Ștefan Talpalaru

Italy

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Personal statement

I am a software architect and developer with 14 years of experience – mostly in web related projects and Ethereum – and a system administrator focused on Linux.

Professionally, I gravitate around Python, Django, Javascript, Nim and Gentoo.

My open-source projects vary from the usual Django apps / Python wrapper for PCRE / Go worker pool library / etc. to the genuinely interesting grafting of the gccgo runtime into Nim in order to combine Go's goroutines, channels and GC with Nim's generics, macros and transpilation to C.

Then there's the occasional dip in unknown waters like the porting to Linux of a C/C++ scanning tool made by Studio Ghibli, including a new SANE front-end – of questionable practical use when xsane is available, but with some tracing tricks up its sleeve and needed to replicate the original workflow of the related OpenToonz project. I had no prior experience with SANE or FLTK, but that's the beauty of open-source – no artificial barriers to entry.

Skills

- Python – used mainly in web development, in conjunction with Django (and Cython for wrapping C libraries)
- Javascript – just client-side, we have nicer languages for wasting cycles on the server

- Go – just enough to come to the conclusion that less is not more. More is more. Elegant CSP implementation, though.
- Nim – a bit too much experience there. Debugging the compiler and runtime is fun at first, but eats up development time in the long run.
- Haskell – just the core language – besides satisfying my curiosity, I learned what a powerful type system can do for you (and that problems with tooling and packaging can become a deterrent for the whole ecosystem).
- Linux system administration – when given a choice, I run Gentoo ~amd64 on a VPS provider like Linode. I maintain my own <u>package overlay</u> and like to control all the system's software with the distribution's package manager.
- Git – besides the typical usage, I do continuous integration and deployment using git hooks – one in the test repo to run a fast test suite and if that passes, the code is pushed to the production repo where another hook runs the necessary deployment commands. I also do <u>crazy stuff with submodules</u> to mimic a monorepo.
- uWSGI – in a quest to get the perfect graceful reload for Python web backends, I got the chance to dig into this project's complex functionality and came up with the prize – I figured out <u>a setup</u> that allows me to not lose a single request while the workers are reloaded.

Work history

Nim Developer at Status.im
(November 26, 2018 – March 31, 2022)

Remote contract for developing open-source Nim software.

Duties
- software development for Nimbus (an efficient Ethereum client) and associated libraries
- automating releases (with reproducible builds) and CI testing
- cross-platform support, optimisation, debugging, benchmarking, etc.

Sole software developer and system administrator for senatus.net
(January 2014 – Present)

After the demise of our small consulting company, I took over the maintenance and development of senatus.net – a complex social network / magazine / photo and video hosting site built with Django, PostgreSQL, Redis, Nginx, uWSGI, Varnish, Celery, Amazon S3 and CloudFront.

Duties
- everything on the technical side

CTO, Partner – Odeon Consulting Group Pte Ltd
(May 2008 – December 2013)
A small consulting firm, a huge learning opportunity. Our biggest projects were senatus.net, and BAMS2 – a neuroinformatics project focused on brain connectivity data. As a result of working on the latter, which was mostly my baby, I ended up as the second author of a scientific article. I still brag about it.

Duties
- software architecture and development
- system administration
- providing technical guidance for a small team

Education

Victor Babeș University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Timișoara, Romania
(1999 – 2005)
Doctor of Medicine (MD)

Talks
EuroPython 2011 - "django-rdflib and PostgreSQL - the best of both worlds" - actually 2 talks on the same subject, one in English and the other in Italian

EuroPython 2012 - "Turning regular expressions up to eleven" - a lightning-talk about morelia-pcre, my Python PCRE wrapper

Other

I am a Romanian citizen.

I am fluent in English and Italian, a bit rusty in French.

LinkedIn profile

GitHub account

GitHub pull requests

A selection of open-source projects and contributions