youtube.com/@globalnerdy> or <https://globalnerdy.com/youtube>

The Round 1 deck

Slides for the first interview
(Developer relations strategy presentation)

Welcome to the Round 1 deck! This was my “take-home assignment” after passing the initial interview.

The assignment: Create a DevRel strategy for HypothetiCorp for Q3/Q4 2025. The high-level goal for this strategy should be building stronger brand awareness for HypothetiCorp among engineers, IT professionals, and security professionals. The focus should be on North America and Europe.

The strategy could include:

- Goals, objectives, and measurement
- Target audiences
- Content and enablement
- Speaking and conferences

I would be evaluated on:

- Strategic thinking
- Program quality, effectiveness, and feasibility
- Technical aptitude
- Demonstration of an understanding of HypothetiCorp
- Creativity, curiosity and passion

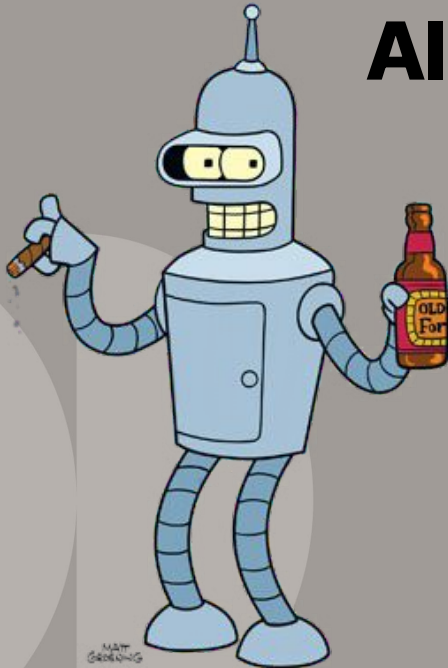
I had a week to prepare this presentation, which I gave at 10 a.m. on Monday, July 21, 2025.

AI usage disclosure

This strategy presentation was developed using AI assistance (Claude, ChatGPT, and Gemini) for:

- **Research:** Market trend analysis and competitive landscape review
- **Editing:** Grammar, clarity, and flow optimization
- **Ideation assistance:** Testing ideas and generating new ones, because no matter how creative you are, it's impossible to come up with a list of things you'd never think of.

Strategic insights, tactical recommendations, and specific positioning were developed based on analysis of the interview materials and 15+ years of experience in the industry.



HypothetiCorp didn't mind that we used AI in the process of putting together the strategy and presentation, but they *did* ask that disclose our use of AI. I decided to put my disclosure in a slide.



Make no little plans.

**They have no magic to stir
[people's] blood and probably
will not themselves be realized.**

**Make big plans; aim high
in hope and work...**

Daniel Burnham (1846 - 1912)
Architect

HypothetiCorp's leadership position in networking and the current state of "business VPN" means that this isn't the time for timid action, small efforts, or little plans, as Daniel Burnham puts it.

Daniel Burnham: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_Burnham

The original Burnham quote says "stir *men's* blood," but that's 19th-century thinking. Let's be more inclusive!



Reinforcing my point: Let's make *moon* shots, not *roof* shots.

The tl;dr

Mission	Transform HypothetiCorp from a beloved home lab tool into the obvious choice for enterprise networking .
Strategy	Create a deliberate pipeline that nurtures home lab enthusiasts into workplace champions while simultaneously building credibility with IT and security professionals.
Key insight	Our biggest competitive advantage is that HypothetiCorp “just works” — a story that DevRel should amplify .

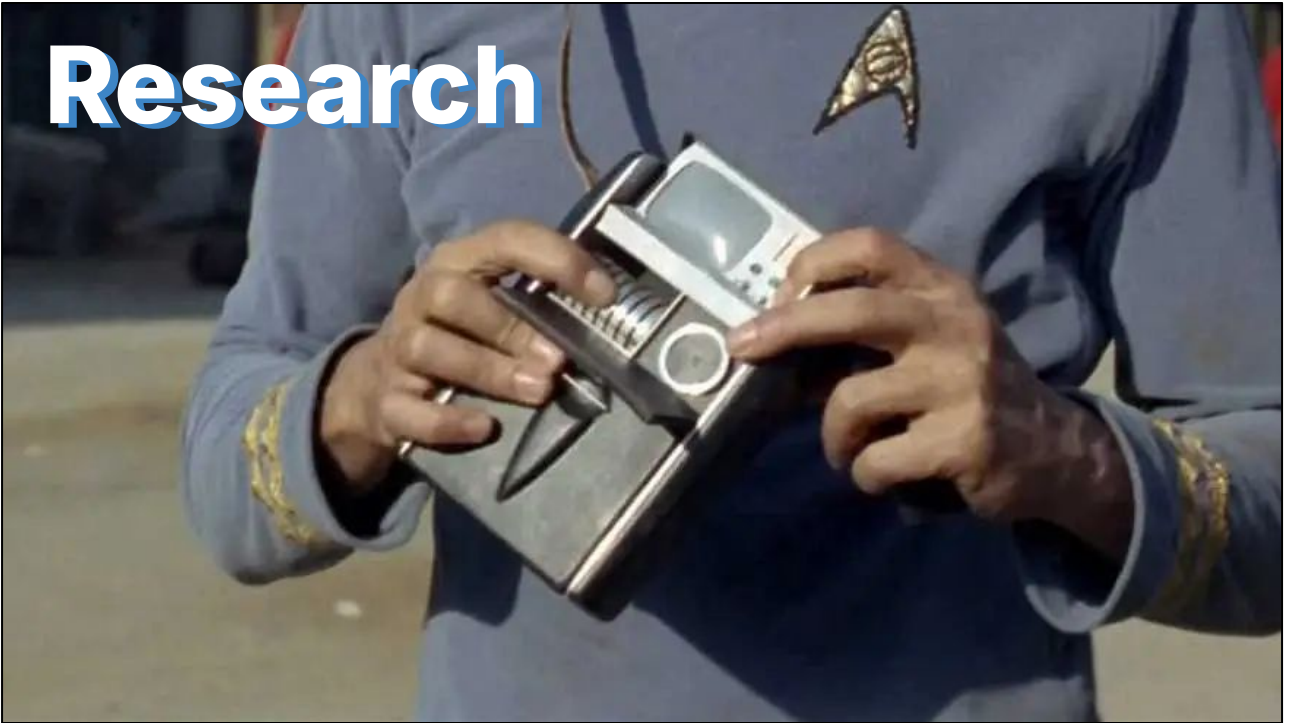
Here's my view of what DevRel at HypothetiCorp would be all about under my management.

Q3/Q4 Awareness/engagement goals

Reach	1M+ impressions across content, forums, and speaking engagements
Content	100K+ monthly video/blog/newsletter views with 10%+ engagement rate
Community	Grow combined community channels by 20% (Reddit, newsletter, social, etc.)
Advocacy	Identify and nurture 50+ community champions
Attribution breakthrough	Implement tracking for the homelab-to-enterprise pipeline
Feature discovery	25% increase in feature adoption post-content
Europe	20% increase in UK/German audience engagement
Sales enablement	20+ feature explainer assets for the Solutions Engineering team
Another face	As a player/coach, be an additional face in articles, videos, and conferences

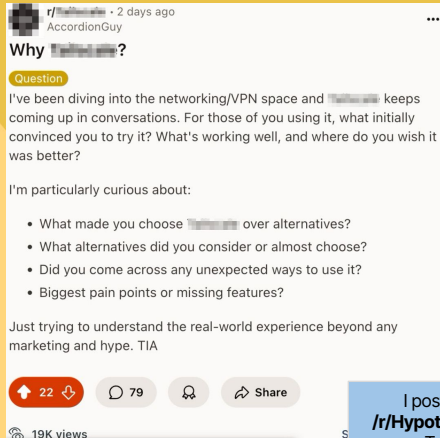
Here are the goals and metrics that I'm proposing for Q3/Q4 2025.

Research



Before getting into the details of the strategy, I gave them a summary of all the research I did on HypothetiCorp and the developers and techies who use it, or who are considering using it.

I began with...



As part of preparing for this presentation, I made "Why HypothetiCorp?" posts to various social media platforms, and I got the most responses (by a very wide margin) on **Reddit**.

Let me show you the feedback from Reddit...

As part of my research, I went on Reddit's r/HypothetiCorp subreddit and asked the people there "Why HypothetiCorp?"

The original presentation included a link to my Reddit posting.



I got a lot of responses...

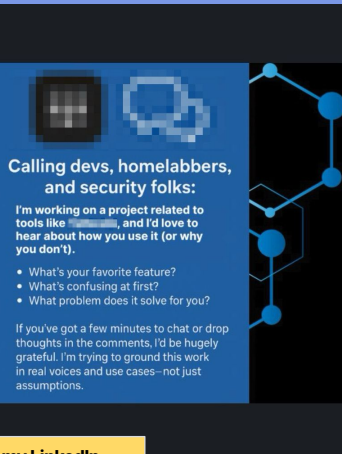
I got a *lot* of responses. (The original version of this slide had high-resolution screenshots of a lot of responses, most of them singing HypothetiCorp's praises. This is just part one!)



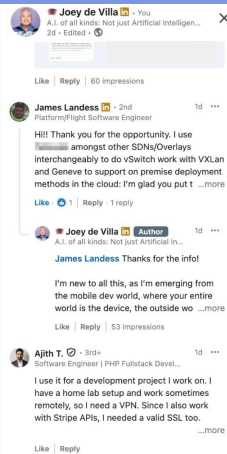
...in just two days!

Here's the second half of the responses. Once again, lots of praise. I got lots of responses for a mere two days.

LinkedIn didn't do as well...



I posted this to my LinkedIn account (6600+ followers) on Tuesday morning.



Shortly before I posted on Reddit, I also posted on **LinkedIn**.

The complete set of responses to my post is pictured on the left.

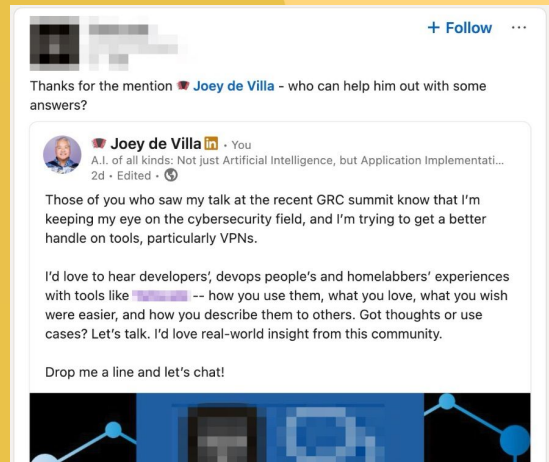
I posted something similar on LinkedIn, but got barely a handful of responses.

Lesson learned: it's the techies, not the managers, who are HypothetiCorp's core audience.

...even with a boost from HypothetiCorp!

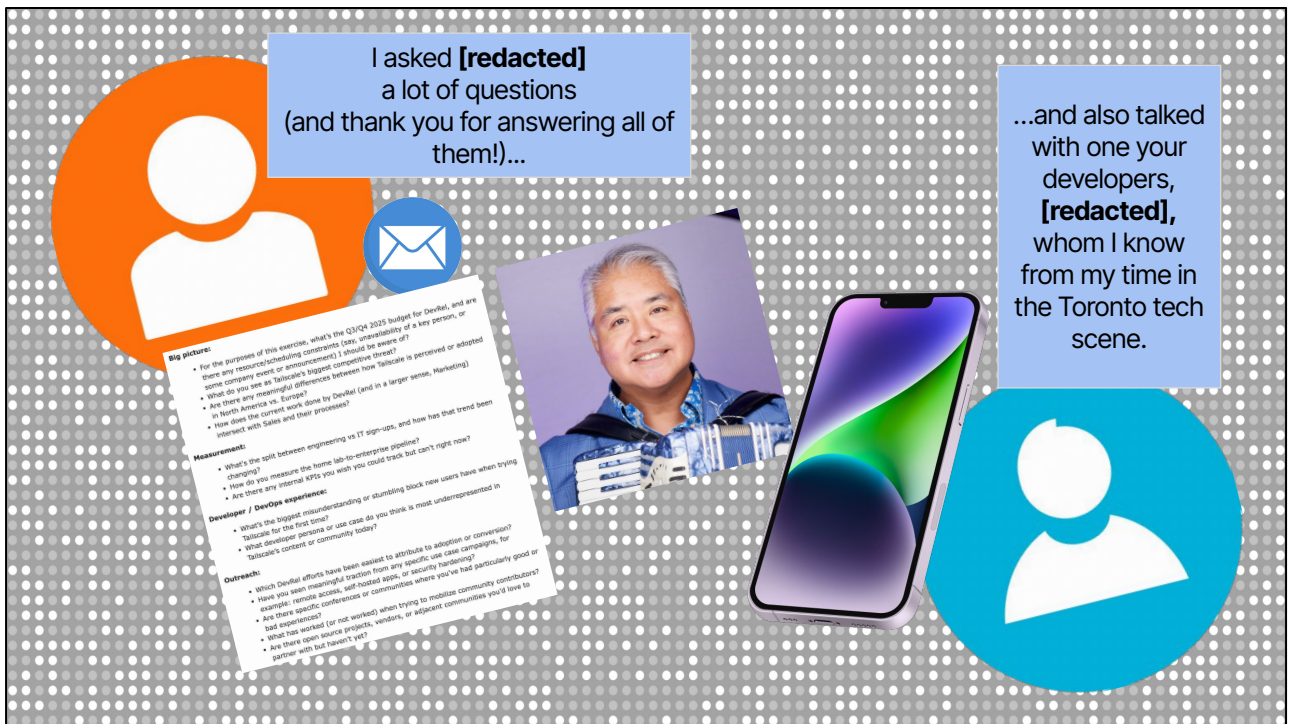
A couple of hours after I posted on LinkedIn, the HypothetiCorp account didn't just thank me for the mention — they also called on readers to provide me with some answers!

([redacted], I assume this was either you or someone on your team. Thanks so much!)



HypothetiCorp's social media people saw that I'd tagged them, and reposted my LinkedIn post and called on readers to help me with my question.

Lesson learned: HypothetiCorp has an excellent social media team!



I was told that I could email questions to the VP of Marketing, under whom Developer Relations worked. I asked 20 — 14 in the first email, 6 in the second — and they *answered them all*. I was impressed!

I also talked with a developer friend of mine who works at HypothetiCorp.

I reached out to my network...



I move among Tampa Bay's large security community, having been involved with BSides and ISACA events, and having been a student of Undercroft Baseline, the cybersecurity training program run by the people behind what's now called The Neon Temple, Tampa Bay's security guild. So I talked to a few technical people in these circles about HypothetiCorp and their wares.



I also watched most of the videos on HypothetiCorp's YouTube channel.

On the original slide, the background, which was a grid of HypothetiCorp videos, wasn't blurred out.


```
YouTube Channel Extractor.py X
Users > joey > Documents > Python > YouTube data extractor > YouTube Channel Extractor.py > YouTubeChannelExtractor > print_video_sun
7 class YouTubeChannelExtractor:
206 def save_to_csv(self, videos, filename="youtube_videos.csv"):
221     print(f"Saved {len(videos)} videos to {filename}")
222
223 def print_video_summary(self, videos):
224     """
225     Print a summary of the channel statistics.
226     """
227     if not videos:
228         print("No videos found.")
229         return
230
231     print(f"\n=== YOUTUBE CHANNEL SUMMARY ===")
232     print(f"Total videos: {len(videos)}")
233     print(f"Total views: {sum(video['view_count'] for video in videos):,}")
234     print(f"Total likes: {sum(video['like_count'] for video in videos):,}")
235     print(f"Total comments: {sum(video['comment_count'] for video in videos):,}")
236
237     # Sort by views for top videos
238     top_videos = sorted(videos, key=lambda x: x['view_count'], reverse=True)[:5]
239
240     print("\n=== TOP 5 MOST VIEWED VIDEOS ===")
241     for i, video in enumerate(top_videos, 1):
242         print(f"{i}. {video['title']}")
243         print(f"    Views: {video['view_count']:,} | Likes: {video['like_count']:,} | Duration: {video['duration']}")
244         print(f"    Published: {video['publish_date']}")
```

...and got some video stats, too.

I used Claude to whip up a little Python script to build a spreadsheet of HypothetiCorp's YouTube videos so I could see viewership trends.

Lessons learned



Now that I'd gone over the research I did (and provided the team with a subtle message: "*I really do my homework*"), it's time to enumerate the lessons learned.



HypothetiCorp has a loyal fanbase made up of people who are "close to the machine." The more technical you are, the more you love HypothetiCorp. It still has a "By techies, for techies" feel.

Of course, the original slide background wasn't blurred. It featured headlines, testimonials, and forum posts about how great HypothetiCorp is.



Some of HypothetiCorp's biggest deals come from homelabbers who liked HypothetiCorp so much that they tried bringing it to work.



IT pros account for the bulk of organization self-serve

Source: Initial interview with [redacted] and follow-up questions via email

HypothetiCorp has a generous free tier which serves most homelabbers' needs, and an enterprise tier which requires signing contracts and special arrangements. In between is the self-serve tier, and it's "IT Pros" — typically tech managers — who account for the bulk of sales through this channel.

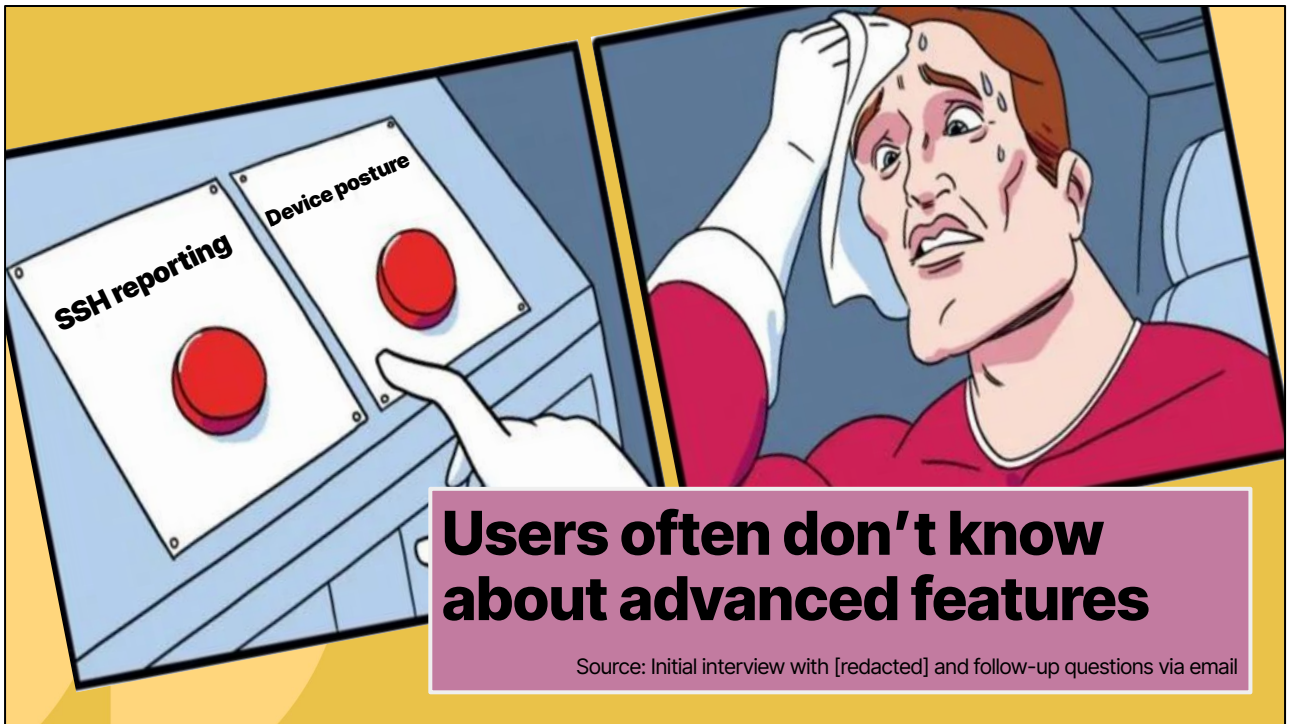
What we know about the user base

Product tier	Who are the users?
Free	Primarily engineers
Organization self-serve	Mostly IT pros
Enterprise	A mix of IT pros and engineers + security approval



We know the **home lab-to-enterprise pipeline** exists, but isn't measured.

Here's who the users are. Not surprising, but it was nice to have the data to confirm this.



HypothetiCorp is so well-loved for its best-known features that users don't know it can do so much more.



Not surprising, but once again, it was good to have the data.



An interesting thing to note. I also wanted to make the point that I understand different markets require different approaches. A lot of techies seem to operate on the assumption that they're communicating only with people in Silicon Valley or only the U.S..



Again, not a surprise, but the Python script I vibed together gave me some interesting stats to cite.

The background for the original slide was a grid of HypothesiCorp videos in monochrome. This background is a blurred out version.



The “Business VPN” messaging works, but there’s more to HypothetiCorp than just that

Source: Initial interview with [redacted] and follow-up questions via email

This would end up driving a major platform of my strategic plan.



There's a lively, helpful, and active HypothetiCorp community on Reddit.

Source: Actual interactions I had on r/HypothetiCorp

Once again, discovered by my going onto to Reddit and talking to actual users. After going through HypothetiCorp's subreddit, I don't think any other candidates did this.



**HypothetiCorp has wizards
behind the curtain.**

HypothetiCorp's DevRel team is small and scrappy, but they get the job done, and they do it well.

Key strategic pivots



Before I launched into the strategic plan, I addresses some area where HypothetiCorp could pivot.

1: Grow the "IT pro" audience

Problem:

Our messaging is currently heavily focused on homelab users; we're undeserving IT professionals.



Solution:

Develop a line of content dedicated to IT pros and grow our conference presence.



The IT Pro audience is underserved. Which the techies are the core audience, the IT Pros do the lion's share of the self-serve buying. Let's grow that!

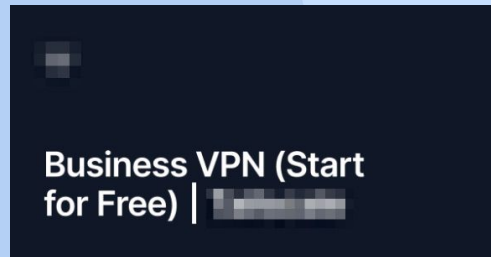
2: Don't think *VPN*; think *private internet for teams*






Problem:

The "business VPN" campaign has been successful, but it's putting HypothetiCorp into a small box and limiting the possibilities for broader positioning.

Solution:

Showcase HypothetiCorp capabilities beyond replacing their current VPN, such as...



-  **Zero-config** remote access
-  **HypoDNS:** Human-friendly networking
-  **HypoDrop:** Frictionless file sharing
-  **SSH & ACLs:** Fine-grained access control
-  **Funnel:** Serve from local → public securely

Everybody thinks of HypothetiCorp as just "business VPN." Maybe it's better to think of it as "Your own private internet, where there are no security or authentication hassles, and it's easy to find the other devices on it."

3: Users unaware of features

Problem:

Customers have no idea about certain features (example: device posture management), even after becoming regular users.

Solution:

"Features on features," a feature awareness campaign via YouTube and sales enablement.



Even regular users are unaware of the cold things that HypothetiCorp can do. Let's change that!

4: European market penetration

Problem:

Lower adoption in priority European markets, and the German skepticism about products offered for free.

Solution:

A mix of specific messaging for the UK and German audiences, [redacted]'s being based in the UK putting them literally in reach of those markets, and market-specific compliance positioning.



The UK and Europe (particularly Germany) are important markets, but they need approaches and messaging that better fit them.

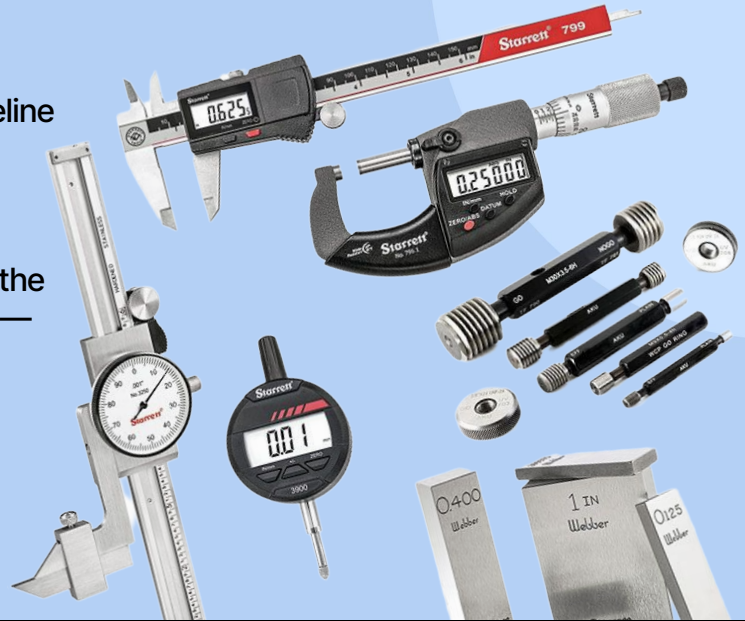
5: Attribution measurement as competitive advantage

Problem:

The home lab-to-enterprise pipeline exists, but it's unmeasured.

Solution:

Implement tracking systems for the home lab-to-enterprise pipeline — it's quite likely that competitors aren't doing this!



We know that there's a home lab-to-enterprise pipeline, but it's currently unmeasured. And if you're not measuring something, it's hard to improve it.

What HypothetiCorp should keep doing



For all the pivots I mentioned, there are also a number of things that HypothetiCorp is doing right. These need to be “turned up to 11.”

Keep on keepin' on, part 1

Free tier strategy

- To use [redacted]'s own words: "It's our biggest competitive moat"
- The starting point of our important home-lab-to-enterprise conversion pipeline
- Creates a low-friction, high-impact trial experience for technical users



Open source and developer-first approach

- Establishes and maintains technical credibility with our core technical audience
- Supports product-led growth and bottom-up adoption
- Differentiates HypothetiCorp from enterprise-only networking solutions



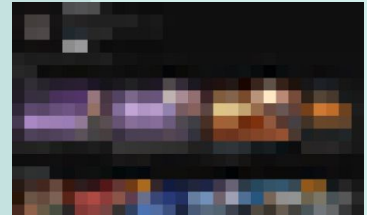
That free tier brings all the techies to us in the first place. Don't mess it up, and make the experience even better!

Also HypothetiCorp's open source / techie-first approach gives us credibility and sets us apart from the more corporate alternatives.

Keep on keepin' on, part 2

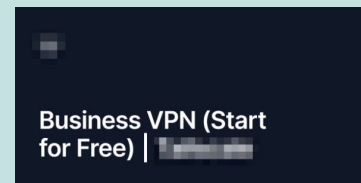
YouTube channel optimization

- Think of YouTube as the world's second-largest search engine
- The only DevRel effort with proof that it leads to adoption
- Leverage [redacted]'s established presence and technical expertise for feature deep-dives
- Let's keep using formats that work and explore new ones



"Business VPN" messaging

- It's our most successful use case campaign to date
- Continue for enterprise sales while adding platform messaging
- Yes, produce broader positioning material, but don't abandon this — it works!



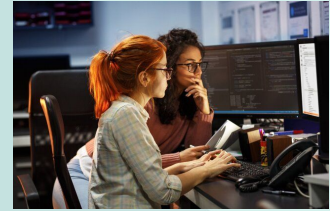
We know that the videos lead to adoption, and that video is now the preferred learning medium for so many developers. We're doing well here — we need to turn it up!

Also, while we're telling everyone that HypothetiCorp is more than just a "business VPN," it still is a great business VPN! Keep saying that!

Keep on keepin' on, part 3

Technical authenticity and community engagement

- Builds and maintains trust with our core audience
- Harness r/HypothetiCorp and its active community participation
- Create hands-on technical demonstrations and real-world use cases
- More “HypothetiCorp sucks” vacuum cleaner-style creative technical content, please!



Home lab community focus

- Core strength that feeds enterprise pipeline
- Authentic user advocacy and word-of-mouth growth
- Foundation for technical credibility and organic adoption



We're techie-driven, and we're techies who speak to techies. That's what makes us trustworthy — let's keep that up, and amplify it!

Also, homelabs are our home. Never forget that.

Opportunities

Measurement systems	There are new attribution models and engagement metrics in development, which is important — if you can't measure it, you can't improve it!
Insiders program	The Insiders program, established earlier this year, is still in the beginning stages and needs scaling support.
European market	Europe (specifically UK and Germany) is a market that can be won over with with privacy- and sovereignty-focused messaging
Sales enablement	Solutions engineering is asking for more DevRel content

Here's where I see we can grow.



The way I see it, there are four audience categories. I'll go through them in order of most to least critical.

Primary audience: Homelabbers and technical enthusiasts (core strength)

Individual developers, platform engineers, devops professionals using HypothetiCorp at home or sneaking it into work

Pain point	They want to bring the beloved tools and solutions that they use on their home systems to work, but need business justification.
Goal	Give these enthusiasts the tools and resources they need to champion HypothetiCorp in enterprise environments.
Tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "How I sold HypothetiCorp to my team" content• ROI tools• Enterprise case studies

Homelabbers and techies are our core audience. We're still an engineering-driven organization, and that appeals to this core audience.

Secondary audience: IT professionals (underserved opportunity)

Network administrators, IT managers moving beyond traditional VPN solutions

Pain point	They need more than “just a VPN” but don't know HypothetiCorp's full capabilities. Many think of HypothetiCorp as “Oh yeah, the business VPN.”
Goal	Expand their perception of HypothetiCorp beyond “Business VPN” to seeing it as a comprehensive networking platform.
Tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• IT-focused use cases• <i>Features on Features</i> content• Compliance documentation

IT Pros represent our biggest growth opportunity. They're the ones who make the self-serve purchases that can lead to the coveted enterprise deals.

Tertiary audience: UK and German markets (primary European targets)

Privacy-conscious engineers and IT professionals in established target markets

Pain point	German users are skeptical of “free” products, and UK users need post-Brexit, post-2024 data sovereignty clarity.
Goal	Build trust and market penetration in priority European markets.
Tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Market-specific compliance content• Localized community building• [redacted]'s UK presence advantage

Next up: the European (yes, I know the UK *technically* isn't Europe) market. Big opportunities here, and HypothesiCorp has an advantage that many other companies don't that I'll talk about later.

(Note to readers: “I'll bring it up later” is an old speaker trick to get the audience a little more alert in the middle of a presentation. It sets up an expectation. Feel free to steal this trick.)

Quaternary audience: Enterprise security teams

Security architects, compliance officers who approve networking solutions

Pain point	They need proof that HypothetiCorp is what they need.
Goal	Become the security team's preferred choice for zero-trust networking.
Tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Security conference presence• Compliance documentation• Audit trail features

And finally, enterprise security teams. These people hold the big purse strings behind enterprise contracts. They need to be convinced that HypothetiCorp isn't just homelab-grade stuff, but equally at home in the big leagues.

Strategic execution arc

2026 Q1 +
planning



Q3 - First
90 days

Foundation

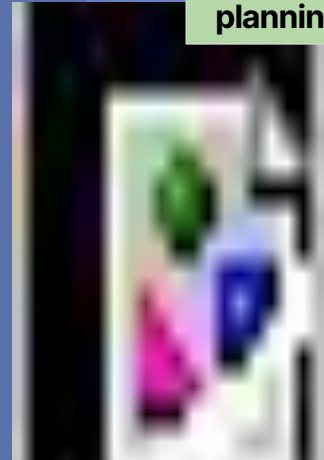
Lay the groundwork.



Q4 - Next
90 days

Focus

Do fewer things better.



Flywheel

Use our momentum as a multiplier.

I think I spent the better part of a week working on an “arc” for executing my DevRel strategy, as well as a catchy phrase to summarize it: **Foundation / Focus / Flywheel**. I *really* like Foundation / Focus / Flywheel and expect to use it in the future — not just interviews and take-home assignments, but for when I *actually* land a DevRel job.

The general idea behind Foundation / Focus / Flywheel:

1. **Foundation** involves building the essential systems and infrastructure that enable everything else to work effectively. Key elements include:
 - Attribution tracking
 - Team processes
 - Measurement frameworks
 - Community research.
2. **Focus** concentrates resources on fewer, high-impact initiatives based on what you learned in Foundation, executing them with precision to generate measurable momentum.
3. **Flywheel** leverages the momentum from the Foundation and Focus phases to create self-sustaining growth engines where:
 - Community members generate content
 - Partners amplify reach
 - Successful users naturally recruit others

Rather than trying to do everything at once, this Foundation / Focus / Flywheel framework ensures each phase builds deliberately on the previous one, creating

compounding returns and competitive advantages that even a small, scrappy DevRel team can sustain.

1: Foundation (Q3 - First 90 days)

Build the infrastructure and systems needed for scalable success

Activity	Details
Attribution systems	Implement homelab-to-enterprise tracking mechanisms
European market research	Deep dive into UK and German-speaking region preferences (and in the case of Germany, specific compliance/privacy needs)
Sales enablement framework	Create content pipeline for solutions engineering team
YouTube optimization	Analyze successful formats and create repeatable templates
Team coordination	Establish workflows for [redacted] in the UK and European focus

Success metrics: Systems in place, baseline measurements established, team processes optimized

The Foundation phase is critical because most DevRel programs fail or fall short by trying to do everything at once without proper measurement or systems in place (and as I like to say, "If you can't measure it, you can't improve it").

The Foundation phase would comprise my first 90 days. Aside from my orientation, it would largely be about building the infrastructure that enables everything else to scale effectively.

Attribution systems: Many companies struggle to prove DevRel ROI because they can't track the "homelab-to-enterprise" journey, a.k.a. The customer moving from community engagement to enterprise adoption. Implementing measurement systems such as UTM parameters, conversion tracking, and user journey mapping creates the metrics foundation that justifies future investment and helps us find areas for improvement and where can refine our tactics.

Market research: Rather than assuming what different regions need, this phase involves actual user interviews and market analysis. Understanding cultural differences in technology adoption (like privacy concerns in German markets) prevents costly messaging mistakes later. "Better an eraser on the drawing board than a sledgehammer on the construction site."

Sales enablement framework: DevRel often operates in isolation from sales teams. I propose creating a systematic content pipeline ensures technical education materials support the sales team and revenue generation, making DevRel a clear business contributor rather than just a "nice-to-have cost center."

YouTube optimization: I often say that YouTube is the world's second-largest search engine. Let's make sure we've which video formats drive actual adoption, then create templates and processes that the team can replicate consistently. Data-driven content strategy scales much better than ad-hoc creation.

Team coordination: Remote teams need explicit workflows for collaboration, especially across time zones and oceans. Establishing these processes early prevents coordination bottlenecks that slow execution in later phases.

The key insight: Foundation isn't glamorous work (in fact, it's a damned pain in the ass), but it's what separates successful DevRel programs from those that struggle to prove value or scale impact.

Foundation phase team execution

First 90 days: Build the infrastructure and systems needed for scalable success

Lead Developer Advocate ([redacted])	Senior Community Manager ([redacted])	Technical Writing Manager ([redacted])	DevRel Manager (hopefully Joey)
			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• YouTube format analysis and template creation• European conference CFP submissions for Q4• Initial sales enablement content framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Insiders program process documentation and automation setup• r/HypothetiCorp community engagement strategy and user research coordination• Discord channel optimization and UK/German expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UK/German market research and persona development• Privacy-focused content audit and gap analysis• GDPR compliance and German market education content framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Learn the ropes” at HypothetiCorp• Attribution system selection and implementation• European partnership pipeline development• Team workflow optimization• Additional content

Success metrics: Systems in place, baseline measurements established, team processes optimized

2: Focus (Q4 - Next 90 days)

Execute a few initiatives with maximum impact and measurable results

Activity	Details
European content push	Concentrated push on privacy-first, sovereignty-focused content
"Features on Features" campaign	Educating users (and prospective users) on underutilized HypothetiCorp capabilities ("Bet you didn't know HypothetiCorp can do this!")
Strategic conference selection	Conferences (ideally 2 or 3) with a speaking focus, if possible
Community champion program	Fine-tune the Insiders program with clear value propositions
Sales content library	20+ feature explainers and competitive positioning materials

Success metrics: European engagement +25%, feature adoption +25%, sales enablement usage tracking

The Focus phase leverages the infrastructure built in the Foundation phase to execute high-impact initiatives with precision. This is where strategy becomes visible results.

The Foundation phase would comprise days 91 through 180. 90 days. The key principle: do fewer things, but do them exceptionally well.

European content push: With market research completed in Foundation, this concentrated effort addresses specific regional concerns rather than generic "European content." Privacy-first messaging directly tackles identified barriers to adoption, while sovereignty-focused content positions the company's architecture as a competitive advantage. Concentrated pushes work better than scattershot, "throwing spaghetti against the wall and seeing what sticks"-type efforts. They create momentum and mindshare.

"Features on Features" campaign: HypothetiCorp isn't alone in suffering from feature discovery problems. This is common with a lot of SaaSes. Users don't know about capabilities that could drive increased adoption and retention. "Features on Features" would be a systematic education campaign that turns existing product depth into a growth driver. The playful naming makes technical content more engaging and memorable than generic "feature spotlights," and if you haven't figured it out by now, I love clever names.

Strategic conference selection: Rather than attending every possible event, the Focus phase prioritizes two or three conferences where speaking opportunities (not just booth presence) can demonstrate thought leadership. Speaking creates more authentic

engagement and better attribution tracking than passive sponsorships. Quality over quantity drives better ROI.

Community champion program: HypothetiCorp's newly-minted Insiders program gets refined based on lessons from the Foundation phase about what motivates community participation. Clear value propositions (exclusive access, recognition, direct product feedback) create sustainable engagement rather than one-time activities.

Sales content library: Let's create 20+ pieces to cover common sales objections and use cases, and not simply go with random content creation. This is part of the approach to directly support revenue generation. It also creates measurable impact through usage tracking established in the Foundation phase.

The Focus phase proves DevRel's business value through concentrated execution and clear metrics, setting up the scaling opportunities of the Flywheel phase.

Focus phase team execution

Next 90 days: Execute a few initiatives; maximum impact and measurable results

Lead Developer Advocate ([redacted])	Senior Community Manager ([redacted])	Technical Writing Manager ([redacted])	DevRel Manager (hopefully Joey)
			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Features on Features" video series production (from UK base)• European conference appearances• Sales team collaboration and feedback loops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Streamlined community champion recruitment (including r/HypothetiCorp power users)• User-generated content campaign launches across Discord and Reddit• Cross-timezone community engagement coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UK/German content production sprint• "Features on Features" campaign execution• Documentation optimization for UK and German compliance needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• European market penetration strategy• Partnership negotiations and development• Performance measurement and optimization• North American conference appearances

Success metrics: European engagement +25%, feature adoption +25%, sales enablement usage tracking

3: Flywheel (2026 Q1 + planning)

Leverage momentum and community to create self-sustaining growth engines

Activity	Details
Community-generated content	Users creating HypothetiCorp tutorials and use cases
Partner ecosystem	Technical integrations and co-marketing opportunities
Thought leadership	Industry recognition as zero-trust networking experts
Scaling European operations	Local community leaders and regional advocates
Attribution optimization	Use data insights to double-down on highest-converting activities

Success metrics: Organic content creation, partnership revenue attribution, industry analyst recognition

The final phase in my proposed DevRel strategy arc is the Flywheel phase. It represents the ultimate goal of strategic DevRel: creating self-sustaining growth that reduces dependency on team size while accelerating impact.

This phase happens after my first 6 months (180 days), and it's where the infrastructure from the Foundation phase and momentum from the Focus phase grow like compound interest.

Community-generated content: The strongest indicator (and my favorite measure) of DevRel success is users creating content organically. it's proof that the product has become integral to users' day-to-day work, and maybe even part of their identity (if you don't believe that users incorporate their tools into their identity, you haven't seen a programming language or editor debate). Community tutorials often address use cases the company never considered, and they expand market reach without additional additional work for the team. The key metric isn't volume; it's quality and diversity of content creators.

Partner ecosystem: HypothetiCorp is used along with other networking/dev/devops tools, and technical integrations create network effects. When this happens, other tools' success drives adoption and becomes our success. If we set up some co-marketing partnerships, we can amplify our reach through other established channels and gain (and also lend) credibility through association. We can get revenue attribution from partnerships and prove DevRel's contribution to business development.

Thought leadership: Industry analyst recognition (Gartner mentions, conference

keynotes, media quotes) creates a credibility flywheel, especially with IT pro and executive decision-makers. Recognition leads to more speaking opportunities, which drives more recognition. This positioning makes all other DevRel activities more effective and helps with enterprise sales cycles.

Scaling European operations: Local community leaders provide cultural context and timezone coverage that remote teams can't. From my time at Microsoft and witnessing the MVP program in action, I know that regional advocates create authentic grassroots growth and are force multipliers for company-driven initiatives. This scales international presence without putting more on our small team's plates.

Attribution optimization: By this point, we should have 6+ months of tracking and should have a much better idea of which activities drive the highest-value conversions. Let's double down on the tactics that work and wind down low-ROI activities.

The Flywheel phase transforms DevRel from a cost center to a growth engine that scales impact faster than team growth, creating sustainable competitive advantages.

Flywheel phase team execution

Q1 2026 and beyond: Leverage momentum and community for continued growth

Lead Developer Advocate ([redacted])	Senior Community Manager ([redacted])	Technical Writing Manager ([redacted])	DevRel Manager (hopefully Joey)
			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• European community speaker training and enablement• Advanced technical thought leadership from UK• Partnership integration demonstrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fully autonomous community champion program• User conference and event coordination• Community-driven content curation across Discord and r/HypothetiCorp• Reddit community insights feeding into product and content strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• European market expansion documentation• Advanced use case and integration guides• Competitive positioning content	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategic partnership management• Industry analyst relations• Team scaling and development planning• North American community speaker training and enablement

Success metrics: Organic content creation, partnership revenue attribution, industry analyst recognition

Content and enablement



Here's my plan for content, which focuses on three key areas...

1: “It just works” demos

Activity	Details
<i>HypothetiCorp in 60 seconds</i>	YouTube shorts showing specific use cases
Interactive demos	Web-based simulations of common networking scenarios
Community-driven content	Turn r/HypothetiCorp success stories into video demonstrations
Comparison content	“HypothetiCorp vs. traditional VPN” technical deep-dives

“It just works” isn’t just a slogan or mantra at HypothetiCorp — it’s what the users say about us! Let’s build content based on that.

2: "Beyond business VPN" positioning

Activity	Details
<i>Features on features</i> campaign	Monthly YouTube series showcasing underutilized capabilities
Use case expansion	Content showing HypothetiCorp as networking platform, not just VPN replacement
Integration showcases	Show uses of HypothetiCorp in combination with popular enterprise tools

Once again, to get the IT Pro audience, we need to tell them that HypothetiCorp is more than just a business VPN, and here's how.

3: Content for Europe

Activity	Details
Transparency reports	Make clear how HypothetiCorp handles data, show GDPR compliance specifics
German market messaging	Content that explains why — at least in HypothetiCorp's case — “free” doesn't mean “you're the product”
UK market messaging	Take advantage of [redacted]'s presence in the UK, plus <i>the other thing I'm going to mention in a little bit</i>
Local case studies	Showcase UK and German companies using HypothetiCorp

The UK and Germany are different markets — they need different messaging.



Conferences

In the age of AI and AI slop, face-to-face presence, human connection, and the “you had to be there” factor will all end up being more important than ever. This means having a presence at conference — now on the exhibitor floor and the “hallway track,” but eventually on the stage.

Conferences, Q3 2025

Conference	Notes
DevOpsDays Kansas City August 13, Kansas City	A devops conference that coincides with Kansas City Developers Conference.
Kansas City Developers Conference (KCDC) August 13 - 15, Kansas City	One of the largest independent (i.e. not run by a vendor) developer conferences in North America. With 2,000+ attendees in 2024, it's in the same class as PyCon US and BSlides Tampa. <i>I'm presenting at this one!</i>
HashiConf September 24 - 26, San Francisco	HashiCorp users are infrastructure engineers who manage complex, multi-cloud environments - exactly HypothetiCorp's target demographic for enterprise adoption. The 2024 conference had 1,400 attendees.
Civo Navigate London September 30, 2025	A conference run by UK-based pure Kubernetes cloud hosting company Civo, this can be an entry point into deeper connections with the UK market. They expect 800+ attendees.

Here are the conferences for Q3. Conference sponsorships and speakers are arranged quarters in advance, so these recommendations are already too late. Still, I'm making some recommendations to give you an idea of the sort of conferences I think we should be present at.

By the way, I'm speaking at KCDC in mid-August, and if hired, I will promote the hell out of HypothetiCorp!

Conferences, Q4 2025

Conference	Notes
(ISC)² Security Congress October 28 - 30, Nashville	4,000+ attendees!
KubeCon + CloudNativeCon North America 2025 November 10 - 13, Atlanta	We're gold sponsors for this conference.
AWS re:Invent 2025 December 1 - 5, Las Vegas	We're gold sponsors for this conference.

HypothetiCorp already had sponsorships at 2 out of the 3 conferences that I recommended for Q4.

Given the homelabber/security interest in HypothetiCorp's product, we should look at (ISC)² and other security conferences.

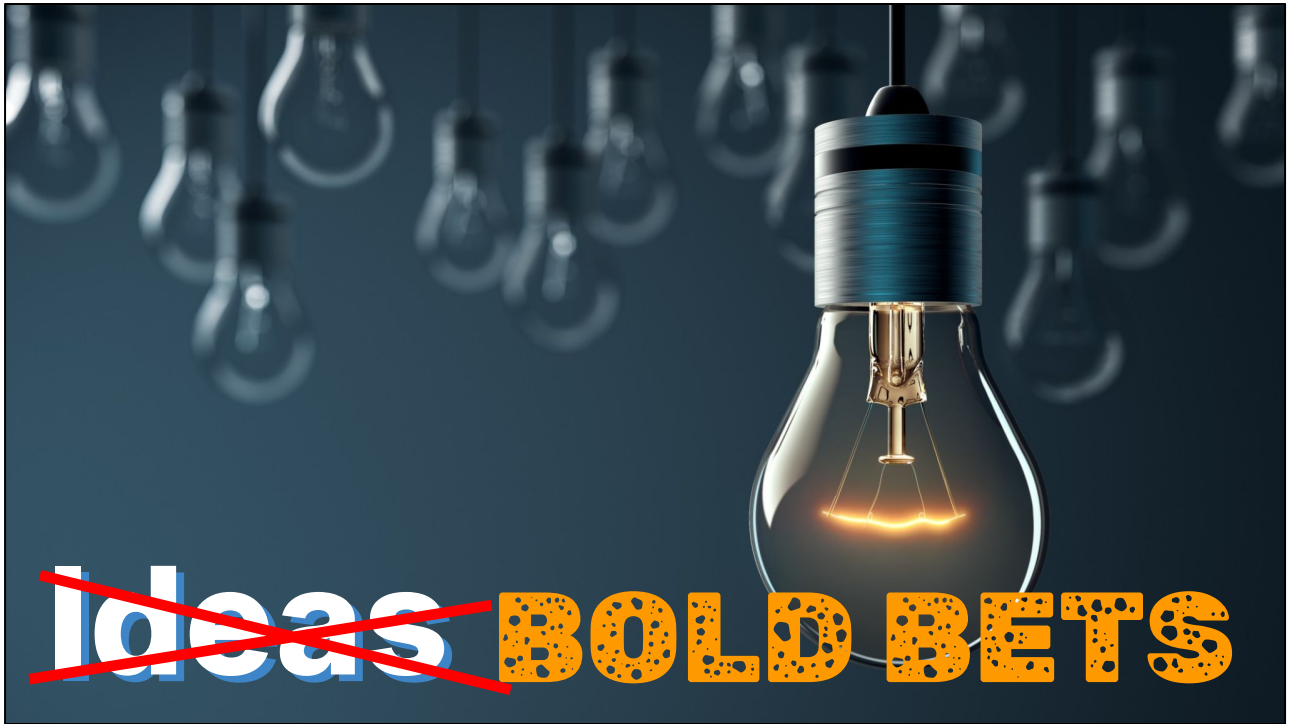
The primary benefit of sponsorships at KubeCon and re:Invent is having a booth. Ideally for the 2026 editions of these conferences, we want a speaker opportunity!

Conferences, H1 2026

Conference	Notes
KubeCon + CloudNativeCon Europe 2026 March 23 - 26, Amsterdam	We're gold sponsors for this conference.
RSAC 2026 March 23 - 26, San Francisco	The mother of all security conferences, with 45,000+ attendees!
PyCon US 2026 May, Long Beach (California)	Another one of the largest independent (i.e. not run by a vendor) developer conferences in North America, with 2,000+ attendees.
Web Summit Vancouver 2026 May, Vancouver (Canada)	15,000+ attendees! We also had a presence at the 2025 conference.
HypothetiCon ???	Maybe it's time to bring it back.

HypothetiCorp also has a sponsorship at KubeCon Europe — but how about RSAC or PyCon? I might favor PyCon, as we'll get plenty of IT Pro decision-makers at many other cons.

I remember HypothetiCon from a couple years ago — can we bring it back? It has some serious community- and opportunity-generating potential and can set us apart from competitors.



This is the part of the presentation where I suggest some ideas that might be called "feasible, but might be out there." But as I said at the beginning of this presentation, "Make no small plans!"

Outside the U.S.

The Canada factor



In Europe (and in non-U.S. North America), there's growing wariness of U.S. technology providers.

We can subtly use HypothetiCorp's 🍁 Canadian 🍁 roots as a trust-building differentiator and show that we live outside the U.S. regulatory and data politics environment.

At the risk of inserting politics into this presentation, I must also bring up a socio-politico-economico-complexo-migraine-o reality: people outside the U.S. are wary of working with U.S.-based technology companies. Even if you don't look at media outside the U.S., one has to only look at Paris Marx's *Disconnect* (<https://www.disconnect.blog/>) to see the concern.

HypothetiCorp should use the fact that it's a Canadian company to differentiate itself. Make it clear that we live outside the U.S. regulatory / data / politics spheres. This could be a big help in our campaign to get more European customers.

What if we were featured by **Tiff in Tech**



- Model turned developer turned tech evangelist
- Wide appeal from beginners to seasoned pros
- 1.4M subscribers, 10M monthly audience reach
- Done features for NVIDIA, Amazon, Microsoft, Apple, Amazon, Shopify
- Based in Toronto; HypothetiCorp would be her first hometown client
- If not her, then maybe:
 - NetworkChuck (networking/security)
 - Jeff Geerling (Raspberry Pi and homelab)
 - Wolfgang's Channel (esp. for Europe)
 - Techno Tim (Homelab/self-hosting)

HypothetiCorp should expand its reach by working with tech influencers who can be hired to do info pieces on us. There are a number of people we can choose from, but why not Tiffany "Tiff in Tech" Jantzen? She's not just a popular tech influencer, and not just a Canadian, but from HypothetiCorp's home town — maybe we can harness a little hometown pride to convince her.

Tiff in Tech:

- Site: <https://www.tiffintech.com/>
- YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@TiffInTech>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/tiffintech/?hl=en>
- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/tiffany-janzen/>

Other influencers cited:

- NetworkChuck: <https://www.youtube.com/@NetworkChuck>
- Jeff Geerling: <https://www.youtube.com/c/JeffGeerling>
- Wolfgang: <https://www.youtube.com/@WolgangsChannel>
- TechnoTim: <https://www.youtube.com/@TechnoTim>

Plush axolotl

"Axolotls are constantly growing throughout their lives, so they are obviously the unofficial mascot of HypothetiCorp."

Be the Axolotl,
HypothetiCorp blog



Is there a way we can give these to HypothetiCorp community members who go "above and beyond?"

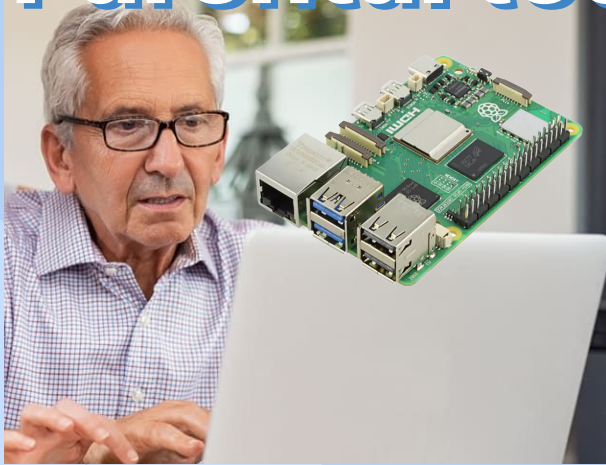
There's an idea in an article from the HypothetiCorp blog from a couple of years back that we should make real — the suggestion that our mascot should be the axolotl, an unusual creature with qualities that match ours! I've sourced a wholesaler for cute plush axolotls that we could use as giveaways, especially at in-person events.

Don't know what an axolotl is? Here you go:

<https://www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/axolotls-amphibians-that-never-grow-up.html>

The real slide featured a different exotic animal that had qualities that could make it the unofficial mascot of the real company.

Parental tech support



More than a few Redditors told me about how they had:

- Set up a Raspberry Pi or similar IoT device at a parent's or older relative's place and
- Used HypothesiCorp for remote access to that older relative's home network to do "anytime, anywhere" tech support

Maybe we could:

- Create videos or documentation showing how to do this?
- Create a kit, complete with IoT device?

In my Reddit thread, so many people told me about how they used HypothesiCorp to set up VPNs with Raspberry Pis or similar IoT devices at their parents' place in order to be able to do remote tech support. We should create instructional material and even physical kits to make this process even easier!

Conference HypoNet



Create a temporary HypoNet VPN for attendees at conferences, and then:

- Developers can instantly share localhost:3000 applications without complex tunneling.
- Set up file servers and demo apps that only HypoNet members can access.
- Show how you can connect to resources across AWS, Azure, and GCP through the same HypoNet interface.
- Demo how different attendees can have different access levels to the same resources based on ACL policies.

Has someone done this? Imagine a HypoNet “network within a network” at a conference — there are so many possibilities!

Conference HypoNet

Even more stuff we could do with a conference HypoNet:

- Connect various conference IoT devices (badge scanners, digital signage, demo hardware) to show HypoNetCorp's device versatility.
- Show seamless connection between attendees' phones, laptops, tablets, and any conference demo hardware.
- Contest ideas:
 - **HypoNetCorp treasure hunt:** Hide digital "treasures" (exclusive content, swag codes) on HypoNet-connected resources that attendees must discover.
 - **HypoNetCorp speed run:** Time attendees connecting new devices to the network and accessing shared resources. Fastest setup wins prizes.



So. Many. Possibilities. And opportunities to gamify!

HypothetiCorp Rescue Squad



How about a community program where power users help newcomers debug setup issues via Discord or video calls? It could be gamified with badges and recognition...

Here's an idea that harnesses the active, involved, loyal, and friendly community that's built up around HypothetiCorp: the HypothetiCorp Rescue Squad!

It would be a lightly coordinated group made up of power users to help newcomers debug setup and beginner issues. It could be done via a forum, but much better if done more interactively, such as via Discord or some other chat/video chat platform. Gamify it with badges and recognition.



I've been going on for some time now. Now's a good time for me to take some more questions!

But first, a quick recap...

The tl;dr

Mission	Transform HypothetiCorp from a beloved home lab tool into the obvious choice for enterprise networking.
Strategy	Create a deliberate pipeline that nurtures home lab enthusiasts into workplace champions while simultaneously building credibility with IT and security professionals.
Key insight	Our biggest competitive advantage is that HypothetiCorp “just works” — a story that DevRel should amplify .

Once again, my view of what DevRel at HypothetiCorp would be all about under my management...

Q3/Q4 Awareness/engagement goals

Reach	1M+ impressions across content, forums, and speaking engagements
Content	100K+ monthly video/blog/newsletter views with 10%+ engagement rate
Community	Grow combined community channels by 20% (Reddit, newsletter, social, etc.)
Advocacy	Identify and nurture 50+ community champions
Attribution breakthrough	Implement tracking for the homelab-to-enterprise pipeline
Feature discovery	25% increase in feature adoption post-content
Europe	20% increase in UK/German audience engagement
Sales enablement	20+ feature explainer assets for the Solutions Engineering team
Another face	As a player/coach, be an additional face in articles, videos, and conferences

...and the goals and metrics that I'm proposing for Q3/Q4 2025.

The Round 2 deck

Slides for the second interview
(Panel interview with the Developer Relations team)

A mere day after the Round 1 interview, I got an email from one of the HypothetiCorp's HR people — I'd made it to Round 2!

Round 2 would be a panel interview, with me being interviewed by the team I'd be working with. This one didn't require a slide deck, but I created one anyway, because:

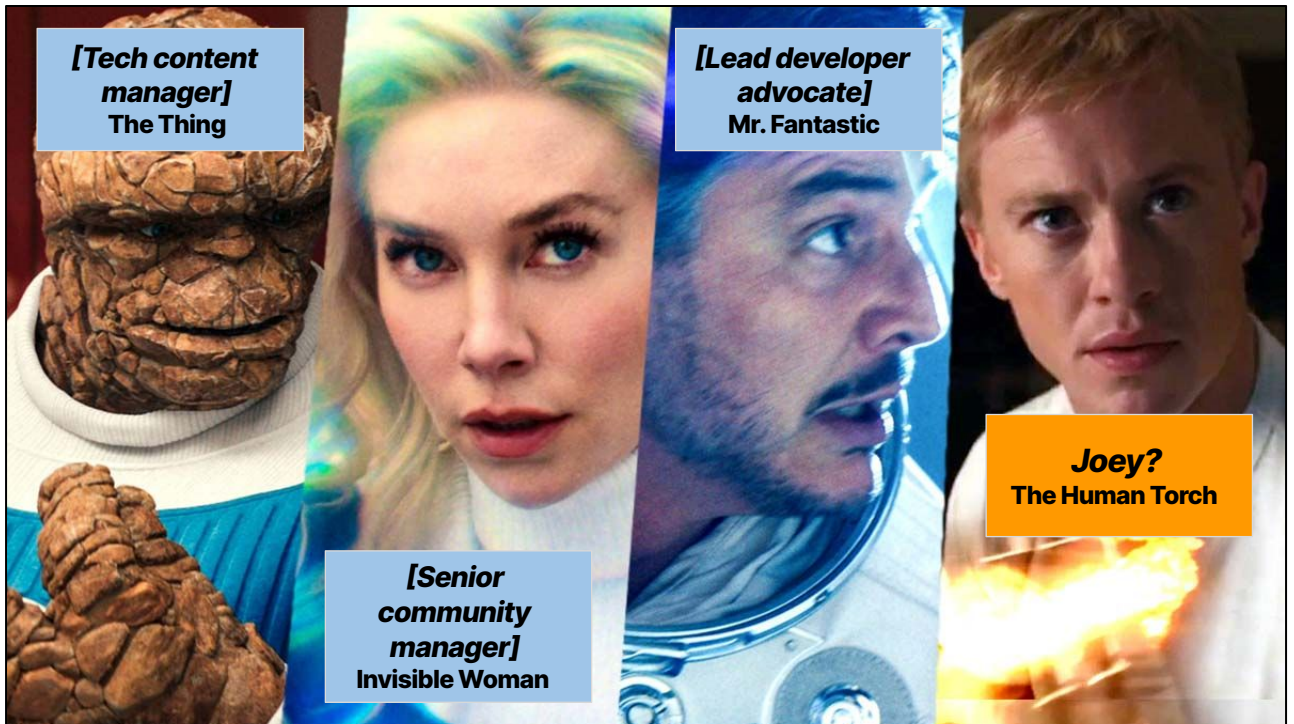
- Notes on slides are easier to read and flip through than notes in a document or wiki
- I could use slides as visual aids to make points where merely speaking and hand-waving wouldn't do

I had two days to prepare for the panel interview.



HypothetiCorp's Developer Relations team would be made of just FOUR people — myself included, if I were hired.

The Round 2 interview took place on July 24, 2025, the day that the new *Fantastic Four* movie premiered, and I thought it might be fun to start with a couple of slides comparing the team to the Marvel Universe's "first family."



This slide got a chuckle...

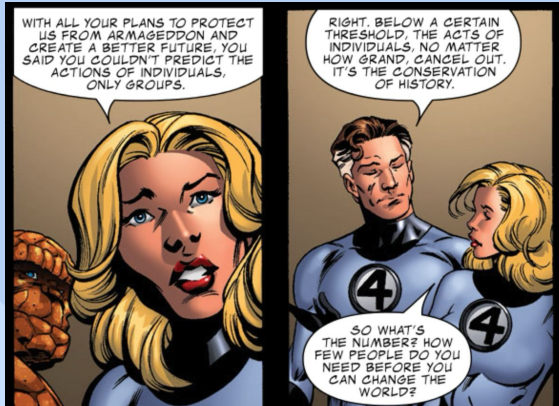
the *Fantastic* 4

FIRST STEPS

Role	Fantastic Four equivalent	Why it fits
[redacted] Lead Developer Advocate	Mr. Fantastic / Reed Richards Genius-level intellect, stretchy powers	The strategist and technical polymath. Stretches between engineering and external engagement, always looking for elegant ways to explain complex systems. He's probably crafting talks and demos that stretch the imagination — just like Reed.
[redacted] Senior Community Manager	Invisible Woman / Susan Storm Force field powers, makes visible things invisible (and vice versa)	The connective force holding the community together. She makes invisible work — moderation, relationship building, conflict resolution — highly impactful. Like Sue, she's often shielding the team from chaos while nurturing positive culture.
[redacted] Technical Content Manager	The Thing / Ben Grimm Super strength, rock-like skin, expert pilot	The rock-solid foundation. He anchors HypothesiCorp's voice with durable, authoritative content. His work hits hard — tutorials, blog posts, docs — and he's always dependable. You want him on your side when the editorial calendar throws punches.
[redacted] DevRel Manager	Human Torch / Johnny Storm Can generate and project flame, flight	Brings the spark. As DevRel Manager, he ignites momentum and lights up opportunities. Outward-facing, a little daring, and his enthusiasm helps amplify everyone's superpowers. Plus, he's a great wingman for the rest of the team. 🔥

...and so did this one, where I took each of our roles and related it to one of the members of the Fantastic Four.

Playful as it is, I thought it was a pretty apt metaphor for how I would like the DevRel team to function.



Trust your team, and protect your team.

— John Oxley, my manager at Microsoft Canada's Developer and Platform Evangelism group

The Fantastic Four operate on the same principles, which is why they're an effective team that have changed the world (and saved it) so many times.



And finally, my team philosophy, which comes from my favorite DevRel managers of all time, John Jeffrey Oxley, with whom I worked during my time as a Microsoftie.

I also used one of my favorite panel sequences from the *Fantastic Four* comic, where Reed Richards says that the smallest number of people required to change the world is four. And the HypothesiCorp DevRel team could be that four!

My best article about working in DevRel

Developer Evangelist. Toronto Area. Now Hiring. Maybe You?

By Joey deVila October 1, 2010 1 Comment



I wrote it a while back, but it's still relevant:

<https://www.globalnerdy.com/2010/10/01/developer-evangelist-toronto-area-now-hiring-maybe-you/>

I never got to use this slide, but you can!

<https://www.globalnerdy.com/2010/10/01/developer-evangelist-toronto-area-now-hiring-maybe-you/>

My approach to developer relations 0

- I treat DevRel as the **connective tissue between product, community, and market.**
- My approach is **outcomes-driven**: I define success through **adoption, activation, and advocacy**, not just impressions or likes.
- I emphasize **helpfulness over hype** — simplifying complex ideas into real-world value for developers, IT pros, and security engineers.
- I use a **Foundation → Focus → Flywheel** model to build programs that start lean and scale naturally.
- I **regularly collaborate with engineering and product teams** to ensure our content and advocacy are technically sound and roadmap-aware.

The “My approach to developer relations” slides were notes rather than actual slides that I would show during the panel interview. As I wrote earlier, notes on slides are easier to read than notes in a word processor or text document during a video interview.

My approach to developer relations 1

- **Developers can tell when you genuinely care** about their success versus when you're just trying to hit your metrics.
- **Helpfulness over hype.** That means actually using the tools I'm advocating for, understanding real developer pain points, and creating content that solves problems rather than just showcases features.
- To the community, I represent the company.
To the company, I represent the community.

I must have both their interests in mind at all times.

— Mary Thengvall (*The Business Value of Developer Relations*)

My approach to developer relations 2

- My ultimate goal isn't just adoption, but about helping developers **fall in love with developing again.**
- That means **supporting them** through the full journey:
 - Experimenting with new tools
 - Prototyping solutions
 - Building meaningful projects
 - Celebrating when they ship something they're proud of
- The best devrel moment: **not when they download your SDK, but when they tell you that you helped them build something** that got them promoted or turned their side project into their startup.

My approach to developer relations 3

- "Knowledge is the only thing that increases as you give it away."
— Mia Liang
- Good developer relations:
 - *Isn't* about convincing people to use your product
 - **It's about connecting with developers and helping them become better at what they love to do.**

<https://mialiang.com/2021/04/28/knowledge-is-the-only-thing-that-increases-as-you-give-it-away/>

Developer Empowerment flywheel

I'm borrowing this from former Auth0 co-worker **Kim Maida** (now at FusionAuth).



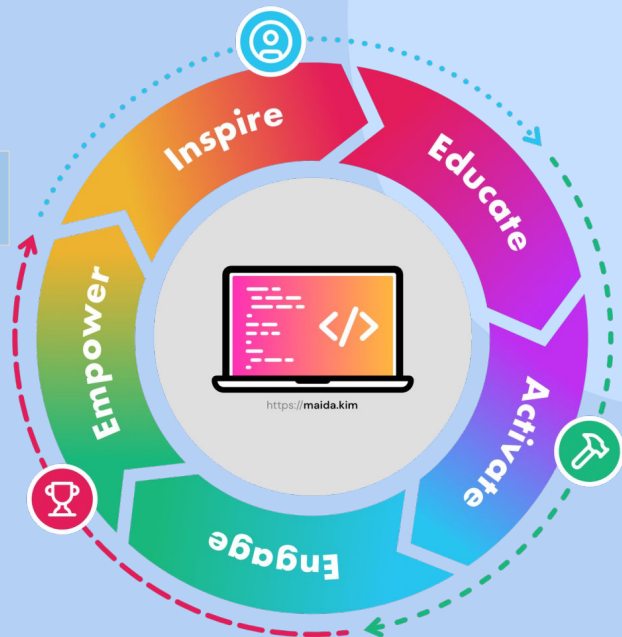
Developer audience: Developers in the community with the potential to use the product.



Builders: Developers currently in the process of learning to develop with the product or are actively developing with it.



Champions: Developers who actively advocate for the product in the community.



This is Kim Maida's Developer Empowerment Flywheel. She was a co-worker of mine at Auth0, and she's now at FusionAuth (who used to make really saucy ads about how much Auth0 charged!). Anyhow, I'm not above borrowing ideas from bright people in our field.

<https://maida.kim/how-to-drive-developer-growth-and-engagement/>

Unlike the "My approach to developer relations" slides, I had these "flywheel" slides ready in case I needed to show them.

Flywheel 1: Inspire

1. **Ideas:** Sharing inspiration on what the product's capabilities are and how to begin. Start small! Have fun and share basic examples with a low barrier to entry. Showcase possibilities and get people to an "aha!" moment as early as possible.
2. **Use cases:** Show how building with the product helps in a practical sense. How does developing with our product solve pain points, enable new capabilities, and provide features that developers want to take advantage of in the real world?
3. **Showcases:** Highlight the really cool, powerful, and/or unique projects that developers have built.
4. **Opportunities:** Inspire developers to explore, experiment, and think much more broadly about how they can build awesome projects and accomplish things that they haven't been able to accomplish previously, without our product.

<https://maida.kim/how-to-drive-developer-growth-and-engagement/>

Flywheel 2: Educate

1. **Documentation:** Provide thorough, easy-to-follow documentation with an exceptional developer experience.
2. **Tutorials:** Create and share tutorials, quick starts, blog posts and other learning content on a variety of mediums including written, video, interactive, and more.
3. **Demos:** Share practical demos with real-world applicability; go beyond Hello World to provide value by showing developers how to build things that are practical and useful.
4. **Presentations:** Talk about how to think about architecture, design patterns, principles, and best practices; provoke thought and be available to answer questions.
5. **Workshops:** Dig deeper with more involved guided learning and teach interactively. Workshops are high value because of the depth of commitment involved.

<https://maida.kim/how-to-drive-developer-growth-and-engagement/>

Flywheel 3: Activate

1. **Create new:** Sign up and take an action (install an SDK, create an app, etc.)
2. **Commit code:** Start writing code (commit code to a repository, make an API call, deploy to an environment, etc.)
3. **Subscribe:** Subscribe to newsletters, course platforms, podcasts, YouTube channels, Twitch channels, etc. Commit to learning more on a regular basis.
4. **Join community:** Join a product-related developer community or user group.
5. **Reach out:** Activate developers to reach out to product advocates to have conversations, find out more, and ask questions as they're getting started.

<https://maida.kim/how-to-drive-developer-growth-and-engagement/>

Flywheel 4: Engage

1. **Discussions:** Engage developer users to participate in chats or discussions, such as communities, forums, and social platforms like Reddit, StackOverflow, etc.
2. **Program participation:** Engage developers to actively participate in activities like hackathons or longer-running developer initiatives like 100 Days of Code challenges; engage developers to join and actively contribute in developer community programs like ambassador or expert or certification
3. **Provide feedback:** Encourage developers in the community to engage in conversations providing value product and / or developer experience feedback.
4. **Ask questions:** Engage with product advocates to ask questions that aren't in the docs and show active interest in learning more and going deeper.

<https://maida.kim/how-to-drive-developer-growth-and-engagement/>

Flywheel 5: Empower

1. **Support:** We want to provide support and resources to help developers teach others what they've learned.
2. **Enable:** Let's provide high-value opportunities for developers to learn from and work with advocacy teams at the organization.
3. **Promote:** We should shine a spotlight on work developers in the community have done and promote resources they've created.
4. **Advocate:** We should empower builders to become advocates themselves and teach others.

Empowerment can happen through a variety of different avenues. We can create experts and ambassadors programs, facilitate and support external community meetups, and put on developer conferences wherein we invite and highlight community speakers and contributors. We can also partner with community experts and content creators. By empowering developers who build with our products, we foster the continuation of the developer empowerment cycle.

<https://maida.kim/how-to-drive-developer-growth-and-engagement/>

DevRel metrics framework

Category	Description
Reach and awareness	Volume-focused metrics for brand recognition and product visibility across developer communities
Engagement and education	How actively developers are interacting and participating in your community
Activation and conversion	Attribution to PLG funnel
Retention and expansion	Shows how well your program keeps developers engaged over time

I also had these DevRel metrics slides ready to show, in case I needed them.

1: Reach and awareness

Volume-focused metrics for brand recognition and product visibility across developer communities

- Website traffic from developer-focused sources
- Conference speaking engagements and attendee reach
- Content views (blog posts, documentation, tutorials)
- Social media impressions and follower growth
- Brand mentions in developer communities

2: Engagement and education

How actively developers are interacting and participating in your community

- **Content performance:** Documentation usage, tutorial completion rates, sample code downloads
- **Community activity:** Forum posts, Discord/Slack engagement, meetup attendance
- **Developer event participation:** Workshop attendees, hackathon participants
- **Feature adoption:** Usage of specific product features after DevRel initiatives

3: Activation and conversion

Measures how effectively DevRel activities drive developers from awareness to meaningful product adoption and business outcomes

- **Product-Qualified Leads (PQLs):** Activated users likely to convert
- **Trial-to-paid conversion rates** attributed to DevRel activities
- **TTHW (Time to Hello World):** How quickly developers get started with their first project — first HypoNet, perhaps?
- **TTFV (Time to First Value):** How quickly developers reach their “aha moment”
- **Integration completions**

4: Retention and expansion

Shows how well your program keeps developers engaged over time

- **Developer retention rate:** Percentage remaining active after set periods
- **Community growth:** New vs. retained community members
- **Expansion revenue:** Additional purchases from developer-influenced accounts
- **Net Promoter Score (NPS)** and developer satisfaction (SAT)

Community impact metrics 1:

User-to-user help metrics

- **Help ratio:** Questions answered by community vs. team members
- **Response time:** How quickly community members respond to new questions
- **Solution rate:** Percentage of questions that get working solutions
- **Follow-up engagement:** Do people come back to help others after being helped?

I also had these “Community impact” slides ready to show, in case I needed them.

Community impact metrics 2: Community health indicators

- **Retention rates:** New users still active after 30/60/90 days
- **Contribution diversity:** How many different people contribute each month
- **Cross-channel activity:** Users active on multiple community channels
- **Organic content creation:** User-generated tutorials, setup guides, etc.

Community impact metrics 3:

Knowledge transfer metrics

- **Documentation improvements:** Community-suggested edits to docs
- **Feature requests quality:** How detailed and actionable community feedback is
- **Bug reports:** Quality and completeness of community bug reports
- **Use case discovery:** New applications/integrations discovered by community

Community impact metrics 4: Advocacy indicators

- **Referral tracking:** New sign-ups with community member referral codes
- **Social amplification:** Community members sharing content vs. just consuming
- **Event participation:** Community members volunteering to help at events
- **Recruiting pipeline:** Community members becoming employees/contractors

Community impact metrics 5: Advanced metrics

- **Network effects:** Do successful users bring in more users?
- **Knowledge base usage:** Are community-created resources being used?
- **Problem escalation rate:** Are fewer issues requiring official support?

Thoughts on metrics

- **Attribution is critical:** Modern DevRel teams must track "attribution to PLG funnel," connecting their activities to actual business outcomes like signups, activations, and revenue.
- **Avoid vanity metrics:** Don't use account creations or open source downloads as measures of community. Focus on engagement *quality* over *quantity*.
- **Align with business goals:** Focus on metrics that have a clear connection to business outcomes, such as conversion rates, customer satisfaction scores, and retention rates.
- **TTFF (Track the full funnel):** The importance of tracking progress is evident, with the decline in "we don't measure" from 14% in 2022 to 9% in 2023, showing the industry is maturing in measurement sophistication.

This slide is more a set of notes than something I would have shown during the interview.

Avoid vanity metrics: <https://devfirst.substack.com/p/kpis-for-developer-relations-teams>

Align with business goals:

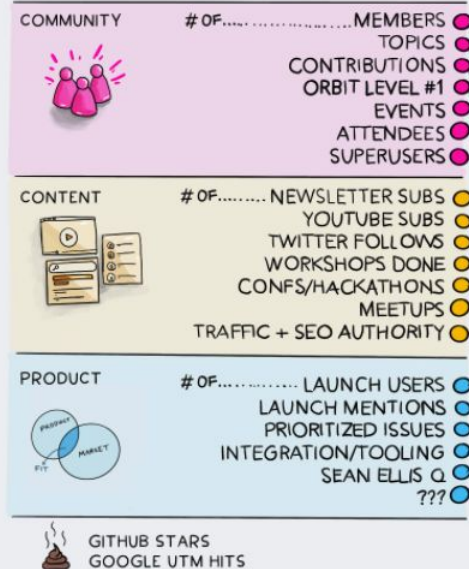
<https://www.productmarketingalliance.com/developer-marketing/what-is-developer-relations-devrel/>

Decline in "We don't measure":

<https://www.devrel.agency/post/survey-insights-devrel-metrics-that-matter>

DRIVERS OF DEVREL

These are your leading indicators. You have more control here, but these metrics are less meaningful



YOUR NORTH STAR

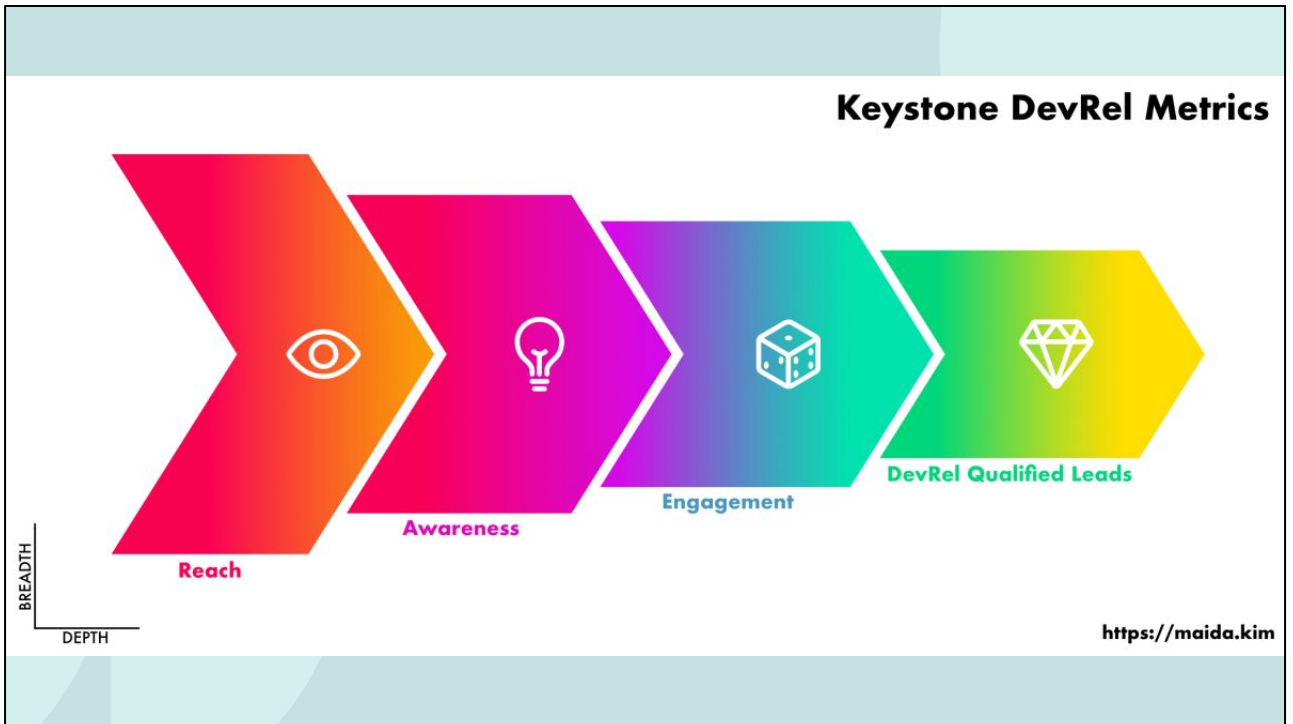
MAD is a lagging indicator. It's the most meaningful, but you have the least control.



ART @ARTHURWUHO

From Shawn "swyx" Wang: *Measuring Developer Relations*
(<https://www.swyx.io/measuring-devrel/>)

I don't agree with Swyx on everything, but I agree with this slide of his.



An older concept from Kim Maida that I included, just in case.

<https://maida.kim/how-to-measure-the-value-of-developer-relations/>

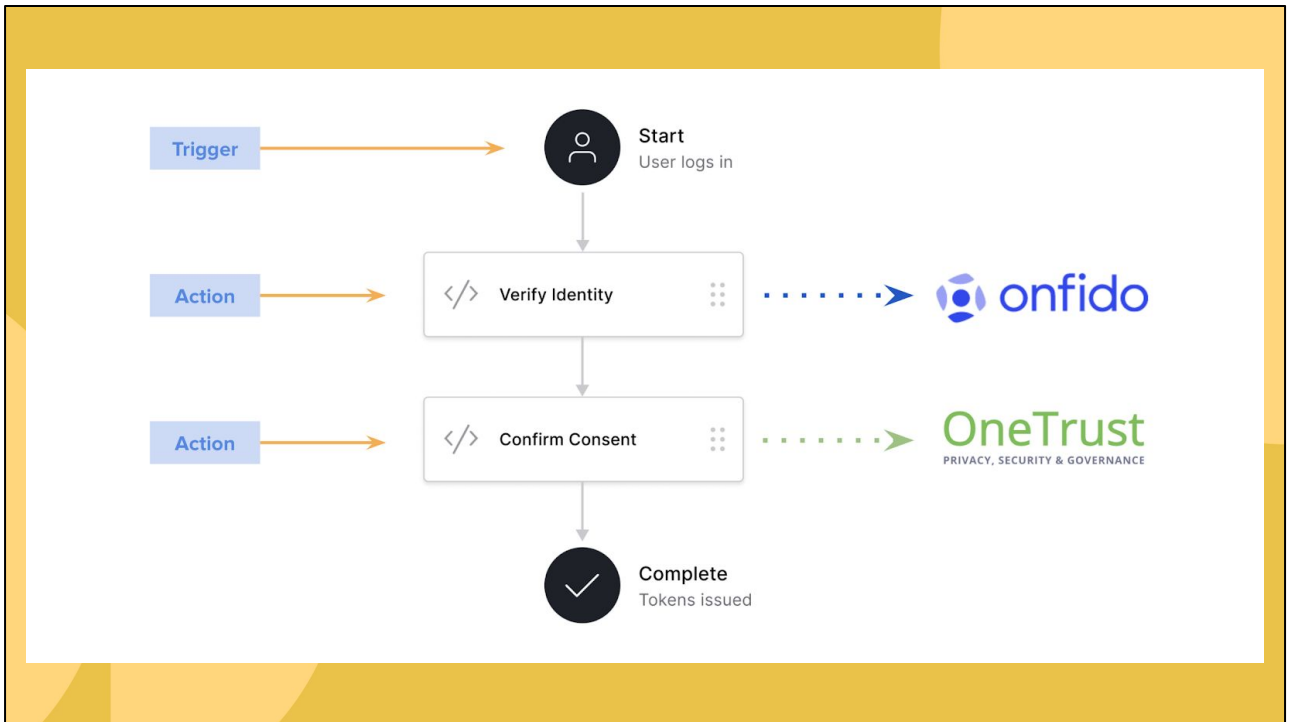
Auth0 actions



- **Actions** are **serverless functions** hosted by Auth0 that are **triggered by certain events** during authentication workflows, such as when logging in or logging out.
- There two broad categories of actions:
 - Actions you write yourself
 - Ready-made actions made by partner organizations

This set of slides with gold backgrounds contain examples of content I'd created.

This slide explains a new feature in Auth0 that I was tasked to write about: Auth0 Actions.



This is a screenshot of Auth0 Actions in action. In case I needed it, I could show this slide while explaining how Actions worked.



Honeytokens:

Using Auth0 actions to catch users logging in using decoy user accounts.



Trusted networks only:

Using Auth0 actions to limit logins only to users on trusted IP addresses.



Specific dates:

Using Auth0 actions to allow users to register for an account only on certain dates.



Rickroll:

Using Auth0 actions to redirect users to an announcement page (or Rickroll them).

Here are four articles I wrote about Auth0 actions.

Honeytokens article:

<https://auth0.com/blog/use-honeytokens-auth0-actions-catch-malicious-user-logins/>

Trusted networks article:

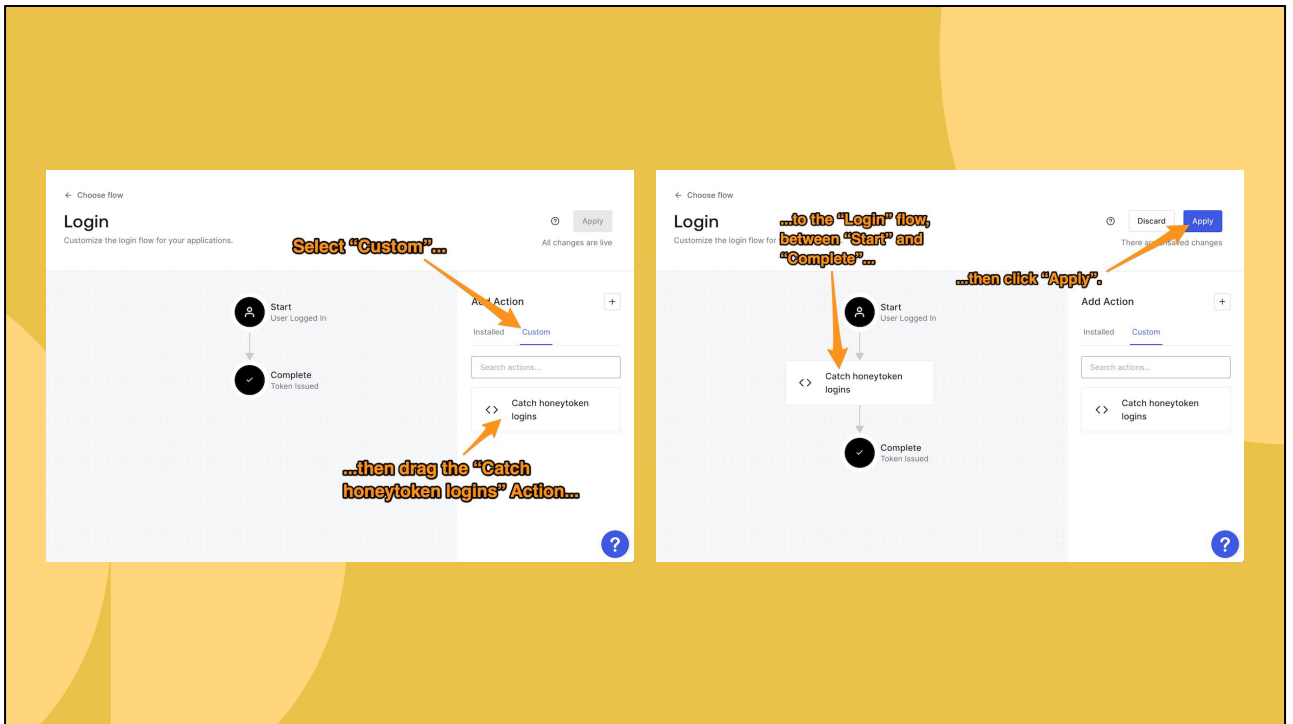
<https://auth0.com/blog/ensure-users-log-in-trusted-networks-auth0-actions/>

Specific dates article:

<https://auth0.com/blog/limit-user-registration-to-specific-dates-with-auth0-actions/>

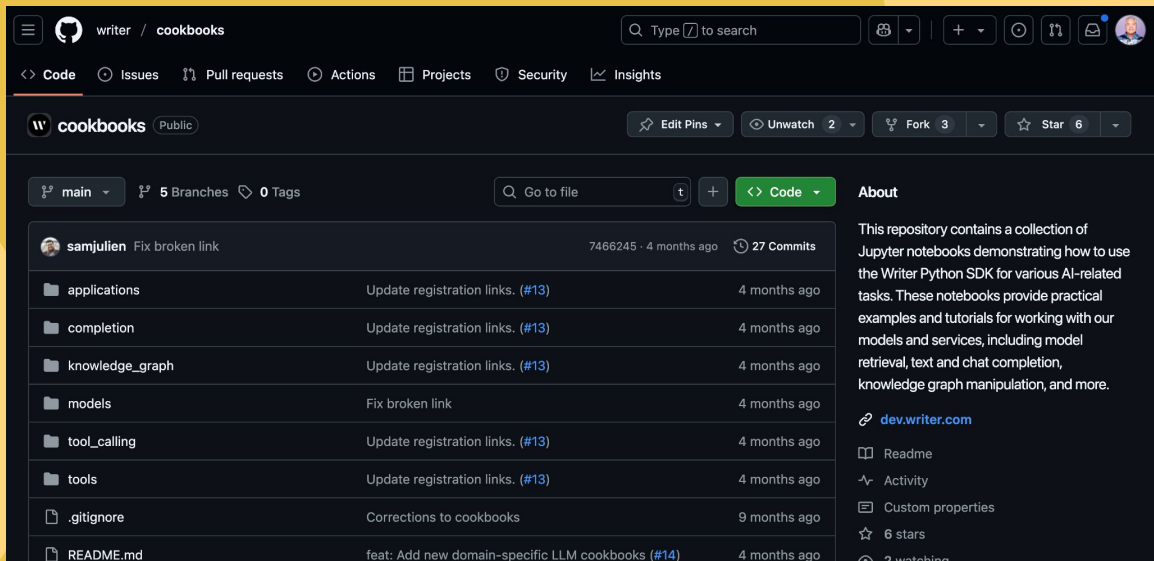
Rickroll article:

<https://auth0.com/blog/use-actions-show-users-announcement-after-logging-in-or-rick-roll-them/>



Here are screenshots of Auth0 Actions' drag-and-drop UI, taken from one of my articles.

Writer cookbooks

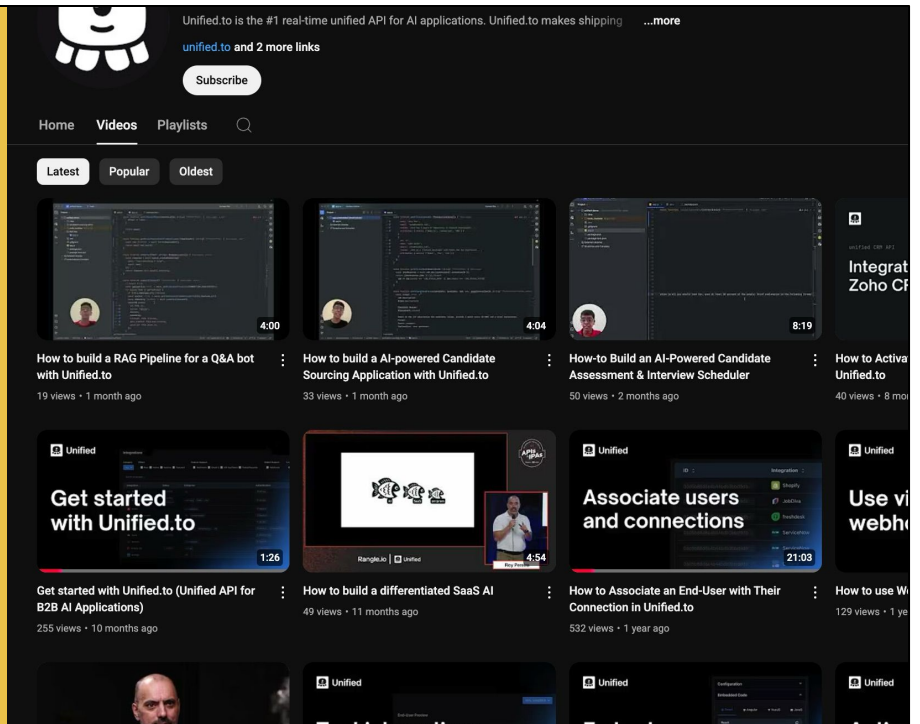


I also wrote documentation for the AI company Writer, including these cookbooks: step-by-step instructions on how to use Writer to build simple AI-powered applications.

<https://dev.writer.com/home/cookbooks>

Unified.to

Most of their video views, even after a year, are in the two-digit territory, with **one** notable exception...



I also did DevRel consulting at [Unified.to](https://unified.to), which included making videos. My video explaining a key task — associating end users with their connections — is their most-viewed video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OW-1vE04cFw>

Technical content strategy

- My first 90 days won't be about reinventing the wheel
- They'll be about finding the volume knobs on what's already working and turning them up to 11:
 - YouTube is clearly driving attribution,
 - r/HypothetiCorp is buzzing with engaged users
 - There are passionate advocates in the home lab community.
- Rather than starting from scratch, I want to systematically amplify these proven successes while I'm learning the deeper nuances of the business

The rest of the deck was really notes for me rather than slides to show the panel.

Conference talk strategy

- I **balance inspirational talks with deeply practical demos**. If someone doesn't walk away with an idea they can try this week, I've missed the mark.
- I **tailor each talk based on audience maturity/focus**. For example: DevOpsDays = workflow relevance, PyCon = integration simplicity, BSides = security posture.
- I **prioritize "we solved this weird problem with HypothetiCorp" stories** over feature dumps.
- I've used speaking slots to **test messaging and turn Q&A into future content ideas**.
- I **actively coach others** (including team members or community champions) to submit talks, which builds HypothetiCorp's presence beyond just me.

Growing developer communities

- **Community is a long-term investment**, not a channel.
- My approach:
 - Listen first
 - Lower the barrier to contribution
 - Celebrate the hell out of early participants.
- I want to use **lightweight rituals** — e.g., “First Friday Demos,” “HypothetiCorp Tuesdays” — to give community members a rhythm and reason to return.
- I **favor tools that communities already use** (Discord, GitHub, Mastodon) instead of trying to move them.
- I often **work with Community Managers to co-create a contributor funnel**: casual → consistent → trusted → advocate.

Collaboration style

- I default to transparency and proactive documentation — it makes async, distributed collaboration easier.
- I'm a coach at heart: I like helping teammates grow in the direction they want to go.
- I use lightweight planning rituals (e.g., monthly OKR check-ins, weekly syncs) to keep momentum without bureaucracy.
- I value cross-functional wins: collaborating with marketing, sales, or product to unlock use cases or unblock roadblocks.

My strongest selling points

- Proven team leadership with technical credibility
- Content creation machine (750+ Microsoft blog posts, 20 years blogging)
- Community building at scale (multiple 2K+ member meetups)
- Conference speaking experience with measurable impact
- Cross-functional collaboration experience across engineering, product, and marketing
- Geographic expansion experience (North America focus they need)

These red slides are really notes to myself, but I did end up showing the panel the “Key questions to ask” slide.

Key questions to ask

- **[Lead developer advocate]:**
 - What's the biggest content gap you see right now?
 - What would make your job easier?
- **[Senior community manager]:**
 - What's working best in the community right now?
 - What's your biggest challenge with the Insiders program?
- **[Technical content manager]:**
 - What's the content creation process like?
 - How do you balance technical accuracy with accessibility?
- **All:**
 - What would success look like in your first 6 months working with me as your manager?

Technical aptitude

- **Philosophy:** Lead with community needs, not product features
- **Example:** Your Auth0 mobile growth (0 to 20K monthly) - focus on how you identified gaps and built content around real developer pain points
- **Measurement:** Concrete metrics and attribution (they care about this!)
- **Recent content example:**
 - Pick something technical from your recent work (Unified.to content, Python AI courses, or conference talks)
 - Walk through: Problem identified → Research → Content creation → Distribution → Results
 - Show the technical depth + community impact
- **Conference Strategy:**
 - Your Microsoft 8-city tour approach (taking big topics, training local speakers)
 - CFP process and topic selection methodology
 - How you measure success beyond just "gave a talk"

Community

- **Growing communities:**
 - Tampa Bay success: 5,000+ combined members across 4 meetups
 - Process: Start with genuine value, not promotion
 - Scaling: Your systems thinking (templates, processes, community champions)
- **Collaboration style:**
 - Trust-based management philosophy you mentioned in the first interview
 - Cross-functional work (Auth0 product teams, Microsoft breadth program)
 - Remote/async collaboration experience
- **Engagement strategy:**
 - Community-driven content (r/HypothetiCorp integration ideas)
 - Gamification and recognition (Insiders program thoughts)
 - User-to-user help ratios and community health metrics

Technical content

- **Blog Presence:**
 - Global Nerdy: 10M+ pageviews, technical accessibility
 - Auth0 Blog: Mobile content strategy and guest author management
 - Writing Philosophy: Make complex simple, but don't dumb down
- **Content creation:**
 - Process: Research → Draft → Technical review → Community feedback → Iterate
 - Promotion: Multi-channel distribution, community amplification
 - Repurposing: One piece of research becomes blog post, video, conference talk
- **HypothetiCorp content strategy:**
 - "Features on Features" campaign concept
 - Community-driven content from r/HypothetiCorp
 - Attribution focus (they can't measure home-lab-to-enterprise yet)
 - European market content needs

Stories to have ready

- **Technical Challenge:** How you updated Auth0's 2-year-old mobile samples
 - **Community Growth:** Tampa Bay Python from 0 to 2,100+ members
 - **Content Strategy:** Microsoft newsletter to 50,000 subscribers
 - **Cross-functional Impact:** Working with Auth0 product teams on quickstart kits
 - **Problem-Solving:** Any time you identified a gap and built something to fill it
-
- **Remember:** They want to see if you can do the work (technical aptitude), build community (not just audience), and think strategically about content. Show don't tell!