The Future of Tiki - 2021 - Some Ideas

Here are some ideas on the topic of Tiki as a Tech Solution in 2021 to discuss at TikiFest Virtual 2021, and about the need to understand the situation before strategy/marketing can be done. Anyone is free to add thoughts here or please come to the TikiFest session.

I'm thinking that in order to promote Tiki, we need to think about where it stands in today's market/environment, who its potential market/audience is, what those people need in a solution, how Tiki can meet those needs, and how we can promote Tiki as a solution to those needs.

- What is Tiki's use-case niche?
- Why does a person or organization choose Tiki over alternatives?

To think about the future of Tiki, I think we should think about things like

1. How the web market/environment has evolved during Tiki's lifetime
2. How Tiki's market niche has changed and what it is now
3. Who (individual or organization) previously used Tiki in the past and who uses it now
4. How Tiki can best be promoted, based on understanding the above points

This thinking takes into account what Tiki is as a software solution:

- **Wiki-based website + easy/flexible forms creation and data management + complementary functionalities and "legacy" features**
  - This is my conception of Tiki as a solution: The wiki and tracker components are the two main pillars/tent poles/anchors. Used in conjunction with them (complementary functionalities) are search, categories, user permissions, file/media storage and presentation, calendar, etc. And bonuses/gravy are the "legacy" features that include blogs, forums, articles, etc. These I'm calling "legacy" because they are features that maybe in the past were more front-and-center in web platforms, more popular as the centerpiece of a website, and got more development TLC than they do today.

One - How the web market/environment has evolved during Tiki's lifetime

- The internet (WWW) has become more "everyday life" and not just a playground for techies.
- The rise of giant platforms — Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram. These have syphoned off a lot of web publishing and organizing that formerly went to, or otherwise would go to, independent websites.
- The decline of personal websites/blogs — As the giant platforms became prominent, independent websites faded as the first choice for web communication, etc.
- The consolidation of choices for website software/platforms — WordPress (https://www.wpoven.com/blog/wordpress-market-share/) — and emergence of easy-to-use alternatives (Wix, Squarespace, etc.).

Two - How Tiki's market niche has changed and what it is now

- Perhaps Tiki has always appealed in particular to techie users because of its many features, greater complexity, and so on, and even because it was a bit of an outlier ("Everybody's using — I'm going to use Tiki"). As the internet has become less techie, software and platforms that appeal to the general public have become more popular. Platforms that are more techie have just maintained their market penetration, in absolute numbers, but have been surpassed percentage-wise by the easy-to-use or "bandwagon" alternatives as web newcomers flocked to those.
- For general public usage, all of the options that aren't a giant platform have suffered as the giant platforms gained popularity, and it's been a snowball effect as popularity feeds popularity.
- The potential for personal websites/blogs using "old-school" platforms like Tiki will probably continue

to be limited indefinitely as they will be a niche for people/organizations with particular specific needs that the mainstream options can't meet.

Three - Who (individual or organization) previously used Tiki in the past and who uses it now

- Probably the Tiki users in the past and those today are pretty much the same types, with the exception that, today, some people/organizations who don't necessarily require Tiki's specific features have shifted to "easy-to-use" alternatives. A check of older websites in Tiki's website directory shows a number of them are now WordPress sites, for example. (It should be said that "easy-to-use" may be a misleading description as websites that ended up with security issues with third-party plugins, for example, turned out to be not so easy to use after all — but the perception exists nevertheless.)
- Regarding the use cases of larger organizations and companies, the alternatives to Tiki are SaaS solutions for data management, etc.
- Individuals and organizations who understand, appreciate, and require the features in Tiki chose it for those reasons in the past and do today, so . . . .

Four - How Tiki can best be promoted, based on understanding the above points

- Understand and promote Tiki's advantageous features relative to alternatives
  - Wiki-based website + easy/flexible forms creation and data management + complementary functionalities and "legacy" features
    - The specific features Tiki has that can't be matched by alternatives should be promoted.
    - Maybe there's a way to capture these in a neat phrase.
    - This is why I don't care much for the "Tiki does it all" or "Tiki for everybody" kind of catchphrase — a) it isn't really accurate — there's a lot Tiki can't do without significant customization/extension, and b) it obscures the truth that Tiki does have built-in features that are unique and will match some use cases very well.
- Point out Tiki's advantages relative to the alternatives:
  - Tiki is Open Source, so it's free, no license or subscription costs, etc.
  - Contributed data is owned by the users.
  - Tiki's "all-in-one" model means no third-party plugins that are subject to upgrade incompatibilities and security vulnerabilities.
  - For developers, the Tiki project is easy to get involved in and contribute to.
  - Web presence + data input and management + complementary features all in one package.
  - An interesting collection of website features for tech enthusiasts
  - . . .

See also:

- TikiFest Virtual 2021
- item11892#contenttabs_view_tracker_item-1
- SWOT