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EE Podcast #83 Big Changes for EE & EllisLab

CORRECTION NOV 29, 2012 4PM MT: On the podcast, we made a couple of errors that we'd like to clarify. We mentioned that the previous commercial pricing and non-commercial pricing were \$249 and \$99, respectively. This is incorrect. Previous commercial licenses were at \$299.95 and non-commercial was \$149.95, with the Freelancer license at \$99.95.

Additionally, the podcast has heard that Derek Jones will be talking more about EllisLab and Enterprise in the near future, so stay tuned for that!

[Music]

Lea Alcantara: You are listening to the unofficial ExpressionEngine Podcast Episode #83, talking about the latest news about EE and EllisLab. I'm your host, Lea Alcantara, and I'm joined by my fab co-host,

Emily Lewis: Emily Lewis.

Lea Alcantara: This episode is sponsored by [Focus Lab](#). Focus Lab, LLC is an EE shop who believes in the power of teamwork. If you need help planning, debugging, developing or even training on an EE project, give Focus Lab a call and ask for Erik Reagan or online at focuslabllc.com/ee-podcast.

Emily Lewis: The ExpressionEngine Podcast would also like to thank [Pixel & Tonic](#) for being our major sponsor of the year.

[Music ends]



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Lea Alcantara: So we were originally going to have Dana DiTomaso come and chat about SEO and digital marketing, but due to scheduling conflicts, we are going to be discussing the recent changes with EllisLab and ExpressionEngine instead.

Emily Lewis: Right. We'll try and get Dana rescheduled for our 2013 schedule, but for now, let's dive straight into the recent events.

I took a bit of time off for the Thanksgiving holiday and I know you were on vacation.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: So I turned on my computer yesterday, and wow, all of the news from EllisLab and EE was a big surprise.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. I would say that was my reaction too, and I found it a little odd that they did it on a holiday Sunday.

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: It's kind of strange.

Emily Lewis: Yeah. Well, let's break down some of those changes. First, let's talk about the stuff mostly specific to EllisLab. First and foremost, their new website.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: They gave it a complete redesign and brought ExpressionEngine, CodeIgniter and MojoMotor under the ellislab.com domain, which I think makes perfect sense from a business perspective. As far as the design, I like it more than the previous design. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. Well, I think change is always interesting. You have to kind of get used to it for a bit. For me, the design is pretty much inline ... I'm not surprised by it because it's pretty much inline with the look they began to build in the newsletters.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Lea Alcantara: So I'm not sure I love it. I think it's okay.

Emily Lewis: What do you think about it? Your expertise is in branding. What do you think about your initial impressions of EllisLab with this new brand?

Lea Alcantara: I'm not sure. It feels, in my opinion, a little bit muddled, just personally, because it feels like they are trying to target more enterprise, but it's still kind of kooky...

Emily Lewis: Right. Like they have this superhero illustration, and that interesting hand drawn illustration at the very bottom of the home page that I don't understand at all.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah. So it's kind of...

Emily Lewis: A mix.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, it's kind of a mishmash, like when I first looked at it, I thought it was really clean. It's got a consistent color palette.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Beyond that, like I'd have to really dive into it to see if it's actually on brand or more functional, but an interesting question is, what do you think the EllisLab brand is? Right?

Emily Lewis: Well, I think that's an excellent question because I think that's something they've maybe not struggled with, but it's never been crystal clear, which knowing myself running my own business how important that is to convey, especially if they are trying to now target the enterprise market. It looks like it's a brand that's waiting to find itself.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah. I'm sure that with feedback and over time and reviewing, maybe doing A/B testing or something like that, they'll find a little bit more information, and yeah, but right now, I kind of have mixed feelings. That being said, despite my own aesthetic sensibilities or something like that, none of that really matters if the site isn't functional.



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Emily Lewis: Yeah. I mean, I heard some anecdotal comments on Twitter that the store is pleasurable.

Lea Alcantara: Yes.

Emily Lewis: People liked that.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: The one thing I noticed, and I think a number of other people noticed, is it doesn't seem to convey the features of their products, to find out like what ExpressionEngine does other than it's a CMS, but like the features it has. I don't know where you go to find that.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. Like there was no competitive analysis or even talking about one of its most powerful features, which is its templating engine.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Which is one of the things that sets it apart from the other CMSes. It wasn't really featured beyond "We can get you to do whatever you want or whatever." I do find it strange that the software features and requirements are buried in the docs right now.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So it's there on the site, but you kind of have to...

Emily Lewis: Hunt for it.

Lea Alcantara: Hunt for it. So I'm just wondering, so is the main audience for this site? Repeat customers that already understand EE, or are they expecting EE developers to explain those types of things? Because basically like what are the features they are trying to sell?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Like is it more of the brand feeling as opposed to the nitty-gritty technical aspects? I'm wondering if it just went too far on one end than the other, because sometimes when you



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compare like other – I actually did a talk just a couple of weeks ago about branding in websites and stuff like that, and I was comparing two bicycling/cyclist websites, and one cyclist's website just featured a page with bicycle. That was the main thing, so clearly they are trying to target the technical person that doesn't care about like the frou-frou community outdoorsy feel and they just want you to appreciate the machine for what it is.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Then the other site was the kind of frou-frou. You see the guy in the mountains with the bike so the bike...

Emily Lewis: Conveying the lifestyle.

Lea Alcantara: Exactly, exactly. So it feels like the design direction that they've taken with this is almost like a lifestyle brand direction because it's not really focusing on the technical parts as much, and while I don't necessarily think that there is a wrong tactic with focusing on having that community lifestyle feel with ExpressionEngine, maybe they took it too far because it's still a piece of software.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees] Well, and the website is where my clients may go to get more information about ExpressionEngine, the details of what it may offer, and even just someone who is researching different CMSs and they are trying to do comparisons to see which might be the best solution for their needs. I'm not sure that it's conveyed effectively. But then again, I don't quite know what enterprise means, but maybe if enterprise is where they are targeting, maybe the people who make decisions for enterprise don't need that. I don't really know.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. That's an interesting thing to discuss because I guess, I personally don't talk to my clients about PHP or anything like that.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: They don't even know. Some of them don't even know what the LAMP Stack is at all, right?



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Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Then again, who are you targeting?

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Who is this site targeting? Are they targeting just the end client like the actual client who needs a site, or are they targeting developers who will need to sell this to the client?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Either one though, there needs to be some sort of specification that shouldn't be too hard to find.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: I think that's something that they need to address with this current design.

Emily Lewis: I will say one thing about the redesign and the bringing of the products under the same umbrella, the same domain.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: It signals to me that they are getting more serious about marketing and branding, which is something I've always wanted them to do.

Lea Alcantara: Yes, yes.

Emily Lewis: Because I hate being in a situation where I'm dealing with a client. I'm like, "We are going to build this with ExpressionEngine." They are like, "What's that?" So if this helps get them more brand recognition or name recognition, and that it gets ExpressionEngine more recognition, then that's going to be good for me.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, and the more consistent things are, the easier it is to market as well because then putting it all in one brand then people understand that ExpressionEngine and CodeIgniter and MojoMotor are all in one umbrella, right?



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Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Because some people might still not make that...

Emily Lewis: Connection.

Lea Alcantara: Connection before when it was all disparate sites. Now, that it's all under one domain and one look and feel, that does strengthen, I believe, the brand connection for sure.

Emily Lewis: Right. I think another thing, in addition to sort of that feature set being less conspicuous on the site, another thing that was very conspicuous was the lack of that community partnership logos, the Train-ee, Devot:ee, EE Insider, Creat-ee, the official community partners.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. That was definitely not missed by those in the community. I think then that makes me wonder again what is the goal of the site, and why or who is their target market on trying to sell. Having these giant community partners, I think in the previous site, shows that they were connected to this community and that there is a whole group of people supporting this system. Having them not there anymore makes me wonder why, for one thing.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

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Lea Alcantara: And another, does that mean that enterprise clients don't care about community sites that are full of information. It just makes me wonder like what was the real reason about that.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: It just seems like it was a surprise to many people including community partners.
[Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.



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Emily Lewis: And I mean, while we aren't a community partner, just myself as an individual community member.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: I always valued it when EllisLab announced an official community partner because to me it conveyed that they were trusted, that I could go to those resources and feel confident about the information I was getting. Now, the simple fact is, Train-ee, Devot:ee, EE Insider, Creat-ee, they've all already proven that they are reliable, trusted, established organizations that you can turn to.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: But anyone new coming into EE, they may miss out on those resources.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. That's exactly it. Again, who are they targeting?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Like it feels like the design is targeted to those that already know EE exist.

Emily Lewis: Right. Well, speaking of like who they are targeting, and we've already sort of mentioned this enterprise focus that seems to be where they are going, they've got that new – well, they aren't promoting their official community partners any longer. They do have something called an Enterprise Partner section.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. So in the [last podcast](#), both Paul and I mentioned that we were both part of the Pro Network, and that it hadn't really brought us any huge leads, and one of the major changes that EllisLab just did a few days ago was to get rid of the Pro Network almost seemingly in favor of the Enterprise Partners section.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: So that kind of jarred the community a little bit. They did change it so now old Pro Network links just redirect to a temporary page that explains that they are trying to rethink or



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restructure or reconfigure the old Pro Network, but they've taken down the current list as it stands and the only links to past or current ExpressionEngine developers are those in the Enterprise Partner section.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, and I mean, all of the companies listed on the Enterprise Partner's page are great companies that have long supported ExpressionEngine and done great work, and I don't think I would ever qualify as an enterprise partner because it's just me, myself and I.

Lea Alcantara: No.

Emily Lewis: And I deal with small shops.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: So on two levels, I have two questions, I guess, about it like how did these partners get to be these enterprise partners? Was there some sort of – I don't know – application process or something that I wouldn't have been aware of because I don't function in that world?

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: But I have to say as a small shop, I feel a little left out here. I know I wasn't a part of Pro Network, as I told you guys in the [last episode](#), but I certainly get this impression that the smaller shops, the small developers who have long supported the community, I don't know, they seemed like they are being forgotten about.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah. There is definitely that type of sentiment happening right now. I don't know, like I have mixed feelings about it because I don't think there is anything wrong with having enterprise partners promoting them and all these kinds of things.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: It just seems random. [Laughs]



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Emily Lewis: Well, it seems to be exclusion of the people who are in the Pro Network who may have been smaller.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, exactly, and like I mentioned though Paul and I were part of the Pro Network and we didn't really get any huge leads, but that doesn't mean others have the same experience. For example, Carl Crawley from Made By Hippo, he found significant value in it, and apparently got a lot of calls and RFQs from it. So just because my individual experience doesn't mean that's the greater experience.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So it just makes me a little bit confused, I guess...

Emily Lewis: Yeah, and I think the fact that, from what I understand, the announcement about the closure of the Pro Network or the suspension rather, because they are evaluating apparently what to do with it so it's not gone necessarily, but the announcement was ... they notified members within 24 hours and then it was down.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: That's really quick.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah. That was really quick turnaround time. I definitely think that the Pro Network in its previous incarnation wasn't a good incarnation.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Clearly for Paul and I, we didn't get that much value or as much value as we could have possibly. I'm not a hundred percent sure what could have added more value. There is a million different ways you could tackle that and discuss how that would work. But yeah, definitely, it's an interesting thing to just do that within 24 hours, but at the same time, would people have been happier if they gave them two weeks' notice?

Emily Lewis: Right. People probably would have been upset no matter what. [Laughs]



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Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: But change is hard. That's the bottom line with a lot of this.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. I mean, and then speaking of that, any of the changes like it just makes me wonder if any of this would have gone down, like any of the website changes, the Pro Network changes, the pricing changes, whatever, would have gone down a little bit easier if there was a gradual...

Emily Lewis: A more consistent communication.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, like gradual communication over hint #1, hint #2, or those kinds of things, but I'm not sure though because if you don't like the change, whether you found it out yesterday or two weeks ago, I'm not sure that would have made that much of a difference. For example, if you were going to pull down the Pro Network with a two weeks' notice or three weeks or four weeks, how would you have changed your business?

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: What would you have done, you know? [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Like my business continues onward without the Pro Network.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Right?

Emily Lewis: Sure.



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Lea Alcantara: So yeah, with that being said though, I think that whether or not you agree or disagree with the changes, it's almost a moot point. Maybe it's the communication that's really the issue here, you know?

Emily Lewis: Yeah, I think that's pretty perceptive. That's certainly my sentiment. I think I was spoiled by how engaged EllisLab was when I first got involved with ExpressionEngine.

Lea Alcantara: Yes.

Emily Lewis: And it almost sounds like that I'm describing a guy I dated and now we are not dating.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs] Yeah, yeah.

Emily Lewis: Because I was like, "Oh, I know these people and they value my opinion. They asked me to look at something when I was at SXSW." It made me feel part of something that was bigger than me, but also a unique experience knowing the people who make a product I like so much. And it's been obvious to everyone this past year, maybe even a little bit past that, they've been pulling back from that really intimate community engagement, and I think that's hard when you get used to it. That's what you expect. When it goes away, you feel like something is wrong, even if something may not be wrong.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah. That's exactly it, and at the end of the day, I don't have that type of relationship with every piece of software or tool that I use. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Yeah

Lea Alcantara: If Apple changes something or Adobe changes something, well, we all bitch and moan about Photoshop all the time, but we still use it and then move on.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I think it's like you just said, we had that original relationship and now it doesn't feel like that's there anymore.



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Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So I think I'd be okay with that if the software continues to be awesome, and more communication even if it's not the same type of communication, starts happening.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah, but I still have mixed feelings, to be honest.

Emily Lewis: Yeah. I've gone back and forth from "You know what, it's a business decision, I respect that" to "Hey, they don't like me anymore. This sucks." [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: You know?

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: All right, so let's continue with some of the changes. So another really big change is Derek Jones is now taking the helm as CEO.

Lea Alcantara: Oh, wow, yeah.

Emily Lewis: I think one of the things he talked about on their blog post sort of announcing his new role is that every member of the EllisLab staff is now a doer, a maker, someone who develops.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: And I think that only bodes well for the software itself, for ExpressionEngine.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: If everyone is a doer, if everyone is a maker, then everyone should be constantly involved in making the product better. I mean, that's my assumption about this staff focus.



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Lea Alcantara: Yeah, and for those that don't know much about EllisLab's structure, Derek Jones used to be the CTO, Chief Technology Officer, before he took over as CEO, and the previous CEO was Leslie Camacho.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So that was a little bit interesting too.

Emily Lewis: Yeah. I was reading through Les's post on the EllisLab site where he announced or reiterated Derek's announcement from moving from CTO to CEO, but what was not clear to me is what Les's role will be. He does say that he's going to be involved with the team through the remainder of 2012, but it wasn't clear what would happen after that.

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Lea Alcantara: Yeah. It's just too early to know how these changes will really impact the future of EllisLab and EE.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: But it will be interesting to see how Derek's leadership will benefit the direction of the software. I'm just making assumptions here because he was the CTO. I'm hoping that as the CEO, he prioritizes the technical innovation of the software along with the bug fixes moving forward.

Emily Lewis: Yeah. I hope so too. With that said though, I do hope this seeming focus on branding and marketing continues.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Because I also think as important as it is to make ExpressionEngine awesome, brand awareness is huge, especially if they are going to be changing their target audience.



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Lea Alcantara: Yeah. I think that's always been something about EE, like that's always been an issue, I think, with EE a little bit. Like we have this amazing piece of software, an amazing culture and community, and yet it hasn't reached the sort of critical mass adoption, which...

Emily Lewis: [Agrees] Or even just awareness of it.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Like I saw this infographic the other day. I can't remember who made it, but ExpressionEngine wasn't even listed. It had some CMSes I've never even heard of listed, and I was thinking, "How did those have recognition in the broader industry, but ExpressionEngine doesn't, considering how powerful ExpressionEngine is?"

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah.

Emily Lewis: So we will see. Hopefully the marketing focus will continue.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I would really hope, and I think they need to.

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: That there is a huge need for a better and more focused branding and advertising efforts as well, because I think that's something that has been lacking. I don't know how aggressively they've been pursuing promoting ExpressionEngine all over the place as much as say WordPress.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Some people would say, "Well, you can't compare EE to WordPress and blah, blah, blah. It's huge and all these kinds of things." But it used to be the little engine that could, right?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Like I've been in the web long enough to remember the old Movable Type versus WordPress versus you know. Do you remember Greymatter? [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs] Yeah.



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Lea Alcantara: Like those systems and things like that. It used to be small. It used to be the little engine that could, and then it became huge and then they made a few smart decisions and they got a few great developers to make really big sites on them, and EE is on a lot of amazing sites, but a lot of people don't know that.

Emily Lewis: Right. Well, maybe some of these changes are going to change that.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. Just for those awarenesses.

Emily Lewis: That was most of the EllisLab news, but there is also some ExpressionEngine-specific news.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: The first, which I'm not going to lie, I'm pretty disappointed about, is the lack of a non-commercial license.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: It's no longer available.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I think that's definitely going to hurt a few shops.

Emily Lewis: Smaller shops.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. A few smaller shops or even big shops. I know there is Kurt who runs NetRaising. It's exclusively...

Emily Lewis: Non-profit.

Lea Alcantara: Non-profit, and this essentially triples the licensing fee for every single one of their websites and they have a massive amount of websites to deal with.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So that's going to be an issue for that. And for me personally, I don't think \$299 for any type of site, whether it's non-profit or for-profit, is really that bad.



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Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: But I'm not going to be judging everyone's budget because everyone's got their own type of budget and every non-profit can be big or small. Like I've worked for giant non-profits that work like a corporation and they do have bigger budgets, and I also have the tiny little non-profits run by senior citizens and little old ladies and they are helping immigrants, and they are not lying when they really need all the money.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Do you know what I mean? Like you kind of have to make judgment calls over what projects you want to take based on both your business profit and your own personal interest in that client or project.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And sometimes I think that people take too broad of a brush when they judge licensing pricing.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Again, like for me, with me personally it's not a big deal, \$299 for any client if that EE is the right choice for them. But that's not the case for a lot of folks, and I think there is going to be a lot of unhappy people.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: But what can you do? It means you might choose a different solution instead.

Emily Lewis: Well, I mean, I think that brings up a good point. I agree with you, \$299 in and of itself is not exorbitant, it's not unmanageable, but I do think one good thing, at least, for me as a business owner ... and the new license price is up a little bit. It's up to \$299 now.

Lea Alcantara: Yes.



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Emily Lewis: And it was \$249 before, right?

Lea Alcantara: Yes, the commercial license was \$249.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: And the non-commercial was \$99.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: So that new price point, I think one thing it's going to make me do as a business owner is something I should have always done is more closely evaluate what solutions I use for different types of clients, projects and budgets.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: I always have tried to make sure that when I did bring EE into a project, that it was the right solution for it. But if I do get a smaller client that does have a very tight budget, then this would put me in a situation where I really should more closely evaluate maybe alternative solutions, and that's not a bad thing. That's something I should have been doing all along.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely.

Emily Lewis: Because that's the value I bring to my clients.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah. EE is not the right solution for everyone.

Emily Lewis: Right, right.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. It's just, I know it so much that you want to push it for every client.

Emily Lewis: Yeah. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: And definitely, a price point like this for some people will make you re-evaluate what other options there can be.



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Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: But no one likes price increase, like who does? [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Yeah. I know. Exactly. Good point. And it's not a huge price increase with the exception of if you're comparing the previous non-commercial to the new price point.

Lea Alcantara: However, there was something very major that EllisLab announced which are major changes to support, speaking of pricing.

Official EllisLab support will no longer be available in the forums, instead you can now purchase from three different support plans ranging in price from \$49 a month to \$1,999 a month.

Emily Lewis: Wow!

Leah Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: For me, I don't really know how to feel about this because, for one, I didn't use the forum support as much as I think some other folks did.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: So I don't anticipate this is going to impact my current business too much. But if I do have a problem that I need addressed, \$49 a month, which apparently you could just sign up for one month, pay for one month and then cancel just to get like a single issue addressed.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah.

Emily Lewis: So that's not too bad, but I can't even get my head around \$1,999 a month, like \$1,999 a month.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah. That's definitely an interesting figure, especially because when you multiply that by 12, that's kind of like a part-time employee just standing beside you.

Emily Lewis: Right. Just reading the different packages, there is a Silver package at \$49, the Gold at \$299 and then the Platinum at almost \$2,000.



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Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: And there doesn't seem to me to be a huge distinction between them. You get one urgent ticket with the Silver, two urgent tickets with the Gold and eight urgent tickets with the Platinum. and then they are saying the guaranteed first response is like two business days for Silver. Is that for an urgent ticket? I'm not clear.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah, exactly. Is it just like a regular, because there is unlimited support tickets, so is it a regular support ticket if you're doing the \$49 a month from one to two business days, and if it's an urgent ticket, does that get bumped into four business hours with like the Platinum?

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Like I don't even know what that means.

Emily Lewis: And I feel like even if I'm paying \$49 a month for unlimited support tickets with one urgent ticket. I personally do not feel that two business days is a fast response.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: That seems even slower than what some of the forum support was.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, and definitely two business days for me would be incredibly slow especially if I was paying for the support because I've gotten much faster support on Twitter. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Well, I think that brings up a great point. We've got the #eecms on Twitter where a lot of folks get a lot of help.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: And then we've got the Stack Exchange. I don't know if it's still proposal or beta. I'm a little confused on that, but I know that they are still trying to move that effort forward for peer-to-peer support.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]



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Emily Lewis: And so I'm thinking that this new pricing for EllisLab support is going to probably lead to more active engagement on Stack Exchange and perhaps on Twitter for peer-to-peer.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, for sure. I definitely think that. We've always said that the community is one of the best parts of EE.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

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Lea Alcantara: And I think that will continue on, including support that isn't first-party. I think Twitter and Stack Exchange will really be helpful. I personally haven't used official support in a while because I've been using ExpressionEngine for seven years, so most things I can muddle through and figure out, and anything more complicated, I go to Twitter or Stack Exchange first before even trying to go through the official support. But I know when I first started selling EE as a solution for my clients, I always said that part of the reason why you pay for the license compared to, say, WordPress or Drupal is that first party support is included.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: But now you have to pay extra for the privilege. I think it might become a harder sell for some.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: There is unlimited sites included in even the lowest tier so that's not really too bad.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: But you have to absorb the cost as a developer for the \$49 a month.

Lea Alcantara: Now, again, that's not a deal breaker, especially if you do get the occasional support need, then \$50 a month is not a big deal. I think I have more of an issue over the response time than anything.



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Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Because if I'm going to be paying any amount of money, they should be faster than community support, you know?

Emily Lewis: Oh right. I couldn't agree more.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: So...

Emily Lewis: It will be interesting. One thing I do think whenever something like this changes or new options become available, new products, new add-ons, whatever, all of that leads to more innovation or more changes eventually.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Because if people don't want to pay for this support, then perhaps it will drive more activity on Stack Exchange, which will be good.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: And I will say I'm glad at least the forums will be in place as a point of reference.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah. For those that don't know, even though they've taken away default support via the forums, the forums haven't been taken down. They are still there for you to use as a community forum. They are just not going to have the support staff going in there and tracking things out.

Emily Lewis: Right, right.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, it's definitely interesting times. [Laughs]



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Lea Alcantara: Yeah. I would have to say that's what I can think about. I don't know like my overall thoughts yet, but still I still have mixed feelings about everything. I think we need some time to get used to this.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And really think about our own businesses and see where it goes.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So we will see how we all adapt. If you're good at what you do and you know what your client needs, that should still keep on going no matter what EllisLab does.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, and that's always been the case.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: I do think that intimate community engagement I referred to earlier sort of spoiled us all and contributed to this feeling of shock, I guess, that I see on Twitter about some of these changes. But the bottom line, EllisLab is a company and they are trying to do what they think is right for their company, and I can't fault them for that because I'm doing the same for my business. And I don't want anyone telling me what to do or how to do it when I'm the one who knows what's going on behind the scenes.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, exactly, and I don't want somebody else dictating my choices even if it's a hard choice or an unpopular choice.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: And none of these changes changes the fact that ExpressionEngine remains an exceptional product.

Lea Alcantara: Absolutely. It's still the number one CMS in my opinion too for my clients, so there is always that too.



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Emily Lewis: I definitely think that, like you said, time will tell. Not only in terms of whether these changes benefit ExpressionEngine, but also in how we as community members adapt to them. Right now, the news came as a bit of a shock to a number of people, myself included. And that shock needs to wear off. The Twitter feed yesterday, I had to turn it off at some point because there was so much anger and frustration, and I certainly think that while those feelings are understandable, but they distract me from the reality that I have a business to run; I have clients to support.

Lea Alcantara: Yes.

Emily Lewis: And nothing has changed with regard to my ability to do that.

Lea Alcantara: Exactly, exactly.

Emily Lewis: Nothing. I can still do all of that.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, exactly. I'm still developing. I'm still designing. I'm still running a business, and that hasn't changed. And I think Angie Herrera had a really good blog post that's mostly inline with my thinking as a small web shop, and then Hop Studios also summarizes their thoughts with like a point-by-point ten reactions to EllisLab's policy shifts, so we will have those links in the show notes.

Emily Lewis: Yeah. So I think that's about it for the news, at least, as far as what we want to cover at this point. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah, for sure.

Now, we'd like to thank our sponsors for this podcast, [Focus Lab](#) and [Pixel & Tonic](#).

Emily Lewis: We would also like to thank our partners, [EngineHosting](#), [Devot:ee](#) and [EE Insider](#).

Lea Alcantara: Also, thanks to our listeners for tuning in! If you want to know more about the podcast, make sure you follow us on Twitter [@eepodcast](#) or visit our website, [ee-podcast.com](#).

Emily Lewis: And don't miss out on our last episode of 2012 when we will be speaking and look back at the past year which has completely flown by. [Laughs]



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Lea Alcantara: Yeah, [laughs] it's crazy. So this is Lea Alcantara ...

Emily Lewis: and Emily Lewis ...

Lea Alcantara: Signing off for the unofficial ExpressionEngine Podcast. See you next time!

Emily Lewis: Cheers!

[Music stops]