

Maintaining an open source application - a look behind the scenes

Nextcloud News Android App

EU Open Source Week - Offsite Event Bonn - 2025

> whoami

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 - Maintainer Nextcloud News Android App
- Studied Computer Science at Bonn Rhein Sieg University of Applied Sciences
- 10+ years programming experience

The journey began in

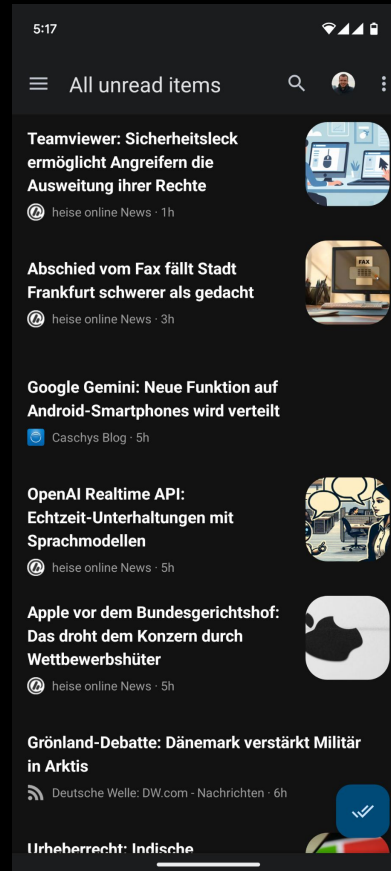
2013

when Google announced the shutdown of
Google Reader

What's next?

- ❑ “Google Reader Shutdown a Sobering Reminder That 'Our' Technology Isn't Ours” (Forbes)
- ❑ ownCloud was growing quickly
- ❑ Community was building a backend/web RSS Reader for ownCloud so I started working on an Android App
- ❑ Goal: You are in control and you decide what you read (not some algorithm / AI that tries to optimize engagement time)

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Why open source?

- ❑ ownCloud is open source
- ❑ ownCloud / Nextcloud community is great
- ❑ Making money wasn't a primary concern
 - ❑ One time fee on Google Play
 - ❑ Free on F-Droid and on GitHub

Opportunities

- ❑ 700+ GitHub stars
- ❑ Community effort is great - throughout the years ~40 contributors
- ❑ The main driver of contributions: People that are using the app want to help improve it
- ❑ “Only one app” in the thriving Nextcloud ecosystem (indirect advertisement)

Challenges

- ❑ Bug reports: Complex user setups result in many GitHub Tickets
 - ❑ debugging user issues is one of the most time consuming tasks
 - ❑ making sure users fill out all information about their setup
- ❑ Finding a good balance between user communication / project management and development time
- ❑ Learn to say no
- ❑ Dedicating time in our busy lives (especially if you don't have a business model)

Take aways

- ❑ You are part of something bigger - something other people appreciate and use (on a daily basis) - even though on GitHub you mostly get reports about issues
- ❑ Depending on the project there are sometimes meetups / bigger communities (like Nextcloud conferences)
- ❑ Insights gained from being a maintainer help when contributing to other projects

Securing your Software & Cloud-Native Environment

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