

Issue #16

 Hackmamba



Helping devtools win over technical audiences

MARKUP MINDSET

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TMM #16– How distribution is really working for devtools right now



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Hey there, this week in *The Markup Mindset*:

- Why X ads is not a dependable channel anymore
- Small technical moments on Reddit are quietly producing consistent awareness.
- Product Hunt continues to drive users for launches that are executed with intent.

Lets get started!

1. X ads is not a dependable channel anymore

I was going through a thread on Reddit where a marketer shared that they recently activated a JavaScript challenge for all ad traffic coming from X using Cloudflare. They suspected a large share of the traffic was automated and wanted to measure how much. The result was stark. 97.44% of the traffic failed the JS bot check, which meant only about 2% of their ad spend was reaching real humans

Is this normal? 97.44% of ad clicks coming from X are spam bots.

I recently activated a JS challenge for all ad traffic coming from X since I had a feeling that a lot of the traffic we're automated, and I wanted to know how much. It seems that 97.44% of the traffic could not pass CloudFlares JS bot detection, aka not human,

That leaves ~2% of every dollar spent, is actually spent on humans.

Is that normal in the ad industry? Did anyone try something similar on other platforms to gauge their quality?

You have used 5 out of 5 available Custom Firewall Rules.

Order	Action	Name	CSR ⓘ	Activity last 24hr	Enabled
1					
2					
3					
4					
5	JS Challenge	JS challenge all ad traffic from X URI Full	2.56%	Issued 2.27k Solved 58	☒

[Reddit thread](#)

That mirrors what we are seeing internally across multiple devtools.

What we are noticing:

- Docs pageviews rising while time on page stays under 2 seconds
- Clicks landing on docs with no scroll depth or link interactions
- Retargeting pools growing with no lift in trial starts
- CTR improving while zero new users reach setup guides

A growth lead at a devtool company said:

We saw 310k impressions, 9.4k clicks, and zero activations. Seventy percent of the visits hit our docs and bounced in under a second.

The question marketers should now be asking is not how to optimize X ads further. The **question is whether it still makes sense to invest in X at all, or whether that budget should move to channels that produce real product usage.**

2. Use small technical moments on Reddit to drive quiet awareness

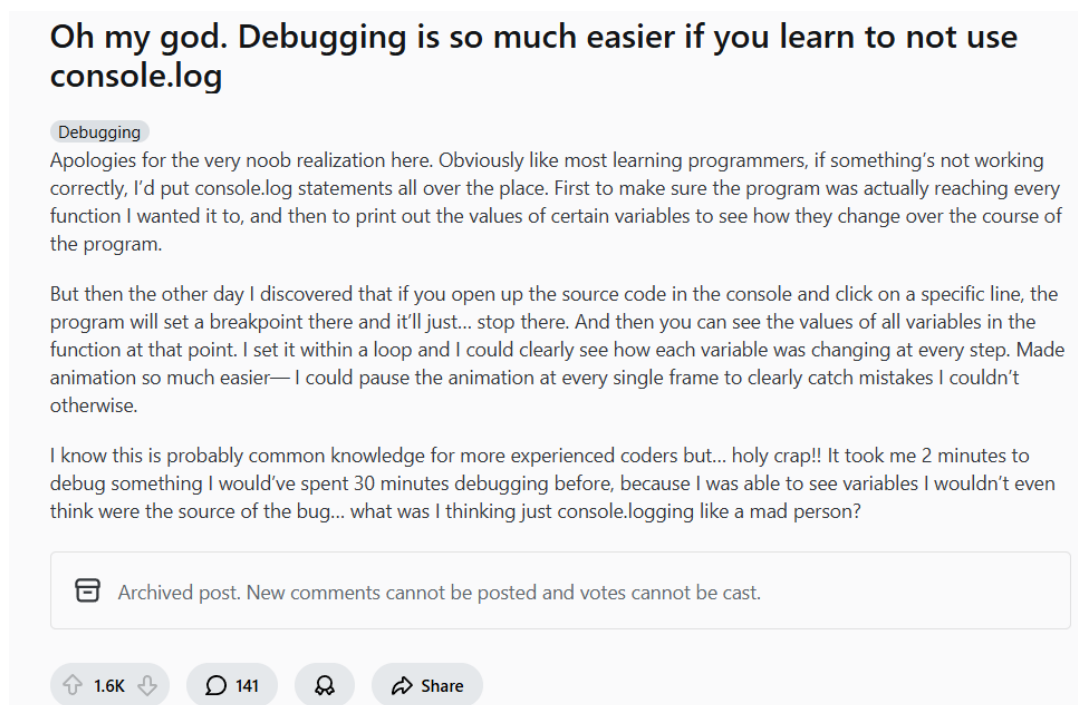
For one of our BaaS clients, we ran a Reddit experiment across r/webdev, r/selfhosted, and r/devops. We focused only on small things people run into while building. These posts felt natural inside developer subreddits and led to regular comment activity.

This structure produced 2–3× more comments and 3–5× more upvotes than normal technical posts.

Here are the formats that worked:

1. Template 1 – “Small mistake → Small lesson”

A post that shows a simple error, the wrong assumption, and the quick fix. Developers recognize the setup immediately.



2. Template 2 – “Strange behavior in XYZ”

A post that describes behavior that does not match expectations.
Developers naturally jump in to diagnose

Strange Docker Desktop Behavior

Hi all,

i dont know if this is the right place, if you think its not, please feel free to pint me to an better sub.

Im running an up to date docker desktop on an win 11 pro. There ar 25 Containers with different home projects / small websites etc.

Almost all Containers have Ports published.

Today the 2nd time i was not able to communicate outside the docker containers.
At first i thought of an dns issue, because dns failed and direct ping to the ip worked.

So i went investigating, and it turns out ONLY ping works, nothing else.

i hosted a picture for testing on another host on my network : 192.xxx.xxx.200/test.jpg

Turns out it is reachable from my network and the ping from the container works.

But neither curl or wget can actually access the image.

In fact no other communication than ping works. mqtt, http, https etc. everything runs into a timeout.

Another interesting thing i noticed: on the upper right where the docker account button is also an timeout error popped of. So the communication from the whole docker system is / was broken.

Beside from docker desktop everything worked as expected - web browsers, terminal etc.

I stopped all containers and tried to just start 1 but the same behavior.

I restarted docker Desktop and Docker engine - same behavior

I restarted the whole machine - same behavior.

I cleared my dhcp pool just to be sure.

I turned windows firewall completely off.

In the following time of troubleshooting i restarted 2 more times and suddenly everything works as expected.

This is the 2nd time that happened, does anybody know what can cause this behavior and how to prevent it for the

3. Template 3 – “A question that invites discussion”

A post which contains a question or odd behavior and prompts interpretation

What's the worse production issue you've ever caused?

Just curious as to how bad things got and if you were able to recover from it/repair the damage?

87

107



Share

3. Product Hunt is not dead

I reviewed the past month of launches on Product Hunt to understand what “a good launch” actually looks like right now. Roughly 20 to 40 devtools shipped in that window. The stronger ones still land in the 150 to 600 upvote range, with a clear follow-through in GitHub stars, community signups, and direct traffic after launch.

To understand what that top end translates to in real usage, I spoke with Flo Merian, one of the most consistent hunters on the platform. He said:

A dev-first product that finishes in the Top 4 can drive around 1,500 direct users in a single day.

That is true distribution.

What actually determines whether a launch reaches that level is still the open question. That is what I am breaking down next with examples and a practical checklist. Stay tuned!

Tahir

More from us:

1. [Everything you should know about marketing to developers in 2025](#)
2. [6 best developer marketing channels you should focus \(+examples\)](#)
3. [How do I grow an engaging software product community?](#)

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