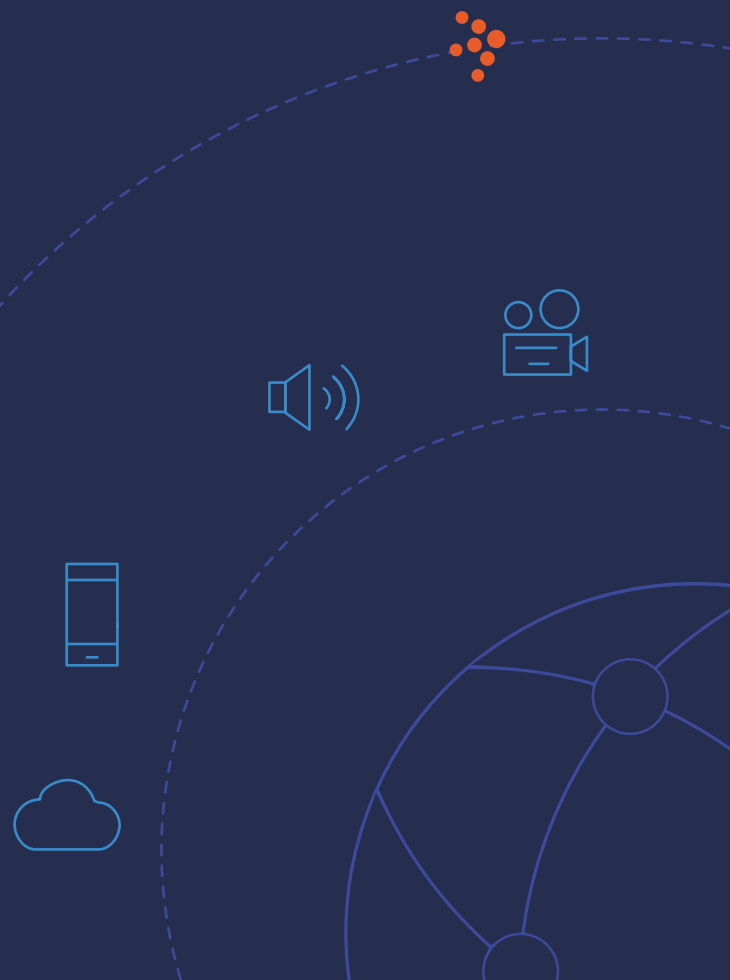


RESPONSIBLE OPEN SOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Ensuring Effective Collaboration

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telestax 



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Open Source Responsibilities

Creating an effective Open Source community requires resource investments - both in time and money. Just like anything that produces value however, it's worth the effort. Done poorly and you're not doing much more than a code dump. Done well, it can develop a life and culture of its own.

“
With great
power
comes great
responsibility
”

In this whitepaper, we will outline the responsibilities that we, at Telestax, abide by and enforce for the greater good of everyone involved in developing and cultivating this effective Open Source community. Continue reading to learn more about creating a roadmap, documentation, versioning, and more in Open Source.

Additional Resources: [Growing an open source community](#) by Dan Allen.

① Work in the open

All design, code, documentation, and tests are in the open so we must guarantee high quality and involve the community as much as possible in design discussions, feedback on new features, etc. This is extremely important to create and grow a strong community. Any new feature or design should be sent for review and feedback through a thread in the public [Google Group](#).

Every member of the team should be connected to the public IRC channel #restcomm on freenode.net. This is crucial in order to keep contributors engaged in ongoing public brainstorming sessions.

Every Wednesday at 5 PM CET, TeleStax holds a community status update for all the projects on the platform where anyone can join and listen or chime in.



2 Have a clear and public roadmap

Needless to say this one is extremely important for everyone to know where a project is headed and how potential contributors can help.

- › Project leaders set vision and direction, while soliciting continuous feedback from community and customers.
- › Project leaders are responsible to define milestones in Github. For example, <https://github.com/RestComm/RestComm-Core/milestones>.
- › We use the excellent [Waffle.io](https://waffle.io) for visualization and maintenance of the current roadmaps for our open source projects. For example, <https://waffle.io/RestComm/RestComm-Core>. You can filter per milestone, per person, etc.
- › It's good to make extensive use of GitHub Labels. We have created a number of specific labels that help us to more effectively filter milestones and associated issues. There are two specific ones that are worth spending some time on.
 - › [Help Wanted Label](#): This label is for all the issues that contributors can assist with to help a project. Ideally, new labels with difficulty for each issue should be added so new contributors can take the easy ones and as they get more advanced, can assist with more challenging issues and eventually get hired.
 - › [Technical Debt Label](#): No matter what you do, there is always technical debt accumulating for any project for various reasons. Instead of denying it and having quality issues, we clearly label those issues and enforce that they will be scheduled and taken care of in roadmap planning.

3 Create great documentation

- › Even if it's a higher initial investment to document a project, it is mandatory. Team members can help by creating issues for missing docs. R&D team members should always have a draft of docs that can be tested and polished by the documentation team.
- › Any feature that is worked on must be documented with examples.
- › **The better a project is documented, the more people can find their way around by themselves.** This also means there will be fewer community and customer support questions, thus freeing up time to more quickly move through the roadmaps.



4 Release cycles

- › Aim for 1 to 1.5 months release cycles in order to stay agile and keep the community engaged with bug fixes reported and new features. One feature and one technical debt issue per person working on the project per release is good practice. The rest of the time should be spent on fixing bugs and improving some areas that may have been left behind due to customer support overload, travelling, or other factors.

Release early, release often.

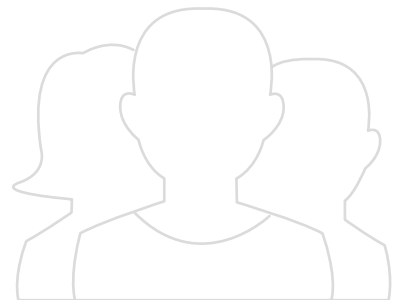
- › It's very important to follow the release early, release often strategy to keep the community engaged and allow for small, fast, incremental improvements instead of big monolithic releases with big impact on stability or changes.

5 Versioning

If you're a project lead, we are following the [Apache Conventions for Versioning](#).

i.e.

Major.Minor.Patch. So usually your Maven pom file will have a version similar to Major.Minor.Patch-SNAPSHOT. However, our [Continuous Delivery](#) will be responsible for continuously releasing every time there is change in the master branch of the project. As a result, the final version will be Major.Minor.Patch.BuildNumber.



6 Help the community

- › Go to your forum every day to show users that the forum is alive.
- › Never leave a post on your forum or StackOverFlow without response for more than four business days. Ideally wait one or two business days so that community members can answer first and get involved (this can help you spot the next potential contributors to recruit).
- › Make sure you are notified of any new topics on your project's tag questions on StackOverflow.
- › Never leave an issue from the community in the issue tracker without response for more than four business days. Before prioritizing it on the roadmap, always ask the reporter if they want to contribute a fix (again, in order to help you spot the next potential contributors to recruit) otherwise people will ask you to fix their code and monopolize your time (and prohibit you from being able to get necessary work done on your project).
- › Ideally **issues reported by the community should be fixed in the current release cycle** except if they require a big refactoring. Issues reported by community should be treated



as second priority after customers support tickets in order to keep the community engaged and using/growing the project. Since most of our prospect leads are inbound leads usually generated by community users going to production, this is extremely important. A number of customers disclosed they were tracking our response time in the community to check if we would be providing good quality support before buying anything from us.

7 Marketing

Evangelize

Be prepared to dedicate time to evangelizing your project and not just on development.

Social

Publish on social networks (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+, etc.) at least weekly or when working on a new feature.

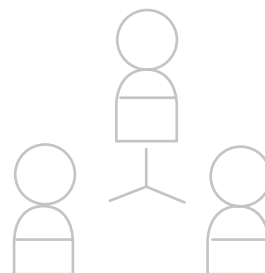
Blog

Always write a blog post and publish it on social networks for every release.

Dedicate time to evangelizing your project, publish on social networks and write a blog post.

8 Contributors

From our experience on Mobicents and RestComm, the TeleStax team noticed three kinds of users:



Regular users These people use your product, ask questions and, after gaining confidence with the product, are also comfortable answering questions.

Contributors These people use your product, ask questions, answer questions, and contribute code.

Certified Partners At Telestax, our partners are essential to the success and growth of our business. As our business grows, we are increasingly focused on building strong partnerships that strive to execute on a shared vision and strategy that is based on trust and transparency.

The Certified Partner commits experts from their own team to be Contributors so that the partnership is built on a foundation of openness, community and competencies. This enables our partners to ensure they have insight and input to our product roadmap, as well as access to sales, marketing, and technical resources from the Telestax core team. This also allows TeleStax to recommend to their customers and certified partners that are deeply involved and recognized experts. Read More on the [TeleStax Certified Partnership Program](#).

There are also multiple types of possible contributions, not limited to code contributions:



A Using it in your product or project and providing feedback	C Use cases, feature requests: Roadmap influence	E Documentation: Everyone needs good docs, Code is a moving target
B Code & Algorithms: Core Projects, Incubator projects, Frameworks	D Community Support, bug fixes, forum posts: Help to be helped	F Testing (Perf, load, security, unit tests, interop, etc.) / CI

For **B**, **E** and **F** it's mandatory that the Contributor signs the [TeleStax Contributor Agreement](#). When a contributor adds to the project, acknowledge him on a [public Acknowledgments page](#).

As the Contributors ratio grows, you now become the leader of the project who gives the direction and goals and works to keep everything coherent and aligned.

Contributors are usually naturally attracted if the project lead effectively executes all of the above (i.e. great product with regular updates and bug fixes, great documentation, marketing, community and contributor engagement). But remember, contributors are usually a very small percentage of the user base. It takes time and effort to attract them but it's key to engage them as the best of them can become part of the team as the company grows. It is our only [Hiring process](#).

9 Licensing

RestComm is licensed under AGPL: See community obligations on AGPL Code - <http://info.protecode.com/bid/40416/AGPL-and-the-cloud-what-are-your-obligations>

Use the below AGPL license header for source code

```
/*
 * TeleStax, Open Source Cloud Communications
 * Copyright 2011-2015, Telestax Inc and individual contributors
 * by the @authors tag.
 *
 * This program is free software: you can redistribute it and/or modify
 * under the terms of the GNU Affero General Public License as
 * published by the Free Software Foundation; either version 3 of
 * the License, or (at your option) any later version.
 *
 * This program is distributed in the hope that it will be useful,
 * but WITHOUT ANY WARRANTY; without even the implied warranty of
 * MERCHANTABILITY or FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. See the
 * GNU Affero General Public License for more details.
 *
 * You should have received a copy of the GNU Affero General Public License
 * along with this program. If not, see <http://www.gnu.org/licenses/>
 */
```



About Telestax

Open Source is at the core of everything we do and is the foundation of our history and company culture. It is important to note that the entire company and contributors have worked in an open and distributed manner from day one ([similar to many others nowadays](#) with [very good reasons for doing it](#)), now across more than 30 countries at the time of writing.

Global Team and Partners

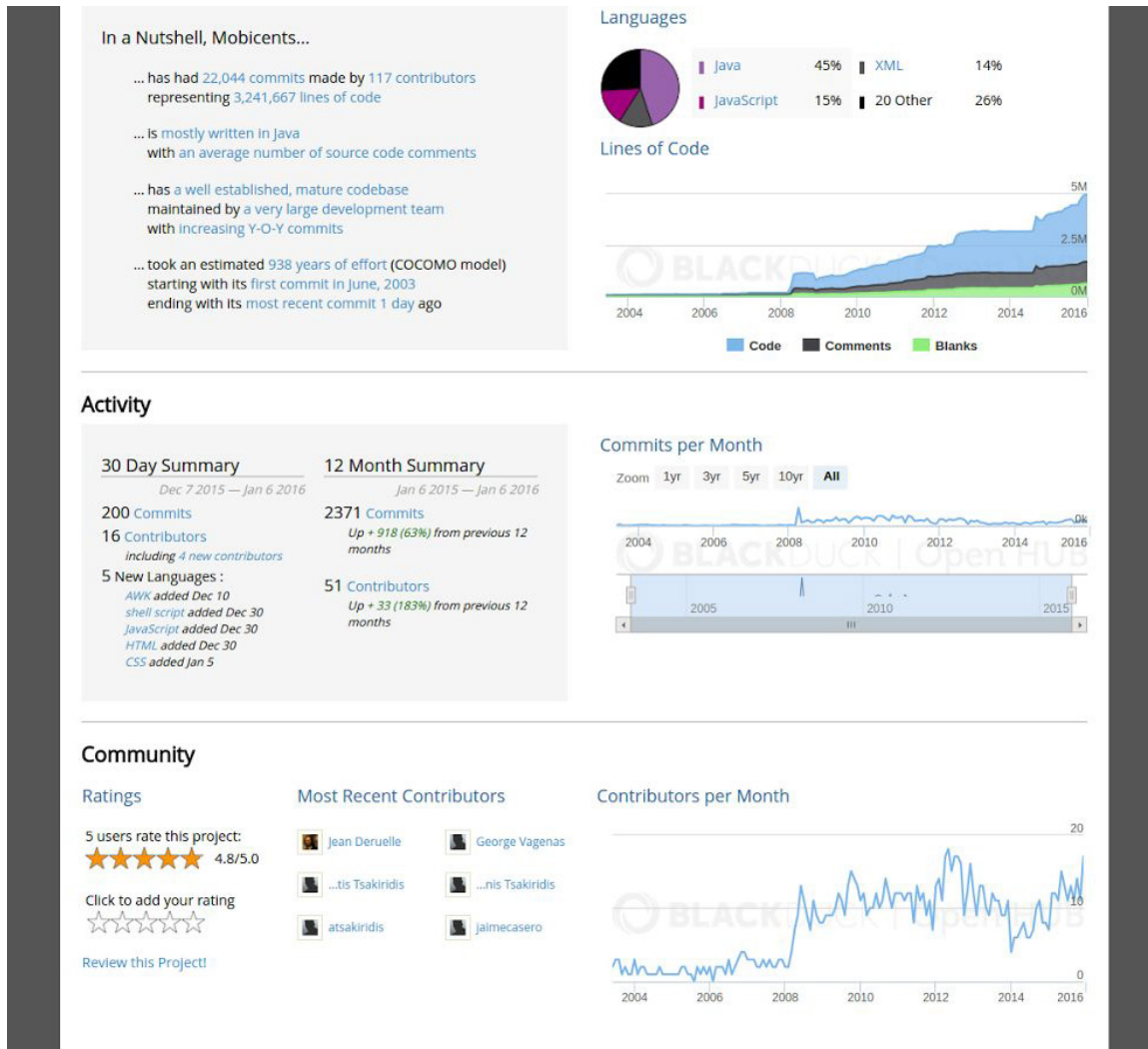


The team has adopted Best Practices for evolving a sustainable open source project and growing an active community around it. These best practices are based on many years of first hand experience contributing and leading FOSS projects at GNU, Apache, JBoss, Red Hat, and of course Mobicents ([newly rebranded as RestComm](#)) which we started in 2004 and is now the #1 Open Source Communications Platform.

The independent Website [OpenHub](#) by Black Duck shows, at the time of this writing (early 2016), that the codebase has tripled since TeleStax was created and that it would take 51 Million Dollars to rebuild the project for an average salary per year of \$55K.



In a Nutshell



In a Nutshell, RestComm has had [22,150 commits](#) made by [117 contributors](#) representing [3,240,672 lines of code](#). It is [mostly written in Java](#) with [an average number of source code comments](#) and has [a well established, mature codebase](#) maintained by [a very large development team](#) with [increasing Y-O-Y commits](#). It has taken an estimated [938 years of effort](#) (COCOMO model) starting with its [first commit in June of 2003](#) ending with its [most recent commit approximately 24 hours](#) ago.

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