Onboarding users on your library

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1 Question

How can you onboard users to use your library as fast as possible?

2 Answer

You need to make it as frictionless as possible for them to use your library.

First, they need to know the value proposition of the library. They need to know why they should use your library and not find another one available online. It needs to be convincing and to touch on the tasks they need to accomplish. The closer your vocabulary is to theirs, the easier it will be.

Second, the installation process needs to be as painless as possible. If you use a language with a package manager, give instructions on how to install your package using the package manager. If there are multiple popular package managers for the language in which the package was written, make sure to cover the most used ones.

Third, when users do not understand how to do certain tasks using your library (when it is in its early stage of development), take note of those questions, especially the wording. You want to capture what they were trying to do, how they described what they wanted to do, and why they were trying to do it. With this information in hand it should be easy for you to determine whether your library supports (or should support) the use case they tried to accomplish. If your library is not going to support the use case, make sure to indicate it early in the documentation so that users do not have the wrong expectation that your library will help them with this use case.

Finally, try to learn as much from your users as possible. Try to understand what it is they are trying to accomplish and whether it is valuable to most of them if you were to support new use cases. If you can document the most common use cases so that they can read the steps they'll have to go through, it will be simpler for them to evaluate the process before going through it.