WordPress to Facebook (and back)

Bar Camp Boston 3

May 17, 2008

John Eckman, jeckman@optaros.com

Agenda

- **WordPress, Facebook**

- **Why?**

- **wpbook**
  - **v0.5**
  - **v0.6**
  - **v0.7**

- **Lessons Learned**

- **Next Steps**

- **Q & A**

WordPress, Facebook

- **WordPress**
  - Hugely popular blogging platform
  - Powers wordpress.com
  - Available for self-hosting wordpress.org
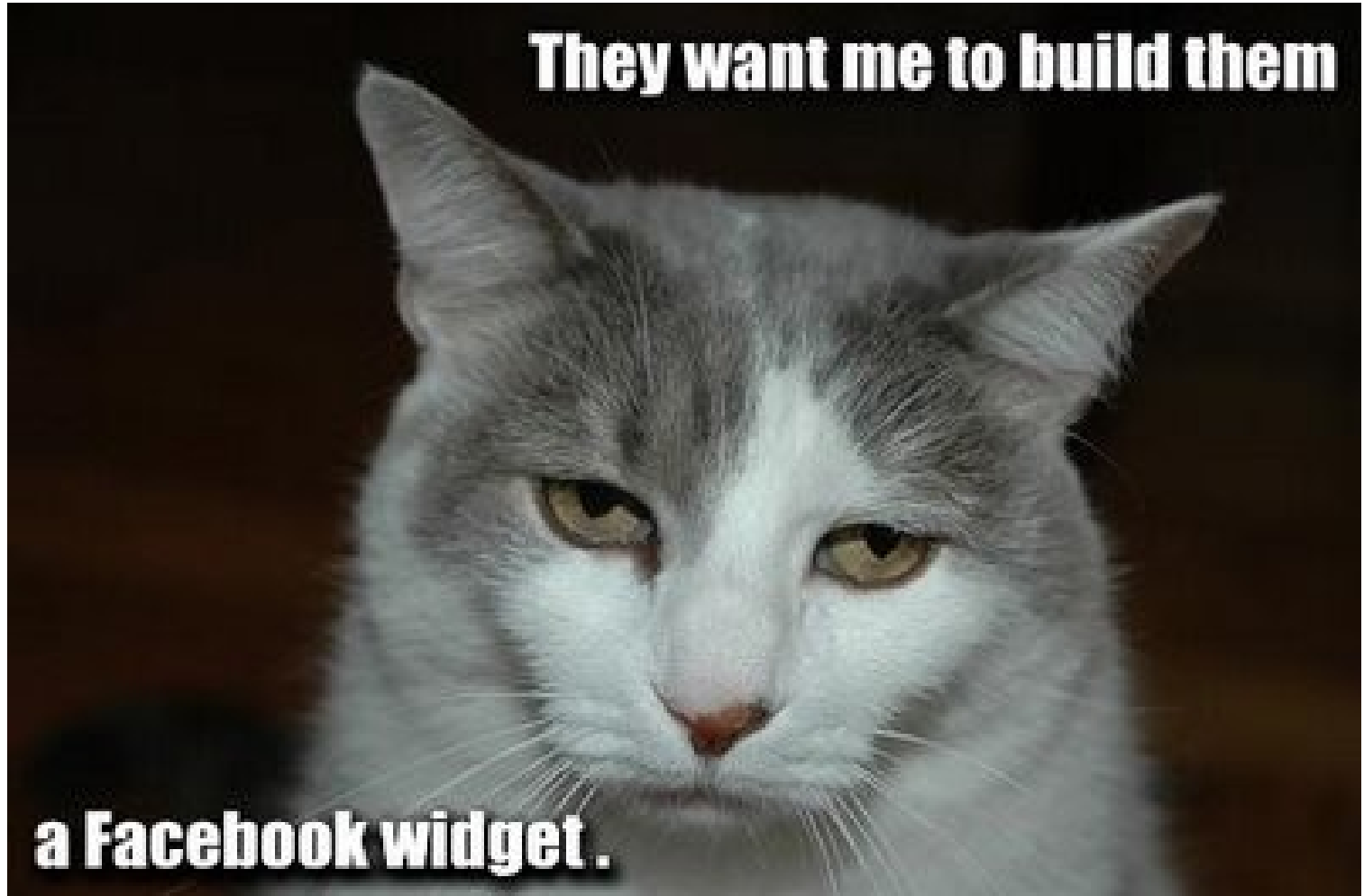 - GPL
  - Huge plugin community, infrastructure

- **Facebook**
  - Hugely popular social network
  - Only powers facebook.com
  - Not available for self-hosting
  - Not open source
  - Huge application development community

- **Both provide APIs and encourage developers to create additional features**

Why?

http://lolnptech.blogspot.com/2007/09/they-want-me-to-build-them-facebook.html

Why?

- **Try out the Facebook API**
  - Immensely popular
  - Very limited
  - Problematic terms of use

- **Support WordPress**
  - All Goodness
  - Works for people as well as companies

- **Promote my blog**
  - Open Parenthesis is teh awesome
  - http://www.openparenthesis.org/

- **Because it's fun**

wpbook 0.5

- **Existing wordpress plugin**

- **Blog posts from wordpress -> facebook**
    - no comments
    - only N recent posts
    - created a "wpbook" page
    - some known issues
        - Saving facebook api key, secret
        - more . . . link wasn't working
        - page created visible in nav

- **http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/wpbook/**

- **http://scholarpress.net/plugins/**

- **Dave Lester**

wpbook 0.6

- **Still Blog posts from wordpress -> facebook**

- **Added comments**
  - Comment with your Facebook identity
  - Linked to Facebook profile
  - (with other plugins) fetch profile image from hCard

- **Fixed some bugs**
  - Saving facebook api key, secret
  - Updated docs on how to hide page created
  - Eliminated the "more..." link

- **Still limited**
  - only N recent posts
  - created a "wpbook" page

- **Somewhat more difficult install**
  - calling comments-processing file from theme
  - required user to add to existing theme

- **http://www.openparenthesis.org/code/wp**

wpbook 0.7.1

- **Still Blog posts from wordpress -> facebook (and back)**

- **No more page**
  - Inspired by Alex King's WP Mobile plugin
  - Facebook Theme installed in wp-content/themes
  - Plugin senses when we're in Facebook context
    - currently uses fb_sig_iniframe in query string
    - could use any number of fb_sig parameters

- **This means flexibility**
  - Num of posts as set for blog in "normal" mode
  - recent posts list
  - previous and next post links

- **And eases installation**
  - one plugin file
  - one folder in themes dir
  - easy to uninstall

- **Oops. 1 bug fix release**

Lessons Learned

- ◆ **iFrame vs. FBML**
  - Javascript? We don't need no stinkin' Javascript!
  - You want video in your web posts?
  - Analytics?
  - FBML is simpler but too limiting

- ◆ **Facebook iFrames often suck**
  - cross domain receiver
  - Who's on _top?
  - WP Plugins relying on javascript can fail
    - which can cause the resize javascript to fail

- ◆ **Facebook Terms of Service always sucks**
  - Can remove you at any time for any reason
  - Can decide to charge a fee at any time, based on any rationale

- ◆ **Dreamhost has sucked a lot lately**
  - Your facebook app still runs on your server
  - Cheap, shared hosting plans may not cut it

Next Steps

- **Categories, Archives by Month/Year, Tags?**
- **Pages (About, Contact)**
- **Search ?**
- **Analytics ?**
- **Facebook style "share" button for posts, blog**
  - Without FBML tag
- **Any way to ease the Facebook App creation bit?**
  - What would a multi-blog instance look like?
- **Better way to fetch & cache Facebook profile image**
- **Other?**

Q & A

eckman.john@gmail.com

jeckman@optaros.com

http://twitter.com/jeckman

http://johneckman.com/

http://www.openparenthesis.org/

http://www.goatless.org/

http://www.optaros.com/user/jeckman

http://apps.facebook.com/openparenthesis/