

<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

CTRL+CLICK CAST #057

CartThrob for EE Ecommerce with Matt Weinberg

[Music]

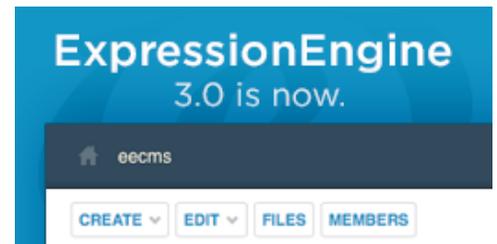
Lea Alcantara: From [Bright Umbrella](#), this is CTRL+CLICK CAST! We inspect the web for you! Today special guest Matt Weinberg returns to the show this time to talk about ExpressionEngine Ecommerce and Vector Media's acquisition of CartThrob. I'm your host, Lea Alcantara, and I'm joined by my fab co-host:

Emily Lewis: Emily Lewis!

Lea Alcantara: This episode is brought to you by [EllisLab](#). ExpressionEngine 3 is the brand new release of the most flexible and powerful content management system on the planet. Have you tried it out yet? Download the free Core version or be one of the first 50 podcast listeners to get \$50 off with the coupon code **CTRL+5050**. Don't worry we'll have this on our show notes so you can copy it right exactly. This exclusive promotion is good for one week only, so get it today at expressionengine.com (ed note: or just go directly to store.ellislab.com)

[Music ends]

Emily Lewis: If you've been listening to the show lately, you know that over the past few months, we've been talking a lot about ecommerce. We chatted about Perch ecommerce and Craft too, and we even had a Statamic episode in our archive. Today we're rounding out the CMS ecommerce discussion with ExpressionEngine, specifically the third-party CartThrob add-on, which was acquired by Vector Media Group earlier this year, and we have Vector Media Group's very own president of



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/carthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

technology, Matt Weinberg, with us today to help us navigate the discussion. Welcome back to the show, Matt.

Matt Weinberg: Thank you so much for having me. I'm happy to be here.

Lea Alcantara: So for those that don't know you, can you tell our listeners a bit more about yourself?

Matt Weinberg: Absolutely, I am the co-founder and president of development and technology of Vector Media Group. That means I lead our development team. I do a lot of infrastructure planning, security, auditing type stuff, and I've been doing ecommerce sites forever basically in the internet world, a couple of years is forever. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: And I have a 2-1/2-year-old daughter and I have a 9-week-old son.

Lea Alcantara: Oh, yeah, congratulations.

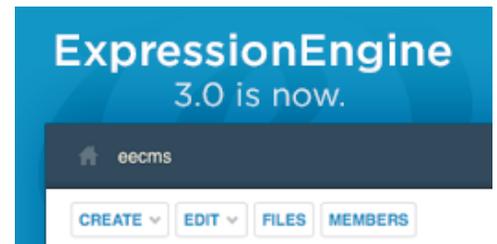
Matt Weinberg: Thank you.

Emily Lewis: And just a little tidbit for our listeners, and I may have said this when we had you on the last time, but you were on *CBS Sunday Morning*. [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Like I watched that every Sunday morning. I'd like to turn into my mom. As I get older, I'm like doing all the stuff she does, but *CBS Sunday Morning* is like a Sunday morning ritual with my



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

coffee, and they had a whole like segment. You were in it in Vector Media Group offices and stuff. It was so cool. [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: [Laughs] Yes, so the coolest parts about that for me were, first of all, the host, Mo Rocca, is just an amazing person.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: And I'm still in touch with him. He and I still email and talk.

Emily Lewis: Oh really? Oh cool.

Matt Weinberg: Yes.

Emily Lewis: I love his *My Grandmother's Ravioli* show, have you ever seen that?

Matt Weinberg: Yeah, of course.

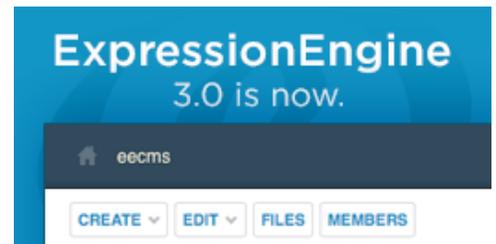
Emily Lewis: Yeah, so that's very cool. [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: And then the other funny thing is I live in Long Island now, but at that time I was living in New York City, and I never talk to my neighbors, like the people live across the hall from me like I had never spoken a word to them in my life, but after that aired, with people that I had not spoken to forever but living across them, they're like, hell, look at me and turn and look at me, "Were you on CBS this weekend?" [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: It's like the only time we've ever talked. [Laughs]



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Lea Alcantara: So now you're real famous.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, I have one of those, and I was like, "I know him!" [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Our podcast is on the same level as CBS Sunday Morning because we have the same guest. [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: I think you guys are cool.

Lea Alcantara: Oh, thanks. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

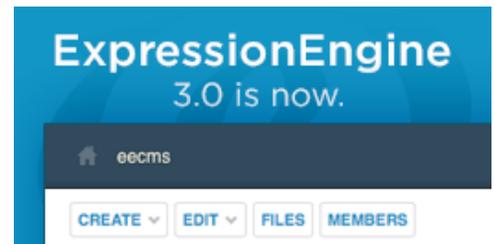
Matt Weinberg: I was not on their show for that long. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Well, that's cool.

Emily Lewis: So let's get into today's topic. I kind of want to first talk about CartThrob. For our listeners who may not be aware, it's a pretty popular third-party ecommerce add-on for EE. Matt, can you share the history of that add-on, and why Vector Media Group acquired it?



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

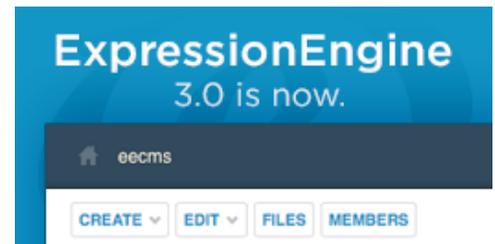
Matt Weinberg: Sure. CartThrob is, in our totally biased opinion, the best ExpressionEngine ecommerce add-on, but we've actually thought that way for a long time, and the add-on was originally created – I don't know – like five or six years ago by a group called Mighty Big Robot. There is a guy named Chris Newton. They had a developer named Rob Sanchez working for them. Rob Sanchez is a name a lot of people in EE community know. Rob actually works here at Vector now. He's worked here for a little bit under two years, but that is totally unrelated to CartThrob. Yeah, Rob is one of our developers, but it's totally unrelated.

Soon they came out with CartThrob I guess six years ago or so for EE 1, EE 2. Mighty Big Robot came out with a couple more add-ons, including some add-ons for CartThrob itself like CartThrob wish list and subscriptions and those, and it was really well loved and we loved it. We used it for so many projects, and it was really what we felt was always the best approach to ecommerce, which is storing orders inside of regular entries and giving you that power.

So we've used it on so many projects, and about a year ago I guess, just the amount of support required, it was kind of overwhelming for Mighty Big Robot, which is effectively a one- or two-person shop, maybe even like a one-and-a-half-person shop at that point, and they really couldn't give the dedication to updating the product and the support that their customers really expected.

So a couple of months ago, they announced that they were just going to shut the whole thing down. We found that to be a major issue for us for two reasons, one is that we use it, like a lot of our clients use it, and some of our clients were even messaging us saying, "What's going on with this? Now, my software has been discontinued, et cetera, et cetera?" More so, we just have a lot of ideas about CartThrob. We have new bug fixes that we've made internally that we think could be applied to the product, but we just have so many ideas about how to make it better.

Some rights reserved. License: creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

I've always been pretty friendly with Chris. I reached out. I said, "Hey, I'd hate to see this great product get shut down. What can we do?" And we went back and forth. It was a very easy negotiation. I think we're on the same page. I think Chris, one thing that was very important to him was that CartThrob would get like a good home, not just that he'd get money, but I think he was very concerned with the future of CartThrob, and I think he felt confident that Vector is such a well-known agency, especially in ecommerce world, that it would really give it a home and improve it and let it grow. So it was a very easy negotiation.

It was super easy to work, and I guess back in August or so, we acquired it, and now it's ours along with a whole bunch of other Mighty Big Robot add-ons like Profile:Edit and Field Editor and a few others.

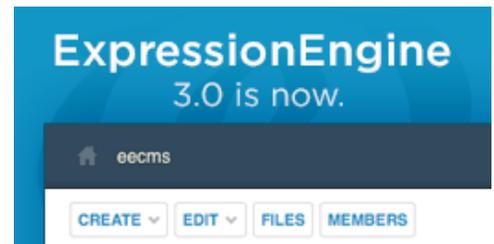
Lea Alcantara: That's really cool. So I'm curious, I mean, it sounds like a rather smooth process. Were there any major challenges once CartThrob was officially yours?

Matt Weinberg: Yeah, so many. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: And none of these are the fault of Chris or anybody in that team, like honestly, I cannot speak highly enough of. One thing is, and you don't even think about this when you're doing an acquisition, but just the actual process of getting the stuff over. These guys have years of code. They have servers, but those servers have like their personal domains and their personal emails, and like we're obviously not buying that stuff, their personal stuff, and like they're paying for these, there



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

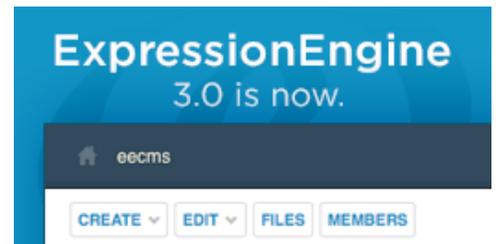
are these SSL certificates. It's like all these things, but there are also like some email addresses that are the support email address.

All these little things, I hate to say, I didn't even think about like how we are going to even get the software over. There are things like the Devot:ee account. There's the Twitter account, the Facebook Group, like the GitHub account. So we tried our best to make a list. Chris and the team at Mighty Big Robot was super accommodating, and then afterwards, we all just did this in good faith, so if we found something afterwards like, "Oh, we totally forgot to get the GitHub account," they gave it to us, but it's getting everything over to our servers and changing the DNS, transferring the domains, transferring the emails, but making sure we didn't take their emails, that was a big pain.

Then the support queue, I mean, it's no shock I think to anybody to say that CartThrob Support prior to us had been a little bit ignored, again, Mighty Big Robot is one person, maybe one-and-a-half to two people, so we expected that we'd have new support requests. I didn't think we expected quite the backlog of requests that were in there, and we wanted to make sure we spread the word about what was happening, so we actually went back to the help desk and all the open tickets that had never been responded to from – since some cases were for weeks or months, and we wrote to these people and we were just honest.

We said, "Hey, we acquired it. We hope to do better for you if you decide to move on, we totally get it. If there's still something we can help you with, please let us know," and that took us while, but I think it was worth it. It's to help people understand that we are dedicated to this product.

Emily Lewis: That kind of communication, did you have to do that as well from like a marketing standpoint, letting people know the new ownership of the product, especially in such a tightknit EE community? Was there any pushback or were people generally happy?



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Matt Weinberg: Well, I would say that probably if people are unhappy, they would be less likely to tell me than if they were happy.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: Well, maybe that's not true. Maybe people are more likely to complain.

Emily Lewis: I feel like the EE community tells people what they think.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

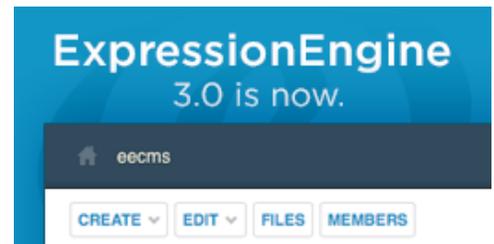
Matt Weinberg: Yeah. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: I think so. [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: It's true. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: I've got that impression. [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: We've got in basically across the board positive responses. One thing that was really important to us is that when we acquired the software, I said it was August, but it was actually late or mid-July, and one of the gateways that's pretty popular, they were changing their API in CartThrob, that was about to be totally incompatible and it was like end of August that that was going to change, and so one of the first things we did was we put out a small maintenance release just fixing that, and we just wanted to prove to people like, "Hey, we know that this software has not even had a maintenance release in quite a while," and lots of people are sending out tickets about this API change they were going to be able to process orders.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

We just wanted to prove right away, “Yes, we are on top of this, we are going to be updating this software. It’s not in the dead pool.” So that was important, and people have been really receptive and happy.

Emily Lewis: Personally, I was happy as well. CartThrob was one of the first solutions I worked with for EE commerce projects.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, me too.

Timestamp: 00:09:57

Emily Lewis: And again, the reason why I felt really comfortable with it right away was because it uses just regular entries, and it was something I was already familiar with because I’ve been using ExpressionEngine, so there wasn’t a whole mind shift in terms of how to think about content, products or content. So your description just then about the maintenance release for the API that was changing, it kind of leads nicely to my next question, so what was your initial goal upon acquisition? Was it to get the existing system working and supported, or did you also want to start adding new features, making big overhauls to support the way your team approaches development?

Matt Weinberg: The answer is yes. [Laughs]

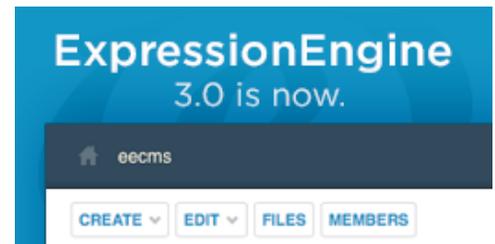
Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: All of it. [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: All of the above. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Matt Weinberg: But I guess to be more specific, our number one immediate goal was to make sure people knew it wasn't being discontinued.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Matt Weinberg: Because one of the things is that the old owner had put up a web page, like a changepartthrob.com saying, "This product is over. It's being discontinued." I mean, that got spread around. I mean, it got sent on the Devot:ee mailing list. It was told on Twitter. Some of our clients asked about it. It would have been more ideal if we had started these conversations earlier so there's never that page.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

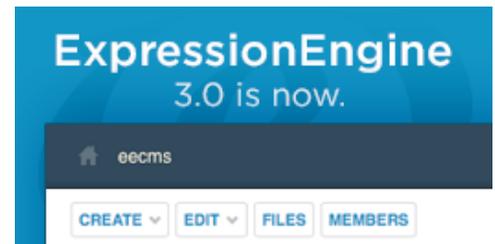
Matt Weinberg: So I think our very first instinct was just to make sure people know, "You know what, no, it's not getting discontinued. It's in good hands, like please don't move to competitors. We're still here."

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Matt Weinberg: And convincing people with the truth, which is that we really are invested in this product, it wouldn't make sense for us to buy it and then not really invest in it. So we put up a blog post and said, "We are wanting to invest in this and we have resources dedicated."

And then there were a couple of like really immediate bugs that we wanted to fix. One of them was that API upgrade that was it had a big time limit on it. We needed to have that upgraded by the 31st or 30th or whatever it was from a couple of weeks after. There were a couple of other bugs, things



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

that we just had been fixing for clients every time that we had done a CartThrob installation that we knew about, so we wanted to fix those.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Matt Weinberg: One of the bugs that were such a big bug is that CartThrob internally has like a support portal. If you go to the CartThrob module page, you can email Support. I mean, that hasn't been worked in probably two years.

Lea Alcantara: Oh wow, right.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: But the issue is people don't know it's not working, so people submit a support request there. It goes into the ether basically. It's never received.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs] Oh no.

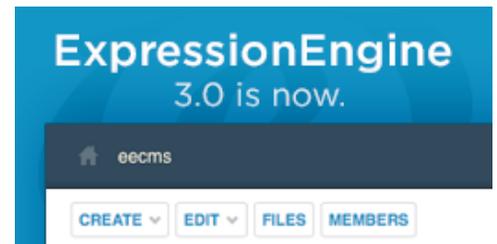
Matt Weinberg: And they think that support has just been ignored.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: So we released Version 2.7 a couple of, I guess, weeks ago that fixes that issue too, right?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: I know there are still a lot of non-2.7 users out there, but hopefully, there is this fix going forward. So those were the big fixes, but then the other thing is we acquired an add-on called CT Admin.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, right, right.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: Right. So that was made by a guy named Eric Lamb with mithra62.

Lea Alcantara: Yes.

Matt Weinberg: He's a super smart guy, a great developer, and he actually reached out to us when he heard some rumors that we were may be acquiring CartThrob. He asked if we're interested in it. We were. We feel like CT Admin has a lot of features that would fit very well into CartThrob itself. So part of our plan is to end up rolling a lot of CT Admin features into the base CartThrob package, which I think you'll see shortly from us.

Emily Lewis: Nice. You just literally answered one of our listener questions. Andrew Armitage had written in asking, what are the plans to incorporate CT Admin into CartThrob?

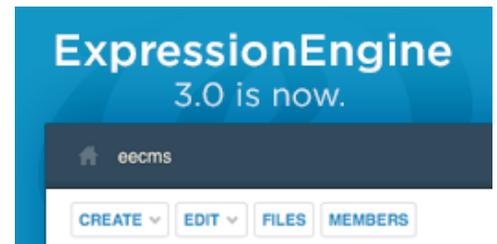
Matt Weinberg: Yeah. I don't think all of the features necessarily belong. There are some stuff in CT Admin that's great, but it would may be confusing or weird for everyone who uses CartThrob, which I think have a much more diverse set of customers than people imagine.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: But yes, some of the features definitely belong in there, but then in a weird place we're in now, there's also the EE 3 upgrade.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: Right.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Matt Weinberg: So it doesn't a lot of sense for us to build a whole bunch of new features into CartThrob that we then have to upgrade for EE 3. So our number one priority right now after we did those bug fixes that we already did is EE 3 compatibility.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: And as part of EE 3 compatibility, there's going to be a bunch of new stuff, a bunch of new features, part of the CT Admin rolling in situation, and then at that point, we'll be just focusing on new features and everything else.

Emily Lewis: So does that mean that CT Admin will still exist as a product like a current full-featured product, but then there will be some of its features brought into CartThrob?

Matt Weinberg: Yeah, I don't know honestly.

Emily Lewis: Okay. [Laughs]

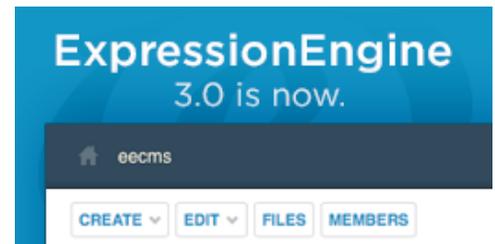
Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: I'm not sure. That's a good question. Well, some of the features are definitely going to be brought in, and if it looks like those features are a lot of the rationale for CT Admin existing, then I don't think it make sense for CT Admin to be a separate \$300 product, right?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: So maybe it turns into like some free add-ons, maybe it's like some cheaper extension to CartThrob.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Matt Weinberg: Maybe we'll just put them all in, but make it so that advanced users kind of get better access, and we don't confuse the regular users. I don't know. We haven't decided that quite yet.

Lea Alcantara: So before we dive more into the technical aspects of CartThrob, I'm just a little fascinated over the business of add-on development because primarily Vector Media Group is a services company. You guys make the websites and stuff. Now, it seems like you're focusing on product development, especially with this CartThrob, like is that something that you guys are going to start adding like more attention towards, and why is that?

Matt Weinberg: It's a really good question, and it's something that we debated a lot in the lead up to purchasing CartThrob, which was not an insignificant financial investment for us.

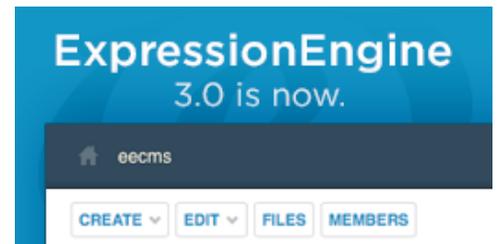
Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Matt Weinberg: And in some ways, I'll go back to the question in a second, but just to kind of set up context, like in some ways, our initial investment into actually purchasing it isn't even the most investment. Like we're going to spend way more time/money in upgrading for EE3 in doing those support and inevitable stuff that happens with that probably than we ended up spending on the product itself, you know?

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Matt Weinberg: Just because it's such a big complicated product.

Lea Alcantara: Right.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Matt Weinberg: So it's very complicated discussion. The net in that is that we are a services company. We benefit from doing websites. We also do a lot of like specific projects.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Matt Weinberg: So a lot of times other agencies hire us just to do the hard stuff.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: An API integration here or fulfillment integration or whatever else, custom module, we get hired a lot for that kind of thing.

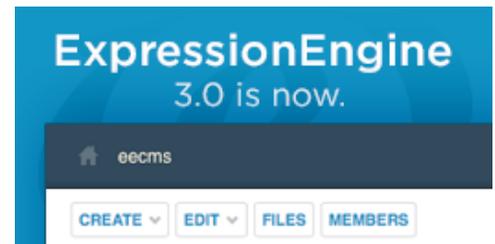
Lea Alcantara: Right.

Matt Weinberg: So we have a couple of different things we want to make sure of. First of all, it's really important to us that there is a good ecosystem of ecommerce add-ons for ExpressionEngine. It just makes business sense for us given how much of our business is tied up into ecommerce.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Matt Weinberg: So it makes sense for us to invest in that, even if nothing else. Also, by buying CartThrob, we get a lot of incoming business now because a lot of people, rightfully, see us as the people behind CartThrob, it gives us authority that we know what we're doing, which is true. I hope people think we know what we're doing, and we've gotten business from it. We've gotten some great projects, really fun projects just by owning it, so I don't see us transitioning to be a product company.

Lea Alcantara: Okay.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Matt Weinberg: I see us continuing to be a services company that has CartThrob and it builds some strategic goals for us and also just as a benefit to the EE community, it's a great product that we have out there. Does that answer your question? I don't know what to say.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, no, no, no, it's definitely something that I know that a lot in our ExpressionEngine community battles/struggles with. A lot of people seem to start off services and then they dip their toe into products, and then then they either go all in on the products and dump the services, or they try to do some sort of hybrid, or it's just interesting to me to just try to figure out like, well, why?

Like why did you decide to do that, or are you going to be adding more to that, and there are some that started to do a product offering for their initial business and then they dumped it completely because it didn't make sense for them. Yeah, I just wanted to have context over is CartThrob the first of many or is it CartThrob almost an anomaly.

Matt Weinberg: Yeah, I think right now, it's almost an anomaly.

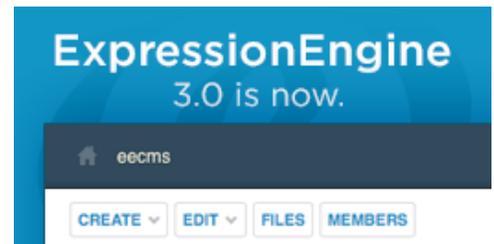
Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: But it's an anomaly that makes a lot of strategic sense for us given our expertise here.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Matt Weinberg: And so it's funny, after we acquired CartThrob, no less than four other add-on makers reached out to me asking me if we're interested in acquiring their add-ons also.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Lea Alcantara: Right, right.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: And it's okay. I totally get it, and I was honest to them, and I said, "We're not really getting into the add-on business. With CartThrob, it makes so much sense for the kind of business we already do."

Emily Lewis: I think that's what's interesting about anyone who's operating a business, how you make big decisions that are an anomaly, a shift from your normal operating procedure. I mean, Lea and I have these conversations all the time when we get some idea about something we might want to do, and I think you mentioning that it had some strategic relevance is really important because taking on an add-on that is as extensive as CartThrob is and as big as the support needs are, to me it would have to be more than just we want to make sure it keeps going. There has to be some sort of strategic reason.

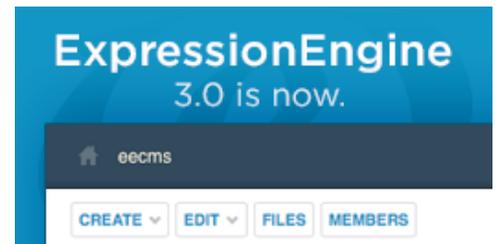
Matt Weinberg: Definitely, I totally agree with you. Hopefully, we'll find out it was a good decision for us.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: I know it's always hindsight that really tells you if you're right or not. So let's talk about CartThrob. Let's fill our listeners in some, who probably may not be familiar with CartThrob, but what are some of the core features of it as it stands today, and do you feel it's suitable for all types of



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

ecommerce, like is it something that's a good solution for simple payments as well as full inventory management or subscriptions, events, somewhere in the middle is it best suited for?

Matt Weinberg: Absolutely. Yes to all of the above.

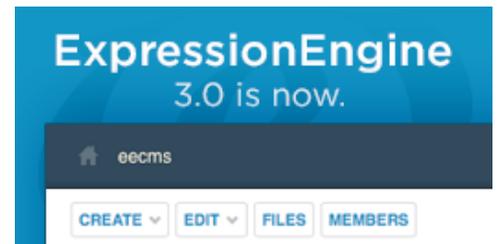
Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: Again, I sound very self-serving saying this. [Laughs] But just to remind people, we were huge users of CartThrob before we bought it. That's one of the reasons we bought it is because we were such big users of it.

Timestamp: 00:19:44

I mean, we have clients that are doing tens of millions of page views a month and they're selling millions of dollars of inventory and it's physical and it syncs with like their brick and mortar store and it syncs with their fulfillment center and it syncs with their CRM and that's on CartThrob, and then we have clients selling one digital download a month for \$15, and it just emails to them to fulfill it and that's on CartThrob, and we have everything in between.

I feel like CartThrob is a great product. I feel like it's a great product for a couple of different reasons. First of all, we mentioned it before, but it stores orders in entries. That's really a powerful thing. First of all, EE is obviously built around entries, so when you have orders being stored in entries and when you have products being stored in entries, suddenly you can use that `exp:channel:entries` tags to do anything. You can use any kind custom field type to store information about the product. CartThrob out of the box acts like a modifier field. You can store blue shirt, black shirt. This one is plus \$5. This one is minus \$3 whatever it might be.



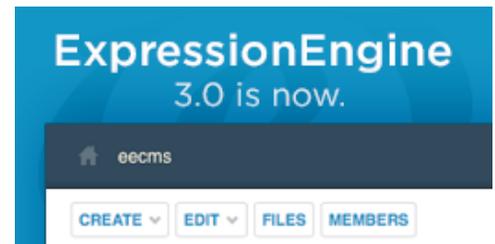
<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

But with CartThrob, you can also have a Playa field in our product entry, and you can have like a matrix, and you can have anything. That's the power of it. The other thing is it has all these extension hooks. So we constantly have people contacting us saying, "Oh, I need to sync with this system or that system. I need to check with an ecommerce fraud system before processing the order." So there are hooks at every step of the process.

There is an extension hook definers right before you add them into the cart, right after adding to the cart when you're updating your cart, when you're checking out before we hit the credit card processor. After we hit the credit card processor, if the order passes, if the order fails, if it was declined, like there are extension hooks every step of the way, and if you use CartThrob Subscriptions, which you can add to CartThrob, you get more extension hooks. You have hooks right before an initial charge fires.

You have extension hooks right before something expires, renewals, so you can really do anything you want, but even if you're not the kind of person that develops your own extensions, just the power out of the box, having access to all the native EE tags is just a really powerful combination, and it means that you can go build your whole cart using EE templates, so you don't have to learn like our weird templating language or something, but just your regular EE templates become checkout templates.

Emily Lewis: I think one thing that stood out for me also when I did my first CartThrob project, and I took a quick look at the documentation the other day, and it's still pretty much in the same shape it was, but it was pretty thorough. It was kind of my first experience, and this was a few years back, but my first experience with an add-on that was really well documented with all the things that I could do, but one of the things that still to this day stand out for me, and it has influenced my own internal



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

checklist for ecommerce projects is it the CartThrob checklist of the stuff you're supposed to ask your client before you'd begin configuring the system.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: And even knowing like what kind of configuration you're going to need, like if you're going to need like the subscriptions add-on or maybe even CT Admin or things like that. I also feel like that is as valuable as having great features just having great documentation.

Matt Weinberg: Totally, I totally agree with you, and full credit goes to Mighty Big Robot and to Chris as the previous owners for that. They've put together this great documentation, and also one of the things on the site that I really liked that is all them is with each part of CartThrob with the little CartThrob add-ons, they give you a sense just like real world terms how complicated it will be.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: So it's like, "This is a couple of hours for a developer to do or this is like a couple of weeks for a developer to do," just so that you get a sense of like what I'm getting into here for each of these things.

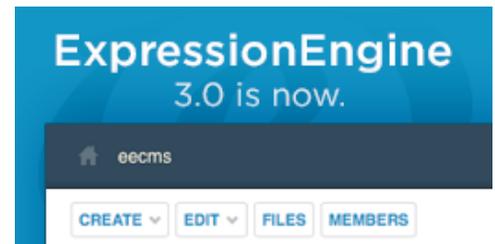
Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: And they have pages about PCI compliance.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: Just all kinds of interesting stuff.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, it's extremely valuable, especially if you're new to an ecommerce project. I think CartThrob might have been my first ecommerce project ever, and I was like, "Oh, there's something



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

called PCI compliance, [laughs] like I didn't even know that, but my client didn't know, and I didn't know that because when I read through all this documentation and came to them prepared with questions, it really helped me seem a lot more informed than I was. It helped me ask the right questions, that I didn't drop the ball.

Matt Weinberg: Yeah, and that's great to hear because 99% of the people buying this product or choosing it are developers, right?

Lea Alcantara: Right.

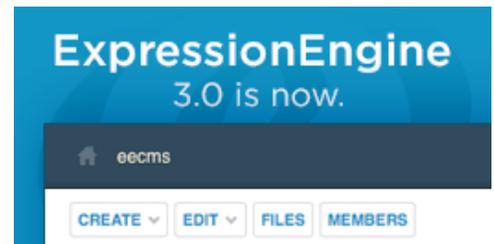
Matt Weinberg: They very rarely can have an end client that says, "I want CartThrob." End clients are going to come to their developer and say, "I want ecom," and the developer is to make that decision, so we want to be very friendly to developers.

Lea Alcantara: So regarding that, do you have any plans on expanding or improving on the documentation or tutorials for CartThrob?

Matt Weinberg: Absolutely. I mean, one of the things we're doing is we are mining the help desk history.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: And even in the last couple of weeks honestly, we see the same types of questions come up over and over and over, and it's no fault of the people submitting, but it's our fault for not having better documentation. So if we get a question more than once on support, I think that's a good candidate for us to just add to the documentation because who knows how many people are struggling with that and haven't even submitted support.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Matt Weinberg: So that's good, and then we really want to add more examples. We find that even on pages where parameters are well spread out, are well spelled out, people just don't know. They have very unique needs. So if we can give examples like, "Okay, if I was selling a t-shirt, here's what I do. If I were selling a download that needs to be unlocked, here's what I do. If I were selling subscriptions, here's what I do." Just give as many examples as possible. I think people can use that as a good starting point.

Lea Alcantara: Right. I know for myself that's the most helpful, like samples in context.

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Matt Weinberg: Yeah, of course, because you want to see how things are supposed to work, and you want to make sure. I guess it's weird, sometimes you don't know if you're doing it wrong or the software is broken, right?

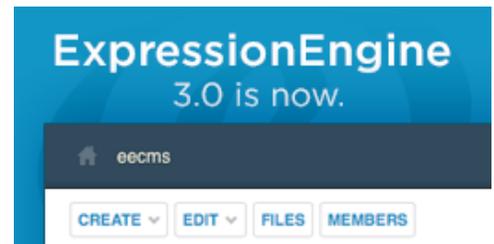
Lea Alcantara: Right.

Matt Weinberg: So... [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Right, right, right.

Matt Weinberg: So we want to make sure that we are giving people enough resources that they know they're doing it right, or at least they know what the right thing to do otherwise.

Emily Lewis: So you've mentioned a number of times that Vector Media Group had long used CartThrob for projects, but I'm curious, have you ever used any other ecommerce solution, whether it's for EE or for another CMS, or even built like a custom from scratch ecommerce solution?



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Matt Weinberg: Yes, all of the above. So we've used the other main ecommerce ExpressionEngine modules, and those we've had good luck with, but again, this is self-serving, but we had this opinion before we own CartThrob, that we've always thought that CartThrob was the best one. We've also used other platform like Magento and Shopify. So systems like Magento and X-Cart, they're like self-hosted and then systems like Shopify, which are like SaaS.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: And sure, we've done tons of custom ecommerce projects in the past where we're not even using an existing system. In most cases, we're doing that when we're not using ExpressionEngine.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: Okay.

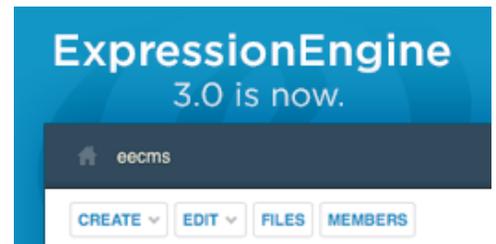
Matt Weinberg: So if we're building a site on like Laravel or like Python or something and we're using a framework, a lot of times we'll build our own ecommerce integration.

Emily Lewis: I mean, for you, that's the decision maker. If it's on EE, it's always going to be CartThrob and if it's on something else, then you're going to look elsewhere?

Matt Weinberg: Yeah, I would say so. [Laughs] I mean, I would say that these days, we probably would absolutely default to CartThrob whereas in the past, we might have like analyze some other options.

Emily Lewis: Right. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Right, of course.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Matt Weinberg: But one of the reasons in the past we might have analyzed some other options was never because the CartThrob functionality wasn't there, it was because of CartThrob bugs or support, right?

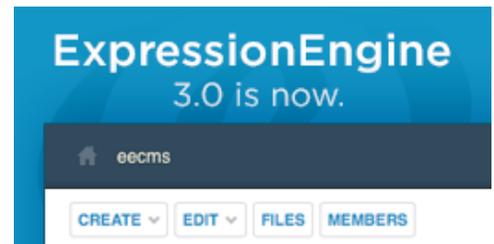
Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: So if we thought that we could get better support or better bug fixes from someone else, we might have gone that way. These days we're in control of that destiny, and hopefully people will see that they're getting much better support and bug fix than anywhere in the past, and so at that point, we feel that CartThrob has it all, has the best feature set along with the great support that people deserve.

Lea Alcantara: I'm just a little bit curious though, like in these situations where you're still in that position where you're trying to figure out whether it's EE or Laravel or Craft or whatever, how do you decide which solution is the best fit, or even Shopify, like why would you go, "Okay, this needs to be like an ExpressionEngine CartThrob versus static with Shopify"?

Matt Weinberg: Yeah. That's a really good question. It's a lot of factors. So we really don't do that much Shopify work. We tend to be hired for stuff that's a little bit more custom than Shopify stuff. Shopify is a great system that I speak very highly about in general, but one of the big downside of Shopify is that you don't have a CMS. I mean, you have like a product management system.

You can enter your products and you could put up like static pages, but if you compare the publishing power of something like ExpressionEngine or something like Craft to something like Shopify, there is no question, that there's no comparison. So a lot of our clients are these big publishers that have an ecommerce component, and if you're a big publisher and you're publishing dozens of articles a day or



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

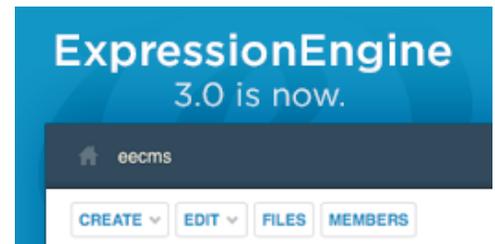
hundreds a month or something, and you have to do like tagging of related content and you also do webinars and you do events and you have all these like all kinds of content on the site and you also have an ecommerce component where maybe you're selling white papers and you also have a premium subscription, like Shopify is not really going to be able to do that, and even something like Magento is not really going to be able to do that. If it's a publishing platform that has ecommerce, at that point, we'll typically do ExpressionEngine plus CartThrob or I guess now Craft plus Craft Commerce or something.

If it's just a straight ecommerce site, I mean, we'll still often look at ExpressionEngine and CartThrob only because, again, even a straight ecommerce site that has almost no publishing, they're going to have some content, they're going to have marketing pages. They're going to want to do like related products. They're going to want those kinds of things. I guess I would say that if we decided to use a framework with a CMS, lots of other decisions have gone into that already. If it's just a pretty straightforward ecommerce site, we could probably use the existing CMS.

If the site is also custom and an existing CMS isn't going to work and we're using a framework, at that point the decision has been made that we're using a framework and so we can't use CartThrob. The decision happened because of other reasons basically.

Timestamp: 00:29:58

Emily Lewis: So to get to that point, I'm guessing there's a lot of communication with the client. Is that part of a long discovery process or does that happen during the sales process, even before you engage?



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/carthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Matt Weinberg: A little bit of both. So we have to have a tiny bit of discovery or maybe even more than a tiny bit of discovery as part of the sales process just to make sure everyone is on the same page, they have a budget that's going to work for us. We're going to propose a budget that's going to work for them. We can do their features. We need to make sure they're a good fit. They don't want something that we don't know how to build.

But if it's a really big site, we'll typically propose a paid discovery process that says when they pay us, we do a full discovery with them. We put like real development and project management resources to it and they walk away with a full functional specification and a real exact estimate from us, which hopefully they'll come to us and we can build the whole thing, but even if not, they walk away with something they can shop around to agencies which is a really specific document of everything that they want.

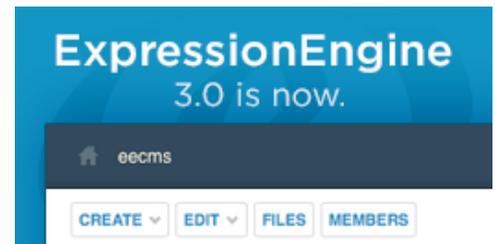
Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Do you have any specific questions that you think is often missed by developers to ask clients?

Matt Weinberg: Yeah, I think there is a couple. So, one would be who are the users of the site from an admin perspective day to day. I feel like sometimes what happens is your main point of contact that the client tells you everything they want in a CMS.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Matt Weinberg: But they forget about like the intern that needs to add all this content every day or they forget about like the CEO that may need to review stuff but doesn't really need like a whole lie



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

into the system and all complicated things or they forget about the editor-in-chief, like sometimes your point of contact, that the client is not the only one using the site.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Matt Weinberg: So you talk about like the visitor experience, but you don't always talk like the author experience a lot.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Matt Weinberg: You'd really like to dive into the author experience. The other thing is being realistic with the client about tradeoffs with infrastructure. If you ask a client, "Well, how often can you say it would be down there in a year," all of your clients are going to say, "We can never have any downtime, period." You know?

Lea Alcantara: Right, of course. [Laughs]

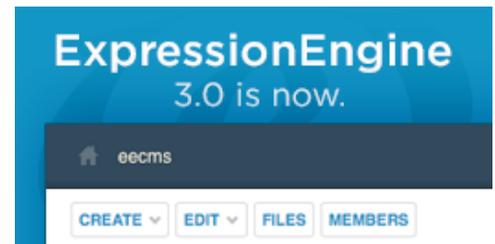
Matt Weinberg: And so I would say, "Okay, that's no problem. We will price for you a fully redundant Amazon Cloud system and it's going to be multi-zone and DNS failover and round-robin, and by the way it's going to be \$1,500 a month." [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: And they're going to say, "Well, hold on a second." [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/carthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Matt Weinberg: So I think it's very important to have had conversation with the client and say, "Nobody likes downtime, and certainly we're not playing for downtime, but here are the different infrastructure options we can do. I we do this like a single server, maybe multi-zone database, you'll probably be down for like..."

I don't know, but based on Amazon, and I'm just using the Amazon Cloud as an example, but any host, "like for 15 minutes once every four months. Is that okay? Is that acceptable to you based on the cost difference?" I think being honest about that conversation, hoping clients understand that even Google and Facebook don't have a 100% downtime and they spend millions of dollars in infrastructure is much better.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

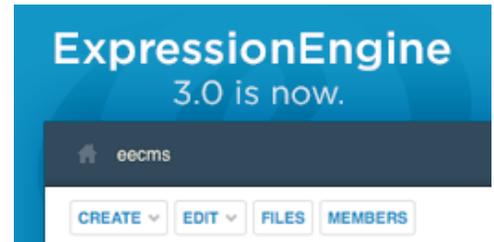
Lea Alcantara: That's actually the first time anyone we've asked that particular question has mentioned infrastructure, I think.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: It's insane actually, because now when you mentioned that, it's like, "Yes, of course, we should plan the downtime as a reality for every website." We never expect it or want it to happen, but it's an eventuality.

Matt Weinberg: Absolutely, a 100%, and I think clients are really smart. You need to help them understand what tradeoffs are.

Lea Alcantara: Right.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

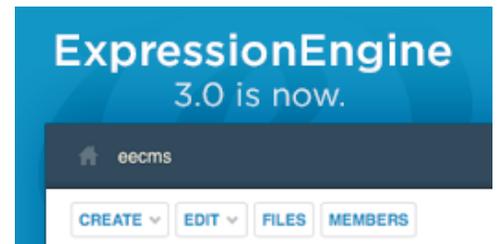
Matt Weinberg: All infrastructure and hosting and computer stuff is all about tradeoffs always.

Emily Lewis: And is there anything specifically ecommerce related that you talk to your clients about with regard to infrastructure, like I guess if they have a lot of products?

Matt Weinberg: Yeah, I mean, like some clients have a lot of products but few transactions, some clients have a few products and a lot of transactions, and some clients have a lot of everything. So first of all, one of the questions is, are they selling a commodity that it's going to be super competitive and you need every little like app they can get, or is it something that people are coming to them specifically and they're seeking them out, and the reason I asked this is, if you're selling a commodity, then you could look at those studies in like Amazon where if you shave 20 milliseconds of your page load time, you get an increase in your conversion rate by 0.2%. So if you're in a super competitive market, we should spend time on that stuff. Not to say we shouldn't always spend time on optimization, but if you're selling a unique experience and your people or your customers are coming to you, the maybe we should focus more. If you have a limited budget, maybe you should focus more of our time in like the experience-type stuff, and it is okay if it takes 50 milliseconds more to load this specific page. I don't know. Well, that's part of the tradeoffs thing that we need to think about. The other thing is—okay, going back to PCI compliance, I feel like I'm always talking about it and sorry if I bore everyone about it. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]



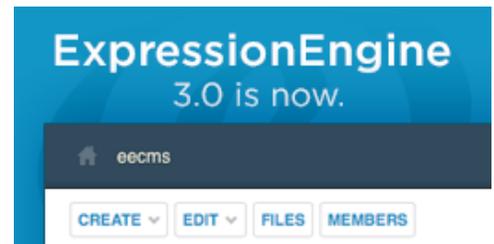
<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/carthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Matt Weinberg: But every client says, “Oh, I really want to store credit cards so that at the checkout, they can just select their card and check out with it,” and that’s great. I think that’s a big benefit to a lot of stores. But to be PCI compliant, that means you’re using like your credit card processor’s vault system and it just adds a lot of complexity. So we do have to decide how much additional marginal revenue do you think that’s going to drive for you and is that worth the extra cost for us to spend the time to do it, and we help them understand.

Another good example of that, by the way, is like the credit card processor choice, so Stripe charges 2.9% plus 30 cents. Realistically, you could negotiate with Authorize.net and get a cheaper price in that. You could get – I don’t know – 2.6% plus 25 cents or something, but it might take us a lot less time to integrate with Stripe, especially if you’re doing bulk stuff. [Laughs] So the question for the client is how many transactions are you really doing here?

If you’re doing like a dozen transactions a month, pay the extra 0.2% to Stripe, it’s just so much easier and you’re not really going to save money by negotiating with Authorize.net compared to our extra time implementing that. But if you have clients that are doing \$500,000 a month in revenue, those credit card processing savings quickly add up and so even if it’s a credit card processor we’ve never integrated with before, spending four days integrating with it ends up saving our client a lot of money. So those are the kinds of decisions too.

Emily Lewis: I love all those questions, especially, I mean, it’s a no brainer once someone says it, and you’re like, “Oh, aha,” but you said how many products do they have, but also how many transactions do they have, and I think that’s really critical. Often, we’ve gotten inquiries where they were like, “Well, these are the number of products. It’s not that big of a project,” but then you need to ask that other key question about the number of transactions.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/carthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Matt Weinberg: Totally. If they're doing a lot of transactions, you have all kinds of extra stuff around, maybe like database optimization. I don't even know it, like a lot of things come into it, and so it's really important stuff to understand.

Emily Lewis: So given all the experience that you've had with ecommerce, what would be your best advice to anyone who's implementing an ecommerce solution for a client? Maybe like your top tip.

Matt Weinberg: I would say make sure you really understand the flow of any commerce transaction.

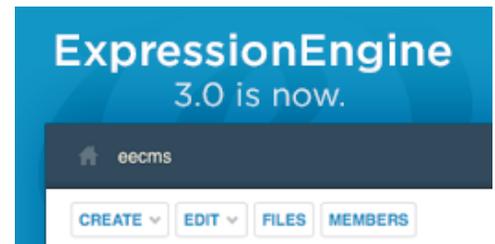
Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: Like really make sure, like do you understand really what a gateway is. Stripe and Braintree have kind of stopped the distinction between gateways and merchant accounts to a large extent, but still, do you understand that whole flow, add into your cart, checking out, adding your billing information, transaction gets sent to the gateway, and it either gets declined or approved, and then we show a receipt or we show an error page? Like that flow, I think a lot of people don't get it when they're designing their cart. They're doing things that just don't really make a lot of sense as far as implementation goes, or they're just making their lives a lot harder.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, I think one thing that's helped me when I have worked on ecommerce solutions is that I've shopped online all the time from lots of different vendors, and so you get to experience bad ecommerce and good ecommerce.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/carthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Emily Lewis: I think being a user is also really helpful to inform your design process, and also for me, I had a client. I forgot the specifics, but he wanted to install some sort of PayPal thing that he perceived would reduce the number of clicks that the user would have to make because for him, that was it, it would reduce the number of clicks, that was his priority. I went through it and actually added to, and I had to push back and explain to him that PayPal maybe selling this as a quicker more streamlined checkout process, but it actually increases the number of steps that a user has to take. Yeah, being informed on what it feels like to be a user of this system I think is really useful because you can describe it in context and then you can design for it.

Matt Weinberg: I think you made a really good point just now that if these clients are going inundate it with offers that make a lot of promises, and in some ways go over their heads like PayPal stuff, but then they're going to get like fraudulent-type emails from SSL vendors, like these fake emails, "Oh, we're the official SSL Registry of America. Your SSL is running out. Your domain is expiring."
[Laughs]

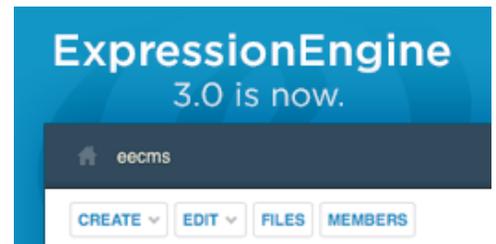
Lea Alcantara: Right. [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: "Someone in China is filing a trademark on you."

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: And like this are so much, so much stuff that they need to deal with, and so helping your client understand these things or at least making sure your clients know to go to you as the developer, I mean, to ask about these things is really important.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Emily Lewis: Now, what about your best advice or a top tip for someone who's trying to develop or maintain an ecommerce solution, like Vector Media Group is doing now with CartThrob?

Matt Weinberg: Solution, like natural platform?

Emily Lewis: Yeah, or an add-on or whatever someone would call it.

Matt Weinberg: I'm going use two things. You said one, but I managed two in a little bit.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: So one of them is just making it really easy for developers. I cannot tell you how many just incoming support requests we get for CartThrob that just isn't even for support, but just, "Can you integrate with this? Can you integrate with this?"

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: I would hate to have to write back and say no, but what I can write back legitimately is say, "We have not done this, but we have all the extension hooks there for it, and if you have a developer or you're going to hire us to do it or any developer you know that knows PHP and extension hooks can do that."

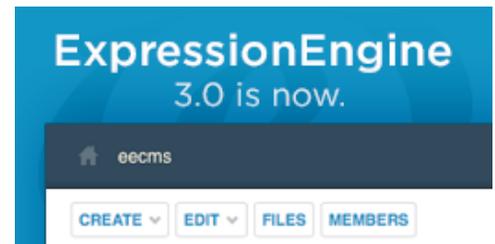
Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: And so we can legitimately say, "Yeah, we can do it with anything." It's true.

Timestamp: 00:40:02

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: Because you're not going to be able to build it in all that stuff, right?



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Emily Lewis: Right.

Matt Weinberg: So you take advantage of the developers and their expertise. The other thing is support is really important.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

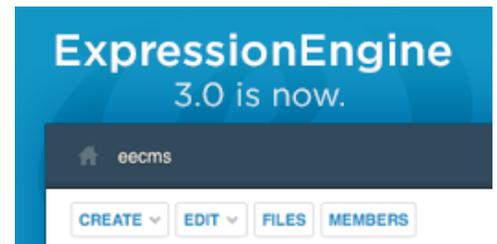
Matt Weinberg: These are people that bought your add-on. They're selling things. If there's a problem, their clients are losing money and are breathing down their necks, and support can be frustrating at times, but you just have to understand that that these problems are manifesting as loss of revenue for your customer's customer, and that makes for very stressful situation so you just have to be respectful of that in the support. So help them explain things and help as best as you can.

Lea Alcantara: So we got a listener question from Brandon Kelly regarding pricing and support models, especially because that possibly was one of the reasons you guys need to take over from the previous developers was it was just unsustainable and they were also such a small team. Are you guys thinking of changing up how CartThrob is currently priced, especially now that you guys are thinking of the EE 3 upgrade, like what are you guys thinking in terms of pricing CartThrob?

Matt Weinberg: We have not made a decision yet, but we are definitely evaluating all of our options. What we want to make sure of is that we can afford to give people the support and attention that they deserve.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Matt Weinberg: And we don't know exactly what that means is as far as pricing, and I'm not necessarily saying there's going to be like a big price difference. I'm not saying there's not. We're



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

not sure. We're trying to balance this desire to make sure CartThrob is a well-used platform with the desire to make sure that we can afford to support people.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Matt Weinberg: Something I do like to remind people of is that if it wasn't for our investment in CartThrob, there would not be a CartThrob. It would not exist, so we do have to find a way to make sure that investment goes back to us, you know?

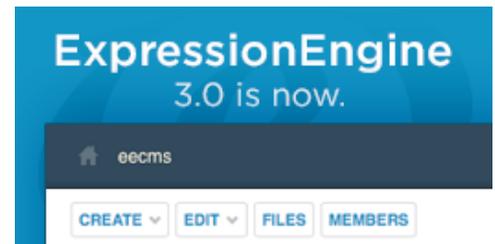
Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: That's important for us just because we're a business, and it's important. It's one of the reasons we bought it, and so like when we see sometimes people submitting a support request and they bought their license four years ago and it's something that's specific to like their server or their unique thing, and we say, "Now, we really need to charge you for this now. Are you with us?" I think at that point, it's totally reasonable to say, "Listen, this is not a problem to CartThrob. This is a problem on your server that's unique. You've not paid CartThrob a dollar since 2010. It's not anything that..." You know? We have to find a way to make sure we're paid, our time is getting paid for it.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/carthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Matt Weinberg: So that was a really long answer. The answer is we don't know. We want to make sure we have something that's fair where people can buy the product, feel like it's supported, they're paying a fair price, and they're not getting nickel and dimed.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Matt Weinberg: But on the other hand, we can afford to keep making updates and changes.

Emily Lewis: Any chance that you've seen a good model in either the EE community or another framework or a CMS community that you're interested in borrowing from? Because this is something that I feel like every time we talk to an add-on developer, this is the biggest challenge—pricing and support—and making sure that they can provide the quality of support, but they're getting something from that.

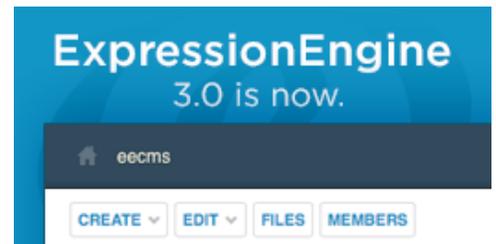
Lea Alcantara: Right.

Matt Weinberg: Yes, so I'm going to say that I like this company's support model, but I just wanted to be clear, I'm not saying that we are going to adopt this support model before everybody like gets very worried.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Matt Weinberg: But in our company we use a system called JIRA, which is like our issue tracking and Agile management tool, and JIRA like runs our whole company basically, like everything our developers are doing at any time is in JIRA and all of our client communications are in JIRA. We don't use Basecamp or anything like that.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

With JIRA prices, they charge a one-time initial fee and that gets you a year of updates and support in the software, and you can run the software forever for as long as you want. You have one year of what they call maintenance, which is updates the product and support, and then after that one year, you can pay maintenance yearly, and again if you just kind of keep up with your maintenance contract, you get updates to the software that are included for free and you get updates, except for like major, major updates, and you get access to support, and that maintenance cost is like some small percentage of your initial purchase cost.

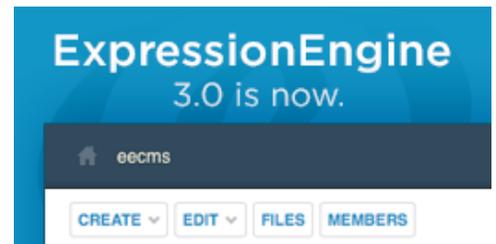
So what I like about it is that we paid JIRA and now we pay them yearly fee, and I think we pay them like – I don't know - \$10,000 a year or \$12,000 a year or something like that. It's a lot of money, but I know that I can submit a support request. They answer me within like an hour every time. I get all my bug fixes, all my maintenance updates, and I don't mind paying because it's an important part of our business. So again, I'm not saying we're going to adopt that for CartThrob.

I don't necessarily know if it makes much sense for CartThrob, but I think that people are willing to pay for a critical software to them as long as they feel like they're getting a value for that.

Emily Lewis: I agree. Yeah, I agree. I agree. So now that you're heading into getting CartThrob ready for EE Version 3, I was wondering do you have any thoughts for the CMS developers, one who actually creates the CMS, and if you have any thoughts on what things they need to keep in mind to help developers create seamless like add-ons.

Matt Weinberg: You know what, I cannot speak highly enough of EllisLab in the EE 3 transition. I mean, if you can compare it to the EE 2 transition a couple of years ago, it's night and day.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees] [Laughs]



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: They like preannounced EE 2 and then two years later, there was like a beta and then six months later, there's another beta, and then we had Version 2.1.3 and it felt like five years, you know? [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: And it is such a difference now. I think they're doing an amazing job. They came out with developer previews. They were super communicative to developers. There were a couple of extension hooks missing in some of the early version of 3 and they're totally resolving that in 3.1, which should be out short I guess. I really like what they've been doing. They've been extremely open to feedback.

Lea Alcantara: Speaking of EE Version 3 and I know you guys are putting resources towards CartThrob being compatible with that, do you have a time line that you can share?

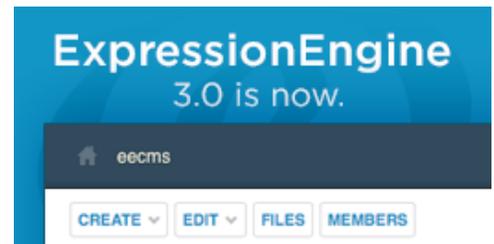
Matt Weinberg: [Laughs] No way. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: I had to ask.

Matt Weinberg: It's a very complicated software as everybody knows, so we are really reticent to give a time line until we're totally sure of it because we don't want to make promises that we can't keep.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Lea Alcantara: So is there going to be anything new on the horizon though for CartThrob that you want to share?

Matt Weinberg: Yeah, I mean, the rolling in of a whole bunch of CT Admin features, but done more nicely, you know?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Matt Weinberg: And that's again no shot to Eric Lamb who did an amazing job, but I think that we have a full design team here.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Matt Weinberg: So I think getting our design team to think about the UX of reporting and what order history can look like and customer reporting and just product reporting, all those things could be very interesting.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

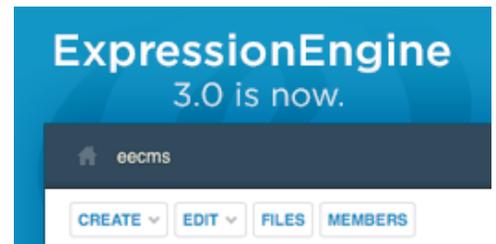
Emily Lewis: Oh, that's exciting.

Lea Alcantara: Awesome. This was a great, great discussion, and what I love most is that you actually gave advice that I don't think anyone has mentioned in our past ecommerce episodes regardless of the CMS.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So thanks. [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: [Laughs]



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: Oh, you're welcome, anything I can help. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: But before we finish up, we have our Rapid Fire Ten Questions so our listeners can get to know you a bit better. Are you ready, Matt?

Matt Weinberg: Absolutely.

Lea Alcantara: So first question, Android or iOS?

Matt Weinberg: It's iOS.

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

Matt Weinberg: Like a Wi-Fi, like does my iPhone count?

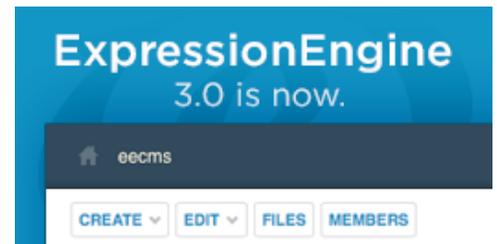
Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Three things, but that's it. [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: Okay, I'll say my iPhone and I'll just wink away the Wi-Fi part of that. I guess they can turn music. Oh, my wife and my kids. Does that count? I guess, do I have to choose one kid or I'm limited to three?



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: But iPhone is definitely first. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs] Still first!

Lea Alcantara: That's so funny. [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: What's your favorite TV show?

Matt Weinberg: We really love *Nathan For You*.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: Yeah, that's funny.

Matt Weinberg: It's an amazing show.

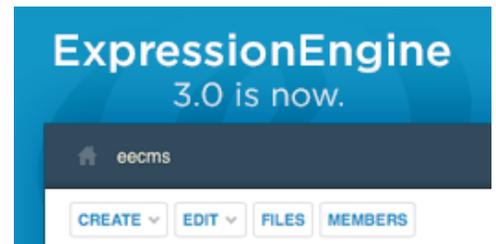
Emily Lewis: It's weird.

Matt Weinberg: He's so weird. He's a very bizarre guy. I don't know, but he's a very weird guy. I liked it.

Emily Lewis: What's your favorite dessert?

Matt Weinberg: I really like Crispy M&Ms.

Emily Lewis: Oh.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/carthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Matt Weinberg: People don't seem to know that those exist, that those are like big...

Emily Lewis: They're like the Rice Krispies inside chocolate, right?

Matt Weinberg: Yeah, exactly.

Lea Alcantara: Oh.

Matt Weinberg: So it's regular M&Ms, but they've got exactly basically Rice Krispies inside. It's unbelievable. It's like life changing.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: Those will go into the desert. Oh, those will go into the desert island too. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

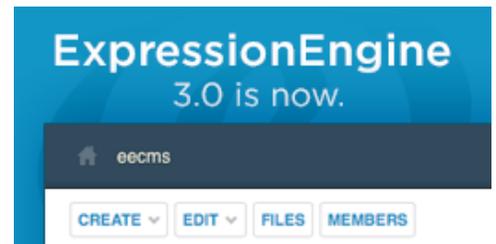
Lea Alcantara: What profession other than your own would you like to attempt?

Matt Weinberg: That's a very good question. I don't know, maybe being like a teacher. I think that would be cool, like a professor, not like in elementary school, because those kids are obnoxious, but like a professor or something.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: That could be fun.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Emily Lewis: All right, what profession would you not like to try?

Matt Weinberg: Honestly, web design.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: So I was so happy that I'm on the development team here, and that we have our designers and they're unbelievable and they love their job, and I just don't know how they do it.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Matt Weinberg: Because when projects get to development, there's a spec, and we know if something works because it like either works or just a spec or not.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

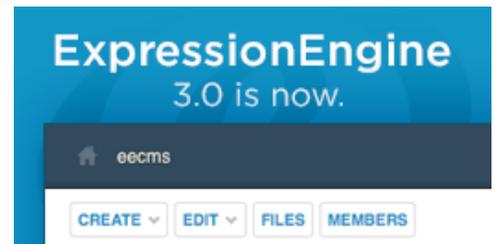
Matt Weinberg: When you're in design, good designers have this amazing ability to like figure out something out of nowhere, which is just so impressive to me, but it's nothing I could ever do.

Lea Alcantara: What's the latest article or blog post you read?

Matt Weinberg: So I read this morning, Steven Levy did something about DoorDash, which is just a delivery startup on the West Coast that my friend used to work at. So he doesn't work there anymore, and I was very interested in reading about it.

Emily Lewis: If you could have a super power, what it would be?

Matt Weinberg: I guess turning invisible.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/cartthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: What music do you like to work to?

Matt Weinberg: I like indie dance, like all pop.

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

Matt Weinberg: Dogs, it's not even a question.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: That's all the time we have for today. Thanks for returning to the show.

Matt Weinberg: Thank you so much for having me. I appreciate it.

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

Matt Weinberg: I am [@mrw](#) on Twitter, and our website is vectormediagroup.com.

Emily Lewis: Thanks Matt, we loved having you on the show again.

Matt Weinberg: Thank you so much.

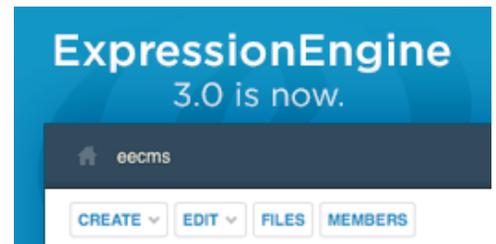
[Music starts]

Lea Alcantara: CTRL+CLICK is produced by [Bright Umbrella](#), a web services agency obsessed with happy clients. Today's podcast would not be possible without the support of this episode's sponsor! Thank you, [EllisLab](#)!

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



Episode sponsored by



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/carthrob-for-ee-ecommerce>

Lea Alcantara: And thanks to our listeners for tuning in! If you want to know more about CTRL+CLICK, make sure you follow us on Twitter [@ctrlclickcast](https://twitter.com/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 last episode of 2015 with our annual year in review. Our intern Erin Lewis will be joining us once again as we reflect on the past year, and be sure to stay tune to ctrlclickcast.com/schedule for upcoming 2016 episodes.

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]

Timestamp: *00:50:36*

Some rights reserved. License: creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0

Produced by
Bright
UMBRELLA

The logo for Bright Umbrella features a pink umbrella icon with a white lightbulb inside it, positioned to the left of the text 'Bright UMBRELLA'.