

Adventures in Open Source Development

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly



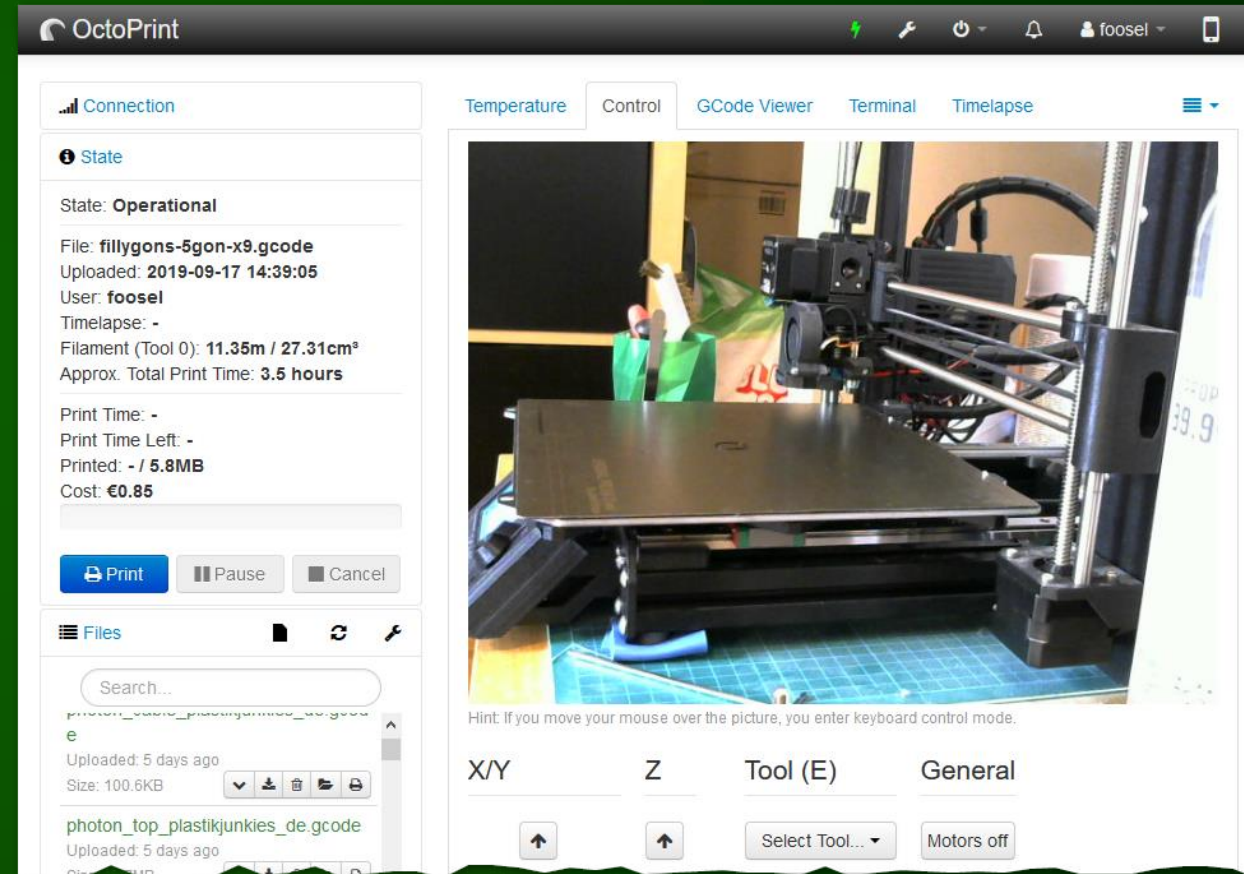
Gina Häußge

- 41 years old
- Software engineer
- Maker
- Bouldering apprentice
- 100% Nerd
- Creator & maintainer of **OctoPrint**

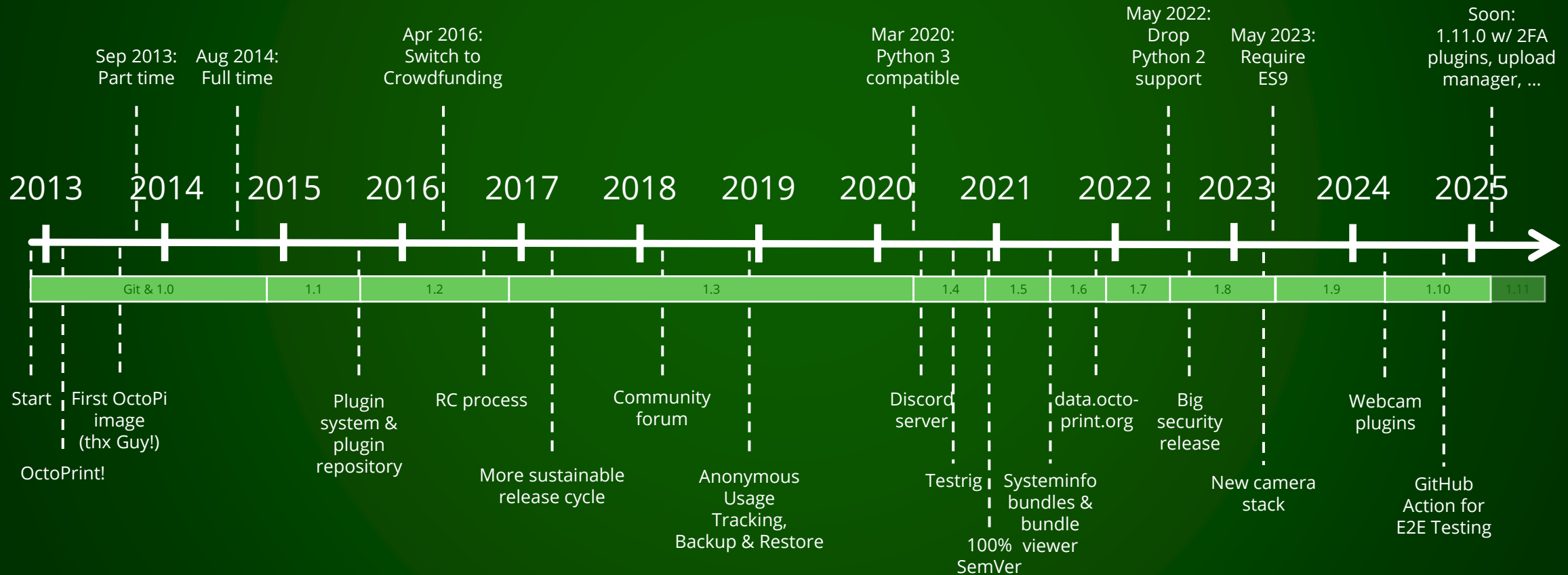


OctoPrint?

- “The snappy web interface for your 3D printer!”
- Open Source, AGPLv3
- ~85k confirmed users, unknown actual number
- Backend: **Python**
- Frontend: HTML & CSS & JS
- 🖱️ octoprint.org



Over a decade of maintenance



The



Working with passion

- It's **your** project!
- You can shape it, you can implement your vision
- No politics driven architecture
- No working on something you'd never use yourself



Helping people

- You help people solve their problems
- You are an **enabler**
- And sometimes they even say **thank you**: Makes it all worth it!



Learning tons of new stuff!

- Software development
- Project management
- Community management
- Release management
- The value of release candidates
 - and how tricky it can be to get people to actually **run** release candidates...
- Brand development
- ... and so much more



The Bad



Work life balance

- Especially if side project or large project
- Hard to shut off and recharge
- You need to be **very** protective of your private time



Pay

- Asking for donations is tough and doesn't usually scale
- Partnering with companies is an even bigger challenge
- Make it easy for people to give you tiny but recurring tips
- Github Sponsors, Patreon, Liberapay, Donorbox, ...



Solitude

- Especially at the start you'll do it alone
- People are fast to request features, but slow to contribute them
- Beware of having to maintain things you don't or can't use



The Ugly



Entitlement & attacks

“I need it to do X, implement that”

“Fix this obscure bug!”

“Why isn't this implemented already?!”

“Who ever pushed this release should be ashamed of themselves!”

“F*** YOU!!!”



Bad commercial players

- Companies love using OSS
 - They don't love contributing back to OSS
 - ... if they even admit they are using OSS
- Companies might manipulate for profit
 - Community
 - Telemetry
 - You
- Choose your battles wisely



Burnout

You don't owe anyone anything!

You need to take care of yourself!

Learn to say "No"!



A photograph of a forest with tall, thin trees and sunlight filtering through the canopy. The ground is covered in grass and low-lying plants. The text "Would I do it again?" is overlaid in white at the top left, and "Absolutely!" is overlaid in white at the bottom right.

Would I do it again?

Absolutely!

Thank you for your attention!

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