

EPISODE 24

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:01.0] DT: The Milwaukee designer hit publish on another post he didn't enjoy writing. He was eager to build a train of blogs that he could drive traffic to and monetize with ads but something was missing. He didn't enjoy writing articles for the various subjects, but he loved coding the blogs and crafting the CSS behind them. He leaned back on his chair, looked to the ceiling and thought what to do next then it hit him.

He decided to close all of the blogs except for one, and he called it CSS-Tricks. That blog became one of the most popular front end development blogs in the world and paved the way for another product or designer decided to build a platform to share demos of front end code. He called it CodePen.

[0:00:40.2] SS: Hello hackers, thanks a lot of joining us for another episode of the Hacking UI podcast where we hack our way through design, development, and entrepreneurship. I'm Sagi Shrieber.

[0:00:49.7] DT: I'm David Tintner.

[0:00:51.2] SS: Our guest today is the founder of a blog we've been following for years, which is called CSS-Tricks. He is also the founder of CodePen, which is the Dribbble of front end coding. He is the host of the podcast chop talk, speaks in conferences around the world and this year he published his second book which is all about using SVG on the web.

[0:01:09.0] DT: Ladies and gents, it's our pleasure to present to you Chris Coyier.

[0:01:13.8] SS: Let's get hacking.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:01:26.3] DT: All right. So, Chris, what's up? How's it going today?

[0:01:29.8] **CC:** Really good, thanks for having me guys.

[0:01:32.4] **DT:** Thank you for joining us.

[0:01:33.1] **SS:** Great having you on the show.

[0:01:34.4] **DT:** Yeah, we're excited to talk to you today.

[0:01:35.6] **CC:** Congratulations on your journey as well. I just learned that you're about four months into the journey with Hacking UI, full-time.

[0:01:45.8] **DT:** Thank you, thank you.

[0:01:47.6] **SS:** Yeah, thanks man.

[0:01:49.5] **DT:** Chris, you're in California now? Or where are you joining us from today?

[0:01:51.8] **CC:** I had a short stint in California but that was years ago now. It's actually interesting day for me today because my kind of permanent home these days is in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, which is somewhat near — I grew up around Madison, Wisconsin. Milwaukee is like 90 minutes away or so and yeah, after I was out in California, which is the place I lived right before Milwaukee I was working at Survey Monkey or whatever. Just kind of decided to move home, arbitrarily and buy a house there and put down roots a little bit.

Although I didn't quite do that because as I'm talking to you guys right now, it's my second day in Miami. Me and my fiancée picked up and moved down here just for the winter, kind of to escape the cold in Wisconsin and she has a new job here and such. So yeah, I guess I'm a Miami citizen for the next nine months or so.

[0:02:44.2] **DT:** Very cool. I'm actually Miami originally, living in Tel Aviv now, but that's where I grew up and went to college in Florida too.

[0:02:52.2] **CC:** Wow, nice, cool.

[0:02:54.6] **SS:** I am from California right now.

[0:02:56.6] **DT:** the whole circle completes itself.

[0:02:58.7] **SS:** I'm actually in Google right now, in Google offices.

[0:03:01.6] **CC:** No kidding, really?

[0:03:02.9] **SS:** In Mountain View. They're in summit here. I had to find a room to kind of...

[0:03:09.0] **CC:** You're there for the Chrome Dev Summit or?

[0:03:10.4] **SS:** No, I'm like a Google mentor at the Google Launch Pad. Every year they have a summit that they bring us all in, all the experts from the rest of the world and have a two day summit. So I tried to find a room and they said there's no available meeting rooms. So one of the Google guys snuck me in into the gym and I'm here inside like a room inside their gym. It's nice.

[0:03:33.9] **CC:** Wow, they need to build more buildings, Google, get on it.

[0:03:37.2] **SS:** Yeah Chris. You've been doing so much man and we've been following you for so long. You're everywhere, you're like writing, you're leading a lot of changes in the CSS world by your writings and by your experiments, you have a podcast going on, you have CodePen. So much to that you're doing it that we really have a lot of questions for you and basically how you do all that at the same time.

[0:04:01.2] **DT:** Yeah, why don't we start by — can you give us a breakdown of what are you going on with today? What's the life of Chris Coyier like today?

[0:04:07.5] **CC:** You pretty much hit all of the things that I do, so it's not too much more than that. I have CSS-Tricks, which is writing and editing and that site and then there's CodePen, the team that's involved there, which is my biggest project and then my smallest project is I also

have a podcast called ShopTalk Show with Dave Rupert. So those three things keep me pretty busy, which is pretty similar to what you have going on with Hacking UI. You write and have a podcast and such. I'm sure our lives aren't that different.

[0:04:37.7] SS: I mean, it seems yeah, the amount of articles and episodes and work that you have going on is just inspiring.

[0:04:45.8] DT: Let's get into — we first started following you from the blogging. I'm curious, I believe you opened up CSS-Tricks in 2007, right?

[0:04:52.1] CC: Yeah, that's right. I think just coincidentally it was the fourth of July, it was the birthday of America.

[0:05:00.0] DT: Nice. So why don't you take us through what that was like at the beginning when you were starting out and why you started blogging to begin with?

[0:05:06.2] CC: The story is just that it was kind of a part of a "network of blogs" at the time. "Networks" meaning I started a bunch of blogs, the friend of mine and the idea was like, "Let's just have a bunch of URL's, we'll toss up WordPress on all of them, we'll turn out content for it and we'll put AdSense everywhere we can and hopefully have one of those kind of blog farm kind of things in which that makes money, such that at least supplements what we make from our kind of crappy day jobs and maybe incrementally slowly it will make enough money to buy us a pizza or something?" Because in the really early days, blogs make hardly anything.

Whatever, those other blogs were kind of like adobe help blog. So the reason it was a network was because we thought maybe we'll break them up by adobe property essentially and have it be like, they weren't called this — I don't even remember what they're called. But it was like "InDesign Tricks" or "InDesign Help" and, you know, "PDF Help" and stuff and it would just be articles that just would be really simple content with a few screen shots like, "Did you run into this error? Well then, just do this," or whatever. They were short, easy articles to write and CSS-Tricks was one of them because I was like, "Well, we got a system now. Install WordPress, put this theme on it, put a new header in it, go."

It wasn't very inspiring, they did not last very long because we mostly found it kind of boring. Just not the most fun articles to write and we'd have to be trying to inspire each other to do it, "Oh, come on man, just at least get one article out today," kind of thing and eventually it just fell away because it's just like yeah, we tried you know. It wasn't that fun. What was fun was actually setting up the sites themselves and designing the banner to go in the top and tweaking WordPress to do what I wanted it to do and learning CSS along the way and so the one that I was most interested in writing for was CSS-Tricks back then, and when they all kind of closed down around it, I was like, "I'm going to keep the CSS one because I like that one, that one's the most fun for me."

And I kind of since stopped caring if they ever made any money or not you know? CSS-Tricks had a little bit of engagement too, there would be a few people that read it. As soon as somebody leaves like a comment on one of your blog post you're like, "What? Somebody cares about what I wrote?" Which is pretty motivational, you know? The second you get your first comment on something you wrote, it can be a little addictive, you just roll with it.

[0:07:43.1] SS: Yeah, the adrenaline rush of putting something out there to the world and getting feedback from it.

[0:07:46.8] CC: Yeah, "the journalism rush" is that what they call it?

[0:07:49.5] DT: The adrenaline rush.

[0:07:51.1] CC: Oh, adrenaline rush. I still find that motivating you know? It's a lot easier to write when you know that somebody's going to read what you write. That holds true today for sure.

[0:08:02.3] DT: Yeah, definitely. I can totally agree with that. At the beginning, I'm curious when you're trying to get users to read your stuff and especially like seeking the comment or feedback, were you doing anything in particular to promote your post and get them to users, to readers?

[0:08:16.8] CC: I think the most popular tactic back then was the commenting on other people's sites. It was just was a lot more — it felt more organic and fun back then to be like, "Okay, well," — you know, most blogs had like a link back kind of thing where you not only leave your name but you leave a link to your site as well. If you left something thoughtful on their site, there's a pretty good chance that they would at least check it out as the owner of that blog. You get a link back out of it which doesn't hurt for Google juice or at least it didn't back then. Other people are reading the site might follow along to it and it kind of felt like that was almost part of the job.

Writing and blogging is part of the job and going out there and participating in the larger community was part of the job too. You see a little bit of that these days but not so much anymore, at least not on CSS-Tricks. People just coming and leaving something thoughtful just because you hope that, they hope that you're going to check out what they're doing. Comments are just weird this days, it's not what they used to be.

[0:09:15.6] DT: We actually completely disabled comments on Hacking UI a few days ago. But I mean, for the past year or so even more, it just — comments were kind of totally dead. All the engagement that we had was through email or through social media and almost nothing on the actual site itself. Whereas you're right, at the beginning when we started, that was something we were trying to really design the comments for engagements and saying, "This is where we want to have the conversation."

[0:09:38.3] SS: By the way, I'm still not sure that it's like the right way to go that we disabled comments. Jeffrey Zeldman says he still treats every comment and answers it like personally. But yeah, comments aren't the same anymore.

[0:09:53.8] CC: No, I don't have the answers for it either. Once in a while I'll have a moment where I think I'm going to do it, kill comments and then what I ended up doing is writing it down. So I have kind of a notes file that was like, it kind of documents what I was feeling at the time and what are the strong points for shutting down comments and then I just kind of let it percolate and at the moment, I'm still like, "Yeah, it's not that big of a problem." A lot of times to me when I'm really feeling it a moment in which I think, "Okay, this is it, I'm going to shut them down," it's usually just because it's one jerk you know? I'm like, "Yeah, that's not good enough of a reason," you know?

I do feel like the overall quality of comments just kind of internet wide has declined and you know, even in the niche of design and development blogging and stuff, the quality has gone down. But there's enough value there that's fine. The idea that your engagement is fragmented across other things is, that's tricky too. It's kind of like, "Fine, who cares? If you're engaging with me, that's good period. If you want to do that where you're comfortable doing that, fine." Then it's kind of lost you know? It's a lot easier to have that value be limited to only the people that are on that shared platforms. So I think that's a struggle a bit.

If I had all day every day to manage comment threads, I think I would engage with anybody wherever and then port it back to a common thread in a database that I own. There's a conversation that happened over here on Twitter or wherever and I'm going to embed that thread here in the comments of this blog post because I don't want it to be lost in time, there was interesting things being said there. But unfortunately I don't. Once in a while I will or I close comments over time because that's almost a sure thing that if somebody leaves a comment on a post three years ago, it's kind of worthless even if it's not spam, nobody else is going to see it.

Not nobody, but the chances are fairly low. So what I do is just close them and say, "If you have something to say about this though, like you're about to leave a comment and are now disappointed the comments are closed, don't be. Email me because I'll read it. I'm still interested and if you have something important to say, I'll update the post or I'll allow you to leave that comment or I'll leave that comment for you or something." I don't want that to be gone forever. So updating blog post, there's probably twice as much work updating post or out posting new ones, I'd say.

[0:12:13.7] DT: Are you going back through old blog post a lot, and aside from a user telling you something like that are you doing it on your own?

[0:12:18.9] CC: Yeah, we do it proactively and in reaction to — in fact, blog posts are dates. So it's easy to just go find an old one and update it. I used to do that more than I should but there's also this — there's different sections of CSS-Tricks. For example, there is an almanac section in which the post aren't dated, there are just organized by, are you a selector and organize

alphabetically and such? They do have dates on them when you go to the page. It will tell you when it was last updated but they're not organized by date.

I have something like hidden kind of admin pages that sort those pages by date because it's interesting to know what's an almanac page or an almanac that hasn't been touched in three years? We should know that because chances are, there's going to be outdated information in that. Once in a while I'll grab one of those and just look through it and make sure it's up to date. Some of it is the content in there but some of it is just like, "Well, we format things a little bit differently now." So this is an opportunity to clean up some HTML or just make sure that page looks, behaves correctly.

[0:13:19.4] DT: Okay, it sounds amazing but I'm thinking to myself, how do you find the time because you're writing so much and then to go back through your old post too, how do you find the time to manage that in addition to the new content?

[0:13:30.4] CC: I don't know, how does a mechanic find time to sweep the shop? They have to, otherwise they'll trip on grease and stuff and go out of business. I don't know? It's just, when it's the job, it's the job.

[0:13:42.5] SS: Yeah, something that we come across well now that we have Hacking UI full-time is that we find a lot of our times going on, let's say, you know, we have a podcast and now it's creating the art for the podcast and making the post for the podcast and doing so many things which are like around the content that we find less time to actually create the content in terms of like taking care of everything. Because we have a lot of podcast going on but we haven't written — I haven't specifically written an article in a long while. David had the 30 day challenge, so he wrote every day for the past almost month. But also, doing content for the blog is like something that it seems like you have down as mandatory time in your day or week. We kind of don't, can you fill us in on how your day looks like maybe?

[0:14:29.9] CC: I don't know that I have it down, but I do think that people probably treat blog posts as a little bit more as a bigger deal or holy or something than they really are. Jeremy Keith once famously said — I don't even know where to send you for this, I don't remember what context he said it in. But kind of treat your blog as your drafts folder and that if you have some

kind of burgeoning thought that you're like, "Oh, I'm not ready to blog that yet, it's just kind of a draft in my brain." Like, "No way man, just publish it." Blogposts should be kind of like your drafts in a way. They don't have to be this glistening tutorials or anything.

A blogpost can be anything, it could be a conversation that you copy and pasted form your phone over or I even have a big list that I've started recently to remind myself of what a blogpost can be. It can just be a link to somebody else with some commentary about what's going on. Lately I've seen a git repos that are like, "Here's this cool thing that we have," and it doesn't have a live demo. That's too bad, maybe my blog post will just be as like, "Oh, look at this cool repo I saw and here's a demo that I put up because they didn't have a live demo because they didn't have a live demo so I'm just going to do that for them," kind of thing.

[0:15:39.4] DT: Cool.

[0:15:39.9] CC: That could be a blog post. There's just an unlimited amount of things that a blogpost can be; "Oh, here's something I was at a meetup last night and we went through my mind, just something I thought of. Here's something I learned this week, it's a little, probably everybody already knows it, but I just learned it so here it is," kind of thing. I hope CSS-Tricks has that vibe. We could do it even better I think in that regard but because blog posts can be anything and they can be small and they can be big, it's the flow I think that's more important, it's the idea, just get it out there. It becomes not so hard, is my point.

[0:16:14.9] DT: Love it. Okay now, just before we continue, we want to take a short break to give a shout out to our sponsors.

[SPONSOR BREAK]

[0:16:22.7] SS: Hey everyone, we wanted to tell you about something big that we are doing this week in Hacking UI. We have partnered with General Assembly to bring you the 2016 design tools survey. This survey would run for two weeks up until the first of December 2016 and as soon as we close the survey for submissions, we'll open source the results so we could all get a clearer picture about the tools that we use to craft our digital products. If you can, please take

two minutes of your time and head on over to hackingui.com/tools and fill out the survey. You will also be able to find the post link on our home page at hackingui.com.

After submissions are closed, we will also work with a data analyze to prepare the report for you and we will share the results in a free webinar on December 6th. Seats are limited so you'll be able to sign up in advance. Just visit hackingui.com/tools and you'll find the link to sign up. Thanks a lot to General Assembly, that helped us put the survey together and to all of you out there that will fill or have already filled the survey.

Now let's get get back to the episode.

[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[0:17:17.2] DT: There's something also in your writing that I really admire that I noticed is that you have this attitude of — especially when people write about code, it can be a very sensitive subject. People are super opinionated, but it seems like you have this attitude of “here's my experience, here's what I learned, I'm sharing it with you. It might not be the best way but this is what I learned” kind of a vibe.

[0:17:35.4] CC: Yeah, that can be defensive as well, “I'm not an expert in this thing but this is what I literally did in literal production on a literal website.” So it has some cache. I know what you mean though, people are so worried that they wrote something that's “wrong” or something, that they're going to get jousted in the commons for doing it wrong. It's like, “Well, I didn't do it wrong because it's live on a website.” If you there are some better way to do it then wonderful then thanks for the comment, I'll do that, or I'll explore your idea as well.

But it doesn't hurt that my blog is about more front end-y stuff because I think that that danger is higher when you write back end-y stuff. “Let me show you how our log in system works,” kind of thing. Those are things that there is a little bit more right and wrong to like if you encourage the use of some kind of insecure login method or something, I'll be a lot more nervous about writing about stuff like that because I think you really can write an insecure login system.

[0:18:44.1] DT: It's a good point.

[0:18:44.8] CC: That would be more of a problem. But if it's just how do you do rounded corners or whatever, nobody cares if it's slightly different than the next person's.

[0:18:51.0] DT: Okay, that's a really good point. I never thought about that, but you're saying it's a safer to be a front end blogger. So we're lucky.

[0:18:57.4] CC: In a sense yeah, you can screw up the front end too but not as dangerously perhaps.

[0:19:03.8] DT: CSS-Tricks is built on WordPress, right?

[0:19:05.4] CC: Yeah.

[0:19:06.4] DT: I know that in ShopTalk radio, you are talking about WordPress a lot. Is WordPress the best technology for a blog today would you say? If you're going to start a blog today or giving advice to someone who wants to start a blog, would you say you'd use WordPress?

[0:19:18.6] CC: I don't know the answer to that. I'm a fan of WordPress and what it does for me and what it's done for CSS-Tricks. I wrote a post in the last year I think about how WordPress is kind of a poster child for WordPress. Because it uses every single WordPress feature that there is. Starting at one of the core things that I think people should think about in regards to WordPress is that it's a log in system, basically. It has user management. I log in to my own website and can write and publish posts from my own website.

Do you need that? Is that a requirement of the blog? Because if it is, then WordPress is — that gets a bunch of points for WordPress because it can do that. Whereas if somebody's like, "Well, I like Jekyll." I like Jekyll too, Jekyll's great, it's amazing. I like all the flat file generators. I think that's a really cool way to publish a website. But most of them, it comes with the idea that there either is no UI, there is no web based component for writing new content or it's a third part add on kind of situation.

[0:20:22.0] DT: Okay.

[0:20:23.8] CC: So I think, “Okay, that’s just one thing, it has user management.” Not only can I log in and write new content and arrange content and kind of visually arrange things, there’s all this back end power of WordPress, but there’s also like, I can have authors too. Authors can log in and work on their post but they can’t touch anything else on the site. I can have forum administrators too. That’s another thing on CSS-Tricks, there’s forums on it. Forums kind of require this structure and this database system and that kind of thing. Oh, I sell stuff on the site too. Thank god, there’s really easy powerful plugins for a WordPress to allow for that. I have comments too, there’s going on 100,000 comments left on CSS-Tricks. Those are all those comments are in my database, I can design them, I take care of the features around them and check them for spam and all that stuff. It’s content that lives with me on my site.

I can theme WordPress, I’m comfortable with that. I can cache it, I can have hosting through a hosting company that knows what they’re doing because WordPress is so big and popular. There’s this community around WordPress that allows me to reach out to people who are smarter than me and know how it works because it’s such a giant community of people around it. There’s all this stuff. If there’s a feature of WordPress, I probably am using it and it just works out great for me. It has nothing to do with the next person who wants to start a blog, you know? In fact, some people are like — if somebody said, “I’m thinking about just blogging a Medium.” “Cool, fine, sounds good, do it,” you know? I like that.

[0:21:56.2] DT: Yeah, it’s kind of tricky world to navigate now because it feels like there’s a different purpose a little bit for medium than a regular blog but I’m still not sure exactly what that is. I’ve kind of experimented with putting like personal posts on Medium but are like design and development post on Hacking UI. I think there’s something to be done with both.

[0:22:13.2] CC: I don’t know, people are totally just figuring that stuff out still. There’s a lot of people that think of it as a place to cross post things. That was hot for a minute, although I see less and plus of that. Some people, the idea there being like I’m going to post on my own site first, indie web, you know? Own it. For some reason, they feel like medium has better distribution or something, which if it does, it does you know? Then they cross post it to medium

but I've heard compelling arguments the other way too like no, let's start on medium and we'll use our site to just kind of archive it because Medium is where we want to be.

[0:22:45.1] DT: It's such a nice editor to write post in too. It's really simple to get it out there.

[0:22:49.9] SS: Yeah, when is WordPress going to do something with that?

[0:22:52.9] CC: I don't know. I don't mind the WordPress editor. I mean surely it could be reinvented and I could be impressed or whatever but I just been using it so long that it feels comfortable to me to just basically write in a text area.

[0:23:08.0] DT: The question I'm trying to figure out today is I have a lot of people who don't want a code, they just want to publish and I'm trying to figure out the best way for them to get a blog going. Because I totally agree with you, everything at WordPress, we're using WordPress also in Hacking UI for all the plugins and working on that stuff. But if you don't want to code or you don't have anything, I'm wondering what a good solution is for that today. Whether WordPress.com is good enough or it's...

[0:23:29.4] CC: Yeah, you can't go too wrong there because starting on WordPress feels fairly safe to me. Also, again, because of how big WordPress is, there's plenty of tools to be like WordPress 2 X. So if the day comes along that you've decided that you need to move off WordPress for some legitimate reason, there's a pretty good chance that you'll be able to export your stuff from WordPress to whatever you need to and vice versa.

[0:23:54.8] DT: I want to ask you about how you've been monetizing the blog throughout the years and how that's changed. Can you give us kind of like a rundown of that? I know there's advertising on the site now, was it always same way, or how did you start?

[0:24:06.4] CC: Yeah, pretty much. I think in the early days it was, you know, "Let's get some AdSense on there and see how that goes," and then when those, like the one that was the really early days blogs kind of went away, I think we kind of just shut down all the AdSense stuff too and I've never been like a super big fan. In those days it's just like text blurbs and stuff. I was always like, "Yeah, this is kind of gross anyway and I'm not making any money anyway." So I

think I pulled them off and did nothing for a while but at least the expectation was set that I had advertising early on and it wasn't too much longer until somebody approached me that said, "We'd like to put an ad on your site and how much do you want for that?"

That was also a big moment. Similar to that moment of somebody leaving a comment on your site for the first time, the adrenaline rush or whatever that there's proof that somebody read it. It's also very powerful to be like, "Oh, we see your site, it looks like the kind of site that reaches our customers and can we put an ad on it?" And I was like, "I have no idea how this works but here's a number, let's call that one month of time on the side and I'll put your stuff on there, and when the month goes by, you can either re-up or I'll take your ad down," kind of thing.

They were down with it and I took their money and put the ad on the site and I was like, "Wow. Well, that's pretty cool." I think at the time I probably thought of it as supplementary to AdSense, like, "Oh, that was a cool side deal." But you know, who knows how long that will go on or if that's common place or not. That was the early days and then I did manage it myself for a while. There's probably periods in there of months if not years where I just kind of made on advertising page and set a few advertise, reach out to me and kind of hand managed it all.

Then for I'd say most of the history of CSS-Tricks, it was BuySellAds, which is kind of — it's an ad network that's fairly specific to web tech and design and stuff market and the promise was not only — it's kind of like if you're on our network then you're going to make sales because people go to the network of BuySellAds. You're going to get more ad sales on — they take a cut but you're going to sell more ads than you would have otherwise. I do think it was true and it's self-service so I no longer have to manage anything. I just put BuySellAds at the site, sit back and wait and was fine. There was a glory days for that type of stuff, you know?

Not that I was making a ton of money but I had sales that was always full and I was happy with how things are going and just fine. If anything, BuySellAds will be contacting me like, "You should open up more zones because there's so much interest here." That was always kind of a dance between wanting CSS-Tricks to feel fairly light and not one of those intensely advertised on sites and still make enough money to be worth doing. Then a mixed would come along and then a really good advertiser come along and contact me and I'd be like, "I think I'll handhold

this one, because why not? It's a big sale and I won't have to take the 25% cut and whatever but I can run it alongside BuySellAds stuff.

These days, it's pretty much like that. I still work with BuySellAds, I still like them, they sell some portion of ads on the site, I sell some portion of the ads on the site. There are some partnership stuff that happens on CSS-Tricks, there's other little things here and there and I would say the biggest change in the last year/two years is that display advertising just — at least for me, just doesn't do that well. I wish it would, but it's just — it's not terribly surprising to me because how often do you click on ads on sites you know? I know for me, it's not very often. But what does work on me is like I do like podcast ads and I do like posts. Like if I'm reading a blog and they publish a post that was clearly marked as sponsored and it says, "This is what this product is and they're sponsoring the site this week." I'm like, "Cool. I get it, those were some words that I can relate to or whatever and it gave them an opportunity to just explain something in their own words what the product or service does.

I always liked that and so I sort of doing that on CSS-Tricks as well and I think that's our most effective style of advertising. I don't think it's our biggest slice of the pie yet but I expect it will be one day and I always try to sell people on that if they come — somebody comes to me and wants to advertise or you know, a lot of times you'll get an email, I bet you guys get this emails to if somebody that's like, "I made this infographic, you should post it on your site." What they're trying to do is contact marketing. They're trying to get you to post about them or they'll even offer to write it themselves or something, you know?

I never accept anything like that. Because it usually doesn't have the right vibe and if that's what people thought of as this site, it would be gross in my opinion. I'd be willing to work with you if you want to buy a sponsored post, and they're not particularly cheap you know. Maybe they are for what you get, I don't know, I didn't mean to say that but they're not \$10 or whatever, they're money and then I can help you write it and I can help you reach our audience in a more honest, but still sponsored way.

[0:29:03.4] DT: Cool, and then you write the post for them and they just approve the message or something at the end?

[0:29:07.5] CC: Sometimes. I'd almost prefer that they write it and I kind of can sign off on it or we work together on it, they put a draft and I'll do that kind of thing, it really doesn't matter who writes it as long as it feels like an honest explanation of what they did and it can take any from — it could be one paragraph long, it could be a whole tutorial, I don't care, we mark them as sponsored you know? It's very clear to the audience. In the past when we haven't marked them as sponsored, in the early days I was still figuring this out, I got extremely negative comments about that. People don't like that, they don't like to be advertised to without it being disclosed and I don't blame them. These days it's very clearly disclosed and they still tend to do fine. We track analytics on this things and the advertising that does the best arts is sponsored content for sure.

[0:29:54.0] DT: That's a good point, I just want to bring you back to that for a second because I know that that's something we've actually dealt with throughout this journey too and I guess a lot of people are probably figuring out along the way. Especially when you start making money from your content for the first time. I know we had an issue, situation in the newsletter at the beginning where we had some sponsored links where we said, "Oh, what's the difference, these are products that were not accepting sponsors that we don't agree with or sponsors that we don't think of a good product.

But we said like, "Okay, they're a good sponsor, we'll put them in the link section," but we didn't say "sponsored" on it. After a few times or so of doing that, we changed it and had it say sponsored because we got negative comments and we also just felt like we were totally losing people's trust. Even though we said, "Look, we vetted it, we're not letting bad products in here, this are good products," but still there's something there's such a trust that I think you have to build with your audience.

[0:30:40.3] CC: Yeah, it's one thing to say it like, "Oh, I don't think this is affecting my journalism here," but you don't even know what fit is. They gave you money, you're a tainted source at this point. Money has changed hands here, you need to disclose that. Otherwise — you don't even know what it's doing to your own brain necessarily so it's just the safest thing is just disclose it.

[0:31:02.0] DT: Yeah, it's definitely something I think most people will probably come across as they're doing their own blog or newsletter or whatever it is and it's just like...

[0:31:07.7] CC: The fear though is there, right? The fear is that, as soon as I put sponsored there, it's worth less, people are going to not click just instantaneously not click on it because it says "sponsored". I don't know if that's true in fact I don't know, how do you AB test? There probably is a way that they AB test that. But first of all, it's the right thing to do so just I would consider keep doing it but it's not so bad that putting sponsored on something reduces its value to nothing. In fact, I think they can still do extremely well.

[0:31:37.6] SS: Yeah, if it's relevant to the audience.

[0:31:40.1] DT: I think it's kind of like balancing that short term gain that you might have with the amount of value that you lose in the long term with your blog or whatever it is — your podcast, your newsletter — that there's real value to be lost in the long run if you lose people's trust.

[0:31:52.4] CC: Just anecdotally, can you think of sites that don't disclose advertising that have just been around forever or in a long term trusted source of information? Definitely not. The real trustworthy news sources are very clear about disclosing everything. I wish I almost like went to school for journalism, because this stuff is clearly defined I think. Like actual journalist know this stuff.

[0:32:16.1] DT: Definitely.

[0:32:19.0] SS: Well, David was in journalism school.

[0:32:21.0] DT: I actually studied journalism in school. Yeah. But it's definitely 100%...

[0:32:25.1] CC: Yeah, if you're going to quote somebody, there's a way you got to do it, if there's sources for an article, there's a way — there's just stuff that's not clear to the rest of us. Though hopefully is clear to you as a journalism student.

[0:32:37.5] DT: Definitely. I think this is also, a very interesting territory that we're all treading on it. Not that blogging is so new or podcasting or any of this forms are so new but it's kind of like

walking on fine line between — it's not traditional journalism by any means but it definitely still is journalism. There's still some of the same basic laws still apply.

[0:32:56.6] CC: Yeah, and hopefully the closer you adhere to them, the better job you're doing.

[0:33:00.3] DT: Definitely.

[0:33:00.5] SS: Also, I just want to just give a bit of like something for the listeners of this podcast that what we're talking about is basically a bullshit radar that everybody has and it's your brand so once you have advertisement and you just like, you just say, "Okay, it's an ad, it's sponsored." First of all, it doesn't hurt your brand and actually it gives you like people see you as fare that you're pointing out to them that it's sponsored and as opposed to when you don't and then you get in their bullshit radar and your brand is hurt forever. It's very easy, we all have our bullshit radars on 24/7 these days. When you're surfing the web. Just like it's a branding thing and branding is super important.

[0:33:46.0] CC: That's a very good way to put it is that as soon as you've lost — you know, there's some boy who cried wolf stuff in there too. Once you broken some trust, it's very difficult to get back and...

[0:33:56.3] DT: All right, I want to jump ahead a little bit and ask you about CodePen. We've been talking about CSS-Tricks basically up until this point but can you let us know how did the idea for CodePen come about and how did you start working on that?

[0:34:07.8] CC: The early days of CodePen, really early days. Let's just build something days with some friends where the idea was kind of based around CSS-Tricks. It was kind of like, I have so many demos on CSS-Tricks that's the kind of the meat of CSS-Tricks, the best articles than what it's known for kind of section. I used to even have a section just for, just the examples on CSS-Tricks that you could browse through and be like, "Oh, here's the thing that's the accordion," or whatever and you could just see the demo and just grab the download if you wanted to, if you didn't even care about the article.

Anyway, people like to demo. These days it's a mixture, it's more of a — there's certainly plenty of demos on CSS-Tricks but there is editorial and links and there's just a lot more going out but anyway, any time that there is — today, there's a post and it's a really great post I think by Alicia Sedlock, *An Intro to Monkey Testing with Gremlins JS* and it's kind of like, you have a forum, let's say of some HTML of a forum or a complete forum with CSS and Java script or whatever. It's like real forum on your real website, you want to make sure that it doesn't mess up, that it can't get into a weird state where you can't submit it or that something has hidden. Some accessibility problem with it or something.

It's kind of like what Gremlins JS does is it just unleashes random insanity on that page. Just taps and clicks any random coordinate and scrolling and swamping and you know, random input being put in. If you look at the demos of this, it's just like insane, it's just like, "Whaa!" Just blast random data on to this and try to screw it up. The idea is try to do so much insane interaction with this form to see if it can hold up to it. So there's actual demos in the thing. It's kind of like, we can just tell you about that. But a really cool — the way to really drive this home is if you can see it happening. That's true of any front end anything.

If I have a post about how to do realistic looking drop shadows and CSS or something, it's one thing to write paragraphs about that, even better is to look at example CSS of that. Even better than that is putting those two things together, being able to read about it, being able to look at small really relevant bits of code and then a full complete demo where I'm actually looking at, not even a screenshot of it. The real thing. I want to see real output of code. So how CSS-Tricks used to do that is "here's the article, here's the code snippets, here's a button that says view demo" and you click view demo, it opens a new tab or whatever and shows you the demo. If you want to check out how it was built, you can go back to the blogpost and read or you can view source or use the web inspector and dig in to it or whatever.

Then there's this other tools started coming along like JS bin and JS Fiddle and stuff which is a lot of us are familiar with today. This editors in which that you're looking at those two things side by side. You're looking at the HTML and the CSS and the Java Script and the output of those altogether. And it just was awesome. It's a really compelling way to look at a demo. It just makes sense, it's like we take that for granted this days, those things didn't always exist but now it's

like, “Oh, I see, here’s the java script, I can edit it to change what’s happening in this other part of the screen over here.”

It really changed writing about web development, learning, teaching web development. How editors are built today even. The tools that we expect to be built into our editors. A lot of that was happening at the same time. It’s like, “Okay cool. What I probably should do is like move every single demo on CSS-Tricks over to JS fiddle, because what a great product. I should do that. People will be much happier to click over and be looking at a demo there than looking at a demo just on a flat page where they have to web inspect things for themselves.”

But then I was like, “But that feels dangerous to me.” I would have been okay doing it looking back through time because JS Fiddle is still around, still chugging away just fine. I didn’t know that, what if it’s shut down, what if a butterfly flapped its wings and history was changed a bit and something bad happened to it or any other service that I would have picked. Not only that is that I had monetized my demos a little bit, I had like a bar across the top that gave some context for the demo and I had an ad in there.

I was like, “Maybe I’ll build my own system that’s like JS Fiddle but it allows me to brand it, I could monetize it if I wanted to, I could control the features that it had,” whatever. “Maybe I’ll open source it, maybe I won’t, that kind of thing and it’s like, I don’t want to put my friends into this because I could take a stab at building it but they could help me do a better job and in fact, why don’t we get somebody you know servers and databases and stuff and really do it correctly also while we’re at it. Instead of me just hacking my way through some weird front end database or something.”

So, that was what it was early on, is “let’s build one of this existing tools but let’s try to do a better job, let’s try to make it — let’s try to make the best one of this versions is” what it became right away. Then it’s like it’s not open — some part little bits of it are open source but the whole thing is an open source because it’s so integrated with our complex server architecture and our payment system and our log in system and stuff. It’s just isn’t, it’s more like software, it’s not open source it’s just like get hub isn’t open source.

[0:39:28.9] DT: What point did you realize that it was something that it was going to be more than just for your own new CSS-Tricks and something that everyone could use?

[0:39:36.3] CC: Well, when we were building it, it was kind of like, we had to make that call kind of early and it's like, "Let's just put it up on a real domain for now and kind of launch it as that," which was CodePen.io and I just make sure that we're developing it there first before we decide what else we want to do and then we launched it on CodePen and it was like, "Okay, this is working, this is cool," and then it built some admin pages because we were like, we had this thought really early on and it's like, "As cool as this other tools are that exist in the same market, how do you know what the coolest things the people are building on them are right now?"

What was the coolest fiddle of the day? Who knows? You could troll around twitter I guess but that's not like a super good indication of it so it's like, let's make sure that we make our home page not the editor so that we have this portal to CodePen that we could do anything with and we'll see what happens with that over time and can evolve it but we'll make the editor buried kind of one URL deep on the site. So we have an admin section as well that we built and we just wired up some code early on that showed us a list of all the pens that were created that day, which became very addicting to go to that page and just open, open, open, open all the things and just see what people built.

We're like, "Wow, look at this one, how cool is that?" We're just kind of seeing how people used CodePen and what they used it for. We had accounts early on so that if you wanted to come back to the work that you had created, you could, which meant that you have a profile page. So let's build out a profile page. "Oh, these are so cool, why don't we just build an admin interface so that we can click a button and send them to the home page and make the home page just our editor's picks of cool things that people are building and those will just link out to that person's account where they can get that?"

And then there's this kind of fun thing that happens that people intentionally building beautiful things because they want to be featured on the home page. So there's that and then once you have this things are falling into place, you're like, "Well, you should be able to follow developers and they should be able to follow you back. We should put comments on it, we should — all the

componentry that became what CodePen is now kind of fall in to place because of those early choices.

[0:41:37.1] DT: Definitely, you can really — obviously you feel it when you're using CodePen but it makes sense if the community was such an early aspect of it, that direction so early on. Because it's so strong now with the community.

[0:41:48.8] CC: Yeah, we're in November right now and there's this phenomenon in November we learned about last year called Code'vember and there's like variations of it, there's Node'vember in all of this things but it's this like movement that we don't really have anything to do with, we didn't invent it, we just kind of support it and people use CodePen but bought other tools as well to just take the opportunity to — it sounds like you just completed a 30 days writing challenge kind of thing. People use this as a 30 day coding challenge.

[0:42:16.2] DT: Very cool. Okay.

[0:42:17.9] CC: But they go nuts, it's like it has more momentum in November than — there's always amazing stuff happening all the time, this one has a spirit of its own. It's insane, and that just comes from arbitrary community. There's loads, community in every sense of the word, at CodePen. All kinds of community things happen.

[0:42:37.5] DT: So, who's working on CodePen today?

[0:42:39.3] CC: It's nine total folks these days. It's small in all sense I guess. Sometimes I always thought when you're smaller than another team and that team calls themselves small, I always feel like, there's teams that I talk to, they're like, "Well we're only 50 people, we're super small," and I'm like, "You're enormous. 50 people, small?" I know in the grand scheme of companies, maybe they do think of themselves as small, but nine still feels very small.

We all know each other very well, you hang out together and you know, it feels small, everybody know exactly what's going on with every other person in a way. I think that's when you're not small anymore is when there's a few people that don't know each other very well or I'm totally different teams and have never talked to each other, that kind of thing. We've very far away from

that. The only reason we have nine is because about a year ago, a little more than a year ago, we took a round of funding with the whole idea of let's use that money to hire some people and build, build, build.

[0:43:40.0] DT: Are there plans to hire more people and continue growing in that same way, or is it something that you want to keep small?

[0:43:45.1] CC: Well that's my plan;. I would love for us to just grow and grow, and grow. Of course. There may be limits to that. I'm sure there's companies that occasionally grow so fast that it gets away from that and they don't like that. But we're not at risk for that, nothing I've ever built is at risk of insane growth to that level. But I'd love to see the day we are twice as many people. I think we all would because we're all like — you can look at our road map, we can look at our internal GitHub board and Trello boards and all be like, there's so much here, we could keep another team just as large as us busy, easily I would think.

I'd love to keep growing, we just can't because then we would fail. The idea is to grow slowly to the point where you can pay everybody and you're fairly confident that you can continue paying everybody. We're pretty close to being even again, we're not quite there yet. We still — I mean that's the point of taking funding is that you're burning money faster than you can earn it at least right away and then you claw your way back to profitability and then you make the choice if you're going to do it again or what? Or just only keep spending how much more you're making. It's close and we'll make the call when we get there, you know?

[0:44:56.6] DT: Okay. So what's the collaboration between CodePen and CSS-Tricks today?

[0:45:02.0] CC: You know, I run them both so fairly strong in that way, every post on CSS-Tricks if we can use a CodePen or an embedded pen we will. Or I announce CodePen news on CSS-Tricks as much as I can and stuff like that. I'm the only cross over employee though. Marie who is support CodePen and community and all kinds of other stuff started working at CSS-Tricks and then for a while did both and then it was like, "I'm just going to go full CodePen." We're all friends, everybody I think knows or is aware of each other and stuff but they're otherwise totally separate teams.

[0:45:40.1] DT: Okay. It's definitely an awesome platform to have. I think every company would have dreamed to have a blog like CSS-Tricks that can also help support their product.

[0:45:50.0] CC: Yeah, we lucked out to a degree in that way and we don't have to really pay for marketing so much. There's multiple reasons, one is that I built — spent so much time building brands and everybody that works for us to some degree has their own audience that they can bring to it. But we got a bit of a lift especially in their earlier days from CSS-Tricks. I don't know that it's that — how big of a deal it is anymore. I mean, it doesn't hurt but I think the cross over is such that we've tapped out what CSS-Tricks can give CodePen and CodePen is now much larger of an enterprise than CSS-Tricks is. So that's probably about tapped out.

[0:46:27.5] DT: Okay. And you said, everyone who works at CodePen also has their own audience?

[0:46:31.1] CC: Well, to a degree. I think literally everybody has written blog post and has their own social media presence. It's not like how we hire or anything, but it just the nature of being a human being.

[0:46:44.8] DT: I was just curious if that's something that there is a reason for that common thread between you because, you know, there's a lot of developers out there, I have a lot of friends who are developers or designers that aren't writing post or aren't blogging and actually sharing their stuff. So I'm curious if there's some sort of reason for that or if it's purely just a coincidence.

[0:47:01.1] SS: Most are not, right?

[0:47:03.0] CC: Oh certainly. I've always enjoyed that term like the dark matter developer or whatever, you know? For every developer that is sharing stuff and doing open source and going to conferences and stuff, there's probably a hundred that just do their job and go home and nobody knows they exist. But they have more of an influence on the industry than you'd think, you know?

[0:47:23.3] SS: You have CodePen and you're running also the business side of CodePen?

[0:47:27.5] CC: Yeah to a degree. There's us three founders and we kind of split business like chores amongst us, you know? There's so many different ones, there's financial stuff, is definitely a big part of it. That's when I hardly do anything at all. But certainly like partnerships and stuff are a part of business and I definitely do work on that stuff, you know? So we split the load.

[0:47:51.6] SS: Okay, you work on the business side of CodePen, basically on the design side of CodePen and then you have CSS-Tricks to run as well? Everything in, and then also, you have your podcast and you actually manage to publish a book this year in 2016, right?

[0:48:09.2] CC: I did that too, yeah.

[0:48:10.5] SS: So how does your time split?

[0:48:13.0] CC: Yeah, you just wake up and you do some work, you know? I don't really have any secrets for anybody to share in that way but...

[0:48:21.4] SS: I mean, you say you don't have anything like strict and managing your time. CodePen obviously is like the top priority because it's the main business. I mean, do you have anything like —any rituals like I'm writing at least on one hour a day or something like that?

[0:48:35.9] CC: No. You know, I'm envious of people that do though. I have heard that from people you know, "I was able to write this book because I would wake up and I'd go to the coffee shop and I'd write 500 words every day and then I would start my day and if I did that then I would make sure that," — and I never had anything like that and I probably should have and there was little stints I think where I definitely, I would like intentionally context switch in which to give myself some momentum. I literally would get up and go to the coffee shop and just by virtue of being somewhere new, I was able to switch over into Microsoft Word and be able to knock out some stuff with less distractions just because it felt like I was just switching it up and doing something new.

So that was a little trick I guess but I don't know that that was vital. I think it was more important to getting something like a book done was that I wasn't just sitting down on a typewriter with a brand new fresh idea that I was thinking about for the first time. The book was — I had been speaking at conferences for like two years about SVG. So I had this presentations that I could draw from. I've been writing about SVG tons on CSS-Tricks. So it was kind of just like, "Okay, I've learned a ton about this, I have all this existing material in the form of talks and blog post and notes and stuff, can I just compile this into a book?"

I've already told the story of SVG in the way I want to tell it a number of times like how can I just tell that same story in a book format. In a sense it's not like it was easy but it was easier. It just was work that needed to be done now, not like an inspiration didn't need to strike me, it was just manipulating work.

[0:50:15.8] SS: Okay. All right. By the way, to anyone who doesn't know, the book is called *Practical SPG*, it's a book apart and we will link it in the show notes.

[0:50:23.8] CC: Yes you should. Everybody should buy it because I need to sell — honestly I need to sell some more copies of it. Please buy the book, *Practical SVG*.

[0:50:32.9] DT: Chris, what did you think of the overall experience of writing a book? Is it something you'd want to do again?

[0:50:37.4] CC: Yeah, I have an idea for another one. This was my second book. A long time ago I wrote, or I coauthored with Jeff Star, a book called *Digging Into WordPress* and that did really well but I was kind of traumatized by it only in the sense of like, "Holy crap, that was a lot of work for a lot of people and I'm not anxious to do it again." It took a long time for me and a lot of preparation and a good partnership for me to be like, all right, I'm going to try it again.

This days I'm thinking about like, I think I have a new thing to say that again I don't think will be that hard of work. It will kind of be, not a total recycling of other things that I've did but kind of a reformatting and I want to write the book that I think people expect me to write in a sense and I think it's about time for that. I almost guarantee it will take me a couple of years to actually get it done but I think I do have at least one more in me.

[0:51:30.4] DT: Can you give us any hints on exactly what you have in mind, or is it all still secret?

[0:51:35.2] CC: No, I mean, I can't think of why I would keep it a secret but I think I would write something either titled, or eluding to CSS-Tricks. I've never written a book about CSS, why don't I try that and make it kind of the name sake of CSS-Tricks or maybe it will be the story of CSS-Tricks or what I think about running a site or maybe it will literally be CSS-Tricks or something. But I think yeah. Of the books I've written so far, there were pretty far tangential to what I'm kind of "known for" I guess, that like why not write the one that is what people expect me to write I think and about ready to do that?

[0:52:12.1] SS: Cool. I would love to read a book one day about the story of CSS-Tricks and I mean, we can't get it all in one hour podcast but for sure I would love to read a whole book about your story man. It's been exciting just talking to you and getting into what you're doing this days and your story. We have a last question that we'd like to wrap up with and that's about your influencers. Who are your influencers?

[0:52:36.7] CC: Oh yeah, people that I think about? Sometimes I get asked a question like this even while I'm like sitting around with my fiancée or like, "Could I have a month to research this and write a blog post about it instead?" Even if somebody's just like, you know, "What are your favorite action movies or whatever?" I'm like, I can't — I want to look at like a list of a thousand of them and slowly prepare that list for you. I don't want to name someone off the cuff, you know? I like to be researched about my thing, and that's kind of how I feel about this too. It's funny to just name off a few names and then later be like, "Ah, I should have — I have a good list for this."

I would think that the easy ones are my cofounders and all of the people that I work with in all my teams are all inspirational to me in some way but extra shout out to Alex Vazquez and Tim Sabat for running CodePen with me, it's been a crazy journey and they're both so smart and have such good instincts and remain calm, level-headed, kind people and that's inspiring to me to know that we can go through all the stuff that we have and still come out strong always. That's inspiring to me. Of course my parents are wonderful, I always look up to, you know, one

person in the industry I always look up to is Jeremy Keith. I think he's a standup fella and what he has to say and his gentlemanly qualities I look up to.

[0:54:03.9] SS: Cool, one last question, which is divided by two, what's the podcast that you listen to the most these days, and what is one recent great book that you've read?

[0:54:13.1] CC: Oh. interesting. I just got off three days on the road so I listened to a good number of podcasts on the way, that was good. When I have this conversation with most folks it's like, it's always the same ones and I'm guilty of it too. I love all of the classics of podcasting like Radiolab and This American Life and Planet Money and all the NPR ones and stuff. I absolutely love all those. There's another one that I think maybe slightly less people have heard of but I feel like it's just as good as any of those called Imaginary Worlds.

[0:54:43.4] SS: Imaginary Worlds.

[0:54:44.3] CC: Shout out to them. Imaginary Worlds is very good yeah. I enjoyed Dinner Party Download, that's a pretty good one. There's a new Bloomberg one called Decrypted that's fairly good I think. That's also about startups and VC and stuff so probably it will be on ally.

[0:55:00.8] SS: Very nice.

[0:55:01.8] CC: Yeah, I don't know, that's a few of it, not everybody have heard of but they're still pretty big though. They're not like tiny little niche ones like both of us do, I think. Hopefully not forever though.

[0:55:11.0] SS: You'd be surprised by the way of how many people just don't know even the most popular ones like NPR and stuff. So it's good that you mentioned those as well.

[0:55:19.0] CC: We're on the cutting edge though. These are going to get big. Oh, the book right? We just had a friend visit while I was in Milwaukee and they're visiting for just a very niche micro conference in Milwaukee called Murder in Mayhem, which is like a get together for a crime fiction authors. And so I was meeting this fellow for the first time, a lot time friend of my fiancée named Alex Sagura and he wrote a book about kind of a crime fiction book that takes

place in Miami. So I was anxious to read it, called *Silent City* and I find it highly enjoyable. Just a good old mystery, like a “who dunnit?” kind of thing with all the expected twist and turns and stuff and it was fun. And it’s a part of what’s going to be at least a four part series with the main character named Pete Fernandez.

I just enjoyed it. Sometimes that’s a lot of times what people want to read. They want to pick up a Stephen King book or something because it’s just easy and it’s going to be fun and it’s going to be weird and this qualifies in the same way, it’s just a good old murder mystery. Felt good. It’s a very satisfying read.

[0:56:25.6] DT: Very cool. I definitely understand, I get the same amount of fiction as well, always going back to that and it’s kind of like escape I really enjoy.

[0:56:34.3] SS: Cool man. So it’s been great, really fun interviewing you. We’ve been through some very interesting points also about like grow and about like trust with audience and so it’s been great. Thanks so much.

[0:56:46.9] DT: Yeah, thank you.

[0:56:47.6] CC: Yup, it was my pleasure, thanks so much for having me on the show.

[0:56:50.5] DT: Thanks a lot Chris and have a great day.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:57:05.3] SS: Hey everyone, we already told you about the design tools survey that we put together with General Assembly, if you missed that, head down over to hackingui.com/tools and check it out. But now, I would like to tell you about something cool that general assembly made for you. It’s called Dash. It’s a tool to help you learn HTML, CSS and Java script like coding and interactive webpage with your own bare hands. It’s awesome because even if you don’t want to be a front end developer, as a designer, it will help you gain comfortable understanding of coding terminology and also you’ll be able to communicate more effectively with your team members. Plus, of course you’ll gain competitive advantage in a job market.

So head on over to hackingui.com/tools and hit the link to Dash by General Assembly. It's awesome and I actually signed up myself and started learning to improve my front end skills. So again, it's hackingui.com/tools and you'll find the link and banner to Dash.

[END]