



## EE Podcast #89 Get to Know #eeecs: Jessica D'Amico

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**Lea Alcantara:** You are listening to the unofficial ExpressionEngine Podcast Episode #89. Today we're continuing our "Get to Know #eeecs" series with special guest, Jessica D'Amico. I'm your host, Lea Alcantara, and I'm joined by my fab co-host...

**Emily Lewis:** Emily Lewis

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**Emily Lewis:** The ExpressionEngine Podcast would also like to thank [Pixel & Tonic](#) for being our major sponsor of the year. [Music ends] Hi Lea, what's new?

**Lea Alcantara:** Nothing much really. Same old, same old. How about you?

**Emily Lewis:** The same here. Last year my first quarter was really quiet in like a frightening way, like I had no idea if I was going to get any work that quarter.

**Lea Alcantara:** Sure.

**Emily Lewis:** And this quarter it's quiet, but I have projects lined up. They are going well and smoothly and it's perfect.

**Lea Alcantara:** Well, that's great news, great news. I've been really busy with teaching. I feel like that encompasses even though I only teach two days out of the week. It's a lot of work.

**Emily Lewis:** It takes so much time, plus isn't your mind kind of on it often. You're kind of always thinking about your lesson plans...

**Lea Alcantara:** Yes.



**Emily Lewis:** And your students and what you are going to cover?

**Lea Alcantara:** Oh, all the time, all the time because even though you have a sort of lesson plan for the year, you're always tweaking it based on how the students react, or you have to figure out whether you need to review something again, et cetera, et cetera. So even before this call I was thinking like, "Okay, what am I going to do for the next class?"

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah, I miss teaching, but I don't miss that aspect of teaching, being able to keep my focus on an actual web development has been nice this year.

**Lea Alcantara:** Sure.

**Emily Lewis:** So we've got a bit of EE news?

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah, so let's get down to it starting with EllisLab support.

**Emily Lewis:** So we mentioned in the last episode that the deadline for renewing your free three-month trial was at the end of February. Well, EllisLab decided that setting a deadline on the offer wasn't needed so they decided you can redeem the Silver Support Plan trial whenever you feel like it. I think it's great because I haven't had a need for it yet, so at this point when I do need it, it will be there for me to give it a try.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah, I think that's great initiative from EllisLab.

**Emily Lewis:** I'm pleased to see that it seems like they are on a constant state of evaluating what they are doing, and they don't seem to mind adjusting if something doesn't feel like it's the right fit.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah, and I think that's a good business practice in general too. Even if you got plans, you've got to be flexible and adapt based on how your clients respond and how the project goes, for example, too.



**Emily Lewis:** I think this move will definitely be welcomed by the community, and could really build a base for that support plan more so than what they were doing before.

**Lea Alcantara:** Agreed, and in other news, conferences! First stop, EECI which is going to be October 14<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> in Portland, Oregon so mark your calendars.

**Emily Lewis:** They are still finalizing details for the conference, but they've put together a survey for you to offer your two cents about what presentations and classes you want to see at EECI this year. So you can visit <http://d.pr/sR6M>. We will have the link in our show notes, but it's a bit of a long survey but it's definitely worth taking.

**Lea Alcantara:** Agreed, and continuing with the conference theme, there is still time to register for EEUK, which will be in Manchester on May 17<sup>th</sup> and it's got an add-on workshop by Low on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Emily Lewis:** I'm so glad to see the community is still thriving with these events. Speaking of community, today we're continuing our "Get to Know #eecms" series with guest, Jessica D'Amico.

Jessica is an independent web and multimedia developer based in Washington, DC. Jess is very active in her local web community. She leads DCEErs, a local Meetup of ExpressionEngine enthusiasts, and is a member of the DC Web Women. Welcome, Jess, thanks for joining the show!

**Jessica D'Amico:** Thank you for having me.

**Emily Lewis:** So Jess, so our listeners know, you are doing us a huge favor joining us today because you're not feeling so well today. [Laughs]

**Jessica D'Amico:** Well, it's my pleasure to be here, but I apologize in advance for the way I sound.

**Emily Lewis:** You sound just fine. I think everyone can relate to this time of year on all the colds and flu going around.

**Lea Alcantara:** Springtime allergies, springtime sickness, yeah. So Jess, why don't you tell our listeners a bit more about yourself.



**Jessica D'Amico:** Okay, I'm a web designer out here in Washington. I have been a web designer for a long time, and I work for myself and with other local agencies and companies in the area. I try to do mostly ExpressionEngine work when I can. I might take the occasional WordPress project as well, and I work with a lot of photographers so I'm looking at a new system out there called Koken. That comes from the people at Dominey Design, which I think is going to be a little bit interesting for creative portfolio type work.

**Emily Lewis:** Is this Koken thing like a CMS, a publishing platform?

**Jessica D'Amico:** It really is. It's mostly sort of an image administration based. If you've ever known anything about SlideShowPro or SlideShowPro Director.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jessica D'Amico:** I've been a long time fan of SlideShowPro Director and its API, and I usually hook that up to EE for photographers who want to have a site that offers more of a range of functionality and blogging and things like that, but I've always lamented the fact that the Director couldn't be just sort of a little CMS of itself, and that I think is sort of what we're seeing with Koken.

**Lea Alcantara:** Well, that's so interesting because I've got a sentimental attachment to SlideShowPro a little bit because I think years and years and years ago when I first launched my site, I launched using SlideShowPro for my portfolio and all that fun stuff, and it's only recently that I took it down because you can correct me if I'm wrong, it's Flash, right?

**Jessica D'Amico:** It's Flash, right. It's Flash.

**Lea Alcantara:** That's why I took it down, yeah.

**Jessica D'Amico:** What I love for my photographers is that SlideShowPro is really just a Flash front-end piece, but if you are there using Director to do asset management and image management, you can hook up to their API, and so you can just hook that up to Cycle or anything you like to just really your own in terms of slide shows or displaying images and things like that.



**Lea Alcantara:** I just want to add like an addendum, an ExpressionEngine addendum, is that while I did run SlideShowPro for the actual slide show aspect of my portfolio section previously, the entire data set was run through ExpressionEngine. So you can still typically use SlideShowPro, if that's the Flash front-end that you want people to see when they are interacting with your photos, but I just use ExpressionEngine to plug in the screenshot and the information and everything and then I output it in XML file based on that, and then that plugs into SlideShowPro, and that's what I used to use. But you were using Director? The main thing?

**Jessica D'Amico:** Yeah, Director is an image administration system so it's an installed software on your server.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jessica D'Amico:** And it has an API. It's written in CakePHP and it's really easy to hook into which is great, so my photographers didn't always love having two systems to log into so they'd have to use image administration on one login and then log in to EE to do their blogging and their site updates. But the flipside is I've always thought for a long time that it's the best image administration out there on the market. If there aren't so many images, if you're not talking about a professional photographer whose workflow is that demanding, one of the nice things about Director is that offers plugins with lightroom and other ways to sort of connect. So photographers, they already have a workflow that's established. If you are just doing more of a simple image presentation, I usually just use Channel Images.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jessica D'Amico:** But I'm excited about Koken because I think it just offers a very sort of simple and streamlined solution for somebody who maybe needs to show a lot of work. There's a lot of client access control in the image setup so that a photographer could log in and create a set of images that's private for client review, but that isn't visible to the world and then maybe that website really



only has three or four real “pages” but it’s easy for them to just have a WYSIWYG editor and throw some text in there as well.

**Lea Alcantara:** That’s cool.

**Jessica D’Amico:** The templating seems really easy also, so if you take a look at their templating and you’ve been using ExpressionEngine for a long time, it’s somewhat similar. Actually, with Koken, I was very surprised, it’s built on CodeIgniter.

**Lea Alcantara:** Oh.

**Jessica D’Amico:** Maybe I shouldn’t say that.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jessica D’Amico:** [Laughs] I don’t know. I don’t know if I should say that. I think that it was interesting that Koken was built on CodeIgniter. I know it’s a project in the works for at least two to three years, and that might also be part of that.

**Emily Lewis:** So Jess, you mentioned in the beginning that you are a web designer. Do you ever consider yourself a developer? You mentioned that you work with an API and hooking things into ExpressionEngine. Do you work with PHP much?

**Jessica D’Amico:** I don’t do a ton of work with PHP, so I don’t really consider myself a developer. I don’t sit down and write sort of high-end code and build and extend things. I’m a little bit dangerous and know how to tinker...

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jessica D’Amico:** I can make things work for me. I think I’ve had a lot of practice with the Director API, and I’ve been using it for years so I’m most comfortable with that, but I’m not a coder in that sense.



**Emily Lewis:** Now, in terms of designer, do you create visual interfaces for your clients, or do you mostly do like the front-end development from someone else's designs?

**Jessica D'Amico:** I do both. I work with designers who hand-off designs to me that I then implement with HTML, CSS and JavaScript for. Or I work with a lot of photographers primarily who have a very sort of minimal aesthetic that I understand and I'll design a site straight out for them and build it as well. So it really depends on the project and really just how a client finds me in what their needs are.

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**Emily Lewis:** Now, how did you establish this relationship with photographers? How did you get into that little niche?

**Jessica D'Amico:** I used to be a photographer many moons ago.

**Emily Lewis:** Oh!

**Jessica D'Amico:** And I studied photography in school and thought I was going to be a photographer, and then just got caught up sort of in the web at the right time. I was a computer lab geek. Not many people know that... I guess they do now.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jessica D'Amico:** And I worked in a computer lab where we had to support all the journalism classes on campus that were being taught and things like that, and after doing a semester abroad and being out of the loop, my boss welcomed me back with the words, "Learn HTML, you're teaching it in two weeks."

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jessica D'Amico:** So that kind of just got me very passionate about the web and blending photography and storytelling online and I've been trying to have some connection to that part of my life ever since.



**Emily Lewis:** How long have you been working for yourself?

**Jessica D'Amico:** Primarily, since the beginning of my career, so since 1998.

**Lea Alcantara:** Wow!

**Jessica D'Amico:** Yeah. I spent a year in New York City working for a photo services company, a stock photo agency sort of, in their web division. It sort of at the dawn of everybody doing image search and things like that online, and then moved back to DC and just was a little bit wary of the wrong job. I didn't want to end up working for the government, not that there's anything wrong with that. I just felt like I wanted to try to do more creative photo-related work if possible. I found a small company down here in DC that was doing a lot of the kind of photo work that I wanted to be doing for really great clients, and I worked with them for a number of years, but I was never really an employee.

**Emily Lewis:** As an independent web designer, do you have a typical day or does your day look different every single day?

**Jessica D'Amico:** I'd say my day looks different every day. I have a typical day now that I have a son, so I think when you have a kid, that sort of snaps you into more of a schedule. So I start out by dropping him off at school and doing a few things, and then get into the office, and from that point on, it really depends on what's going on in terms of projects for me and clients, and then the phone rings and it all just gets shot to hell.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs] So when you say office, do you mean an actual office separate from your home, or do you work from home?

**Jessica D'Amico:** I do both in a roundabout sort of way. I live in the middle of Washington, DC, and our house has an apartment on the lower level, and I took that over a number of years ago for my office space, which was one of the best things that I ever got to do for a work. It means psychologically I have a place to get up and go in the morning and leave behind at the end of the day. And it's always there to meet with clients and be my workspace, but I can literally walk out of it and leave it behind, which is really terrific.



**Emily Lewis:** How many years have you had this separate space? Did you get it because you were having to challenges managing your time and focus?

**Jessica D'Amico:** I got it just because the way that my personal life works out. We have a very non-traditional schedule in our family, and I think if you're going to meet with clients in your home, I will meet a lot of small businesses and independents and photographers and those kinds of people are also like me and have the ability to meet during the day or one will pop out, they may not have their own office, and so most meetings take place sort of in my workspace and then it just means, if you're bringing people at your home constantly, you've got to have sort of a level of presentation and availability, but that is a little bit harder to sustain, I think.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jessica D'Amico:** So I really just wanted to try to have the space that I could meet with clients and it would always be for that purpose, and it's really great. I love it.

**Emily Lewis:** If you don't mind me asking, was it a huge financial investment to make that decision, or did it turn out to be totally worth it.

**Jessica D'Amico:** It's been totally worth it. It's a really long roundabout sort of answer, but it's been really worth it. We did rent the apartment previously, so it provided sort of some motivation to make sure that it's bringing in enough income to warrant that, and then when you add kids and other things to the picture, I don't know if it will be something that I'll be able to sustain forever, but I've really enjoyed having it right now. So for right now, it's what works best for us.

**Emily Lewis:** How long have you been working with ExpressionEngine?

**Jessica D'Amico:** I was trying to figure that out from the email that you sent earlier. I think the first ExpressionEngine site I did was in 2007, so maybe six years or almost six years ago.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** Wow.



**Jessica D'Amico:** So yeah, I like it a lot. I made the mistake of doing one Joomla site, I guess, way back when, and I thought this is not going to work for me.

**Lea Alcantara:** So is that what prompted you to check out other CMSes and then ExpressionEngine came to your radar?

**Jessica D'Amico:** I'm not sure. I can't remember exactly how I found ExpressionEngine. I know I was researching CMS solutions for clients at the time, and people were coming to me, my clients were coming to me asking for things like blogs, and I was trying to deliver solutions for them that made sense, and I found ExpressionEngine, and I'm so happy that I did.

**Emily Lewis:** So you mentioned that you on occasion take on a WordPress project. Is that something that you decide that WordPress is the better solution, or a client comes to you and they have an existing WordPress site or they want to use that particular platform.

**Jessica D'Amico:** It really depends. I think mostly it's a budget decision that a client comes to you and says, "This is my budget. This is what I've got to work with, and here's what my needs are." I think if it makes sense to present ExpressionEngine as an option whenever I have done so for a client in a project that will scale and that has budget flexibility, the choice is always ExpressionEngine. I think when people are met with the option of having a control panel that is beautiful and that gets customized for them and that gets created to work with their workflow and the way they understand their content, they'll always go down that path. I think it's more along the lines of having somebody come to you and you really just understand that the budget, the time frame and the money involved just don't warrant ExpressionEngine as a choice.

**Lea Alcantara:** So what do you consider the strengths with EE? What do you like about it?

**Jessica D'Amico:** I like that for me, and I think for lots of people, ExpressionEngine can make you bigger than you are in the sense that it enables me to deliver a range of solutions that I wouldn't be able to build myself.

**Lea Alcantara:** Okay.



**Jessica D'Amico:** And I think that the huge add-on community just adds to that. I can go way beyond my skill set and do something that's a large-scale site. It has all your needs. You can involve commerce. You can involve high-end member stuff. I'm doing a forum right now. Yay! [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jessica D'Amico:** Yay, Scaffold. So I think it's a great choice.

**Emily Lewis:** Now, what would you say would be the worst thing about ExpressionEngine?

**Jessica D'Amico:** I don't know that I have an answer for that off the top of my head.

**Emily Lewis:** Is there anything, a challenge, that you encounter with every project, or something that frustrates you every time?

**Jessica D'Amico:** I think there is. I think the worst thing about ExpressionEngine perhaps is that there doesn't seem to exist sort of an agreed upon "best way" to start out as a beginner.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jessica D'Amico:** And I think that that is something that most of the developers in our community consider a strong point because ExpressionEngine becomes the framework for them to leap off of and create and develop new tools and integrate them back into the system. But one of the things you mentioned, our DCEERs Group... We have a huge Meetup group here in the DC area. We try to meet every couple of months, and we recently had a presentation from Chris Monaccio on how to move from WordPress to ExpressionEngine. And it made me realize that he was coming at that WordPress mentality, and we all sat there in the room and shared his frustration about not knowing what to do or where to start, or what the best practice is for beginners.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jessica D'Amico:** It seems like we hear a lot that the sample templates that are given out and the methodology of embeds and the solutions that we know early on are then sort of lambasted online later on by people saying that that's a terrible way to do things, and you look around and say, "But



what other way is there? That's the only way I was ever shown." And so, I think newcomers can struggle.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah, that reminds me of one of the [episodes we had with Leevi Graham](#), so it's not necessarily even just pure ExpressionEngine beginners. If you're an employer who wants to hire a new developer, a talented developer, and you're trying to get them quickly up-to-date to using an ExpressionEngine workflow, initially he was struggling a lot over trying to figure out, "Okay, this is how you do it," because there's no standardized way to actually say that. So Newism actually had to do their own painstaking kind of workflow, and then that led to them creating something called a Site Generator, that's kind of in beta that they have been playing around which kind of bundles their specific default ExpressionEngine setup so that their new employee could just get started right away and figure stuff out based on their particular needs.

Our first episode of the year, as well, when we had Amy Witty who is pretty new to ExpressionEngine explained her own process and things like that. It is a double-edged sword because you can make any ExpressionEngine site any way you want really.

**Jessica D'Amico:** Right. You can do anything, and there's no wrong way to do it, except maybe there is.

**Lea Alcantara:** Well, there's a more perhaps efficient way to do it, right?

**Jessica D'Amico:** Right, right, absolutely.

**Lea Alcantara:** Because even my old ExpressionEngine sites, they don't have that much content and they don't have that much traffic or whatever, even if it's filled with a ton of embeds, it still works and it's still fast.

**Jessica D'Amico:** Sure.



**Lea Alcantara:** And the client still is able to update the site properly and all those fun stuff, and sometimes even our best practices were learned through doing it, right?

**Jessica D'Amico:** Oh, absolutely. I think you learn and then it works, and then you think, “Wait, there should be a better way because this is slow or it seems to hang, or maybe I could do this better,” or then somebody tells you like, “This is absolutely terrible. Aren’t you doing this?” And you think, “Oh, no. I’m not doing that. Oops.” And yeah, so I think there’s definitely. We’re actually going to do a Meetup on that very soon that I’m really excited about. It stems from watching Chris and sort of everybody in the room feeling his pain.

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**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah.

**Jessica D'Amico:** And we’re going to do sort of a site breakdown of here’s the site that the owner acknowledges as kind of ugly and it was built and it works, but it could really be refined, and we’re going to break it out into teams and decide how would we approach the “rebuild” of this project.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Emily Lewis:** I love the sound of that, that collaborative process. One of my frustrations, and this isn’t specific to ExpressionEngine, but more the industry in general is that there’s so much of a focus from folks who have years of experience and have learned all the best practices, and on occasion, when they shared those best practices, if a newcomer is reading it, it’s that sense that they are doing something wrong, and the moment you make someone feel that they’ve made a mistake or have done something wrong, they are less engaged in what’s going on. I think there has to be a better way of educating people about best practices without alienating them or making them feel bad for trying something and getting it to work, but maybe it doesn’t follow along with what someone says are the standards.

**Jessica D'Amico:** Absolutely, yeah, I’m really excited about that too. I think we have a wide range of talent at a lot of levels here in our group, and we have a lot of newcomers, and it’s actually really



exciting. We have people that I wouldn't have expected who have joined our group, and I would like to encourage all the Meetups out there to just sort of think about the people that they may or may not be reaching. So we have a member of our DCEERs Group named Houston Ruck who has worked for years with Anna Brown on his website. He works for a non-profit here in Washington, and so because of her great work and because of getting jazzed up about ExpressionEngine, he decided to join the DCEERs and come to some of our events from both the social perspective, but learning more about the CMS and what it can do. And I think sometimes we missed an opportunity as business owners or agencies to reach out to our clients and say, "This is an opportunity here for you to learn more about your workflow and how we can better serve you by building that workflow." So I was really excited that we've had a lot of engagement like that.

**Lea Alcantara:** That's so cool. I think more clients should be involved like that, and it's cool that he was interested enough to do that, but I think also as designers and developers, sometimes we may not ask all the questions that are in our head that they expect or whatever and just having a client saying, "Oh, I never would have thought or asked for this feature," because they didn't even know that feature existed, right?

**Jessica D'Amico:** Right.

**Emily Lewis:** Now, Jess, how did you get started with the DCEERs Group?

**Jessica D'Amico:** That's a good question. I don't know. I think I just started connecting with them after EECl in Brooklyn, and met up with Zac who was the former organizer of the group and who has since moved on. And so just started going to events last year or the year before it.

**Emily Lewis:** Now, you guys put on a great conference, or it was like a one-day workshop type thing last year?

**Jessica D'Amico:** It was like a little day conf. It was really great. Yeah, we had a great time doing it.

**Emily Lewis:** How did you go about getting the presentations and speakers and attendees?



**Jessica D'Amico:** The attendees, I think, were in some ways the easiest part. We have a very large group, and people are excited and they wanted to do more and learn more. As for speakers, I reached out to people and asked them to be involved, and most of them said yes.

**Emily Lewis:** Great, so it was really about working your own network.

**Jessica D'Amico:** It was. A lot of the people I reached out to, I had never met.

**Emily Lewis:** Oh, really?

**Jessica D'Amico:** Yeah, I just thought we're doing something and I'm going to take a shot at seeing if people will go for it, and they did.

**Lea Alcantara:** Oh, that's awesome.

**Jessica D'Amico:** Yeah, it was great.

**Emily Lewis:** Now, this is sort of changing tacks a little bit, but I imagine networking has something to do with this next question: as a self-employed person, how do you get new work?

**Jessica D'Amico:** Almost all of my work is referral. I've had a lot of clients for a long time, and I'm very grateful for that. I think it's really a nice reward when a client is willing to pass you on to someone else and say, "You need to work with Jess," and so I mostly get referral-based work, or a friend-of-a-friend or someone who has heard through that way, and I would say now having been working more with the DCEERs, there's definitely that happening as well, that people are saying, "You know, we've got something that we don't have time for. Do you have a few hours to work on a small piece of this, or there are things I could hand off to you." But it's always really been referral. I don't do a lot of looking for work *per se*.

**Emily Lewis:** Now, you've been doing this on your own since 1998. I imagined you've learned a lot of lessons, but is there one key business lesson that you've learned?

**Jessica D'Amico:** I don't know if I would say business lesson, but it ties into what you just asked about: how did we get people to be involved with our day conf? I would say a life lesson that I learned



is just to ask for what you want. You'd be really surprised at how effective and powerful, and it took me way too long in life to learn that. I wished I had just realized it sooner, that it's just so easy. You may not have it now, so if you want something and you ask someone, they may not give it to you. But they may or they may try to work with you to find a way to make it happen, and I think we don't do that enough. I think from the business perspective, that can translate into just saying to someone, "This has been a great meeting, or I love your mission, or I am passionate about your project, please hire me." Those are really powerful and effective words. They work.

**Emily Lewis:** That's a good point.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Emily Lewis:** I have one last question for you about ExpressionEngine. Is there an add-on that you cannot live without that you include in just about every project?

**Jessica D'Amico:** I don't know if there really is. I think my projects are different and so I sort of mentally formed them into groups. I'd say probably a lot of the Pixel & Tonic, Wygwam and Matrix and things like that. If I am doing image projects, definitely Channel Images is something I use over and over again. I don't know if I think there's one overall. It will probably come to me later. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** Before we let you go, Jess, we've got our own version of Inside the Actors Studio's famous 10 Questions, so it's going to be kind of rapid-fire and you just say the first thing [laughs] that comes to your mind.

**Jessica D'Amico:** Okay.

**Lea Alcantara:** All right, are you ready?

**Jessica D'Amico:** Yes.



**Lea Alcantara:** Okay, first question, Mac OS or Windows?

**Jessica D'Amico:** Mac.

**Emily Lewis:** What is your favorite mobile app?

**Jessica D'Amico:** Oh, probably Twitter.

**Lea Alcantara:** What is your least favorite thing about social media?

**Jessica D'Amico:** The relentless pace and expectation that we have created, and it's all our own fault.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs] What profession other than your own would you like to attempt?

**Jessica D'Amico:** I don't know. Maybe like home redesign, remodel, contracting.

**Lea Alcantara:** Cool, HGTV. [Laughs]

**Jessica D'Amico:** Yeah, I think all design is design really. You design a solution, or you design a room, or you design a website, but it's design.

**Lea Alcantara:** So the opposite question, what profession would you not like to do?

**Jessica D'Amico:** Work for the government. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Jessica D'Amico:** I like to apologize right now to Brett, he's part of our DCEEs and he does wonderful web work for the government. [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** Who is the web professional you admire the most?

**Jessica D'Amico:** I don't know the answer to that question. I don't know that I found that professional yet.

**Lea Alcantara:** What music do you like to code to?



**Jessica D'Amico:** It depends. If you're sort of in a little frantic mode, something loud that you're sort of banging off the walls and just getting you into the groove. Otherwise, if you need to get lost, probably jazz, that I can sort of let blend into the background.

**Emily Lewis:** What's your secret talent?

**Jessica D'Amico:** [Laughs] How can I tell you?

**Emily Lewis:** Oooh, it's a good one. [Laughs]

**Jessica D'Amico:** I'm not... I'm now very not talented. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Jessica D'Amico:** I can't think of one. I can't whistle.

**Jessica D'Amico:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** You can't?

**Emily Lewis:** Next time we meet, I'll teach you how to whistle. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** So what's the most recent book you've read?

**Jessica D'Amico:** I can't think of a book that I read, and yet I have many books on my nightstand. Sorry, I'm blanking.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs] It's okay.

**Jessica D'Amico:** Oh, I read *Bossypants* in the airport by Tina Fey.

**Lea Alcantara:** Oh, Tina Fey.

**Jessica D'Amico:** Yeah, it was funny.

**Emily Lewis:** I liked it as well. So lastly, *Star Wars* or *Star Trek*?



**Jessica D'Amico:** Both definitely.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** All right, so that's all the time we have for today. Thank you for joining us, Jess.

**Jessica D'Amico:** Thank you for having me. It was a pleasure.

**Emily Lewis:** In case our listeners want to follow up with you, where could they find you online?

**Jessica D'Amico:** Probably these days, Twitter. I just shelved my site. I'm in the process of redesigning it, so I'm at [@justjessdc](https://twitter.com/justjessdc) on Twitter, or you can email me, [contact@justjess.com](mailto:contact@justjess.com).

**Lea Alcantara:** Perfect.

**Jessica D'Amico:** Great, thanks again.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Music starts] Now, we'd like to thank our sponsors for this podcast, [Responsive Web Design Summit](#) and [Pixel & Tonic](#).

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

**Lea Alcantara:** And thanks to our listeners for tuning in. If you want to know more about the podcast, make sure you follow us on Twitter [@ee-podcast](https://twitter.com/ee-podcast) or visit our website, [ee-podcast.com](http://ee-podcast.com).

**Emily Lewis:** Don't forget to tune in to our next episode when we will talk about ExpressionEngine caching with Aaron Waldon. Be sure to check out our schedule on our site, [ee-podcast.com/schedule](http://ee-podcast.com/schedule) for more upcoming topics.

**Lea Alcantara:** 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.