Updates to the Ansible web presence, May 2023

Sandra McCann
Ansible community docs lead
GitHub: samccann
Matrix: @samccann:ansible.im
License: CC-BY-SA 4.0

ANSIBLE

Acknowledgements

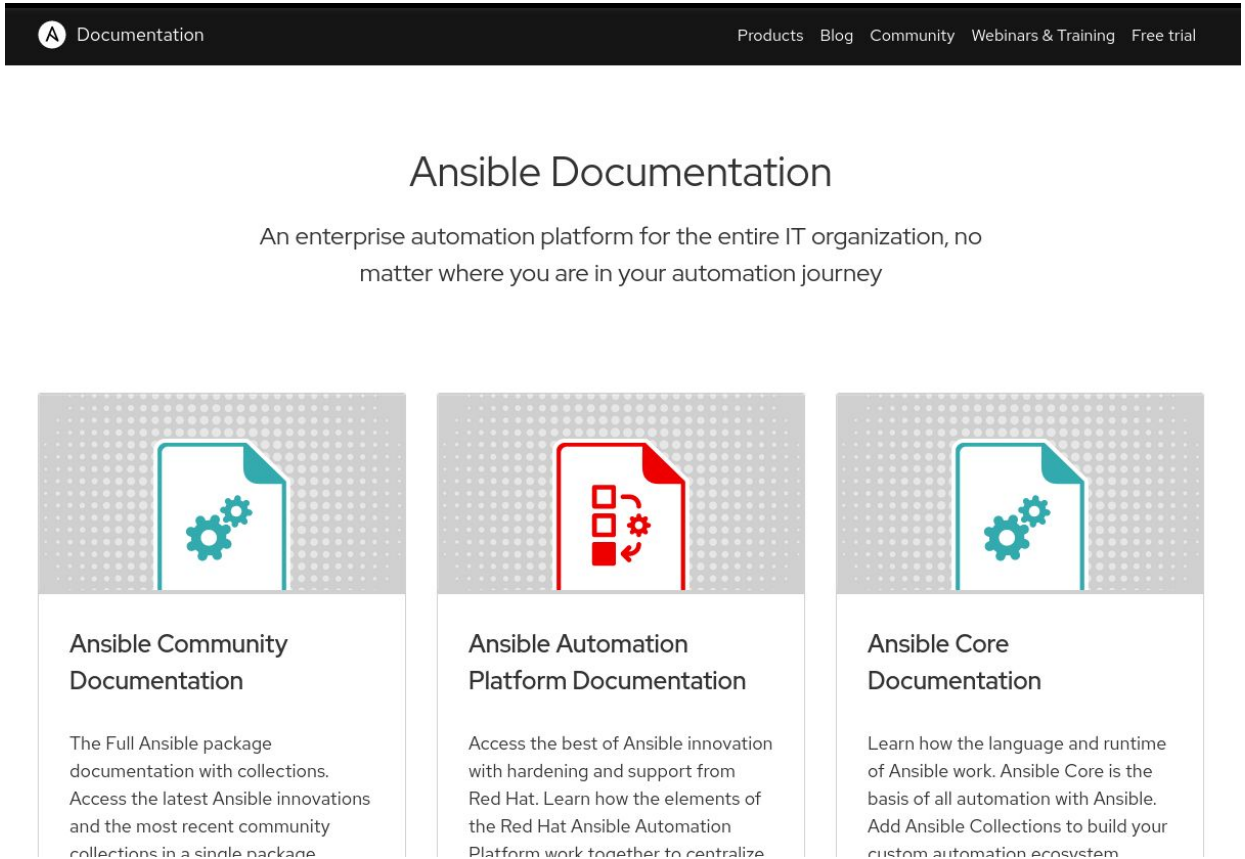
Thank you!!

- Don Naro (oraNod in GitHub)
  - Senior software engineer on Ansible community eng team
- The Ansible community!

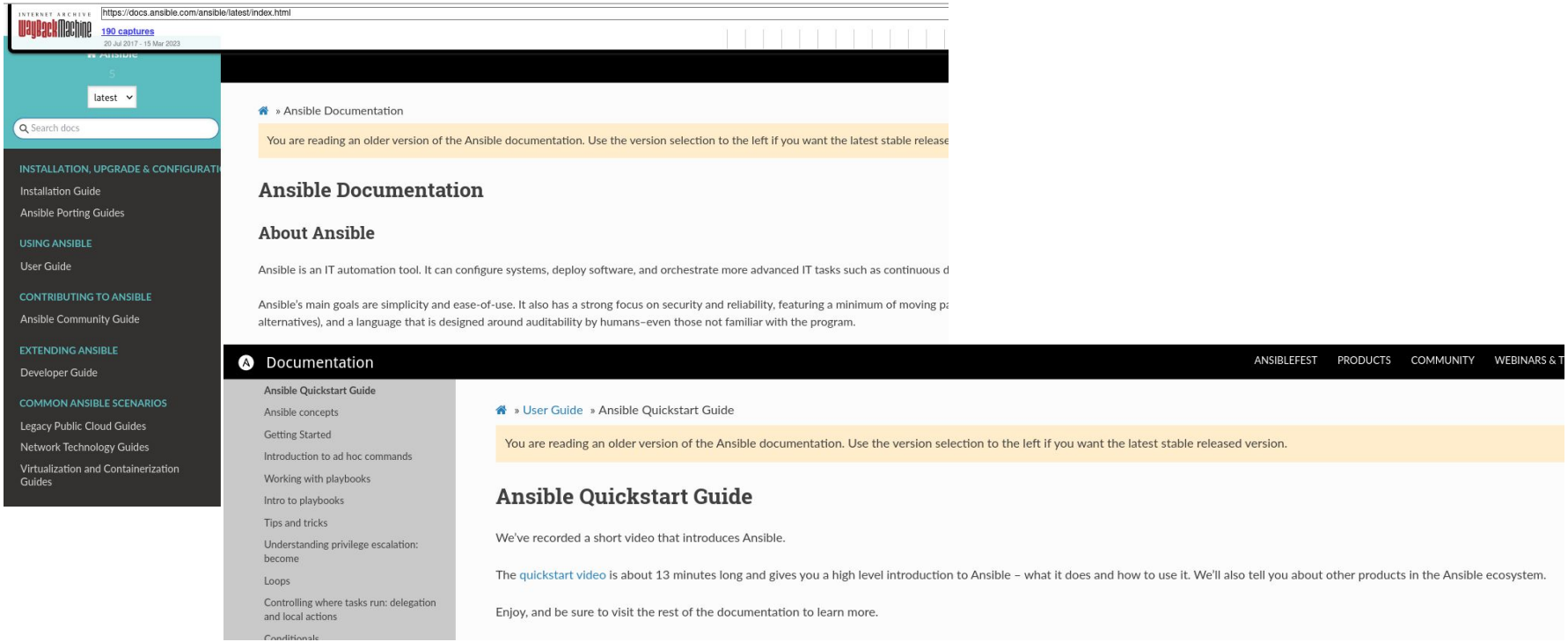
Agenda

- Where we were at and what problems it caused
- How we went about redesigning it all
- More than you ever wanted to know about personas and journeys
- The new docsite!
- What’s next - our fully updated community web presence!

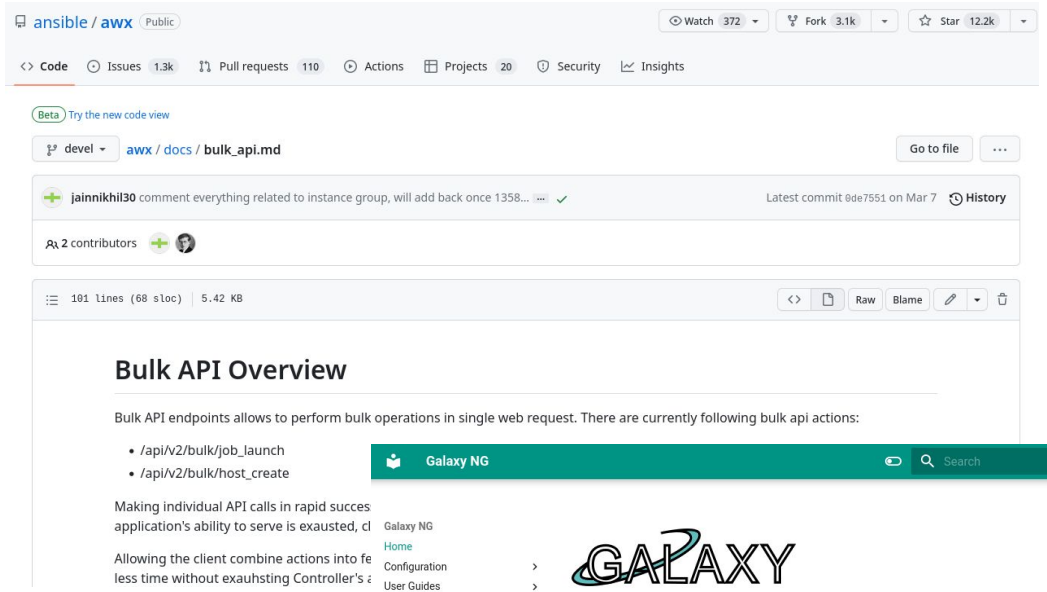
Snapshot of the docsite: May 07, 2022

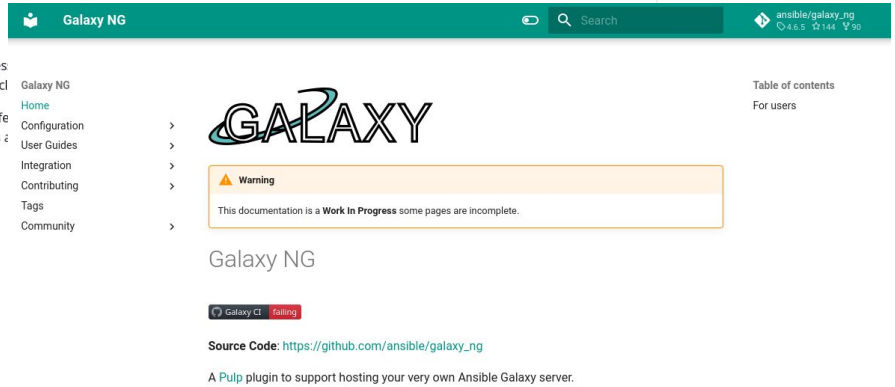


Barriers to entry for new users



Lack of cohesion across project docs





ansible-builder

Navigation

Contents:

Introduction
Installation
Execution Environment Definition
CLI Usage
Collection-level Metadata
Glossary

Quick search

Go

Introduction

Using Ansible content that depends on non-default dependencies can be tricky. Packages must be installed on each node, play nicely with other software installed on the host system, and be kept in sync.

To help simplify this process, we have introduced the concept of Execution Environments, which you can create with Ansible Builder.

Execution Environments

Execution Environments are container images that serve as Ansible control nodes. Starting in version 2.0, ansible-runner can make use of these images.

An Execution Environment is expected to contain:

- Ansible
- Ansible Runner
- Ansible Collections
- Python and/or system dependencies of:
  - modules/plugins in collections
  - content in `ansible-base`
  - custom user needs

Getting Started

To get started with Ansible Builder, start by creating an Execution Environment definition. This file allows you to specify which content you would like to include in your execution environment, such as collections, Python requirements, and system-level packages.

Once you have created a definition, read through the CLI Usage.

So where do we go from here?

Let’s get to know our readers!

- Who’s coming to our docs and why?
- What do they need and when do they need it?
- Where are our documentation gaps?

Much ado about personas and journeys

What is a persona?

- Personas allow us to create a set of ‘typical’ readers based on their needs, knowledge, and attitude.

Much ado about personas and journeys

What is a persona journey?

- This is the way we identify how a persona gains experience from new user to expert.
- What do they need in the beginning? What do they need when they've been working with Ansible for some time?
- How do they 'cross-journey' to another persona (say from user to contributor!)

Ansible Community Personas

- Novice
- User
- Developer
- Community Maintainer
- Community member/evangelist

https://github.com/ansible/docsite/blob/main/data/journeys/docsite-personas.md

Identifying personas

- Needs
- Attitude
- Knowledge

https://github.com/ansible/docsite/blob/main/data/journeys/docsite-personas.md

Ansible docsite personas

Personas represent various humans who are all on different automation journeys with Ansible. These docsite personas help put users in context to identify their technical content needs at each stage of their respective journeys.

We use personas to ensure Ansible community users can find help when and where they need it. If the right support is there, users are much more likely to succeed with their goals. This leads to higher levels of adoption and a more vibrant, stronger community.

The practical goal of defining these personas is to improve the navigation and layout of the `docs.ansible.com` page.

Novice

I'm a general technologist who has an idea about automation. I might already have a project or solution in mind and want to see if Ansible is the right tool for the job.

- **Needs:** A low barrier of entry to gain the fundamentals of Ansible automation.
- **Attitude:** Wants to understand basic concepts quickly and can find small obstacles frustrating.
- **Knowledge:** Undetermined. It is possible that I use Microsoft Windows as my primary operating system. I might even be completely new to open-source technology. I can be a Linux enthusiast doing home automation, a member of an IT team for a small business, or a solution architect for large enterprise.

User

I write automation content like playbooks and roles. When writing playbooks and roles I like to evaluate multiple options to find simple solutions to complex problems.

User journey milestones

AWARE	EVAL	ADOPT	SCALE

Mapping out persona journeys

Novice

The novice journey is the basis for the "Get started with Ansible" section on the docsite index page.

```
Milestone: Need to learn the basics
  Understand the challenges of modern infrastructure management [content gap]
  Understand the fundamentals of Ansible automation

Milestone: Set up an automation project
  Install the Ansible package
  Run your first ad hoc command in a few easy steps
```

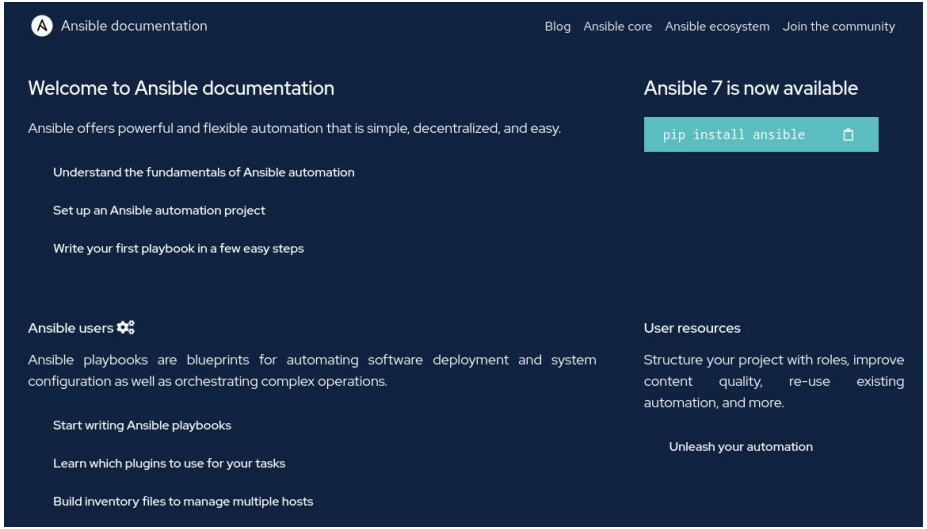
Users

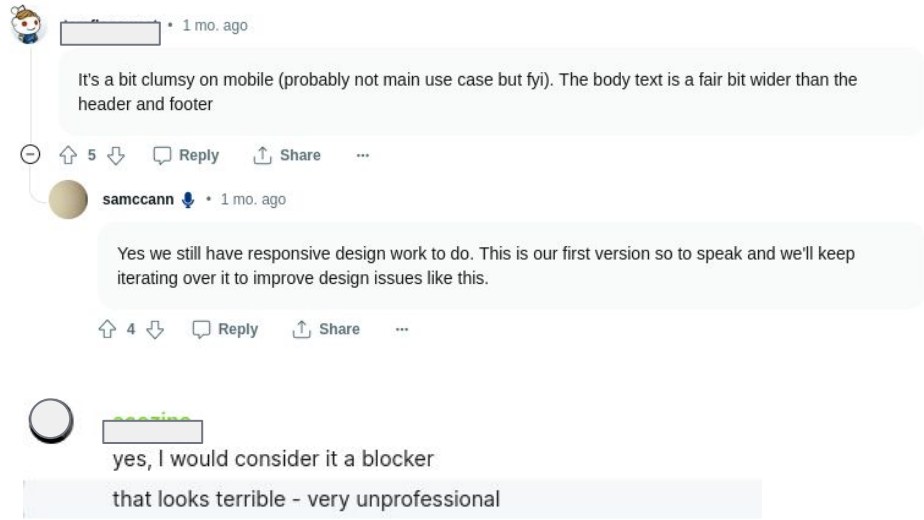
```
Milestone: Create automation
  Start writing Ansible playbooks
  Learn about Ansible modules

Milestone: Learn inventories
  Build inventory files to manage multiple hosts
  Use dynamic inventories

Milestone: Organize automation projects
  Use roles to structure the automation project

Milestone: Use Ansible tooling
  Use Ansible Lint to validate playbooks
  Install Molecule to develop and test Ansible roles
  Create and test playbooks with Ansible Navigator
  Use Ansible with Visual Studio Code and OpenVSX compatible editors

Milestone: Find Automation content
  Start exploring Ansible Galaxy
  Install and use roles
  Install and use collections
```

https://github.com/ansible/docsite/blob/main/data/journeys/docsite-journeys.md

Cunningham's law

The best way to get the right answer on the internet is not to ask a question;
it's to post the wrong answer.





Gathered feedback and iterated quickly

HELP WANTED 🙏

andersson007_ contributed

The new collection inclusion requests are waiting for your reviews. Please help the community extend the package!

Don Naro shared

Come join us and help build a new docsite! The community team has been working to update the Ansible documentation landing page based on a set of user journeys. Right now we're working on a prototype docsite to improve the navigation and user experience.

G [redacted]

I'm a bit unsure about the new docsite. I still can't figure out how to click through to access the community section/collections index

[redacted] 1 mo. ago

Add easy access to the index of all modules please. This is where I go to look things up.

6 Reply Share ...

Feedback started to trend more positively

[redacted] • 1 mo. ago

Thanks! This is great! I've been wanting to get into ansible but felt overwhelmed about where to start. This is clearer for a new person like me

3 Reply Share ···

[redacted] • 1 mo. ago

As someone who's used Ansible for many years, and is now trying to onboard a whole org onto Ansible... THANK YOU!

The old design doesn't really do a good job of giving me a starting point to browse the docs. None of the boxes feel like clicking on "Take me to THE OFFICIAL DOCS" - instead, the user is supposed to somehow know beforehand that "Ansible Community" is the documentation, and not a non-official resource for meeting like-minded people.

It feels like it's trying to take me away from the docs. Its doing anything but trying to get me into the right section of the docs. It feels like it's denying that docs exist at all.

The new design actually feels like a landing page for the docs I'm looking for. "USING ansible" "GETTING started" "LEARN which plugins" "BUILD inventory". All the links are taking me to places that help me DO stuff. Finally. Thank you for doing this work.

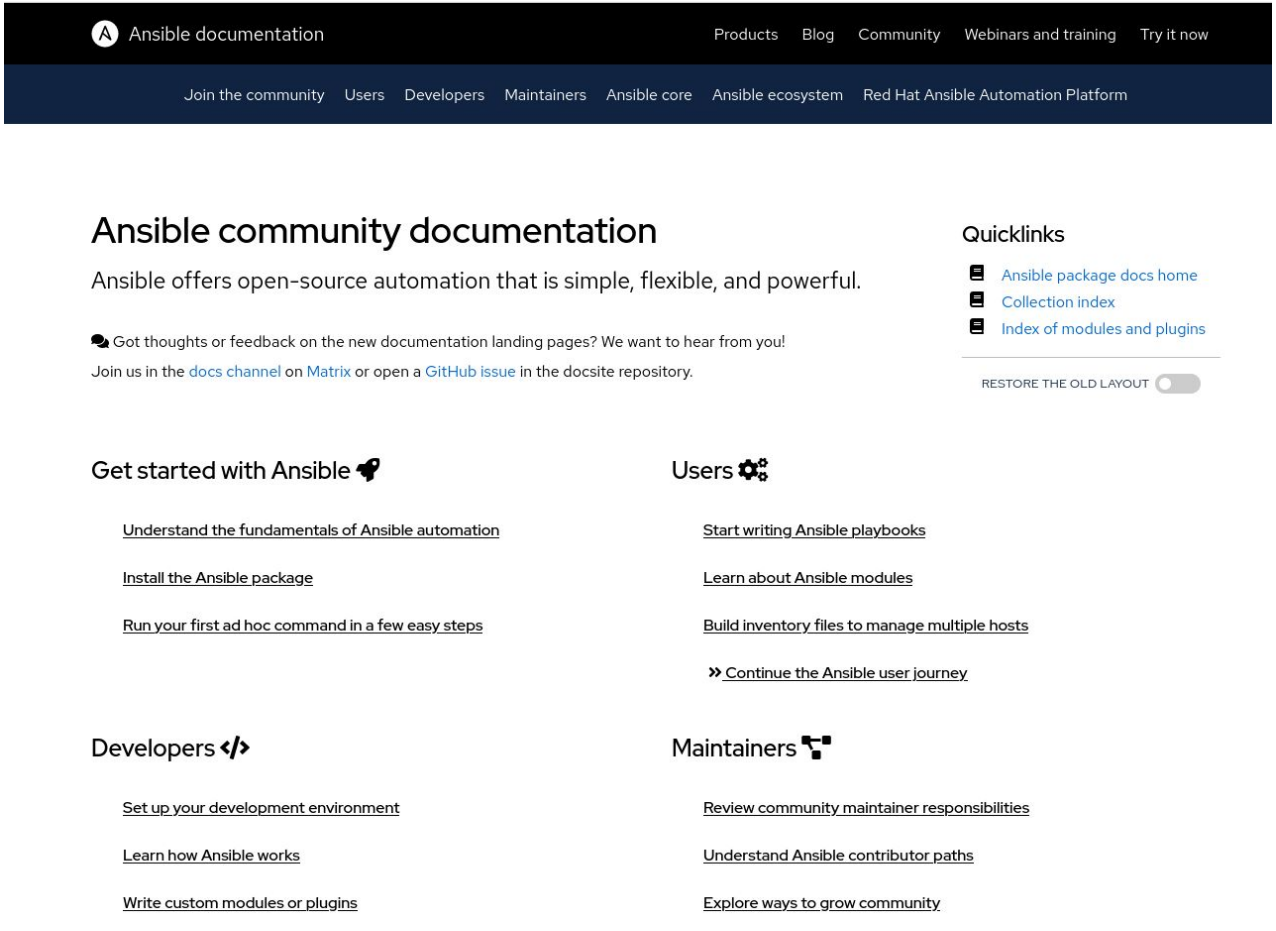
24 Reply Share ···

bcoca 8:04 PM

like it a lot more than the 'boxes'

1

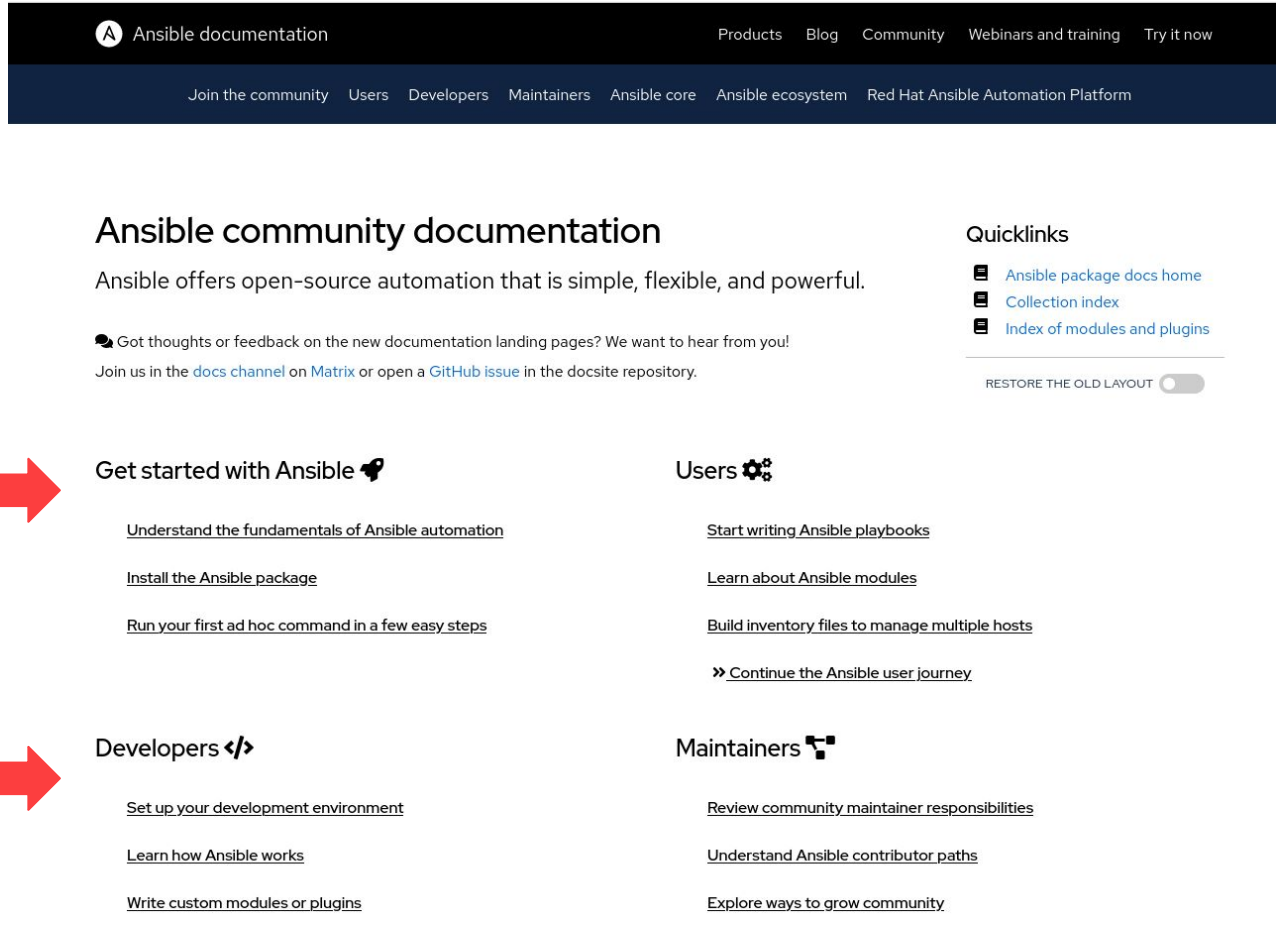
Released a journey-based docsite



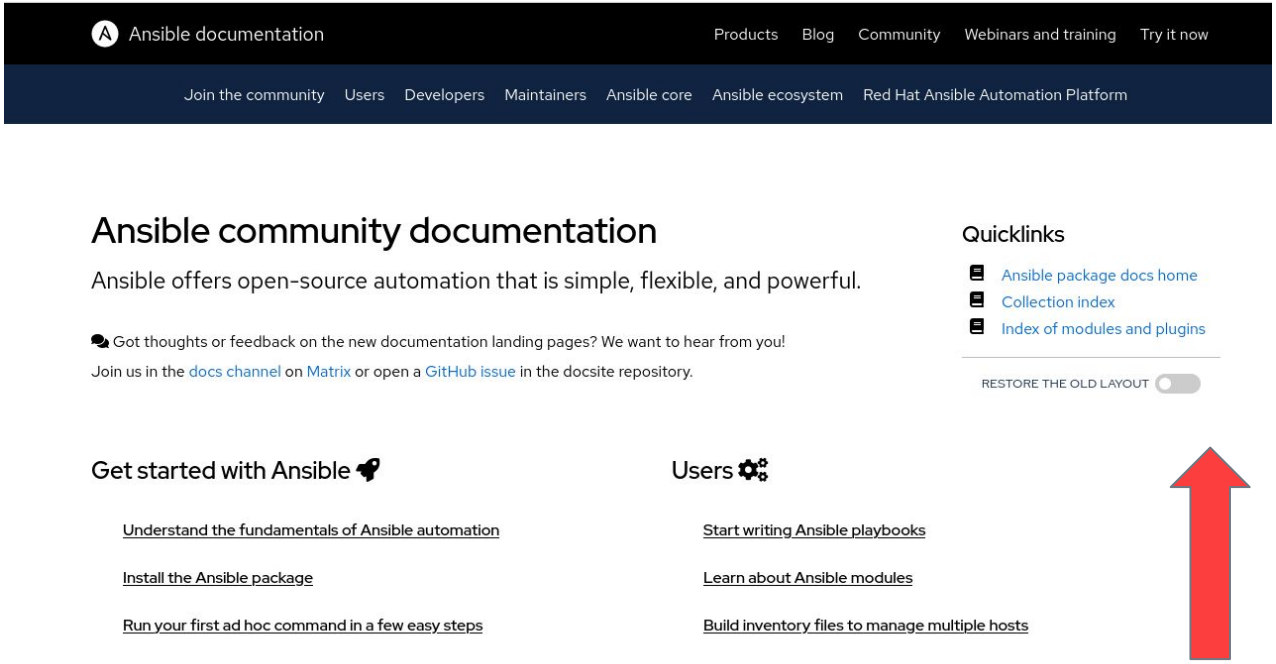
Getting to know the new docsite! Top nav bar

- Links to the main personas and projects

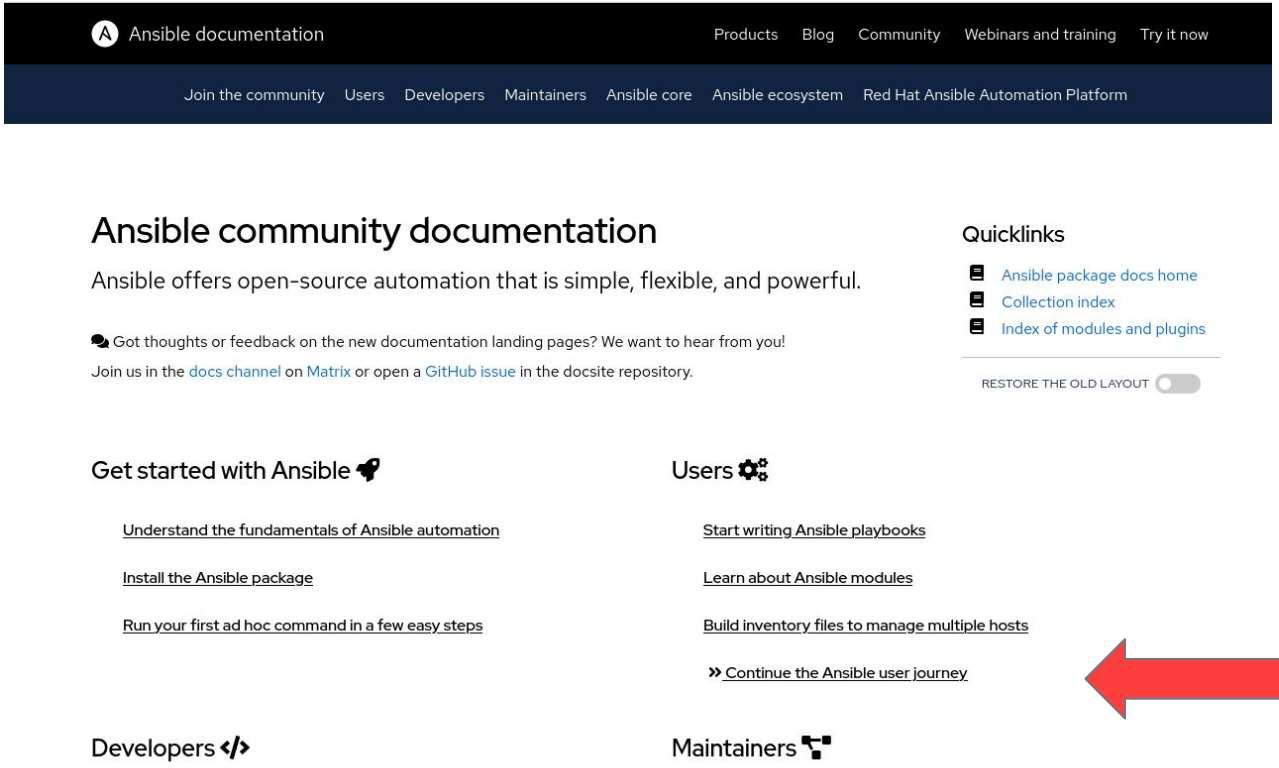
Getting to know the new docsite! - personas



Getting to know the new docsite! - quicklinks



Getting to know the new docsite! The journeys



Follow the journeys!

Users

Start writing Ansible playbooks

Learn about Ansible modules

Build inventory files to manage multiple hosts

» Continue the Ansible user journey

Follow the journeys!

Users

Automate the management of remote systems and control their desired state.

Got thoughts or feedback on the new documentation landing pages? We want to hear from you!
Join us in the docs channel on Matrix or open a GitHub issue in the docsite repository.

Quicklinks

- YAML syntax
- Playbook variables
- Playbook conditionals

Create automation

- Start writing Ansible playbooks
- Learn about Ansible modules

Build inventories

- Build inventory files to manage multiple hosts
- Use dynamic inventories

Organize automation projects

- Use roles to structure the automation project

Use Ansible tooling

- Use Ansible Lint to validate playbooks
- Install Molecule to develop and test Ansible roles
- Create and test playbooks with Ansible Navigator
- Use Ansible with Visual Studio Code and OpenVSX compatible editors

Continually solicit feedback and measure with analytics

Other docsite changes

Other updates to the docs:

- Getting started
- User guide revamp

Getting started with Ansible

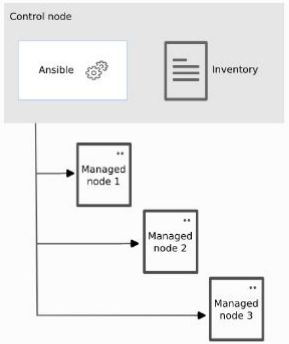
Getting started with Ansible

Ansible automates the management of remote systems and controls their desired state. A basic Ansible environment has three main components:

Control node
A system on which Ansible is installed. You run Ansible commands such as `ansible` or `ansible-inventory` on a control node.

Managed node
A remote system, or host, that Ansible controls.

Inventory
A list of managed nodes that are logically organized. You create an inventory on the control node to describe host deployments to Ansible.



Ready to start using Ansible? Complete the following steps to get up and running:

1. Install Ansible. Visit the installation guide for complete details.

```
python3 -m pip install --user ansible
```

2. Create an inventory by adding the IP address or fully qualified domain name (FQDN) of one or more remote systems to `/etc/ansible/hosts`. The following example adds the IP addresses of three virtual machines in KVM:

```
[myvirtualmachines]
192.0.2.50
192.0.2.51
192.0.2.52
```

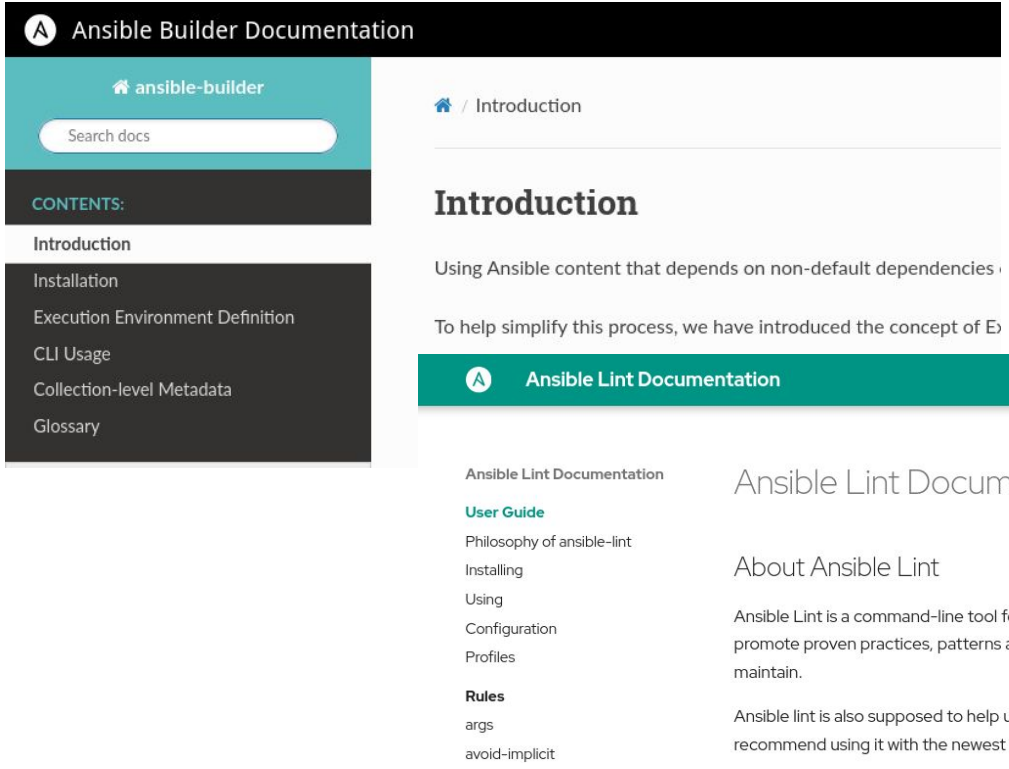
3. Verify the hosts in your inventory.

```
ansible all --list-hosts
```

```
hosts (1):
  192.0.2.50
  192.0.2.51
  192.0.2.52
```

Breaking up monolithic books

Cohesive ecosystem



Something new on the website front

- Needed a place dedicated to community
- A place entirely owned by community
- A key part of our Community strategy for 2023

https://ansible.github.io/community/posts/ansible_community_strategy_2023.html

Problems we need to solve

- Community is fragmented
  - 20+ projects in the Ansible ecosystem
  - Most operate in their own silos
- Community lacks a place for its own unique voice
  - Ansible.com currently doesn’t cater to community
  - No option for blogs or broad discussions

Something new is coming!

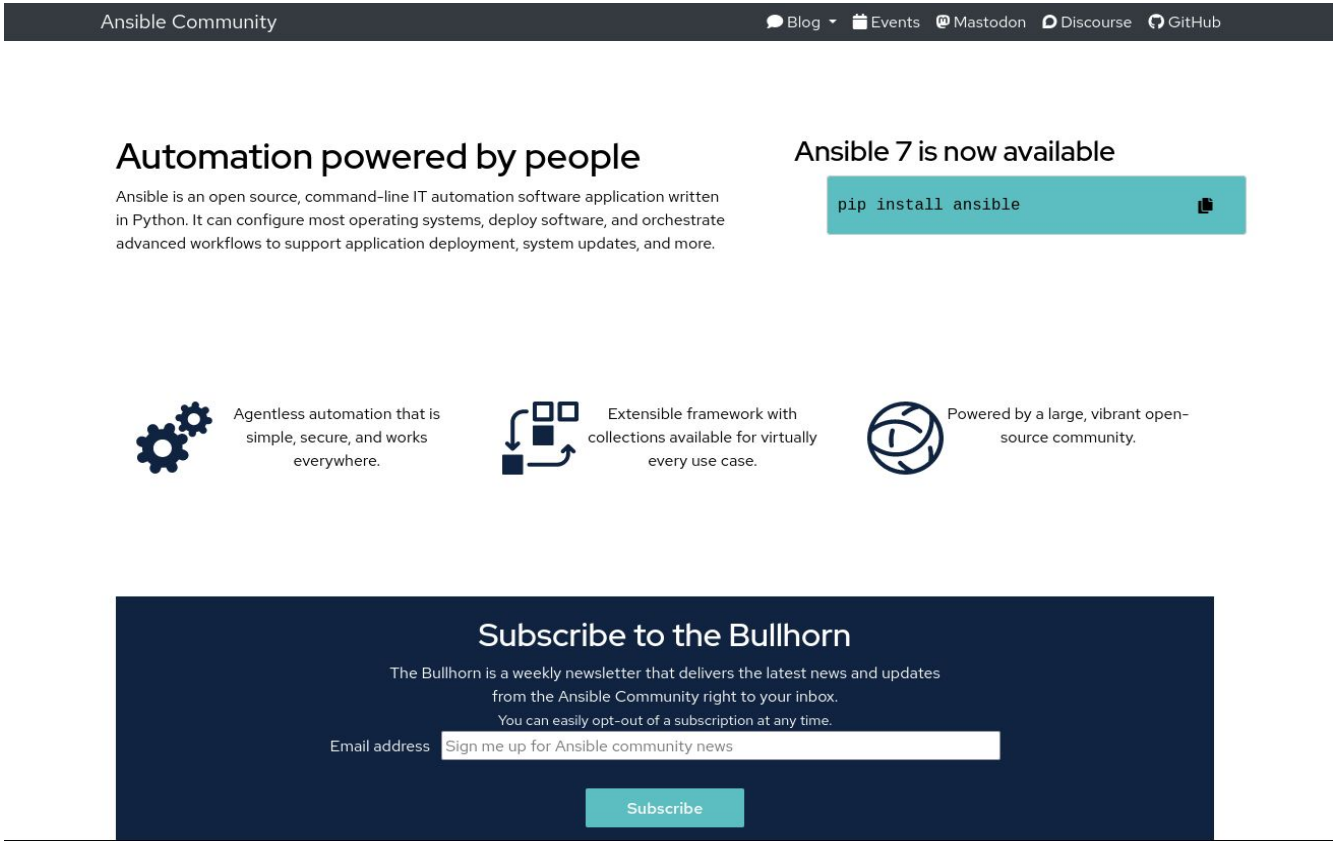
- An updated community-focused web presence!
- A community-driven and maintained blog
- A new forum!

https://ansible-community.github.io/community-website/

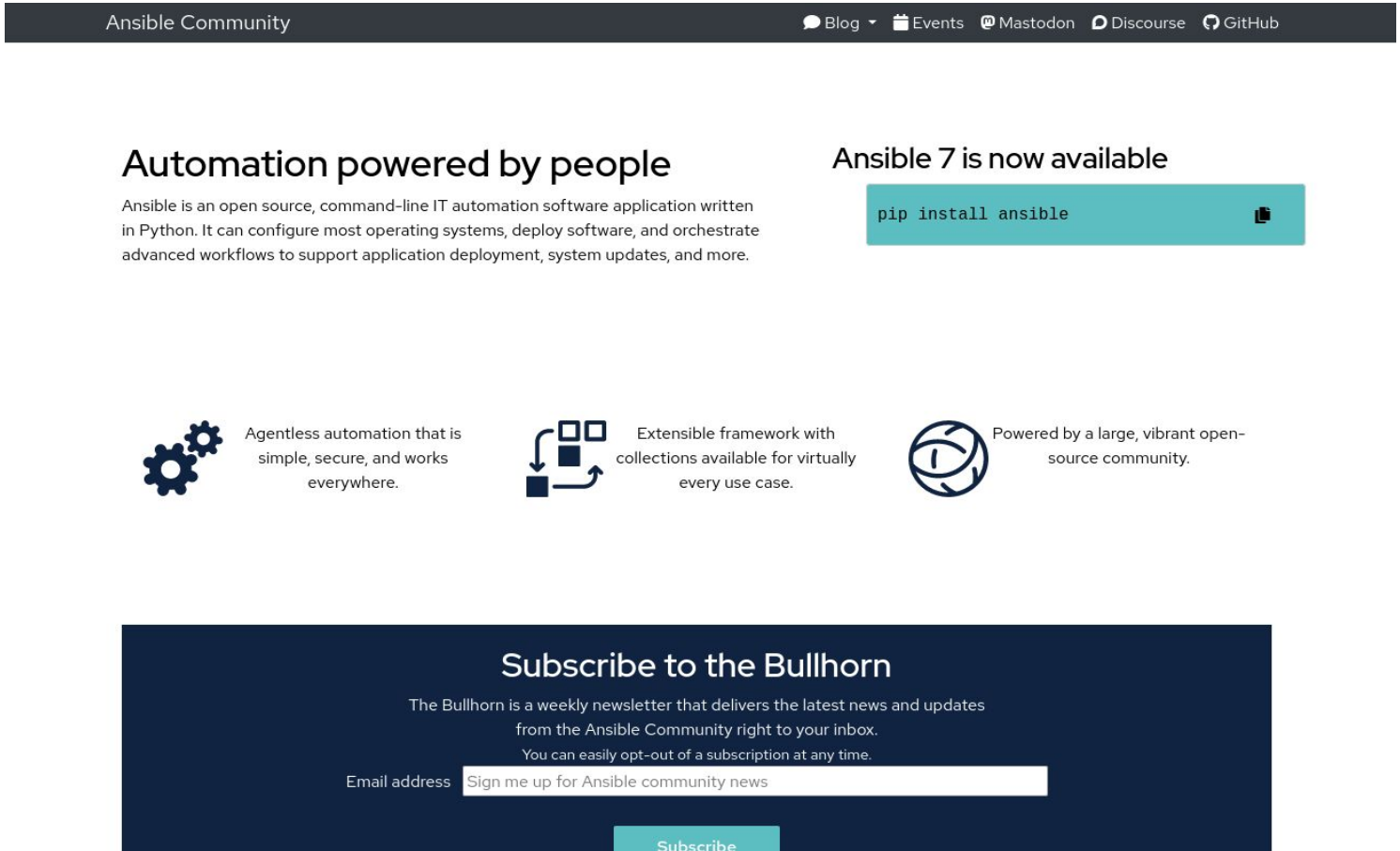
The website - a work in progress

Join us! Help always welcome!

https://github.com/ansible-community/community-website



Getting to know the new website!



Ongoing, iterative improvements

- Update early and often!
- Community help and feedback wanted
- Want to get involved?
  - Docsite - https://github.com/ansible/docsite
  - Website - https://github.com/ansible-community/community-website

Social Media

Follow and mention/tag us :)

- **Mastodon** : https://fosstodon.org/@ansible
- **LinkedIn Group** : https://www.linkedin.com/groups/4648083/

Thanks!

GitHub: https://github.com/ansible/community
Matrix: #community:ansible.com or #social:ansible.com

ANSIBLE