

How to Use Demo Magic

Adrian Kosmaczewski

2022-11-25

My colleague Tobru¹ recently pointed me to demo-magic², and I now seriously wonder how could I ever do a live demo without this. The description of the project says it all:

A handy shell script that enables you to write repeatable demos in a bash environment.

The idea is as simple as this: instead of having to type commands while doing demos or recording videos, just create a script that will:

1. Write the command for you on the screen;
2. Wait for you to press <ENTER>;
3. Execute the command live for you.

And not only that, but it's written in 100% shell script: just save the file locally, and make sure you have pv³ installed (`sudo apt install pv` should do the trick on Debian, Ubuntu and similar.)

Then write a script as follows:

```
#!/usr/bin/env bash

# Include the magic
. demo-magic.sh

# Clear the screen before starting
clear

# Print and execute a simple command
pe "echo 'hello world'"

# Wait until the user presses enter
wait

# Print and execute immediately
pei "bat my-demo.sh"
```

¹<https://mstdn.social/@tobru>

²<https://github.com/paxtonhare/demo-magic>

³<https://ivarch.com/programs/pv.shtml>

Save the script as a file named `my-demo.sh` (well, any name, really) and just `bash my-demo.sh` to get started. Press `<ENTER>` to print the command, and press it again to execute it. As simple as possible, and very useful when demoing stuff on a terminal.

But you can do much more with `demo-magic.sh`:

- Personalize the prompt;
- Simulate network connections even if offline (whaaat);
- Run hidden commands, not shown to the public;
- Add timeouts to the `wait` command;
- Get help on your `my-demo.sh` script using the `-h` argument;
- Type your own commands, if needed, using the `cmd` instruction.

Simply put, this is a godsend for all the DevRel people reading this. Couple it with `asciinema`⁴⁵ and you're in for a treat.

```
{{< asciicast src="demo.cast" >}}
```

Update, 2022-11-26: The movie in this page is embedded using the `cljoly/gohugo-asciinema`⁶ Hugo module created by Clément Joly⁷.

⁴<https://asciinema.org/>

⁵`asciinema` is another gem worthy of its own blog post, because srsly. It's so awesome I don't know where to start.

⁶<https://github.com/cljoly/gohugo-asciinema>

⁷<https://cj.rs/>