

Ideas, Visions and Reality:

Looking back on 20 years of community work

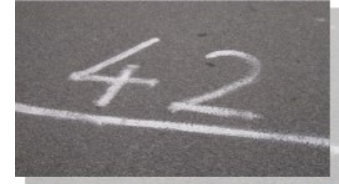
PyCon Italia 2022 – 04.06.2022

Florence, Italy

Marc-André Lemburg :: eGenix.com GmbH

Speaker Introduction

- Marc-André Lemburg
 - Python since 1994
 - Studied Mathematics
 - CEO eGenix.com GmbH
 - Consulting CTO and Senior Solutions Architect
 - EuroPython Society Fellow
 - Python Software Foundation Fellow
 - Python Core Developer
 - Based in Düsseldorf, Germany
 - More: <http://malemburg.com>



Agenda

- Introduction
- Helping Python grow
- Lessons learned



How to help Python and its community grow and prosper

- Main insight: **It's not only about writing code**
- Help is needed in many areas as well:
 - **Marketing**, e.g. create a buzz
 - **Documentation**, e.g. tutorials or guides
 - **Community building**, e.g. meetups or OSS
 - **Event organization**, e.g. conferences
 - **Design**, e.g. make projects stand out
 - **Legal**, e.g. trademarks
 - **Infrastructure**, e.g. manage deployments

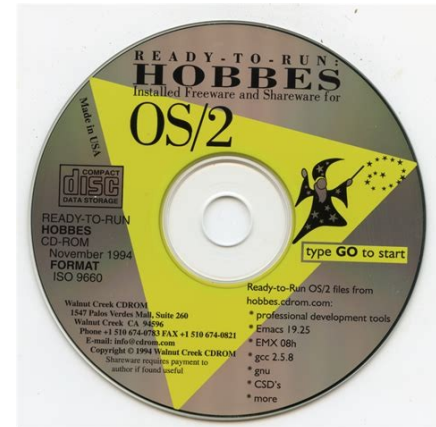


Let's take a tour...

My Passion for Python

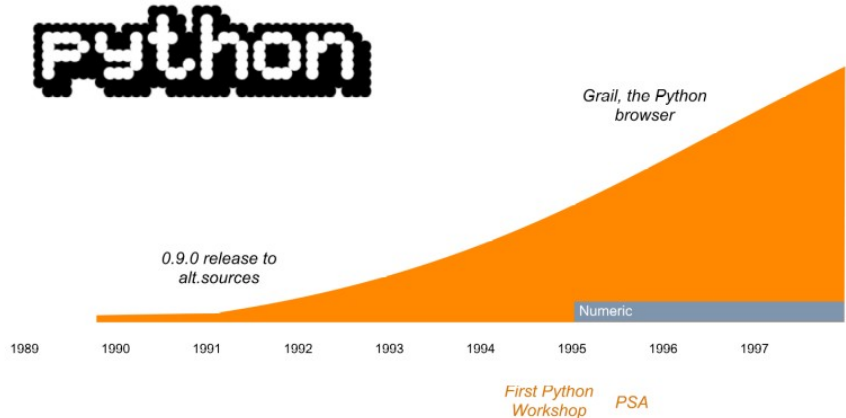
I discovered Python in 1994 and immediately fell in love with the language.

Since then, I wanted Python to grow, prosper and have a huge following in IT.



Loved the language, but also the community and challenges

- Very elegant language (coming from a C background)
- Lots of very smart people (Guido, Tim, Raymond, etc.)
- Relatively small community in the early days (late 1990s)
- Lots of potential for improving / extending
 - Python itself
 - the organizations around Python
 - the conference landscape



Python projects & Core Development

- My “mx Extensions”, e.g. mxDateTime, mxODBC, mxTextTools, etc.
- **Unicode integration in Python 1.6 / 2.0**
- platform module
- pybench
- (many smaller things in Python)
- **Python DB-API**



Introduction to Unicode: What is a Character ?

Unicode Terminology

André Lé

– Graphemes: d r é L e

This is what users regard as a character.

– Code Points: d r e ' L e

U+0301
Combining
Accent

This is the Unicode encoding of the string.

– Code Units: d r e ì L e

0xCC 0x81
UTF-8 for U+0301

This is what the implementation stores (UTF-8).

Python Software Foundation (PSF) projects

- PSF founded in 2001
- Fund raising for the PSF
- pycon.org
- Marketing material
- **Conference kits**
- Domain management
- Job board
- Events calendars
- Trademarks
- **Python brochure**
- Python Wiki



EuroPython: Starting the conference series

- First EuroPython conference in 2002 in Charleroi, Belgium
 - Lots of different parties
 - Lots of opinions
 - Lots of fights
 - Many strong egos
 - Lots of passion
- Implemented by a small executive team
- First major community run Python conference
- Community
 - Many small companies
 - Zope was big at the time
 - Only major conference was in the US (Foretec's IPC)



The screenshot shows the website for the EuroPython and Zope Conference 2002, held in Charleroi, Belgium, from June 26-28, 2002. The page features a navigation menu on the left with categories like BROCHURE, SESSIONS, COMPANIES, and PRACTICAL INFORMATION. The main content area includes a central image of a globe with the conference logo, a welcome message, and a list of guest speakers including Guido Van Rossum and Eric S. Raymond. The right sidebar contains an 'ALL NEWS' section with a link to 'Dinu Gherman's photography'.

European Python and Zope Conference 2002 June 26-28, 2002
CEME
Charleroi, Belgium

English

BROCHURE
[Interviews](#)
[Tracks](#)
[Talks](#)
[Presentations](#)
[Timetable](#)
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SESSIONS
[Tracks](#)
[Talks](#)
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COMPANIES
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[Exhibitors](#)
[Propaganda](#)

PRACTICAL INFORMATION
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[Floorplan](#)
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SPEAKERS' CORNER
[FAQ](#)

PRESS RELEASES

English

English is better than English

Come and meet us at our annual European meeting

"The EuroPython Conference Team announces the first major Python and Zope Conference in Europe to be held in Charleroi, Belgium on June 26-28, 2002. The European Python and Zope Conference is an initiative by the EuroPython Conference Team to bring together Python and Zope users and developers. This is also an opportunity for those who are interested in these technologies to learn more about them. This will be the first major European event dedicated solely to the Python programming language and its applications. Since Python is seeing a lot of use and much important Python software is developed in Europe, European Python community members felt it was high time to organize such a gathering."

With guest speakers:

- [Guido Van Rossum](#)
- [Eric S. Raymond](#)

And other renowned people from the Python and Zope world:

- Paul Dubois
- Christian Tismer

ALL NEWS

Dinu Gherman's photography

Friday, 19 July 2002

Dinu has published some nice [photography](#) taken during our stay in Charleroi.

[see more...](#)

EuroPython 2002 is over

Sunday, 30 June 2002

EuroPython 2002 is over. Long live EuroPython 2003.

[see more...](#)

EuroPython Society (EPS)

- EPS founded in 2004
- **Organizational development**
 - Local team + EPS Board
 - EuroPython Workgroups
 - Turned fully remote
 - Took on full financial risk
 - **Extended mission to support Python in Europe**
 - Created a grants program



EuroPython Society

Organizers of the EuroPython conference series.
Working for the Python community.

- Today
 - Budget: 600k EUR
 - DR Buffer: around 600k EUR
 - International VAT handling
 - Trademarks in EU and US
 - Grants program



Python Meeting Düsseldorf

- Local user group in Düsseldorf
- Founded in 2012
- Meetings every quarter
 - 10-25 people per meeting
 - Many regulars
- 1200+ Meetup members
- A lot less formal than the other communities

- Lots of fun

Nächstes Treffen:
08.06.2022

Vorort im Biker
Stadtteilzentrum um
18:00 Uhr
Raum 1, 2. OG.

Sonderveranstaltungen:
>>> [PyDDF Herbst Sprint 2021](#)
Python Sprint/
Hackathon Online auf
Discord
20/21.11.2021

Videos der bisherigen
Meetings:
[Liste aller Videos](#)
[PyDDF YouTube Channel](#)

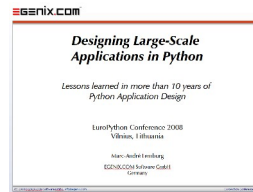
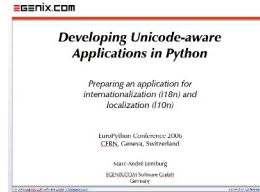
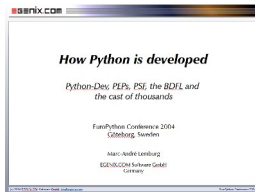
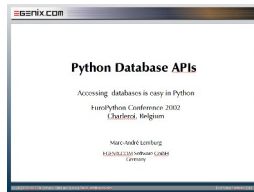
Mailing Liste & Telegram:
[PyDDF Mailing Liste](#)
[PyDDF Telegram Gruppe](#)

Python Meeting Düsseldorf (PyDDF) auf Telegram, Meetup, YouTube (Vortragsvideos), Github (Slides),
Mailing Liste für Ankündigungen, Mailing Liste für Python-Interessierte und Teilnehmer, Code of Conduct.

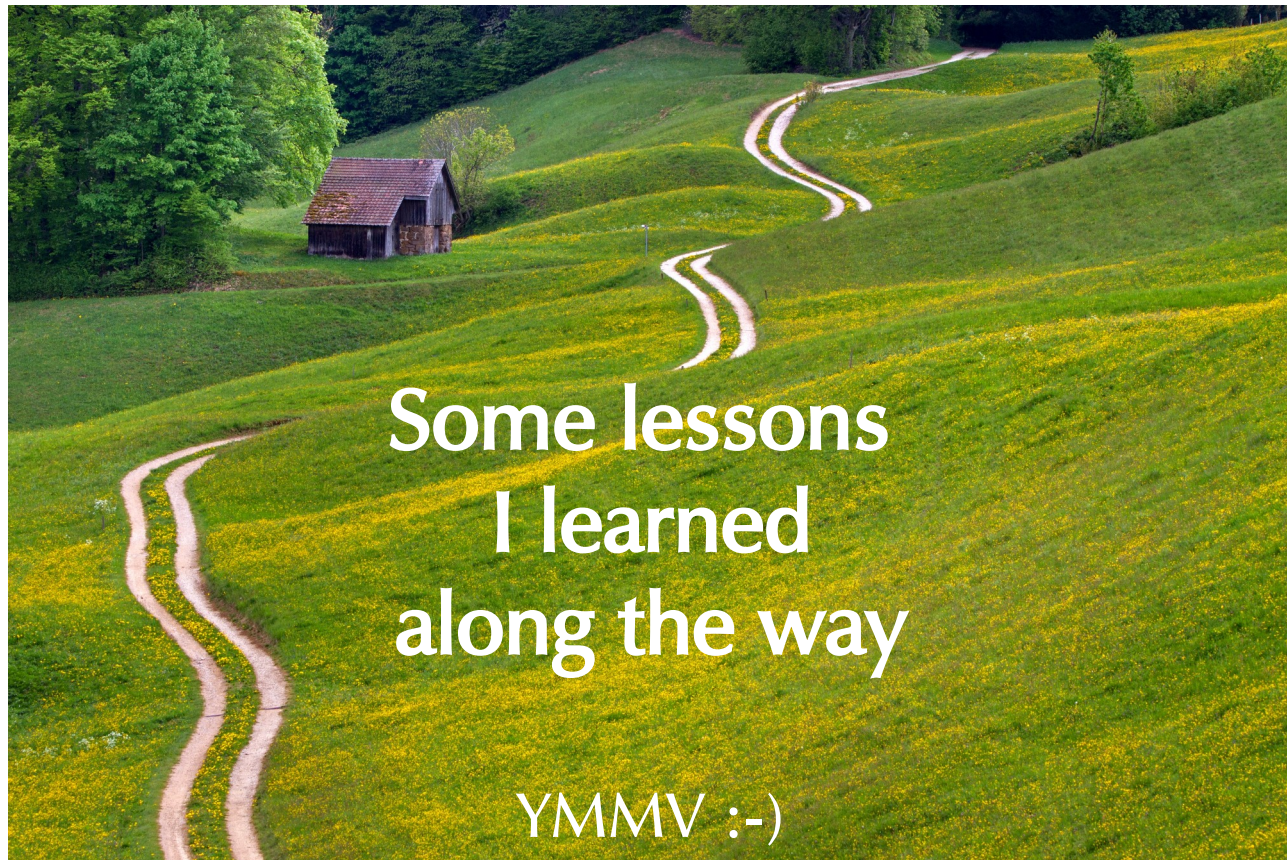
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More than 20 years of OSS and community work

- **Python Core Developer**
 - 1997 – 2012: active coding
 - 2012 – today: advisory role
- **Python Software Foundation**
 - 2001 – today: Fellow membership
 - 2002 – 2004: PSF Board Member
 - 2010 – 2016: PSF Board Member
- **EuroPython**
 - 2002: Executive Committee
 - 2012 – 2021: EPS Board Member
 - 2017 – 2021: EPS Chair
- **Python Meeting Düsseldorf**
 - 2012 – today: quarterly meetings



Looking back



Some lessons
I learned
along the way

YMMV :-)

Challenges

- Time management
- Paradox: Having to fight for doing good
- Endless discussions to convince people
 - Cultural differences in perspectives / values / priorities
 - People's agendas
 - Strong egos
 - Different perspectives on execution / management



Motivation

- You need to find your own “fusion reactor” as energy source
 - Love for Python / growing Python
 - Love for collaborative work
 - Taking on a challenge / working towards a (higher) goal
- Rarely a case of recognition
 - People often take your efforts for granted
 - Few people thank you for your work
- Rarely a case of monetary advantages
 - You most likely won't get compensated for your work
 - If you're lucky, some of your expenses will get covered



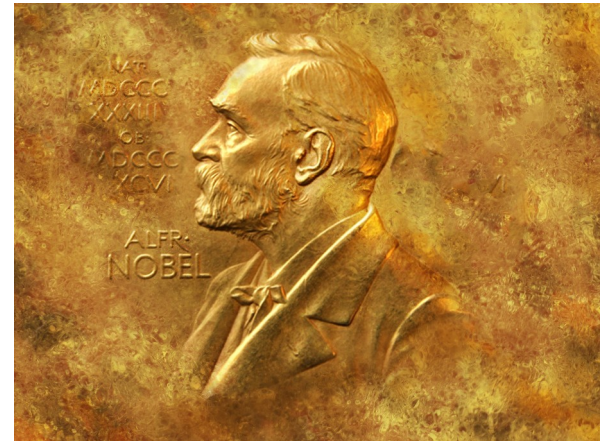
Endurance

- OSS and community work aren't always fun
 - Lots of boring work to do
 - Little feedback or input from others
 - Complaints from users, attendees, co-workers, your family, ...
 - There isn't always a set goal to reach
- Plan for difficult times
 - Take a break, if possible
 - Directly approach people for help
 - Consider complaints, but avoid lengthy discussions
 - Stop, when things get unbearable



Recognition

- Don't expect lots of recognition for your work
 - Doing so can be very demotivating
 - Recognition is a nice to have, but not essential
 - Listen to your own motivation
- Reward yourself, when you've reached a goal
 - Don't expect or wait for others to do so
- If you *do* get recognition...
 - Use it as an energy source for your motivation
 - Use it in discussions on future projects
 - Use it in your CV, LinkedIn, blog, etc. to get the attention you deserve



Dealing with pushbacks

- Not everyone will like your ideas or projects
 - Be ready to argue for your ideas
 - Find a balance between effort to discuss and effort to implement
 - Stop discussions early, when it's clear you won't win
- **Consider implementing your ideas on your own**
 - This may involve having to find new partners
 - Which may be easier than you think – the Python community is large
- **Put the ideas on hold for a year or two**
 - Wait for new people to be in charge
 - Wait for perspectives to change

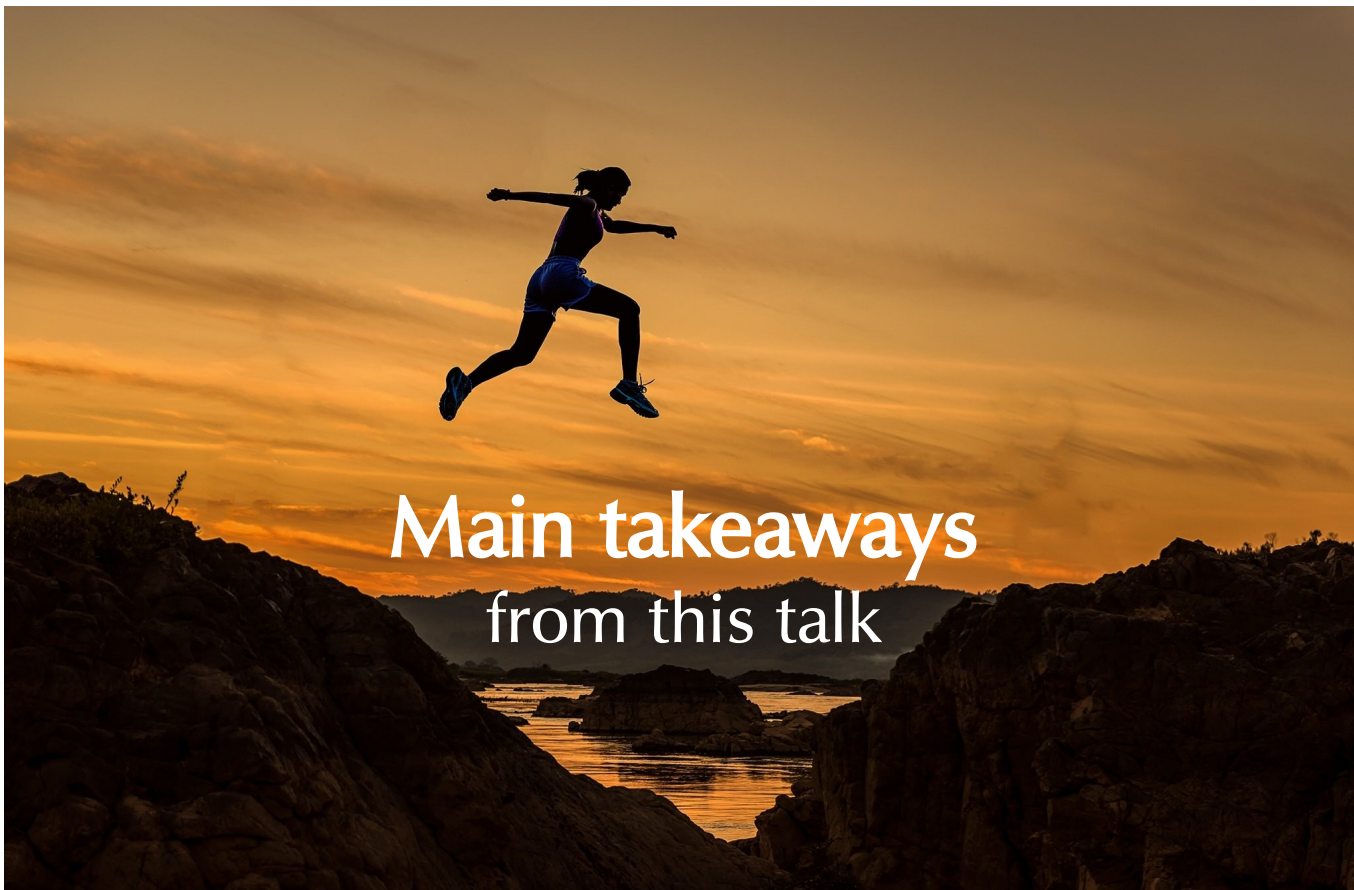


Dealing with attacks

- **When working in the open, you create an attack surface**
 - Some people love to use this against you. Their motivation is not always clear
 - Attacks always hurt. Try to not take them personally
 - It's almost always just a few people, even though it may seem otherwise
- **In OSS and community work, avoid closing in to mitigate**
 - Often enough, staying open helps
 - Ignoring attacks or simply slowing down things usually is the best strategy
 - Attackers tend to lose interest after a while
- **Ask others for help**
 - Talking to others can be a great way to reduce stress and learn new perspectives



Always look on the bright side of life... 🎵 🎵 🎵 🎵



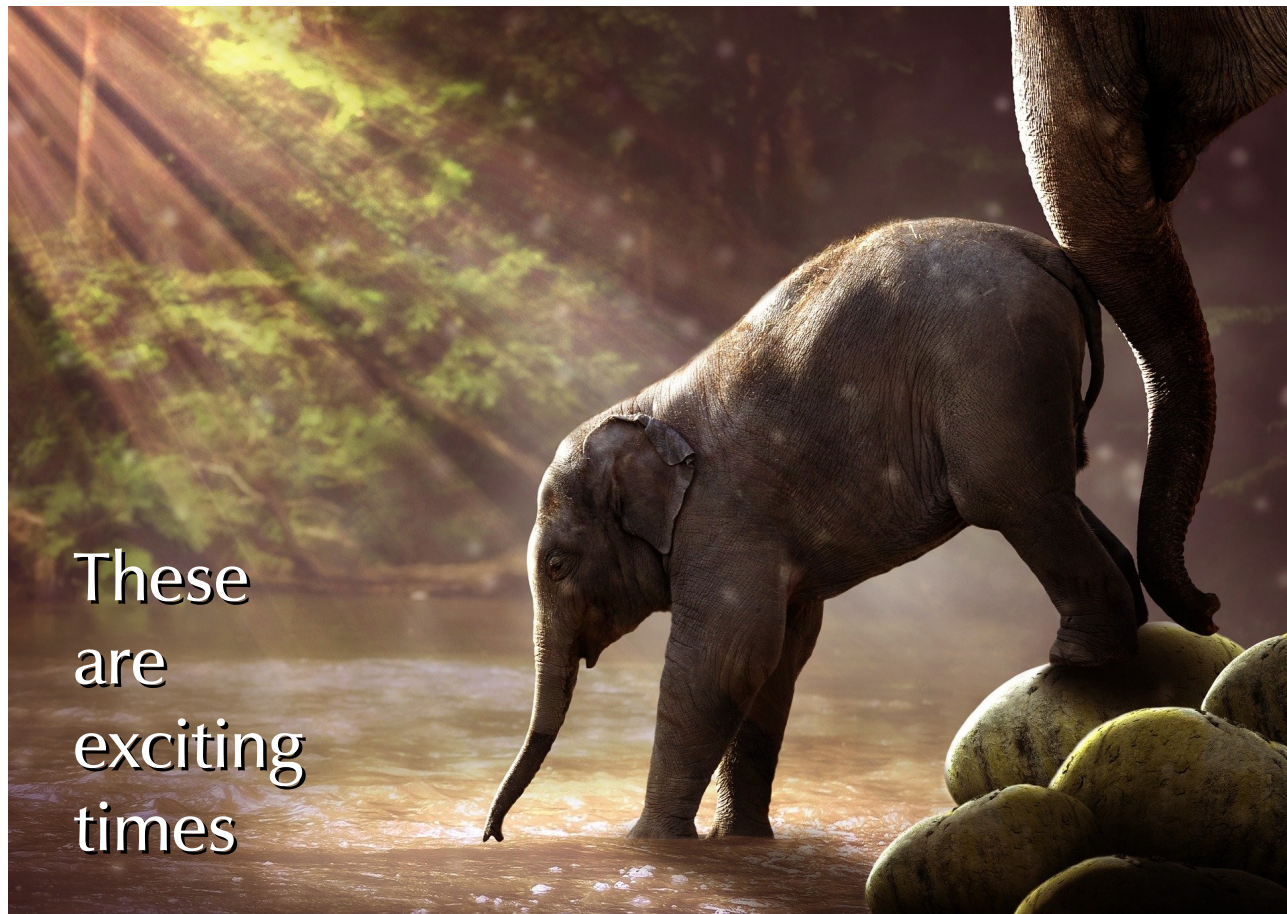
Main takeaways
from this talk

Main takeaways from this talk

- It's *easy to find something* to work on to help grow Python
 - There are plenty of options
 - All kinds of skill sets are needed
- Make sure *you enjoy what you're doing*
 - Don't take pushbacks / attacks personally
 - Take breaks when needed
 - Reward yourself



Never stop to **learn** and **try out new things...**



These
are
exciting
times

Thank you for your attention !



Time for discussion

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References

- Several photos taken from Pixabay
- Some screenshots taken from the EPS websites, the PyDDF website, the Python Brochure website, the Python website, talks I've given in the past
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