

Hiring and embedding new engineers

Hyves

Who am I

Ramon van Alteren

Senior System Engineer Hyves.nl

Joined in 2005

ex-Manager System Engineering
Primary architect Ordina Java Factory
Eacoss

5+ years software developer/consultant



Who am I, part II



Original career in social work

Master focussed on successful coaching programs for addicted prisoners

5+ years working as a coach in a addiction rehabilitation center

Behavioral change is hard



But not impossible

Despite best intentions



People under stress will often default to old known behavior

Tools for change



Peer Pressure



Paradox

Back to Hiring & Embedding

Hyves

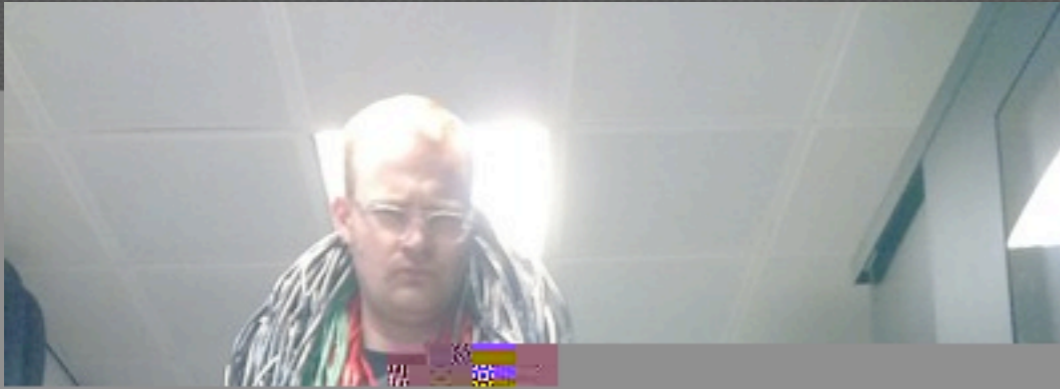
Small social network company started in 2004

By 2005 we had 4 employees and 30 servers in a hosted rack setup, 100K members

By 2008 we had ~50+ employees and 2000 servers hybrid hosting setup, 5M members

By 2010 we had ~120+ employees, 3000+ servers, 3 datacenters and 10M members

Every 3 months 2005-2008



And now ?

2011:

~160 employees

~15 different nationalities

5 departments

5 floor office building

Back to hiring

Who I would like to hire:

- 2-3 years of development experience
- 3-5 years of systems / operational experience
- full stack knowledge (hardware, OS, networking, standard services, custom build services)
- 3+ years experience running large scale operations
- 2+ years of devops experience

Actual candidates

- 3+ years of development experience
- 3+ years of systems / operational experience
- full stack knowledge (hardware, OS, networking, standard services, custom build services)
- 3+ years experience running large scale operations
- 2+ years of devops experience



Net result

We're putting a group of people together that mostly have experience with siloed development & operations.

And add a fair amount of stress, deadlines and operational issues

Despite best intentions



People under stress will often default to old known behavior

Process

The default answer to this problem is to define more processes, hand-overs, deliverables, have more meetings....

But....

Culture

Extreme focus on operation

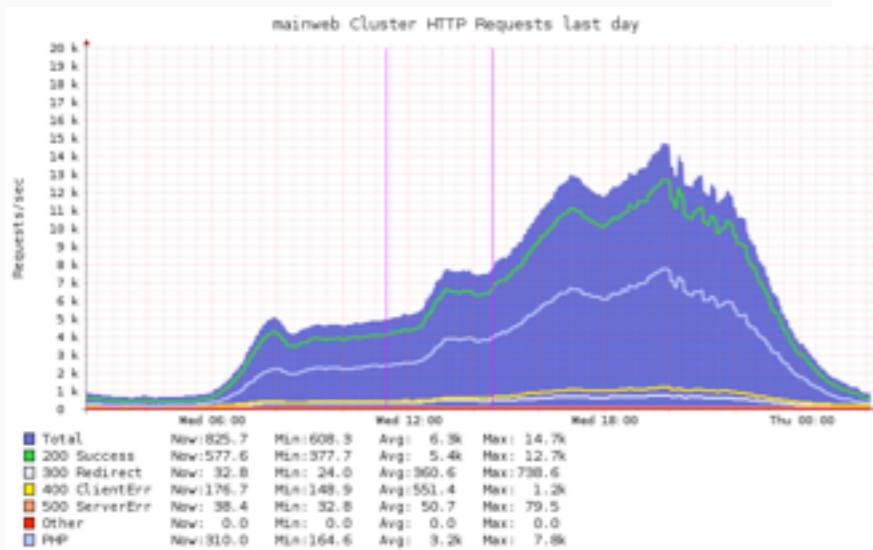
Release early, release often

Small teams of smart people

Failure is a common topic

People + Culture >> process

Focus on operation



Date: 18 jan 2010 Pageviews this hour 4.027,310

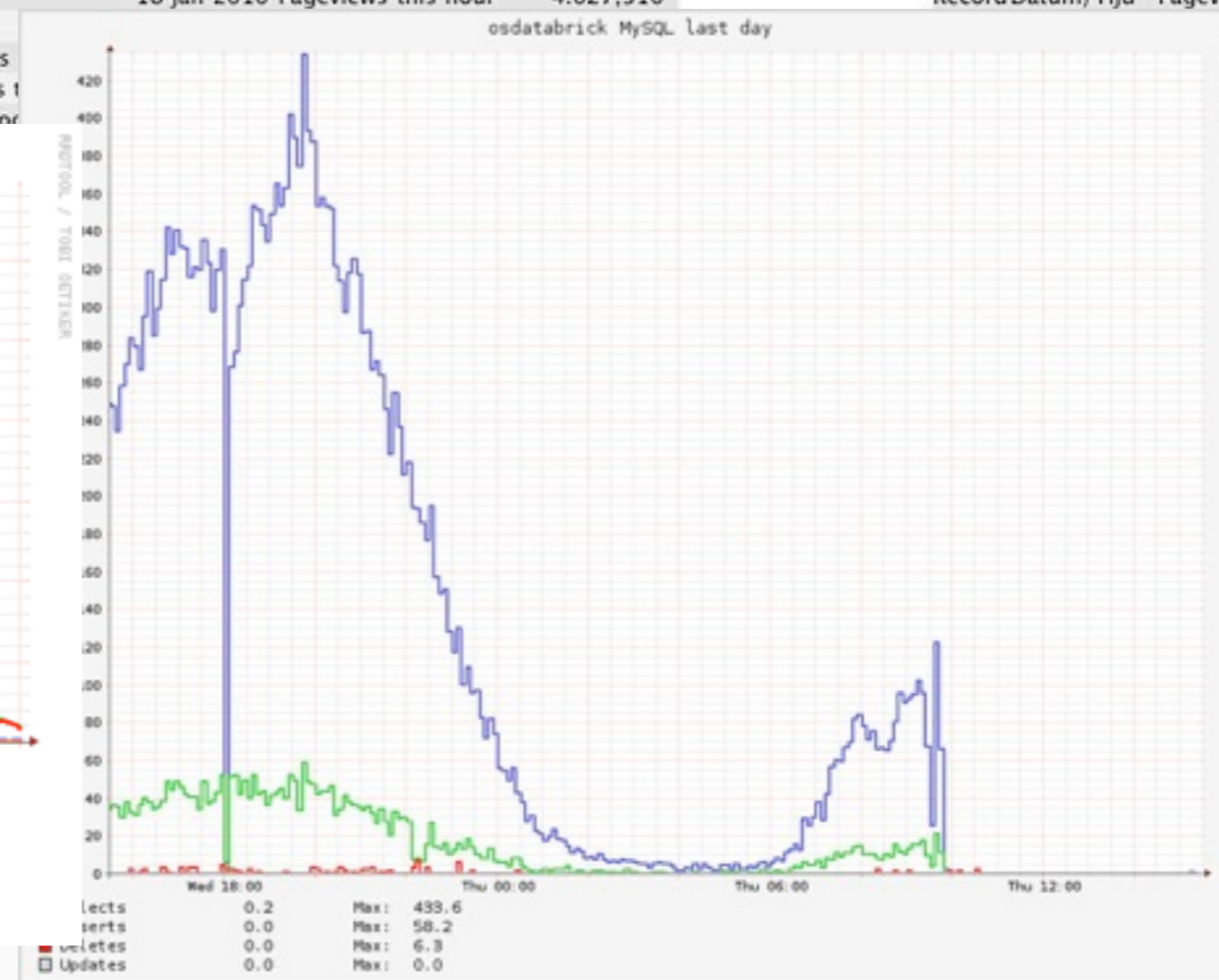
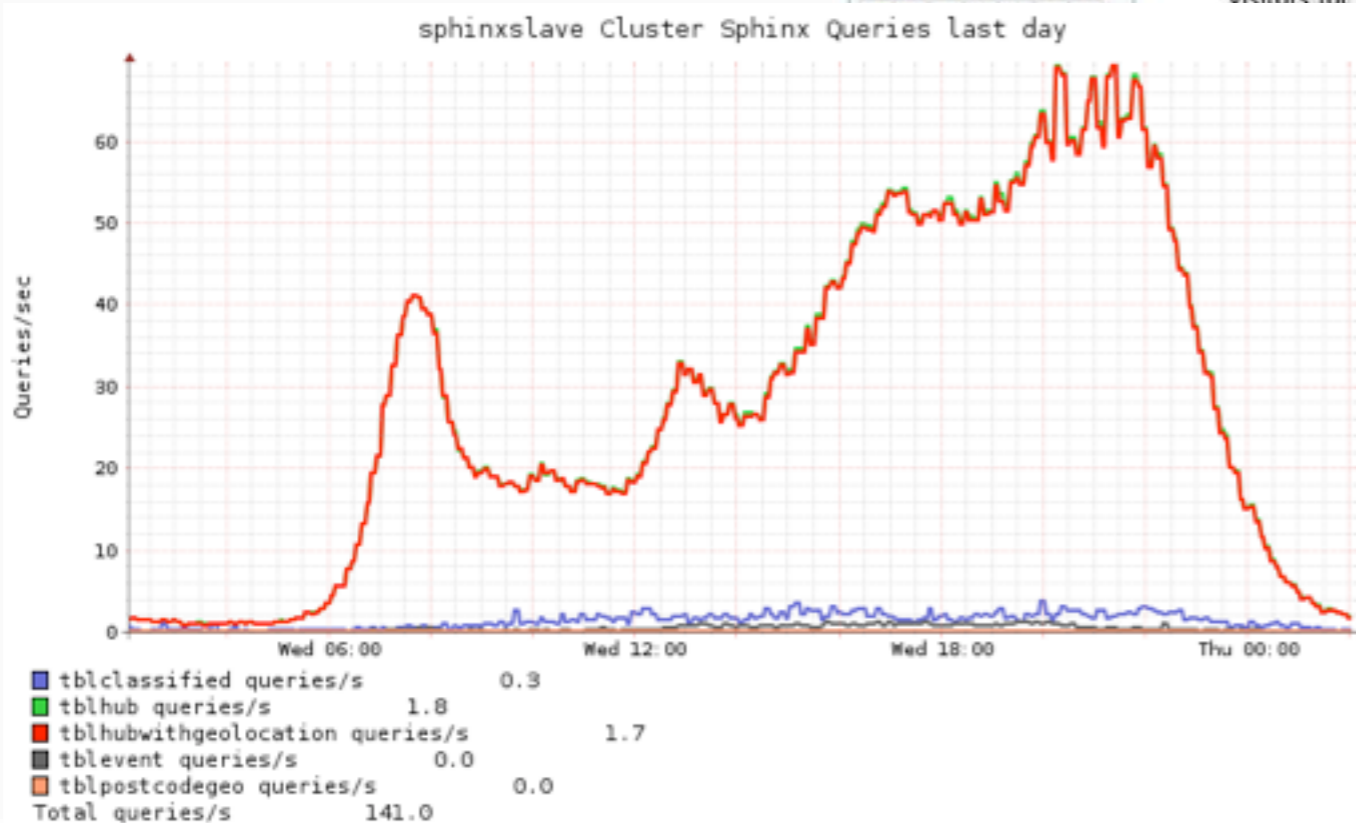
Time:

Pageviews

Prognosis

Visitors tot

RecordDatum/Tijd	Pageviews
	9,890
	320
	54,630
	91,750



Hyves.net SysAdmin
always in touch with your friends

Embedding

embedding:

implant (an idea or feeling) within something else so it becomes an ingrained or essential characteristic of it :
*the Victorian values **embedded in** Tennyson's poetry.*

First steps for a new hire

Mentor / Go-to person

Lunch with the founders

“Swimming while you can stand” project

OPS-team

Disruption shift after 6-8 weeks

Mandatory datacenter hardware fixing

Joint OPS/DEV team

One room

Ticket team (development)

Ops team (system engineering)

Dashboard

Deploymeister (development)

Rotate often

Other stuff

ACI's on site problems

Techlunches every friday

Joint project teams

A & P meeting

Common irc channel with monitoring notifications

Lots and lots of out-of-bound activities (Beer++)

Hackathons

Problems

Capacity planning

Unexpected consequences

Resource management / refactoring

Database schema management

Ownership of code and services

Stuff that works

Joint OPS/DEV team

Failure as a first-class citizen

ACI's

Joint project teams

Hiring process

Ramp up time investment for successful candidates

- CV-selection (15 mins)
- Assessment evaluation (5-30 mins)
- Telephone interview (30-60 mins)
- On site interview (3-4 hours)

Thank you

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