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CTRL+CLICK CAST #032 Build Planning for CMSs

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Lea Alcantara: You are listening to CTRL+CLICK CAST. We inspect the web for you! Today we are sharing our tips and tricks for planning CMS builds including ExpressionEngine, Craft and Statamic. 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: So this is our first podcast in a long time with just the two of us.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: Before we get into our topic, what's been going on with you, Lea?

Lea Alcantara: I took a whirlwind trip to Vancouver this weekend.

Emily Lewis: Oh, nice.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah. It's one of those things where I've lived in Seattle for about a year and a half now already.

Emily Lewis: Oh my God.



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Lea Alcantara: I know, time flies, and even though there are certain cities and road trips to be had, Rob and I haven't really gone on them.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And so the whirlwind trip really literally happened in like, "Hey, why haven't we gone to Vancouver yet? I don't know, what are we doing this weekend? Let's just go." [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: That's so cool.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I know. It was great, especially because you know how much I'm a huge foodie.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And Seattle is a big foodie town, but for some reason, Japanese food and Chinese food isn't as great as, say, Vancouver is. I mean, there's a huge Asian population in Vancouver, so the first thing we did was go to an izakaya and eat all the Japanese food we could have.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: So that was fun.

Emily Lewis: Nice.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Good. So was that like a long drive?

Lea Alcantara: No, you see, that was the thing. The longest part of it was Customs, literally 50 minutes in the car, just lining up, which was annoying.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Lea Alcantara: But the actual journey, like if there was no Customs, it would have been three hours, two and a half to three hours to get from point to point, but because of Customs, there was an essentially an extra hour just sitting around waiting.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: but otherwise, that's a pretty short like drive.

Emily Lewis: Nice.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: I'm sure you'll probably go back a few more times then. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah. Now, it was really funny because it's so close by, it's like, "Oh, I'm back in Canada again."

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Like Canada, US, and then just seeing how my cellphone switched from AT&T while I was waiting in line at Customs, like literally at the border, and then all of a sudden, it was nope, now there's data charges if you start using it, and I'm like, "Oh." There was literally like a foot difference before that's switched on and off, and I was just thinking, "How do they know?" [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: The magic of GPS. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I guess so. I guess so.

Emily Lewis: Well, that sounds nice. Yeah, I had a very low key weekend doing a whole lot of nothing. I'm still kind of recovering from a cold that I picked up when you and I where in New Orleans for CSS Dev Conf.



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Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: I can't seem to shake it, and I guess it's just maybe a combination of the change of season plus being around a whole bunch of germs. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, and conference is always fun, but then there's consequences. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Yeah. Well, I can't even 100% guarantee that it was from the conference. Every time I get on a plane, I feel like I get sick.

Lea Alcantara: Right, right.

Emily Lewis: That always makes me paranoid being on a plane.

Lea Alcantara: It's like isolated tube of germs.

Emily Lewis: Oh God, that's totally what it is.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Oh, I really hate flying. All right, so let's get to today's episode.

Lea Alcantara: I'm good.

Emily Lewis: I wanted to start with a listener question.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: Since we're going to be talking about EE, Craft and Statamic today, I wanted to discuss choosing the right tool because listener Curtis Blackwell sent us a tweet, and he wanted to find out when is each the right tool for a project. So what are your thoughts on that?

Lea Alcantara: Well, for me, it's kind of like Goldilocks and the three bears.



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Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: There are just so many things to consider, and sometimes one CMS is better than the other for a particular scope. So for me, I feel like the first thing to consider is understanding the scale of the current site as well as they how wanted to scale in the future.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So where the site is currently may not be where it is later on, or maybe it will be, and that really, really I think establishes which CMS you might want to think about, and then quickly after that, does it need a database or not?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So I feel like, is it going to be sticking around for a while? Is this data need to be exported very easily or have some really crazy dynamic needs and logins for some reason?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And I want to mention that sometimes that might seem complex, but it might not actually be. So for example like when we had that episode on Statamic and ecommerce, I learned that you don't necessarily need a database for that, you know?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Because I feel like when somebody thinks, "Oh, ecommerce site, let's just jump straight into ExpressionEngine because it's got robust third-party tools and testing and it's a huge CMS." But that might be overkill if all the client wants is to sell like a few t-shirts and mugs and the rest of the site is brochureware.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Lea Alcantara: So if you install ExpressionEngine, it's just, "Well, why do you need all the other bells and whistles it has if that's all that client wants to do." So Statamic makes more sense.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: But thinking about that scale part in like what's happening in the future, let's say that client, that same mug-selling client, wants to have membership tied to purchases and he wants a way to export that data easily, so he can do his own statistic thing in his own way, and then he also wants to sell more products in the future and have dynamic data of history of that kind of stuff for their memberships based on behavior or whatever, well, I feel like in that case a database makes more sense.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So then at that point, we'd have to look at Craft or EE.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And then after that, I think about, "Well, what's the community behind each tool?"

Emily Lewis: Absolutely, yeah.

Lea Alcantara: Because when I'm thinking about scale as well, I can't discount how battle tested certain things could be and how good the third-party add-on ecosystem is. So sometimes for me, if there's a make or break functionality that one CMS has over the other, even if the rest of the features match, I'll most likely choose a software that has that make or break functionality. Even if I like the user experience of another one, that functionality goes first and foremost because I'm trying to make sure that the client, their needs and their goals for the future is dealt with.



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Emily Lewis: Yeah, I think scale is a huge part knowing what the client needs in advance. In fact, I feel like that's one of the reasons why we spend so much time not just in the discovery process once we sign a client, but even before we've engaged with the client, when we're dealing with the prospect to try and to get a sense of the scope of their project beyond the bullet list that they have in their RFP.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: But for me, I also have to admit that when I'm thinking about the right CMS for the project, it's a combination of those client needs, but also what I know how to use.

Lea Alcantara: Yes, right.

Emily Lewis: So I've been using ExpressionEngine for – oh I can't do math in my head but – awhile.
[Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yes. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: And I've only been using Statamic for a year.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: You do all of our Craft builds, so I really just know Craft from the tutorials I've done and using it as a content author, but I never built in Craft.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: And so I think about what I know how to use. So for example, if it's a simple brochureware-type site, like I can totally do that in EE. I feel like I can do anything in EE.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: ExpressionEngine is way too much for that.



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Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: And I kind of like that right now years after I've been using ExpressionEngine, I have an option. Before, I'd use EE, but I would feel like, "Wow, this hosts a whole lot more than this client needs." So I like that we have options, and maybe even Craft might be too much for a brochureware-type site.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: So I think with Statamic, I can build simple sites like that. But then looking at the project closer, they need brochureware now, but expect more functionality later, and so I started thinking about what will support the site's growth over time.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: Statamic could certainly be a good fit, but like you were describing, like what if that brochureware site might need to expand and include something like membership or even if it's brochureware site, but it's coming from another platform that's database driven and they want to import that data, I have no idea how I would do that in Statamic.

Lea Alcantara: Right, right.

Emily Lewis: Because it's all flat files.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: Like there may be a way to do it, but I don't know how to do it, and so for me to pick Statamic wouldn't make sense.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.



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Emily Lewis: In a year, if I figure that out, then Statamic might be okay for that, and so it's a combination of what the project needs, what it needs now and then in the future, that scale you were talking about, but also what I can proficiently build in a reasonable amount of time.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I think we can't underestimate the wealth of knowledge we have with one over the other.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Especially as running as running a business and stuff, time is money, right?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And if it's taking way too much time and we know we can build it confidently with another system, then we'll build it with that system that we're confident in, especially if there's a time crunch or whatever. I feel like it makes sense to invest in time learning other CMSs so we have a more holistic approach and understanding over the needs for our client's projects, but I feel like at least in our experience, we chose particular projects that gave us more flexibility in order to actually sit down and learn and understand the system.

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Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: But if there was a time crunch, I feel like both you and I would be like ExpressionEngine.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, we know it. We're fast with it.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.



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Emily Lewis: We know the add-ons that we trust. We know the community that brings up that community point even more so.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: I mean, I can honestly say that I enjoy working with Statamic, but I'm not as familiar with what some of the add-ons are because I haven't sort of moved in to that yet. I've been just building with core. So if I needed more, I would really want to experiment a little bit first.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I agree, and I mean, I love developing for Craft, and to me, after our second site with Craft, it was just easy for me, but currently, I'm that's a young system, so there were a couple of RFPs that we were looking at, and there's that make or break functionality. It's like that one thing that I couldn't do or it just started to do, so my confidence in it isn't as high.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So then it's like, "Okay, we'll have to choose ExpressionEngine perhaps with that instead." Right?

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: So that's where we're coming from, and speaking of ExpressionEngine, since we both started with EE, we'll talk about how we both started how we started planning for EE devs. So in the beginning, when you were first working with EE, did you do any planning at all?

Emily Lewis: Nothing. Zip. Zero. Zilch, and in fact, I don't even think I thought that planning would be necessary.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]



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Emily Lewis: When I started with ExpressionEngine, I had no background in content management systems.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: I had never ever worked with WordPress or I don't know, whatever was out there at the time. I didn't. I just did front-end development, and any content management systems were customized that my employer had built in house.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: And so with planning, I figured I had to learn it, and so I built as I went along, which I wonder if that's the natural sort of thing. I mean, how do you plan for a tool that you've never used before?

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, that's totally true.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: I mean, for me, back in the day, and talking to yourself now with this planning, that I did some planning, but I never actually wrote anything down.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: And I think that's kind of a curse of anyone that's been self employed.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Like why would you write it down, because it's in my brain, I know, and I don't need to share it with anyone. But I didn't have a set way or order of doing things anyway, so I just knew what needed to be done and so it was definitely more on the fly, and yeah, similar to you, I have used



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like different systems before like ExpressionEngine. Actually, part of the reason why I went to ExpressionEngine was back during that controversial time of Movable Type.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: They started charging, God forbid. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: And then there were so many restrictions or whatever, and at the time, EllisLab was like, “Well, if you don't like Movable Type, why don't you try ExpressionEngine?” So I was like, “All right, maybe I should.” And the rest is history as they say.

Emily Lewis: So what does planning involve for you now that you got many years of ExpressionEngine development under your belt?

Lea Alcantara: For me, to be honest, the turning point was EECI 2010.

Emily Lewis: Yes.

Lea Alcantara: And it was Leevi Graham. Hi Leevi, if you're listening, and he was explaining how his team documents their work.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So I basically started using his ideas and kind of went from there, and back then, I think due to how I build and things like that, it was mostly an idea to send to clients as a deliverable.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Because back then it was one of those things where I didn't bill monthly or weekly or however like we bill these days, and it was all by deliverable.



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Emily Lewis: You bill the deliverable?

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah. So it's just like you get the deposit. I always had a deposit, which is good, but then sometimes there is this like long point where there's nothing, and then so I used Leevi's way to get paid at some point in the middle. So they saw that I was planning and things like that.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And I think in terms of planning back then and how I do now, I think with how we deal with proposals now, I think about add-ons way sooner than I used to.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And trying to figure out what we can get away with natively and listing out any potential add-ons, and then after that I think we also start to anticipate potential subcontractors at this point, just anticipate any customization needs for those add-ons that's emerging.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So I know since working with you, I basically have become way more detailed in documenting and more over anticipating anything that could possibly go wrong.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs] It's contagious.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: So from then, from nothing, no planning, and now, what does it involve for you?



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Emily Lewis: Yeah, I think my earliest planning was add-ons, thinking like what add-ons I might want to bring into it.

Lea Alcantara: Right, right.

Emily Lewis: Today, very much inspired by Leevi's presentation and the document that he shared which we'll link to in our show notes, I have an extremely detailed Google Docs that has all of the planning in it.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: Its channels, its custom fields, its templates, and like within each of those, like in the channels, it's the name, it's the short name, the Field group, category, every single thing I plan out in advance, and I find that it's that sort of detailed planning document, the very narrow aspect of it, it really helps me in particular establish my naming conventions really early on.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: Because in the past, I'd get into building, and I'd be naming one in the way, and then the next day, when I went back to the system, I'd build a new channel with some fields and realized, "Oh, a better name would work for what I had done the day before, and so I'd go back and I'd update that stuff, and I mean, I was just wasting time trying to name things right. So planning it in advance helps me kind of avoid that OCD tendency that I have about naming conventions.

Lea Alcantara: Man, like if you look at some of my older EE implementations, there was no naming conventions because there was no planning.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Lea Alcantara: It was just okay. Especially when you're transitioning from like a blog-type CMS mindset, a body is just "body," and that's short name.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: There's no other description associating it with a channel. There was no description what does "body" even means. Is this the testimonial? Is this an article? I just put "body" because everyone uses "body" back in the blogging days.

Emily Lewis: And this makes me sort of think about a listener question that we got from Alex Armstrong. His was specific about Statamic, but part of his question was that, how does one structure content in Statamic so it's less page oriented and more content strategic? And I don't really want to get into Statamic just yet because we're talking about EE, but I think his point about being content specific, content strategic versus page oriented, I think that comes into play in the planning.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: And it has to do less with the CMS and more with the content planning.

Lea Alcantara: Yes.

Emily Lewis: We're doing the discovery with the client. We have a very thorough kickoff process that you and I follow, sending the client a very detailed survey of information that we need to get about their content.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: We talk to them about workflow. We talk to them about who the different types of members might be, like if they have an editorial work flow where someone has to approve things. So



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in the planning, it's not just the CMS and what the channel names would be and what the template should be and all that other stuff.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: It's also what is the content, like you have to know that in advance.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: There's just no way around it, unless you want to spend a whole lot of wasted time and money.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: And it's money that you're probably going to have to suck up if you did a flat rate estimate on the project in your proposal.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I totally agree, absolutely.

Emily Lewis: I think this is something that for our listeners, if you check out the link to Leevi's presentation in the show notes, that's one of the first things he details that Newism does in their planning, it's creating not quite a site map, but it really does reflect that sort of concept of what kind of content is involved. It's a news item. What does that news item contain? Everything from, does it have an author? Does it have a date? Does it have like a lead paragraph? Will there be an archive? Will there be categories associated with those news items? If there's an archive, like how will the archive be structured by date, by category?

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: So knowing in advance what kind of content you're dealing with, that should be in my opinion, before you even get into the CMS planning.



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Lea Alcantara: I agree, and I also wanted to point out, not just big content, because I think that's part of the issue. His question is like well, how do I move from page, which I feel like is "big picture."

Emily Lewis: The big picture.

Lea Alcantara: The picture content content versus like small stuff. Like I know with ExpressionEngine for us, we think about what can be put in Low Variables.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: What's the small content? What can we pull out that's going to be repeated so we'd have a DRY approach to development?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: I'm not familiar with Statamic to see if there's enough ways we can just pull out variables and things like that, so the first thing is like what is the big content, like the overall picture, and then what's the small pieces that's repeatable.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: I think it's definitely something to consider. How can we approach this with a DRY mindset?

Emily Lewis: Absolutely. Another thing I think comes into play in planning, and again, this is not as much about the CMS as it is about the site as a whole, is if you're dealing with a site that you're either redesigning or upgrading, but something existed before on their domain, you need to take a look at the URLs on their old domain and start listing them out so you have a reference point for what was there originally.

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Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: And then as you're building, what the new URLs might be so that you can do your URL redirects once the new site goes live.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: That was something I had never done before, but I got involved in a project with a couple of other agencies and I was doing the EE build, they were doing the design and the front end, and they introduced this idea of documenting what the existing URLs on the site would be and what we anticipated they would be down the line.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: So we had a simple document to reference early on that the client would also approve.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: Once we figured out what our template structure would be, we would know what the URLs would be and we would make sure that the client was okay with that, which is a big deal if the client also has a lot of SEO campaigns running.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: So I think that's another part of planning that I certainly never thought of until a couple of years ago.

Lea Alcantara: Oh yeah, and I have a very similar story too. There's a client where they actually didn't even have a CMS. Everything was just static PHP files and there was no content strategy.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Lea Alcantara: It was like some links had a folder, some links didn't, some had, but who knows what that name was, and having that document where it listed all their original like URLs and where it would map out in ExpressionEngine or something like that, it allowed you to see patterns, especially when you have to make a .htaccess redirects rule of some sort. If you start listing it out, then you'll be able to see, "Okay, I need to make sure that the .php is removed. We're going to keep the name with this, and then we need to add this folder in front of it."

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And sometimes, just kind of even saying, "I need to have this," then you just try to figure out how to do the Regex. That to me is the confusing part, but like I know what the next step is, and actually, Leevi, speaking of which, helped me with this particular project for free. I was just like confused on Twitter, and he's like, "I know what you're doing." So thanks again, Leevi, for the planning help.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: And I think you alluded to this earlier, and again, it was something that Leevi emphasized in his presentation is that all of these things that you're doing with planning, whether it's the content strategy, the URL, what is the documentation and mapping to new URLs, and then the CMS, all of those can be paid deliverables.

Lea Alcantara: Right, yeah.

Emily Lewis: Like you can do them and you could get paid for them as opposed to waiting for or even not just get paid for it, just making sure the client knows that you're active in the project.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. Because I don't think the client actually understands the document.



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Emily Lewis: Yeah. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: They barely don't, but half the time with client relationship, it's just the sharing them that everything is all right, you know?

Emily Lewis: Absolutely. So let's shift to Craft and talk about what kind of planning you're doing for Craft builds, and I'm particularly interested in knowing if the lessons you've learned over time with EE, did they help or hinder you when you started working with Craft?

Lea Alcantara: Like when you started with EE, I didn't quite understand the system, like with Craft, and so I still had to shift the mindsets on how to approach the site build. So for example, in Craft, the fact that templates naturally have a folder structure. I mean, it's completely separate from the control panel, and it's rendered through files and folder structure, not in the CP, so that was a big part in trying to figure out how to make the site, and I was also simultaneously trying to learn Twig. So with my first Craft site, much like EE, I didn't really plan as much as just trying to make things work. That was like my first priority, does this even work?

And Mijingo tutorials where the starting point of the plan. So even like when I first started learning HTML and CSS, I just literally tried to replicate the practice site that Mijingo created, and then bolted the other site using that structure. So I didn't write anything down at that time because I was just mostly concerned in figuring out how the entire thing worked. So at that time, I don't think it really made sense to have a planning document because I wouldn't even know where to begin to plan.

Emily Lewis: So you did think about the content planning, so you still had planning, but it wasn't necessarily specific to Craft.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. So like I tried to figure out what could I do. Just because I said everything is templated, it's not page related. So I had to think about little things like modules as in `_footer.html`



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kind of thing, and it wouldn't be in Low Variables, but it would be just its own file, just the footer has its own file versus like, "Okay, how do I have like a master layout for all the inside pages." So that's also something very different for Craft. It's just figuring out how to have its own templates render not like template by template. It's just like you can have like your master template for a particular layout and you can have your own things related to just that particular layout and it's regardless of where it is in the structure of the site, so you could have a pagemaster.html and you can just embed that into like the index.html of About folder. *Editor's note: I used the term "embed" but in Craft, they actually use [extends and includes](#).*

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: I know for those that don't understand Craft, this might sound like really, really weird, but yeah, that was kind of like my thinking process when I was trying to figure out like, "Okay, what are the layouts going to be separate from the structure, and what's the structure is going to be as well?"

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: It was like it's very similar actually in my thinking when I first started playing around with EE's...

Emily Lewis: Template partials?

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. Like the template partials as well as, gosh, Mark Croxton's add-ons.

Emily Lewis: Oh, Stash?

Lea Alcantara: Yes, Stash, yeah. It's a lot similar in naturally, natively, out of the box DRY Stash, you know?



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Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Like you have your master layouts, you have your embeds, you have your inputs and stuff like that, and I think the way they term embeds is different from ExpressionEngine embeds too. So like having to figure all of that even out just like, “Okay, what's the translation in my mind?”

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: It was one of the things that I was trying to even deal with when I was starting to work with Craft.

Emily Lewis: So it sounds like there were some things that not that it hindered you in Craft, but you had to almost disassociate from your associations with ExpressionEngine.

Lea Alcantara: Right, right.

Emily Lewis: On the flip side of that, was there anything that you brought from your years of experience building CMSs in EE that actually helped you build a good CMS in Craft? I mean, a good project in Craft?

Lea Alcantara: Right after I finished the first Craft site, like I kind of figured out how it more or less works, but even thinking about the years of planning ExpressionEngine sites and just CMS sites, just understanding the content first and foremost was the biggest thing.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Like I had mentioned with even the Statamic site question, what's the big picture and what's the small content?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Lea Alcantara: Because I was really trying to figure out like how much can I pull out of this that could be repeated over and over and over again was the biggest thing.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So when I started the second Craft site that we made and because it made a lot more sense to me, I did start using our planning doc.

Emily Lewis: The EE planning doc that we have?

Lea Alcantara: Yes, yes, yes.

Emily Lewis: Okay.

Lea Alcantara: Yes, so it was like I started the planning doc based off of that EE planning doc. However, but unlike EE, I didn't think about add-ons until much later.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Because it's such a young system, what add-ons? Do you know what I mean?
[Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: I mean, there is a ton. There is a ton of Craft add-ons, but it wasn't the first thing that I thought of, and this is a part of the reason why I really like Craft is I thought about the content way, way sooner because of the way Craft handles content. So for example, Craft has something called section types. Those section types include structures, singles and channels, and this is like the big picture content that I'm thinking about, the structures, singles and channels, so I had to figure out whether that content had to fit in one versus the other, and then there's even more granularity within those particular section types and those are called entry types. So what was interesting was when I



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was building that next Craft site, that was just before entry type was introduced, so actually, I had to completely change my planning document midway. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: It was really interesting just to see how my mindset was shifting more towards content first versus functionality first.

Emily Lewis: Like add-ons.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, because I feel like with the ExpressionEngine planning, I think about, "Will this work functionally?" While with content with Craft was I kind of assumed that everything is already possible or I already understood that this particular functionality already exists.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So even though I say, "Okay, it doesn't have as many add-ons, that's because it doesn't need as many add-ons." I guess, depending on the functionality that you need. So a lot of the things I was thinking about was content first.

Emily Lewis: So now that you have this Craft planning document that was inspired by our EE planning document, what's the difference between the two, and what's similar?

Lea Alcantara: Okay, so let's talk about the differences first. What's definitely more different from the EE planning document is how much more detailed the custom field documentation is.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And that's due to how Craft handles fields. So fields in Craft is kind of like it can belong to anything.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Lea Alcantara: And what I mean by that is it doesn't have to belong to a channel. It's like it's own thing floating around that you just associate it with wherever you want it to go. So it can be part of multiple groupings, so in the planning document, I had to outline which were shared fields and which were exclusive to that particular layout.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

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Lea Alcantara: So there's also layout groups for fields, and that's not necessarily a Field group. So that's related to how the layout of the fields will be based on channel, single or structure that it's associated with or the entry type is associated with, and then Craft also has a special field called the matrix field, and matrix field can have other fields inside it. So with the planning document for Craft, I had to break down all the possible subfields that's related to that matrix field.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: What was interesting was when I was planning all of this, it was interesting how I realized that I misunderstood some Craft functionality.

Emily Lewis: Oh.

Lea Alcantara: So the planning document actually helped me really understand Craft as well. Again, especially because I was basing the Craft documentation on our EE documentation, sometimes you kind of bolt functionality from one to the other.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, yeah.

Lea Alcantara: And then when I actually tried to implement it as I had planned it due to that, I realized, "Actually, no, it makes no sense."



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Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: It actually doesn't make sense based on the functionality, like one of the major things I definitely changed was because how Craft fields are handled and it can belong to anything, I was able to remove a lot of redundancy.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Like in EE, you might need to have all those multiple fields, but one particular field can apply to so many different places that in my planning document, I had to delete a lot of fields that I didn't need and I just didn't implement because, "Okay, that one field can apply to three different entry types or whatever."

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: And I think the simplest one I think, for example, is meta tag description stuff. You could have that associated with a blog post entry type as well as like a master field because it's the same field and it contains the same information. It's just that one is going to be customized to a blog post and one is the global. I didn't need to have global_meta tag versus blog_meta tag, but just have meta tag which could apply to both.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, I feel like one of the things that I love about, well, there are a number of things I like about our planning documents, and one is that I find it saves a lot of time because everything in your head, you're putting on paper and looking at it before you start building and then discover halfway through the build, "Oh, that's actually not really made to do this. I need to..."

Lea Alcantara: Right, right, right.

Emily Lewis: And then you have to undo the build instead of just correcting your planning document because I feel like in one of the last projects we did in EE, I had built all the planning document out. I



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had listed all of the channels, the categories, all of the different fields and the field types they would be, and then I had you go through it and you caught a few things that in my head made sense, but you looked at it and were like, “Oh, no, no, we actually want to do it this way.”

Lea Alcantara: Right, right.

Emily Lewis: So we caught a lot of stuff before I started building anything and then had to waste the time undoing. The undoing was in this paper document that's a whole lot easier to change and not to mention, make comments on, so we also have like a history of comments and the discussion related to it, it then becomes like ongoing documentation that you may not be able to have when you've undone a channel and changed the custom fields. There's no like revision history for that from the database, you know? [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah.

Emily Lewis: That's not virgin.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, exactly. You just pointed out the biggest benefit for having planning documents in the first place. It's the ability to share it within your team.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So you can just have another pair of eyes who'd say, “Well, this doesn't make sense to me, or this would be another efficient way to do it.” That kind of stuff, right?

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: So you're benefiting from a larger mindset.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, absolutely. I'm so amazed that it took me as long as it did to actually start becoming really detailed in the planning.



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Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Because the first time I did it, I swear I built the CMS, like once the planning was done, I built the CMS in like three hours, like there had to be a lot more stuff done, but the core channels, the core fields, like I just banged all that out super, super, super fast.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Because I had this document that told me what the names were. It told me whether it was required, how many characters I was going to allow, whether it was Rich Text Editor field or a text area. All of that stuff was already figured out.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah.

Emily Lewis: I wasn't thinking about it when I was building.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, you weren't pausing, considering, et cetera. You just like just executing. I have to say that Craft site, that second Craft site I built, I built in two days, the majority of it.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And the rest of the week was just tweaking, fixing, et cetera, but because I had that planning document, it was all like relatively straightforward. It was just like, "Okay, just bang it out."

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: So we've been talking about Craft and EE for a bit, let's circle back to Statamic.

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: How do you start planning with Statamic?



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Emily Lewis: Well, I think it's the same story that we both talked about. When I was learning Statamic, I didn't really plan, and I have to admit part of this is my mentality about Statamic. I thought of it as a "small" CMS that didn't need planning, which is sort of ignorant. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: Because it's not a small CMS and planning is always useful. But after building two sites with it, it became really clear that planning is important because once again, I got caught up in my naming conventions issue.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: I was naming stuff and setting it up in my flat files and then I'd think about it and the next day I'd change it and I was going back and forth, and it was absolutely ridiculous, and I think it does need the same sort of meticulous approach to planning and management, and maybe even more so if you are coming from a CMS experience where you're sort of building in the control panel because you're building in flat files that are somewhat abstracted from the control panel experience.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: So knowing what you're going to call your fields and what types of fields you're going to use is really critical, and this is even true if you're using a theme. We haven't talked about themes yet because you and I, we don't do a lot of theme work. Most everything we do is custom, but we are doing a theme-based Statamic build right now because it was the perfect solution for a particular client, but the theme, it has some of what the client needs, but contains a whole lot more of what is really necessary, and part of what I think is important in building a nice CMS is creating a good user experience.

Lea Alcantara: Right.



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Emily Lewis: And part of that is getting rid of what isn't needed or useful, not just telling the client, "Ignore that field."

Lea Alcantara: Absolutely.

Emily Lewis: It's getting rid of it entirely.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Emily Lewis: And this actually requires a lot of planning because if you didn't build the theme and you go to customize a theme, you can inadvertently delete stuff that you actually need or that there are dependencies built on, although Statamic, because it relies on flat files, this scenario is kind of nice that Statamic doesn't need a database because everything I'm doing is being managed in Version Control, and so if I did delete something from the theme that I actually needed, I can roll back pretty easily.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: Whereas if I deleted, let's say, a channel in ExpressionEngine...

Lea Alcantara: Goodbye.

Emily Lewis: If I catch it soon enough, yeah, I can re-import the database, but if I hadn't exported the database to start with, yeah, it's just a mess.

Lea Alcantara: Exactly.

Emily Lewis: It's easy to roll back if you're using Version Control, but even if you aren't Version Control, because it's flat file based, I can reference those original files from the theme and do a simple copy and paste. It's not super efficient, but I think it's more so than with a database.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]



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Emily Lewis: But yeah, I think planning is essential if you're going to touch a CMS of any kind.

Lea Alcantara: Period.

Emily Lewis: It's really what it comes down to, and you're only going to get to that mentality if you don't do it. Like if you don't do it and you mess up and you realize how much time you're wasting and you're starting to realize that "I'm losing money on this," then all of a sudden you start to realize the value of planning.

Lea Alcantara: Right, right. For sure, because it's so much easier to edit a document than to undo actual work.

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. So let's go back to our listener Alex Armstrong's question.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Let's dive a little bit deeper. So Alex was talking about structuring content in Statamic, so it's less page oriented and more content strategic, but he also pointed out something interesting. There's a new replicator field.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Do you know anything about that?

Emily Lewis: I haven't actually used it yet so I can't talk about it from actual experience, but I did take a look at the documentation, which I'll link to in the show notes. For me, I'll draw a comparison to something I'm already familiar with. It reminds me of the Matrix add-on for EE where you define a number of different fields and you kind of put each one in a column and they're grouped.

Lea Alcantara: Right.



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Emily Lewis: And then you give the content author the ability to create another row of this group of fields. So Statamic has a field type called a grid, which is basically this set of fields together in a grid, columns for lack of a better word.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: And Replicator just takes that and let's you say, "Well, I want another row of those fields or I want another block of those fields that the author can enter."

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: In the documentation, it gives a good example, a good use case of this with like images, so let's say you have an entry that has a slideshow in it, and that requires multiple images. Each image might have a caption and it may also have a link that you want the slideshow to link through to direct the person to.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: So you create a Replicator set that has a field for the actual image, a field for the caption, a field for the link, and then you give the user the ability to add as many of those chunks of content, the image, link and caption, as they want rather than just saying, "Oh, you can do three," and so you set up three blocks of those content.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: What looks really cool about Replicator is that it's not just a matter of you can create another block of that content, you can also reorder all of those, and not just the individual like images like reorder one above the other, but the whole block can be reordered in the control panel.

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Lea Alcantara: Right, right.

Emily Lewis: So that you can create a document flow or a content entry work flow that might be more friendly for your content authors, so it can create a slightly better user experience, depending on what your needs are.

Lea Alcantara: Oh, that sounds very similar to Craft's Matrix as well.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Because I know for our site, we use Craft CMS in our portfolio section, and to be able to reorder specific fields as well as entire blocks makes it really easy to manage.

Emily Lewis: I think one of the great themes that's nice about these new CMSs that are giving us more options is that they're taking some of the knowledge that you've learned over years using maybe another CMS and building great user experiences and building them into the core of something where you're not having to turn to an add-on, the user experience is really embraced from the beginning.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: The user being not you and me who are building it, but the client we're going to hand this off to. We are giving lot more tools to make that user experience the best one we can give to our clients.

Lea Alcantara: What's interesting is how there is so many similar functionalities.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: But what's also interesting is how different they implement the similar functionalities.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Lea Alcantara: So when you're considering a CMS, part of your consideration could be what seems to make sense for the mindset of your client in terms of entering content.

Emily Lewis: Oh, good point, yeah.

Lea Alcantara: Because some people will say, "Well, EE can do the same thing, or Craft can do the same thing, or Statamic can do the same thing." Well, they might do the "same thing" but different enough that that could be the differentiating factor or a factor to decide whether that CMS makes the most sense to your client.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Because sometimes we do have those clients who are very technologically scared and hesitant and that does affect the decision making.

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: For example, with ExpressionEngine, sometimes there's that Structure add-on.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Me personally, I'm not a huge fan because I think it's subverts too much of ExpressionEngine functionality, but it is so great for clients who just want to see a tree structure and being able to drag and drop and all that fun stuff, and that might be a reason why you choose that particular implementation.

Emily Lewis: I don't want to get on a rant about Structure, but I love the tree aspect.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs] Yeah.



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Emily Lewis: And that's one of the things I like about Craft because you get that natively, but Structure, you get that and that you kind of get some issues sometimes, depending on what your needs are.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah.

Emily Lewis: So another thing I want to talk about is I hope what our listeners are getting from this is that if you've worked with any kind of CMS, you have skills that you could apply to any tool, whatever it is.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: Like, yes, you should absolutely get familiar and experiment and see what's possible, but if you understand how to structure a work flow for your content authors, you can apply that knowledge to EE, Statamic, Craft, whatever it is you want to use because they're just tools. They're tools that take the stuff you have in your head and make it reality.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, agreed, and I just wanted to circle back over the user experience in choosing the particular functionality and maybe one user experience is better than the other, even if there's overlapping features. Thinking about, again, what is the scope of the site now, and what is the scope of the site in the future? And here is something to consider, if that functionality that you want is native, if it's native to that CMS, that is a major plus.

Emily Lewis: Yes.

Lea Alcantara: Because, for example, with Craft and even Statamic, a lot of those things are first-party. It's dealt with by the original developers of their CMSs. That means as the CMS grows, that functionality is going to grow with it, and we'll continue to work as planned because it's part of their



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functionality to test that because it's native. If it is an add-on, who knows? Who knows whether that add-on will work in the future?

Emily Lewis: To reference our last episode with Shawn Maida where we talked about upgrades. I mean, one of the biggest pain points I experienced with our ExpressionEngine upgrades are getting add-ons and figuring out, first of all, if they are supported by the latest version, and then if they're not making the decision on what to do with that point, if it's not an add-on and it's just part of the core system, that eliminates that concern.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely.

Emily Lewis: It eliminates the freaking audit that you spend hours on trying to figure out if the add-ons are ready.

Lea Alcantara: That's just the reality. That is also a differentiating factor and definitely still need to consider when you're choosing a CMS. Whether you can say, "Yeah, well, all of them look the same and have the same functionality." But do they? What's native? What's not? That's definitely something to consider.

Emily Lewis: Let's return to discussion of planning, when you do your planning, is it just at the beginning, or do you plan throughout a build? Like is there anything after launch even?

Lea Alcantara: I would have to say with that particular Craft one, I did try to do it in the beginning, but weird stuff came up during actual implementation that made me understand that what I had planned for didn't make any sense. So I had to change the planning document mid-build. In regards to that, I feel planning starts at the beginning for sure before you even touch the CMS, but don't be so hardcore that you don't change the planning document if the scope or whatever changes.

Emily Lewis: So like your planning document becomes documentation.



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Lea Alcantara: Yes, yeah, agreed.

Emily Lewis: Regardless of CMS, what have been some of the hardest lessons you've learned along the way with build planning?

Lea Alcantara: Oh, well, I feel like, at first, it seems like it's a huge investment of time.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So just like with anything, you're reluctant if you know it's going to take a lot of time. But on the flip side, once you're dealing with the site, once all that planning is done, it's quick.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: As I mentioned before the Bright Umbrella Craft site was two days. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: Once the documentation was done, you took a look at it and said, "Okay, it makes sense," it's two days. That says it all I think. How about you?

Emily Lewis: The same here. I think the hardest lesson I've learned is not planning in the first place.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: Because you lack a point of reference for your initial build which adds time to the process. But you also lack a point of reference if you need to do new work in a system you haven't worked in months. That sort of idea that planning becomes document, documentation, whether it starts as a planning document and it involves to something more else, it's critical not only to build, but maintain.



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Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely, absolutely. Now, I'm curious what you think after we planned all this stuff. It still seems like early in the project, sometimes the client might approach you with a functionality change. How would you deal with that?

Emily Lewis: One of the things that the planning document becomes useful for is you can take a look at that and see where this new functionality might fit in.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: Or maybe even leverage something you've already built. I think Craft is a good example for this because the fields are not tied to a channel per se.

Lea Alcantara: Right, right.

Emily Lewis: They are abstracted from that and so you may already have a field that could support that functionality change, and that lets you give an estimate a little bit after, a little more accurate even.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: And maybe it makes it easier to actually build it in the place.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, exactly because you know where things are in the first place.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Now I think about it, it's like how did I ever estimate anything when a client asks me something new when nothing was written down, like It's just I guess it will take me this long.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Lea Alcantara: But like if you have it written down where it's like, "Okay, here are all our channels and fields and whatever the heck." And you look at it and you're like, "Okay, that functionality can fit or not."

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: I think what's even the more important thing is like, "Hmm, what you just asked will not be easy to implement based on the rest of the functionality that we've already written down."

Emily Lewis: What about if it's a functionality that they had asked for in the beginning and it was part of your original discussions, but maybe it was overlooked in the planning process.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: So what do you do with that? Do you just follow the time and cost since you promised it?

Lea Alcantara: I think with the documentation like as we mentioned, it's a quick way to see whether a functionality can fit or not. I think most of the time, depending on what the request, if we promise something and we didn't plan for it, that was our error.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: So that's something that we just kind of do swallow and deal with, and that was our error.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: However, I think a lot of that is dependent on how the scale of functionality is.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Lea Alcantara: Sometimes we just have to have a difficult discussion with the client that explains we need more time and budget to make that functionality work.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: And I think what helps with that conversation is establishing how much you've done your due diligence in previous correspondence. So half the time you're really trying to communicate and over communicate with your client. So they understand that you're trying to help them and we're all human here. Part of the reason why we have these planning documents is to mitigate these situations in the first place, but stuff happens and if you've been a good communicator, it allows them to understand you aren't trying to pull one over them.

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Emily Lewis: That actually brings up another scenario. So let's say we've planned for something that we were going to use a combination, and maybe native and third-party solutions, to achieve something, but as we're building it, it's not actually doing what we need and so there's going to need to be some sort of custom development to complete the task. So is there anything that planning can do to help avoid this?

Lea Alcantara: There's only so much you can do, right?

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Again, like you can just write down every type of conversation and notes and all that fun stuff and have a planning document, but I think that sometimes stuff happens and even if you read further documentation with add-ons, there could be undocumented issues, and that's not your fault, it just happens.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Lea Alcantara: So the way I think it should be handled is, again, just having a conversation like this before it even happens, like during even the kickoff, basically try to talk about like, “Here are possible worst case scenarios. What can we do before it even happens? It might not happen, but what are the next steps that needs to happen?” Sometimes, especially when we're dealing with third-party solutions, and we don't have control because we didn't create that solution, explain to the client there might need to be customization if it doesn't work out of the box, and they're circumstances out of our control, and that all we could do is try to communicate to them immediately if anything comes up.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: At the end of the day, this isn't really about add-ons, it's just basically trying our best to plan for any contingency and to communicate to them that there may need to be extra time or budget if that happens.

Emily Lewis: Yeah. Before we wrap up, there's one final question, and it's so funny to be asking you these questions because I know the answers.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: I don't like interviewing you knowing the answers, but with this documentation that we use, whether it's for EE, Craft or Statamic, is there one template that we use, or how do we maintain this documentation?

Lea Alcantara: I think basically the last project tends to inform the next project.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So the last planning doc is the start of the new planning doc because every project, we find out something new.



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Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: We get better at it, and there's something that we understand even further, and on top of that too, this is software, and software continues to be updated with new functionality. Like I mentioned, entry types didn't exist, and then it did, you know? [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So I had to definitely change the approach to that for Craft. So you have to kind of consider it for the particular project, not to make it into one long always updating, but you always make notes and in the back of your mind, "Okay, on the next project, here is something we're going to add to the planning document."

Emily Lewis: Yeah, definitely. It's not a build it once and never look at it again always use it.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: It's built it, use it, and then tweak it later for the next project, and then tweak it for the next project based on what you learned. So a planning document should be a living document I think is the bottom line, which I guess is another reason we use Google Docs.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, for sure. It's so, so easy to comment and stuff like that for these types of documents.

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: Well, we really I think dove deep into our three favorite CMS solutions, and I hope all our listeners got a little bit of something today to figure out which one might be best for your particular client.



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Emily Lewis: Yeah, I hope so too, and I hope they walk away from it and really realizing what I mentioned already that it's really your knowledge.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: You're just picking a tool that let you apply that knowledge, so you have to pick the right tool, but if you have the knowledge, you can make all of these tools work for you.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, and again, caveat, this is our experience, you know?

Emily Lewis: Right. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Admittedly, I think most people who are listening to the show know that Emily and I are ExpressionEngine experts.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And Craft and Statamic, they're great systems, but they're new and we're still new to them too. So if there's anyone listening in the Craft or Statamic community who are like, "No, this is wrong. You guys have no idea what you're talking about." [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Well, just let us know actually. I would like to know what you think we could have explained a bit better.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Just contact us at ctrlclickcast.com/contact and let us know what you think we needed to highlight instead.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, maybe we can get you on the show to call us out. [Laughs]



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Lea Alcantara: Exactly. So well, since it's just the two of us today, we decided that one of us will do our rapid fire ten questions, and Emily drew the short straw.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: So are you ready, Ems?

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

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

Emily Lewis: Mac OS

Lea Alcantara: What is your favorite mobile app?

Emily Lewis: Shazam.

Lea Alcantara: Shazam?

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: What's Shazam?

Emily Lewis: Oh my God, it's the awesomest thing. So if you're in the car or a bar or anywhere and you hear a song and you're like, "Oh, I like that song. What is it?" You turn Shazam on, it listens to it, it tells you what it is."

Lea Alcantara: Oh, wow!

Emily Lewis: It's integrated with a dozen different things. I use Evernote to track the music I want to buy, and so I just send it to Evernote.

Lea Alcantara: Oh, wow!



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Emily Lewis: And when I go buy my music, or you can add it to your Spotify list just from Shazam. It's really cool.

Lea Alcantara: Oh, that's super cool.

Emily Lewis: Even like TV shows.

Lea Alcantara: Nice!

Emily Lewis: Like music in a television show. I don't know how it does it, it's magic.

Lea Alcantara: Compares sound bites, I guess.

Emily Lewis: It's awesome. I use it all the time.

Lea Alcantara: All right, next question, what is your least favorite thing about social media?

Emily Lewis: I don't like any of it. I just don't.

Lea Alcantara: Oh.

Emily Lewis: I mean, you and I talked about this. I'm just not a fan of social media these days.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: I think it's the negativity, the self-indulgence, the "hey, look at me" kind of stuff. I'm a little tired of it.

Lea Alcantara: So what profession other than yours would you like to attempt?

Emily Lewis: I was thinking about this last night because I watched this documentary called "I Know That Voice," and it's about voice actors.

Lea Alcantara: Oh, I love that.



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Emily Lewis: I would really love to do that because I think it would be so cool. I'm not great at impressions, but I have a couple that I like to do and they make me crack up, and I just think it would be cool to be able to do that.

Lea Alcantara: Confession, that is also something I would like to do.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Oh, my God, we're twinsies.

Emily Lewis: Every time we talk and find out more about each other, we discover we're like identical.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Okay, opposite question, what profession would you not like to do?

Emily Lewis: Probably something in the healthcare field dealing with like fluids. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Oh God, yeah, okay.

Emily Lewis: Yuck.

Lea Alcantara: So who is the web professional you admire the most?

Emily Lewis: I have so many, but one that always stands out for me is Stephanie Sullivan Rewis. She's one of those people that it's not just her technical ability, but she's a really open and transparent person. I know her as a friend, and so I also know some of the way she deals with clients and deals with employers, and she's really great at standing for herself without making other people feel bad.

Lea Alcantara: So what music do you like to code to?



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Emily Lewis: Everything. It's a mix of just about everything. I don't like country music. With that, I would never code to that.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: So it's more like what I wouldn't I code to.

Lea Alcantara: All right, what's your secret talent?

Emily Lewis: I can whistle obnoxiously loud.

Lea Alcantara: Like a wolf whistle?

Emily Lewis: Like if you're at a concert and you hear those really loud whistles, that's usually me.

Lea Alcantara: Right, cool.

Emily Lewis: And the person next to me is staring at me like, "Shut up!" [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Because it's really loud.

Lea Alcantara: What's the most recent book you've read?

Emily Lewis: I'm in the middle of reading *Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency*.

Lea Alcantara: Hmm, it sounds unique.

Emily Lewis: Douglas Adams of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* wrote it, so it's by him.

Lea Alcantara: Okay, cool. So lastly, *Star Wars* or *Star Trek*?

Emily Lewis: *Star Trek*.

[Music starts]



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Lea Alcantara: Aha! All right. Well, that's all the time we have for today. We'd now like to thank our sponsors for this podcast, [Backup Pro](#) and [Pixel & Tonic](#).

Emily Lewis: And thanks for our partners, [Arcustech](#), [Devot:ee](#) and [EE Insider](#).

Lea Alcantara: We also like to thank our listeners for tuning in! If you want to know more about CTRL+CLICK, make sure you follow us on Twitter [@ctrlclickcast](#) or visit our website, [ctrlclickcast.com](#). And if you like this episode, please give us a review on [Stitcher](#) or [iTunes](#) or both.

Emily Lewis: Don't forget to tune in to our next episode. We've rescheduled with Whitney Hess to talk about humanizing business. Be sure to check out our schedule on our site, [ctrlclickcast.com/schedule](#) for more upcoming topics.

Lea Alcantara: This is Lea Alcantara ...

Emily Lewis: And Emily Lewis ...

Lea Alcantara: Signing off for CTRL+CLICK CAST. See you next time!

Emily Lewis: Cheers!

[Music stops]

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