

How to turn 1 digital cat into 150 analogue cows

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One of the coolest things (and definitely the cutest) to come out of [ETHWaterloo](#) was [CryptoKitties](#), self-described as “a game centered around breedable, collectible, and oh-so-adorable creatures we call CryptoKitties!”

About a month ago, they launched a bounty on their smart contracts, and I thought I'd take a look. I found a few modest bugs (the code's very well written) and in return they awarded me with this, my very own BugKitty:

(I seriously laughed my head off when I saw what they'd designed. Well played, CryptoKitty team.)

At around the same time, the game, and the value of these digital kitties, started taking off, with the one-of-a-kind 'genesis cat' [selling for nearly 250 ether](#) — about \$100,000 at the time.

That set me thinking about my own nearly-unique cat. He's pretty awesome, but that sort of money can make a big impact.

Coincidentally, my favorite charity of all time, [Worldbuilders](#), is doing its yearly charity drive. Worldbuilders is the creation of [bearded wonder Patrick Rothfuss](#), who is not only an incredible author (seriously, go read [his books](#)), but also a genuinely kind person. Worldbuilders runs a yearly charity lottery, stuffed with donations from sci-fi and fantasy authors, publishers and fans (along with lots of other cool stuff), and sends all their proceeds to [Heifer International](#).

Heifer give livestock and training to disadvantaged families, to help them become self-sustaining. Here's [a good writeup on the Worldbuilders blog](#) about the good they can do. Giving a heifer and the necessary training to care for her to a family costs about \$500, but that gift can be enough to set an entire family on the road to supporting themselves and improving their conditions immeasurably.

So, I listed my beloved BugCat up for auction, starting at a seemingly-insane 200 ether, and going down to 25 (CryptoKitties uses Dutch auctions, which reduce over time until someone buys them).

One of the Ethereum founding team, Jeff, [expressed some interest](#), and Thomas Clowes [promptly persuaded him](#) to commit to buying it if we could get enough retweets — 500 of them.

And so [I tweeted](#), and you all retweeted. A few hours later, we hit 500 — and endless thanks to everyone who helped spread the word. By that point, Jeff was in bed, and as soon as it hit 500, I went to bed too.

Waking up in the morning, BugCat was sold — but not to Jeff. Someone by the name of 'dimsim' had [bought him](#) in the night, for [175 ether](#), making BugCat the second highest priced CryptoKitty sold so far. Did they learn about BugCat from all the retweets? We may never know. Jeff seems [surprisingly okay](#) about this outcome.

175 ether translates into [about 169.1](#) after the auction house fees, and before exchange fees, and that's a bit over \$75,000 at today's rates — or in Heifer terms, about 150 (analogue) cows.

I've emailed Worldbuilders to sort out the best way of turning our Magic Internet Money into USD for the fundraiser, and I'll post progress updates on Twitter.

Please don't forget that you can donate too — you'll be helping a good cause, and getting a chance to win some excellent books and games in their lottery. If you [donate here](#), your donation will be tracked as coming from the Ethereum community. Leave your Ethereum address as a note, and I'll send you a CryptoKitty (offer limited while stocks last).

Thank you to Jeff, CryptoKitties, Thomas Clowes, the pseudonymous 'dimsim', and all of you who helped retweet.