

FOSDEM'25 x X-WIKI

XWIKI SAS

20 years of hacking the funding of XWiki and CryptPad



LUDOVIC DUBOST

Founder & CEO

About me

- Worked on Internet technologies **since 1995**
 - Netscape
 - NetValue, Nielsen/NetRatings
- Created XWiki **in 2004**
- Prefers to build Open Source than talk about it, but ends up talking a lot anyway

APELL, CNLL, Euclidia, Hub Open Source,
OW2, OpenFoodFacts, Murena

XWiki SAS

- French & European independent company
- Self-Funded, Majority Ownership
- ~6.5M€ revenue in 2024
- 50%+ growth in 2024, 2 years in a row
- 65 people in Paris and Iasi (Romania)
- Two Open Source softwares: XWiki (LGPL) & CryptPad (AGPL) with an international community, 100% Open Source
- Engaged for digital sovereignty in EU
- Services: Support, Training, Consulting, Hosting in the EU



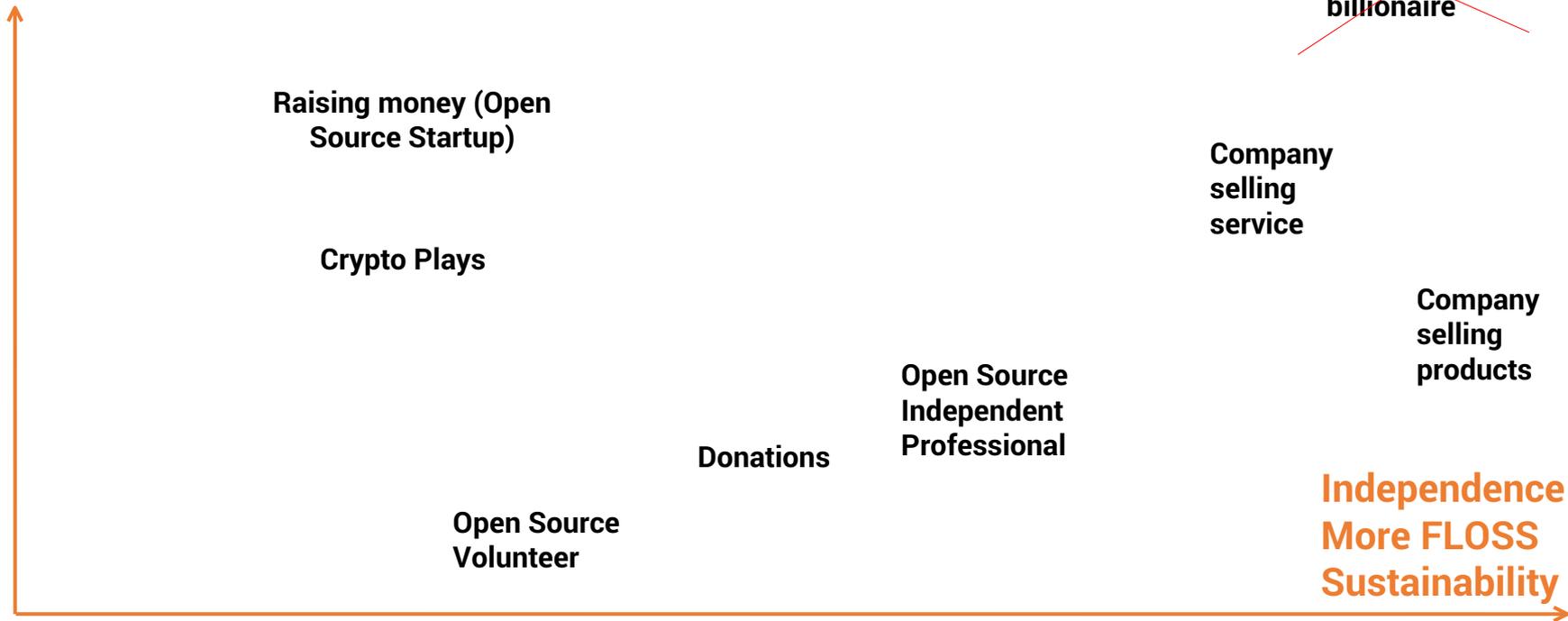
Enabling Freedom

#1

The early ~~days~~ years

But... How do you fund it?

Speed,
Comfort



Investors?

- Who is the real BOSS?
- Are we talking about the same goals?
- Dangerous long term effect

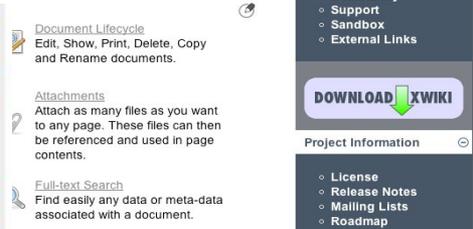
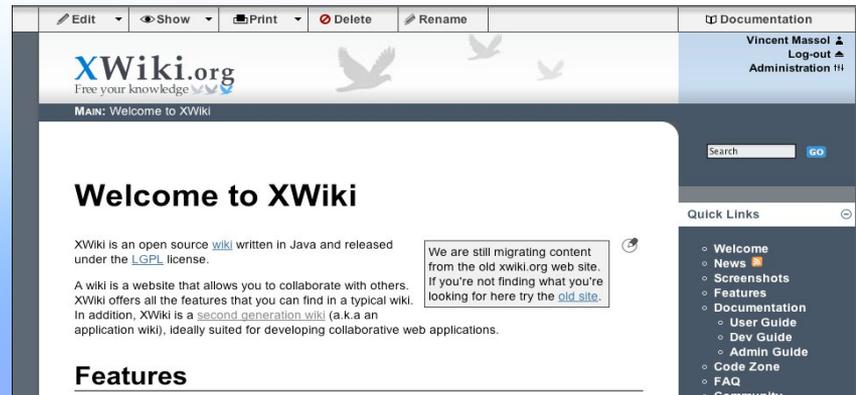
Money is a mean, not a goal.

The first 5 years

“Public Money, Public Code”

- Leverage Open Source
- Community
- Service
- Romania
- Innovation
- Research Money
- France: CIR
- Patience

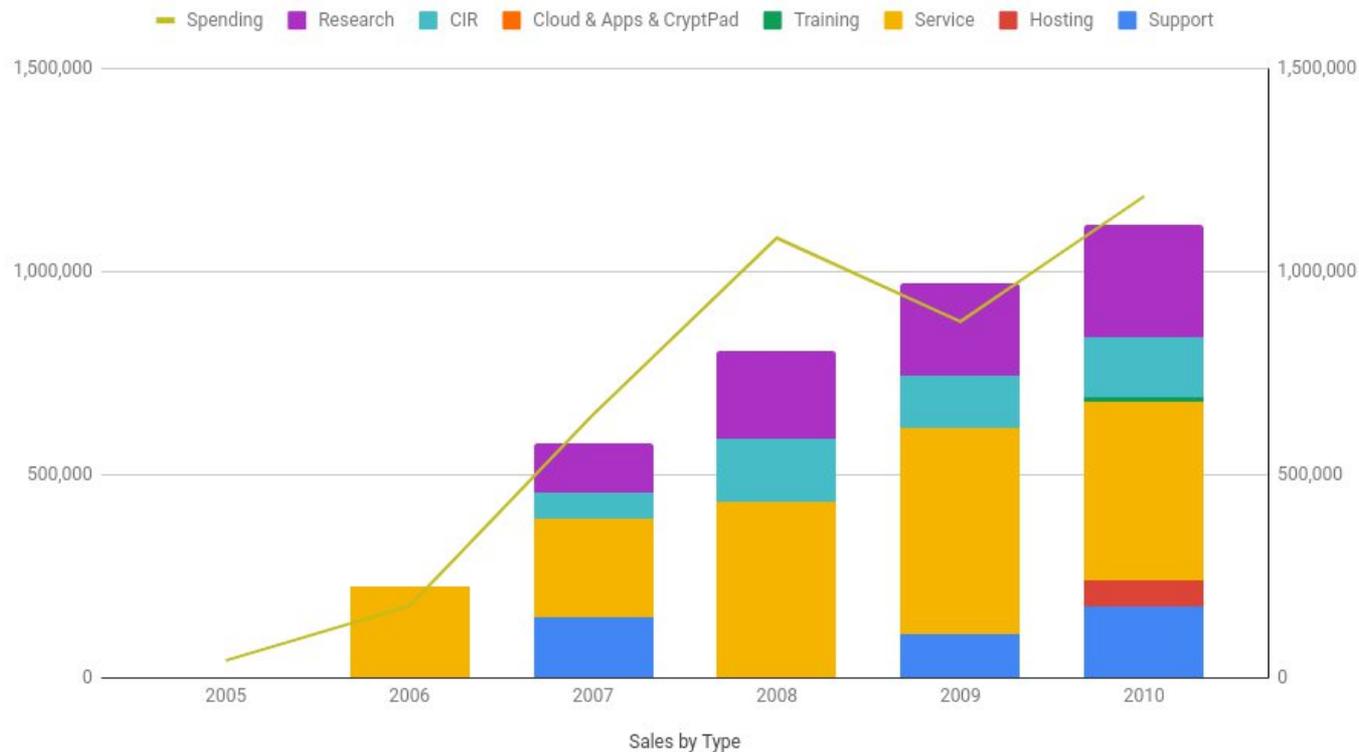
HACK
HACK



Finance!

The first million is the hardest to get?

XWiki SAS 20 Years - 2005 - 2010



**Recurrent
revenue going up
from 0% to 20%,
250k**

Values

**Community
& Customers**

**Happy
Team**

**Product
Centered**

**Open
Source**

**Knowledge,
Privacy**



No success in Open Source without a good product

- Condition the service on support
- Or sell the product and give service
- Make sure to focus revenue towards the roadmap

Sure, find the money ... but ...

- Always think about the **product**, it needs to be competitive
- It's easy to think you can't fund your Open Source because of the business model
- Strategies to direct revenue towards the Product

#2

Support revenue is key

5 to 10 years

“Public Money, Public Code”

Focused on one product & making it known

2011

1.5M, 360k recurring

2013

1.6M, 574k recurring

2015

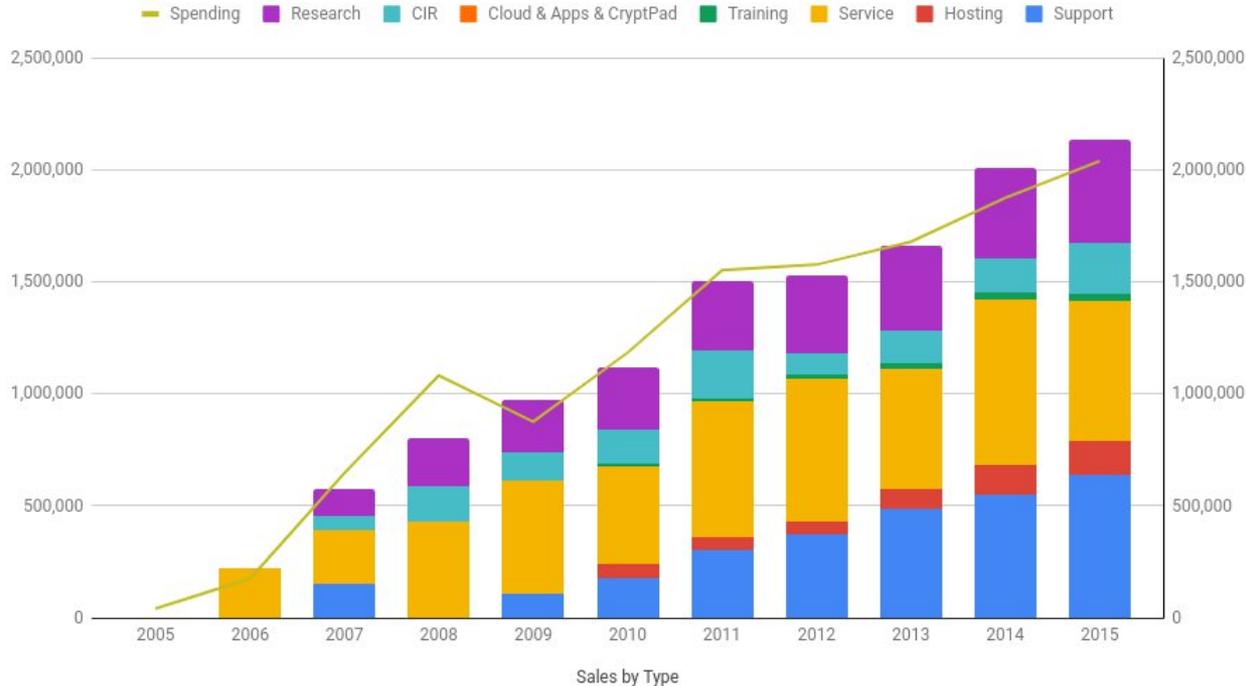
2.1M, 800k recurring

- More research projects
- Internation Sales
- Derivate Applications (Fail)
- **XWiki Cloud (failed)**
- Large service projects
- More support sales
- First Applications (Free)

Finance!

Product revenue is coming progressively

XWiki SAS 20 Years - 2005 to 2015



Recurrent revenue going up to 35%, 800k

Closed Source competition is tough

- Atlassian Confluence took the lead
- Aggressive pricing did not leave a lot of room

Winner takes it all ?



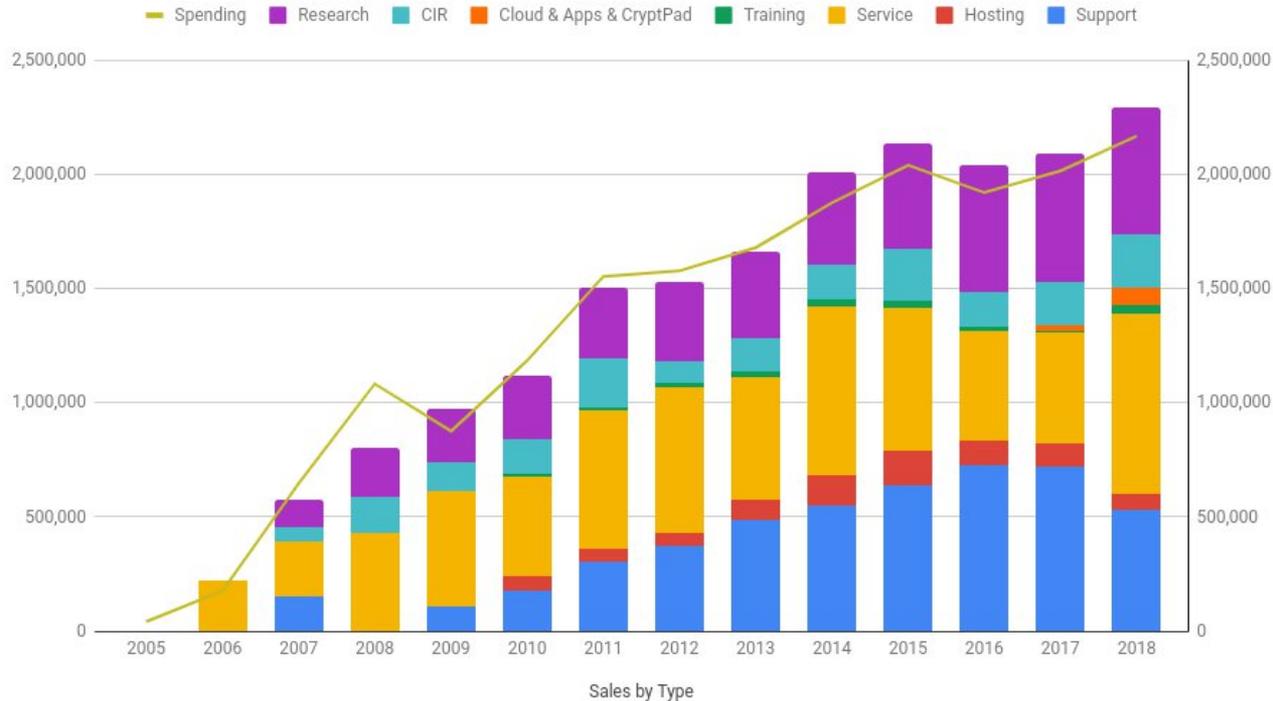
#3

A challenging period

A challenging period

Product revenue is growing too slowly

XWiki SAS 20 Years - 2005 to 2018



**Recurrent
revenue flat at
35%, 800k**

**Find Service
Client to fill the
holes**

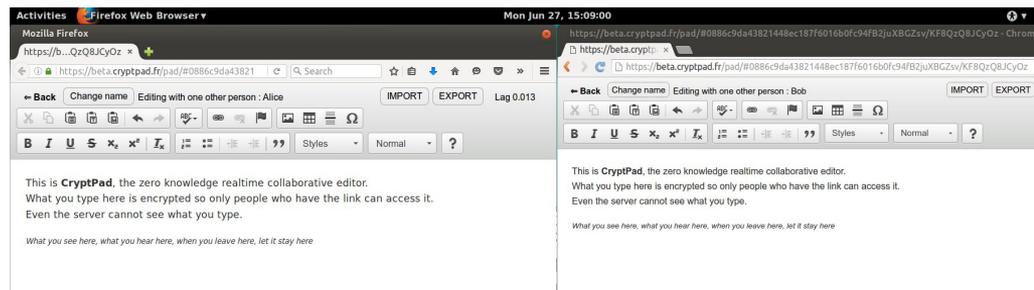
Open Source is not free

- Open Core Package (FAIL)
- Making Open Source Extensions Paying
- Extensions are included in Support Contracts
- We also adapted our pricing to reward long term clients and clients of support (30% more for service without support)
- Other approaches also possible: SAAS offers, bundling paying features, no service without support



Launching CryptPad in 2016

- CryptPad is launched as part of a research project in 2016
- Additional funding found with a larger project
- Developing a full “e2ee” collaborative suite



#4

The come back

Atlassian increases pricing, pushes to Cloud

- BigTech cashing in, open opportunities for competitors
- Listen to the Client needs
- Confluence extensions as Paying Extensions



Digital Sovereignty

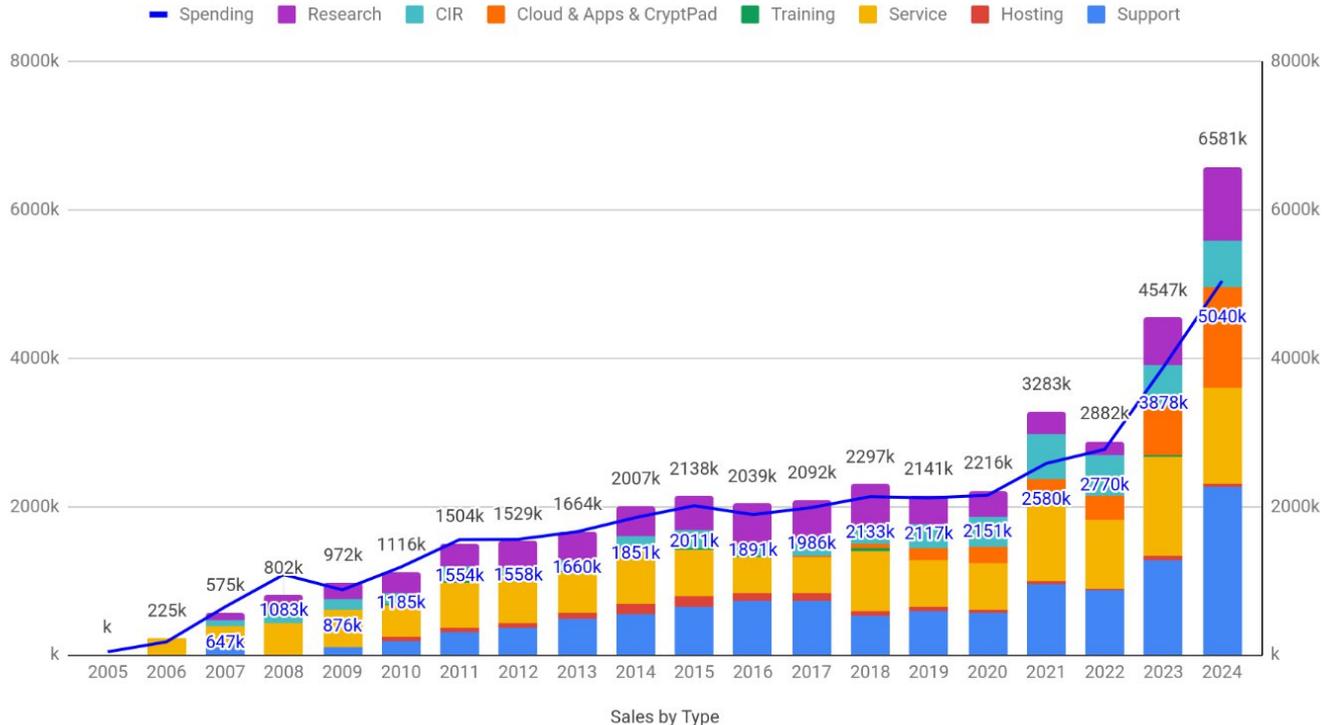
Be the reference in your domain

- German openDesk project
- France 2030 Collaborative Suite funding



Open Source has long term value

XWiki SAS Revenue and Spending



**Reaching 50%
recurrent
revenue, 2.5M**

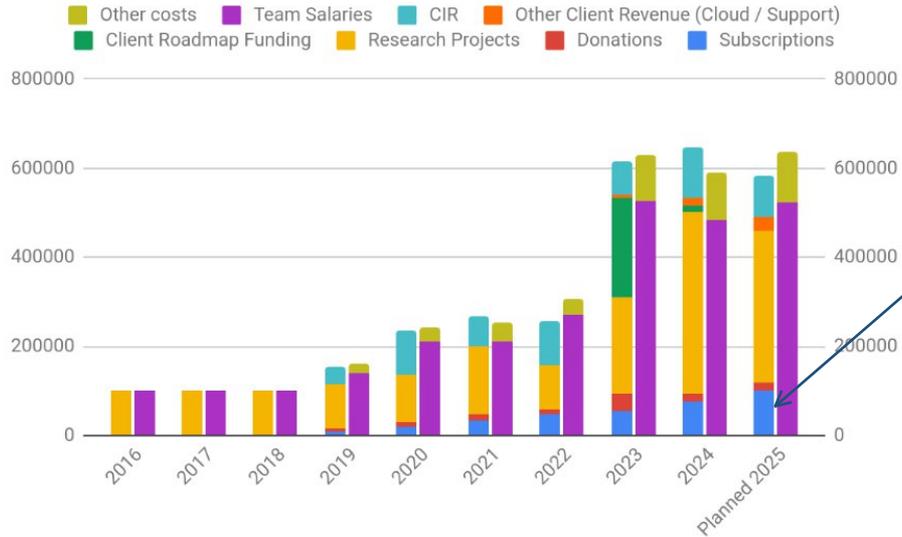
**Total revenue
6.5M**

**The best funding
is the client
funding**



CryptPad

No service for CryptPad



From 0% to 20%
recurring
revenue, 100k
(only)

Donations and
subscriptions: you can
have an impact on the
cryptpad team size

Continue to fund
CryptPad with research
funding

Finding the right product that
we can sell to generate
sustainable revenue

Clients without Service

Strongly depends on the competition

Enterprise clients can pay more, but move slowly

End-user are small subscriptions (CryptPad growing to 1000 subscribers)

Marketing is necessary (factor in the costs)

Need to have dedicated developers on the Business part

Next Generation Internet & NLnet



Simple to make a proposal

Well adapted to open source project with existing communities and users

Also in France, but more complex



Bigger amount of money

Donations & Kickstarter

CryptPad has 600 donators for 20k per year

OpenCollective allows regular donations but might be less efficient than a KickStarted campaign

Working on donations requires time and marketing



Pixelfed raising 55k in 2 days

FOSS Fund

Users of Open Source should also give back.

We also need to give back, some of the developers building the module we use, don't have good funding.

CopiePublique.fr

1 % of our recurrent revenue

40k for 2021-2023, 20k distributed

23k for 2024 to distribute

Similar calls for donations by sentry, indeed, etc..

A big thank to the XWiki Team

The first funders of our Open Source work are our team members



Come join them
jobs@xwiki.com

Also not possible without
the funders and all clients



Thank you!
Questions?

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