

<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/podcasting-101>

CTRL+CLICK CAST #38 - Podcasting 101

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Lea Alcantara: You are listening to CTRL+CLICK CAST. We inspect the web for you! Today we're going to take a look behind the scenes of CTRL+CLICK and share everything we've learned about podcasting. I'm your host, Lea Alcantara, and I'm joined by my fab co-host:

Emily Lewis: Emily Lewis!

Lea Alcantara: This episode is brought to you by [EllisLab](#), [ExpressionEngine](#) is the web professional's content management system of choice. If you haven't used ExpressionEngine in a while, give their latest release a try. You'll find a speedier, stable and more capable system than ever before. They love their customers and the customers love ExpressionEngine, but don't take our word for it! Check out expert Pat Pohler's [6 Reasons He Loves ExpressionEngine](#) linked in the show notes, and then give it a try at expressionengine.com.

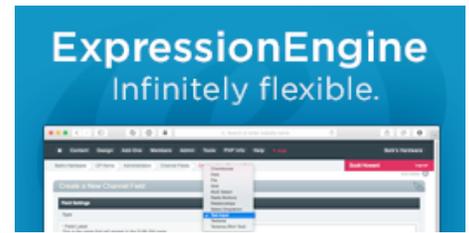
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Emily Lewis: So today it's just the two of us sharing what we know about podcasting and some of the details about how we keep CTRL+CLICK going ... and I'm kind of excited about this one!

Lea Alcantara: You know, I know a lot of people when they see us in person and occasionally on Twitter and stuff, they'd ask us about like the nitty-gritty of podcasting and things like that.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So here's the episode.



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Emily Lewis: I know. [Laughs] So Lea, why don't you start though with some background in how we even got into podcasting in the first place.

Lea Alcantara: Sure. So for those that are new listening to the podcast, we were actually originally the EE Podcast, and the EE Podcast actually was originally hosted by Dan Benjamin and Ryan Irelan. And how we ended up hosting the show was kind of by happenstance really. Ryan decided that he was going to move on from the EE Podcast, but he thought that the podcast still had value and he didn't want to just abandon it, and I had been a guest on the show when he was hosting before, and he thought that, "Hey Lea, why don't you take over the show?" I enjoyed myself guesting. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

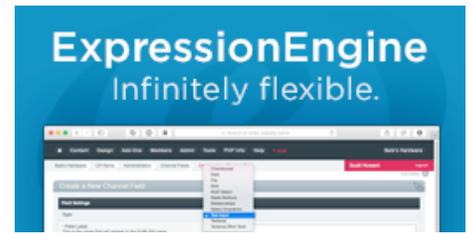
Lea Alcantara: And I guess I thought, "Hey, why not? Why don't I host this thing? It will be fun, I guess." But I didn't want to do it by myself, so I kind of asked Twitter for some suggestions for a possible co-host, but even when I did that I kind of already had a person in mind. And that person is Emily Lewis. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: And on a whim, I just kind of emailed her and was like, "Hey, do you want to podcast?" And here we are, really, right? [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Totally, and I had almost zero experience with podcasting when Lea reached out. I had been doing a small local podcast here in Albuquerque called Duke City Tech, and it really wasn't a good fit for me in the way I like to be uber organized and things like that. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Right, right.



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Emily Lewis: So I ended up not doing that, and shortly thereafter was when you reached out to me, and I thought it was kind of out of the blue because you and I only met like once.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Maybe twice.

Lea Alcantara: A couple of times.

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: At South By Southwest (SXSW) and then at EECl.

Lea Alcantara: The EE Conference.

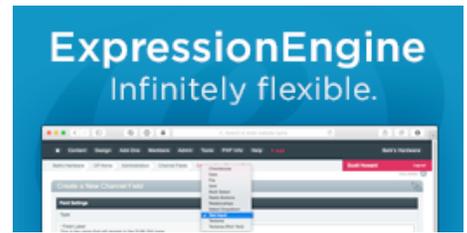
Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: But it seemed like such a fun opportunity, and I just remember that you seemed really organized.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: And you know it sounds funny, but if you're going to go into something like this with somebody, there's got to be a match in how you work together. And I had just walked away from this experience where I was the crazy organized freak who was trying to plan everything and not really feeling like I fit in, and you come in and you've got some things planned out. You already have some



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designs in mind ... I'm like, "Well, this seems like she knows what she's doing. I could get involved if someone else is equally invested."

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: And I think that's really important if you're going to have a co-host.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely, and I mean, it did feel kind of like it's both planned *and* organic. Do you know what I mean?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Because it was one of those things where I honestly didn't know what I was getting into, especially four years or ... how many years? I don't know how many years we've been doing this now ...

Emily Lewis: We're coming up on five this June.

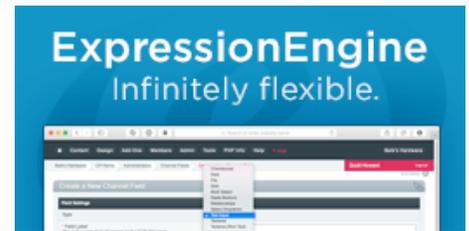
Lea Alcantara: Five years, holy!

Emily Lewis: Yeah. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: So almost five years. Five years ago, if you told me that I'd be still doing this five years later, I honestly would have been like, "Really? I don't know." [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: I think my point of view at the time — like deciding to host the podcast and everything like that — I was self-employed and worked from home for the longest time, and I kind of wanted an opportunity to talk to a colleague and a peer on a regular basis.



Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: That was kind of like my motivation, like whether it was just Emily and just like shooting the breeze and stuff like that about the web. Or our guests, obviously.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: I just wanted, especially when you're by yourself, I just wanted to speak to another human being. [Laughs] And that was kind of like my motivation at the beginning, and then it kind of turned into a real business-type of side project really.

Emily Lewis: It's not even a side project. You and I, we try and correct ourselves on it. We treat this like it's a project. It's not a side project.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, a client project. Yeah, it's like a main project.

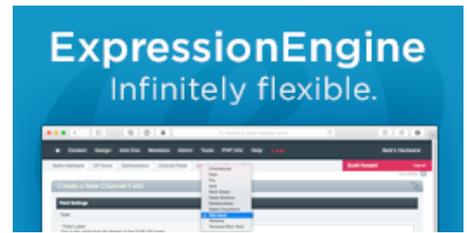
Emily Lewis: Yeah, it is always in our queue.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah.

Emily Lewis: We schedule it. It's built into our schedule. Our time is built into our budget. We take it seriously, and I think that's part of the reason why we're looking at five years, you know?

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah.

Emily Lewis: Because we treat this very seriously. And so let's start with some of the foundational stuff that sort of make the podcast possible. Let's talk about equipment to start. So when we started, I remember asking you like what kind of mic I should get. And I believe at the time you had a Rode Podcaster, right?



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Lea Alcantara: No. Actually, at the first thing that I had, especially when I started with Ryan and Dan, it was like the little [Blue] Snowball.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Like one of those portable ones.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And then since I continued to podcast with the EE Podcast, then they gave me a Rode Podcaster.

Emily Lewis: Okay. But when you and I started, you had a Rode.

Lea Alcantara: Yes.

Emily Lewis: And I think you recommended that to me and I was like, "Holy crap, that's more than I want to spend on something I'm not sure is going to work out."

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, totally.

Emily Lewis: And so I ended up getting a Blue Snowball.

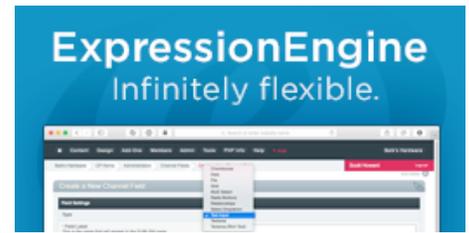
Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: I guess about 18 months ago, I upgraded to a Rode Podcaster.

Lea Alcantara: And how's that changed?

Emily Lewis: If you listen to our podcast regularly, like we do when we're listening to edit, you can hear a richer sound experience on my end.

Lea Alcantara: Right.



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Emily Lewis: I think the Blue [Snowball] is great. I don't have any complaints about it, but this is just a little bit better, and I sort of justified the cost based on the reality that we're long term, we want to have the investment. It's a podcast; it's what you listen to. We want the quality to be as good as we can possibly deliver, and mics are a big part of that.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely, and that was the biggest, I think, equipment expense that we had.

Emily Lewis: Yes.

Lea Alcantara: I'm just using like a \$20 heavy stand. I don't have it like hooked up to my wall with like an arm and, what it's called, one of those pop...

Emily Lewis: Pop screens?

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I don't have a pop screen or whatever. I just try to be careful based on my distance with my mouth to the mic, I guess. And we also adjust our volume when we record as well. I think like the fanciest thing we *do* have in terms of the equipment is the high-quality mic and a steady stand.

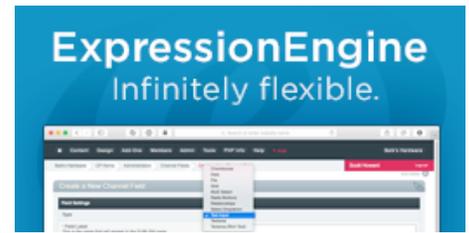
Emily Lewis: I'm actually using the stand that my Snowball worked on.

Lea Alcantara: Oh.

Emily Lewis: So it's actually just sitting on my desk, and I just have to take care not to hit my desk.
[Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Right, right, right.

Emily Lewis: All right, so you mentioned that we adjust our sound. Let's talk a little bit about the software we use.



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Lea Alcantara: Sure.

Emily Lewis: I think it's important to mention in the beginning ... we've made some changes over the years. And I think that's another thing that if you're into podcasting — especially if you want to do it long term — kind of check yourself, your equipment, your processes, your software every few months.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: And make sure you're using what makes sense. So we do everything over Skype, all of our recordings. Lea and I are on Skype right now. When we have guest, we add them to the call, and that's been the same since the beginning.

Lea Alcantara: And we tried to move away from Skype frankly, but there's no better solution.

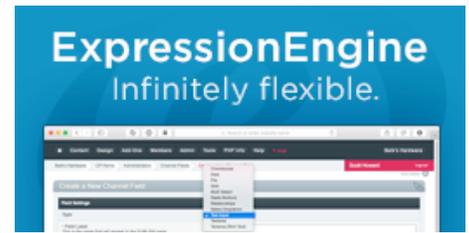
[Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Like everyone has Skype, it's free, and despite all the drawbacks, it's the most consistent cost-effective solution to have multiple people on a call.

Emily Lewis: Both of us are on Ethernet connections when we do the podcast and then we ask our guest to do the same if possible, and sometimes Skype gets that sort of like auto-tune feedback kind of thing.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.



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Emily Lewis: And there's very little we can do about it other than making sure that you have things like Dropbox syncing turned off and anything running in the background turned off, which is really important when you're having a conversation over the Internet.

Lea Alcantara: Right, absolutely.

Emily Lewis: So from Skype, we have this little software that plugs into Skype called Call Recorder.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: And that records the Skype call entirely, like everyone who's on it. It's like one track, and Lea does that on her end.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, because we tested where we wanted to do a backup Call Recorder where both Emily and I record, but that severely limited the bandwidth.

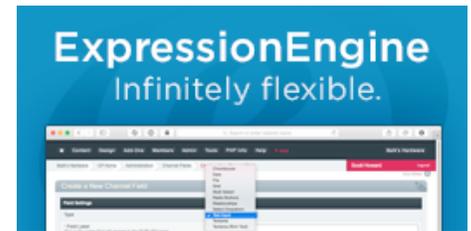
Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: Like our processing power or whatever it was, like it basically broke up our calls each time. So we decided that like one person will be doing the call recording because it just wasn't worth it to have like the calls drop because both of us were recording essentially.

Emily Lewis: And I don't know if this actually is true, but it seems to be working with Skype — it's always kind of like voodoo getting it to work ... [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs] I know!

Emily Lewis: But it seems like whoever is doing the call recording should also initiate the call and add people to the call, and so Lea also does that. So in the beginning, that's all we had, we just had the Call Recorder file that had everyone's voices on it. And if Skype had auto-tuning issues or there



was a weird feedback that was also recorded into the track, which sort of prompted us ... and I think it was [Jonathan Snook when he was on the show](#), he mentioned that, “Oh, do you want me to record this locally,” and we’re like, “What is this that you’re speaking of?” [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: “What do you mean?” [Laughs]

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Emily Lewis: And apparently, it was pretty common. And so that led us down to asking our guests to record their audio locally, and we individually record our audio locally.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: We still use Call Recorder as a backup, but by having the individual local tracks, you avoid any of the Skype issues that might affect the sound quality. And then we have our editor sync all those individual tracks together.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, and it really has upped our sound game for sure, especially...

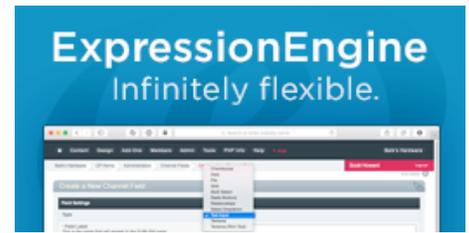
Emily Lewis: Oh, I think it sound so much better, yeah.

Lea Alcantara: Oh yeah, and we no longer edit our podcast ourselves.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And we’ll talk about that in a bit, but when you have separate audio tracks, for example, one of our last episodes, someone’s doorbell rang.

Emily Lewis: My doorbell. [Laughs]



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Lea Alcantara: Yeah, and because it was on a separate track, as opposed to combined, we were able to isolate and say, “Can you just delete that from Emily's tracks, so there's no doorbell in the background.”

Emily Lewis: Yeah, definitely, good. In terms of recording locally, we, Lea and I, use Audacity, which is just freeware. It's actually what our sound editor suggested because it's cross-platform and free. And so if we're going to ask our guests to do this, we don't want to force them to buy any software or whatever or if they're PC user, trying to hunt down something that they could use that we won't really know how to instruct them on.

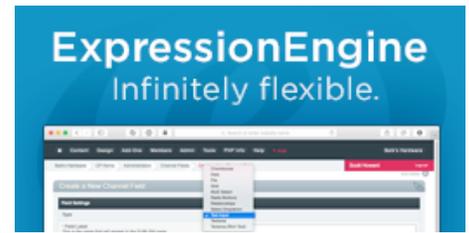
Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: So we use Audacity. But we also have guests who are very familiar with recording local audio, and they use whatever they want, and we just sort of work with them to make sure that the sound levels work and that the output is a file that our editor can work with.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely.

Emily Lewis: And just one last thing about the local recordings — we've mentioned this already, but it also contributes to sort of having an even sound amongst all the different tracks — is we try and get everyone to adjust their levels to fall within a specific range of highs and lows of decibels. I'm not an audio person, but I'm not sure, but we try and have everyone do that so that all of our highs and lows are kind of in the same range, so there isn't anything that sort of blows that out of the water when syncing the files.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely. So let's talk a little bit about our website. So some people listen to our show actually through our website, not through iTunes or through phone player or whatever app



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they're using. So for the website, we use that to track some like manual downloads. And the player that we currently use is an HTML5 player called MediaElement.js. When we were designing the site a few years ago, I think it was like one of the first HTML5 players even available, so that's currently what we're using.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, this website, I guess we designed it five years ago.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, right.

Emily Lewis: And we rebranded it two years ago, but with the rebrand, we didn't actually do anything more than sort of a more visual sort of cleanup.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Although I did clean up some of the stuff underlying in the front end.

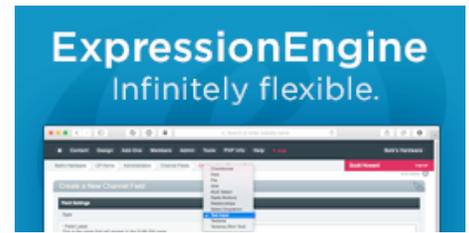
Lea Alcantara: Sure.

Emily Lewis: But we're well aware that our site isn't responsive. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Right. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: It probably needs an update, and that's definitely on our radar. It's one of those things that ... I think if you're doing a podcast, you're not doing it for the money. Hopefully, you get a little bit of money from sponsorship and support like that, but the website is working, it's serving a purpose, and it's a matter of prioritizing and getting it the latest and greatest. If we spend all our time keeping this site the latest and greatest, we'd be bankrupt. We wouldn't be doing the podcast anymore. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah. But I mean, [feel free to send us more money](#), anyone listening.



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Emily Lewis: Yeah, seriously. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: If you really want a responsive website for CTRL+CLICK CAST, please [send the money to Bright Umbrella](#). [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, exactly. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: You mentioned tracking, Lea ...

Lea Alcantara: Right.

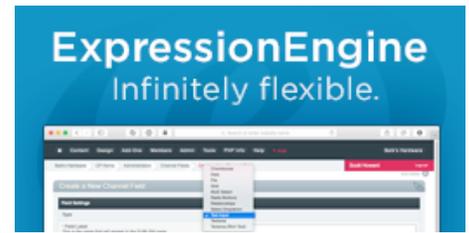
Emily Lewis: Let's talk a little bit about that for a second because it's something that's been sort of top of mind for us lately.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. So tracking podcasts suck. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Yeah, big time.

Lea Alcantara: It's I think the bottom line for this, and part of the reason why it is, just as I mentioned a little bit earlier when I started mentioning the website, there is the website player and there is streaming clicks. So they haven't downloaded the MP3, they just pressed play on the website. And then there's also the click where they actually press the download link, and then there is actually our RSS feeds and who knows what player that person is listening to using that, and then clicking on that feed, and then there is Stitcher and then there is iTunes, and then we've got Google Analytics and then we have Mint and we have FeedBurner.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]



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Lea Alcantara: And all of them say not the same thing, like they all have like varying ways to track downloads and listens and it all seems a little bit variable.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So it's really hard to pin down exactly what's going on. The worst offender is iTunes because they don't have a built-in way to show you how many people are downloading it. They just kind of see like visually. Like when you're actually looking in iTunes, there is like a bar graph to show popularity, but what does that even mean?

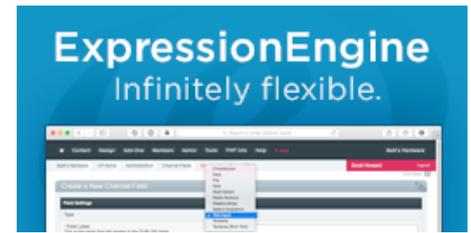
Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So tracking is really, really difficult. Like we tend to lean towards FeedBurner for actual numbers mostly because it does say, "This is how many downloads it's been," and then we try to cross reference that with Mint and Google Analytics, but otherwise, it's really hard to pin down.

Emily Lewis: Yeah. There's no way that we know of right now how many listeners or, for an episode, how many people listen to it on iTunes, plus how many people listen to it on Stitcher, plus how many people downloaded it from the site, plus the people who just played it from the site, plus the people who do the RSS or listened through RSS. So it's five different — for lack of a better word — channels that we don't know how to reconcile the numbers to know what the actual number of downloads per episode is.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Or listens per episode. I mean, not even downloads because that's a totally different thing. It's just like streaming them while you're listening.



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Lea Alcantara: Yeah, exactly, like is it the same person pressing the play button a couple of times a day because they started and then stopped and then tried it again, you know?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So it's really quite difficult, so whenever people ask about listenership, we do kind of generalize just based on kind of that amalgamation of the information that we get.

Emily Lewis: I mean, I think the alternative is to only have one way to listen to our podcast, and that makes no sense whatsoever.

Lea Alcantara: No, because everyone has, like, different ways.

Emily Lewis: Exactly, exactly. We *are* tracking these things though. Our intern, Erin [Lewis], does a report for us. She takes a look at things. We are aware of what's going on, but we don't have an overall number or sense. We did do some research — or rather our intern did some research for us — and found two resources that we're looking into.

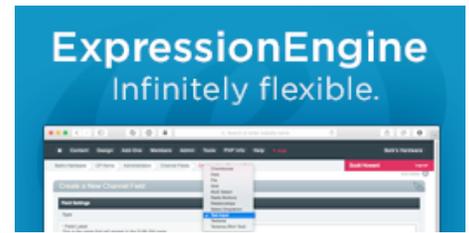
Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: We haven't really decided what we will do with them. One is called Podtrac, and we haven't finished setting up or haven't even used it, but apparently, it's like a tracking code tied to the URL for the MP3, and that they say that they'll be able to tell us a broader picture of downloads, and so we're going to look into that.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: The other one was Bubrry or Blubrry ...

Lea Alcantara: Blubrry.



Emily Lewis: Blubrry.

Lea Alcantara: Blubrry, I guess it's like Blueberry, but it's...

Emily Lewis: Without an E at the end, so it's B-L-U-B-R-R-Y. And that offers like a paid option, which we are just not going to go for because we just don't have the budget for that, but they also have a free option but it did require some sort of advertising on our site, which we did not want to do. So that's where we stand with being able to track downloads. It's a little frustrating, but it is what it is. We're not going to only have one channel for listening.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely, and speaking of the RSS feed, once you actually set up an RSS feed and we put it through FeedBurner which does have like an auto iTunes compatibility thing set up as well, to just make sure that all the regular RSS feed tags and everything get converted to the equivalent for iTunes and so we just have the one feed.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

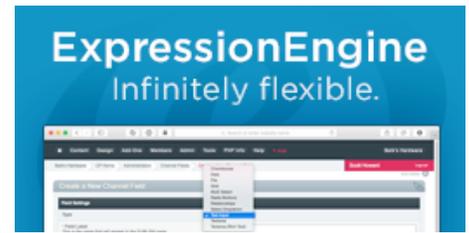
Lea Alcantara: And that one feed feeds into iTunes and Stitcher and anything else really.

Emily Lewis: Let's talk a little bit about just iTunes and Stitcher really quick.

Lea Alcantara: Sure.

Emily Lewis: So Lea, you did the iTunes setup. Do you want to just talk about that?

Lea Alcantara: Sure. So like once you do have the main RSS feed feeding into FeedBurner that converts into like all the fun iTunes tags and stuff. Then the next thing you have to do is you have to kind of apply to get into like the iTunes directory. Basically, before you do that, just make sure that



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your RSS feed is valid, like you don't have any incorrect tags or incorrect information. Make sure that you have the proper artwork limit set up, and that sometimes changes every year.

Emily Lewis: Yes.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. So like when we first launched, I think like our album artwork had to be 1200 x 1200 or actually even less maybe when we started. And as we all know, with Retina and Retina screens and all these new devices and stuff, that number just keeps going up.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

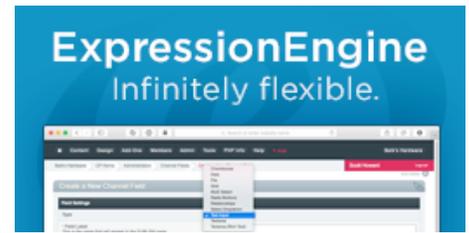
Lea Alcantara: So for example this year, we had to make sure that our iTunes album artwork had to be 1400 x 1400 in order to be crisp and clear on iTunes. And usually iTunes gives you a heads up: "By the way, you need to change your album artwork because we've changed our status" or whatever, and you kind of have to do it or else you might be dinged. But it seems all mysterious really.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: It really is because it's just that you're not sure whether or not this makes sense, you know?

Emily Lewis: Yeah. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Like you've just kind of plugged everything in and then cross your fingers and then hope it works. [Laughs] But essentially, once you have like everything set up and you make sure that everything is configured properly once you apply, usually it took us like 24 hours before it was like, "Okay, it works. Here's your link."



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Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

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Lea Alcantara: And it helped that we did have episodes in our library already so we weren't a new podcast, so there was stuff up on iTunes once we were set up there.

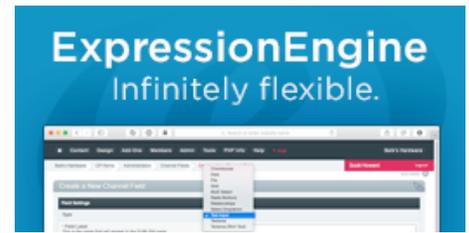
Emily Lewis: I vaguely remember there have just been a few things over the course of five or so years that have come up that we've had to sort of tweaked with iTunes that I remember — and this really wasn't really iTunes' fault or ours necessarily — but we had a listener who wanted more than the last 50 episodes, and our RSS feed was specifying a limit, so we increased the limit. But iTunes does set it ... like you couldn't have a million as your limit. There is a limit of how many iTunes will show of your past episodes.

When we rebranded, when we changed the name, do you remember if there were any hiccups with that?

Lea Alcantara: I think what I tried to do was I tried to insert it to iTunes like a new podcast, but it really wasn't a new podcast. It gave me an error, like it basically rejected it, and I think that's true because we were using the EE Podcast URL and stuff and we still have that in our archives. So basically, what ended up happening was I didn't need to resend it at all because it already existed. I just needed to update my RSS feed ...

Emily Lewis: To reflect, like, the new name and everything.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah, exactly. And then just wait for iTunes to kind of like update on their end all the artwork and all the files, et cetera.



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Emily Lewis: So just quickly, Stitcher. We just started syndicating on Stitcher last year because we saw ... well, I saw our friends Gene Crawford and Carl Smith who do the BizCraft podcast had set up on Stitcher. And I mean, honestly, what we are trying to do with the podcast every day is expand our listenership, and so I thought that might be a nice channel to check out.

It's super easy, you create a profile, you submit your podcast. They then send you a link that you need to include on your podcast website and ours is just in the upper right hand corner kind of along with our Twitter link and the RSS feed link, iTunes link ... and once they see that you have that reciprocal link to Stitcher in place, then it's active and they start pulling your latest episodes, and if you're a Stitcher user, you know that you can listen to things from the web or from the Stitcher app. I wouldn't say it's a massive part of our audience, but I'd say it's a not a negligible number of people listen to us on Stitcher. I mean, my boyfriend listens to us on Stitcher.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, and I know like other friends of mine use Stitcher as well. So it's one of those things where we want to make sure that our podcast is accessible to as many people as possible in whatever way they want to listen.

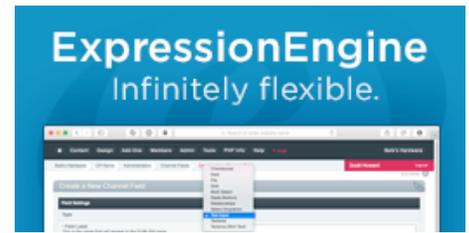
Emily Lewis: All right, so we sort of talked about like, I guess, in my mind, some of the boring stuff like tracking and setting up profiles.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Let's talk about like our early days of producing this podcast.

Lea Alcantara: Oh god.

Emily Lewis: It's so different than it is now.



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Lea Alcantara: Oh, absolutely. So we kind of touched on how we did like the early Skype with the Call Recorder, and that was back before we did our own individual audio track using Audacity. So when Emily and I first joined forces, we really had no idea how to do anything. I tell you, nothing, nothing. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: I remember my first episode, how shaky my voice was. I was like, “Oh my god, I'm going to mess this up.” I think I was just so stressed that whole first couple of episodes. [Laughs]

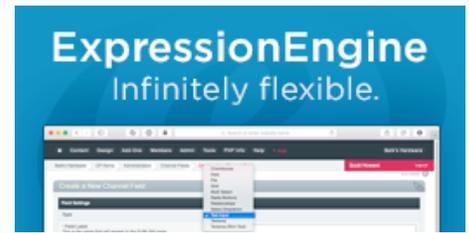
Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I feel like podcasting definitely is one of those things you have to kind of get used to in terms of getting comfortable with what you're saying and how you're saying it and just being less self-conscious that you're being recorded, I guess. I think one of the weird things is just knowing that you're being recorded. But in the early days of us editing ourselves, yes ... so that means Emily and I personally edited every single episode, and we did that for maybe the first two years.

Emily Lewis: Oh yeah, it was a long time. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Two years, and I cannot even imagine why, you know? [Laughs] Well, I mean, I can imagine why because we were trying to bootstrap ourselves.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And when you do that, you do everything yourself. And when we were editing ourselves — Emily and I both have Macs — and so we decided to use GarageBand. So after we would have a recording on Call Recorder, we would essentially just import that recording into GarageBand and then kind of taught ourselves how to cut things out and splice it back together just through GarageBand.



Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So that works, but it took so long. I think most people who have any experience with editing any sort of recording knows that it usually takes about three times as long as the actual recording.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So that means if we had recorded 60 minutes, that means we'd be editing for three hours.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, and I'm almost positive I never did less than four.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Because I think one of the things when you're editing yourself, your own voice or your colleague's voice, you're like, "Oh wait, that sounded weird. Let's get rid of that little tiny 'um'," and then you spend this time trying to get rid of this like really stupid "um" that really anyone can get over, you know?

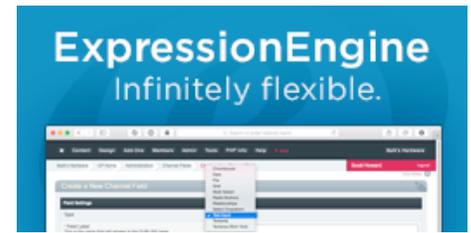
Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Anyone can get over the fact that we say "like" a lot, you know?

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: It's like you can get over that, but we would try and edit every single one of those out. It was such a waste of time.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.



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Emily Lewis: I mean, not a waste of time — it turned out well — but not a good use of our time.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, especially because neither Emily and I are professional audio editors.

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: And so there was that time to actually even learn what we're doing that.

Emily Lewis: Document ...

Lea Alcantara: And then documenting it and figuring out how to export, what type of quality of export the MP3 needs to be, all those types of things. So that took us a lot of time, and I think after really like near the end of the second year, we were getting exhausted about it, so we were like, "Uhhh, maybe we should hire someone."

Emily Lewis: Yeah, we alternate ...

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

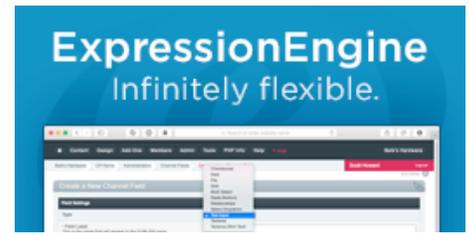
Emily Lewis: Lea and I alternate responsibilities for each episode, so that one person isn't it back-to-back, but even with that, when it came to my time, I was like, "Ugh, I've got to set aside pretty much the whole day to this."

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: And then not only do we do just the editing in GarageBand, weren't we using like a tool called Levelator that we run it through to.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: Like it was just many, many steps.



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Lea Alcantara: Right, and so I actually ran into the host of the MacCast at EECl. He suggested to me to use Levelator.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So that was where I got that from, and it just like somehow magically levels the audio out so that somebody isn't too quiet while somebody is like super loud. It just makes everyone like more or less the same. I believe it's discontinued now, and it was a free product, but I feel like you can still find it around somewhere.

Emily Lewis: And we also, if I remember correctly, we also would have to edit the MP3 file itself after editing to put in all the iTunes information.

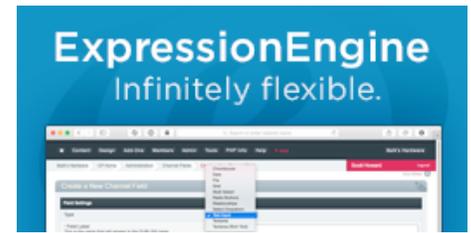
Lea Alcantara: Right, right. So there's metadata included in an MP3, like the title, the year, the author, et cetera, whoever made all that kind of stuff, and so we used to like import that into iTunes, plug it all, save it, export out of iTunes. It was just like a long cumbersome process.

Emily Lewis: I'm actually glad we're reflecting on this, because I'm like, "It's not so bad now."
[Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I know, for sure, like we've offset that actually.

Emily Lewis: So let's talk about that, because you basically did all the research to find us an editor.

Lea Alcantara: Right, yeah, because after a while it really was taking a toll on us when we could be doing client billable work. And so I tried to do a little bit of research Googling about editors in general, and what I did find was oDesk. So oDesk is one of those places where you can find any sort of freelancer that does some sort of work for you. Essentially, I just narrowed down the highest-rated



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editors that I could find, and then I believe I contacted three of them. And I basically said, “I will pay for you to edit a test.” Like each of them, “I’ll pay you to edit a test episode.” So we sent them an episode that we had edited ourselves already. It’s already been out, but we gave them the raw data, and our final editor who’s Goran [Krznic] ... hi Goran ...

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: He actually volunteers to do it for free, and he was the most responsive out of the three people that I contacted, and he was the most professional. And you know the other people like they weren’t bad, but they didn’t even get back to me in a timely manner, and that was something Emily and I, and still find very, very important in all of our professional relationships, is timely communication.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

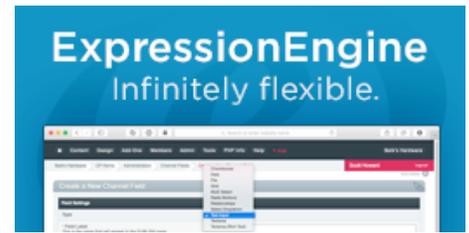
Lea Alcantara: And that was Goran, and since Goran lives in Europe ... I believe, in Croatia.

Emily Lewis: In Croatia.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, in Croatia, his fee is a lot more reasonable due to the currency exchange, so because of that, we’re able to have such a high-quality type of editing work done and maintain the podcast, while keeping our general production costs low.

Emily Lewis: We’ll be sure to link to Goran’s LinkedIn profile for anyone who’s interested in reaching out to him for audio editing. And I just wanted to add that he’s been a great editor for us, especially ... I don’t believe ... English is *not* his first language.

Lea Alcantara: No.



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Emily Lewis: So he does a really great job with that constraint. And he's responsive, and like we talk to him about like when we need a file completed by, what our deadlines are so we can keep with our production schedule, and he meets them. And if things come up ...I mean, last year he had an illness and he let us know like a week and a half in advance that he thought he was going to miss some things. And you know that those things happen, but he takes the time to let us know that in advance so that we can adjust.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

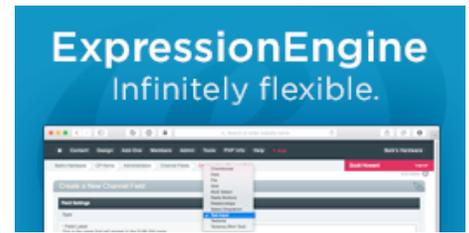
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Emily Lewis: And then another thing that I really love about Goran is that when we were thinking about making that transition from only using the Call Recorder file to individual local audio files, we just asked Goran like, "What should we be using? What kind of file output do we need? What are the settings in the audio file that need to be in place?" We don't know this stuff, and he came back to us and gave us all of that information. He just takes the time as he understands *he's* the expert in this situation.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: And he treats us with a lot of respect of our time and it's just been really great working with him. I mean, it's really, really great. We really lucked out.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, and this is his job. Being a sound editor isn't a side job for him. His like "full time" job beyond the freelancing stuff is he edits sound for theater in his country. So it's something that he does like all day long so we know we're getting professional quality work and for a very, very reasonable price.



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Emily Lewis: All right, so as great as Goran is, Lea and I do still listen to each episode from a quality control perspective just to make sure that what goes out has been passed through our ears, and again, Lea and I alternate episodes so only one of us is responsible for each episode. And if we find something like Lea mentioned earlier, the doorbell thing.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: We'll just let Goran know. We tell him what the time range is and he then makes the little edit. Most of the time, the vast majority of the time, it's perfect and ready to go. But basically, it's taken us from four hours down to — I'd say I can get an episode listened to in about — 40 minutes because I listen to it 2x the speed from a quality control listen perspective.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, right.

Emily Lewis: So that has cut our involvement down significantly.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely, and for me, when I know it's my turn to do the listen, I actually just go to the gym and I listen on the treadmill.

Emily Lewis: Oh, do you?

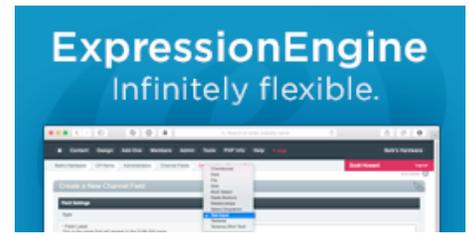
Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: I've never asked you what you do.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: I sit and make the notes for the show notes and the keywords when I'm listening.

Lea Alcantara: No, I'm on the treadmill. And I just have the notes app open on my iPhone, and then basically I pause my treadmill when I notice a mistake, I write it down, and then re-restart and do that.



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Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: So basically, it's kind of like an excuse to like, "Okay, well, I could be sitting doing this or I could be walking doing this."

Emily Lewis: I should probably start walking. I actually have a treadmill in my home so I can totally do that. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah, I know, and I think especially because I know usually our episodes are 45 minutes to one hour so it's like that's like a decent like I'm not going to be sprinting, but I know for sure that I'm going to get some activity in today. So I do use that as an excuse to go to the gym and listen to it too.

Emily Lewis: Better woman than I. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs] But it means it's a little bit longer like in order to do that, I can't listen to it in 2x speed because if I need to concentrate to find the mistake while I'm walking, listening to it in two times, and I tried, but it's just like I missed, like it's just, "Well, what was that? Oh okay, I have to rewind."

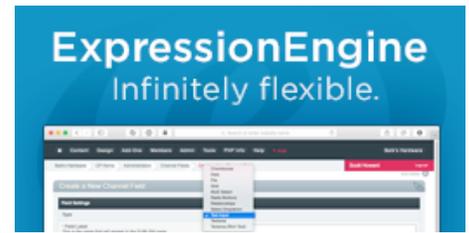
Emily Lewis: So another person that we work with to bring this podcast to life is our transcriptionist.

Lea Alcantara: Yes.

Emily Lewis: His name is Joseph Oliveros.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: Hopefully, I'm pronouncing that correctly, and did you also find him on oDesk?



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Lea Alcantara: No. Actually, so speaking of fitness, I listened to a bunch of fitness podcasts, and that's how I got the idea of just like listen to fitness podcasts while I'm on a treadmill because it kind of like motivates you to continue being fit. And this particular podcast —they no longer have transcripts, I don't know why — but they did have transcripts once upon a time and Joseph was cited at the podcast transcript so I literally just reached out to him. I was like, “Hey, what's your rate? How do you do this?”

And actually, Joseph was the one who told us to go to oDesk to find the editor so when we were looking for an editor beyond just my regular googling, I asked Joseph to like, “What do you think? Where do you think I should find an editor?”

Emily Lewis: Yeah, and just to take a step back and explain why we have transcripts, I know in the beginning it was just I knew that I couldn't be the kind of developer that I am, which is someone who really support standards and accessibility, and put together a podcast and only have audio.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: Like it didn't resonate. It seemed hypocritical.

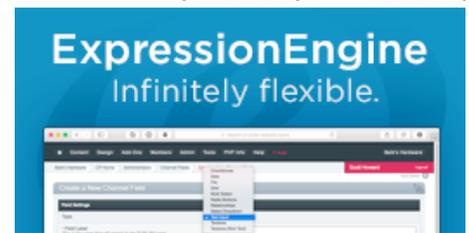
Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: So I remember telling you in the beginning like, “We have to have transcripts, like that's important to me. That's something we have to have.”

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Just because I wanted something that would be fully accessible.

Lea Alcantara: Right.



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Emily Lewis: And then, of course, as it has turned out because search engines don't listen to audio files, but they do read texts, it's helped us a whole lot in terms of search engine....

Lea Alcantara: Optimization, yeah.

Emily Lewis: Absolutely, like the exposure we have on keywords and good content for those keywords is unexpectedly high. Well, I guess I should have expected it, but that wasn't where I was coming from ... but it's fantastic.

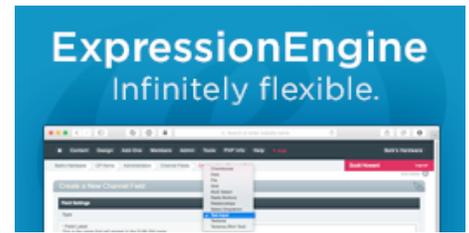
Lea Alcantara: Right. Yeah, absolutely, and I also understand that there are people here who aren't even listening to this podcast. Twofold, I mean that by twofold. The most obvious one is some people, they just want to skim the subject matter and actually just get to the show notes and the heart of the matter because they don't have time or they don't want to listen to 45 to 60 minutes of us talking. But the other half addresses that accessibility point ... we do have a CTRL+CLICK CAST reader who is hearing impaired, and I remember him reaching out to us and saying, "Thank you for having your transcripts."

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: So he could actually get or gain value without having to listen to it.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, and we've even got a recent tweet from someone making a comment about that, and it's always sort of makes me feel like that's money that ... I think you could easily say, "Well, let's not put the money towards that because we don't have a large audience that wants to read it, and so that's not an expense." But I think it really is worth the investment, like we said, we want our podcast to be listened or read by as many people as possible.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.



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Emily Lewis: And whether it's one or two listeners, that's enough for me to justify that. And then, of course, what would I say if I was talking to a client, the SEO boost is not bad either. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Oh yeah, absolutely, absolutely.

Emily Lewis: So for the transcripts, like once we found Joseph, there were just a few things that we do to support him in giving the transcripts done. Well, for one, we send him the edited file from Goran, so it's the completely edited file. Before we send it to him, we also make sure we find any keywords or phrases that he may not be familiar with. And because he's been doing this for us for a long time, there's some, like ExpressionEngine, in the beginning, he wasn't familiar with, but he is now, so we don't always include that every single time.

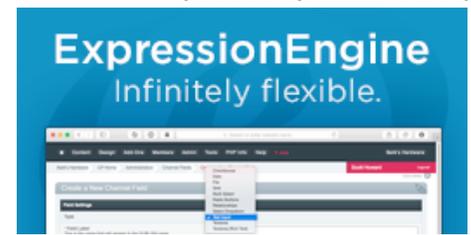
Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely.

Emily Lewis: Just noting colloquialisms or names of people or names of cities, odd phrasing, especially in the tech world, we always have like weird acronyms and stuff like that.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: So we just give him a big list for each episode along with the audio file so that when he's going through and transcribing, he at least has some context for those. But he still finds some that he's not able to figure out what it is that's being said, and so when he sends us back the transcript, he highlights in the text document in yellow along with the timestamp and basically telling us, "I couldn't figure out what this, where it was," and then Lea and I go to that point in the track, find it out and update the transcript itself.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.



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Emily Lewis: When we're doing that sort of clean up in case there are yellow highlights that indicate where it needed to be looked at, we also make sure that there is no spelling errors or even any things that Joseph may not have highlighted, but we spotted when we scan through the transcript. And then we format it and prepare it for a PDF, which is what's posted on the site. So that, too, takes time, but I'd say, again, for me, that takes about 45 minutes to review the transcript, make sure it doesn't have any errors in it and get it into a PDF.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I would say that's about the same thing, although I do more skimming than reading for it, because sometimes certain things sounds fine, but if I was listening to the podcast while I was doing the transcript — because there was an area that Joseph was confused about — sometimes I notice more things, just the turn of phrase of certain things ... because another thing that I want to mention is Joseph is actually from the Philippines as well, so we are also able to take advantage of the currency exchange and keep our production costs low as well, so that he's able to provide us this service affordably for us.

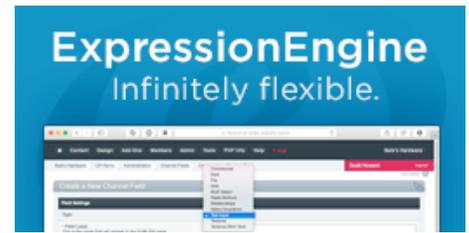
Emily Lewis: And he's been great. I mean, he's been with us from the beginning.

Lea Alcantara: Yes.

Emily Lewis: We've been doing transcripts from the very beginning, and it's been a great relationship.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: And I think it just points out with a podcast or with anything, it really is about finding great colleagues that you can go to for a service, but who also can point you in a direction like Lea was saying recommended us going to oDesk to look for an audio editor kind of a thing. Those



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relationships become really invaluable not just because of the service that we get, but because of the expertise and openness that those people have with us.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely. I can't imagine doing this podcast without these two guys at all.

[Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: It just saves so much time and keeps the quality so high.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, totally. So let's go and let's talk about content a little bit.

Lea Alcantara: Sure.

Emily Lewis: I wanted to just let people know in case they're curious, we have intro and outro music on the podcast, and we got that from PremiumBeat, which we'll be sure to link to in the show notes. It's royalty-free music that you pay for. And Lea and I spent *a lot* of time trying to find the music for the CTRL+CLICK CAST rebrand, but it was a fun process.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs] Totally.

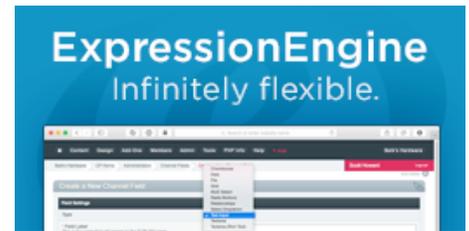
Emily Lewis: And before we get into like talking about the topics and the guests, I kind of wanted to talk about how we have sort of changed our format a little bit over the years, sort of adjusting.

Lea Alcantara: Sure.

Emily Lewis: So in the beginning... [Laughs]

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Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]



Emily Lewis: I think we said that a couple of times.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: In the beginning.

Lea Alcantara: Time immemorial. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: We had banter.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: And right after we would do our sponsor message, we would do some banter between you and me before we would get into the episode topic and/or introduce the guest.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: And we don't do that anymore. I guess it was about six months ago we decided to cut the banter out.

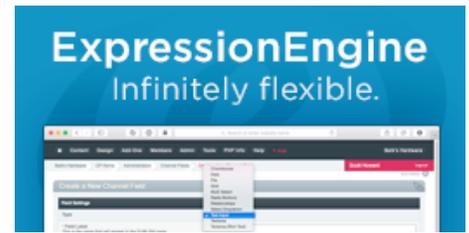
Lea Alcantara: Yes.

Emily Lewis: Because we wanted just to get to the focus of the podcast. That's why you're listening. You're not listening to find out what movies Lea and I have seen or what we're up to or that kind of stuff, and that's kind of what the banter was.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: We did in the beginning I think because it helps us ease into the conversation.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, the show, yeah, absolutely.



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Emily Lewis: Exactly. So it was more for our own benefit, but by cutting it out, I feel like the podcast is a little bit more focused.

Lea Alcantara: But that being said though, like the shift in the focus doesn't mean we've completely taken out any sort of banter.

Emily Lewis: Oh, right.

Lea Alcantara: We just kind of offset it essentially. So for example, we ask our guests to tell us a bit about themselves, and that's kind of a more natural way to just like ask fun questions and things like that.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And do have natural banter that leads into the questions.

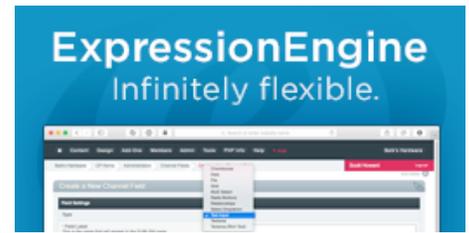
Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: But we no longer have a set amount of time at the beginning to just talk about our weekend. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Right, exactly. And another thing we did, especially after we rebranded to CTRL+CLICK CAST, because at the time we were like we really want to make sure people understand that we are still focused on content management systems.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: And we had sort of like CMS news, and we would sort of go down the list of latest news from Craft, latest news from ExpressionEngine, latest news from Statamic, all of these different



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ones. And it seemed like a good idea, but then, for one, it's sort of a pain in the ass to kind of keep up with all of that stuff.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Emily Lewis: But second of all, our podcasts aren't listened to necessarily the day it comes out and so news quickly becomes not news.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: And we are not the resource for finding out when the latest version of something is out. If that's what you're looking for, you're looking at the wrong source.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

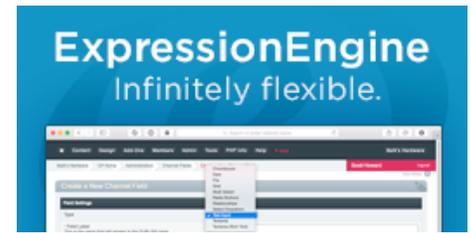
Emily Lewis: And so we also ended up dropping that after about maybe nine months or a year or something like that.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, and I think the point of this entire discussion, too, is that when you have a podcast and you start with a format or whatever, feel free to change that format if it's not working for you.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Just be deliberate over like reflecting at how the show is going and if it's something that works for you and your audience.

Emily Lewis: Absolutely, and I think the last thing I want to mention with regard to that format thing is the thing that we've *added*. I believe we added it with the rebrand of CTRL+CLICK CAST that seems to be kind of popular.



Lea Alcantara: Yes, yeah.

Emily Lewis: And it's frankly one of my favorite parts at every show is our rapid-fire 10 Questions.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, me too, yeah.

Emily Lewis: It's an *Inside the Actors [Studio]*-style inspired ... at the end of every episode, we ask ten questions to sort of get to know our guests a bit better, and it's not really on the topic, but about sort of geeky questions.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: But it's always fun. And this year, with the start of a new year, we have a whole new set of 10 Questions, and I think we're going to try and do that every year ... have a whole new set.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, it's fun. I definitely feel like when I chat with people about the episode or something like that, they always mention like, "Oh, I didn't know X about the guest."

Emily Lewis: Right.

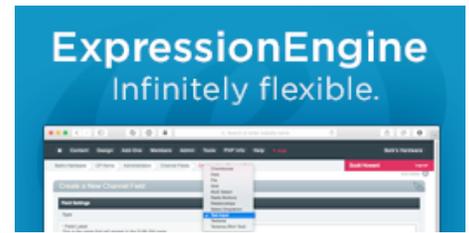
Lea Alcantara: Like they're not even talking about the topic, they're just talking about what the guest actually shared.

Emily Lewis: I'm pleased with that one. That's one that we came up with and we've stuck with, and think we'll probably continue to stick with.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely.

Emily Lewis: Continuing on this thread of content, let's talk about how we pick topics and guests.

Lea Alcantara: Right. So because we're a CMS-focused podcast, we definitely do keep CMSes top of mind, but we do also talk about just content development and development practices in general as



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well as design, and as well as business culture topics, and that was sort of the reason why we decided to rebrand in the first place. We just thought that the previous podcast was too singularly focused.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And we just wanted to talk about more varied subjects, and so we generally look at our calendar and just kind of pace out those particular topics based on how we feel things are going, right?

Emily Lewis: Yeah, and we maintain ... we have this big list of topics.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

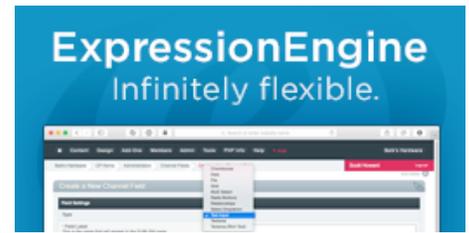
Emily Lewis: Sometimes they're paired with a guest, sometimes they're not, that we just maintain. If something occurs to us, we add it to the list. If someone reaches out to us and suggests someone or themselves as a guest, we add them to the list. And then we have ... oh, this is something we have to talk about: every month, Lea and I have a podcast-specific meeting, and during that meeting, amongst other things that we discuss, we decide who the next people are that we're going to try and reach out to, or the next topics, because sometimes we do topics like today which is just us.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: And we really sort of do it at 4 to 5 at a time.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely.

Emily Lewis: We don't book the whole year.



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Lea Alcantara: Yeah, and I think it's interesting with that type of process, that's partly why we're so consistent. Getting all these guests ahead of time, really far ahead of time, because we're a biweekly podcast, so that means if we're booking four guests, that means we're booking like maybe two months in advance.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: But that allows us to get these high-quality guests who are generally super busy on the calendar because we ask them for permission way ahead in advance, so they would schedule stuff around our particular meeting to record.

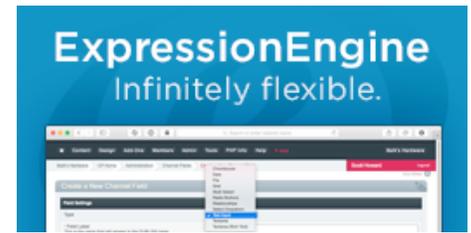
Emily Lewis: Yeah, and I think it's worth mentioning that we really try to have a diverse group of guests on the show.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: So we do keep it top of mind that we want to have people who are representative of not only different areas of the web, but we want to talk to people who are into design and then someone who's into the front end and someone who's in Craft and someone who's into ExpressionEngine. So diversity of topic and interest level, but also in terms of everything from age to gender to race. We do try and make sure that we think of a broad range of people, and even people who are kind of ... not newbies, but maybe aren't as well known in the broader industry.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely.

Emily Lewis: So that the people that you are listening to, they're as diverse as we can find on all of those points, but still falling within the topics that Lea and I have an interest in talking about because if we're not interested in talking about it, it's not going to be a good episode.



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Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely. I feel like that keeps us really interested in running the podcasts too.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: One of the major of the major benefits of having a podcast is having a regular scheduled time to talk with people in your industry and see what they're thinking and share thoughts and learn from each other, and I don't know if anyone else has the privilege to do something like that on a regular basis. It allows us to be reflective over what we're even doing and where we are at, and I'm just grateful that we have this kind of outlet to do that.

Emily Lewis: Oh, yeah, and that's the main reason we keep doing this or I keep doing this.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: I get to learn something twice a month. I have to do research on it. I usually walk away from the conversation with ten action items that I can apply to the business. [Laughs]

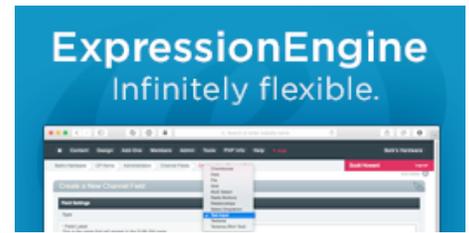
Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely, and with even just following up with our colleagues, right?

Emily Lewis: Oh, I know.

Lea Alcantara: Because it's one of those things where you might see them in a conference, but in the chaos of events and things like that, you don't have a chance to actually sit down, talk to them, get to know what they're thinking professionally or even personally.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So that's another reason why I love the 10 Questions because the entire episode is the professional ideas and thoughts, and then we find some quirky thing about them, you know?



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Emily Lewis: Right. The last thing I want to mention about guests is that when we do reach out to a guest to schedule them for an episode, we follow up about ten days before their scheduled recording with a list of questions that Lea and I have prepared, and the reason we do this is because at least, and Lea, you say why *you* think we do it...

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: But for me, it helps me remember what to ask, especially if the conversation gets really going and I'm not paying attention, we can go off and maybe not address any question that could be really important to address.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

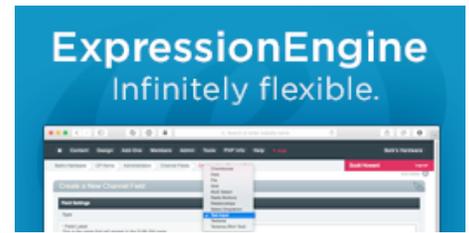
Emily Lewis: But also I've been a guest on podcasts before and I have not had any prep, not really knowing what to expect, and I personally, as I've mentioned, a very organized person, I like to know in advance what I might be asked about, so that I can prepare.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: I want to represent myself and my brand and my business really well, and I want to extend that same courtesy to our guests and so those questions we send, we rarely read them verbatim.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: And we rarely get all of them, but sort of it sets the tone so they know where we're coming from and then they can reply and say, "Well, have you considered this? There's this whole other thing that I wrote about it or I gave a presentation on it that I'd love to make sure we talk about."



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So it sort of establishes what we're going to talk about, but we make sure that they understand it's not just like a Q&A. We're having a conversation and these questions may come up.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely, and it's definitely a guideline.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: It's not set in stone, especially because we do look at the time and we do make sure that everything sounds natural, like if a question that was like lower in our list came up sooner or whatever, then we just deal with that and move on, like we don't have to go like, "Okay, and then this and then this and then that."

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: But I feel like the structure does help keep things pointed, and also when you have a podcast like this, I mean, it depends, like every podcast and everyone has a different style and preference on how things go, and some people prefer that loosey-goosey. But when you have these types of like prepared questions or at least even a prepared structure, it eliminates the awkward pauses more I find.

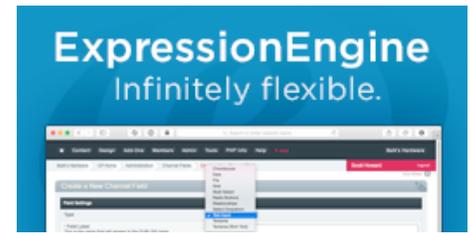
Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: That kind of what's next, right?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

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Lea Alcantara: Because, generally speaking, when we create the questions, we also organize the questions ourselves too.



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Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Like we kind of organize the questions in an order we find that we'll naturally flow into the next question as well, so we don't just have haphazardly send a bunch of questions to someone and we're like, "Okay, we're going to ask all of these randomly, who knows?" But it just helps the transition from point A to point B.

Emily Lewis: And while the questions are guidelines, I think it's important to mention, we do have a script.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: We script out our intro and our outro. I mean, listen to us talk when we don't have a script ... there's a whole lot of "ums" and "likes."

Lea Alcantara: Yes.

Emily Lewis: And we want to make sure our sponsor messaging is clear because they're paying for the time and we want to make sure that that's conveyed properly as they expect.

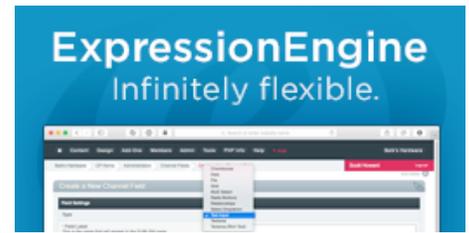
Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: And it also just sort of takes stress off of us to be able to have to wing something off the top of our heads for those — the intro and outro — which is really the bread of our podcast sandwich.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Podcast sandwich sounds yummy.



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Emily Lewis: All right, let's talk a little bit about sponsors, and I feel like there is no right or wrong. There is no magic bullet. It's kind of like what I was talking about in end of the year episode. It's about hustling.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Lea is — by either choice or by default, because Emily doesn't want to do it — does most of our sponsor work.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: So we do collaborate together on how we're going to reach out to sponsors and we work on messaging together to make sure that we're not saying too much or spamming people. But it's really been we email and we email and we email asking for sponsorships.

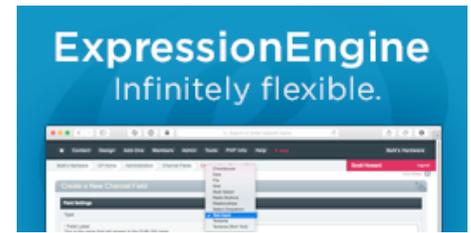
Lea Alcantara: So with these particular sponsors, they are long-term relationships and we treat them as such.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And I do believe that's part of the reason why they continue to sponsor beyond just getting the benefits of sponsorship, which is exposure through our social media and through the show and reaching a targeted audience, those kind of things. It's because we've maintained these types of relationships and making sure that everyone respects each other and knows what's going on.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And that the quality of the show is still high so they're associated with quality as well, right?



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Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Because I mean, that's why you could go into business with certain places or things because you want to associate your brand with their brand as well.

Emily Lewis: I think something also that it's not necessarily tied to our sponsors, but more on *sponsorship* is that we've adjusted over the years. I think in the beginning we had, I don't know, maybe unrealistic expectations about making a lot of money from the podcast. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

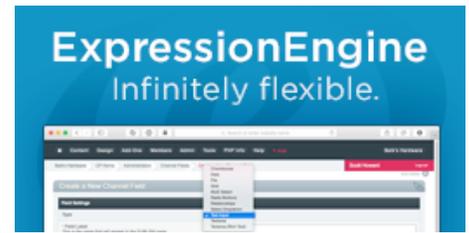
Emily Lewis: And so we came up with all these different types of sponsorships. We have site ads and we have transcript ads and we have RSS and episode ads and all these different ways for people to sponsor, because we thought if we have more ways to sponsor, we could attract a broader range of sponsors, some who had more money to spend, some who had less, some who wanted to target a different channel. And ultimately, it became a nightmare when we didn't have sponsors well in advance.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: It got to the point where Lea was spending a lot of time every month trying to get everything filled, and so last year, I guess, with the beginning of *this* year, we decided to streamline and simply offer episode sponsorships.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: And that's it. It's easier to sell. It's easier to talk about and communicate with about to sponsors, and also we're not juggling ten different things in the CMS for different ads.



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Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely. It's definitely made things a lot easier to communicate about.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Because I think part of the struggle with last year, we were like emailing so many different things, this, that and the other.

Emily Lewis: Confusing.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, exactly, and you know when I would feel like this email is too long, delete.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Versus like, "Here, buy an episode," "Okay, sounds good to me." You know?
[Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Right.

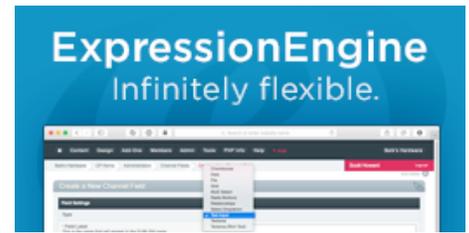
Lea Alcantara: It's just like when talking to sponsors, I mean, they're busy in their businesses too. You need to be able to convey your value succinctly and offer one option. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Yeah, yeah.

Lea Alcantara: As little option as possible really, and I think that's helped. That has worked with us.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, I mean, I will say it did affect the potential amount of money that we could bring in on sponsorships. But compared to the amount of like hassle it was and that we weren't actually getting many bites from the hustling we were doing.

Lea Alcantara: Right.



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Emily Lewis: It's just that I'd rather have every ad filled, every episode ad filled, than make X amount of money, you know?

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: Just because I don't want to worry about it. I just want to know we have a sponsor for that episode and not think about it because we are not making a profit on this podcast. I've accepted that and moved on.

Lea Alcantara: Well, I mean, another thing too is that this allows us to focus on the actual quality of the podcast and gaining listenership.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So that if it does get bigger, then there's potential for it to make more money in the future perhaps, like to up the cost of sponsorships, et cetera and so forth.

Emily Lewis: All right, so I think this sort of covers the guests, the content, the sponsors ... Let's talk a little bit about promotion and then let's finish up with something like reflection-type of things.

Lea Alcantara: Sounds good.

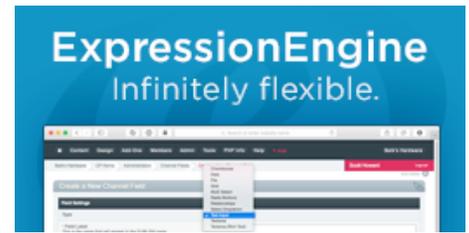
Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: So promoting the podcast is mostly Erin.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, our intern.

Lea Alcantara: Yes, and what's interesting is that at the beginning, we really didn't do.

Emily Lewis: No, like we tweeted.



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Lea Alcantara: Like we did like the bare minimum of “The episode is out, tweet, tweet!” [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: And that was it. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Those kind of things, and I think that was fine, but that doesn't really add value to anyone's day. That doesn't create any urgency to check anything out, and the reality is with social media, it is a very powerful tool when you use it properly. And so even before we got Erin on board, Emily and I started brainstorming over like, “Well, how do we get people more engaged? How do we get people more interested in our tweets, et cetera?”

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So we started to think about recycling our content, because we do have this giant library of shows, and not everyone has listened to every show or know that certain episodes even exist, so we started scheduling possibly ways to promote these former episodes, and then on top of that, we started to also compile facts, like fun facts, about each episode.

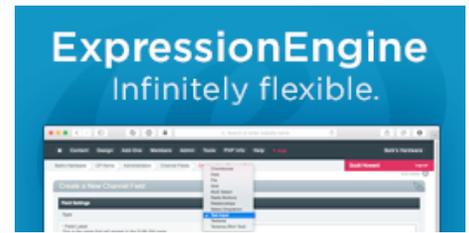
Emily Lewis: We call them “personality promos.” [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yes, exactly, exactly. So we just kind of made a list of “Here are certain pieces of content that I think is still relevant, even though it was recorded a couple of months ago, and then here is a list of just fun facts.”

Emily Lewis: Or even a couple of years ago.

Lea Alcantara: Yes.

Emily Lewis: Because some of our episodes still hold up.



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Lea Alcantara: Oh yeah, absolutely, absolutely. And yeah, of course, like just fun facts and things like that, like how many people are listening, who's our most popular episodes since this, those kind of things.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Just to have something like more interesting than “Our episode is up, please listen.” And then once we got Erin on board, she took the fledgling stuff that we started with and were kind of just haphazardly kind of applying and then began to make it a lot more regimented, a lot more deliberate. And what that means is we had to get over the fact that we were promoting ourselves.
[Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Do you know what I mean? I think we had to get over, “Oh, are we tweeting too much? Are we not tweeting?” And the reality is that we weren't tweeting enough.

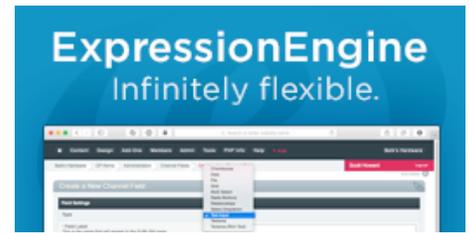
Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: I think the big eye opener was when our peers were surprised we have a podcast.

Emily Lewis: Right. For five years. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yes, like, I mean, this is our fifth year, and there were people that we know, that we spoke to at conferences, that are our Facebook friends and in our Twitter as well and we follow each other and they didn't know we have the podcast.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Lea Alcantara: And so that was a huge kind of a wake-up call to be like, “Okay, we’re not doing enough. We need to make sure that we are tweeting a lot more frequently in a more deliberate schedule.” We also started tweeting at certain times so that our British listeners — hi everyone! would know that our episode is out, as well, because we’re not just isolated to the United States or Canada. There are people in the UK, there are people in Europe. In fact, we have people in the UK and Europe on our show as well.

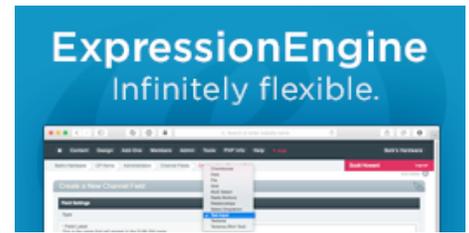
Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So it’s like trying to be more mindful that these audiences exist and that as long as we’re not spamming, we do try to be careful between the line of like being useful and informative and promoting ourselves and not doing it to the point where people are like, “Oh god, there they go again.”

Emily Lewis: Yeah, we have a schedule. We schedule these out, and another thing that we started doing just recently — thanks to Erin who sort of noticed that we got a lot of traction on a tweet that was referencing a resource we had referenced in the podcast episode — and so we also are now, in addition to sort of mentioning past episodes, we also call out specific resources or recommendations from that episode and direct people to our show notes which beyond the podcast ... especially our guests, they always have resources and books and all these other stuff that would be great for our listeners to be aware of. And so we’re drawing attention to those as well for the people who may not listen to the show on the site and even know that the show notes exist with every episode.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: So yeah, it’s been an eye opener, and thank god for Erin, that’s all I gotta say.



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Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: And speaking of that, promoting the podcast and being more deliberate, asking for reviews. By the way, please review. If you've listened all the way this far, please review our show.
[Laughs]

What's interesting is that we do have a very loyal listenership. There has been a lot of great feedback that we are so grateful for, and there are a lot of people who mentioned like really amazing things to us via email or through Twitter or in person, but we didn't have a bunch of reviews.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

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Lea Alcantara: And frankly, Emily and I didn't really care because it doesn't matter.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

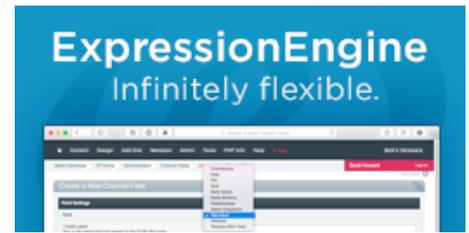
Lea Alcantara: Because like really, at the end of the day...

Emily Lewis: We are going to do this. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: We're going to do this and we think that we're doing a good job, and when we think that there's room for improvement, then we try to improve on that, or on those kind of things. It's like we don't need the ego stroke, but...

Emily Lewis: The podcast does though.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. [Laughs]



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Emily Lewis: Because apparently, reviews on iTunes, the more reviews you have on iTunes and Stitcher, the more likely you have to be recommended by those apps.

Lea Alcantara: Exactly, exactly. So in order to get that type of exposure on those particular avenues, reviews do help, and reviews help others find us easier.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And that make sense, that make sense, because like if there is automated recommendation engines and if there is a bunch of traffic plus reviews to particular shows, then those shows do get pushed up somehow somewhere in whatever app, and so reviews do help, and it's interesting that asking for reviews, just a simple ask, people do. [Laughs]

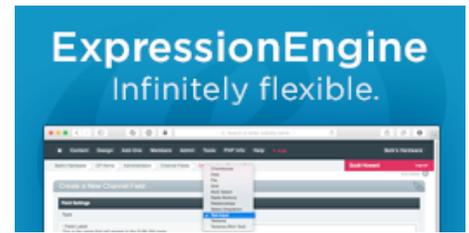
Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: Thank you.

Emily Lewis: Imagine it only took us five years to figure this out. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I know, for sure, for sure.

Emily Lewis: So Erin regularly schedules a couple of times throughout the month asking direct for reviews in iTunes and Stitcher, but also Lea and I since the new year started, we've been sending emails out to people who have emailed us or mentioned us on Twitter or have been guest and just directly asked them in an email. Just since we started those personal emails asking for reviews, I think we've got like ten or fifteen or something like in just a couple of weeks.



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Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I know, absolutely. I feel like just a simple act of asking is a good business lesson in general. I mean, I feel like all these things are common sense, but it isn't until you actually do it that you're like, "Oh, there's a reason why people always say, 'You should ask.'" [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Well, and it reiterates the importance of checking yourself regularly throughout the year. Lea and I meet every month to schedule things and talk about sponsorships and changes to the site and things like that, but we also try and make a point of like, "Are we doing this okay? Does this need to change?" You know?

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: But it's those lessons that you learn, you're like, "Duh?" [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Like getting someone to edit our episodes for us, "Duh?" [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. But I mean, I think that's also the reality of running a business, right?

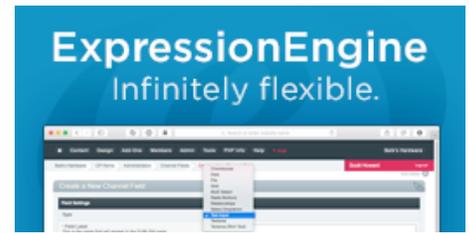
Emily Lewis: Oh yeah.

Lea Alcantara: Like sometimes you just don't know what you don't know.

Emily Lewis: Don't know

Lea Alcantara: And then you just continue doing something until you pause to reflect and think, "Okay, maybe there's a different way to do this."

Emily Lewis: Like our scheduling ... 2015 is the first year in five years that we actually looked at the upcoming year and scheduled the episodes in a way so that Lea and I could actually have some time off at the end of the year. [Laughs]



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Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I know, for sure, or even like a recording schedule versus like ...

Emily Lewis: Oh, right.

Lea Alcantara: This is I think the first year we've given ourselves more padding between recording and release, because I think we really only gave ourselves a couple of days.

Emily Lewis: Like what we were thinking?

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I don't know, like it felt like whenever it was a podcast week, it was a lot more stressful, just because it's like, "Oh, we need to get this out there so Goran can edit and like Joseph can read and like we do all this stuff and transcribe it." And it was just like frantic, and then this is the first year we're like, "Why do we need to be frantic? There is no need to be frantic about this at all and just schedule it appropriately."

Emily Lewis: Right, yeah. We used to record three days before the episode went live, and now we're recording a week before the episode goes live. [Laughs]

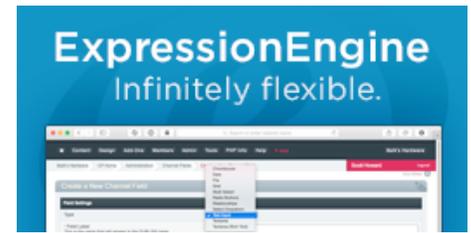
Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: And it's been, like Lea said, so much easier and less stressful, and I can't believe it didn't occur to us sooner.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, or even like the sound check, too. We used to do a separate sound check with our guests because we want them to understand how to record locally, et cetera, and then we're like, "Well, why don't we just do that ..."

Emily Lewis: Right before the recording, yeah.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. [Laughs]



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Emily Lewis: Duh.

Lea Alcantara: But I mean, it's one of those things where that is why we have this podcast, this particular podcast, so *you* can learn from our mistakes.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs] Right, exactly. So speaking of let's go ahead and sum this up, we're already going into the long episode area. We're over an hour at this point.

What would be your final advice for someone getting into podcasting?

Lea Alcantara: I think my final advice really is plan this out. I think even if it's going to be a casual podcast, I think even having the bare minimum outline would be something, I think, that would really, really help you. Just plan, plan your episodes out, and then if you're going to have guests, that you schedule them far ahead of time.

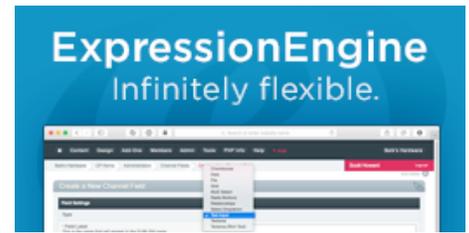
Emily Lewis: Yeah, I think for me, it's a less practical and more sort of an emotional advice, but don't take yourself too seriously.

Lea Alcantara: Oh yeah.

Emily Lewis: And don't take criticism too seriously. I mean, early in the beginning, we had some feedback that we laughed too much or that we say "like" too much. And here's the thing: if you're going to talk to me, I say "like" a lot and laugh a lot. That's me.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: We do our best to edit out awkward spaces and "ums" and things like that, but ultimately, this is how we talk. And if someone is really bothered by that, they're never going to be able to listen to the podcast, and I can't do anything about that because if I'm going to focus on



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speaking properly in a way that makes someone feel comfortable because they don't like the word "like" too much, I'm not paying attention to my guest. I'm not paying attention to you, Lea, and I'm just all worried about myself. And that is not going to lead to a good episode. So just don't take it seriously, you're not going to be perfect. There's no reason to be perfect.

Lea Alcantara: No, like I mean, unless this is supposed to be like one of those edu-tainment kind of like "I'm going to teach you this science-y thing, and therefore, it needs to be formal." Right?

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: If you're just like randomly laughing at how to do an equation, then that's a little odd. [Laughs] But there you go, I just laughed because I found that funny. Thank you very much.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: That's just the format of our show, and I think that's fine, and everybody, that's the reason why there are millions and millions of podcasts out there, because you'll find one that will suit you with either the subject matter, the guests or the hosts, and I hope that you appreciate what we're doing here, and if you have listened all the way to the end here, I think you do, so thank you.

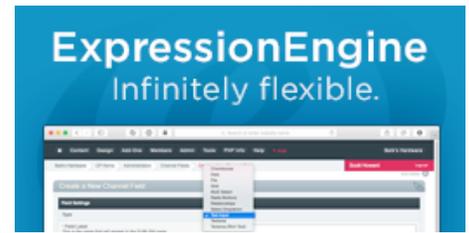
Emily Lewis: Ditto. So I think that brings us to the end of the show.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: But since it's just the two of us and we do have a brand new set of 10 Rapid Fire Questions, Lea, do you feel like answering them?

Lea Alcantara: Sure, give it to me.

Emily Lewis: Android or iOS?



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Lea Alcantara: iOS.

Emily Lewis: If you are stranded on a desert island and can only bring three things, what would you bring?

Lea Alcantara: I would bring one of those like giant beach umbrellas for practicality, because then I can shade myself from the sun and the wind and the elements in general. I would bring one of those special water bottles with a filter in them.

Emily Lewis: Oh.

Lea Alcantara: Because I'm probably surrounded by saltwater, and I can't drink that, but if I had a filtered water bottle, then perhaps I can. [Laughs] And then the third thing probably, emergency flares so I could be rescued.

Emily Lewis: You're so practical. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: I know. I know.

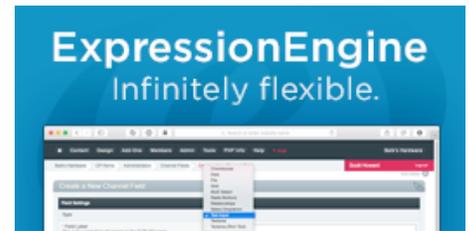
Emily Lewis: But I mean, really, I think as you get older, it's less about making sure you have your comfort items and making sure you survive. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yes. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: All right, what's your favorite TV show?

Lea Alcantara: Oh, there are so many, but my current one is *Better Call Saul*.

Emily Lewis: Oh, yeah. I know they're Albuquerque.



Lea Alcantara: Yes. I mean, if you are a fan of *Breaking Bad*, Bob Odenkirk, that's the actor who plays Saul. I know he's a veteran actor, but I feel like he's a huge discovery.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Like he is amazing.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: And the show is really good. It's just one of those things where you're like you're always nervous when there's a sequel of something or in this case, it's a prequel. It's kind of both because they go back and forth in time, so it's a sequel/prequel, which makes it even more intriguing, but it's as good. It's as good as *Breaking Bad*.

Emily Lewis: Well, I never got into *Breaking Bad*, so I don't know, I'll probably have to visit that one first.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: All right, what's your favorite dessert?

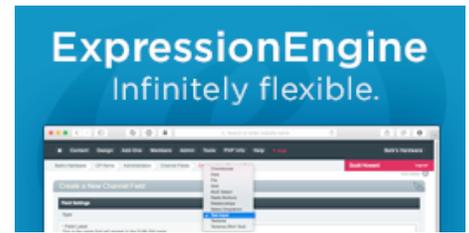
Lea Alcantara: My favorite dessert is, I don't know, it's more like a favorite snack. I mean, it's one of those things where you'd have to pry off my cold dead hands.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: It would be kettle popcorn.

Emily Lewis: Oh.

Lea Alcantara: I just, you know. It's an issue actually. It's a problem.



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Emily Lewis: I probably didn't do you any favors when I sent you that popcorn care package.

Lea Alcantara: I know! But I mean, it's like one of those things where it's just like "hurray!" and "oh no."

Emily Lewis: All right, we asked these with the last set because we kept these questions. So you can give the same answer, but if there's something else that is on your mind, share what you might do.

Lea Alcantara: Sure.

Emily Lewis: So what's the profession other than your own that you'd like to attempt?

Lea Alcantara: I probably like to be a novelist.

Emily Lewis: Oh really?

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. I think like a fiction novelist, because it's one of those things where I'd still be able to work from home. I can still be creative. I can still do that at a coffee shop or anywhere that I want to do it, and I like stories. I like writing stories.

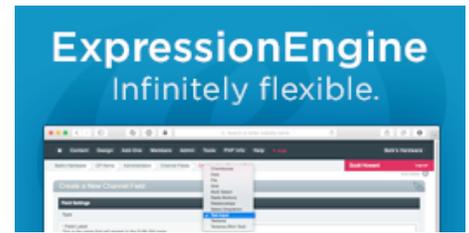
Emily Lewis: What about a profession you wouldn't want to do?

Lea Alcantara: Politics, I think.

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: I was just watching John Oliver the other day about these lobbyists about the tobacco industry, and I'm just like, "Oh, so evil."

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]



Lea Alcantara: You're just like, "How does he even know?"

Emily Lewis: What's the latest article or blog post you've read?

Lea Alcantara: There's drama going on right now in the Asian American ...

Emily Lewis: I was reading that this morning too.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. So there's like — I'm so sad because I'm a fan of both of these people — so there I read an article called "Isn't the internet big enough for more than one angry Asian?" And it's just kind of like analysis between the drama between Lela Lee of Angry Little Asian Girl and Phil Yu of Angry Asian Man. And there is like intellectual property disputes and stuff, and it's just sad and disappointing.

Emily Lewis: I read that myself.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: So if you could have a superpower, what would it be?

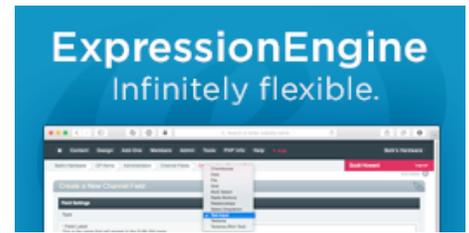
Lea Alcantara: I think I would like to be like Professor X. I'd like to be able to read minds and control minds. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Do you know what I mean? Because I mean, it's a pretty epic superpower, but I wouldn't want it to be like a power that I have no control over.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: As in like, I want to pick and choose.



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Emily Lewis: Right. Yeah, there are some minds you don't want to hear what's going on.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah, yeah, exactly, exactly. As in like if I need to find out what this person is thinking, I have that option, but otherwise, like, "Hmm, you're disturbing. I don't want to hear your thoughts."

Emily Lewis: So when I last asked this question, I think the answer was K-pop, so do you still like to listen to K-pop when you work?

Lea Alcantara: No, it wasn't K-pop. It was Coffitivity.

Emily Lewis: Oh, that's right. Although, didn't you say ... I think maybe when we talked at some point, you said you like that. But the Coffitivity ... is that background noise like you're in a restaurant?

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely. But I mean, it's really varied. Another type of music I like to listen while I'm working, if I'm listening to music and not Coffitivity, is movie soundtracks.

Emily Lewis: Oh, like even the ones that have like clips of dialogue?

Lea Alcantara: No, no, usually like it's got to be like an epic movie soundtrack like...

Emily Lewis: *Moulin Rouge*?

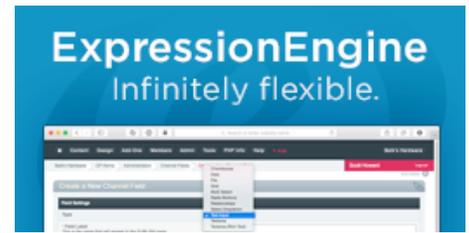
Lea Alcantara: No, that's a lot of singing.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So like you hear like words.

Emily Lewis: Oh.

Lea Alcantara: It's more like *Jurassic Park* background, so you hear like "Na, na, na, na, na, na."



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Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: So you just hear epic orchestral work, and sometimes it's really fun, like the Star Wars background, it just always feels like ... I mean, the entire point of movie soundtracks is to have an emotional response, right?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: It's supposed to make you feel excited or sad or happy, those kind of things, so yeah, movie soundtracks.

Emily Lewis: All right, last question, cats or dogs?

Lea Alcantara: Cats.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, I knew that. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Cats all the way. I'm a cat lady. I'm a cat lady here.

Emily Lewis: Well, we've taken this episode I think the longest we've ever had. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

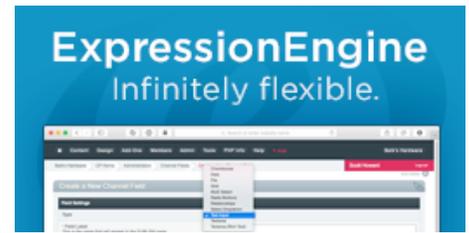
Emily Lewis: So let's sum it up, yeah.

Lea Alcantara: And if it's too long for you, we've got the transcripts.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

[Music starts]

Lea Alcantara: Anyway, so we'd now like to thank our sponsors for this podcast: [EllisLab](#) and [Pixel & Tonic](#).



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

Lea Alcantara: We also want 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 liked this episode, please give us a review on [iTunes](#), [Stitcher](#) or both!

Emily Lewis: Don't forget to tune in to our next episode when we'll be talking with Clarissa Peterson about responsive typography. 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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