



Lessons learned: Growing an open-source project

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Introducing myself



- Former Mozilla fanboy
- Former Adblock Plus lead developer
- Former CTO of eyeo
- Independent security researcher
- Developer of 9fP: Pain-free Passwords

Important milestones

- January 2006: Adblock Plus 0.6 released (for Firefox and SeaMonkey)
- November 2006: Most popular Firefox extension
- September 2007: First mention in mainstream newspapers
- August 2011: eyeo is founded
- June 2015: Felix Dahlke is new eyeo CTO

The achievements

- Active on 100 million devices
- More than 100 eyeo employees
- Won all legal battles
- IAB taking measures to avoid annoying users
- Products: Adblock Plus, Adblock Browser, Flatrr
- Still dedicated to open source and privacy

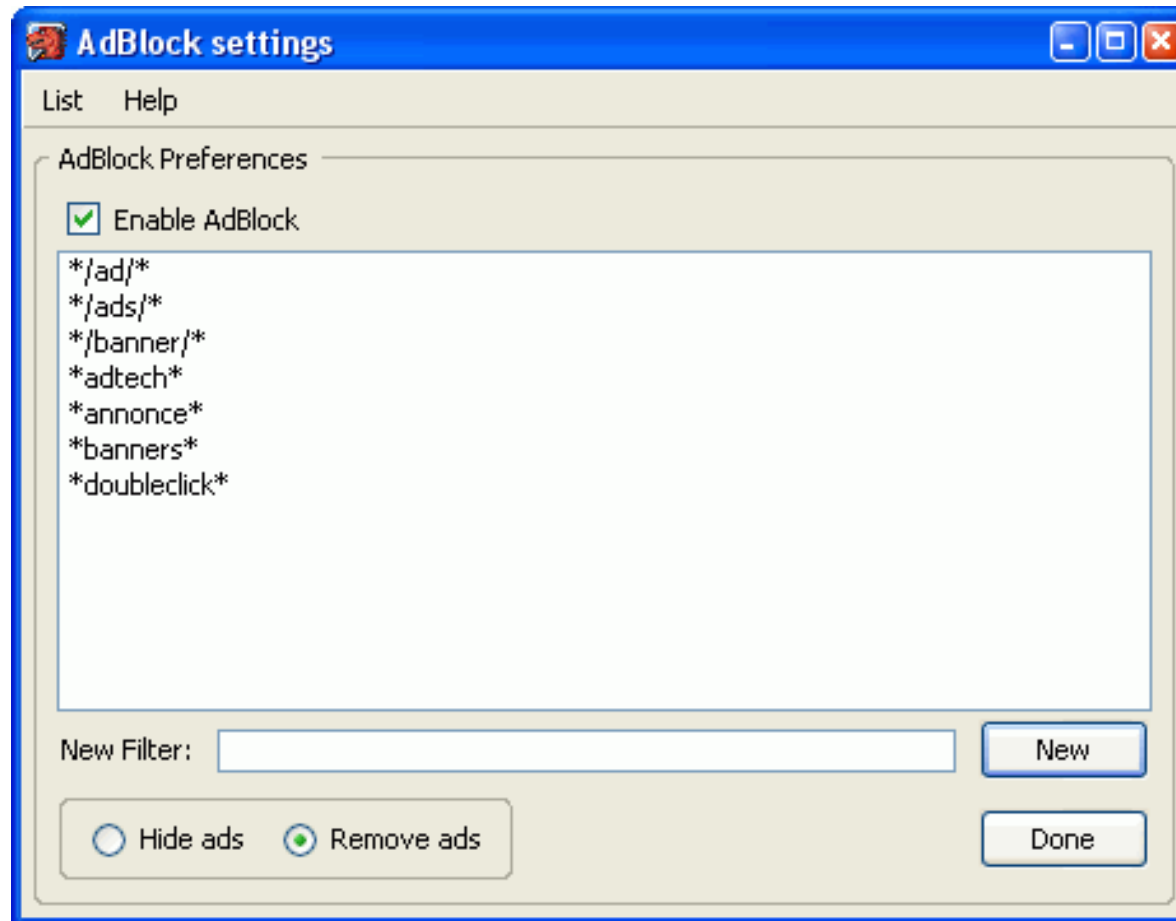
The achievements (2)



How did you come up with that idea?

- I didn't
- /etc/hosts can redirect ad requests to a black hole
- Filtering proxies were available in 2001 (Privoxy)
- AdBlock 0.1 released in 2002

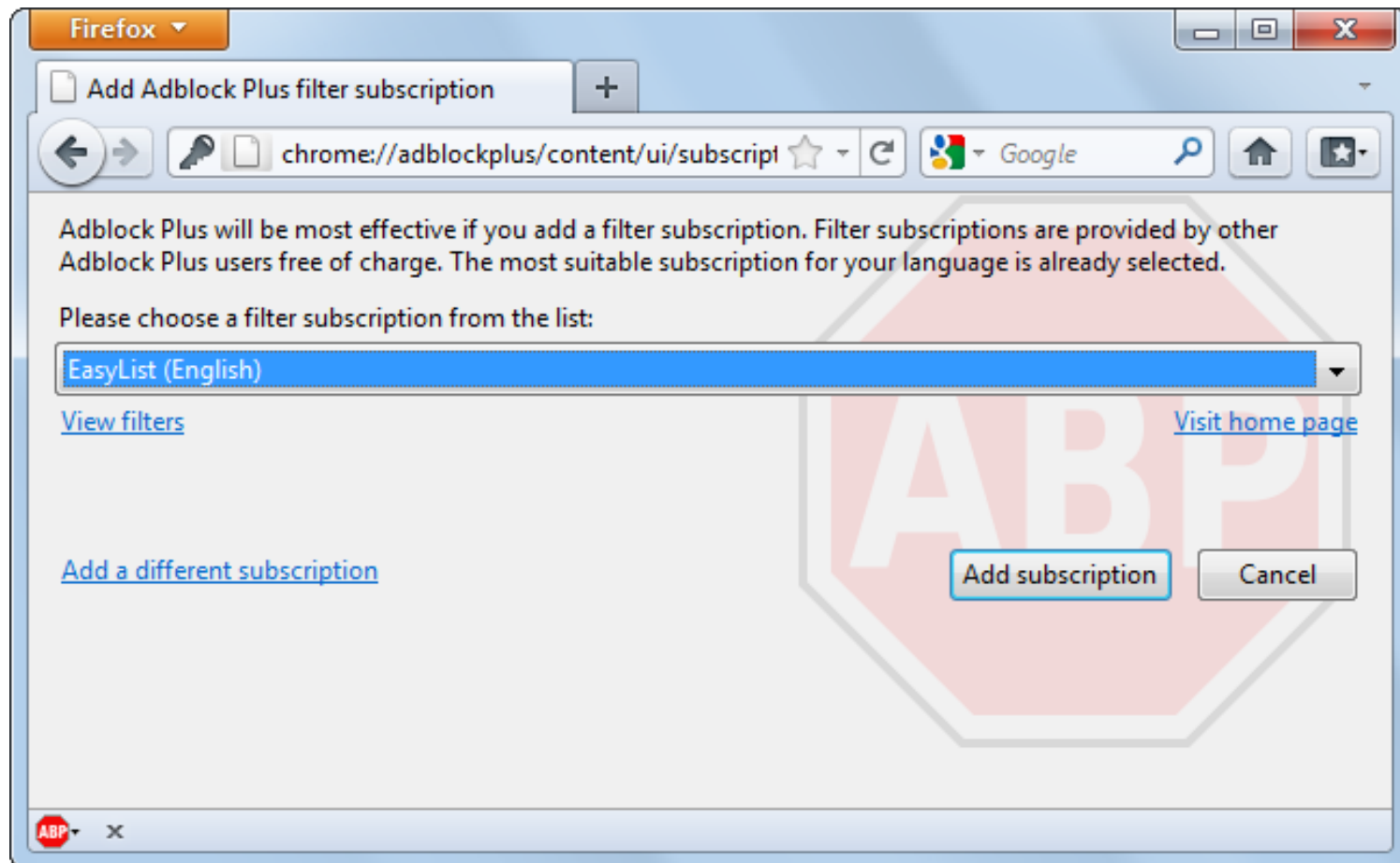
AdBlock anno 2003



How did Adblock Plus succeed?

- The product is never “done”
 - Improve
 - Collect feedback
 - Repeat
- Innovation: automatic configuration

How did Adblock Plus succeed? (2)



Did that open source thing work out?

- Transparency helps establish trust
- Community has been very helpful:
 - Filter lists
 - Translations
 - User support
 - Testing and bug reports
 - Word of mouth
- Negligible source code contributions



WHY THEM NOT

CONTRIBUTE CODEZ?

imgflip.com

Why don't people contribute code?

- More users \neq more contributions
- Only scratching your own itch
- Allowing contributions is work
 - Is all information easy to find?
 - Is the codebase easy to navigate?
 - How easy is it to try out a change?
 - What's the process for contributing?
 - How long to get feedback?

What did you get out of it?

- Experience
- Satisfaction
- Recognition
- Gratitude?

HE BROKE IT!



Can this work in the long term?

- Unlikely
- Hobby project getting too popular
 - Too much work
 - Too little time
 - Decreasing motivation

MUCH BETTER THIS WAY



Did creating eyeo change things?

- It's a job, you **have** to work
- There are goals to be met
- A chance to do new things
- Delegate unwanted tasks
- More people!

LET'S HAVE A MEETING TO



DISCUSS MEETING MORALE

Adding people decreases productivity

- Single developer
 - Almost no overhead
 - Taking shortcuts
- Team
 - Coordinating tasks
 - Code reviews
 - Documentation
 - Policy discussions
 - Hiring overhead
 - Ever growing scope

No way to avoid ethical questions

- A small project doesn't need to care
- A popular project will *always* step on someone's toes
- Ad blockers controversy
 - Is the user really in control?
 - Do ad blockers steal from publishers?
 - Will they destroy the free web?
 - Is there a middle ground?
 - Who decides what ads should be blocked?

Can a company act ethically?



Can a company act ethically? (2)

- Mozilla: Separation into Foundation and Corporation
- Foundation keeping the project “pure”?
- Little impact on policies
- Corporation outnumbered Foundation by far

Can a company act ethically? (3)

- Company culture matters
- People make and defend policies
- Values propagate top-down
- Open discussion culture
- Hiring the right people

eyeo company culture

- Goals
 - Helping people
 - Making an impact
 - *Not* commercial success
- Transparency

eyeo company culture (2)

- Personal freedom
 - Working times
 - Work location
 - Task priority
- Meritocracy
 - Little formal hierarchy
 - Taking responsibility encouraged

GOODBUY EYEO!



What's wrong with password managers?

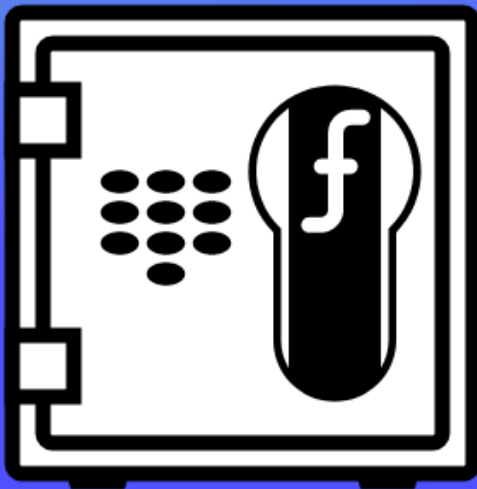
- Password managers are necessary
 - Nobody can remember so many passwords
 - Reusing passwords is dangerous
- Most password managers are insecure
 - Insecure browser integration
 - Broken cryptography
 - Require trust in a server
- Local-only password managers are often better
 - Usually limited usage comfort

Better password manager?

- Not relying on a server
- Easy to use
- Secure browser integration
- Good cryptography to protect the data
- Recovery from data loss
- Sync and password sharing

9fP: Pain-free Passwords

Your new best way to manage passwords



- Only one password to remember
- Conveniently integrated into your browser
- No need to trust us, your data stays on your device (safely encrypted)
- Most passwords never stored but generated when needed
- Easy to recover a password without access to your device
- Multiple backup strategies supported
- Free and open source



Assorted links:

<https://palant.de/sinfo25>

Any more questions?