

# Having a ball with Django

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# What is Django?

- Web framework
- Built on top of Python
- Maps URLs to Python functions
- Request/response
- Includes templating system, ORM, ...

# The problem

- Magdalen College Ball: 1800 tickets, dining and non, budget £250k+
- Web-based ticket-ordering system needed
- AFICT, no other Oxbridge ball has done this fully before
- The joy of cheques
- Off-the-shelf excuses / NIH syndrome

# The sucker who volunteered to solve it

Me: Had built some (quite bad) ~10,000 line PHP systems in the past

Small amount of Python experience

Not good at CSS/design, but I know a man who is

# The tools: Why Django?

- DRY
- Easy to understand
- Good documentation!
- Came highly recommended by various people I know
- Python nicer than PHP
- Open source / free to use

# What happened next

- One month of desultory email exchanges to get the spec
- Enough diagrams to cover the floor of my room
- Six weeks of feverish hacking whilst trying not to let my degree crash and burn
- User testing for a week, ish.

# The launch

- Running on nginx / Apache with mod\_python
- Hosted on a virtual server at Goscomb
- Discount for first 100 tickets...
- Fell over in first two minutes after launch...
- ...arguably because I didn't RTFM.
- Got it back up within five minutes (with some help)

# The good

- Delivered a reasonable system in a dangerously small amount of time
- “Batteries included” in Django + DRY saved huge amounts of time vs even properly done PHP
- Nice URLs
- Automatic admin interface
- Good dev setup
- Acceptance testing went well
- 2500 lines of Python – pretty reasonable vs...

# The bad

- mod\_python suck and fail with session objects
- Transaction serialization hack:
- Admin interface not good enough to save me having to get involved regularly
- Not enough aggregate support in the ORM (yet)

# In conclusion

The good bits were largely thanks to Django

The bad bits were largely thanks to me not reading the docs carefully enough / running out of time...

If I had to do it again...

# Future plans

Tidy up and generalize the codebase, more test coverage, upgrade to Django 1.1

Open source it

Make a few quid installing it for others?

Sell it back to Magdalen Ball 2012!

What to call it? PyTickets, ...

# Questions?

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