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Professional Plone 4 Development

Build robust, content-centric web applications with Plone 4

Foreword by Eric Steele, Plone Release Manager

Martin Aspeli

[PACKT] open source*
PUBLISHING community experience distilled

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BIRMINGHAM - MUMBAI

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Foreword

Hi Eric: A long, long time ago, you made a foolish promise to write a foreword for PPD4.

I suspect Martin plied me to write this foreword while out one evening during the 2010 Plone Conference in Bristol. Full from an excellent dinner and even better conversation, beer in hand, who could say no?

I've long envied Martin's ability to write. Text and code flow from his fingers at a rate that I can't even begin to emulate. I, on the other hand, have been staring at a blank text editor for two weeks now, hoping for inspiration.

One of my first interactions with Martin was in early 2008. I'd been toying with developing a tool that would dramatically simplify editing Plone's layout, a daunting task for most beginners. In response to an early preview, Martin said, *I am also half convinced that this is a cruel joke...But if it isn't, then this could be the best thing for Plone since the invention of Firebug.* That comment, more than any other, motivated me to see the project through.

After all, it was Martin who inspired me to create it.

Earlier that year, Martin wrote a blog post titled *Pete and Andy Try Plone 4*, describing the steps two fictional characters might take to set up and deploy a functioning Plone site in 10 days using an array of new tools that greatly simplify the process. A bold declaration of the roadmap Martin envisioned for Plone, the post prompted a flurry of discussion within the community. Rereading it today, it's easy to see how significant an influence it has been on Plone's evolution. For me, in particular, it sparked an idea and touched off a series of events that ultimately led me to where I am today: Leading Plone's core development team and making sure that each new version puts its predecessors to shame.

And now to the book you hold in your hands.

The original edition of Martin's Professional Plone Development has held a prominent place on my desk since it was first published in 2007. Four years and hundreds of man-hours of Plone work later, I still find myself occasionally turning to it to find a snippet of code or to look up an unfamiliar function. I've been lucky enough to serve as an editor for this updated version. It's been a great read, and it's a reminder to me of just how far Plone has come in the last four years. What's more, I continue to find new and useful information within its pages – *Chapter 12, Relational Databases'* discussion of relational databases arrived in my inbox just as I was starting work on a project requiring the use of SQLAlchemy.

Martin has long been key to Plone's success. He's served as a member of the Framework Team, deciding which features belong in Plone, and he has led the Documentation Team. It's easy to recognize his handiwork in large sections of the Plone 3 and 4 releases. His ability to contribute so heavily to the codebase and then to turn around and describe it so well is a rare combination of skills indeed.

This book won't just tell you how to do things – it will tell you how to do things well. In *Chapter 2, Introduction to the Case Study*, he walks you through the basics of requirements gathering, use cases, mockups, and client interaction. From there, he shares his knowledge of proper development practices, and more specifically, proper Plone development practices. While the client is fictional, by the end of this book, you will have planned, built, and deployed a real Plone application.

Plone is by no means simple. What it provides in power and flexibility comes at the cost of a long learning curve. This book is your ladder.

Welcome to Plone.

– Eric Steele
Plone Release Manager
Pennsylvania State University's WebLion Group

About the Author

Martin Aspeli is an experienced Plone consultant and a prolific Plone contributor. He served on the Framework Team for Plone 3.0, and has contributed significantly for many of Plone's features, such as the portlets infrastructure, the content rules engine, the Dexterity content type framework, and the integration of Diazo theming engine into Plone.

He is a former leader of the Plone Documentation Team, has written a number of well-received tutorials available on plone.org, and is a regular speaker at Plone events and conferences. Martin was recognized in 2008 by Packt Publishing as one of the *Most Valuable People* in Open Source Content Management Systems for his work on the first edition of *Professional Plone Development*.

By day, Martin works for a 'Big Four' management consultancy, managing web development teams. He is passionate about Open Source, Agile, and high quality software.

About the Reviewers

A once-active contributor to several third-party Plone add-on products, integrator of Plone for environmental nonprofits, and occasional Plone core contributor, **Andrew Burkhalter** has more recently taken on the role of active lurker within the Plone community. Though he now spends his days writing iOS productivity apps using Objective-C and Cocoa, he still thinks fondly of Python code and web programming, and has loved the opportunity to review *Professional Plone* from the perspective of a semi-outsider looking in.

David Glick is a web developer at Groundwire in Seattle. He is a contributor to a number of Plone add-on products, a member of the Plone Foundation, and has participated in development of Plone in various capacities as a core developer, framework team member, and security team member since 2008.

Hanno Schlichting is one of the most prolific long-term Plone Core developers. He serves as the Zope 2 release manager, is a Zope Toolk release team member and has led the Plone internationalization team for many years in addition to many more informal roles and involvement in Plone Foundation committees. Hanno currently works for Jarn AS located in Southern Norway. Jarn AS is an agile export consultancy company specializing in high-quality development and consulting in for Plone and employs some of the most recognized Plone community members worldwide.

Jon Stahl is a graduate student at the University of Washington Evans School of Public Affairs. Prior to that, he spent 15 years at Groundwire providing technology consulting services to environmental nonprofits. He has been working with Plone since 2005 and has served multiple terms on the Plone Foundation Board of Directors. He has contributed several chapters to *Practical Plone 3* and served as a reviewer for the first version of *Professional Plone Development*.

Eric Steele has been using Zope since 2002 and Plone since 2005. He is currently working as a developer for Penn State University's WebLion group. He is the author of several widely used Plone products, including GloWorm and FacultyStaffDirectory. Eric serves as the Plone release manager and is a member of the Plone Foundation.

Israel Saeta Pérez is a Physics student and computer enthusiast from Spain. He has contributed to several free-software projects and specially to Plone, helping with documentation and working on Deco/Tiles development during the Google Summer of Code 2010. Nowadays he's preparing to start a masters in Artificial Intelligence and does some freelance consulting in his free time.

I want to thank my parents for helping me become who I am today.

Matthew Wilkes has been working with Plone since 2005 at Team Rubber, as a freelance consultant and for Jarn AS in Berlin. During that time he was involved in developing many different Plone sites, from intranets to government consultation sites. He is an active Plone community foundation member, serving on the Plone 4 Framework Team and foundation membership committee as well as an active member of the Zope and Plone security teams.

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