



**DRUPALCON  
LONDON**

# Why Drupal Projects Fail: Breaking Down Barriers to Successful Drupal Adoption

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Presented by cpliakas





**WARNING: Discussion not technical**



# Agenda

- Introduction
- Key components to success
- Why projects fail
- Breaking down barriers to success
- Questions



# About Chris

- cpliakas on Drupal.org (sē plā kis)
- @cpliakas on Twitter
- Module maintainer, core contributor
- Zend, MySQL, LPI Certified
- Working with Drupal for 3+ years
- Member of Acquia's PS team for 1+ year
- Pre-sales consultant for Acquia



What makes me qualified?



# I work with many organizations





# I remember learning Drupal

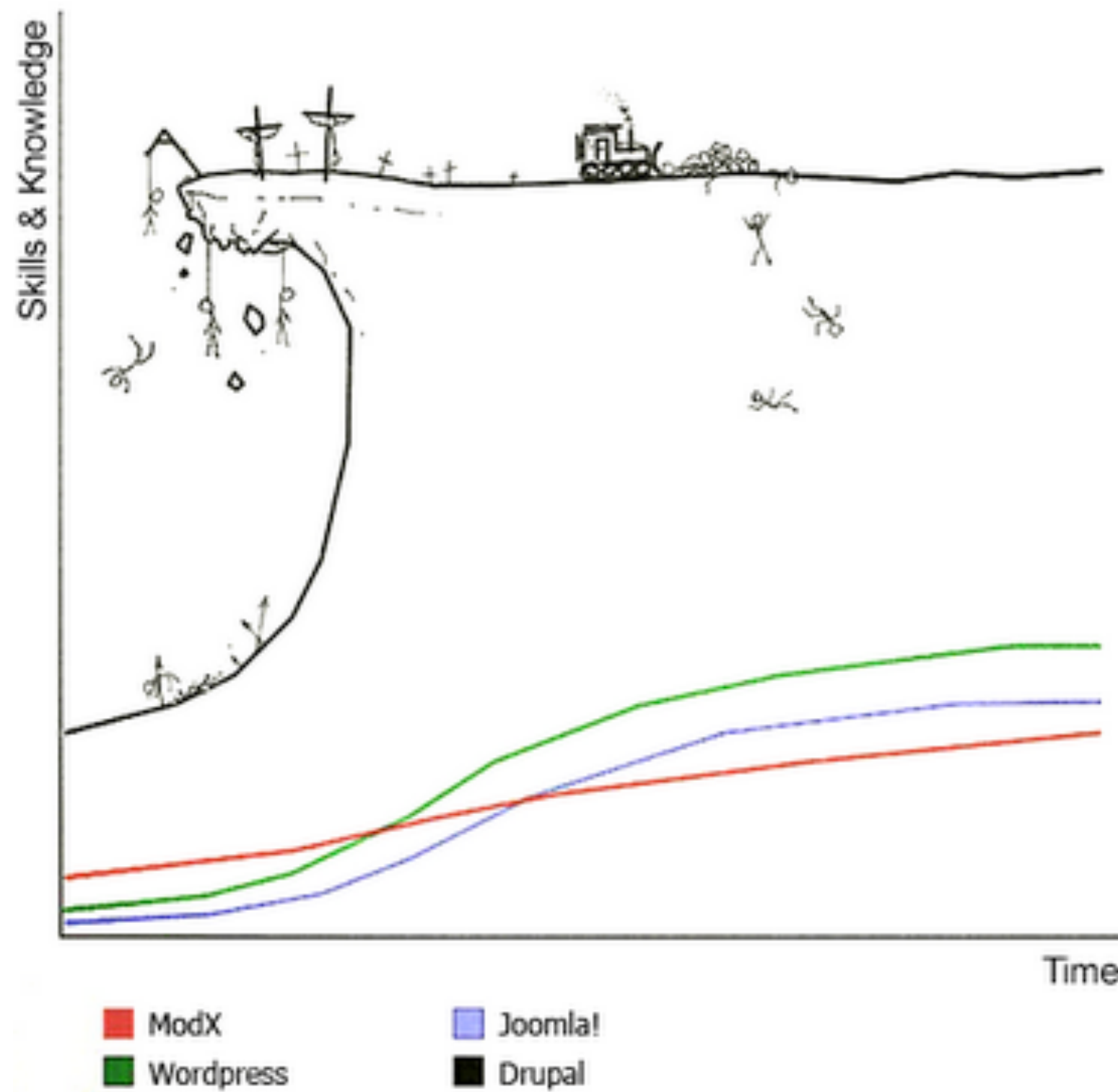








Learning curve for popular CMS



Artist unknown (please identify yourself, this image is great)





I see dead projects!







Been in the weeds

Seen the big picture







There are patterns



# Five key components of success

- Project management
- Process
- Development practices
- Thought partnership
- Expertise





# What we are really talking about

- Expectation management
- Communication
- Execution





# Barriers



# Red flags

- We use “Company X” Drupal.
- We do the impossible.
- We have really good PHP developers that just need a couple of days to get up to speed with Drupal.
- We are pushing boundaries, so we do not work with the community.
- We have an offshore team do most of our development.
- We cut our rates to get the project.
- We will get bigger projects if we meet the aggressive timeline.



Let's break it down



# Mismanaged Expectations



No matter the end result, a project will be viewed as a failure if the original expectations were not met.



# Contributing factors

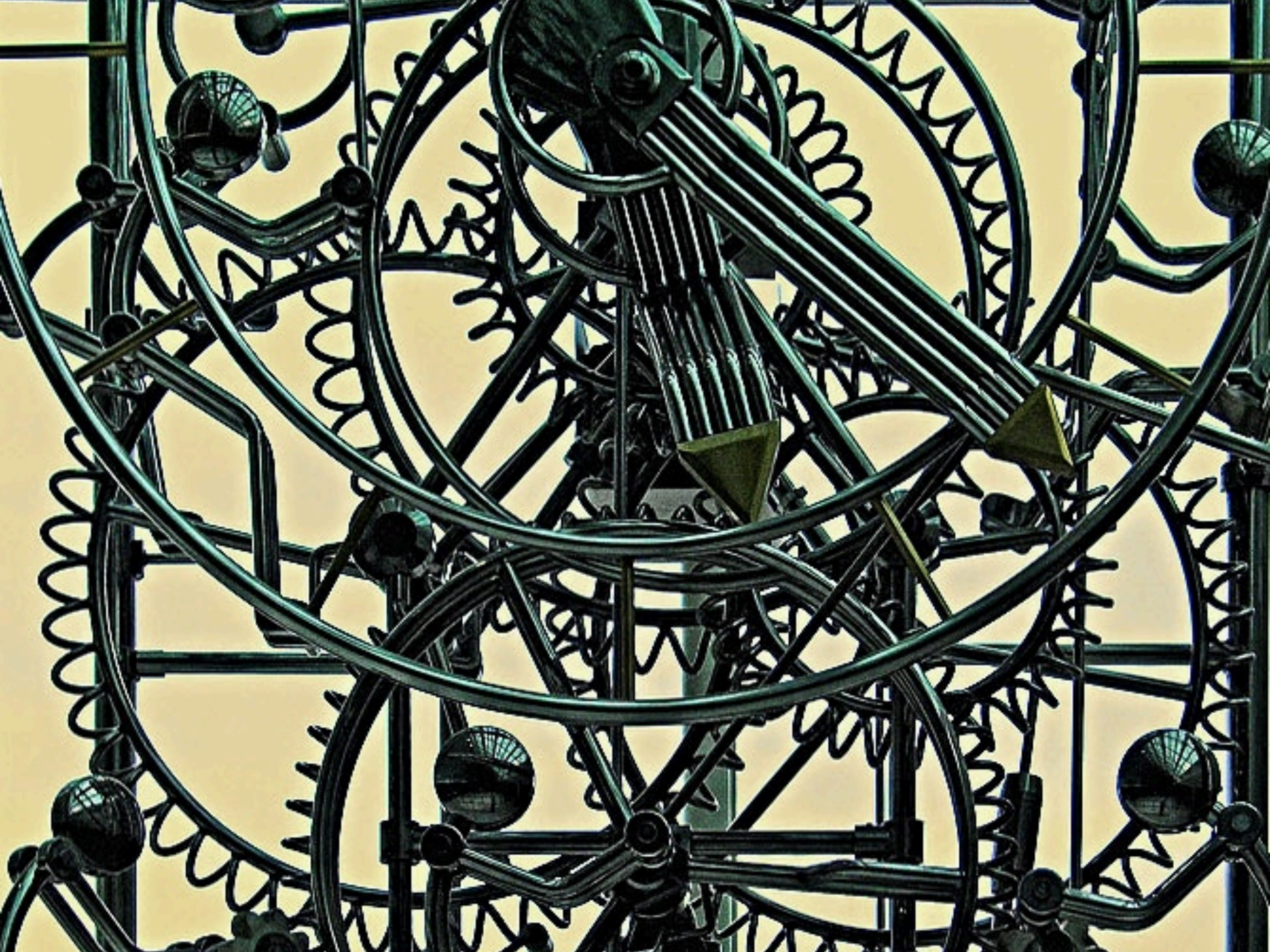
- Product misrepresentation
  - Accidental
  - Intentional
- Unsustainable precedence
  - Timeline
  - Cost
- Communication breakdown
- Lack of transparency
- Client / stakeholder driven project
- Develop an exit strategy





# Lack of Expertise







# Drupal is complex

- There are strengths and challenges
- You don't know what you don't know
- Drupal is not a magic bullet
- Problems aren't trivial
- Many ways to accomplish the same goal
- Team can add hundreds of hours
  - Designers add functionality
  - Developers reinvent the wheel



Building platforms too early



# The platform problem

- Need deep expertise
- Maintenance is expensive
- Are you blocking innovation?
- Are there enough use cases?
- What are your business goals?











# Characteristics of a good PM

- Key member of the team
- Knowledgeable about technology
- Understands process
- Internally keeps team on track
- Protects the team externally
- Effectively pushes back



# Expectation management



# Process



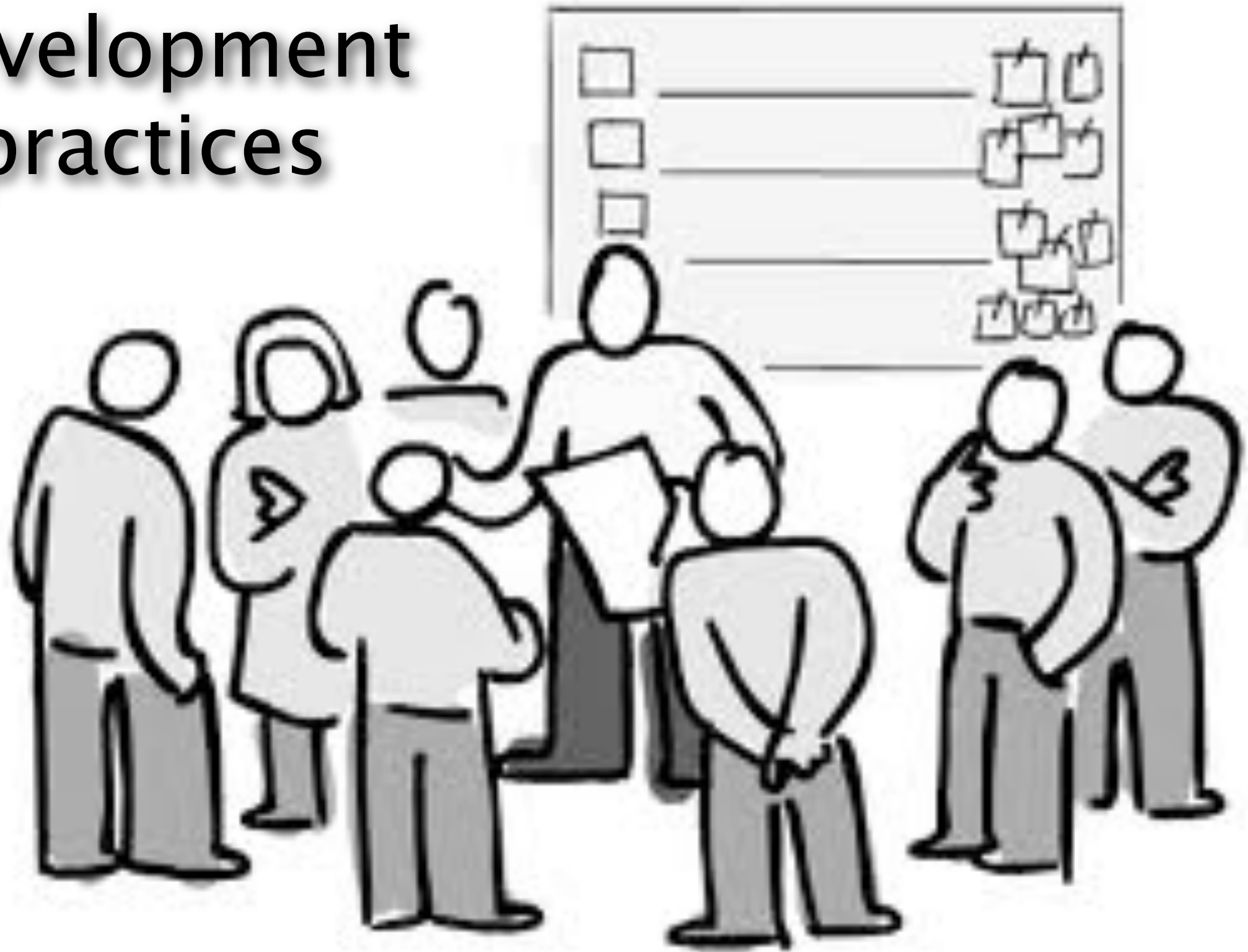


# Define a process that works for you

- Methodology doesn't matter
- Well defined, yet flexible
- Simple is better
- Transparent



# Development practices





# Development practices

- Use source control (SVN, Git, etc.)
- Facilitate communication
- Use Drupal best practices
  - Some developers / designers resist
  - Publicly available
- Simple is better
- Dev / Staging / Prod environments
- Deployment techniques



# Thought Partnership





# Drive goals and innovation

- Understand and identify business goals
- Uncover pain
- Provide solutions and options
- Avoid ports



Experience

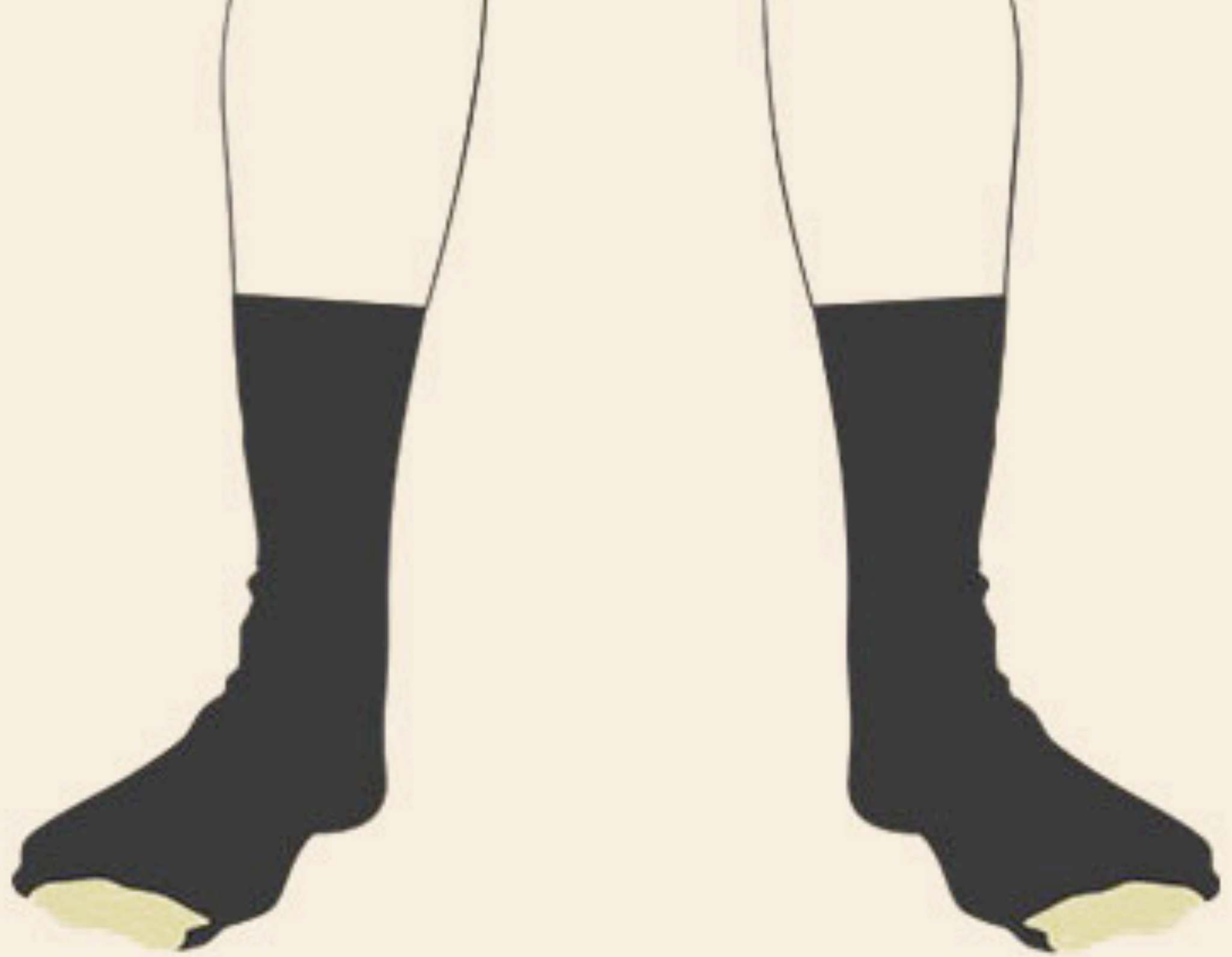




# Become experts

- Doesn't happen overnight
- Empower your team
- Leverage the community
- Share knowledge
  - “Cooperatition” (stolen from Jeff Eaton)
  - Knowledge gained in returned
- Go to conferences, camps, meet-ups
- Give trainings





**IT'S BUSINESS TIME**



# What can Acquia do for me?

- Professional services
- Enterprise support
- Accelerators
- FREE training for partners
- Joint proposals
  - Side by side
  - Behind the scenes
- Acquia Network



How can we help you succeed?



Questions?



# What did you think?

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<http://london2011.drupal.org/conference/schedule>

Click the “Take the survey” link

***THANK YOU!***

