

EPISODE 12

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:01.0] SS: Hello Hackers, thanks a lot for joining us for another episode of the Hacking UI podcast where we hack our way through design development and entrepreneurship. I'm Sagi Shrieber

[0:00:09.0] DT: I'm David Tintner.

[0:00:10.5] SS: We're your hosts and today we're going to let you in on some of our own personal discussions about Hacking UI.

[0:00:15.7] DT: Yeah, in this discussion, we'll describe some of our methods to consume massive content and will give our recommendations for our favorite books and podcasts. Oh, and we'll also talk about what we learned through the first week of the Side Project Accelerator. We'll also share some of the tools we used and the tips we got along the way from our friends and mentors.

[0:00:30.6] SS: But just before we begin, we have some exciting news for you. We're actually in San Francisco right now and we'll be hosting two meetups this week; on Wednesday August 24th and Thursday August 25th 2016, worth adding.

[0:00:45.3] DT: Yeah, our first meetup will be a micro workshop to start off your personal brand. The stuff we'll talk about is taken from our Side Project Accelerator. This will be a part lecture, part hands on experience in which we'll discuss our philosophy of audience driven product development, the giver versus taker theory and the techniques we use to create our content on Hacking UI. This session will be interactive and by the end of the night you'll be on your way and have the tools to publish your first article and build your personal brand as a side project.

[0:01:10.5] SS: Yeah, and the second meetup is about scaling a design team so if you've been listening to this podcast, you're going to want to be part of it. We're going to go into all the insights that we've learned from entering the world's top design leaders and also talk about what work for us with our team and Similar Web.

[0:01:27.1] DT: We'll have all the details in our show notes so simply visit hackingui.com for details. Now, on to the show, Sagi?

[0:01:27.5] SS: All right, let's get hacking.

[EPISODE]

[0:01:40.9] DT: Okay, Sagi, what's up? How are you doing?

[0:01:44.0] SS: Good Dave, how are you doing?

[0:01:47.5] DT: We're like a month into working on Hacking UI full time and it's pretty cool right? What would you say?

[0:01:51.9] SS: Yeah, it was a crazy month and we've done a lot of work and yeah, I can't wait to start talking about that with our audience.

[0:02:00.9] DT: Definitely been a month of changes, crazy month like you said, busy all the time, a lot of new shit going on. Why don't you tell everyone what we're up to lately, what we've been working on most?

[0:02:13.0] SS: I guess this past month has been all about the Side Project Accelerator and if you're hearing this, you probably got our emails and so you probably know that we're doing this and we just launched the Side Project Accelerator. The first lesson came out two days ago and we're totally psyched about it, we've got 15 people in this batch and so far seems great. Everybody's on board, everybody's engaged and we learned so much and I think Dave, that's what we want to share with everyone, right?

[0:02:41.3] DT: Definitely, the first thing that we both said to each other when we were able to leave Similar Web and work on Hacking UI full time is we said, "Wow, we want to help other people do this too." So that's what we're doing now right? Literally, the very first thing, we had ideas for other products and other things we wanted to build and we said no. Both of us

immediately agreed, the first thing we're doing is we want to help other people learn how to do this too.

[0:03:02.2] SS: I and guess yeah, that's what we want to do, we want to help other people do this too. Let me switch this back to you David, what do you think about us now talking about doing this going down to entrepreneurship road and talking less about design development?

[0:03:18.2] DT: It's an interesting point, I mean, we are Hacking UI, it's even in the name. We started Hacking UI because we're a blog for talking about designers, developers, the experience between them, the relationship between them, how to improve that and but I think what we found and why we want to start talking about entrepreneurship so much now is something pretty natural to all designers and developers. Whether you're working at a large company or you're freelancing, there comes a point where you're a creator of digital products.

I know I felt it, I know you felt it and I know that a lot of the members of the Side Project Accelerator obviously felt it the same way but you're creating digital products, you're making them for other people. Eventually you say, "Wait, I want either complete control over the creative process, or I want to benefit financially from the thing that I'm creating. I want to create things and see them in the hands of users and I want to be rewarded for that. How do I get rewarded for what I've built?"

So it's kind of the natural progression I think for creators of digital products to start thinking about this. How they can be rewarded, how they can reap the financial benefits and that's kind of where exactly how we got to this path and how we started talking about entrepreneurship.

[0:04:24.0] SS: Yeah, and actually this story relates to an interview I had with Itay Adam, it was for my Hebrew podcast. So sorry everyone if you're not Hebrew speakers but if you are, check out my Hebrew podcast, it's called [inaudible]. So he was talking about the storytellers being the people that are actually making the product and you know, once you are the maker, the doer, the one that writes code or designs and thinks about the product and the storytelling part.

So I guess yeah, you're creating digital products, you're actually crafting them yourself with your own two hands, and there comes a time where you just want to do it yourself. Now, we came

through a different kind of route because we had the blog. We developed an audience and we started launching mini products into that crowd, so what do you think maybe the products that we have going on in the future, what do you think about that? When are we going to see products from ourselves coming out?

[0:05:19.1] DT: The Side Project Accelerator very much is a product, it's definitely, it's our first product that we're flat out selling to end users if you will. Now, it's not a digital product in the sense of like something that's completely automatic where users sign up. We do have those on deck and we have those lined up and we want to go that direction and again, we just were both so drawn into Side Project Accelerator and helping other people to follow the dreams and complete the dreams of their own side projects, this was like the first thing that we chose to do.

We have digital products lined up and we definitely want to build them in the future and I think that again, this is just what happens to designers and developers. I don't see any way that you're working on this projects for so long that you don't want to be the one who is, like you said, the storyteller of the product, the crafter of this product and also, take it the whole way. That's what this is about, it's like from start to finish, taking it from the idea, the conception, the design, the development but it doesn't end there.

You have to then, okay, iterate with users and again it doesn't even end there. Then you have to market it and you have to get it to users and then you have to collect money for this so that you can keep going and doing it again so I think that's what this is all about and I think that's why we're talking about — we're interested in sharing what we do now. So we're interested right now in just that, in funding and finding ways to make money to continue building and creating the things that we love to do. So for us, it was just totally natural progression, I think a lot of people can relate to that.

[0:06:47.7] SS: Yeah, I think actually another point that people can relate to is also a natural kind of thing is like the passive income part because through our blog, we discovered what passive income actually is, you work and you build something and it makes you money while you're just in your full time day job. So in the Hacking UI case it was commercials and ads and that's what got us to a point where we could actually leave our day jobs and this passive income

thing is something very interesting which I guess you and I are willing to explore now, really want to explore and stretch the limits of it in order for us to have a better lifestyle.

[0:07:22.6] DT: Definitely. I think actually it's important to talk about what that really means or at least how I see passive income and I think how you see it too. Tell me what you think on this but passive income as we see it does not mean that we're like making money and not working. Actually, in fact, I think we're working harder that we've ever worked before, working our asses off here.

How I see passive income is we have several different channels right now that make us money and that we take in revenue through. As we get a new channel, we kind of optimize it, improve it, setup a better process, automate things and this is what we do with the newsletter. We got it to a point that the newsletter, we can work on it, we can get the content and do it fairly quickly and it makes money each week even if one of us you know, if you go on vacation next week, newsletter will go up. If I'm on vacation, when I'm at Burning Man, the newsletter will go on.

This is passive income, it doesn't mean that we don't have, we don't work or we don't work hard. It means that we've setup a channel of revenue that is basically is very automated, easy to maintain and the income will keep coming in next week. Now what we want to do is setup more and more of these channels.

[0:08:30.0] SS: Okay, so let's give something out to the people that are hearing this. What channels do we have going on right now at the moment and after that I think a great example would be to give how we worked in the first lesson for the Side Project Accelerator because that's like setting up a channel, we worked our asses off like you said, we worked our asses off for the past couple of days. I want to get into that. Just before that, what channels do we have going on today in Hacking UI?

[0:08:54.9] DT: Okay, let's start from the beginning. Our first thing that we did was the blog and almost immediately after was the weekly newsletter. Now, we always use the blog not for the sake of making money. We looked at the bloggers just kind of like where we can pour out our thoughts and more for building an audience and collecting emails and the newsletter we used for making money. So the newsletter we'd say is our first channel right?

The newsletter at the beginning, it took us probably like 15 hours of work a week to put together a single issue, maybe even more between both of us. Now it's down to something like three hours or so per week that we can get out an issue and it's making more money. So this is our first channel, I would say that this is the most stable, most optimized channel that is now completely passive.

[0:09:35.5] SS: Yes, also, just to say now, how do we make it now like three hours? Now it involves a super complicated script for Google docs, it involves a chrome extension, it involves a digital app thought leaders, which we can get links through and it involves a VA, a virtual assistant that works for us and she's amazing.

[0:09:59.7] DT: Yeah, I'm kind of lying when I say it's three hours, I mean three hours for us, she's also working her ass off on this thing and it's taking way more than that. But yeah, we've setup the system that for the two of us, it's down to that because of the things that we built and we've automated and we've hired. So that's our first channel.

Our second channel that we've started recently and you're all listening to is the podcast. Podcast we sell ads in the podcast and this is kind of like a revenue stream that's starting to come in nicely but I think it's definitely not as stable as a newsletter and I say that because we're still working on exactly getting in to our routine, right? We want to be at the point where we have a weekly podcast where ads are lined up for the next four months ahead of time and the show's coming out every week, recorded correctly, edited correctly. We're getting there right?

You'll see on Facebook soon, we're uploading a picture of the new studio we're recording in which is awesome with the new equipment and these sound proof walls so we're getting there, we've upped the equipment, we got the good mics, we got an editor in place but it's still not completely optimized and also the way we're selling ads is we're selling ads but it's not — we're at the point right now where ads are sold like maybe two, three, four weeks in advance where we would like it to be like the newsletter where they're sold four months in advance.

[0:11:10.4] SS: Quick tip for anyone who wants to start their own podcast like really quick tip.

[0:11:15.3] DT: Do it, just do it. Seriously? This is one of the most important thing I think I've learned while working with you Sagi is that you have to do it. The first time, accept it that the first time you do anything is going to be complete garbage and this is something that was really hard for me to accept. I remember when you first came to me and you said, "I want to do a podcast." I was like, "Come on Sagi, we're doing this, we're doing that, who cares about a stupid podcast? No, we're not starting a podcast now." You said, "I don't care, I want to do a podcast now."

Like a little kid you're like a little kid, "I've got to do a podcast now." "Okay, god damn it Sagi, fine, we'll do a podcast." We started a podcast and the first episode I remember we have Billy Kylie, I'm like, "Sagi, we didn't research enough, we didn't get back into his history," and you're like, "It's okay man, he's on the show, we got it, we'll interview him." Like, "No, no, no." I'm coming from the journalism background of wanting to prepare for an interview like two weeks in advance and know everything about this guy and everything.

And you're like, "Dude, it's fine. Don't worry." So we did the interview and okay, it ended up being actually I think a decent first episode, tons of room for improvement but it was actually way better than I expected. But the point is, my tip for anyone who wants to start a podcast or wants to start anything for that matter is just do it, take the Sagi approach and you'll improve it and make it better in the future.

[0:12:25.7] SS: Thank you D. Yeah, one of the things like our first episode with Billy Kylie, it was even before I had my Hebrew podcast. That was like our first podcast episode ever and yeah, so this episode, we recorded with our regular earphones from the iPhone, connected to Skype. We really quickly just found out how to record Skype calls, it's like the Skype call recorder. I emailed Billy Kylie because I knew him not fairly well but good enough to send an email out.

Then when we started the call, I said, "Okay, how are you going to record this? Okay, Audacity. So a free app called Audacity, that was like a thing also, like 10 minutes before the call, how are we going to edit it? Audacity. Then editing it in Audacity, I did that the first time, I didn't know audacity so I just got into like a few YouTube tutorials and learned audacity. So the first episode is edited poorly in a way but I was like, "Okay, I see most podcast need a sound at the

beginning like a music intro,” so I just got quickly into audio jungle and bought like a \$5 sound and I was like, “Looks pretty good, okay sound.”

Yeah, we need to, like it’s a great tip you gave out, just fucking do it and if you have an idea for something, just do it and it’s okay if it’s with lousy equipment, you don’t need all the high gear, we bought these great microphones only like I think three episodes in or something like that. It’s okay.

[0:13:51.8] DT: I want to say again like I know it sounds super cliché when we’re living in San Francisco, you heard it nonstop from everyone in the startup world is like, just build — what’s the Facebook slogan? Like build fast and break stuff or something like that, move fast and break stuff. It sounds super cliché, so I’m not coming at it from that. I heard the clichés before and I know everyone talks this and this is agile, go quickly okay?

Yeah, it’s like burnt into your brain in the startup world. But that’s not what I’m talking about. You truly actually operate in this way and that’s something that I’m learning how to do and I think I also try to bring the balance to it because sometimes this way is a bit dangerous, especially when you’re trying to run a business but I really respect that and I’ve learned a lot from that kind of mindset.

Back to the revenue channels that we have. We talked about the podcast, that’s like kind of our second one that’s coming in right now. One thing that we decided to do which was kind of like a progression from the newsletter was at the resources page to the Hacking UI. This is cool, the resources page I think is really useful, what we do is we take some of our best links, things that we shared in the newsletter but the newsletter is kind of, it goes out that week and email and that’s it after that it’s done.

We take the best things for things that are actual resources that are not timely, that are, you can come back to and use it, we round them up, put them on the website in the resources page and we’re improving that constantly and now we’re selling like a few ad spots in the resources page which this became a nice revenue channel as well, we’ve also started adding events, which we’re selling a few events spots. We’re also including the best events that we find and then every once in a while we get an event ad sale too. So this has been good.

[0:15:32.1] SS: Okay, D. We mentioned the resources, we mentioned the news and we mentioned the podcast. What else do we have?

[0:15:37.5] DT: Okay, so our latest channel that we're building and this is like one of the first things that I think, it is the first thing that we've done that's been very thought out, calculated for our standards that is, for other people to know, that's the Side Project Accelerator, right? Tell me Sagi, going back to how I talked about your manmade method of just doing stuff, right? I want to ask you about the first lesson for the Side Project Accelerator okay? Tell me what was going through your head when we had to record that first lesson and get that going.

[0:16:10.0] SS: Wow, I want to say one thing, you know Grant Cardon and his book the *10X Rule* says, "Successful people just commit to things first and then carry them out." He says, "Just fucking commit to them and use that opportunity."

[0:16:24.8] DT: Do not even try to play this off as like you just came up with that philosophy now Sagi, you've been doing this for years. Just because you bring in like some successful author or some well-known book and pretend like he said it. No, no, no Sagi.

[0:16:39.1] SS: No, when he said it, it made total sense with me. If anybody would have asked me — so the first lesson went out this Monday evening. The first lesson went out and we started working on the lesson, so we had the syllabus ready that we knew what the lesson was going to be about. But if you asked me on Tuesday night, "Sagi, how are you going to carry out that lesson?" I would have said, "I think video?"

[0:17:06.8] DT: No, you mean from the very technical aspect, we knew we were going to record a video but you mean, camera, editing, software, what was going to be inside of it, right?

[0:17:14.4] SS: Totally, we had no idea how to record a video, we never recorded any video, we had no experience with that, we have no vlog or anything like that and I mean, I haven't touched a video editing software for like five years. We have no idea how to — we didn't even know where to host it, should we do it on YouTube somehow? Or Wistia or Vimeo? And also building

the back end for this kind of stuff, we're going to have members, they would need access to the video, they're paid member, we're going to do that.

So I'll just tell the story, okay? We didn't know that and we didn't plan ahead and because it's now, we tried to plan ahead but we have so much going on. We worked our asses off so that when we got to Wednesday, we had kind of like pretty much the outline of the lesson but we didn't have the whole lesson written down. We had slides, you started Google slides right?

With Google slides, you put in some slides and I didn't even touch it yet and Wednesday morning I call up my friend Ran Segall who is an amazing video blog on YouTube called Flux. You have to check it out. If you're a designer, you will love that really. Thanks a lot Ran and I called Ran and said, "Ran, what camera do you use for your video blog? How do you shoot? What else do you need besides the camera?" He was like, he was laughing at me at first but then he gave me all this great tips.

[0:18:38.9] DT: It's like the most condescending thing you could ask someone, it's like coming up to a developer and being like, "Oh yeah all that code stuff you're writing, writing that it's just like a bunch of letters, right? You could do that."

[0:18:52.1] SS: Yeah, I mean again, I knew if we recorded the first lesson it might suck but I wanted to do it as professional as possible. So I knew you were going to be serious about this and we have more episodes and we already committed to carrying out, so I said, we might as well buy a decent camera and setup a nice place. I already kind of knew it's going to be in your house although you didn't know it and you tried to convince me a few times to go to other places to record but I said, "No, no, your house is good enough. Your apartment's cool."

So Ran gave me a great camera but turns out they don't sell it anymore because they stopped manufacturing it. So I had to go to the store and then I just said, "Okay, fuck, I'm going to do some research online," couldn't find anything and then while you say at the same coffee shop, we started in the morning with, you wrote your part of the lesson and I just went to the store to the camera store in Tel Aviv and I just asked the person in the counter like, "Listen, so I need a camera, kind of like this camera," and I give the model that Ran gave me.

He said, “Okay, this one yeah, we don’t manufacture it anymore, people don’t manufacture this. Here’s something that you might — here’s a few that are kind of like similar.” So I took the one that I thought was most, the two that were most relevant. I called Ran again, interrupted him in the middle of the day and like, Ran you hear? Your camera, they don’t manufacture it anymore, so do you know of any other cameras?”

Then he gave me, he told me, “Yeah, word up in the video blogging world that this camera is cool,” and I’m like, “Oh great, that’s exactly one of the few that I chose is relevant.” So I said, “Okay, I’m taking this one. Ran, what else do I need?” So he said, “A tripod, and this and that,” and I took his advice and I bought whatever I could that is relevant from his advice.

[0:20:35.7] DT: Okay, so we got the camera, I remember you rushing back like Wednesday with the camera in hand and then how did we — tell everyone how we went about recording and editing also.

[0:20:45.0] SS: Yeah, so about recording the lesson itself, I was like, are we going to do this like we’re talking and standing up or is it going to be screen cast or what software I’m going to use? I consulted with Ran about this as well and I also called up our friend Lior Frenkel who is also a mentor in the Side Project Accelerator like this guy is also — Ran and Lior kind of work together but Lior totally has his own thing going as well, he’s got a new video blog, he’s got an amazing podcast and he’s got a great blog in Hebrew for the moment and he’s also, Ran and Lior around a nuSchool for freelancers to tell them how to run their business.

So Lior told me that the best thing would probably be for us to use a decent camera and just record ourselves and then put slides on top of it and he said, “You can make the slides and sketch, it would be best, put some slides while you gather talking.” I was like, “Oh, that makes sense.” He said, “Yeah, you can use iMovie if you want, it’s that simple.” Okay, cool.

Then after I come back with the camera, we went to your house, we setup the whole thing, we started messing with the tripod and everything, so again, we have no idea and Lior gave me one great advice. Lior told me, “Listen, you have a good camera, great, now make sure you have as much lighting as possible, that’s like the most important rule, as much lighting as possible.”

So that's why we opened all the windows and we opened those lights in the room and I remember you and I just looking at the wall behind us and it's like, that's kind of blank, "D, get the Hacking UI sign." We brought nails and a hammer and we hung the Hacking UI sign behind us, that was all last moment and you're like, "Okay, great, now we need to finish writing the lesson." You wrote your part, I wrote my part, that was like the end of Wednesday I think and then we're like, shit, that's long.

[0:22:30.8] DT: Yeah, so we didn't know exactly — all right, backing up a second, we knew exactly what we wanted to be inside of it, we were very clear of the syllabus. Like we knew their content, we wanted to deliver to people in the program but we didn't know is how to handle it technically, how to actually execute it. I think it's an important point. We committed and we knew what we wanted to deliver, we just didn't know how to deliver it. That's what we found out along the way. As far as, I want to say like another thing too, this is pretty big benchmark for us because we got past how to do lessons, how to do the membership program and the other thing that we did this week that we wouldn't know how to do was the crowd cast.

[0:23:06.2] SS: Yeah, I'll get into that in a bit but I think it's important also to say, yeah, we didn't know how to carry anything out technically, we came from zero. I have some video editing background because I was in design school and learned it but zero experience. We knew our shit, we know what we were meant to deliver in this lesson. It's very important. That's why we could write this lesson like nothing, we just sat down and like, we didn't have to think, just like everything, we'd spit it out on a Google doc and by the way, that's when we decided also to move from a back when Lior gave the lesson tip that we should just stand up and read and talk.

So we moved from Google slideshow, we decide to move in to Google docs and just throw the whole thing down. You wrote your part, I wrote mine, we spent the whole Thursday and almost all Sunday cutting down and taking out parts which weren't necessary in rearranging parts and making it as short as possible because we said, "Okay, now it's time for us to make it perfect for the people that are going to be consuming this and the people in the Side Project Accelerator, need a short lesson to consume."

[0:24:11.3] DT: Yeah, definitely. I mean, one of the things that we're going to be demanding from people in the Side Project Accelerator is to watch the lesson, do the assignment, listen to

the mentor session each week, attend the Q&A. So we said like we can't ask them to devote an hour to the lesson and an hour to the crowd cast, we have to keep everything as short and to the point as possible, there's no room to mess around with any sort of fluff.

So I think the first lesson, finally when we put it out was sharp, every single thing was just tack, to the point. I think the members really appreciated that. We got really good feedback on the first lesson and I think like it was a success overall. I want to say like, something that I noticed with a lot of people on the program, I remember asking you when we were trying to define who we wanted in the Side Project Accelerator, right? We said, "Is it only for designers? No, it's only for the designers. Is there only for developers? No, it's not only for developers. So who is it for, right?"

We said, "It's for people who are not afraid of technology, people who are not afraid to get their hands dirty," and I'm actually really proud of ourselves for how we handled the video editing, the audio editing and the crowd cast, everything we've been doing lately because we're actually I feel like a little bit walking the walk here, where that's exactly the point is that we had a message, we wanted to deliver, we knew the content and we both had no idea how we're going to get it done technically, but neither of us was really afraid of it. I wasn't worried at some point that we wouldn't be able to do it.

Yeah, I was stressed because we had a lot of work to do and we had a limited amount of time but there was never a thought in my head that was like, "Oh, we won't be able to execute this." I see that from a lot of people in the program. Actually from almost everyone in the program right now, I'm seeing that they have that mindset too and I'm really happy about that. I think it's important for not just entrepreneurship, I think it's a really good mindset for life to think that you can deliver something and you can execute the technical side of it, don't worry about that.

Worry about the message, the content, what you're actually want to share and what you want to deliver to people and you'll figure out how to actually technically get it done.

[0:26:05.1] SS: Yeah, I think it's a great mindset. Everything's possible, technical side of things are possible just like you have a great product in mind. Yeah, that Sunday just before I had to run off for the train, we recorded the lesson to takes and second take was a successful one and

it was also, we had a challenge because we needed to read from the screen, so we were like, “How are we going to read the Google doc from the screen while not sounding like we’re reading it and not seeing in the camera that we’re looking at the screen?”

You quickly downloaded an app for the iPhone to control the mouse and also we had the tripod so we messed with the tripod but the tripod no matter what, it seemed like we’re looking sideways because we’re actually looking at the screen when the camera is by the screen and not on the screen itself. We didn’t have a teleprompter or anything like that. Luckily, I bought also a GoPro holder for bikes, we just put that on the top of the screen of the monitor, the computer, put the camera on that and that held the camera just at the top of the screen of the computer. That way it looked like we were actually reading off the screen but it doesn’t look like you’re reading up the screen. It looks like we’re looking at the camera that was a hell of a hack, proud of that.

Then, we recorded two takes and luckily for us, we managed to do the second take I got to the train at the last moment that evening and then at night time we both worked, you worked started building the back end for the membership area, also we didn’t have an experience with but you got just into it, just jumped into the water and I did all the slides in sketch like Lior suggest and it was amazing working with sketch because I could actually design nice slides because I didn’t have to mess with all the shit that Google slides just can do topography and all that. So it was really fun.

On Monday morning, we got started editing, I downloaded, I didn’t want to mess with iMovie, I just downloaded Final Cut because I knew I had worked with it five years ago and I said, “Okay, I want to get back into it,” and it was amazing, I really enjoy it. Went through a few YouTube tutorials to refresh my mind but anyone by the way, if any of you want to do video editing, Final Cut is dead simple and really with a few YouTube tutorials it can really jump into the water over there. Really easy to edit videos in Final Cut.

So put the slides, slap the slides on and then we found some music, right? We did some research, found an intro music and that’s it, we got a lesson, we put a lesson together and you finished the back end and that was amazing. We had a, I think a great lesson, a great first lesson and then we had the crowd cast with Jeffrey Zeldman, it was the same day and the

crowd cast, it was our first time dealing with this kind of live session, webinar kind of thing as well. We heard of crowd cast, Paul Jarvis recommended it to us, thanks Paul. It actually just worked. Yeah.

[0:28:54.2] DT: Yeah, for this one too, I was worried about the technical difficulties if anything happened and actually we tested it out a lot before and there were some technical difficulties. I would say, for anyone who is planning on doing a webinar and any sort of live streaming event, you need to test it before. I'm glad we did and the first time like weird stuff happened. The first time we opened it up, it just didn't work, the sound didn't work on one computer and it worked on chrome on an other computer.

Anyway, we just started to mess with it for a while and we got it to a point where things were working and luckily when Jeffrey Zeldman jumped on the session, everything was great and I'm happy we also recorded it with our own mics and we asked him to do the same to record the audio to have better quality in Quicktime while the CrowdCast was running. Yeah, I think we, I think I'm really sitting here kind of like feeling proud of ourselves at the moment because we got through this first week and we kind of did it.

Now systems are in place, all of the question marks we had we've overcome. Now it's a point of we just need to rinse and repeat. So I want to shift gears here a little bit Sagi and talk about something that I've seen a lot of in the first week of Side Project Accelerator, we have this awesome Slack group that we opened up and I never could have imagined how much participation there would be in a Slack group, it's been amazing. If I'm not in the Slack group for a few hours I come back and I missed like 25 messages or something like this and people are really getting into it and really communicating with each other.

We opened these two channels, one of them is called Good Podcast and one of them is called Good Reads. We asked in these channels, we kind of opened them up on a whim, we didn't know what would happen with them but you and I like to always kind of bounce good podcast episodes, we listen to new things we're finding back and forth and good books we're reading. So we said, let's open this channels up to other people and hopefully get some, at least be able, I think I thought that would be kind of sharing the stuff that we were reading and hopefully they would share like a couple of things but it's been amazing.

So people are sharing tons of articles, tons of podcast and also all of their hacks for consuming content and you actually wrote about this before about how you kind of hacked the way that you listen and read and consume content. So, let's talk about that how it's important for people to consume lots of content and how you can go about that and consume content in the busy lives that we have.

[0:31:06.7] SS: Cool, great topic and just wrapping up the thing about the video, like you said, now this is another channel for us that we put in place and now we can, like you said, rinse and repeat. Really do it over and over again and we got everything setup, so that's that. Going back to consuming content and I think that's important for every professional especially in the digital era that we're in right now, any designer, any developer, things are moving so fast, technologies are changing rapidly fast. I think that everyone should read and consume content, a lot of content.

[0:31:41.3] DT: Okay, once you've accepted that you should read and consume content, it sounds nice and all but what are you supposed to do? Just waste like hours of your day doing it? Come on, there's so much content out there.

[0:31:49.3] SS: Yeah, so like you said, I wrote an article about it, I'll post this on Hacking UI as well, published in a Webydo blog and so there are tricks for consuming a mass amount of content. The first thing is recently I know both of us have recently I'm stuck in — a year ago we started hearing more, more than reading. Both of us started reading articles so we mark them in Pocket an app called Pocket and you have a Chrome extension for Pocket, so if you have an article on your computer you just click and it saves it for you and then you can open it in your app, in your iPhone or Android device. Then Pocket has a read out loud feature and then you just like, you can basically read out loud the article that you saved which is an amazing thing.

[0:32:35.1] DT: the quality is good enough? I mean, it's pretty robotic right? What do you think about that?

[0:32:39.2] SS: I use iPhone and the basic iOS read out loud sound, a bit robotic a bit but super clear and really nice.

[0:32:49.9] DT: Okay. All right, give us some more tips how you're kind of hacking this because most people, I know I was thinking before I started getting into this kind of method that all right, what am I supposed to do just sit around on my couch and listen to books out loud? When do I have time for this?

[0:33:03.9] SS: All right, so like we talked about using Pocket to read out loud articles and I just want to mention podcast and books. You introduced me to Audible, I didn't know Audible. We'll put everything in the show notes by the way. Audible and so it's depth that you can read, buy books on amazon with and then hear them out in your device and podcasts. We've got amazing podcasts, I've also got podcast recommendation list, I can put this in the show notes.

The thing about hearing is that you can do it anytime and anyplace. You can do it on your bike, in your car, while you're cooking, before you go to sleep, you can do it almost at any time, you can consume knowledge. I think everybody should be thirsty for that knowledge and should consume as much as possible because if you surround yourself by very intelligent people that talk to you in the years all day long, you will get smarter for sure.

[0:33:55.7] DT: I know for me, the time that I get to most consume content is when I'm walking the dog. I take out the dog like in the morning and the evening, sometimes three times a day, maybe 20 minutes each time and this used to be kind of like dead time, if you will. I was walking around, it's nice, okay. What I do now is I just carry a little apple ear pods in my pocket wherever I go, I always have them with me and I have my iPhone with me and then I go downstairs, I walk the dog and I listen to either it's a podcast, an audible book or read to text but I always put up the effect to play back at least one and a half time speed.

I'm trying to push it faster and faster so now I'm up to almost two times speed. Sometimes it's a little too fast though. I can listen to something, a 10 minute podcast episode or something like this in only five minutes. If I have 20 minutes for walking the dog, I'm getting through normal podcast episode is half an hour or sometimes an hour but only 20 minutes I'm getting through an episode sometimes an episode and a half.

[0:34:53.3] SS: Yeah, actually it's also an amazing hack. You're right, I mean, I also hear that I can — we both use Overcast for podcasts on our iPhone, I really recommend it because Overcast has the feature of not only going one X or one and a half X or two X but also it has the option of a noise silence, noise shortener or silence cancellation, whatever. If you have like dead wave lines in the soundtrack, it just shortens them for you. The episode plays faster.

It also has an amazing voice booster so if you're in your bike or in the car and then you can hear it louder. Overcast, free app, amazing, really nice to use for a podcasts. In Audible, also you can listen faster, most books are read pretty slow so you must listen faster and also there's a trick for listening in YouTube even, if you're watching YouTube videos, there is a trick, we will post it in the show notes of how to listen to YouTube videos faster.

[0:35:52.8] DT: Just to kind of give like a summary of the trick, basically it involves just opening up with dev tools in the browser and putting in a command to change the play speed in javascript. So it's pretty simple, we'll share exactly how to do it but it's a nice trick to kind of also hack the experience there.

[0:36:09.4] SS: Yeah, those are the hacks. I basically just listen at a faster speed, consume content with your earphones and not with reading because reading is slow most of the time, don't have time when you're at work, you should be at work and evening time you're not in front of the computer all the time. It's hard to read in an iPhone. So consuming it by listening is a great way I think.

[0:36:30.5] DT: Actually, one of the members of the Side Project Accelerator gave a really interesting method that he uses for consuming a lot of content. He actually, when he is at home or when he does have time to read, he actually buys the hard copy of the book itself and listens to the audible version of the book on two and a half speed so he's following along in the text but flying through it because he has it in his ear, going super-fast and what he does is he just take notes inside of the book itself to kind of remember important things.

When I heard this I said, "Okay, this guy, we thought we hacked it, this is the hack." It's been actually amazing listening to other methods of people have for hacking content and anyone

who, all of our listeners please share your methods because we're constantly trying to improve it and find ways to consume more content faster and when I heard this on, I just said wow, that is crazy, he says he's reading about something like a 40, 50 books a year.

There's a couple of other members the program who are at this point too that are reading about a book a week. In addition to listening to podcast and reading articles and stuff. So I'm nowhere near that point. I think I made it like a personal goal this year and actually I wrote about this on Medium that I made a personal goal this year to read more books, I'm really happy to say that I'm halfway through the year and I've read 12 books, that was huge for me but nothing on these guys.

[0:37:50.1] SS: Yeah, we said just now, let's get actionable, okay? For people who want to start hearing more. So we said Pocket, download pocket for your iPhone or android and chrome extension to mark your article that you read. We have Overcast for iPhone, for iOS to hear podcast and for Android, we have a great recommendation by [Svirka Agnelli], an Israeli entrepreneur, one of the founders of Y Stamp and he recommends Podcast Addict, which is a free app for android, great for listening to podcast and android.

So that's podcasts and for books we recommend audible, audible is an app that you install in your iPhone or your android device and when you want to buy the book itself, you have to buy it on Amazon and Amazon have like buy the audible version. That's that and recommended for I know Israelis, probably a lot of countries as well which are not in the US, if you're not in the US, you should check like some books you can't buy on Audible, on amazon for Audible.

What you can do just like signing to Amazon or sign up at Amazon with a VPN like Tunnel bear, something like that and if you have an American credit card or something like that, use that one. So you can buy more audible books. All right. Just a few recommendations for a podcasts and books.

[0:39:10.6] DT: Okay, I'll start with the books one because I think one thing — my philosophy on what I'm reading now is I'm tempted like everyone else to just read like self-help and read business books and management books, but I'm really trying to put some fiction in my book list as well and I'm really happy with that. I think that everyone should be doing this. If you're not

listening to fiction — Sagi, I'm talking to you — you should start, seriously because I've read two fiction books this year, a few actually that have just kind of opened up my mind to new possibilities for things that I can do in my business and in my life.

The first book would like to recommend is *Nexus*, this is an incredible book, one of the best fiction books I've read in a long time. I'll just give kind of like a short summary of it, basically it's sci-fi, it's based in kind of the near future so it's a world that we live in, a world pretty similar to the world we live in today. Not too much different, just basically better technology. The main characters are neuroscientist DJ's, electronic music DJ's and there's this kind of sort of drug, it's not so clear that people are taking that makes them kind of be able to connect to each other telepathically.

Anyway, the book gets really into it, it gets really, really cool but basically each character, when they take this drug, they basically have like an open source operating system in their head that they can communicate with others and act as like a computing hub. Super cool book, the sci-fi doesn't, I know it sounds it, but it doesn't get super weird sci-fi. It's not like on a star trek level, it's very similar to the world we live in today but I really recommend this book, it brought up a lot of interesting questions and made me think about the direction we're going with technology and politics.

The second book I'd like to recommend also fiction is called *The Circle*. *The Circle*'s about this kind of fictional company that they really describe it to make it sound like Google, almost eerily, the exact Google that we know today, also based a little bit in the future but not much and the interesting thing about this book is it's all about privacy. Today, we have all of the big tech companies like Apple, Google are kind of fighting the government to keep things private, right? The FBI was all over Apple trying to not unlock the iPhone and the tech companies, even though they're stealing our data and all this, the outward facing things that they're saying are that privacy is important and they're protecting our data right?

In this book, they take a totally different approach. This company, *The Circle* says, "No, privacy is bad, why is privacy good at all?" To an extreme level they say, "Why should anything be private? When things are private, you have secrets and when you have secrets and when you have secrets you can lie and you can cheat and you can steal right?"

They make this really convincing argument to a super extreme point, they say, “Give me one example that privacy is ever good.” You say, “No, I’m embarrassed, it’s my personal life right?” They say, “Yeah, but you’re only embarrassed because you think it’s not happening to other people. If the same thing is happening to other people and we all know about it and we all share it, wouldn’t that help each other? This weird thing that’s happening to you, if I know it’s also happening and I have it too that maybe I can also improve or be better because of it.”

So they make this really convincing argument that privacy is bad in every sense and then they take it further and I won’t spoil it but it’s also an excellent fiction book that really makes me think and the two of those I think are very applicable to people, especially in the tech world or not but running businesses gave me lots of new ideas and I highly recommend that. Sagi, what do you have? What do you think is good to read lately?

[0:42:46.7] SS: In terms of books, I read the 10X books by Grant Cardon. I really recommend that and just to anyone who hasn’t read yet, *The Four Hour Work Week*, I can’t recommend it enough, it’s like classic that we both read and I really recommend it. It’s two recommendations that I can give. *10X* is pretty hard to listen a bit to Grant Cardon the author because he’s like, he’s really — first of all, he keeps on saying “man”, I guess like women will have a hard time with that because you got to keep pushing it man, you got to — okay, so that’s like...

Get through that and get through the ego that might be sounding, when the stocking but really good book and I got a lot out of it a lot. That’s *The 10X Rule* and the second, *The Four Hour Work Week* by Tim Ferriss is a classic. That’s something that talks about life in general, why should you work as an employee in a company or what’s your meaning with pension and how to basically break out of your nine to five life and start living the real life. Self-fulfillment through your career. I think it’s really an amazing book and a must hear.

[0:44:01.6] DT: I just have to put a disclaimer out there, do not read this book if you don’t want to have the feeling that you should quit your job and do something completely different very soon. It will definitely give you that feeling. Actually I could say that his was truly a life changing book for both of us after reading this, we were already thinking about leaving Similar Web and

we had an idea like a plan to kind of work on Hacking UI full time and this was just kind of for me, at least totally, “Oh, it can be done, this is how you do it, 100% like attainable goal, go for it.”

[0:44:30.2] SS: Yeah totally. So that’s that and podcasts. Do just a few podcast and...

[0:44:37.6] DT: Well, we both love *Smart Passive Income* with Pat Flynn, half hour episodes, short to the point, he just brings on amazing guests, sharp awesome tips for how to run your business better and just like, I know we don’t know him or anything but he just seems like a generally a nice guy. He gives like this honest approach to everything he does and he does one thing really cool on his website.

Every month, he releases an income report where he actually puts the numbers that he made from every single revenue channel and it’s really interesting and something that I really thought was cool, he takes it one step further right? One of his biggest revenue channels is affiliate membership with Bluehost. Bluehost has got some negative publicity lately and I know I worked with HostGator which is like a sister company and I had a bad experience with them and a lot of people have had bad experience with Bluehost.

So Pat Flynn flew to Utah, met with the CEO of the company and he said, “Listen, I’m going to stop recommending Bluehost if you don’t get your shit together.” So Bluehost apparently underwent like this major management change and built this whole new data center and they’re like, he met with him, he has pictures of the whole, he promoted this whole things but it was pretty cool. Obviously the whole thing, I’m sure he’s running lots of money off it and you could see actually how much money he’s running off in an income reports.

But just to see that he was like, “Look, it’s not worth it for me, I can’t promote a product that... it’s not worth it for me in the long run, it’s bad and usually don’t like. I have to be honest with them, I have to give him the good stuff.” Since then, apparently blue host is doing much better. I don’t know personally but it was just a really cool thing to see and this is just kind of the stuff that Pat Flynn talks about.

[0:46:13.2] SS: Yeah, also, I think Pat Flynn is the best interviewer I heard in podcasts. He asks the most actionable questions and I am trying to learn as much as I can, I bet you two are like,

this guy's asking the right questions in each interview. All right, that's Pat Flynn, Tim Ferriss Show, right? The Tim Ferriss Show is a great podcast, he interviews the world's top performers.

[0:46:36.3] DT: I'm actually off and on in the Tim Ferriss show, I haven't been listening to it too much lately, it has some great episodes like really there's some episodes that are just awesome but one thing that I'm like a little bit less into is that a lot of times he has this like amazing person with this great background that I really want to get into and he asked them too much like the same questions, "What are your favorite books? What books do you gift the most?" I don't really care that much.

I'm like, "No, no, no. You're talking to Steve Jobs." Wait, forget what books he gives, I don't care about this, tell me what he was thinking about the day that the iPhone came out, give me the real question. So sometimes he doesn't do that for me but it does have some awesome episodes.

[0:47:11.8] SS: Yeah, and you're right. Tim Ferriss is on and off but is very nice, one of the best podcast out there. I would recommend two more for two different kind of approaches, two different aspects. One is for designers, *Design Details* by Brian Lovin and Bryn Jackson. Two designers from San Francisco that they interview the best designers in the Bay Area and even like more they went to New York for a live session at Etsy and stuff like that.

They have really nice guests on their show and they interview them about their past and what they're up to today like design methods and everything design, product design wise, *Design Details* if you're a place to go and one more for the spiritual part, Sam Harris, you introduced me I think or was it Tim Ferriss? I don't know.

[0:48:02.8] DT: Yeah, I read Sam Harris' book *Waking Up: A guide to Spirituality without religion* and Sam Harris is cool, he is kind of the neuroscience background atheist who loves getting in some politics, basically all of the standard concepts that society has come to believe in and just not even question anymore, he's questioning them. You know, the show also has its ups and downs, it's a very long episode, some of the episodes were like three hours long and I just lose focus but he also has like some amazing episodes and the book *Waking Up* was pretty good. I recommend it, it's a short, easy read.

[0:48:36.6] SS: Yeah, Sam Harris and he talks about why religion is bad in general so those are the podcast just like a few to get your started, we give you the ups, we'll put everything in the show notes so D, do you think we have enough for today?

[0:48:51.1] DT: Come on Sagi, we got to get back to work already all right? We have a lot of stuff to do.

[0:48:55.9] SS: This is our work now.

[0:48:58.4] DT: No, this has been a cool episode. I'm very excited to be at this point like again, we talked about how our status update at the beginning and I think this is a huge moment for Hacking UI for us to kind of be a week into the Side Project Accelerator, systems are in place, things are rolling along and we have a lot of work ahead of us, a ton of work ahead of us but I'm feeling good right now. So I'm looking forward to next week.

[0:49:20.8] SS: All right, that's a wrap. Thank you hackers for joining us today, we hope you enjoyed the show, you can find all the links and resources from this conversation on hackingui.com/podcast. Just before we go, we want to share with you something that you might find useful.

[0:49:36.0] DT: As you know, we are voracious readers and consume a ton of articles, books, podcasts and videos about design development and side projects, we curate the hell out of everything. Each week, we send a short round up email of our favorites. If that sounds like an email you'd enjoy getting, then we'd love to have you join our awesome community, which already has more than 20,000 happy members from all over the world. You can sign up on hackingui.com.

[0:49:57.4] SS: By the way, on hackingui.com, you'll also find some other cool stuff like the Side Project Accelerator, our eight week online program in which we teach everything that we learned in the three years working and scanning Hacking UI as a side project before we quit our day jobs.

[0:50:11.0] DT: And, you'll also find our resources page which reached top of the week on Product Hunt Tech. Our events section which is filled with conferences and meetups for designers and developers.

[0:50:19.7] SS: Hey D, don't forget the T's man, we also got some cool T-shirts for designers.

[0:50:24.2] DT: Sagi, again with the T-shirts?

[0:50:25.3] SS: Hey, I designed those. But really, last thing, if you enjoy this, we would really love to hear from you, you know, by tweeting us @HackingUI or by reviewing the podcast on iTunes, those reviews really go a long way and help us and even make our day.

[0:50:39.6] DT: All right, we'll see you next week hackers, remember to keep hacking.

[END]