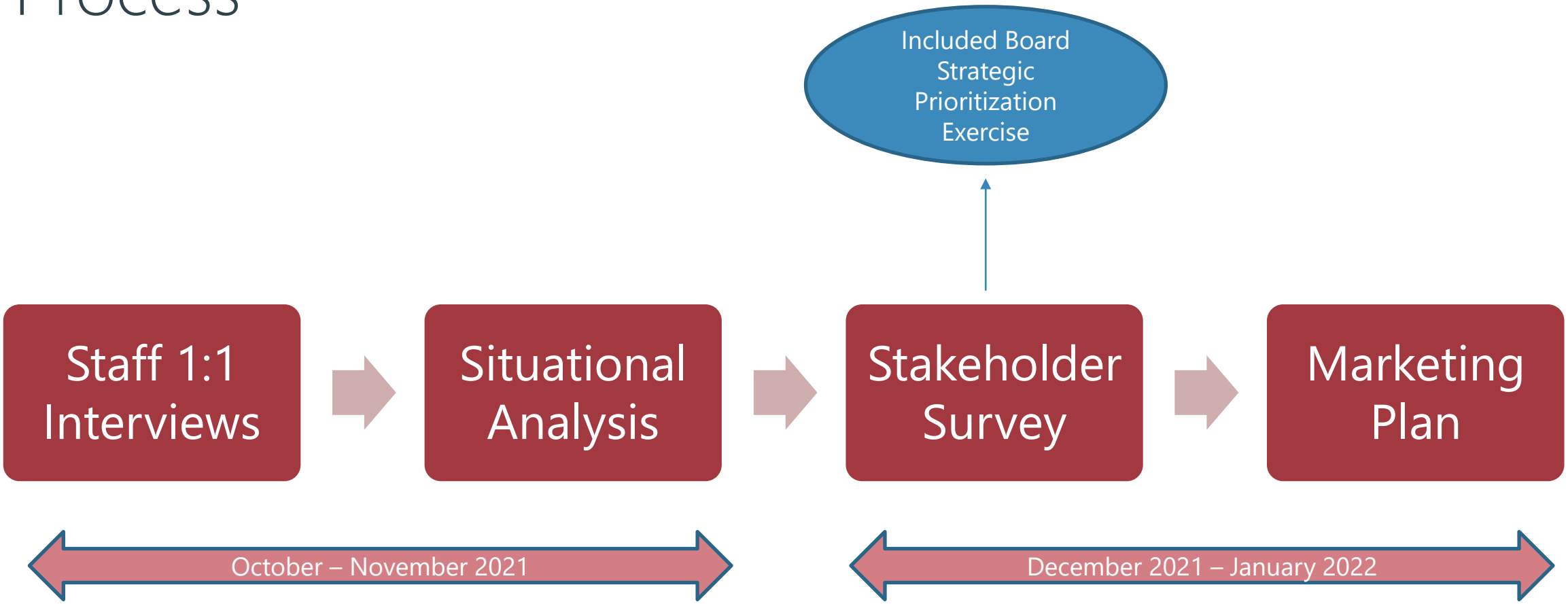
OWASP Marketing Plan

20 January 2022

Process


Included Board Strategic Prioritization Exercise
Staff 1:1 Interviews
Situational Analysis
Stakeholder Survey
Marketing Plan
October – November 2021
December 2021 – January 2022

Strategic Priorities ⟶ Marketing Objectives

As identified by current and past OWASP Board members

Organizational priorities over the next five years?

STRENGTHEN THE OWASP BRAND

- Leader in dev & security community
- Stronger marketing
- More developer outreach
- Thought leadership

GROW MEMBERSHIP

- Grow in size
- Grow in sphere of influence
- Engage a larger constituency
- Grow events

EDUCATION

- Current trends & vulnerabilities
- More tools, more standards
- AI & machine learning
- Certification?

REINFORCE THE COMMUNITY

- Activate knowledge network
- Partnership projects
- Entry-level resources (“gateway drug for new developers”)
- Strengthen tie w/ vendors & integrators

EXPLORE & INNOVATE

Board Exercise Dec. 2022

What specific project would you like to see OWASP pursue?

- ZAP (mentioned 4x)
- OWASP Top 10 (mentioned 2x)
- JuiceShop (mentioned 2x)
- Security w/ AI & machine learning
- Dependency check
- DevSecOps Guidelines
- Standards and policies that can be implemented in applications, especially after Log4J,
- Securing the supply chain by collaborating with frameworks, modules, and libraries to secure the Top 10 frameworks, libraries, or modules in use on each major platform
- A real DevSecOps project that is as transformational to security as DevOps was to software. Not shoving traditional security into DevOps or mindless shift left. But a real rethinking of the *purpose* of all this stuff and better ways to deliver that value

Board Exercise Dec. 2022

How would you divide $100 among strategic priorities?

Board Exercise Dec. 2022

Virtual™

Staff Interviews & Situational Analysis

Overview of Interviews

Five interviews

Growth seen as important, but hasn't been a priority

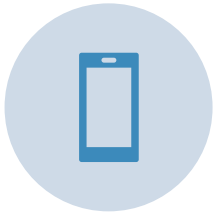
Members tend to be more pragmatic about problems OWASP can solve; staff more aspirational about what OWASP can be

Consensus that much more can be accomplished via marketing/ communications

Clearly there is a powerful, fascinating story for OWASP to tell

Describe OWASP

Collection of developers and app sec professionals who get together to make web applications secure



Exists to educate the individuals in the industry

We make the world's software more secure

Best way to network in the industry (meet people you'll never otherwise meet)

Disseminates app sec knowledge and skills to professionals and developers worldwide

Community of chapters, lots of different communities (not colored by corporate realities)

Key Audiences

Developers

Web App Developers

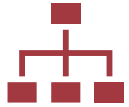
Mobile

Network-Aware Applications

Front-End Apps & APIs

App Sec Leadership

C Suite



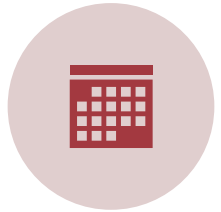
Universities

Software Architects

Limitations

NOT ENOUGH GENERAL MARKETING OR ENOUGH MONEY SPENT

FOCUS OF BOARD



USED TO HAVE SOCIAL MEDIA CALENDAR, DON'T NOW

MORE INTERESTED IN MANAGING OWASP THAN BRINGING IN $25M GRANTS

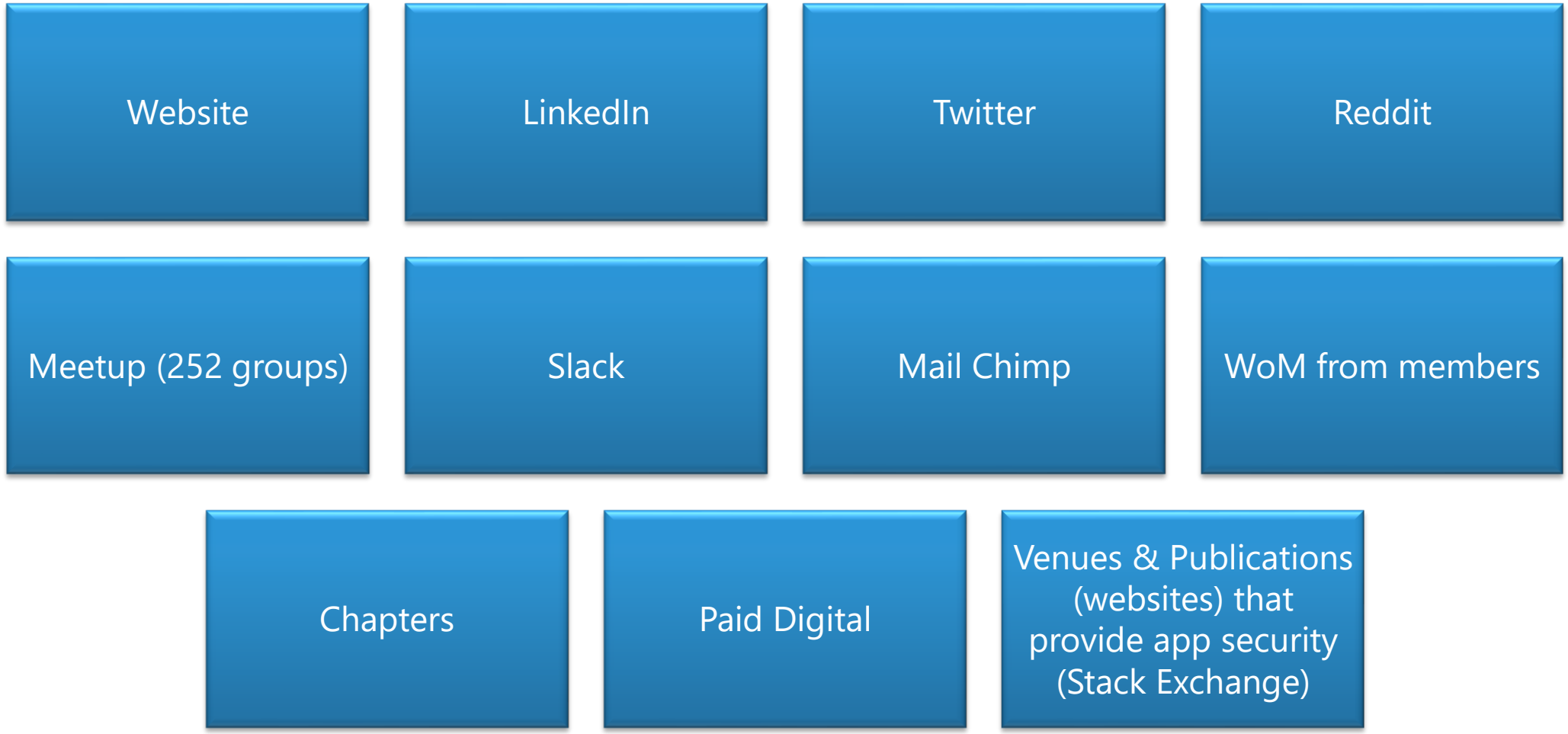
TOXIC YEAR TWO YEARS AGO (LOTS "UNCLICKED US")

TIME AND MONEY

Assets

- Meetings & events
- Amazing projects that everyone in the world uses
- Buddy Club
- 350 people come to every monthly meeting
- 4,000 members
- 172K Twitter Followers, 142K LinkedIn Followers; 22K Facebook, Etc.
- Vendor neutral
- An engaged community
- Meaningful content (app sec tools, available code, documentation projects)
- Prospect list of 46,000

Marketing Channels



Emerging Priorities

Grow

- Increase membership (community is 100-200K; OWASP has 5,000 members)
- Increase awareness & attendance at events (1000s register, only 25% attend)
- Increase sponsorships
- Expand influence

Connect

- Find a different pool of people (more developers)
- Connect w/ companies to understand their perspectives and needs
- Push diversity

Tell the OWASP story better

- New mission statement
- Better marketing copy (doesn't pop)
- Build more value into membership ("everything is free, so no one joins")
- Leverage connected stakeholders to facilitate WoM referrals
- Lay the groundwork for certification of app sec professionals

Virtual™

Stakeholder Survey

OWASP Survey Methodology

Distributed to approximately 10,000 individuals (members & non-members)

12.3% response (1,231 responses: 722 members, 467 non-members)

Responses cross-tabulated to analyze member vs. non-member responses

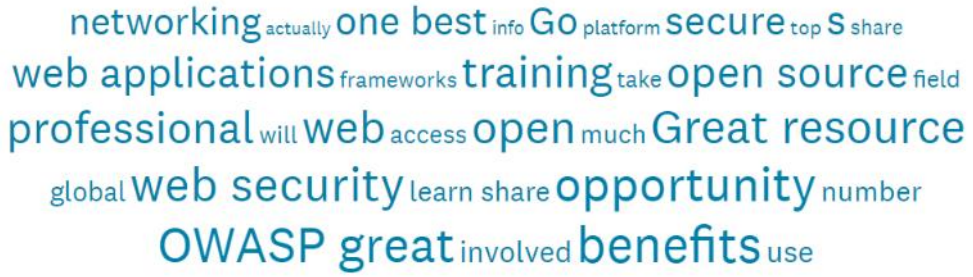
Results are statistically significant

Goal was to gather intel for marketing

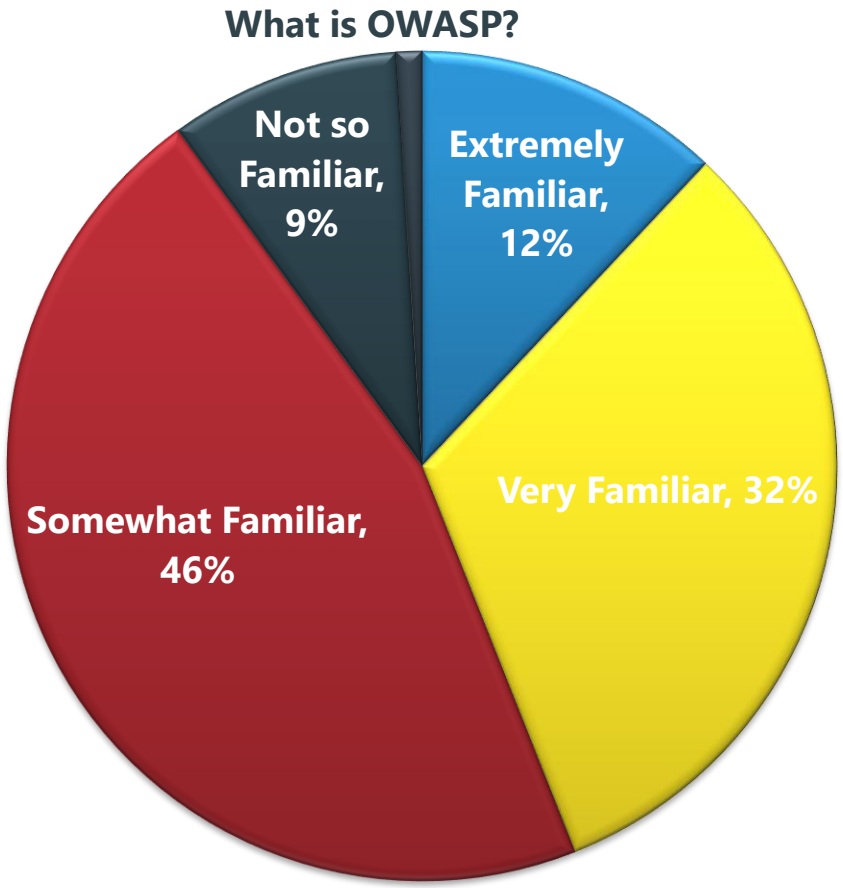
Board of Directors exercise to establish strategic priorities

How would members encourage friends/colleagues to join OWASP?

- Keywords: Security, Community, Projects, Application Security
- “One of the best resources for learning - lots of appsec content, and an awesome community of practitioners”
- “One stop shop for App Sec”
- “Get access to body of knowledge and like-minded professionals by engaging with OWASP”
- “The work conducted by OWASP helps us to keep our platforms safe and to improve the security of systems across the world, improving other systems we use. It's important for us to help with funding via membership fees.”

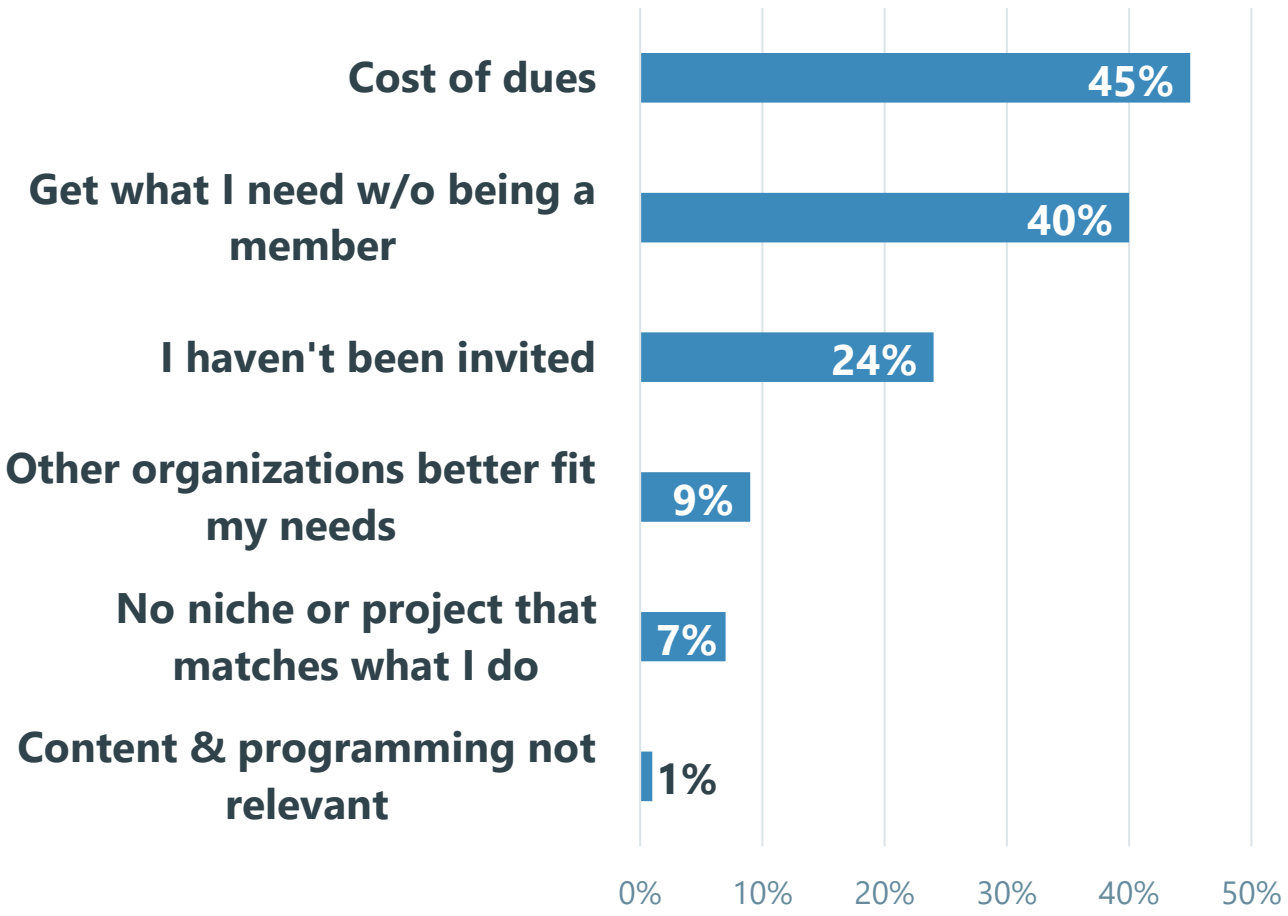


Awareness of OWASP among Non-members



- Awareness not a significant problem
- Logical that few would have little familiarity since names are in the OWASP database to start
- Goal should be to move large percentage (46%) from “Somewhat Familiar” to “Very Familiar”

Why are you NOT an OWASP member?



- This is about cost, giving away the milk for free, and being deliberate about sustained recruitment campaigns
- The content is relevant (just 1% say otherwise)
- There are niches and projects for most (just 7% of non-members say otherwise)
- Other organizations are not the reason (just 9% of non-members say other orgs are a better fit)
- Large pct said “other” (36%)
  - No significant findings, other than “time” and reiterating cost
  - Some thought they already were members (though they had just indicated they were not)

Why are you NOT an OWASP member? (other)

- A handful pointed to inactivity of local chapter
- Many cite time (suggest highlighting “saving time” as a member benefit)
- “I haven't had a specific reason to join.”
- “Because (they) kicked me off since I did not pay an annual membership fee, thus I am no longer admitted any longer to be an OWASP volunteer.”
- “I had my company ready to sign up for corporate membership, but wanted 5 individuals to have membership under that. Your team said, ‘no.’”

What, if anything, would convince you to join OWASP?

- Convince employers to cover costs
- Reasonable pct intend to do so, just haven't
- Need to articulate the value
- "That me being a member would make a difference for the organization"
- "Tiered membership with some free content and then more access depending on membership tier"

"I pay my dues with a reason why it is important. I donate to Wikipedia because Jimmy Wales reminds me, and says it is important. Note that my company matches donations to Wikipedia, but not membership fees."

At what price would you be willing to join OWASP?

64 people said zero; 85 said <$10

Removing outliers, average is $41, median is $50

Overall range is 0 - $100 (not one person said >$100)

$50 is clearly the sweet spot

Cost in developing markets is an issue

Subjects of relevance/interest

Non-members, asked in 2 separate questions

STRONG RELEVANCE

Attack vectors

66%

Threat modeling

51%

CI/CD system breaches

41%

Thwarting malicious automation

41%

STRONG INTEREST

Top Ten Vulnerabilities

83%

Enterprise appsec, architecture, or risk management

59%

Building security champions

49%

Automated server-less automation

46%

These topics should be showcased in messaging: "Demonstrate Member Value"

Where non-members access info & services

Websites, publications, resources accessed for work

1. LinkedIn
2. NIST
3. SANS
4. IEEE
5. ISC²

Developer communities accessed (at least monthly)

1. Stack Overflow (80%)
2. Hacker News (66%)
3. Reddit (63%)
4. MSDN/Microsoft (45%)

Social platforms used for work (at least weekly)

1. LinkedIn (64%)
2. YouTube (61%)
3. Twitter (48%)
4. Slack (45%)
5. What's App (38%)

Tactics & messaging should cross these platforms to reach high concentrations of your target market

Demographics of your target audience

Most Common Titles

1. Security analyst, 26%
2. Software engineer, 14%
3. CISO, 9%
4. Director or VP of Engineering, 9%
5. Other title keywords: architect, consultant, appsec

Years of Experience

- > 10 – 44%
- 6-10 – 22%
- 3-5 – 17%
- 1-2 – 7%

Type of Employer

1. Large Co. – 46%
2. Medium Co. – 18%
3. Small Co. – 13%
4. Consultant/IC – 14%
5. Academic – 3%
6. Student – 5%

Geography

1. N. America – 43%
2. W. Europe – 30%
3. E. Asia – 10%
4. E. Europe – 6%
5. Middle East – 5%
6. S. America – 3%
7. W. Asia – 2%
8. Africa – 1%
9. C. America – <1%

Use this intel to create profiles & target prospects on social platforms and otherwise

Profiles

- Wants to make a difference
- Interested in attack vectors & vulnerabilities

Mid-Career Security Analyst
- Works for large company
- Resides in North America
- Visits LinkedIn, YouTube & Twitter frequently for work
- Uses NIST as a resource

- Wants to contribute, but doesn't know how
- Employer won't cover cost of dues

European Software Engineer
- Works for medium-sized company
- Resides in Western Europe
- Visits LinkedIn & Slack
- Uses Stack Overflow & Hacker News

East Asian Engineering Director
- Works for small company
- Resides in Kuala Lumpur
- Uses LinkedIn & Slack
- Often on Reddit

- Needs to see explicit value for paying what they already get for free
- Currency exchange makes US$50 a stretch

Emerging Marketing Objectives

Stronger awareness and appreciation of OWASP among key audiences

- Build awareness & visibility among larger groups of developers
- Showcase membership & specific projects

Wider and deeper engagement with OWASP by subject-matter experts

- More developers participating
- Awareness of resources & projects

Tactical support of key programs and initiatives

- Drive event participation

Membership growth in the right places

- Systematic & sustained campaigns
- Tell OWASP story better
- Build geographic diversity

Expand opportunities to exercise thought leadership and collaboration on solutions

- Seize opportunities for exposure
- Showcase organizational accomplishments

Wider geographic footprint

Recommendations

MINE & LEVERAGE EXISTING CONTENT

TELL THE OWASP STORY IN NEW WAYS

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT SERIES

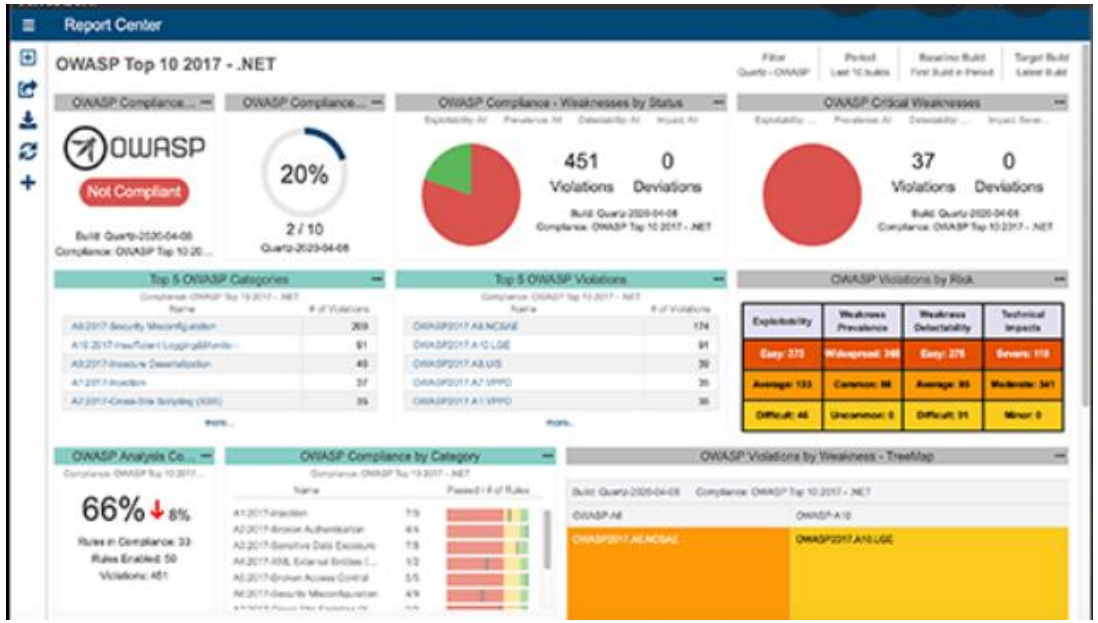
DIGITAL ADVERTISING & SOCIAL GRAPHICS

LEVERAGE OWASP CHAPTERS

NEW COLLATERAL

SEIZE OPPORTUNITIES FOR VISIBILITY

Recommendation 1: Mine & Leverage Existing Content



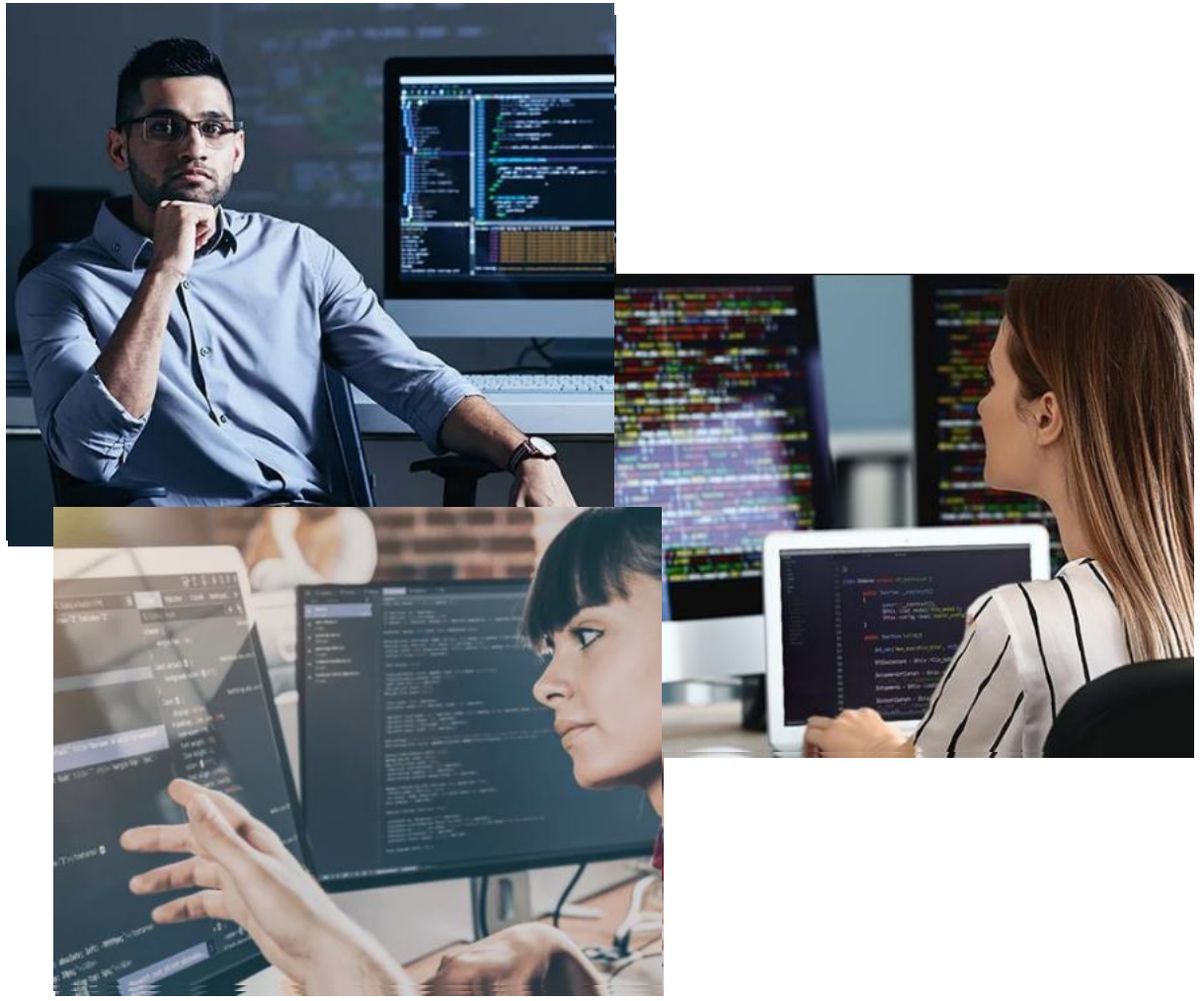
- OWASP owns extensive content that can be reposted & re-leveraged
- All of it delivers the OWASP story the way you want it told
- Repurpose content and share it across social media channels to build visibility

Recommendation 2: Tell the OWASP Story in New Ways

- Communicate through the lens of your members & prospects
- Integrate what they care bout into your messaging (threat modeling, vulnerabilities, attack vectors, etc.)
- Find new platforms
- Leverage events & opportunities

Recommendation 3: Member Spotlight

- Let your members tell the OWASP story on your behalf
- They'll connect w/ their networks
- They'll demonstrate value & credibility that you couldn't on your own
- They'll put names and faces w/ OWASP



Showcasing Your Members

OWASP asks the questions

- What do you value about OWASP?
- Why is OWASP important to you?
- Where is OWASP headed?
- Etc.

Member Company or individual answers

- They articulate the OWASP story on your behalf
- Generally, about OWASP
- Narrowly, about a program, standard, or project

OWASP packages the answer(s)

- Graphic
- Blog
- Video
- Press release
- By-lined article

OWASP posts on its site & social platforms

- Great content for OWASP to share on its channels
- Can be delivered in long form and in sound bite

Member shares with the world

- Member benefits from visibility
- OWASP gains visibility across wider channels, among perfect target audiences

Mix of members by size & geography

Recommendation 4: Digital Advertising & Social Graphics

- Social media graphics
- Paid digital
- Videos
- Blog posts
- Feed the channels and let them do the work for you
- Leverage intel gathered in Stakeholder Survey
  - Whom to target
  - What they value
  - Where they gather & consume information

Recommendation 5: Leverage Chapters

- With all tactics, consider how chapters can play a role
- Design marketing elements to allow for distribution via chapters
- Use chapters to identify subjects for content

Recommendation 6: New Collateral

Differentiate OWASP programs and services

Fill gaps in support of strategic priorities

Infographics, flyers, brochures to seize opportunities for thought leadership

Recommendation 7: Seize Opportunities for Visibility

- OWASP has outsized opportunity to generate positive visibility from work on Projects
  - Announcements from working groups
  - Accomplishments
  - Meetings & events
- A blend of P.R. & social media
  - Podcasts
  - Videos
  - Blog posts
  - Press releases
- Tell and show the OWSP story … don't be shy

Hub & Spokes of the OWASP Marketing Eco-System

A blend of content, advertising & social media to drive engagement, website visits, and acquisition of contact information

At any point, learning can inform & adjust the approach

Mine & leverage existing content

What existing content has use for building visibility of OWASP and/or its strategic priorities? (videos, blog posts, white papers, research)

Content distributed via social media channels, targeting key audiences

February

January

March & Beyond

Content distilled into soundbites & synchronized with social media calendar

Member Spotlight series

February

Identify three to five member companies worthy of spotlight

Draft series of interview questions about OWASP's value to members

March

Conduct interviews w/ members – via email, phone call or Zoom

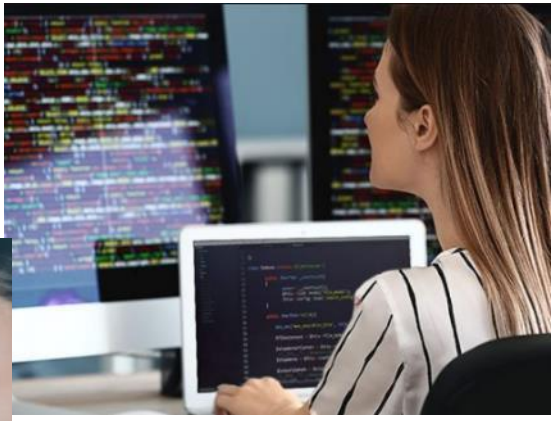
Assemble content & distribute on OWASP website & social channels

Provide to member for additional distribution

April & Beyond

Continue the series

Expand into video and/or podcasts if concept gets some traction



New collateral

February - March

Establish hierarchy of need
- Membership growth
- Chapter engagement

Create templates

June & beyond

Gauge reaction

Move on to additional needs

Develop in sequence with need

Tell the general OWASP story…

…along w/ needs of other areas of organization

April - May

Seize opportunities for visibility

Quarter 1

Establish hierarchy of need. Establish a master calendar of touchpoints w/ OWASP's key audiences

Quarter 2 & Beyond

Synchronize events & P.R. with social media, newsletter, and other touchpoints w/ members and prospects

Quarter 2

Seize unique opportunities to tell the OWASP story via events and P.R.

- Where are OWASP leaders speaking?
- Where are OWASP target audiences gathering in large numbers?
- What OWASP moments are worthy of news coverage?

Metrics

Membership engagement

Projects completed

Website traffic

Social media followers

New members

Dashboard