

## EE Podcast #100 Celebrating 100 Episodes

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**Lea Alcantara:** You are listening to the unofficial ExpressionEngine Podcast Episode 100. Today we're taking the Podcast full circle with original EE Podcast host Ryan Irelan and celebrating our 100<sup>th</sup> episode. 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 [Mijingo](#). Mijingo makes it easy to learn something new, whether it's the step by step video or a helpful e-book, you can get up to speed quickly with the proven training materials. Universities, businesses and individuals all use Mijingo to learn about ExpressionEngine, Python, Markdown, Omnifocus, Git and more. Learn something new today with [Mijingo.com](#).

**Emily Lewis:** The ExpressionEngine Podcast would also like to thank [Pixel & Tonic](#) for being our major sponsor of the year. Hi Lea, happy 100<sup>th</sup>!

**Lea Alcantara:** Woo hoo! Let's party!

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs] I know.

**Lea Alcantara:** I wish we had like sound effects.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** Like a real radio show like \*sound horns\*

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** It's a big milestone.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah. It has. It has.

**Emily Lewis:** For me it's been an incredible experience. Thanks to hosting this podcast, I think my EE knowledge has like doubled or tripled at least.

**Lea Alcantara:** Absolutely.

**Emily Lewis:** And of course, I've gotten to know some of the wonderful people in our community better, and now you and I are formally working together.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Emily Lewis:** I'm so grateful to our listeners, sponsors and guests for making this such an incredible experience.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah, like I feel really lucky to be hosting this podcast and having the type of response that it's had and the guests that we've had, like it really is a fulfilling experience.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** And I hope for our listeners, it's a useful and fun experience too.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah. So before we loop our guest Ryan and get his thoughts on the podcast, we have some big news for our listeners. After three years, 100 episodes, one live show and .net magazine accolades, Lea and I have decided to make some changes with this Podcast.

**Lea Alcantara:** That's right. Well, we've always considered ourselves educators and connectors, and we believe we can best serve our industry and community by expanding the focus of our podcast. The web community is vast, and we really want to reach out to the larger community by tackling topics beyond ExpressionEngine.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah. So this 100<sup>th</sup> episode is the last EE Podcast. We are rebranding the podcast as the CTRL+CLICK CAST and expanding our programming format to talk about other content management systems as well as industry culture, business practices and web design and development techniques.

**Lea Alcantara:** But while our name and format is changing, you can expect the same level of high quality content that we've always delivered, and we're still sticking to the same bimonthly schedules. So we are continuing with our episode transcripts. We're still scheduling great guests and topics for CTRL+CLICK.

**Emily Lewis:** And all 100 EE Podcast episodes will remain in our archive. ExpressionEngine remains one of my favorite tools. I know the same is true for you, Lea. So we are absolutely going to cover EE topics moving forward. We're just going to cover ExpressionEngine alongside other CMSs and broader industry topics.

**Lea Alcantara:** When we update our schedule, you'll see exactly what we mean. CTRL+CLICK will launch with our next regularly scheduled episode on August 22. Put that in your calendar. Between now and then, we will be getting our new branding in place on the site and making some changes to our EE CMS structure and templates, of course, with the new name. We're changing domain name as well, so beginning the week of August 19<sup>th</sup>, you'll find the new podcast on [ctrlclickcast.com](http://ctrlclickcast.com) and we'll be on Twitter @ctrlclickcast. EE-Podcast.com will forward to the new domain and our EE-Podcast Twitter account will remain in place as a reference and to provide you news about CTRL+CLICK.

**Emily Lewis:** So now that we've gotten that big announcement out of the way, let's bring our guest into the conversation. Today we're joined by Ryan Irelan who was one of the original EE-Podcast hosts. Ryan is one of the most active members in our EE community. He runs the renowned EE Insider resource, founded the EE Help Chat, and publishes some of the best EE training resources through Mijingo. When he's not busy supporting the EE community, Ryan is the Happy Cog's technology and development director. Welcome to the show, Ryan. Thanks for joining us in this 100<sup>th</sup> episode celebration.

**Ryan Irelan:** Hello, thanks for having me. Did I miss anything? Did I miss any news?

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** No, just like random stuff.

**Ryan Irelan:** Actually, I had just stepped away to make some toasts and I didn't know.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** Congratulations on Episode #100. So I was here for one.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** And now I'm here, you guys added two zeroes to it and I'm here again.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** So it's great to be here and congratulations on the 100 episodes, and also on the new show, that's exciting to hear. I think we're going to enjoy hearing about sort of stuff that also helps them use EE because people that have small shops and even large agencies and working large companies while they work with EE, they are also working on that in combination with a lot of other technologies and testing other issues. So I think it's going to be really helpful, and I know you guys will do great at it.

**Emily Lewis:** Thanks Ryan. I think that's exactly where we were coming from with the decision to make the change because both Lea and I, while we love EE, we use lots of other technologies, and being able to talk about those things and what we're learning is something that we want to share. We want to share it with our listeners.

**Lea Alcantara:** Absolutely. So I assume everybody knows Ryan in this community. I think most of them know you more on the professional side. Do you mind sharing a bit more about who you are personally?

**Ryan Irelan:** Sure. Let's see. First, let me think of the things that are terrible about myself.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** Because I grew up in New Jersey. I think that's pretty much top of the list in terms of terribleness.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** And right now I live in Austin, Texas.

**Lea Alcantara:** Very cool.

**Ryan Irelan:** And like you said, I work for Happy Cog. I'm actually the VP of technology, so that my title changed earlier at the beginning of the year, and yeah, so I'm doing that, and I have a daughter and she is two and maybe two-thirds, and let's see, what else? I think that's about it, yeah, but I wasn't really eating, that I didn't really go to make toasts.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** I'm actually sitting in our podcast studio at the Happy Cog office here in Austin, and we don't have a toaster.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** So those are all lies.

**Lea Alcantara:** Wow! Happy Cog really skimps. No toaster?

**Ryan Irelan:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** Fire hazard, fire hazard. Do you know the damage you can cause with a toaster? It's amazing.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah, especially if you involve like a fork or something.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** Yeah, you see? Well, we don't have forks either actually.

**Emily Lewis:** Too dangerous?

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** Well, we have like these wooden sticks with rounded edges on the bottom. When we eat, we kind of stab our food.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** Do you mean like chopsticks?

**Ryan Irelan:** Yeah.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** But chopsticks actually would make it sound glamorous. It's actually... No, I'm just kidding.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** We have everything here, except that we really don't have a toaster, but it's okay.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs] Everything except the toaster at Happy Cog.

**Ryan Irelan:** Yeah, yeah. [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** That should be your new tagline for recruiting new people.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** Everything except the toaster. But we do have a wonderful podcast studio. It's also where I work on creating a screencast as well, so that's where I'm coming to you from right now.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah, you can hear the quality of your audio.

**Lea Alcantara:** Very cool.

**Emily Lewis:** It's nice.

**Ryan Irelan:** Yeah, I'm happy with what we're able to put together.

**Emily Lewis:** So let's talk about your beginnings with the EE-Podcast. Why did you start the podcast?

**Ryan Irelan:** I wanted to get rich.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** Sure, absolutely. That's why everyone starts a podcast.

**Emily Lewis:** That's why we're in it. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah. [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** Right? You guys know, right?

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** Why did I start the podcast? Well, man, I have to try to remember like actually the year that it started, but I started it with Dan Benjamin, and many people I think probably know Dan from the 5by5 Network, and EE-Podcast was at one time on 5by5 before Dan was growing the network to sort of reach a broader audience. So I started with Dan, and Dan had been working on Screencast and I think I had already launched EE Insider and was doing a lot in the EE space and thought that a podcast will be the next thing that I could do to share information and news about EE and Dan was using EE on a couple of projects. We both like podcasting. I had been podcasting on and off since about 2005 or so. Maybe 2004, but pretty early on. I actually co-wrote a book in 2006 or 2007 on podcasting for business as I wrote the technical section of it. It's actually still available on Amazon. You can buy it, I mean, if you want, always.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** But if you do, then it will be like one of the three copies that I get in my roll to report every quarter, so I thank you for the 2-1/2 cents. So it's the same thing with like when I started the EE Help Chat and EE Insider. It was just another way of sort of creating a resource for the community to talk about the ExpressionEngine, to learn about ExpressionEngine, and so that sort of really why I started it and I really enjoyed doing stuff on the mic, and so I'm jealous that you get to do this regularly. I know it's a lot of fun.

**Emily Lewis:** It is. I'm curious when you started doing this, you said it was part to help the community. Was it because that when you were working with ExpressionEngine, you felt that there was, I don't know, something missing in the education aspect of using this system and that EE Podcast would be a way for not only are you to share information but also learn.

**Timestamp:** 00:10:00

**Ryan Irelan:** Definitely. I think at the time when I started sort of doing more stuff in terms of teaching EE and talking about and evangelizing it, the main place that people communicated about ExpressionEngine was in the official EE forums.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Ryan Irelan:** Which sounds crazy now because it's kind of like a graveyard these days in terms of people using it unfortunately, and lots of old threads are gone and it had been pruned and taken off the internet and lots of broken links left and right. But all that aside, that was sort of really the main focus, and I felt like that there could be more to the community than just that, and this is before Ryan Masuga started Devot:ee.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Ryan Irelan:** And I know that he was working on a couple of different variations of that site before it became sort of an add-on repository and then a great add-on store, and honestly, it's one of my favorite resources in the community.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Ryan Irelan:** It's something that I think we've all found valuable to sort of help prop up and assist developers to just let them develop code and you don't need to worry about how to sell it. So back then it was really just the forums. It was really like the main thing, and so let's see, in 2007 I signed a contract just to write a book on ExpressionEngine with the Pragmatic programmers, and then I started writing on EE 1 and then her dev, EE 2, was on its way and we kind of know how that went. It was going to be sooner than it actually was and so I put the whole book on pause because I didn't want to write a book on a software that was going to be old when the book came out.

**Lea Alcantara:** Sure.

**Ryan Irelan:** Printing books is expensive and I didn't want to pay for all the paper, so I put that on pause and then did some screencast, and that was sort of really like my first jump in sort of my first release of training materials. I was trying to frame learning ExpressionEngine a little bit differently and frame it in a way to where people are sort of on a journey of building something and I wanted to do it in screencast form and in a sort of series.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Ryan Irelan:** So they could go through like a series of ten videos and build a site, but each one was very focused on what it covered so someone could buy a single video and jump in because they had a snapshot of the code as it was at the point where that video started. Then after I released the videos, I was blown away by the reception of them and I really started to engage with even more people in the community and then I decided like, "Hey, like maybe we need to do another resource where we have another way to help people."

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Ryan Irelan:** And that's when I started EE Help Chat, and I just decided to start that, and I think that somewhere around there, do you actually remember the date of the first EE-Podcast? I don't, embarrassingly.

**Lea Alcantara:** I think it was like in 2009 at some point.

**Ryan Irelan:** Okay.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah.

**Ryan Irelan:** Okay, so it was after EE Insider then.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah.

**Ryan Irelan:** Yeah, so EE Help Chat was in September of 2008 and then at that time it was very different. Actually, I remember this because like I was all prepped on my desk. I said, "Okay, like I have like resources and I have something to drink, and I have like a snack."

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** And because back then I was really like trying to help and find answers for every person that had a question.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Ryan Irelan:** And of course, I quickly realized, I'm like, "You know, that didn't scale." But the ultimate goal was if I could set this up so people could help each other, then that would be a success, and so as time went on, I sort of slowly moved into the background and people are helping each other. There were times where I couldn't attend, but it would still happen, and people will help each other. Then when my daughter was born, I had to back away a good bit from a lot of things, but that being one of them, and it still went on and that's when I realized like, "Okay, this worked, like people are now helping each other, and I don't have to be the one that helps everybody, which is great." I didn't really have like that idea. I wish I could have. Oh, it's like a big thing I wanted to do. It's where I just wanted to help people.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah

**Ryan Irelan:** And it was cool to see people help each other then after that.

**Emily Lewis:** I think that's one of the most unique things about the EE community. Everyone is so helpful to each other.

**Ryan Irelan:** Yeah, definitely, and it was like that in the forums, and so that sort of what the inspiration was.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah.

**Ryan Irelan:** A lot of people that are regularly in the forums are helping people, even today. I mean, there are still people in there and they're helping, but I think you've seen a lot of stuff get pulled into other resources like my site and other places. So anyways, after EE Insider, then Dan and I had talked about doing the podcast and we wanted to do it on ExpressionEngine so we started it. It was pretty rough going at first. I think Dan was figuring out a lot about how to do podcasting stuff and I was figuring out a lot about it as well, but we did it up until 2011.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah, two years ago.

**Ryan Irelan:** Yeah.

**Emily Lewis:** So you said it was kind of rough going in the beginning. What were some of the challenges you guys faced, you and Dan?

**Ryan Irelan:** Well, we were doing all the editing.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah.

**Ryan Irelan:** Like either myself or Dan.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** And that was a little...

**Emily Lewis:** So time consuming. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** Yes.

**Ryan Irelan:** Yeah. It takes a lot of time, and so it became difficult, and then we just had to sort of like a really simple site where we publish the episodes and stuff. This was like way before Dan had 5by5 up and running, and so yeah, it was kind of a challenge and then we both had like other projects. At that point, I had to do EE Insider and I was doing EE Help Chat and I was also working on a book at that time because it was 2009 so I was actually in the middle of writing a book and then working on videos and stuff, so I had a lot going on so it became a lot of work. One of the things that I don't like to do, and it happens because we all get busy, but one thing that I like to do is to start something and then let it sort of just slowly die.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Ryan Irelan:** It kind of drives me crazy. So it was just like shut something down and that sort of what happened with the EE Help Chat, I just decided that I couldn't do it anymore, so I had to close it down. Unfortunately, Mitchell at Solspace and I think EngineHosting kind of took up sponsorship of that and so it ran with it, which is great because that's kind of what's cool about the community.

**Emily Lewis:** When you decided to hand things over to Lea, was it the same situation with the podcast as it was with the EE Help Chat, just not having the time to sustain it yourself?

**Ryan Irelan:** Yeah, exactly, and Dan was also. Look, I guess at that point, Lea, it was just you and I.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah, yeah.

**Ryan Irelan:** Dan had already dropped off because he was getting busy with 5by5 and then I was planning to move to Austin, selling my house, moving the family here, and again, you just have to, like you have reassess the commitments that you have.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Ryan Irelan:** And decide like what you want to do, what you want to focus on, and it was great because I knew that Lea could take it over, and then you and her joined up to work on it, and I have said this before and I've written about it on EE Insider that you guys have taken it and made it better than I could have with a lot of ton of great effort with the transcripts, the new site, and all those stuff. So I couldn't be happier with what you guys did. I mean, the transcript stuff is just great and there is cost to that and there is time involved and you guys have just regularly published with new shows over the last two-plus years so that's pretty cool.

**Lea Alcantara:** Thanks Ryan.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** What I really resonated from what you said when you started from the beginning, Emily and I didn't really know much about podcasting either besides just showing up on a mic and talking. So we also went through a little bit of like learning curve experience over like, "Okay, let's edit everything ourselves and figuring all these things out.

**Ryan Irelan:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** And you know what though, I think it was necessary, right?

**Ryan Irelan:** Yeah, you have to. You have to kind of do it yourself first, I think.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah, exactly too, like really understand like time management and understanding exactly how things work, and then by the time we got our own editor, at least that way we understood what he had to go through and to explain, "Okay, you need to cut from here and here." So the discussion is a lot more useful than just sending raw material and going, "I don't know, do something with it." Right?

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** Exactly.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah, so I would definitely say it was kind of an uphill learning battle for both of us, but I think one of the interesting things is when we decided to make it a biweekly schedule that forced us to essentially like realize how much time it was costing us really quickly, and then so that even though it was uphill, I think we learned very fast how to deal with things because we had committed to doing a biweekly schedule.

**Emily Lewis:** And I think it also helped...

**Ryan Irelan:** Yeah, that will keep you honest, won't it?

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah, exactly. [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** I think we also realized by doing a lot of stuff ourselves, the value of hiring an audio editor. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** Yes. [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** Because for me, I feel like it took me about three to four hours for every episode.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah.

**Emily Lewis:** And it's totally worth handing it over to someone else who's faster and more efficient and he knows things about audio quality and different levels and things like that, that I never tried to improve or focus. I just cut things out so it was a valuable learning process to understand the importance of bringing in an expert who can be more efficient. It's worth the money.

**Ryan Irelan:** Yeah, when the medium is audio and the way people ingest your material is with their ears, then the quality of the audio is most important.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Ryan Irelan:** You can have the best podcast in the world, but if it sounds like garbage, I'm going to turn it off.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah.

**Ryan Irelan:** And that's like for any show because it becomes difficult to listen because then you have to literally strain your ears to listen to stuff.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yes.

**Ryan Irelan:** And that's why, but it's surprising though because it used to be like when podcasting was first starting, only like the people that really into it got quite the gear they needed to do good audio.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Ryan Irelan:** Most people were using just whatever they could find audio in laptop, built-in laptop mic or some terrible headset.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** The thing they use for like Skyping or whatever, but now, actually because there are so many more affordable options for audio like the Road Podcaster mic, I mean, USB, you plug in and you can use it anywhere and it sounds great. You don't need to have like here at the studio, I have what looks like a three-mic system with a mixer and compressors and stuff, and like you don't have to have all that, and so the barrier entry now to have a good sounding podcast is much lower, which is a good thing because then more people who have the information can share it and share it with a higher quality audio.

**Emily Lewis:** Absolutely. Now, if only Skype would get more reliable.



**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** Yeah, totally.

**Emily Lewis:** Or that there would be like some new option out there.

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**Lea Alcantara:** Well, what I find interesting about this conversation is, yes, this is a podcast that most people, 99% of people who subscribed to the podcast listen to it obviously, but we also have transcripts mostly because a lot of people like the content, but they just want to skim to find like the salient points or click through the show notes and they find value in that. What I found really awesome is actually one of our subscribers is actually hearing impaired. He actually does not listen to a lick of our show.

**Ryan Irelan:** Very cool.

**Lea Alcantara:** But he emailed us saying to thank us for the transcripts because he actually subscribes to read our show on a regular basis.

**Ryan Irelan:** That's really cool. I've actually had people contact me at Mijingo asking for transcripts to the videos because sometimes I did get them done, but I got them done for production purposes, but I didn't get them done to publish and so whenever I can, I publish one now, and the fortunate thing about your listener that isn't listening but is reading is that he doesn't have to hear my terrible croaky voice.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah, the transcripts were a huge priority for me when I came on board because I felt I would be a hypocrite when I speak about accessibility and it's a passion of mine and then our own podcast wasn't really accessible. [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** Right. Yeah, you know, good point.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah. But then it also comes with the added accessibility for search engines who can now read our content that it's in the audio and give us some good keyword exposure.

**Ryan Irelan:** It's important because a lot of people are searching for things about ExpressionEngine like one of the podcasts we're going to talk about is caching. People search for stuff like that.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Ryan Irelan:** And if they come across your show, the only way they have to sort of get access into that is through the Google searches. So yeah, it's critical. I wrote about it at some point that I think it's really important that as many people as possible who are doing podcasts and screencasts and stuff like that make their content more accessible. I mean, obviously, because for hearing impaired, but also for people to find it too.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah.

**Ryan Irelan:** Audio and video is varied right now in most cases unless you're using a higher end platform that has some transcription services built in, and if it's not in the body of the page like you guys do along with it, then it's going to be really difficult to find.

**Lea Alcantara:** Absolutely, so why don't we take a look back at our favorite episodes then. All three of us have picked a few that's really left some impression on us. So Ryan, why don't you start? What's your first favorite episode?

**Ryan Irelan:** So the one I want to start with is Backup Options, which was the show you did with Eric Lamb. Lea, we were emailing about this. I know that I said, "What's not to like about Eric?"

**Lea Alcantara:** Yes. [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** He's one of my favorite guys in the community. I got to meet him at the last ExpressionEngine conference, and great dude. He has reached out privately to help me with stuff when I ran into issues on my migration to EE 2 and always willing to help. Again, the backup stuff is really important because you don't want to rely on your host as the only way for your backup, but you also don't want to rely on your client so like you want to make sure that you set up a good system for them. So obviously Eric is the natural person to have on the show because he writes software that does backups so he has – I think it's called – Backup Pro.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** Yes.

**Ryan Irelan:** And I actually run Backup Pro on the Mijingo.com instead of ExpressionEngine, and so I run that so I make sure that my database is backed up regularly.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Ryan Irelan:** And my files are also backed up and zipped. So the great thing about that for me is an extra layer of backup. EngineHosting is my host, so of course, who does regular I think nightly database dumps as well, and all that stuff is Version Control so I have access to everything, but it never hurts to have like a nice backup of your database and of your files all zipped up. So that was a great one I think just in terms of sharing the gospel of backups to everybody.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah. [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** That's sort of how my picks are kind of framed to sort things on important topics that I think that everybody should know about, and that's one, backups.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah, I have to say that's one of my favorite episodes too. I think the biggest lesson is it's really not if but when backups are necessary. That was how important he mentioned that, and how it's good to have many days' worth. So here is Eric discussing [how he learned the importance of backups the hard way](#):

*Eric Lamb: The reason why I tend to keep so many backups or so many days' worth of backups is because I've been hacked and I didn't even know it, and so trying to restore uncompromised files became a bit of a problem.*

**Emily Lewis:** One of my favorite episodes was our talk with Erik Reagan about documenting ExpressionEngine. This episode really made me consider a bigger picture approach to documentation. What I was doing prior to our discussion with Eric was basically commenting in my templates, commenting in my CSS, HTML, et cetera, but taking a bigger picture approach to it, I could use my documentation to guide my project management and future projects. So it completely changed my development workflow and my project management workflow. So [here's a clip of Erik explaining the goal of the documentation](#):

*Erik Reagan: The goal of the documentation is to provide yourself a roadmap, and with any type of code, it's kind of weird area when you talk about building a website. If you are developing software, I think it's a little more of a clear picture because to me documentation really does need to come first with software. With a website, there is a little bit of grey, I think, just because of the tools that are out there to speed up a process and the types of processes that go into creating websites and the design aspect. So documentation, for us, definitely needs to start before the development process and it just creates that roadmap.*

*And whenever there is a custom add-on or something involved, it is absolutely necessary and even in more detail. But to touch on the other side, it's also maintained throughout the process of the development. So we will start*

*with the kind of a core set of structure for the channels and custom fields and all that alongside maybe what add-ons do we intend on using.*

*Before we build the site, we pretty much know the add-ons we are going to be using, so we will document those things. And if there are any nonstandard, what I would consider nonstandard ExpressionEngine techniques that I'm going to use, I'll probably document that just so that if I have, like I said, somebody new on the team or if for any reason, we work with other contractors for a project, they might not build things the same way we do. So it's important to document some of the approach to what you are doing. I think we all kind of know that with ExpressionEngine, its greatest strength is also its weakness in that you can do so many things in so many different ways and won't get the same result in the end.*

**Lea Alcantara:** So Ryan, another of your favorite episodes was caching. You mentioned that earlier in our conversation, and it was with our guest Aaron Waldon. Why did this one stand out to you?

**Ryan Irelan:** Again, another important skill and piece of knowledge that people need to have when they start launching sites, especially sites that are fairly complex, that perhaps involve a lot of queries to the database and maybe sites they need to perform very highly because they're going to have moderate to high traffic. So I think it's important to know the tools out there. We all know that caching is available in EE and Aaron has a great add-on called CE Cache. As I was like going through and reviewing and trying to choose the episodes I want to pick out, I actually was in the middle, literally in the middle of troubleshooting some caching issues on a site that I'm working on and some performance issues, and so I just had it started. I just installed CE Cache and see if that would help, and this isn't a commercial for Aaron's add-on, but it was amazing.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** It was amazing what that was able to do, so I was like, "You know, this is really important to know. Not only is EE caching one way to go, but that there are other options out there, so it's important that everybody goes back and listen to the caching episode with Aaron."

**Lea Alcantara:** And [here is the clip from our episode with Aaron](#):

*Aaron Waldon: Caching can be a tricky thing because like we're talking about before, like if you're using the native tag caching, it's kind of like lottery. If you're the person who hits it every 30 minutes or how it often refreshes, you're still going to get the full force of that page. You're still going to be kind of heavy for you. In some pages, that's okay. I've talked to some people who they have like a map that's being generated with ExpressionEngine add-on that will have like 10,000 data points. That page has to be cached or it takes 20 seconds to load. Do you know what I mean? And then with CE Cache, it will take, if they are using static caching, it will be super fast, and if not, it will take maybe a second or something just because the page is so huge to transfer.*

**Emily Lewis:** Many of my favorite episodes over the course of the past two years focused more on business practices than ExpressionEngine. I think it's probably because still I feel like I'm in the early phases of running my own business, so those learning from people who are more establish has a lot of appeal for me. Our episode with Paul Burton talking about contracts had a huge impression on me. Paul not only offered valuable advice about contracts which I really, really needed, but he also made me reconsider my business in a more serious way. I always thought of myself as a freelancer. That was just the common term I heard, but after hearing Paul describe what he thinks about freelancing, it really made me take my business a little more seriously. So [here's a clip of Paul talking about what freelancing means to him](#):

**Timestamp: 00:29:52**

*Paul Burton: I don't look at freelancing as a legitimate business that can go the long haul. When I started in this business 18 years ago, I called myself a freelancer because I didn't know any other way to describe myself.*

*And at that time I was literally doing project to project work. I wasn't at that time savvy enough to be able to say, "Okay, I'm going to upsell this client on this and that and the other thing." Because the work that I was doing was everything from storyboards for advertisements, to illustrations and then eventually getting into web banner ads and things like that.*

*So as my business grew, I started to understanding and realizing a few things, and I said, "If I wanted to succeed, I had to start treating me and my business as an actual business." And that meant that I had to start approaching projects from the standpoint that I'm not just a hired gun, I am a partner, and that's where the sales, the whole idea of learning how to sell myself as a business came into play.*

*The bottom line is like the word "freelance" actually bothers me because it has the word "free" in it. I can't tell you how many clients I've had that says, "Man, you charge a lot of money for being a freelancer." And my response is, "A, I'm not a freelancer, and B, I'm really good at what I do, and if anything, I'm undercharging for my work." So I would like to see the industry as a whole move away from the term "freelancing," and I don't care if you call yourself an independent creative god, I don't care.*

**Lea Alcantara:** Speaking of business, I also really loved one of our more recent episodes, Episode 97 with Carl Smith.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** So Carl offered so many valuable insights. It's really hard to pick just one, but [here is a clip with him talking about priorities, focus and goals.](#)

*Carl Smith: I actually have a list of three goals that I just keep in Trello account. One is personal, one is family, and one is business, and when I get up in the morning, I kind of just give myself a few minutes to figure out what feels the most out of sync right now. What am I most worried about is one way to put it. But I look at those three options I have and I kind of prioritize my day around where I need the help the most.*

**Emily Lewis:** For my last favorite episode, I can't forget to mention our discussion with Ian Pitts and Adam Wiggall on Version Control. I read about and heard lots of people talking about the benefits of Version Control, but hadn't gotten into it yet, and I was pretty much afraid of it. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** Anything that involves terminal gets me a little nervous, but anyway, our conversation with Ian and Adam was the first time I really started to see how Version Control could be applied to my own projects, especially because at the time I was just working by myself. So here's a clip of [Adam explaining how Version Control is as valuable to a single front end developer as it is to back end development.](#)

*Adam Wiggall: If you are involved in front end, you are writing lots and lots of codes, whether it would be HTML, CSS, JavaScript. So having that all into version control is an absolute. It's a massive, massive plus to any project that you get involved with. I've even spoken to a few developers, designers, front end people, and freelance people. Often they work alone, and it's just them and the client, and that's one of their reasons for not getting involved. They say, "You know, it's just me. I don't work on a team. None of my codes are distributed."*

*If you work on your own and you are not using Git, that's no excuse because it really, really helps cut down so many of the problems you can have if you need to go backwards in your code, revert to something that you were looking at previously. If a client changes their mind on something or wants a new feature or an add-on, having a*

*version control system in place makes all of that so much easier. So whether you are on own or on a big team or even a small team like we are, we really wouldn't want to live without it. It's all in there.*

**Lea Alcantara:** Of course, I have to give a nod to Episode 80 and that's the episode where we recorded live at EEI in Austin.

**Emily Lewis:** That's so fun.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yes. So this episode is a favorite for so many reasons, but the energy of the show really reflects how wonderful the EE community is, and so [here's a clip from our trivia contest where Anna Brown's competitive side came out.](#)

*Lea Alcantara: All right, so everyone, gird your loins. [Laughs]*

*Emily Lewis: [Laughs]*

*Lea Alcantara: Come on. Okay, the first question, step back, Anna. [Laughs]*

*Emily Lewis: [Laughs]*

*Anna Brown: I've cheated already. I became poisoned with success.*

**Emily Lewis:** I think the one thing we can all agree on is that the very best thing about EE is the people involved with it. Without Rick Ellis, we wouldn't even have ExpressionEngine. So Ryan, why don't you tell us about your final favorite episode?

**Ryan Irelan:** Yeah, I went back a little bit to find this one, and it stuck for me for a couple of reasons. One, because all my conversations I've had with Rick, I have had a number of conversations in person and in private, and he's always struck me as a very thoughtful person who definitely has a unique take on things. I know that people that are newer to ExpressionEngine probably might not know much about Rick. He definitely isn't as visible in the community as he perhaps once was, although I don't know if he ever has been like super visible, except for very, very early on in the pMachine days. But I think it's a great show, that's the first one I actually thought about because I just think I remember talking to Rick that day and truly enjoying the conversation. It reminded me a lot. I had a great conversation with him at South by Southwest one year, and then again at the EEI in San Francisco, we had a great conversation as well. So anytime I get to talk to him, I really enjoy it and so that was the one that I wanted to pick. It's a little bit of an oldie. I'm not sure that all the content is relevant now, but Rick definitely he has a very interesting background in terms of the type of work that he's done and the people he's worked with before. He even created CMSs and he also has a lot of interesting stories about the stuff that he was doing at the time and I'm sure if he was on the show again, he would have interesting stories about what he's been doing since then. So definitely, I think a highlight in the catalog of shows for us.

**Emily Lewis:** [Here's a segment of Episode 44 with Rick Ellis of EllisLab:](#)

*Rick Ellis: It's like when you asked a kid, "Hey, what are you going to be when you grow up?"*

*Lea Alcantara: Yeah.*

*Rick Ellis: I've always felt like, "Well, why do you have to be one thing? Why can't it be about the journey? Why can't it be about the process of discovery and a process of immersion into things for a period?"*

*Lea Alcantara: Yeah.*

*Rick Ellis: And that's always how my life has sort of gone. It usually runs in about ten-year cycles where I get really obsessive about something, and when the whole software thing started, and I guess that's why I feel like I was really suited for the startup. There's a kind of renegade nature when your company is a startup and it's all hands on deck and there's just this crazy sort of frenetic energy around it. But when that turned a few years ago, and EllisLab had to make that transition to being what Les has always called "cowboy coding" to actually being a company with human resource policies and with structure and with a development process and all these things, on*

*a personal level, I realized that that's not what I'm suited to do to make that transition and to push that company that way. I'm so thankful that Les and Darren, these guys were there to sort of do that because that's what they crave and they want to see that growth happen and that transition happen. But for me on a personal level, it's always been about finding those interest and then really digging into those interest and doing it to the extent you can, and then once it doesn't really satisfy you anymore, then it's time to sort of reevaluate and maybe there's something else there that pulls you.*

**Emily Lewis:** We really have had so many great episodes, topics and guests. There's always something I learn from each and every one, and I hope our listeners do as well.

**Lea Alcantara:** Well, now that we've looked back, let's look forward to the future. Ryan, how do you think the EE community can best help each other and continue to thrive?

**Ryan Irelan:** Oh wow! I would say be nice.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Ryan Irelan:** Help each other.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** I know you guys talked about this on another episode, really focus on the fact that everybody is after the same goal in their work regardless of the tools they use and don't be a software, a series of files that are compiled and run on a computer. Don't let that become something that really drives you to be too happy or too angry. It is what it is, but I think that everybody should just continue what they're doing. Continue helping each other on Twitter and if possible, in the forums and continue supporting people that are creating good stuff and have been adding. For years have been adding a lot of value to ExpressionEngine. Remember that those people added value by first usually offering a lot of free stuff to the community and then maybe later with add-on developers, maybe started charging for it, but just remember that it's the individuals and the small companies in the community that together are what makes it so strong. So I would say be nice, help each other, be civil on the #eecms.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Ryan Irelan:** I've said that before, and I always get negative feedback about it, but really, be civil and keep going. Create cool stuff or whatever, or create a podcast, whatever. Whatever happens, I think it's going to be cool for more people to jump in and participate.

**Emily Lewis:** How about you, Lea, what do you think is critical for the EE community to thrive in the future?

**Lea Alcantara:** I personally think it's to – I'm going to jump in from Ryan's last point – really do something, whether it's to make an add-on, whether you want to start your own little resource site. That's basically have been the backbone of the community. Somebody has decided, "Oh, there's a gap in knowledge here or engagement here, why don't I start something." And that includes local Meetups, and I think that's really, really important, and there are certain Meetups that I hear about. For example, like the Portland Meetup and even here in Seattle, they're super useful with some of the most amazing like presentations out there to attend and to just engage each other. If you can't get to the ExpressionEngine Conference like definitely go to the local Meetups and do something.

**Timestamp:** 00:40:18

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Ryan Irelan:** Yeah, go to a Meetup as soon as you can whatever one is closest to you. There's a lot of great people. I was in Toronto for an extended period of time earlier this year, and I got to go to the Toronto Meetup, and it's very small, but a nice group of people and they are all really, really passionate about ExpressionEngine, and they also have like different interests so we didn't just talk about like curly braces and parameters the whole time.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Ryan Irelan:** There are other interests and a lot of passionate, interesting, opinionated people, and yeah, I can't recommend Meetups enough. I actually got my first job after graduate school because I had been attending a user group and it's sort of this is before Meetup.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Ryan Irelan:** But a user group, which is sort of what Meetups are now, and because of the people I had met there, I had someone that knew what I did and that I had graduated and finished grad school, that he was able to connect me to someone in their company and got me a job and sort of set me off.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Ryan Irelan:** So there's a lot of benefits there from learning from others and just networking and just hanging out with people that have at least a similar interest as you.

**Lea Alcantara:** Agreed, agreed. So wow! We talked a lot today so that's all the time we have. Thanks for joining us, Ryan, and thanks for everything you've done for our community.

**Emily Lewis:** Ditto, ditto.

**Ryan Irelan:** Thanks Lea and Emily. Congrats again. Good luck on the new show and maybe I'll be back one day.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah, why not?

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

**Ryan Irelan:** They can find me at [Mijingo.com](http://Mijingo.com), and [ryanirelan.com](http://ryanirelan.com) is my personal site. Of course, [happycog.com](http://happycog.com), if you're looking for the work that Happy Cog is doing, and on Twitter I'm [@ryanirelan](https://twitter.com/ryanirelan).

**Lea Alcantara:** Perfect.

**Emily Lewis:** Thanks again, Ryan.

**Ryan Irelan:** Thanks.

**Lea Alcantara:** Now, we'd like to thank our sponsors for this podcast, [Mijingo](http://Mijingo) and [Pixel & Tonic](http://Pixel & Tonic).

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

**Lea Alcantara:** Also, thanks to our listeners for tuning in. Without you, we never would have reached this 100<sup>th</sup> milestone. We hope you continue to listen as we move forward with the CTRL+CLICK CAST. So make sure you follow CTRL+CLICK on Twitter [@ctrlclickcast](https://twitter.com/ctrlclickcast) or visit [ctrlclickcast.com](http://ctrlclickcast.com).

**Emily Lewis:** And please tune into our first CTRL+CLICK episode on August 22<sup>nd</sup> when Lea and I will talk about transitions. We'll share even more details about why and how we are transitioning EE Podcast to CTRL+CLICK as well as how we've transitioned our businesses now that Lea is part of the Emily Lewis Design team.

**Lea Alcantara:** This is Lea Alcantara.

**Emily Lewis:** And Emily Lewis.

**Lea Alcantara:** Signing off for the last unofficial ExpressionEngine Podcast. See you next time on CTRL+CLICK.

**Emily Lewis:** Cheers. [Music stops]

**Timestamp:** 00:43:03