

FIRESIDE CHAT

Taking great notes with Juhis

Nov 24th, 2026

Djangonaut Space

Most important thing first

Take inspiration but don't try to copy anyone's system

I use Obsidian but the tool matters way less than what you write

Ask questions and comment throughout

I'll share the slides in Discord afterwards so you get all the links

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Why do we take notes?

Notes are a tool for ...

... thinking

... writing

... learning

... productivity

https://hamatti.org/posts/notes-are-a-tool-for/

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I don't outsource my thinking to LLM

https://hamatti.org/posts/be-careful-with-introducing-ai-into-your-notes/

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"Running notes" or "lab notes"

> *Also, too many developers rely on their working memory, and end up burning out because they are afraid to leave a problem halfway. If the entire plan of attack exists only in your head, taking a lunch break can be disastrous.*
>
> *A lab notebook makes it safe to stop work at any time.*

Sam Bleckley, https://sambleckley.com/writing/lab-notebooks.html

https://notes.hamatti.org/note-taking/running-notes

"Running notes" or "lab notes"

Running tests

Once I got the app running in docker, I tried running the tests

```shell
docker exec -it djangogirls-app bash
python -m pytest
```

which resulted in

```
========================================== short test summary info
==========================================
FAILED tests/core/test_commands.py::test_new_event_with_one_organizer -
FileNotFoundError: [Errno 2] No such file o...
FAILED tests/core/test_commands.py::test_new_event_with_two_organizers -
FileNotFoundError: [Errno 2] No such file ...
FAILED tests/core/test_commands.py::test_new_event_short - FileNotFoundError:
[Errno 2] No such file or directory: ...
FAILED tests/core/test_models.py::test_add_default_content - FileNotFoundError:
[Errno 2] No such file or directory...
FAILED tests/organize/test_create_event.py::test_create_event -
FileNotFoundError: [Errno 2] No such file or direct...
FAILED tests/organize/test_models.py::test_deploy_event_from_previous_event -
FileNotFoundError: [Errno 2] No such ...
FAILED tests/organize/test_models.py::test_send_deployed_email -
FileNotFoundError: [Errno 2] No such file or direc...
============================== 7 failed, 272 passed, 3 skipped, 3 warnings in
29.72s ===============================
```

A lot of them (maybe even all?) where about missing image files

```
FileNotFoundError: [Errno 2] No such file or directory:
'/var/www/app/static/local/img/photos/about1.jpg'
```

I ran

```shell
npx gulp local
```

which created the images and reran

```
python -m pytest
```

with

```
279 passed, 3 skipped, 3 warnings in 29.05s
```

"Running notes" or "lab notes"

ModuleNotFoundError: No module named 'captcha' in ./manage.py migrate

When I tried to run database migrations, I ran into issue with missing django-recaptcha.

I tried adding it to `INSTALLED_APPS` per documentation but that didn't help much.

The API had changed to `from django_recaptcha.fields import ReCaptchaField` (also need to remove `captcha` from `INSTALLED_APPS`).

Strip API changes.

`ModuleNotFoundError: No module named 'stripe.error'`

Stripe has moved errors to core:

```python
from stripe import APIConnectionError, CardError, StripeError
```

Topic notes

Mocking with pytest

Python

```python
from unittest.mock import patch, MagicMock
from utils import func

from objs import MyObj
# Mock return value
def test_custom_return_value():
  func = MagicMock(return_value=3)

  assert func() == 3

# Mock method

def mocked_method():
  return 100

def test_custom_method():
  with patch.object(MyObj, "method_to_mock", new=mocked_method):
    my_obj = MyObj()
    assert my_obj() == 100
```

Mocking for a method that loads a zip file from the web.

We have a mock zip file with a `file.xml` that looks like

XML

```xml
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="iso-8859-1"?>
<timeStamp>10:00:00</timeStamp>
```

and we want to test a function that gets that zip file from the web and returns the time stamp from the only xml file in the zip.

Python

```python
# in zip_handler.py, we want to test handle()
ZIP_URL = "mock://give-me-zip.file"

def handle():
    resp = requests.get(ZIP_URL)
    with io.BytesIO(resp.content) as f:
        zf = zipfile.ZipFile(f)
        for filename in zf.namelist():
            if filename.endswith(".xml"):
                break

        out_path = "."
        zf.extract(filename, out_path)

    with open(filename, "r") as xmlfile:
        soup = BeautifulSoup(xmlfile, "xml")
        return soup.css.select("timeStamp")[0].text

# in test_zip_handler.py
from zip_handler import handle, ZIP_URL
from requests_mock import Mocker


def test_timestamp_read_correctly():
    with Mocker() as m:
        with open("mock.zip", "br") as zipfile:
            m.get(ZIP_URL, body=zipfile)
            timestamp = handle()

            assert timestamp == "10:00:00"
```



from See How They Run



Stoppard: Tell me, do you write everything down in that little notebook?

Stalker: Only if it's important, sir.

Stoppard: How do you know if it's important?

Stalker: Oh well - - . I just sort of put everything in as we go and then down the line when we know what's important, we know it's already in the notebook.

Stoppard: So you do write everything down?

Stalker: Yes, everything.



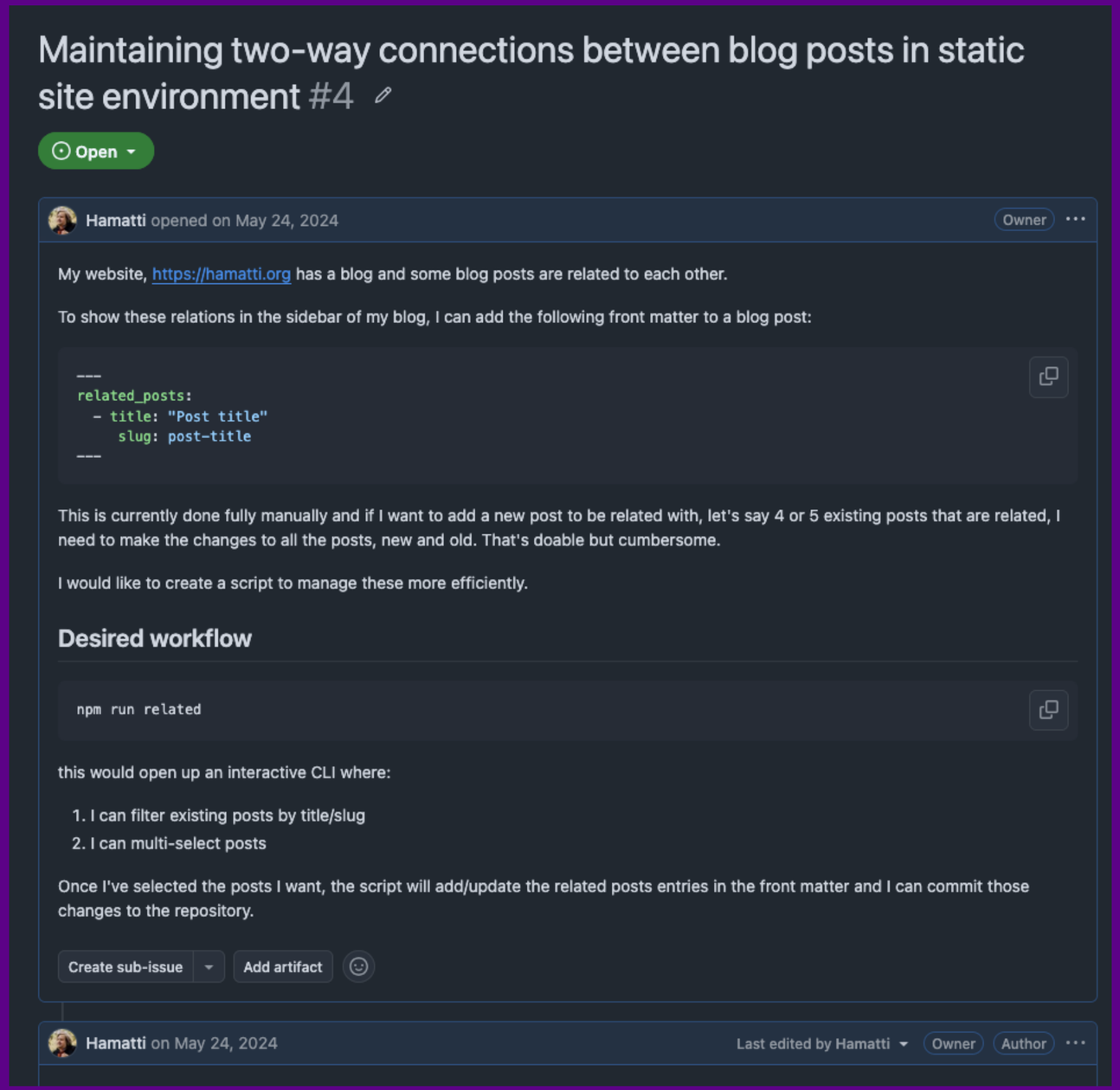
from See How They Run

Public notes

Public notes

A dialogue with yourself in an open/public GitHub issue

https://github.com/Hamatti/public-notes/issues/4



Maintaining two-way connections between blog posts in static site environment #4

Open

Hamatti opened on May 24, 2024 — Owner

My website, https://hamatti.org has a blog and some blog posts are related to each other.

To show these relations in the sidebar of my blog, I can add the following front matter to a blog post:

```
---
related_posts:
  - title: "Post title"
    slug: post-title
---
```

This is currently done fully manually and if I want to add a new post to be related with, let's say 4 or 5 existing posts that are related, I need to make the changes to all the posts, new and old. That's doable but cumbersome.

I would like to create a script to manage these more efficiently.

Desired workflow

```
npm run related
```

this would open up an interactive CLI where:

1. I can filter existing posts by title/slug
2. I can multi-select posts

Once I've selected the posts I want, the script will add/update the related posts entries in the front matter and I can commit those changes to the repository.

Create sub-issue | Add artifact

Hamatti on May 24, 2024 — Last edited by Hamatti — Owner — Author

Public notes

two great talks

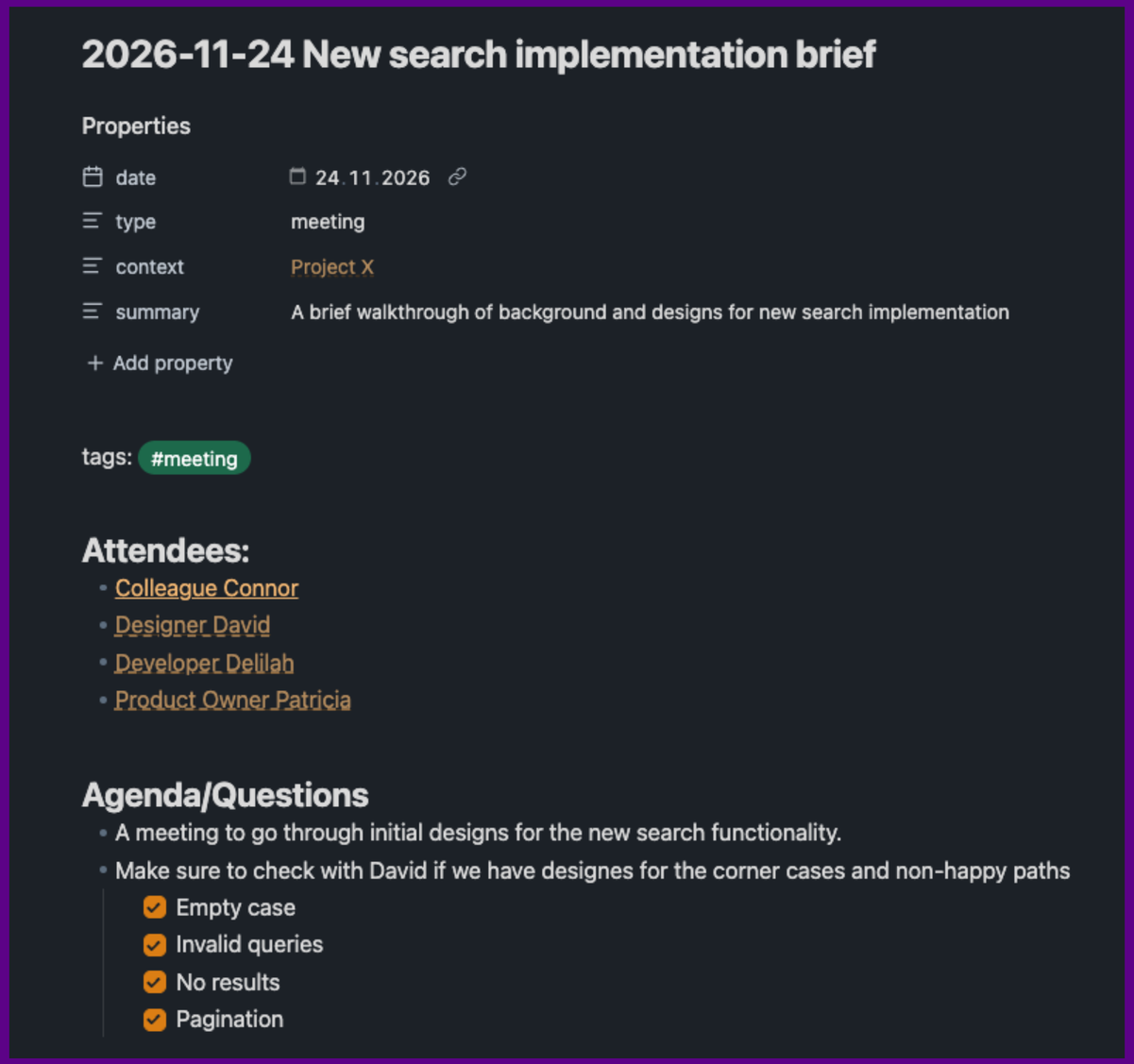
Increase your productivity on personal projects with comprehensive docs and automated tests

- Simon Willison, DjangoCon US 2022

Contributing to Django or how I learned to stop worrying and just try to fix an ORM Bug

- Ryan Cheley, DjangoCon US 2023

Meeting notes



2026-11-24 New search implementation brief

Properties

date	24.11.2026
type	meeting
context	Project X
summary	A brief walkthrough of background and designs for new search implementation

+ Add property

tags: #meeting

Attendees:

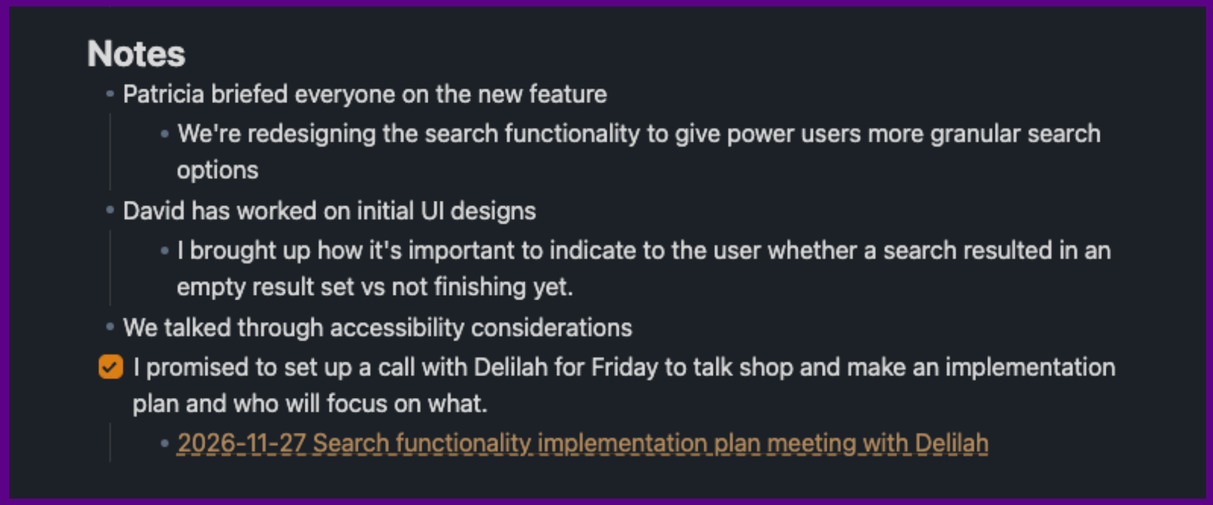
- Colleague Connor
- Designer David
- Developer Delilah
- Product Owner Patricia

Agenda/Questions

- A meeting to go through initial designs for the new search functionality.
- Make sure to check with David if we have designes for the corner cases and non-happy paths
  - [x] Empty case
  - [x] Invalid queries
  - [x] No results
  - [x] Pagination

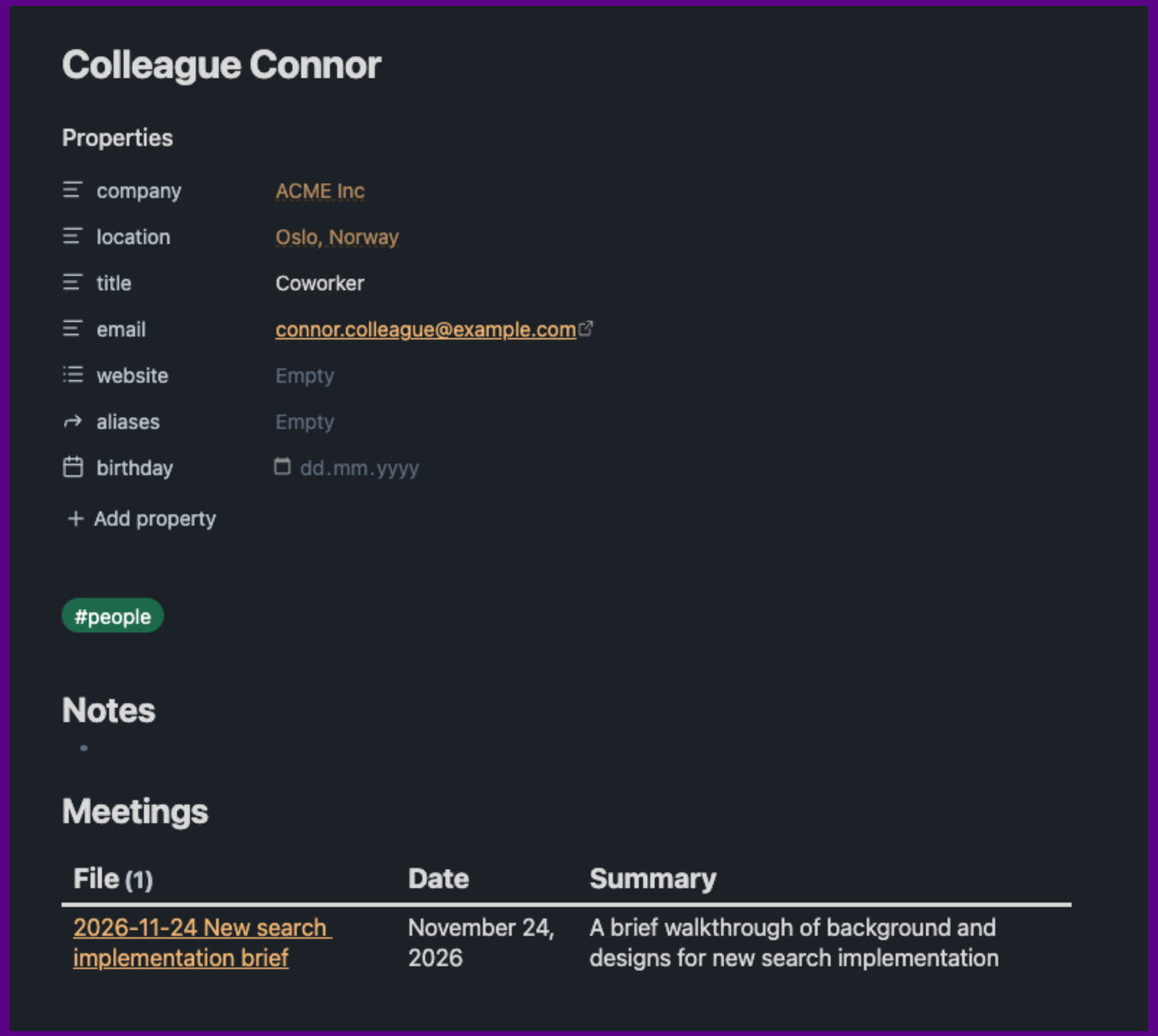
I'm a bit weird:

I prep for meetings

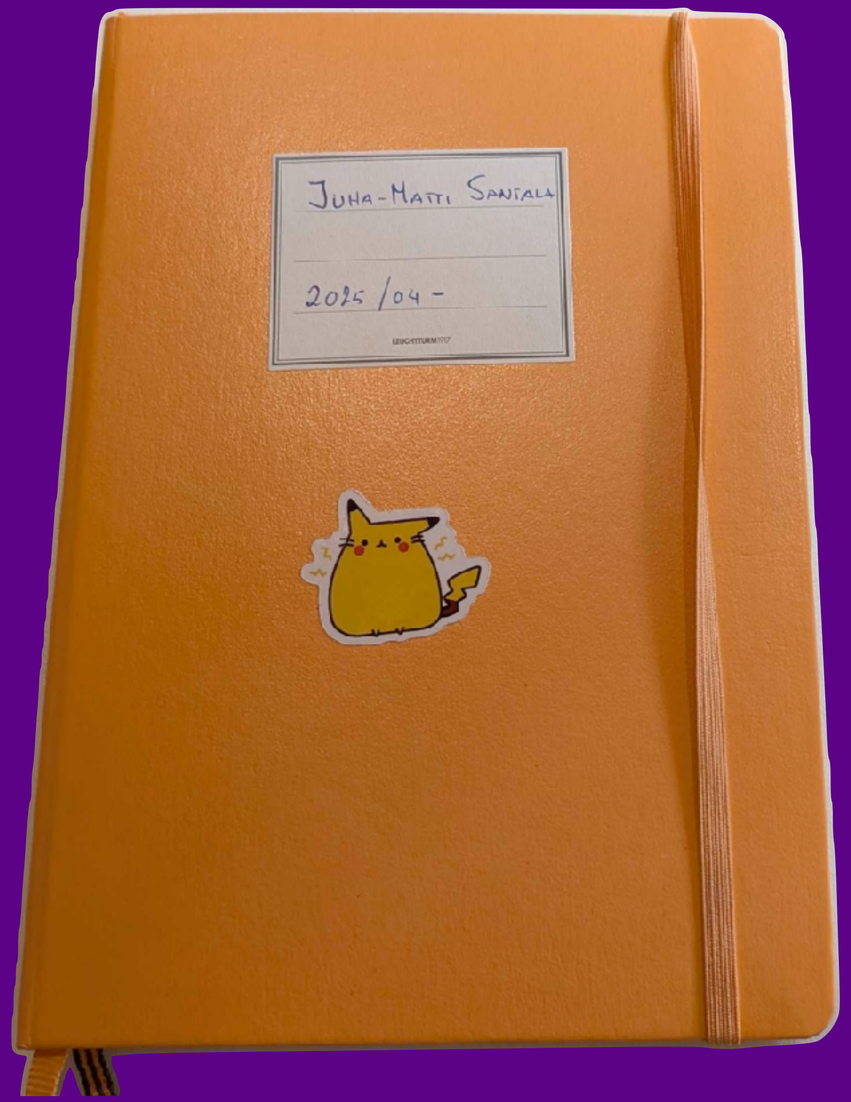


Notes

- Patricia briefed everyone on the new feature
  - We're redesigning the search functionality to give power users more granular search options
- David has worked on initial UI designs
  - I brought up how it's important to indicate to the user whether a search resulted in an empty result set vs not finishing yet.
- We talked through accessibility considerations
- [x] I promised to set up a call with Delilah for Friday to talk shop and make an implementation plan and who will focus on what.
  - 2026-11-27 Search functionality implementation plan meeting with Delilah

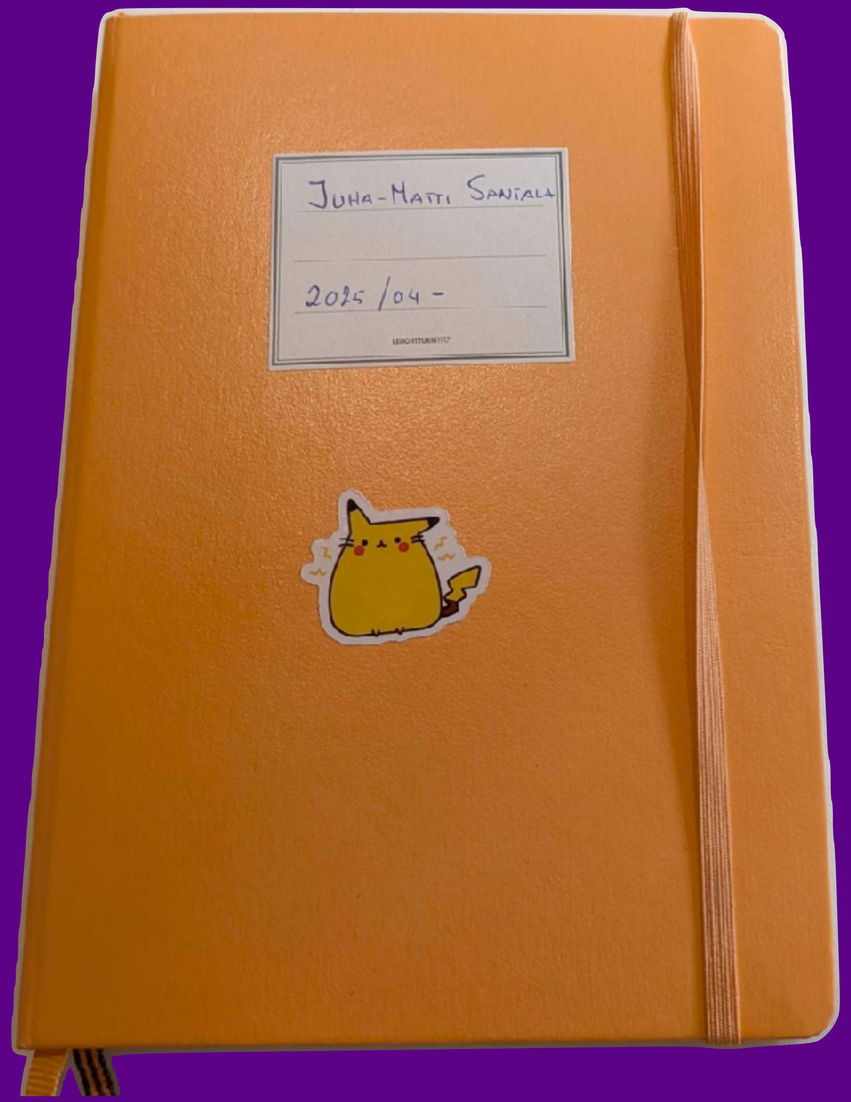


A mini-CRM built into meeting notes



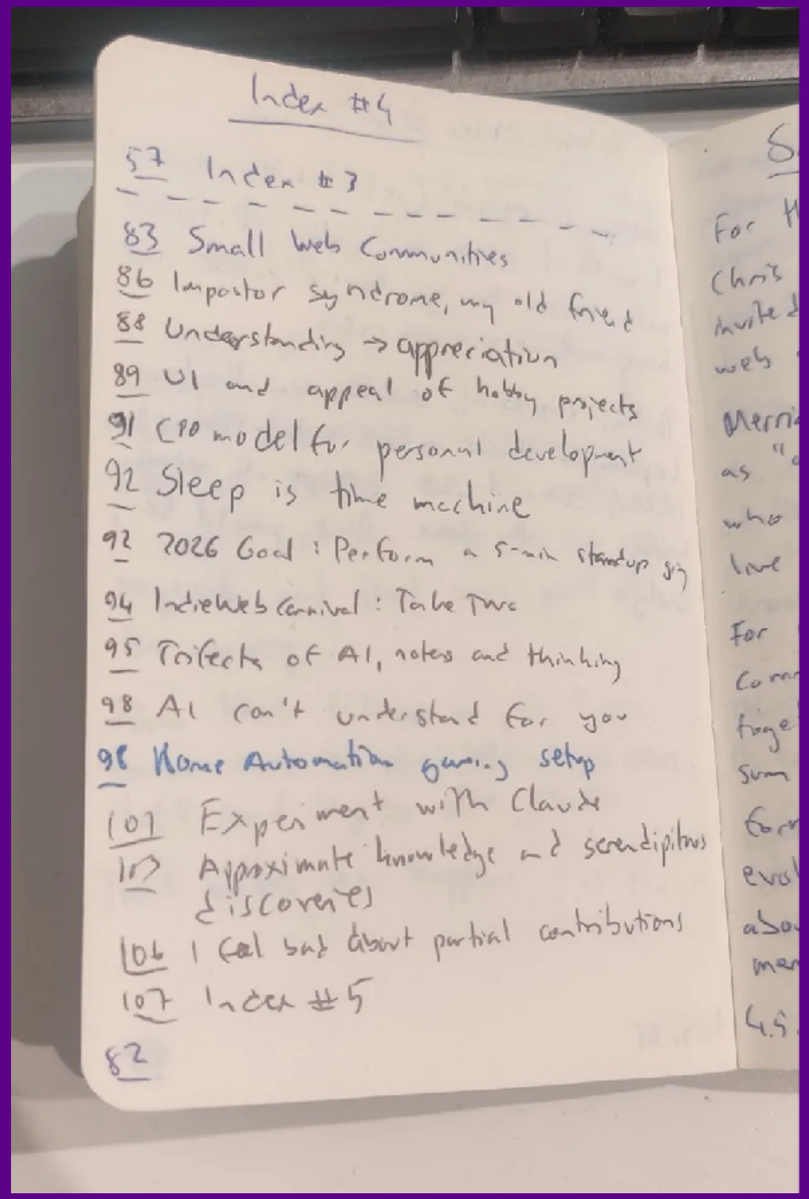
My most important tool is my notebook

https://hamatti.org/posts/as-a-developer-my-most-important-tools-are-a-pen-and-a-notebook/



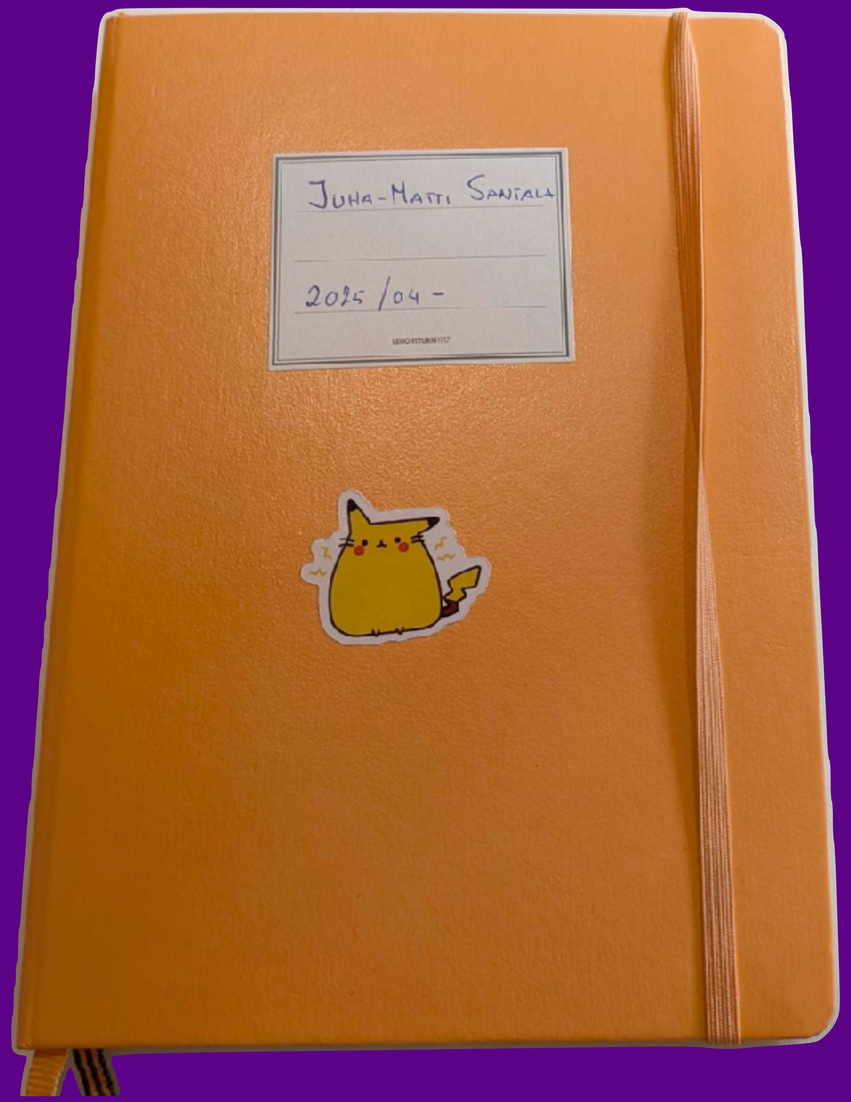
Pen and paper are the best interface to my brain

https://hamatti.org/posts/handwriting-is-slow-which-gives-me-time-to-think/



Rolling index for paper notebooks

https://notes.hamatti.org/note-taking/rolling-index



Double-processing (analogue to digital) is not a feature, not a bug

https://notes.hamatti.org/writing/mini-essays/double-processing-information-for-notes

Writing makes me a better developer

> *When I write a blog post, I'm focusing on explaining things to others. When I then pick up an example from my code, I often see things I didn't see before.*
>
> *Many times I've written "this could have been done better by X", only to realize I should just refactor that into the code directly and showcase that in the blog post.*

https://hamatti.org/posts/blogging-is-my-new-favorite-refactoring-tool/

Happy note-taking!