# Feedback on using Google App Engine? [closed]

Asked 16 years, 3 months ago    Modified 5 years, 2 months ago

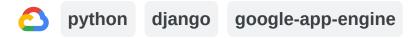Viewed 11k times    ⚙ Part of Google Cloud Collective

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**127**

💡 As it currently stands, this question is not a good fit for our Q&A format. We expect answers to be supported by facts, references, or expertise, but this question will likely solicit debate, arguments, polling, or extended discussion. If you feel that this question can be improved and possibly reopened, visit the help center for guidance.

Closed 13 years ago.

Looking to do a very small, quick 'n dirty side project. I like the fact that the Google App Engine is running on Python with Django built right in - gives me an excuse to try that platform... but my question is this:

Has anyone made use of the app engine for anything other than a toy problem? I see some good example apps out there, so I would assume this is good enough for the real deal, but wanted to get some feedback.

Any other success/failure notes would be great.

python   django   google-app-engine

asked Sep 21, 2008 at 3:41

**agartzke**
**3,905** ● 6 ● 26 ● 18

8   should be community wiki – SilentGhost Jan 28, 2010 at 15:22

## 11 Answers

Sorted by:   Highest score (default) ⇕

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**63**

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I have tried app engine for my small quake watch application http://quakewatch.appspot.com/

My purpose was to see the capabilities of app engine, so here are the main points:

1. it doesn't come by default with Django, it has its own web framework which is pythonic has URL dispatcher like Django and it uses Django templates So if you have Django exp. you will find it easy to use

   - But you can use any pure python framework and Django can be easily added see http://code.google.com/appengine/articles/django.html google-app-engine-django (http://code.google.com/p/google-app-engine-django/) project is excellent and works almost like working on a Django project

2. You can not execute any long running process on server, what you do is reply to request and which should be quick otherwise appengine will kill it So if your app needs lots of backend processing appengine is not the best way otherwise you will have to do processing on a server of your own

3. My quakewatch app has a subscription feature, it means I had to email latest quakes as they happend, but I can not run a background process in app engine to monitor new quakes solution here is to use a third part service like pingablity.com which can connect to one of your page and which executes the subscription emailer but here also you will have to take care that you don't spend much time here or break task into several pieces

4. It provides Django like modeling capabilities but backend is totally different but for a new project it should not matter.

But overall I think it is excellent for creating apps which do not need lot of background processing.

Edit: Now [task queues](#) can be used for running batch processing or scheduled tasks

Edit: after working/creating a real application on GAE for a year, now my opnion is that unless you are making a application which needs to scale to million and million of users, don't use GAE. Maintaining and doing trivial tasks in GAE is a headache due to distributed nature, to avoid deadline exceeded errors, count entities or do complex
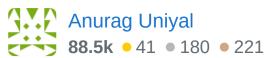
queries requires complex code, so small complex application should stick to LAMP.

Edit: Models should be specially designed considering all the transactions you wish to have in future, because entities only in same entity group can be used in a transaction and it makes the process of updating two different groups a nightmare e.g. transfer money from user1 to user2 in transaction is impossible unless they are in same entity group, but making them same entity group may not be best for frequent update purposes.... read this http://blog.notdot.net/2009/9/Distributed-Transactions-on-App-Engine

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6     Now batch process can be run on GAE – Anurag Uniyal May 6, 2009 at 9:56

2     Check out the new Task Queue Python API too in the App-Engine docs. – Jason Rikard Jun 22, 2009 at 23:00

11    Much of this information is outdated - Django 0.96 is now built into GAE as of July 17 2009. – ine Jul 18, 2009 at 0:16

3     Djanjo 1.0.x is also included into GAE now. You can pick which revision of Django you want. – Laurent Sep 1, 2009 at 14:48

**5**   Just another update, Django 1.1 is now available with GAE as well as past versions. – SingleNegationElimination Dec 5, 2009 at 23:24

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I am using GAE to host several high-traffic applications. Like on the order of 50-100 req/sec. It is great, I can't recommend it enough.

My previous experience with web development was with Ruby (Rails/Merb). Learning Python was easy. I didn't mess with Django or Pylons or any other framework, just started from the GAE examples and built what I needed out of the basic webapp libraries that are provided.

If you're used to the flexibility of SQL the datastore can take some getting used to. Nothing too traumatic! The biggest adjustment is moving away from JOINs. You have to shed the idea that normalizing is crucial.

Ben

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edited Jun 10, 2009 at 5:45

answered Feb 19, 2009 at 18:08

mainsocial

**7,783** ● 3 ● 24 ● 24

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One of the compelling reasons I have come across for using Google App Engine is its integration with Google

**23**

Apps for your domain. Essentially it allows you to create custom, managed web applications that are restricted to the (controlled) logins of your domain.
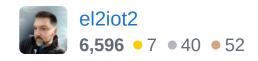
Most of my experience with this code was building a simple time/task tracking application. The template engine was simple and yet made a multi-page application very approachable. The login/user awareness api is similarly useful. I was able to make a public page/private page paradigm without too much issue. (a user would log in to see the private pages. An anonymous user was only shown the public page.)

I was just getting into the datastore portion of the project when I got pulled away for "real work".

I was able to accomplish a lot (it still is not done yet) in a very little amount of time. Since I had never used Python before, this was particularly pleasant (both because it was a new language for me, and also because the development was still fast despite the new language). I ran into very little that led me to believe that I wouldn't be able to accomplish my task. Instead I have a fairly positive impression of the functionality and features.

That is my experience with it. Perhaps it doesn't represent more than an unfinished toy project, but it does represent an informed trial of the platform, and I hope that helps.

answered Sep 21, 2008 at 5:12

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Almost identical to my situation - an aside from "real work" but still something that I need to do and have functional at the end. – agartzke Sep 21, 2008 at 5:40

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Same here. Also, big plus is that the development environment installation is a snap (you're coding within a minute). Same thing for deployments. – Jilles Jun 2, 2010 at 23:21

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The "App Engine running Django" idea is a bit misleading. App Engine replaces the entire Django model layer so be prepared to spend some time getting acclimated with App Engine's datastore which requires a different way of modeling and thinking about data.

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edited Sep 21, 2008 at 4:14

answered Sep 21, 2008 at 4:09

sutee
12.8k ● 14 ● 52 ● 63

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Good point - it seems that it by default takes up Django's templating, but not necessarily the rest of it. – agartzke Sep 21, 2008 at 4:24

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I used GAE to build http://www.muspy.com

It's a bit more than a toy project but not overly complex either. I still depend on a few issues to be addressed by Google, but overall developing the website was an enjoyable experience.

If you don't want to deal with hosting issues, server administration, etc, I can definitely recommend it. Especially if you already know Python and Django.

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answered Sep 23, 2008 at 2:37
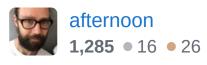
Alexander Kojevnikov
**17.7k** ● 5 ● 50 ● 46

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I think App Engine is pretty cool for small projects at this point. There's a lot to be said for never having to worry about hosting. The API also pushes you in the direction of building scalable apps, which is good practice.

- app-engine-patch is a good layer between Django and App Engine, enabling the use of the auth app and more.

- Google have promised an SLA and pricing model by the end of 2008.

- Requests must complete in 10 seconds, sub-requests to web services required to complete in 5 seconds. This forces you to design a fast, lightweight application, off-loading serious processing to other platforms (e.g. a hosted service or an EC2 instance).

- More languages are coming soon! Google won't say which though :-). My money's on Java next.

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answered Oct 8, 2008 at 16:28

afternoon
**1,285** ● 16 ● 26

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as of february 2009 many of the above limitations been easened. – husayt Feb 23, 2009 at 12:45

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3  If somebody can edit this answer, it'd be nice to reflect that Java is indeed the next language available. – JasonSmith May 3, 2009 at 11:46

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1  @jhs Your comment does that nicely! – afternoon May 12, 2009 at 9:44

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And the Go language is supported now too! – davewasthere May 13, 2011 at 9:45

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This question has been fully answered. Which is good. But one thing perhaps is worth mentioning. The google app engine has a plugin for the eclipse ide which is a joy to work with.

If you already do your development with eclipse you are going to be so happy about that.

To deploy on the google app engine's web site all I need to do is click one little button - with the airplane logo - super.

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answered Mar 17, 2010 at 12:52

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Take a look the the sql game, it is very stable and actually pushed traffic limits at one point so that it was getting throttled by Google. I have seen nothing but good news about App Engine, other than hosting you app on servers someone else controls completely.

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answered Sep 21, 2008 at 3:47

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Joe Skora
14.9k • 5 • 38 • 39

sql game has moved from Google App Engine to a private server. – systempuntoout Jun 23, 2010 at 18:46

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I used GAE to build a simple application which accepts some parameters, formats and send email. It was extremely simple and fast. I also made some performance benchmarks on the GAE datastore and memcache services (http://dbaspects.blogspot.com/2010/01/memcache-vs-datastore-on-google-app.html ). It is not that fast. My opinion is that GAE is serious platform which enforce certain methodology. I think it will evolve to the truly scalable platform, where bad practices simply not allowed.

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answered Jan 28, 2010 at 15:20

David Gruzman
**8,068** ●1 ●30 ●30

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I used GAE for my flash gaming site, [Bearded Games](#). GAE is a great platform. I used Django templates which are so much easier than the old days of PHP. It comes with a great admin panel, and gives you really good logs. The datastore is different than a database like MySQL, but it's much easier to work with. Building the site was easy and straightforward and they have lots of helpful advice on the site.

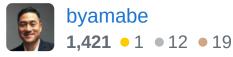Share   Improve this answer

answered Feb 18, 2010 at 21:58

Joshua Patton
**462** ●4 ●19

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I used GAE and Django to build a Facebook application. I used [http://code.google.com/p/app-engine-patch](http://code.google.com/p/app-engine-patch) as my starting point as it has Django 1.1 support. I didn't try to use any of the manage.py commands because I assumed they wouldn't work, but I didn't even look into it. The application had three models and also used pyfacebook, but that was the extent of the complexity. I'm in the process of building a much more complicated application which I'm starting to blog about on [http://brianyamabe.com](http://brianyamabe.com).

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answered Sep 10, 2009 at 18:21

byamabe
**1,421** ●1 ●12 ●19

I started to use manage.py to run the server and also to run some the unit tests. Running the server works fine, but as my application runs as a Facebook app it isn't all that useful (I need a hosted server that Facebook references). Unit testing also worked and it even worked with fixtures. However, I wasn't able to get fixtures that referenced other models to work. I still haven't figured out if it is a problem with my fixture or an issue with app-engine-patch. – byamabe Dec 8, 2009 at 16:55