

History of the department

A bit of history

I applied last year as a DC because, like many professionals around the world, I have companies that depend on the Joomla CMS. And to sell my services I need to have a strong brand, if not for prospect recognition, at least no reluctance from them.

In my segment we are particularly pushed by CMS like Drupal and Prestashop and, even if on the segment of projects with a minimum budget of several tens of thousands of euros Wordpress is very popular, it is not yet the default solution as it can be on lower budgets. In the early budget segment, it has almost become a standard and I have a lot of admiration for those who, every day, must fight to get their projects win with Joomla.

It is all about marketing. Without a strong brand you can have the best product, it will be eaten up by the competition. And that is what has been happening for years with Joomla. Look at the trends, the number of queries on the term Joomla is going down. Month after month, year after year, we are losing points.

So that is why I applied last year. Because it was important to me, it was important to many others as well. So, even though my level of English is close to your level of understanding of Inuit language, I saw an election and I went. Of course, I had no idea what a DC was, or how the board, departments, teams, were working... 😊

The finding

The first surprise was to see that the marketing department was almost non-existent. There was the Social Media Team that did the job, and for the rest, everything else had been left in the lurch after two successive DC resignations and several months without teams. No procedures, no documents (or so few), all I needed to know (or have) was in a thirty-line document given to me by Sandra Decoux. For the rest, I had to invent everything or start again from a formidable marketing study made for the launch of Joomla 4.... Two years ago.

Forum For The Future

Last January, a hundred Joomlaers were invited to Marbella in Spain to discuss and brainstorm on the future and the strategy for Joomla. This event was a great opportunity to bring together a representative panel of volunteers from our community, involved people with a personal and/or professional vision of the future of Joomla. Some great ideas came out of this sprint. Really!

For me, the main news was the birth of the marketing department. Having a level of spoken English close to a goldfish one and not having been included in the organization of the event, I try to optimize in listening to people and be a witness to the creation of the new marketing team. By the end of the weekend, 28 people had joined the marketing department. It was really great news!

The emulation lasted until February and then nothing more. No more sound, no more light.

COVID-19

In March, at the beginning of containment, I proposed to do an article on our portal to show the community that we were not going to forget them. I also proposed to do a survey to the pros in order to find out what they needed during this complicated period.

Seeing that I did not get an answer on the official Glip, I asked Sandra to become my assistant DC. She was my assistant for... a month. When it does not feel right, it does not feel right... ☹

Fortunately, Jaz Parkyn arrived with her experience and her team and an article was published on the portal.

After COVID-19

Since June, Marianela Queme, the assistant to the DC has returned to the marketing team and has started to take things in hand. And just between us, fortunately because without her I would not have been able to draw up the budget for the coming year. She also sent emails to the different Team Leaders and got answers as far as I know. A first marketing meeting was also held in June, the first meeting since March 2019, that's great news!

Joomla 4 and the future of the project

The first version of Joomla 3 was released in September 2012. We are in July 2020. We all know that 8 years in IT is an eternity, but on top of that, the version of Joomla 4 has been announced for more than two years. I say this to emphasize the importance of the launch of Joomla 4, and if we miss the release of the new version, I'm afraid it is the Joomla project that will disappear.

We therefore need a real marketing department, active and efficient. This has not been the case for too long and my mandate is just adding a line to an already too long list of wasted time.

By chance, we have the launch of the DC's elections this month. It is a unique opportunity to find the right candidate, the one who will guide the different teams, implement the objectives decided by the board in consultation with the DCs of the different departments.

Will this person be paid by the project or will he be a volunteer, I can't give you the answer because I don't have it. I also think that a marketing professional will not be able to spend so much time on the task without being paid. So, you understand that we must get the needle in the haystack.

So yes, it is true, the budgets of our project are small and do not allow us to outsource this task. That is true, but is it necessary to have money? If I take the example of the marketing audit done by Noreen Cesareo two years ago, it is a real professional job and it could have been done by her agency. Done and billed!

So why are we cutting off such much-needed skills? Why not appeal to professionals and offer them, in exchange for visibility, to do qualified work for us. We could spread this work, or spread the information of what this work will allow us to do, and for a backlink or a banner (or whatever, these are just examples), we would move forward much more quickly .

In conclusion

Here, I tried to give you an activity report of the marketing department for the last 6 months. As I did not have a template or an example from a previous report, I did it with my personality. It will surely be too personal for some and it will divert them from the deep thought, but I don't know how to do otherwise. I hope the majority of you will understand I have been plenty of good will.

I'm going to leave the marketing department with the regret of not being able to gather the team around the project in the absence of the Team Leaders. Speaking English only in writing didn't help my job, fights or conspiracies in the community doesn't help either... I want to reign at least ten times and each time I thought it was a bad message we were going to send to the community. Once again a board member was going to resign... Especially since it wouldn't have made any difference until the marketing team wasn't responding...

I really hope that the project will find someone who is up to the challenge before us. I've been engaged and active in the community for almost 15 years now, I have a strong relationship with Joomla and the community, and for that, I would really like Joomla to return to the ambition it had 15 years ago. No matter the result in trends, no matter the number of downloads, we have the best CMS, the best community and whatever your project will be, we will do it with a smile and enthusiasm!

Eric Lamy