Spam is War

Jeff Geerling
@geerlingguy

Jeff Geerling

@geerlingguy

drupal.org/user/389011

SERVER CHECK.IN

Flocknote

Midwestern Mac, LLC

Agenda

- Spam is war
- “Know thine enemy”
- Strategies and weapons
- Adaptability
- Q&A

Spam is War

http://memegenerator.net/instance/27497548

Spam is War

- Spammers: real people
- Spammers: automated bots
- Spammers fight a war of **attrition**

Spam is War

- Never, never, never give up!

Image: http://americanpublichousereview.com/2012.04/wooden_match_bethlehem_pa/index.html

Know Thine Enemy

- Spam Bots:
  - Persistent
  - Pesky
  - Predictable

http://lolzombie.com/2071/spam-bots/

Know Thine Enemy

- Spam Bots:
  - Persistent
  - Pesky
  - **Predictable**

http://lolzombie.com/2071/spam-bots/

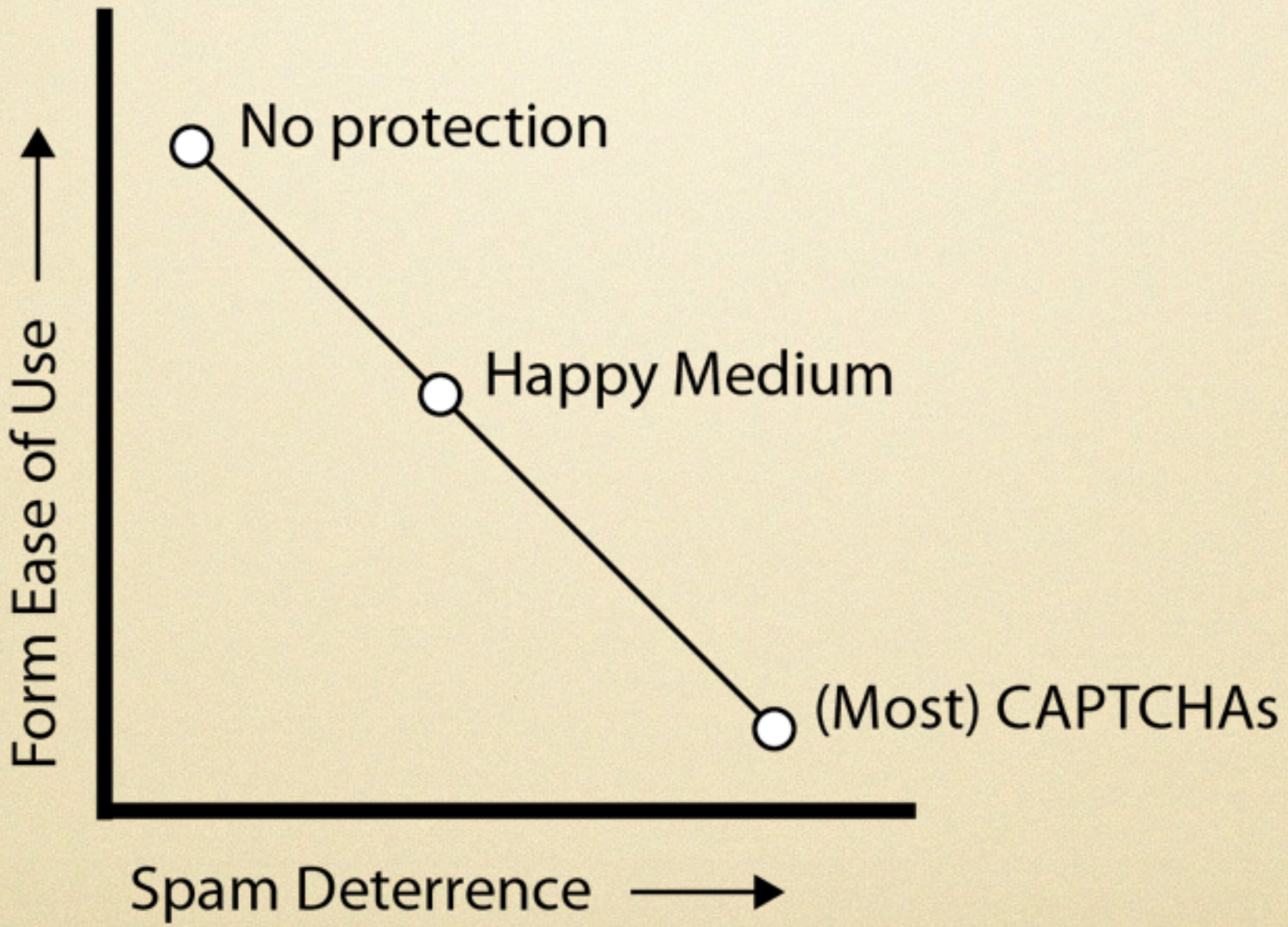
Know Thine Enemy

- Human spammers:
  - Comments like “This is a great site! I love how you use hook_form_alter() here, it really shows the flexibility of Drupal! cialis - keep up the great work!”
  - Overworked comment moderators let these slip quite often.

Know Thine Enemy

- Human spammers:
  - Not impossible to fend off.
  - Sometimes predictable.
  - Don’t like wasting their time (usually).

Strategies & Weapons



Strategies & Weapons

- What DEFCON are you?
  - 1: light spam, mostly bots
  - 2: lots'a bots
  - 3: moderate human spam
  - 4: dedicated human spam

http://www.twitip.com/follow-friday-too-much-of-a-good-thing/

Strategies & Weapons

- Scorched Earth / Win without fighting
  - Destroy incentives for spammers.
    - rel=”nofollow”
    - Comment/Content Moderation
    - Don’t show form submission results.

Strategies & Weapons

- Bait and Bleed & Camoflauge
  - Let spammers spam, but penalize them.
  - Honeypot (drupal.org/project/honeypot)
  - Spamicide (drupal.org/project/spamicide)
  - BOTCHA (drupal.org/project/botcha)

Strategies & Weapons

http://photos.vaxlan.net/v/img/Blitzkrieg+Kittens.jpg.html?g2_imageViewsIndex=1

Strategies & Weapons

- Blitzkrieg
  - Active spam prevention.
    - Services like Mollom, Akismet.
    - CAPTCHA, reCAPTCHA
    - Use sparingly - can cause performance and UX issues!

Adaptability

- Shoot-and-scoot
  - Larger sites often require more dedicated defense.
- ‘Spamotov cocktail’
  - Passive + Active + CAPTCHA + custom module
  - Enable and monitor your logs!

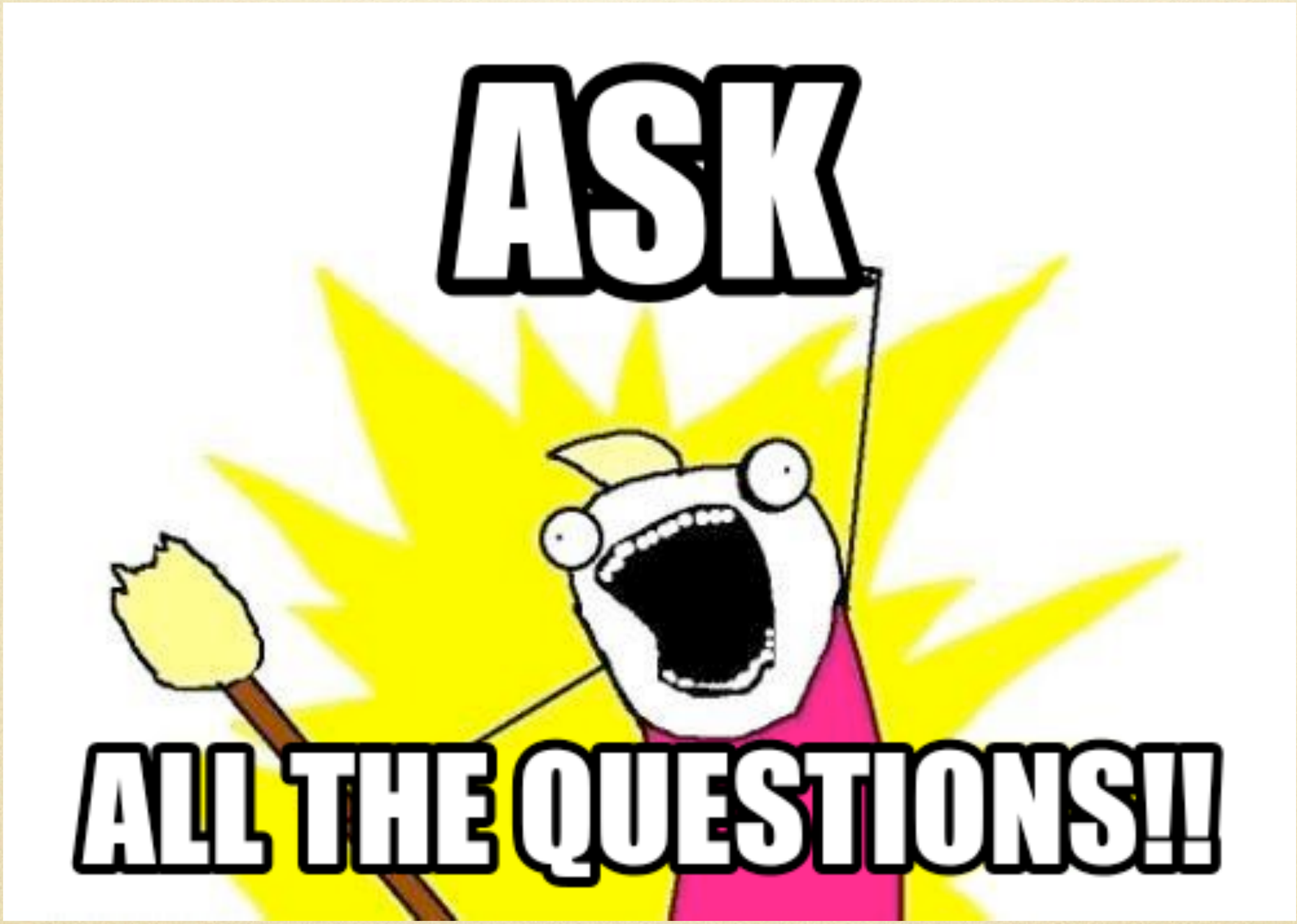
Adaptability

- Honeypot API
  - hook_honeypot_time_limit()
    - Add time penalty to certain IP addresses.
    - Add time penalty if user has submitted X new comments/nodes/forms in past X hours.

http://drupalcode.org/project/honeypot.git/blob/refs/heads/7.x-1.x:/honeypot.api.php

Adaptability

- Stay one step ahead of the spammers.



http://memecrunch.com/meme/1DYM/ask-questions