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Alban
Super Contributor
Posts: 1266
Registered: 2006-01-18



Message 1 of 1
Viewed 2,451 times
★★★★★

FSL Community: Happy 1st Birthday

First year activity report

By **Alban Rampon**
Freescale Community Forums Principal Moderator.

Introduction

First, this report is a personal and informal representation of the Community with real data gathered. Freescale Semiconductor is not responsible for my declarations and I am not expressing the Company's opinion/views, but mine !

Freescale Community Forums are a means of providing informal support primarily for Freescale Consumer & Industrial Customers. However, more and more members are part of the Automotive business.

For Freescale, this new means of support should avoid duplicate questions as answers are public.

The Community builds a knowledge base in which confirmed engineers, as well as hobbyists, can find valuable information.

In Orange are links to further details and all graphs are clickable for a larger version.

Metrics Results

To demonstrate the progress made this year, I extracted metrics from the system. These are all real numbers. The website actually went live on January 2006, but the first month was not advertised. Therefore I did not display it.

New Members



Figure 1. Monthly New Registrations

Freescale Forums benefited greatly from the existing base of Freegeeks.net, a phpBB forum now down. The advertisement of FSL Forums on Freegeeks allowed the Community to grow by 550 members from the first month of being online.

During the last 12 months we have had an average of 425 new members each month. Now the launch period is finished, we have stabilized at about 375, which is very respectable.

[Processor Expert](#), [P&E Microcomputer Systems](#), [SofTec Microsystems](#) and other famous Freescale third parties participate regularly. Numerous [Freescale Design Alliance Partners](#) also bring their expertise, at **no cost to the Community Members**.

Traffic

To provide a better overview of the activities, the metrics are divided by groups. This shows the strength of all boards.



Figure 2. 8-bit MCU New Posts



Figure 3. 16-bit MCU New Posts



Figure 4. CodeWarrior New Posts



Figure 5. ColdFire/68k New Posts

The **strongest** board is incontestably the 8-bit MCU. It counts about 380 posts a month (cumulating 8-bit + OSBDM08). The other boards are consistent with 250-300 new posts every month.

Only the ColdFire/68000 has significantly less traffic; however it was started later than the others. It is at an average of 150 posts, one month after the launch phase.

Two boards are not represented in these metrics: TBDML and OSBDM08. These are two open source projects created for Freescale products to have inexpensive debugging/programming tools. These tools are not for production and are rather targeted to bench evaluation.



Figure 6. Monthly Page Viewed

Membership to Freescale Forums captures only a *tiny* number of the people actually reading them. Anyone can read the posts, but only Members can ask/answer questions.

To provide a better overview of the number of visits, the number of pages viewed gives a total number of visits.

With an average of 350k per month, **Freescale Community serves about 11,300 pages per day** (pages have more than one message).

This is more proof, if ever needed, that the Community is going well and that **Member's participation is respected**.

The 11,300 pages viewed per day show that the Forum could be better used to communicate between Freescale users. **Advertising must be discreet and subtle though**, as it is a primarily a Technical Community. All posts not respecting that obligation are either getting a bad rating or are deleted.

Efficiency



Figure 7. Minutes to Answer

The previous metrics show that Freescale Community has been very active. A key metric for a technical community aimed at supporting users is how long it takes for a question to be addressed.

The Figure 7 is expressed in minutes. Over the last 12 months, all questions were first replied to within 17 hours. (These are not office hours, but consecutive hours)

These results cover the whole Community. Some questions in the **General board** did impact the results negatively. When **delicate issues** are raised or **attacks** are made on Freescale or on other parties, I preferred to think about it rather than reply quickly and give a useless answer. I am sure you will appreciate.

Metrics Conclusions

Freescalers and Community Members who participated in the launch and in the everyday activities can be proud of the result. Their time was not wasted and produced significant results.

We not only have built a **strong knowledge base**, constantly updated by **experts**, but we also have a **generous stable growth**.

Other Activities

During the last 12 months, Freescale encouraged and recognized Members in different ways.

MAC7111 board giveaway

To thank Freescale Community Members who spent most time and were **key participants** in the launch of the Forum, an evaluation board was sent to nine valued Members.

These boards were brand new ARM evaluation boards, and members seemed delighted to receive a useful board to introduce themselves to the 32-bit MCU world (instead of receiving a useless pen I imagine 😊). Their feedback was glowing. *Thank You!*

"Super" Contributors

To recognize **the Pillars of the Community**, we not only measure the level of their participation, but also its quality. Any message (this includes Freescalers) can be rated by all other users.

To promote best contributors, the status of Super Contributor is gained by users who posted more than 500 messages and have an average rating greater than 80%.

As of today only Peg has joined this quality group. This is to show how good this Australian is 😊.

A "Trusted Contributor" status is intended to distinguish members regularly contributing with message rating greater than 80%.

Third Party ranking

Similarly, a **special distinction for Freescale third parties** was introduced. The idea was to attract these third parties, and to create a real **Freescale Knowledge Centre** from the Forums. I believed Members are likely to prefer a one-stop Freescale website rather than having to subscribe to many different websites.

As an incentive to third parties to become members and identify themselves, they are allowed to change the icon attached to posts to display their company logo – discreet advertising and a way for Members to know they can **trust** the source of contributions.

Success Stories

Adapter for MMEVS target

A member was quoted 12 weeks delivery for a small adapter he broke (RoHS/lead free conversion does take time in all industries). This broken adapter was blocking all development and the project, critical for this company, was in jeopardy.

To get the project going again, another Member simply put this adapter in a padded envelope with a \$1 stamp, and the customer received it a couple of days later. He was delighted, and was able to continue his development – **Collaboration between Members** Source: <http://forums.freescal.../freescal.../board/message?board.id=8BITCOMM&message.id=2255>

TBDML in CodeWarrior

This project was so successful that it is now supported **as standard** in CodeWarrior (v4.6 and over). It also has its **dedicated board** in the Community. Source: <http://forums.freescal.../board/message?board.id=TBDML&message.id=147>

OSBDM08 for RS08

Another **fine example** of collaboration between members. Freescale Community members modified RockyRoad's project for it to support our brand new RS08 family. Source: <http://forums.freescal.../freescal.../board/message?board.id=OSBDM08&message.id=169>

More examples exist on the Community ...

Freescale Community Members main players and their activities

- **CrazyCat** & **CompilerGuru** address 99% (!) of CodeWarrior questions in an impeccable manner. I am sure you will agree.
- **Alban**, the author of this document, is Moderator of the Community and is the interface between Freescale and Community Members; I also creates new activities. I have addressed objectively all confrontations yet. Finally I escalate important concerns directly to Freescale responsible personnel for resolution.
- **Peg** and **Bigmac** deserve a special Bravo for their constant and significant contribution of **utmost quality**.
- **Eckhard, joerg** and **RockyRoad** created the OSBDM08+, supporting S08 and RS08.
- **P&E Mark** not only attends P&E Microcomputer Systems Forum but also addresses Freescale Community members concerns. The Community also thanks all
- Finally, I thank our **👑VIPs👑** for their Contribution: **Freegeek** and **DanielM**. I also thank all our Contributors.

Where to Progress

Even if Freescale Community is a great success, there are improvements and risks Freescale is addressing.

External Support

To sustain the success, Freescale must be reactive to important Community Members concerns. Moderation of the website **must** be done diligently to ensure any grievance is addressed in an appropriate manner. For this, sufficient resources are required

I personally believe this is a crucial requirement and have been taking utmost care in replying all our Members concerns (not all technical questions). I hope you will agree.

Internal Support – Implementation/Integration

Unfortunately, having efficient Members supporting the Forum externally is not enough. The Community needs also resources from Freescale. Our Forum infrastructure provider implementation is not free from problems, and problems as well as improvements requests are submitted online almost daily. Be certain these reports are not forgotten. They are logged and Lithium is planning in rolling out a new version of the Forums in March.

This is constant work and keep on reporting !

Better use of information

Looking after the Community seven days a week brought a few ideas. Freescale could use the **information** the Community Members are providing to **adapt their documentation content**.

Community Members questions reveal **trends**. Freescale could fill the gap in the documentation by analyzing these trends to see what users are struggling with. Today, some Moderators already use the Community feedback to update existing documentation (datasheet, application notes and engineering bulletins).

Conclusion

Freescale Community is an informal but very efficient way of support. The Forum will never replace the Service Request system and anyone having an important issue or a question blocking their project should enter a Service Request. The Forum questions are not jumping the queue but are **addressed fairly** with other channels.

By delivering and hosting the Forums, Freescale shows that the Company not only **cares about their Customers**, but they are **open** to new technologies to support them **better** !

Thank you for participating to **Freescale expertise display** for every Members delight !

Finally, your feedback is welcomed and taken into account. Feel free to post any remark on the Community or send them at any time to:

Freescale Community-FREECOMM

Note that **ALL** requests for Technical Support at this address will be deleted and not answered !
(repetitive technical support spam will make the sender blacklisted on Forums email)

-- Edit: Updated all images external link URLs

Message Edited by Alban on 2007-04-11 09:51 PM

www.k-noo.net

PROFILE DE-ACTIVATED, Please see [Nabla69](#), my new profile.

2007-02-13 12:46 PM

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