

# WHY CONTRIBUTING TO MAGENTO 2 MATTERS MORE THAN EVER

For the last 2 years, I've been a part of Magento Community Engineering. We are a small, external team tasked with maintaining Magento 2 on GitHub. During this time, I merged around 300 pull requests and participated in more than 500 issues, giving me front seat to how developers are using the platform and the challenges they face.

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Magento 2 was not the first open source project I helped maintain. For many years, I maintained Nexcess\_Turpentine, a popular module for integrating Varnish and Magento 1.

My role as Magento Master involves traveling, assisting, and educating other developers from around the world. Though it leaves little time for sustained development and coding, it has allowed me to share knowledge with and learn from this incredible global community. Much of my work could be described as providing free support for troublesome issues, but it's just one of many powerful ways to give back to our Magento community.

## THE PERKS (AND PERILS) OF CONTRIBUTING

While the use of open source software is itself one way of contributing to further development of that software, it warms my heart to see others jumping headfirst into helping the greater community. Doing so makes you a part of something bigger than your own project and helps make software you already love into something even better. Contributing is also one of the best ways to learn more about Magento 2, its internals, and potential paths for future development.

As a user of a free open source project, you are in debt. You got something for free and you are (probably) profiting from it. At some point, it seems natural to “pay” for it by giving back to the project and the community behind it. This is the true face of open source, where communities are critical for driving the development of a product that helps brands grow.

## WANT TO START CONTRIBUTING, BUT DON'T KNOW HOW?

Most of the current needs are covered in the CONTRIBUTION.md file in the root of the GitHub repository, and most of the community engineering team is online on Slack to keep the lines of communication open between devs and maintainers. Look for the “good first issue” label, and you'll find plenty of easy tasks for newcomers.

Labels are just one way to search for issues and PRs. Explore the repositories under the Magento organization for other opportunities. Merchants and power users alike can find plenty of ways to contribute in side projects like MSI, translations in Crowdin, the underappreciated DevDocs project, and Adobe Stock integration, among others. The deeper you go, the more opportunities will present themselves!

As a Magento maintainer, my routine is pretty much the same as any other business professional. This in a key point. Many developers don't realize open source projects depend on the same rules, procedures, and standards common to most development projects. Some examples: just like you would for your own project, test your code before submitting it; remember your manners; templates are not optional and never delete them.

These and other “soft skills” arguably contribute as much to a project's success as the code itself. Magento 2 is one of the largest projects in e-commerce, with over 1000 contributors, thousands of open issues, and around 240 pull requests a month. Given the huge size of the Magento 2 community, professionalism and courtesy are vital for efficient production. Maintainers and core developers are people, not robots. Many maintainers volunteer their time — mostly unpaid — and don't deserve to deal with angry users frustrated with a bug.

## HOW TO CONTRIBUTE

Even if you know little to nothing about writing code, there are many ways to contribute. It can be a small typo or a missing translation, but just forking the repository and actively working on your issue will provide insight into how the open source community works.

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