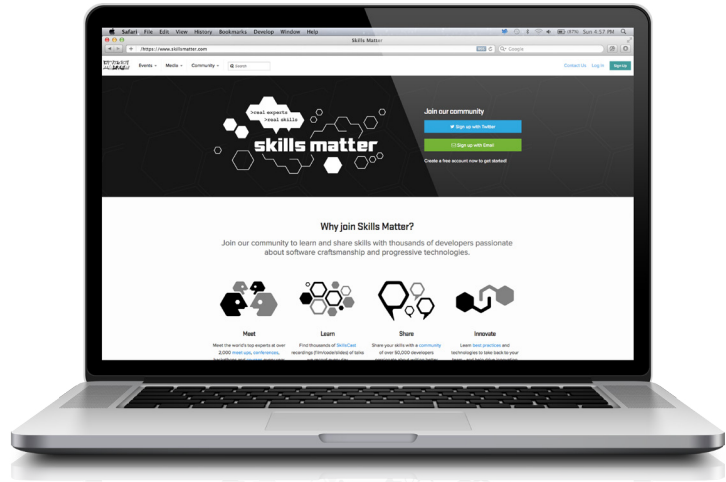# Pivotal Labs Case Study

INDUSTRY
Software Developer Outreach

HEADQUARTERS
London, UK

PLATFORMS
Website (Rails)

KEY GOALS

• Modernize web presence to match strength in the developer community

• Accelerate development while growing delivery capabilities

• Implement a powerful search, streamlined user experience, and new social and user-oriented features

FEATURES

• Rich and powerful search for learning content

• Users and social profile features to follow experts and interesting events

• Conference/event/meetup/group view and sign-up to enable community membership

• Hosted media (recorded videos)

• Courses

• Commercial purchases

Real Experts. Real Skills.

Skills Matter supports a large community of software professionals developing their skills and connecting with other like-minded people. They support and run hundreds of meetups, user groups, talks and conferences while providing online resources for developers to learn and connect.

BACKGROUND

Skills Matter is a highly social and innovative tech company, with a mission to support and drive innovation in enterprise software development. It does this by bringing smart and creative people together in an environment that encourages conversation, collaboration and ideas. Skills Matter's work supports a 50,000 strong community of passionate developers - a community it keeps at the centre of everything it does, ensuring constant opportunities to learn and share. Each year in partnership with the world's leading software developers, technologists and agilists, Skills Matter runs 30 major conferences, hosts more than 40 user groups, offers more than 100 expert-led courses in bleeding edge technologies, and organises hundreds of free evening events and hackathons.
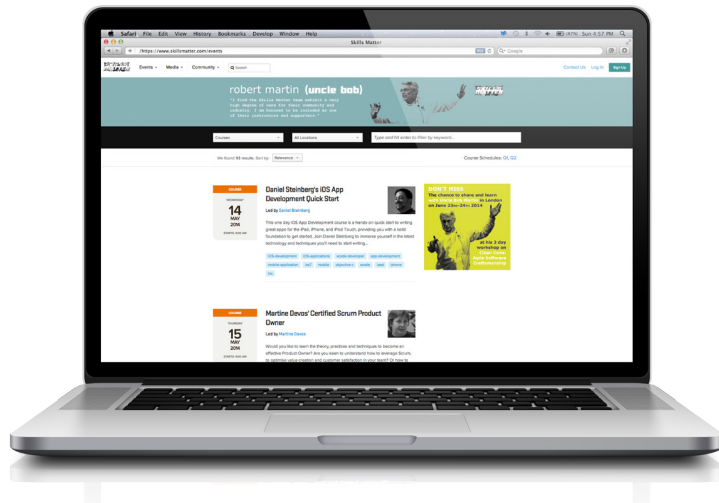
THE CHALLENGES

Because Skills Matter is an established brand that is well-known within the developer community, there were many stakeholders whose interests had to be taken into account. Combining their requirements with an aggressive timeline and a lengthy list of features that required prioritization made this a complex project.

Having received venture capital investment, Skills Matter wanted to modernize their web presence to improve how it listened to, communicated with and worked alongside its members. They had started a migration to Rails and needed to accelerate development while growing their delivery capabilities. The project goals they presented to Pivotal Labs were to:

• Modernize and bring Skills Matter's web presence up to speed with its strong leadership role within the developer community

• Accelerate its web development while growing its delivery capabilities

• Implement powerful search, a streamlined user experience, new social and user-oriented features and adaptable architecture

• Create a flexible platform that supports growth and change

All of this was to happen within a three month deadline to launch, with the ultimate goal of significantly expanding access to valuable content and thereby increasing membership.

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THE SOLUTION

Prior to working with Skills Matter, Pivotal Labs had helped many companies re-platform using the Rails technology stack. Of particular relevance to the Skills Matters website was our recent experience building and launching a developer-focused site emphasizing multi-faceted search. The knowledge gained greatly accelerated our delivery of a rich and powerful search for the Skills Matter website.

We believe the only way to build truly great software is to assemble and educate great teams. By co-sourcing the project, we created an opportunity for focused coaching, as our engineers and theirs designed and programmed together. Skills Matter benefited in particular from Pivotal Labs' process, from test driven development to super-agility, to helping define and prioritize items while remaining focused and disciplined. The Skills Matter team was set up for long-term success, able to design, develop, and manage ongoing projects in-house after our engagement ended.
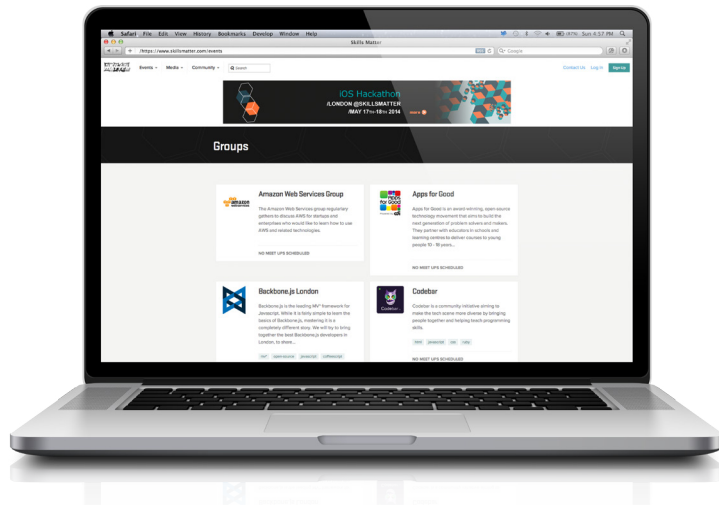
Through our co-innovation partnership with Skills Matter, we developed a website that has strengthened the developer community's ability to network and share their knowledge. Skills Matter is enabled to be faster and smarter about reaching out to and communicating with its 50,000-person community of developers – the community that Skills Matter keeps at the centre of everything it does so that it can offer constant opportunities to learn and share.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

The modernized website is already proving a success, bringing Skills Matter's online presence up to speed with its strong leadership role within the developer community. There has been a noticeable increase in membership, much stronger levels of communication with members, an increased hit rate and reduced bounce rate. Additionally, Pivotal Labs has helped Skills Matter craft a strong engineering capability with:

- A team that uses agile engineering best practices
- A solid application architecture
- A flexible platform that supports growth and change

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LOOKING AHEAD

The Skills Matter team has additional goals beyond the website relaunch. Because our approach reliably creates software that responds to change, the Skills Matter team will be prepared to introduce new features, open up APIs, and respond to community demands with ease. Pivotal Labs remains available as an ongoing partner, and we look forward to working with Skills Matter to continue building simple while preserving flexibility.

WHAT OUR CLIENT SAID

"It has been great to collaborate with Pivotal Labs to enable Skills Matter to deliver the features we wanted fast. From test driven development to being super agile, helping us define and prioritise our requirements through proven practices, while being focused and disciplined - Pivotal Labs understood the nature of our business and our requirement to adapt and change constantly to meet our objectives.

Thanks to their support of our backlog management, their extreme agility and their passion for helping us achieve what we wanted, we were able to realise the results most important to our business."

- Wendy Devolder
   Founder & CEO

ABOUT PIVOTAL LABS

Pivotal Labs has been at the forefront of agile development for 25 years. We specialize in building highly reliable, scalable web and mobile solutions for enterprise and start-up clients, across a range of industries including media, retail, healthcare, education, and financial services.

Tell us how we can align to your success.

Contact us at info@pivotallabs.com

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