

Hi, I'm Maik. I'm a core contributor to django-oscar, and I currently help Aymeric Augustin sell car parts at Oscaro.

Recently, I've been both thinking and ranting a lot about us "web developers". So, here it goes.

"Superpowers" SLIDE

We live in a world where the most comprehensive collection of human knowledge or dating sites that create million relationships per year can be run by only a handful of developers. Our ideas of open-source have changed software, are taking a hold in hardware and education, and, as commons, are even impacting economies. Other developers are stopping deaths in traffic, and are providing infrastructure to battle diseases. We can build tools to find earthquake survivors in an afternoon; and we can parse and visualize immense amounts of data, armed with nothing more than a library or two.

Meanwhile, what professions can we compare ourselves to, and how many lives can they impact? Are we carpenters? Mechanics? Even most architects have less potential to have such a positive impact on so many people's lives.

The same power that can change and save lives, can also make a lot of money. That means our skills are in high demand, which results in a range of perks for us.

"PRIVILEGE" SLIDE

Like seriously, who else gets to take a week out of their work life each year, merely to sample Welshcakes, French wine or Polish beers? ;)

Most of us don't have to obey dress codes and have flexible work hours. How many of your non-tech friends get free lunches or showers at work? Or have the ridiculous job security that we have? Not to speak of the money earned: if Germany is anything to go by, all of you are in your country's top 10% earners.

I'm not saying we're the top dog; other professions get comparable privileges. But if that privilege wasn't inherited, they usually had to work long and hard for it. Think of lawyers, doctors, elite business programs. Many of my peers didn't even finish university! So, make no mistake, you belong firmly into the 1%.

"OCCUPY 1%/99%" SLIDE

This brings me to my first point: Companies are outbidding each other to get us to work for them. They pay hefty sums to recruiters to get more talent on board. But I'm left with the impression that many of us take no advantage of it. Too many of my friends are afraid to ask for a four-day work week, or a wage that they think is fair. I see moms and dads who love no-one more than their kids, but submit to unnecessary 60 hour grinds.

#### "USE THE FORCE" SLIDE

I know asking for something out of the ordinary is scary. You might not think your skills are that valuable, but if you're here, I guarantee you they are. Please realize that you have excellent standing in negotiations about the amount you work and the compensation you get for it. Come join the light side, and negotiate more time for you. Get a home office day. Free some time to exercise and eat well, be there for family and kids, have time for hobbies. Any decent company will rather keep you, even if you work a little less, than see you leave. Talking about “the value you bring to the table” and the compensation you expect in return might feel strange to you, but it is everyday business for your superiors, and no-one will be offended by a reasonable request. What's the worst that can happen? There's plenty more companies looking to work with you.

For the last four years, I have only worked two days a week for a pay check. During that time, I lived in Australia to work in a motorcycle restoration shop, I had a go at starting my own business in lovely Yorkshire, and traveled all across Europe hitchhiking or on a motorcycle. I also taught others how to repair bicycles, became a maintainer for a large open-source project, and managed to be there for my family when it was needed. I don't have other mouths to feed, but one can't call my lifestyle modest, and my savings are in good health. Yes, that is likely not the life you want, but it serves my point: there's a whole lot possible if you just ask for it.

As a note: I'm not advocating you shouldn't work 40, 60, 80 hours if that's really where your heart is. Maybe you have significant shares in the company, or you're trying to get your own business started. I just hope you're aware of the law of diminishing returns, and please don't just do it for a paycheck. Don't let a ticketing website be your life's legacy.

## "LITTLE IMPACT" SLIDE

At the end of the day, most websites that we build aren't terribly important. The most frequented Django sites are built to leave comments on articles, or share photos. My friends and me, we sell car parts, heating elements, tickets or cigars; we process bets and payments or build technology to let us watch cat videos on all our devices. Yes, there's worse things to do with one's life, and I'm not questioning that it's enjoyable. My point is, most of us hardly change the world with our day job!

## "SNAFU" SLIDE

But our world needs plenty of changing. We live in a time where sexism is still rampant in our industry. We are still at a point where it's not common sense, but worthy of celebration that same-sex couples get equal rights. Corporations and governments are leading the biggest war on privacy yet. That war is lead on our home turf; who's going to fight in it if not us?

Things look even bleaker when we try to look at the big picture. People risk their lives every day to flee oppressive regimes, and we let them die at Europe's borders. The economical systems we have created are fueled by war and injustice. And the current level of climate change threatens both nature and humans.

## EMPTY SLIDE

So, there are plenty of things wrong with this world, we yield the tools to fix them, and we can make time for it. I say, we have the moral duty to make this a better place.

Thank you.

## "WHAT TO DO" SLIDE

Negotiate more [time|money] to [help|hack|code|share|teach|grow|demonstrate|enjoy] for [friends and family|party|NGO|initiative|community project|F/OSS] or to start a [business|movement|project]