

# Getting Your Ideas Into WebGUI




WUC 2008  
Colin Kuskie

# About Me



# About Me

A photograph of a man with dark hair and a white t-shirt, smiling. A small grey and white kitten is perched on his right shoulder. A large white thought bubble with a black outline is positioned above the kitten, containing the text: "Hi! This is Colin. And I'm Yoda, the cute one." The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Hi! This is Colin.  
And I'm Yoda, the  
cute one.

# About Me

- WebGUI developer since 2003
  - Testing, documentation, bug fixes, RFEs



# About Me

- WebGUI Contributor of the Year, 2006 & 2007



# About Me

- According to [ohloh.net](http://ohloh.net), I've contributed 50k lines of code



# About Me

- Forum poster & IRC member



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# About You

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- You have some great idea about how to change WebGUI.

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- You have some great idea about how to change WebGUI.
  - Make it bigger.

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  - Make it badder.

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  - Make it awesome!

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The hit reality series is back

# Ace of Cakes



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- You have no idea how to do it.

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  - Make it bigger.
  - Make it badder.
  - Make it awesome!
  - Try hiring your friends.
- You have no idea how to do it.
- Your clients will leave if you don't do it.

# About WebGUI

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Pay Someone to Write Your Code



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  - And whether or not it can go into the WebGUI Core.
  - JT vets all core contributions.

Note to self: look up "vet"

(What kind of geek uses words like that, anyway!?!)

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vet *\'vet\* noun 1. a person who has served in a military force, esp. one who has fought in a war: [a Vietnam veteran].

Nope, that's not it.

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vet \ˈvet\ noun 2. One who practices medicine on animals; a veterinarian.

That's not it, either....

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vet \ˈvet\ verb 3. To subject to thorough examination or evaluation.

JT vets.... Thorough examination. That sounds right.

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  - And whether or not it can go into the WebGUI Core.
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vet \ˈvet\ verb 3. To subject to thorough examination or evaluation.

I still think it's a geeky word, though. :)

Who else can do this?

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- Oqapi
  - [www.oqapi.nl](http://www.oqapi.nl)



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- perlDreamer Consulting
  - uh, that's me...

# Who else can do this?

- Even if they write the code, JT will probably **still** vet any new code into the core.

There's that word again....

# Upsides to Paying Someone

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- You can have code made you can't make yourself.

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- You're not responsible for maintaining the code.

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# Upsides to Paying Someone

- You can have code made you can't make yourself.
- You're not responsible for maintaining the code.
- Saves effort on your part.
- You can support someone else who contributes to WebGL.

# Downsides to Paying Someone

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- Schedules don't always work out.

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- It's expensive.
- Schedules don't always work out.
- Specifications and contracts can be a headache
  - For both parties.

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- Contractors: Ask questions quickly.
  - Unknowns can derail a schedule.
- Don't mix standard and metric.

# Good Specifications

- Don't assume anything. Write it all down!
- Try to define functionality, not implementations.
  - Unless implementation is important to you.
- Use lots of pictures and diagrams.
- Customers: Answer questions quickly.
- Contractors: Ask questions quickly.
  - Unknowns can derail a schedule.
- Don't mix standard and metric.
  - Just ask NASA...

```
if ( $my->money() < $contract->value() ) {  
  if ( !$self->isa('hacker') ) {  
    my $hacker = WebGUI::Community->search(  
      requirements => {  
        hacker => 1,  
        commit_bit => 1,  
        cost => 0,  
        available => 'soon',  
      }  
    );  
  }  
  else {  
    $self->hack_it();  
  }  
}
```

If I don't have enough money for the contract

```
if (!$self->isa('hacker')) {
    my $hacker = WebGUI::Community->search(
        requirements => {
            hacker => 1,
            commit_bit => 1,
            cost => 0,
            available => 'soon',
        }
    );
}
else {
    $self->hack_it();
}
}
```

If I don't have enough money for the contract  
and I am not a programmer

```
my $hacker = WebGUI::Community->search(  
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}  
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If I don't have enough money for the contract  
and I am not a programmer  
search the community

```
requirements => {  
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}
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If I don't have enough money for the contract  
and I am not a programmer  
search the community

for someone who:

```
hacker => 1,  
commit_bit => 1,  
cost => 0,  
available => 'soon',
```

```
}
```

```
);
```

```
}
```

```
else {
```

```
  $self->hack_it();
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```
}
```

```
}
```

If I don't have enough money for the contract  
and I am not a programmer  
search the community

for someone who:

is a programmer

commit\_bit => 1,

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}

);

}

else {

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}

}

If I don't have enough money for the contract  
and I am not a programmer  
search the community

for someone who:

is a programmer

and can make changes to WebGUI

cost => 0,

available => 'soon',

}

);

}

else {

\$self->hack\_it();

}

}

```
If I don't have enough money for the contract
and I am not a programmer
  search the community
  for someone who:
    is a programmer
    and can make changes to WebGUI
    and is free
    available => 'soon',
  }
);
}
else {
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}
}
```

If I don't have enough money for the contract  
and I am not a programmer  
search the community  
for someone who:  
is a programmer  
and can make changes to WebGUI  
and is free  
and is available right now

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else {  
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If I don't have enough money for the contract  
and I am not a programmer  
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for someone who:  
is a programmer  
and can make changes to WebGUI  
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and is available right now

```
otherwise, if I am a programmer  
    $self->hack_it();  
}  
}
```

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and is free  
and is available right now

otherwise, if I am a programmer  
do the programming myself

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if ( $my->money() < $contract->value() ) {  
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# Request for Enhancement (RFE)

- RFEs are ideas for new code.
- <http://www.webgui.org/rfe>
- Once you submit an RFE, JT or one of the PB crew will rank it.
  - Hard or big things get a high rank.
  - Ideas that do not fit will be rejected, usually with an explanation.

# RFEs, Continued

- The WebGUI community votes and comments on RFEs.
  - The RFE is really just a Collaboration System.

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  - The RFE board is really just a Collaboration System.
- "Rating" the RFE does not count as a vote.

# RFEs, Continued

- The WebGUI community votes and comments on RFEs.
  - The RFE is really just a Collaboration System.
- "Rating" the RFE does not count as a vote.
- Voting is done with karma.
  - Transfer karma box on the RFE.

Karma

# Karma

- Everyone with a [webgui.org](http://webgui.org) account has karma.

# Karma

- Everyone with a [webgui.org](http://webgui.org) account has karma.
- You get karma by:

# Karma

- Everyone with a webgui.org account has karma.
- You get karma by:
  - Logging in.

# Karma

- Everyone with a webgui.org account has karma.
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  - Answering polls and surveys.

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# Karma

- Everyone with a webgui.org account has karma.
- You get karma by:
  - Logging in.
  - Answering polls and surveys.
  - Making posts in the discussion boards and wiki.
  - Participating in contests.
- The best way to spend karma is voting for RFEs.

Free Coding from Plain Black

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  - This is slow.
  - You have to compete against others for the top slot.
  - But it's cheap.

# Free Coding from Others

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- Any WebGUI developer can implement a ranked RFE.

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- Any WebGUI developer can implement a ranked RFE.
  - Whether it is the top one, or not.

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- Lots of little features have been implemented this way.

# Free Coding from Others

- Any WebGUI developer can implement a ranked RFE.
  - Whether it is the top one, or not.
- Lots of little features have been implemented this way.
  - Just look in the ChangeLog for the word [RFE].

# Sample RFEs from 7.4

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- Change URL of "news" layout to be something else.

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- Change URL of "news" layout to be something else.
- Search asset feedback. i.e. 'No results found'

# Sample RFEs from 7.4

- Change URL of "news" layout to be something else.
- Search asset feedback. i.e. 'No results found'
- Display the productId in the product manager to make it easier to use with the product macro.

# Working the RFE System

- Earn karma and spend it on your RFE.

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- Earn karma and spend it on your RFE.
- Lobby other people to give your RFE karma.
  - More on lobbying later.

# Working the RFE System

- Earn karma and spend it on your RFE.
- Lobby other people to give your RFE karma.
  - More on lobbying later.
- Convince a WebGUI Developer to implement your ranked RFE.

```
if ( $self->isa( 'hacker' ) )
```

```
if ( $self->isa('hacker') )
```

- But you're not a WebGUI Developer, what do you do?

```
if ( $self->isa('hacker') )
```

- But you're not a WebGUI Developer, what do you do?
- Submit the RFE.

```
if ( $self->isa('hacker') )
```

- But you're not a WebGUI Developer, what do you do?
- Submit the RFE.
- Wait for it to get ranked.

```
if ( $self->isa('hacker') )
```

- But you're not a WebGUI Developer, what do you do?
- Submit the RFE.
- Wait for it to get ranked.
- Implement it yourself.

```
if ( $self->isa('hacker') )
```

- But you're not a WebGUI Developer, what do you do?
- Submit the RFE.
- Wait for it to get ranked.
- Implement it yourself.
  - Diff against SVN and attach a patch to your RFE.

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if ( $self->isa('hacker') )
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- But you're not a WebGUI Developer, what do you do?
- Submit the RFE.
- Wait for it to get ranked.
- Implement it yourself.
  - Diff against SVN and attach a patch to your RFE.
- Then lobby for it with a WebGUI developer.

```
if ( $self->isa('hacker') )
```

**JT**

Date: 1/2/2007 9:33 am · Subject: Re: Logged-in time · Rating: 2

WebGUI doesn't currently track when a session ends in the userLoginLog table. It wouldn't be that hard to do that. Submit an RFE for it and we'll see what we can do. Or if you have the skills, make it work, and then submit a patch with your RFE. That will get it added even faster.

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```
if ( $self->isa('hacker') && $bug)
```

```
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- By the way, that works for bugs, too.

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- Of course, if you can fix it yourself, then why share?

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```

- By the way, that works for bugs, too.
- It pretty much guarantees that your bug will be fixed quickly in the core.
- Of course, if you can fix it yourself, then why share?
  - We'll come back to that later.

```
if ( $self->isa('hacker') )
```

```
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- And you ARE a WebGUI Developer, what do you do?

```
if ( $self->isa('hacker') )
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- And you ARE a WebGUI Developer, what do you do?
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- Implement it yourself.

```
if ( $self->isa('hacker') )
```

- And you ARE a WebGUI Developer, what do you do?
- Submit the RFE.
- Wait for it to get ranked.
- Implement it yourself.
- Commit it when JT says it is okay.

# Writing Code for WebGUI

- Coding style.
- Templates.
- Internationalization.
- Hoverhelp links.
- Testing.
- Wiki Link Goes Here.

The End

# The End

- That's it.

# The End

- That's it.
- "Lobbying for karma"

# The End

- That's it.
- "Lobbying for karma"
- "Lobby a WebGUI Dev"

# The End

- That's it.
- "Lobbying for karma"
- "Lobby a WebGUI Dev"
- Why bother sharing?

# What vs. How

# What vs. How

- I've told you *what* you need to do to get your ideas into WebGUI.

# What vs. How

- I've told you *what* you need to do to get your ideas into WebGUI.
- *How* you go about doing it is way more important.

# What vs. How

- I've told you *what* you need to do to get your ideas into WebGUI.
- *How* you go about doing it is way more important.
- To build a house, nail a bunch of boards together.

# Code and Community

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- It's also about the community.

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  - Volunteers who hack on it because they like it.

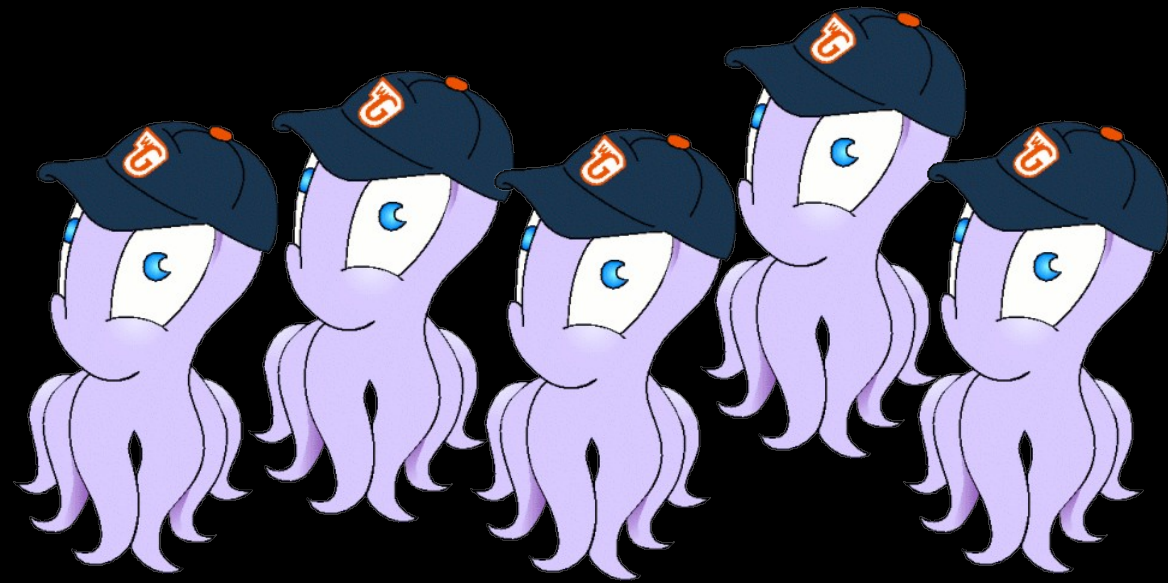
# Code and Community

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# Code and Community

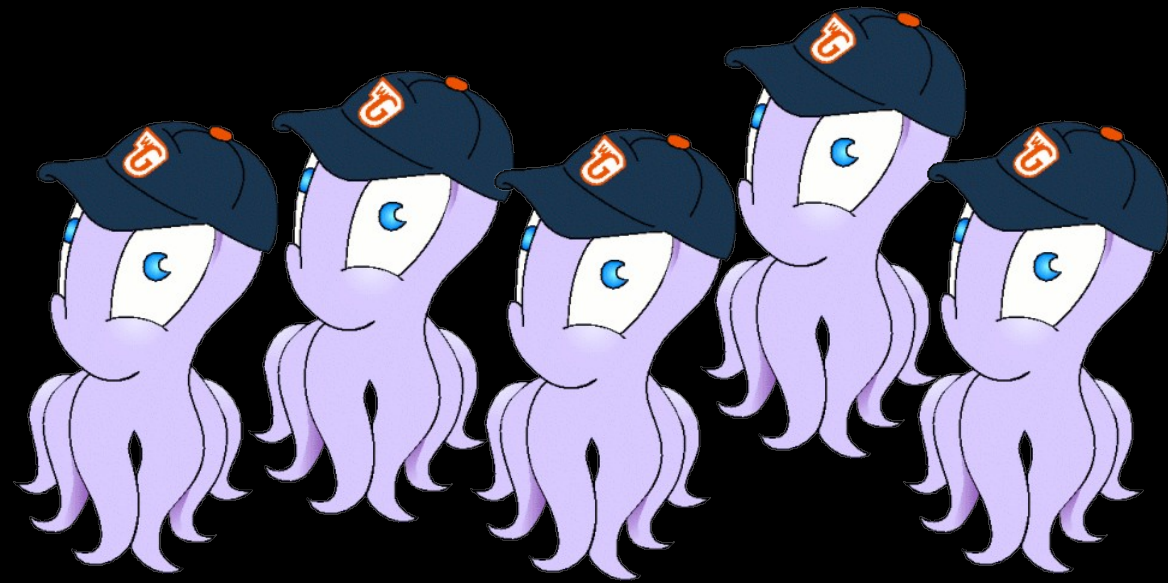
- FS projects are more than code.
- It's also about the community.
  - Businesses who make money from the project.
  - Volunteers who hack on it because they like it.
  - People who use the software because they need it.
- To change the code, you must work within the community.

# Community



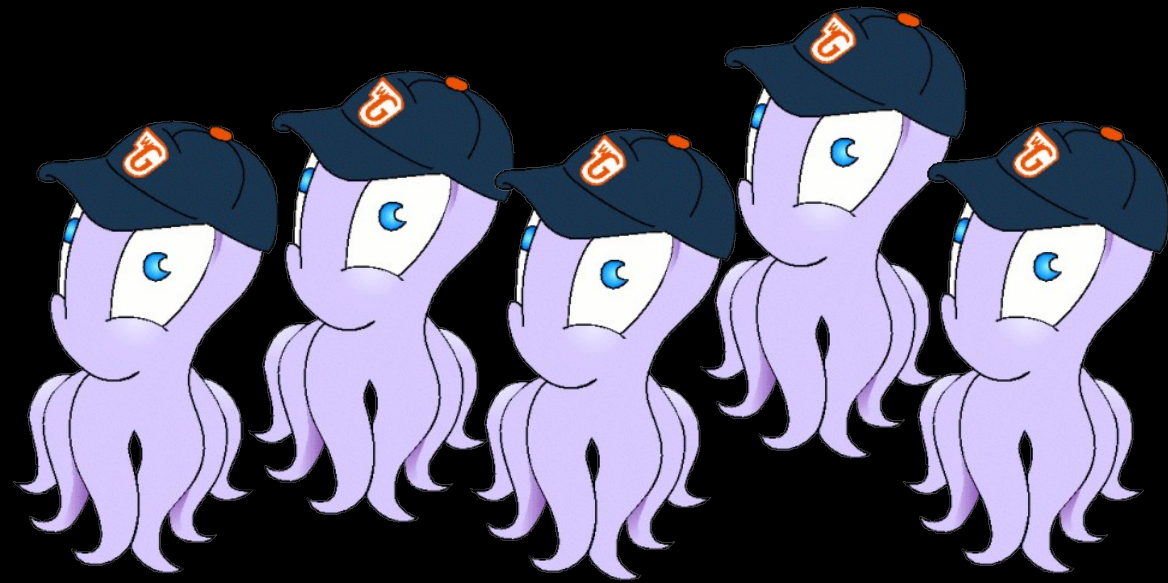
# Community

- You cannot change the community.



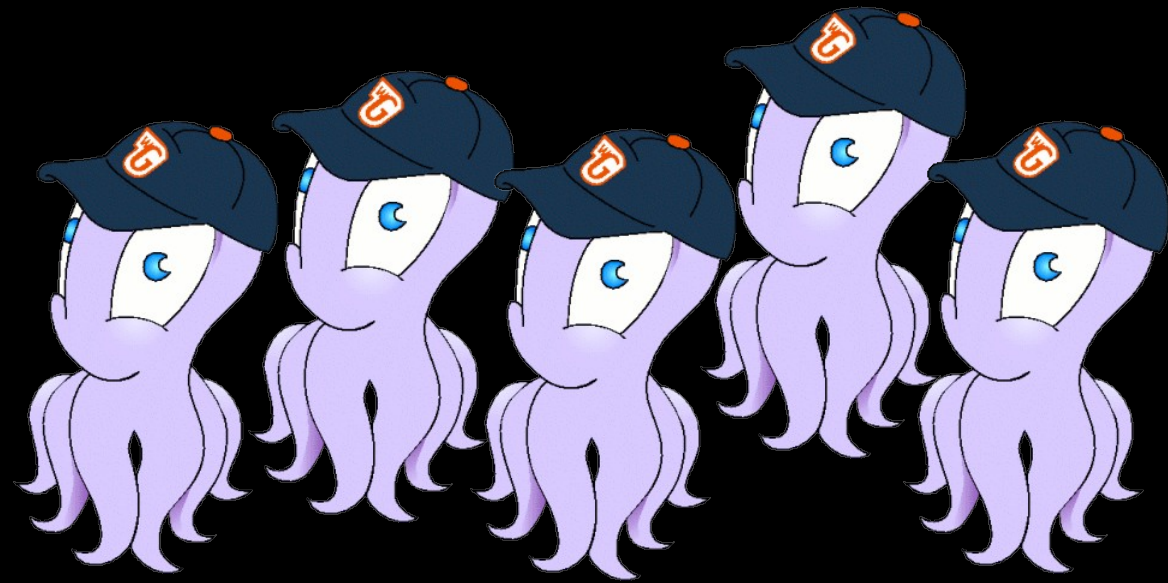
# Community

- You cannot change the community.
- You don't have to like how it works today.



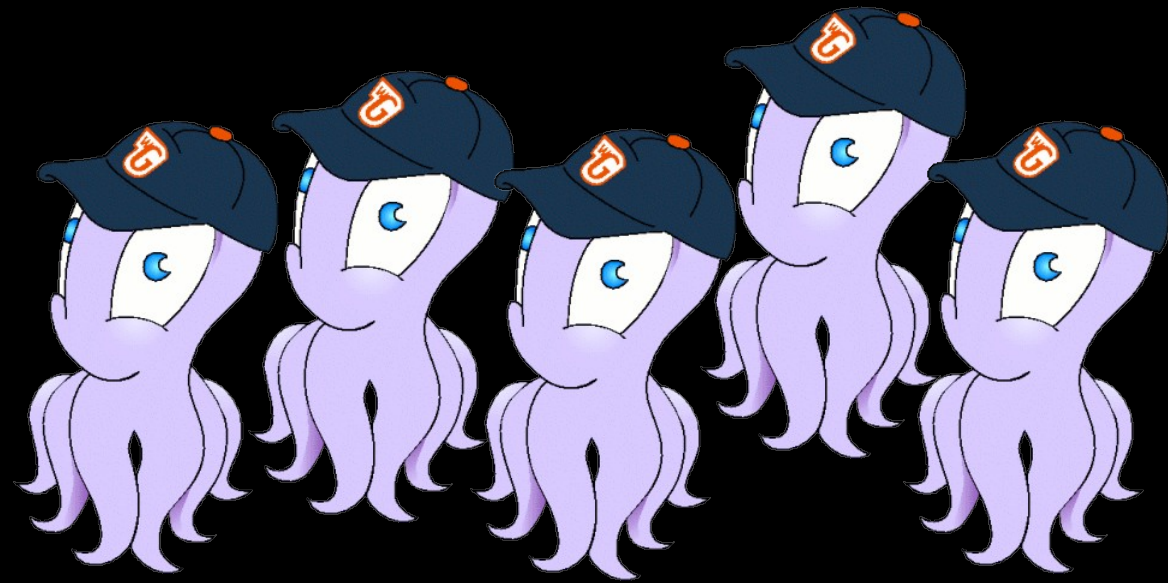
# Community

- You cannot change the community.
- You don't have to like how it works today.
- But you must understand it to work with it.



# Community

- You cannot change the community.
- You don't have to like how it works today.
- But you must understand it to work with it.
- Communities can be affected by members of the community.



Please, Be Polite

Please

Thank  
you

# Please, Be Polite

- You want something from someone else.

**Please**

**Thank  
you**

# Please, Be Polite

- You want something from someone else.
- Remember that you are not entitled to anything.

**Please**

**Thank  
you**

# Please, Be Polite

- You want something from someone else.
- Remember that you are not entitled to anything.
  - Do not demand, ask.

**Please**

**Thank  
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- You want something from someone else.
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  - Do not demand, ask.
- Please, always say "please".

**Please**

**Thank  
you**

# Please, Be Polite

- You want something from someone else.
- Remember that you are not entitled to anything.
  - Do not demand, ask.
- Please, always say "please".
- Regardless of the answer, always say "Thank you".

**Please**

**Thank  
you**

Be Verbose

Electronic Communications Suck

Electronic Communications ~~Suck~~

Electronic Communications ~~Suck~~

Electronic Communications ~~Suck~~



# Electronic Communications ~~Suck~~

- In a face to face conversation, 75% of the information is missed by the other person.

# Electronic Communications ~~Suck~~

- In a face to face conversation, 75% of the information is missed by the other person.
- Now think about email, IM and IRC.

# Electronic Communications ~~Suck~~

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# Electronic Communications ~~Suck~~

- In a face to face conversation, 75% of the information is missed by the other person.
- Now think about email, IM and IRC.
  - No voice tones.
  - No visual cues from hands, face or posture.
- Ask lots of questions and be patient.

IRC  $\neq$  RFE list

# IRC != RFE list

< ornery person> rizen - Simple request for the new WRE... If you have to "set environment" with it, change the user's prompt so they know what environment they're in.

<@rizen> is IRC an RFE list?

< ornery person> Might be. :-)

<+MrHairgrease> irc = intrinsic rfe channel right?

< SDuensin> hehehe

<@rizen> insignificant requests chided

Bug List  $\neq$  RFE List

# Bug List != RFE List

**JT**

Date: 10/31/2006 9:58 pm · Subject: Re: Poll answers and percentage not displayed · Rating: 0

this is an rfe, not a bug.

# Bug List != RFE List

- If WebGUI doesn't do what you want

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- If WebGUI doesn't do what you want
  - **IT IS NOT NECESSARILY A BUG!**

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- If WebGUI doesn't do what you want
  - **IT IS NOT NECESSARILY A BUG!**
- A bug is when WebGUI doesn't work as the devs want it.
- An RFE is a new feature or a change to an existing feature.

The Dev List  $\neq$  RFE List

# The Dev List != RFE List

- The Dev List is a great place to talk about coding RFEs that have been approved.

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  - So is IRC

# The Dev List != RFE List

- The Dev List is a great place to talk about coding RFEs that have been approved.
  - So is IRC
- The Dev List is not a good place to propose RFEs.

# Other Things That Aren't the RFE List



# Other Things That Aren't the RFE List

- Hallway



# Other Things That Aren't the RFE List

- Hallway
- Other PB Forums



# Other Things That Aren't the RFE List

- Hallway
- Other PB Forums
- JT's phone / voice mail
  - 608.259.1500



Put Up

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- Talk is cheap.

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- Code talks.

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- Don't just talk about it, go and do it!

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# Put Up

- Talk is cheap.
- Code talks.
- Don't just talk about it, go and do it!
- Take advantage of the famous quote:
  - "Yes, that's a good idea. Patches welcome."

# Give and Take

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- Developers have spent hundreds or thousands of hours working on WebGUI.

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- Developers have spent hundreds or thousands of hours working on WebGL.
- Give something back!

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- Test a beta version of WebGUI/WRE.

# Give and Take

- Developers have spent hundreds or thousands of hours working on WebGUI.
- Give something back!
- Write or update a wiki page.
- Submit a bug report.
- Answer easy questions on the forums.
- Test a beta version of WebGUI/WRE.
- Buy a book or some support.

# Troublesome People



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- Give people the benefit of the doubt.



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- Take the moral high ground.



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  - Let them demonstrate their true nature.
- Make them work at it.



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- Don't take things personally.



# Getting a Commit Bit

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# Getting a Commit Bit

- Be really involved.
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- Submit lots of good patches so that people get tired of checking in your code for you.

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  - Dealing well with people



# The End



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- That's it. Really.



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- That's it. Really.
- Get involved.
- "Bribe a WebGUI Dev"



# The End

- That's it. Really.
- Get involved.
- "Bribe a WebGUI Dev"
  - Is JT's favorite food really pizza? Maybe it's Teddywedger's? Rats. I can never remember.



Thank you