

<https://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/content-workflows-for-statamic>

## CTRL+CLICK CAST #088 - Content Workflows for Statamic with Jack McDade

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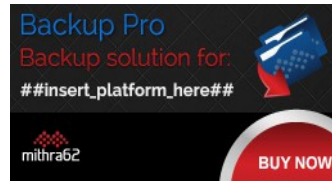
**Preview:** Be as transparent as you can with your customers. It's a whole lot easier to prep them and say something bad is going to happen and then it happened than to apologize for it afterwards. I know people will say like, "Oh, just, you know, we'll apologize later." That's only when you're focused on yourself and so being as proactive as you can and transparent and it's going to be a while as they can take some time. You've got to do that. I mean, we're building a product thousands of people are using with a small team and sometimes the needs in a short, you know, this spike is bigger than our team can handle, and thankfully we have some people that can help us when it happens, but it's something you learn the hard way.

[Music]

**Lea Alcantara:** From [Bright Umbrella](#), this is CTRL+CLICK CAST! We inspect the web for you! Today Jack McDade returns to the show to talk about content workflows in Statamic. 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 mithra62's [BackupPro](#), a complete backup solution for WordPress, ExpressionEngine 2 and 3, Craft, PrestaShop and concrete5. We use this one



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ourselves for some of our client sites. It's insanely customizable and includes automated backup integrity, eight built-in storage locations, console routing. Basically, Backup Pro was built to make disaster recovery as painless as possible. Just visit [backup-pro.com](https://backup-pro.com) to get started.

And we want to remind our listeners that we will be in Chicago for HOW Design Live this May. We're giving a designer-friendly presentation on choosing the right content management system for projects. We discuss how the right CMS can save time and money as well as how to evaluate a CMS, and of course, alternatives to WordPress. Visit [howdesignlive.com](https://howdesignlive.com) to register today.

[Music ends]

**Emily Lewis:** We are happy to have Jack McDade back on the show to talk about content workflows in Statamic, including some new add-ons and features now available in the CMS. Jack is an entrepreneur, consultant and designer as well as the creator of Statamic and founder of Wilderborn. Welcome back to the show, Jack.

**Jack McDade:** Hey, thanks for having me. I love being on a show where they can say the name of my product.

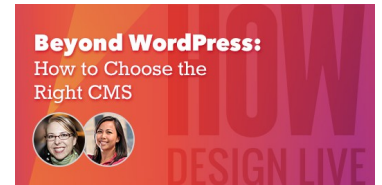
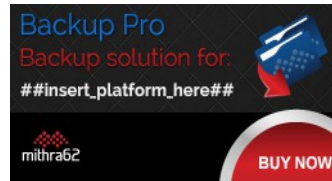
**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** We've had some practice. [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** I know.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah.



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**Jack McDade:** I'm pretty sure there was a whole thing about it like four years ago. Yeah. [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** There was. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** Yes, speaking about four years ago, it's been a while since our listeners have heard from you. You will update us on Statamic soon, but what have you been up to?

**Jack McDade:** Oh boy, I've been trying to stay warm. Oh my gosh.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** Oh, right. The East Coast is getting hit right now.

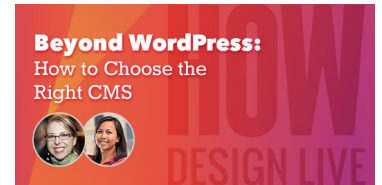
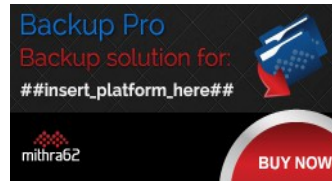
**Jack McDade:** Yeah, we've got a ton, but nobody really wants to talk about that because it's small talk. Yes, so I've been up to...

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** [Laughs] I've been up to a lot of things. Four years ago, I was kind of coming out of the ExpressionEngine world with my new little pet project, Statamic, at least what it feels like in hindsight, and yeah, over the last couple of years, especially, we basically rebuilt Statamic from scratch, and we can get into that later. So we've put a whole new focus into that product. We grew a small consultancy, Wilderborn, you actually said that wrong, but that's okay.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]



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**Jack McDade:** That's another made up word so there's really no right way to say it. I hired some more people and had some more kids, started home schooling, lost a lot of weight, put some of them back on. [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** All sorts of stuff. I mean, life has happened in the last four years.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah. So Wilderborn, how did that come about? You decided to partner or bring on employees? What's the situation?

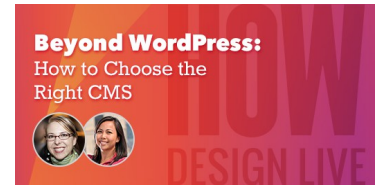
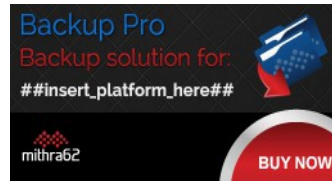
**Jack McDade:** Yeah, well, building a product is a lot of work. There are a lot of things that need to be done, and at some point, if you ever want your product to turn into a business, you need to stop working in the product or in the business and work on the business.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** So I had to bring in some more people and I had to step back a little bit. Sometimes there are just so much to do you have to dive in with both feet and get into it, but I really tried to work on the business as much as I can, and it's been absolutely a good switch for me, both creatively, having kind of new problems to solve and new things to learn and as well as it actually helps to grow the business, too, and make some more money and more community and better clients.

**Emily Lewis:** Oh.



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**Jack McDade:** So Wilderborn, it was pretty awkward when someone would say, “Hey, Statamic, can you build us something, like can the product build a thing to the product?”

**Lea Alcantara:** Right, right.

**Jack McDade:** It’s like we need to have a parent entity that owned it and all the good dotcoms are taken. [Laughs]

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

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** So Wilderborn, I like being outside, the kind of this whole wilderness theme and I just kind of went for “born wild” and I feel like I’d like to just life in the woods if I could if that was socially acceptable. [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

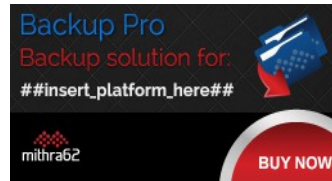
**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** Because then I wouldn’t have to worry about the internet and politics and everything else, and so it was great.

**Emily Lewis:** So you said for you it’s been a good switch. Do you miss development at all?

**Jack McDade:** When I miss I do it.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]



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**Lea Alcantara:** Right.

**Jack McDade:** So it's not like I can't do it. I found I'm not as good at it as I used to be the more time that I spend out of it. So like the spectrum of things that I actually code myself is kind of shrinking.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** Which is good because I just hire people that are way better than me at it, like Jason Varga is like he's a beast.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

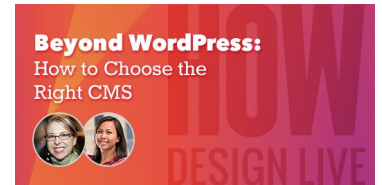
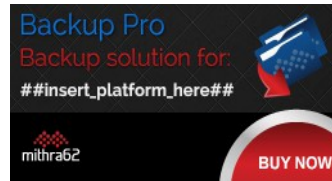
**Jack McDade:** I've been working with him for a few years. I've got Jaggy (Gauran) who's in the Philippines actually. He's a phenomenal developer. Yeah, so I love the team. I work with few contractors, and as much as I want to focus on Statamic, like there's always that itch where you kind of want to work on a little bit something else, and you know?

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** It fills the creativity to have a chance to work on client projects, someone else's idea and then you kind of come back reinvigorated and kind of dump your new ideas back into your product.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

**Lea Alcantara:** Absolutely. So it's been a while since we last talked about Statamic on the show, and some of our listeners might not be familiar with the system. So why is Statamic unique as a CMS? Can you explain it to our listeners?



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**Jack McDade:** Absolutely. One of the most unique and most obvious aspects of it is there's no database, so that's kind of been one of our front running architecture decisions that we went for. So when you remove the database layer, it gives you a whole new set of pros and cons and lets you work very differently because you touched the files. With the flat file system, you can literally just edit a text file and make an update to your blog. You can drop a file in a folder, it creates a page.

You can just drop images into a folder and it creates a gallery, so there are lots of cool things you can do very quickly that don't involve you having to wire things up in a control panel and upload things in the drag-and-drop uploader. However, we do have those things because that's how a client needs to interact 99% of the time with their site, and so that would be on an architectural level, that's definitely one of the biggest changes or differences, and what that does is it lets us position to a slightly different type of audience.

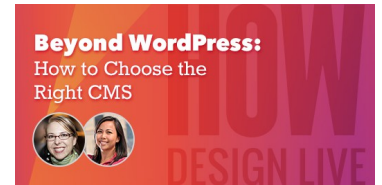
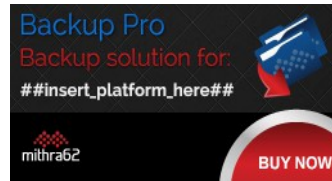
**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** And we found over the last year especially when I had that clarity like, "I really need to start working on the business instead of the product," because the next feature doesn't increase your sales. Like any feature you add most of the time is never going to move the needle. It's going to make your current customers happy, but it's not going to grow your audience or your customer base.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]



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**Jack McDade:** And so we found we needed to figure out who our best customers are. I would love everybody to use Statamic, but if you're something to everybody, you're not anything that anybody loves.

**Emily Lewis:** Right.

**Lea Alcantara:** Right, right.

**Jack McDade:** We found that groups, companies, agencies, whatever you want to call them, that manage lots of small to medium sites is really our sweet spot. You can build a huge site with Statamic. I'm going to go on the record and say you probably shouldn't.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

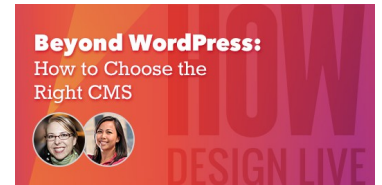
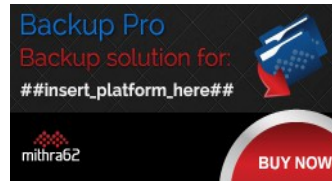
**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** Thousands of files is just – I mean, once you turn to caching, everything works, so like you can do it, but just there are going to be some just issues you'll run into with like your server doesn't like more than 10,000 files in a file, right?

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** So knowing that, we realized we had kind of been building in the wrong direction. We wanted it to kind of recreate every feature anybody ever thought would be cool to have in a CMS, and now we're kind of swinging back towards "What do we need to provide people who are managing lots of websites concurrently with the tools they need to build faster and maintain those sites with a whole lot less effort?" So I don't want to single item, there are CMSs, and that's not at all what my goal is,





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but I know from my history, like sometimes it can take a day or two days or three days to upgrade a server, like an install, and like 99...

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Emily Lewis:** We're in the middle of that right now.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** Yeah, it's a little pain.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

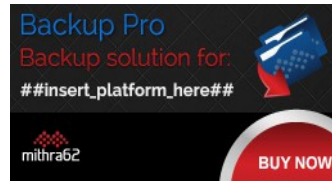
**Emily Lewis:** Lea probably wants to kill herself right now. [Laughs]

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

**Jack McDade:** It's so painful, and so we don't want that to happen. We want it to be a whole lot easier, and so it's really worked out well. I did a lot of interviews with customers and people and potential customers just to see like how they solved like their problems with managing lots of sites and those that are using Statamic, I don't have the problems everyone else do, you know?

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** Right.



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**Jack McDade:** They just like commit, change, push, deploy to the server, done, like you click the button, you deploy it. You just get the right files in the right place and you're done. They're files, you can do whatever you want.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** You can write Automator tasks. You can use – I don't know – whatever you want, drag and drop. You can merge multiple repos into one thing. You don't have to worry about, "Oh no, how do I change the content? Like I need to get the production content down locally so I can edit it, so I can put it back up, so I can take the server down."

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

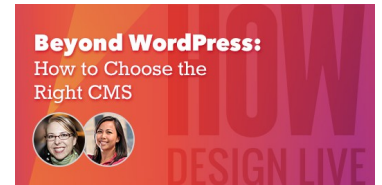
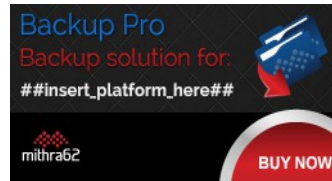
**Jack McDade:** And you don't have to do any of that. You just put it in Git, branch merge and deploy it, and so yeah, that's another big difference is that we're very workflow driven and we're very fast to build and make changes and experiment and throw changes away.

**Timestamp:** 00:10:08

**Emily Lewis:** I've worked with two Statamic sites. One is for a client and one was an internal kind of experiment.

**Jack McDade:** [Agrees]

**Emily Lewis:** And it is fast to develop, and it is nice not to have that database connection, but also I'm glad that you've recognized that sweet spot because I think that's what I felt as a developer using Statamic, building for our smaller clients who had really focused content management needs, and we



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don't need to spend as much time customizing because their needs are so straightforward and so it's quick to implement.

**Jack McDade:** [Agrees]

**Emily Lewis:** I also love that there are some themes available for Statamic, which also help you kind of get started a little quicker.

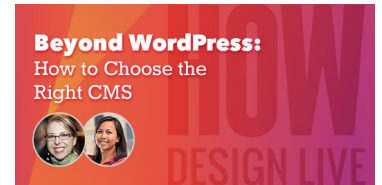
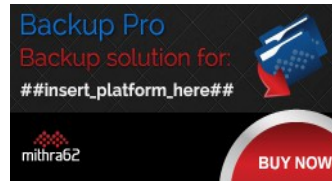
**Jack McDade:** Absolutely, yeah, and something that except for WordPress, not many CMS have idea of a theme.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

**Jack McDade:** And a theme, I mean, just for anyone who doesn't know Statamic, it isn't like a WordPress thing, but because its files literally you just drop the theme folder in and you have access to all these different templates and content modeling so you can start with that and then customize it or use it right out of the box.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah, and I think what's also useful, if our listeners can envision this, it's like the theme doesn't just give you the front end, but it sort of gives you your control panel with like basic content management already set up. You don't really have to create from scratch all over your custom fields or anything, like a number of the themes have that so you already have like a control panel and so it's more like tweaking and customizing rather than starting from scratch if that's like the good fit for your client.

**Jack McDade:** Right. Yeah, so it is still a "bring your own HTML model to content yourself" type approach like ExpressionEngine and Craft and a lot of the other kind of the more modern CMSs.



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**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

**Lea Alcantara:** Right.

**Jack McDade:** But it's different in that it's more decoupled, you can take the pieces out, you can share them between sites, and as long as the files are like sitting in the right folder, they do something pretty cool.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** So let's take a little bit of a step back and just talk about workflow in general. I think we should probably discuss what tasks are even involved. So what are the common tasks people expect to do through a CMS like Statamic?

**Jack McDade:** Blog.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

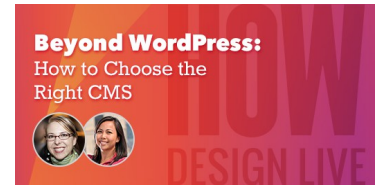
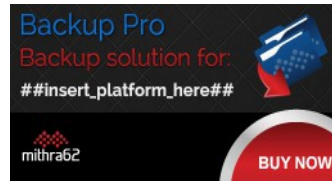
**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

**Lea Alcantara:** Right.

**Jack McDade:** Or never blog. [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]



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**Jack McDade:** You have clients you want to blog and sit there for two years.

**Lea Alcantara:** #Truth.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** Yeah, or new website launch 2013, yeah.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

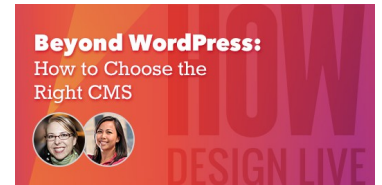
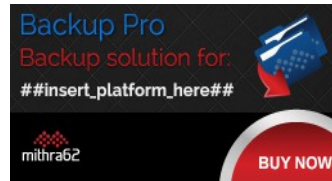
**Jack McDade:** I mean, a lot of times they want to change stuff like the footer information or they want to add a page or they've got a Frequently Asked Question section and they want to add some new questions and sections to a news article or update their staff information, details about people. There is a wide range of things that a client would expect to be able to do and they don't like it when they can't do something.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** Much of it comes from a thorough enough answer, like let's dive into that some more.

**Emily Lewis:** I think you've listed like those common ones. Do you ever have – you mentioned when you were talking about Statamic that you personally wouldn't recommend it for a large-scale site, but we have actually talked to [Daniel Fowler](#) who used Statamic for the large-scale site.

**Jack McDade:** He's the guy.



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**Emily Lewis:** So I guess that would not necessarily fall under common tasks, but more under where they're unusual tasks that at least from your understanding of his project that they needed to accomplish for the University of Georgia site that Statamic was still able to support.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah, I mean, technically, like Statamic can support a really wild level of like flexibility.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** It generally comes down to like a performance level thing when interacting with the control panel because when you're working with a live data, because it takes time to parse all the files once you turn caching on, it's fine. So it's not an ideal experience to run a huge site. I just wanted to be clear like why I would say that.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** And Daniel said, "Okay, I'll do it anyway." [Laughs]

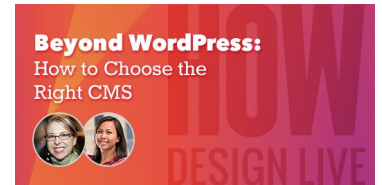
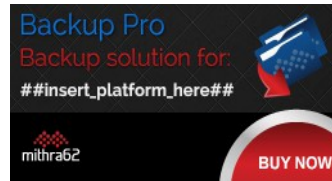
**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** That's exactly what he said. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** And he has a right to do that, and we've given as much help as we possibly could that we built some like add-ons for them and stuff too. The Workshop, they sponsored the Workshop add-on. I think we'll talk about it in a little bit because they needed that, so some of the non-standard



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things that someone might need to do, and there are a thousand things and we can think of a few. Some might be where your actual site users need to be able to technically edit the content or affect the content, maybe your rating things and that's still part of a content-managed thing.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** Or maybe you have content from an external data source, you've got like an API that shares your news feeds like across all of your different products like if you're a Fortune 500 company and you have like 500 products and you've got like press releases that are company level.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

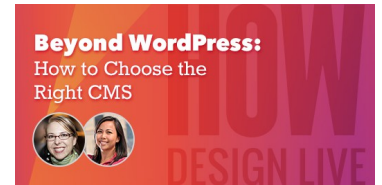
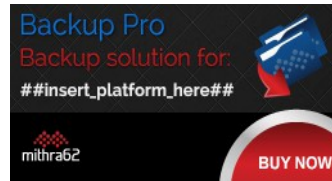
**Jack McDade:** Some CMSs might have a good way to do that, some might not. Statamic would handle that really well, you just can like basically mount the data source, write a little add-on to pull it in and you can pick which ones apply to your site or make them apply to all of them.

**Emily Lewis:** I think one of the things that Lea and I are seeing lately, and maybe it's just present to us, Lea, because we're doing it more ourselves, but dealing with like the marketing, support for marketing like those ad hoc landing pages and the different needs for different types of landing pages based on what the marketing goal is.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Emily Lewis:** That seems to be something that I feel like we're seeing more of lately.



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**Jack McDade:** Yeah, funnels, right?

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** Right.

**Jack McDade:** Everybody is talking about funnels, and I think that's because the website experience has existed for the last – whatever – fifteen years is changing and how we interact with it is changing, and nobody is reading a site from like the home page all the way through the Contact Us page anymore.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah.

**Jack McDade:** We're not entering through the home page anymore. We're on phones or iPads or whatever, Android thing you love, and yeah, the ability to basically spin up these isolated like orphan pages or landing pages or something. Every website project I've done in the last couple of years has been, "Hey, can I make landing pages really easily and somehow like customize them?"

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

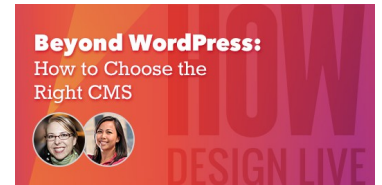
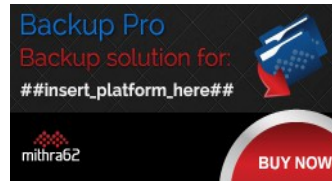
**Lea Alcantara:** Right.

**Jack McDade:** And yeah, I mean, that's where something WordPress is going to fall into a really muddy area.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]





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**Jack McDade:** Because you have this singular data structure that you could try to kind of jam everything into and so you have to bolt on a ton of add-ons to make it work and then as soon as it doesn't work the way one of the add-on works, you have to switch to a different add-on and like undo everything you did with the other ones, and yeah, having that abstract content model as the hub of what your content management experience is really important.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** That's why there are a lot of headless CMSs or kind of a hot thing where there is no control panel or rather there is to some degree, but you're just editing your data, you're not like managing your site through a control panel, but you're doing that as a developer with like an API where you're just querying for content.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

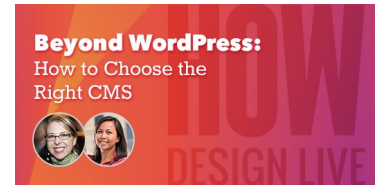
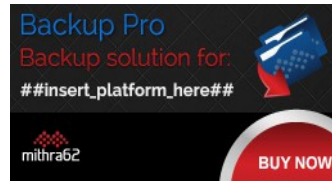
**Jack McDade:** And that's something you could do relatively easily with Statamic 2. I'm not trying to make Statamic like the one solution for everything, but we're just trying to position ourselves to be where people need something.

**Emily Lewis:** It's got the flexibility to do some of those more advanced things like integrate it with API or allow you to create like on-the-fly landing pages, but at the same time, it's not so much that it's too much for those small- and mid-sized businesses.

**Jack McDade:** Right. It feels small, but it grows well.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** Yeah.



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**Emily Lewis:** Oh, I like the way that – yeah, that’s a nice of putting it.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** [Laughs] Yeah.

**Lea Alcantara:** So is there any particular ideal content workflow because it sounds like you’re describing so many different ways people can actually interact with the content.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah.

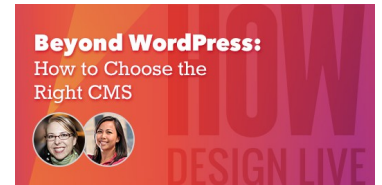
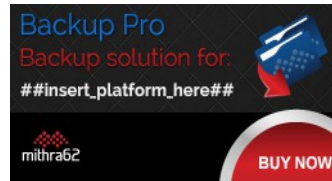
**Lea Alcantara:** All the way from no control panel to the drag-and-drop type of thing and then you kind of mentioned with WordPress, because there’s really only kind of one data type, things start to fall apart.

**Jack McDade:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** Is there any sort of structure really for what’s considered an ideal workflow for clients, and how did that inform how you built Statamic?

**Jack McDade:** Yeah, that’s a good question. I don’t think there is any ideal workflow that would fit for everybody. I mean, there’s no silver bullets in life, so what you need to do is kind of tailor a flexible solution that will work for the majority, like the 80% rule, and what that generally looks like is clients interacting with the control panel, being able to add new entries and edit pages and globals and stuff like that.

But sometimes you don’t want to lock that into the only way that you interact and so once you start to get into the 85 and 90% coverage of the possible workflows, it gets really interesting and you find, if



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you built the first part right, the 80% right, the other things come on a lot easier, and I think that's why we happen to work pretty well with a lot of these other workflows is because of the sort of decoupled way that we built the core, and not to get too technical about it or anything, I think that's a good thing because it very complicated.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** People need to pull content all different ways and every site is unique and every company's needs are unique because their only reason they're still in business is because they found a unique way to cut through market, and so yeah, it's hard to build a tool that fits all those things.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** But trying to drive towards like a really philosophical answer, it's slightly escaping me.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

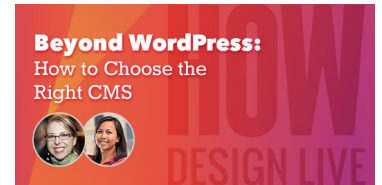
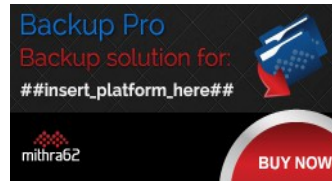
**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** [Laughs]

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**Emily Lewis:** As a developer who works with different CMS software, especially the past – I don't know – maybe five years, I feel like the software itself that we're able to use now the advances we've seen kind of in the CMS industry that ideal content workflow starts with a really clean interface.

**Jack McDade:** [Agrees]



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**Emily Lewis:** Like if you are talking about a control panel, the less you put in the way of the user and the more kind of – yeah, I guess essentially, the user-friendliness of the software itself, the control panel being a priority.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah.

**Emily Lewis:** I think that change that I've seen with CMSs in the past few years has kind of been part of that foundation you're talking about, that 80%.

**Jack McDade:** You mentioned how friendly the user interface is, and I would say even the level above that, how friendly the user experience is.

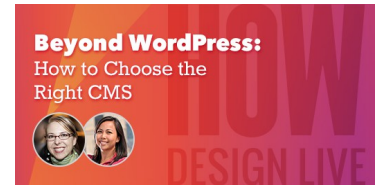
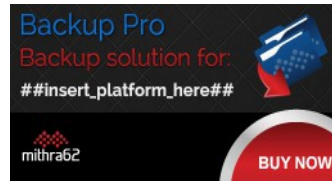
**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** And I know we've been using the UX bit a lot, but I feel like we're finally starting to understand it as an industry like what the UX kind of umbrella is like massive, it's very wide and it involves lots of things.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** And so Statamic has kind of a unified user experience, but there are multiple ways to interact with it. So you've got the control panel, which is where just about all clients live, but you can also interact with Statamic in the files only, like as a developer you never have to touch the control panel if you don't want to, so you can interact with the full structure that way, so we added kind of designed two systems in a way because the folder structure, which replaces the database structure.



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It needs to be variant intuitive and thoughtful as well, and then we've got the whole command line interface which lets you generate things and build stuff and do maintenance things, and so there's another point of interaction that's neither the folder structure nor the interface or the user interface, and so making them feel connected similar, it just takes a lot of thought and planning. A common voice and the prompts and like the things, what things are named.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** Like naming things is still hard.

**Emily Lewis:** It is.

**Jack McDade:** It's so hard.

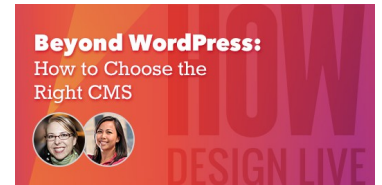
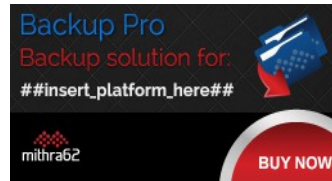
**Lea Alcantara:** Totally.

**Jack McDade:** Every regret we've ever had...

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** That's a little bit hyperbole, but just about every regret we've ever had building products has been like, "I wish we didn't call it that. That's a horrible name."

**Emily Lewis:** That's like my life as a front-end developer because I'm constantly second guessing my naming convention. [Laughs]



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**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** Oh my God, like CSS is even worse.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** And that's one of the things I'm still not doing a lot of when I'm coding because I want to let the guys who are really deep in the back end like stay there and so I'm like, "Oh, I'll just code it up. Oh my, is it a panel? Is it a card? Is it a sheet? Is it a sheet card? Is it a header panel card foot sheet? Am I using two hyphens or how am I mixing and matching hyphens and underscores and oh my God, if I like the side, I like BEM and I want to switch to SMACSS half way through or if I want to bring this library in, I've got camel cases." It's awful.

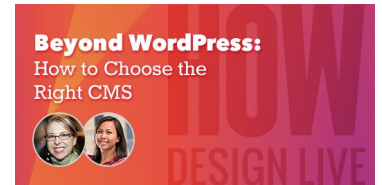
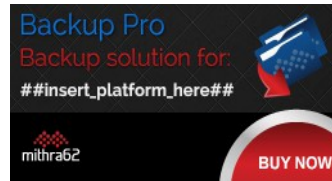
**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** I'm very intimidated about it and my opinions are probably all wrong and it's very frustrating.

**Lea Alcantara:** Well, I definitely think there needs to be some sort of established common vocabulary regardless of whether it's "right" or not as long as it's right within your team, that helps.

**Jack McDade:** Oh, absolutely.



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**Lea Alcantara:** Just actually the other day, Emily and I were just talking about labels in our own system because we called everything landing pages and then afterwards we're like, "Wait, wait, we're actually confusing ourselves." Even though there's only the two of us, and we're like, "Are they landing pages? Should we call it something else?"

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** Yeah.

**Lea Alcantara:** And we're like, "What do we even call it so it make sense to us and doesn't confuse us and we built the system." [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** Yeah, six hours later, you're still not sure what to call it.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

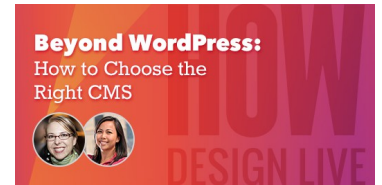
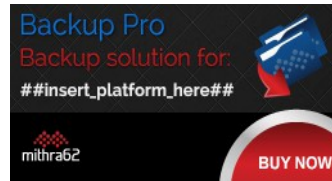
**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah, exactly.

**Jack McDade:** I feel like every front-end project I tackle these days, I spend more time like worrying that I named something wrong than actually doing anything. It's awful.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** I feel like the only thing we've identified as a community of developers is like what a card is. I think everybody knows now a card is like slightly taller than it is wide and probably has a drop shadow.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]



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**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** Like other than that, [laughs] like everything else is subjective. Even what a nav is anymore is like confusing.

**Emily Lewis:** Oh, our lives are so hard. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** Yeah, First World Problems, yeah.

**Emily Lewis:** So I do think, to get back to the ideal content workflow idea, in terms of the client or the content author or CMS admin, whatever you call those people, while there's no ideal for them, I do think we've seen when those workflows for them maintaining their sites when they fall apart or cause confusion or kind of turned staff off from actually maintaining the site because something is wrong with how they have to update the content.

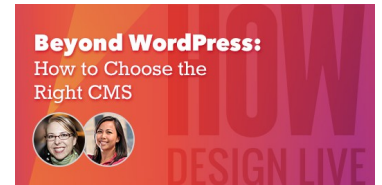
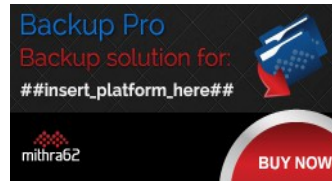
Have you ever seen common things that are just no-nos that you shouldn't, you know, when you're customizing a control panel for a client that you shouldn't do or that causes extra confusion?

**Jack McDade:** That's a really good question. I feel like most of the complicated things where the wheels fall off, and I mean, it's not the only place, but this is one of the more like the bigger explosions is where you like pivot your relational data.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

**Jack McDade:** And so let's take like a restaurant menu, for example, and you've probably done something that if it wasn't a menu itself or something like that like where you've got, "Okay, so we're





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going to create...” if you’re on ExpressionEngine, you create channel or you’re going to create a collection in Statamic, “we’re going to create a menu collection. Wait, no, we’re going to make a meal collection. We’ll do breakfast, lunch and dinner. Okay, cool.” So now each entry will be a part of the menu and then you get down to the smaller bits where you’ve got a menu item and then you’ve got a variation and you’ve got a price.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** And you’re like, “Oh no, is this a grid? Is this a matrix? Is this like a related entry?”

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** And the point where those things connect, like where you jump from an entry to another entry or an entry to a complicated field type or entry to a modal or whatever it is, like that can make it really easy for a client to go, “Oh my God, it’s so easy to make a menu item.”

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

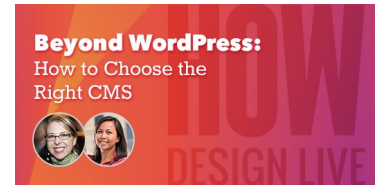
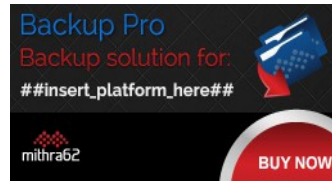
**Jack McDade:** Like they can see it and it make sense or sometimes they’ll never use it and six months later, you go check on the site you designed and it’s running on WordPress.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

**Jack McDade:** No.

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

**Jack McDade:** You didn’t tell me it was bad. You just deleted it.



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**Lea Alcantara:** Right.

**Jack McDade:** So I think those cases, those have happened a lot in my past, and especially back in the EE days with these sort of things, like the grid matrix sort of thing, like kind of the dynamic table where you add rows or whatever you call that, there was this point where sometimes you would just need to add like one more layer inside and you couldn't.

**Emily Lewis:** Yes.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah.

**Jack McDade:** "I just need to do it this one time. I know it's probably going to look bad, but I have to solve the problem and I don't have another solution." So one of the things we did in Statamic 2 is we made – we call it the grid. We made them infinitely nestible so you could put a grid inside of a grid inside of a grid until you need like a 36-inch monitor to even see it.

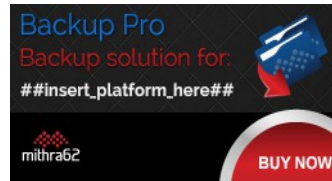
**Emily Lewis:** Nice. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** But at that point, we just say, "It's up to you to decide if this is the best way to do it." And sometimes ugly is okay if it works because it only has to happen one time and you document it, right?

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

**Jack McDade:** And so that's a common one we designed our way out of.



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**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** And it wasn't easy, but it's just JavaScript, what could go wrong? [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** Another thing occurs to me as well is that is a great example of how a workflow can fall apart because of the complexity of how the developer created the fields for the person to maintain.

**Jack McDade:** Right.

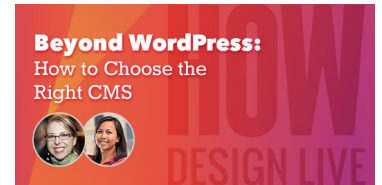
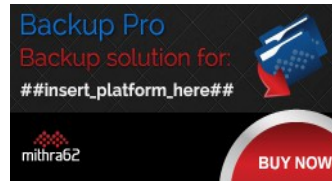
**Emily Lewis:** But I think an even simpler thing, and I've never really seen it in Statamic personally or even Craft, but it shows up in the EE and it certainly shows up in WordPress and Drupal and stuff like that where the interface comes with stuff that the client should never see.

**Jack McDade:** Oh yeah.

**Emily Lewis:** And they're clicking on stuff, especially like a new staff member comes on board, there has been no training for that person, there's no user manual, and they're in there trying to figure out what's going on, and there are ten things that don't do anything.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah.

**Emily Lewis:** And maybe they're not supposed to, but that person doesn't know it, so they think there's something wrong, and so it creates this confusion that it just kind of sucks for that content author.



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**Jack McDade:** Yeah, they're just clicking on things, too, "Like I feel like I should pick something."

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** Yeah.

**Lea Alcantara:** Because it's there, yeah.

**Jack McDade:** Oh man, is that present in WordPress, oh my God.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah.

**Lea Alcantara:** Right.

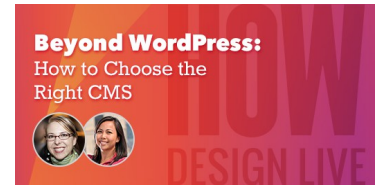
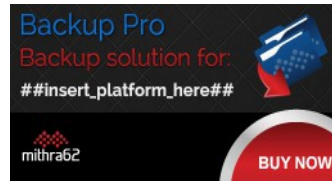
**Jack McDade:** That's definitely the biggest offender. Yeah, that I agree 100%. These things, they're like so natural to the way I think now that it's funny I'm like, "Oh yeah, we did design that."

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** Like specifically for that exact reason where the only requirements that you have for an entry like unit of content is that it needs to have content. [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** Right.



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**Jack McDade:** At least have something, and it's either visible or not. I feel like it has a title, it has a field of some sort, and that way, yeah, you're not showing stuff to people that don't need to see it, and for that matter, areas of the control panel itself, so you have content managers that maybe don't need to edit pages. They're only ever going to edit and create new sections, right? News articles.

**Lea Alcantara:** Right.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** Or they're only going to edit something and never publish it live and so there are ways of creating permissions in user groups and stuff like that, so that you can strip down the experience so that it's as streamlined as possible for them.

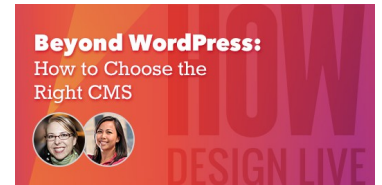
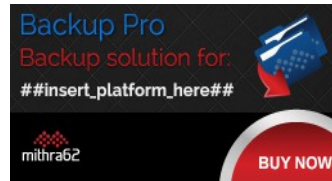
**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** And so this is interesting because we've kind of been on both sides of the fence, and we are on both sides depending on which angle you look at it where there are some people who needs to see everything like a super admin, right?

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

**Jack McDade:** Like a developer needs to see all, but the default state has to have enough showings that you know what it's capable of without showing too much that it either intimidates somebody or encourages them to click on something they shouldn't like, "Let's click update, and no, we hacked the core."

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**Lea Alcantara:** Right.

**Jack McDade:** Like don't click update, right? [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** So yeah, that's the tricky balance where we've kind of leaned towards. Show them all the sections of the control panel, but once you get into the content, don't show them anything that doesn't need to be there.

**Emily Lewis:** Mm hm.

**Jack McDade:** And at least that way sometimes stuff actually looks scary and that's enough. [Laughs]

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

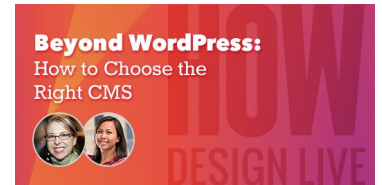
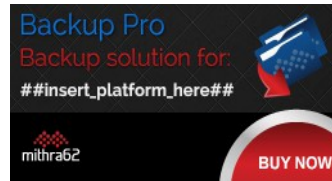
**Lea Alcantara:** So let's have another layer of complexity to all of this.

**Jack McDade:** Let's do it.

**Lea Alcantara:** I feel like we've been talking a lot about specific types of content, but it seems like they more lean towards text... the words on the page, the files you just changed the text file, right?

**Jack McDade:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** But does the workflow change depending on the type of content, especially if it's not text. For example, images, I feel like that definitely adds a new level of complexity.



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**Jack McDade:** Absolutely, images and all the different types of PDFs and all that stuff.

**Lea Alcantara:** Right.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah, that's something that we tackled. Okay, so in Statamic V-1, we kind of had this like the most rudimentary version of files and images. It was just like a filed field type and it would upload a file and we would like maybe check like the file extension was what you wanted, like it's .jpeg, and it's like zipped file or whatever.

In V-2, we rebuilt the whole Assets Manager and then in 2.5, we rebuilt it again because we feel very strongly about that it should be a very natural experience. It should kind of mimic how you work with your desktop as much as possible because that's where we do like 99% of our moving files around.

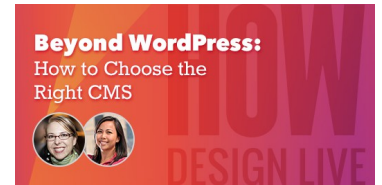
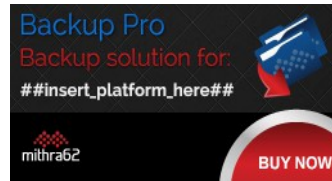
**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** And it gets very complicated between managing like what version of the images is the right one, and how do I make edits to it, and how do I resize it, and how do I crop it when I don't know where it's going to like show up on the site, and all that kind of thing. I want to organize them into folders and files and that kind of thing. Yeah, Assets is complicated. Should I talk about what we did or do you want to talk about the problems that exist with managing Assets?

**Emily Lewis:** Well, actually, if you could do both and maybe talk about what you did, and I'm assuming you did it to resolve problems with managing Assets. [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** Yeah. Yeah, let's do that. I like talking about failures because we learn from failures, right?

**Emily Lewis:** Absolutely.



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**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** The biggest lessons I ever learned in life has come from doing something the wrong way and then having to basically fix it and so you know you won't do it again. So what we did with Statamic 2.0 is the problem we wanted to solve was I want to upload a photo, let's say like a header image or like a headshot of a person or some photo and like I want to add my alt text in one place.

So if you have over styled CMS, you upload a photo, you add alt text or title tag or a caption to an image there, then you reuse the same photo again on your blog and you have to like add the alt text by hand again, seriously, like I have to do that and remember what it is. I have to go find where I used it before, all of that. So we wanted to make Assets a full-blown content type with all the implications that that brings around treating it like an entry so it would have custom data attached to it.

**Emily Lewis:** Oh.

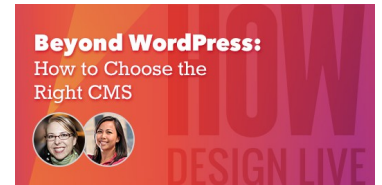
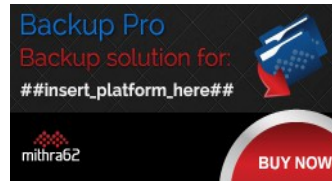
**Jack McDade:** You could store your metadata and you could add all custom fields whatever you want that are attached to that particular file and if you replace the file, you don't want to lose those, but they'll be a great thing, right?

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** So what we did is when you upload a file into the system in the control panel, we would take the file name, we would put it in a storage file and then you can attach metadata to it, and then in order to work with that Asset, you would work with a unique ID, not the file name itself.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]





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**Jack McDade:** Which sounded really good because it gave us all sorts of features and it worked really well, but as a developer, when you know like there are only nine images and that you're working within like Hero 1, Hero 2, you couldn't just type Hero 1, Hero 2 when you're coding a theme or you're going through templates or whatever, you had to go look up what the ID was for that asset and come back and drop it in and wrap it in a tag, and it kind of sucked, like it was the point where I didn't like doing it. I was just skipping Assets and doing everything manually in the files and people were complaining like, "It works like for once the site is built, but while building the site, it's just awful."

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

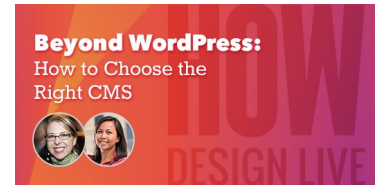
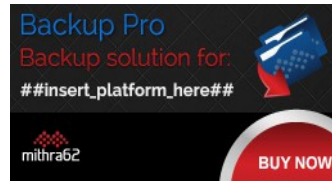
**Jack McDade:** And it took like three months, we rebuilt the entire thing, wrote a migrator, stripped it all out and reengineered it so that the unique ID is still the file URL so it works exactly how you would expect. Now, I mean, it's simple, but it's just this way in the beginning where you've over engineered these things and you're thinking about like possibilities, right?

**Lea Alcantara:** Right.

**Jack McDade:** So now you just work with the file name and when you store metadata against your assets, we just append that in a storage file with the file name, and if you want to replace the file, if you're doing it like in the file system, you just make sure the file name is the same. That's not too hard.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** Or if you're doing it in the control panel, you can just go to the Asset itself and like hit Replace This File, and you just put a different one and it takes its place. So now, you have the best of both worlds where your site is still easy to build, but you can have your captioning, you can have all



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that stuff attached to your photo and then on top of that in Statamic 2, we had this from I think 2.0, but it's even better now where we have focal-point editing.

**Emily Lewis:** Oh.

**Jack McDade:** So you upload a photo and you click Set a Focal Point, and you put a little pin on the photo where the center of the photo should be or this area should always be in the photo when it gets cropped. So no matter what orientation you crop it in, vertical, horizontal, whatever, it's going to make sure that shot is as close to center as possible and so you get these really nice crop, like when you're doing thumbnail resizing automatically and all that stuff like on your front end, what you want is always on the photo.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** So the little girl's rosy cheeks...

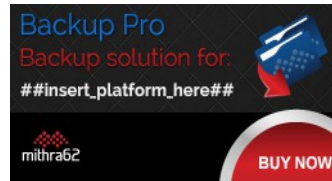
**Emily Lewis:** Oh, clients love that.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah, clients do love it.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah. Especially when like in other systems when there's cropping, but then if you try to do automated cropping, it looks like someone's head is cut off and you just see a torso because they're trying to like absolute center.

**Emily Lewis:** Yes.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah, exactly.



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**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah.

**Jack McDade:** Yes, and then you said, “Oh, well, send it to the top,” and then you’re showing the sky and never the top of the mountains, right, whatever it is.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** Right, right, exactly.

**Jack McDade:** There’s no one rule that works for every photo ever, and so the focal-point editing is really great because if it matters, you just set a focal point and you’re done.

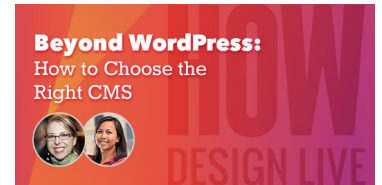
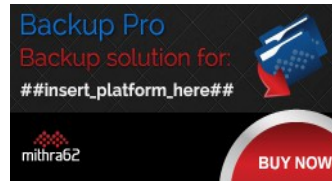
**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** It gives you a nice like grid of all different like ratios so you can see what it would look like, and so that’s something we wanted for sites we build and we felt like that would be a great part of the workflow for people, and the way people design now, which is blog posts have hero images usually and you want them to look good no matter what, whether they’re in your like OG (Open Graph) tags or your Twitter cards and your Facebook like preview renders, all that kind of stuff is really easy to do now.

**Emily Lewis:** Oh, that’s exciting.

**Jack McDade:** [Agrees]

**Emily Lewis:** We’re getting ready to do a Statamic build soon, so I’m pretty excited about trying some of this out. [Laughs]



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**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** Oh, awesome. Yeah, if you have like any feature requirements you want to like run through a little demo, I'd be happy to help you guys out.

**Emily Lewis:** We actually already sold this. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** We just got to build it.

**Jack McDade:** Oh, even if like how to build it, if you have questions, we love helping people out.

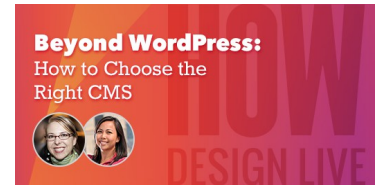
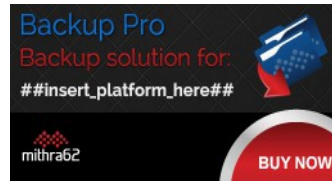
**Emily Lewis:** We need help also. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** Yeah.

**Emily Lewis:** I do want to also talk about the other add-on that you've built that allows for in-browser content editing in the sense that it's not like the control panel, it's directly the site.

**Jack McDade:** I mean, it's very much like the SafeCracker Standalone Entry Forms, if you're coming from the EE world where you've got a set of tags and the tags that you pass in the URL of the page you want to edit or defaults to the current page that you're on and then you can create a form and edit any of the content, you click save and it updates, and then you can combine that tag thus creating and editing. You can combine that with like the user tags to make that they're logged in or they're logged and/or an admin or something.



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**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** And you can use that to create. We did, we made a little demo. It's not really a demo, but it's like a functional theme called Rainforest, which lets you create like invoices without the control panels.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** So you just like create your invoice, you set the price like you pick a client, you write some notes, you hit save, and then boom, there it is and you take a payment. So that's something you could do with Statamic and I really wouldn't recommend rebuilding an entire control panel that way because we already built the control panel, you just use it.

**Emily Lewis:** Right.

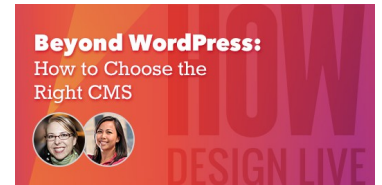
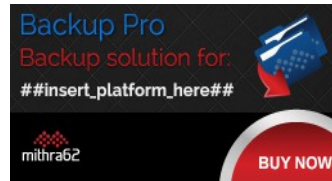
**Jack McDade:** But if you want to be able to let people submit draft articles perhaps and keep them in an unpublished state or maybe you're like a school or something and you want teachers, you just log into like this one page and you don't want to teach them how to use the control panel, they just go in.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** They have like these three fields they can just update. Just go for it. The add-on is \$25. If you need those features, it's so cheap, it's just a no brainer, it's really easy to use.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.



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**Jack McDade:** Yeah.

**Emily Lewis:** And it sounds like, and tell me if either of you remember this, but at one point in time, EllisLab was creating a MojoMotor, do you remember that?

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah, I remember that, yeah.

**Emily Lewis:** And that was in-site content editing, like that was the format of it, and you would put tags around the little section that was editable and if someone was logged in, they could edit just that one section.

**Jack McDade:** Right.

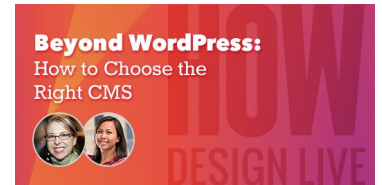
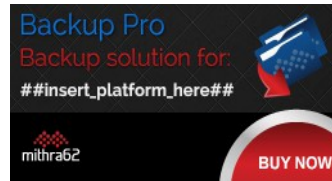
**Emily Lewis:** And so I've experimented with it because I was just curious about it and what occurred to me is that it would be really perfect. That kind of functionality is really perfect for an organization who have kind of like what you were describing with the teachers who have staff or volunteers who occasionally have to update one small restricted area of something.

**Jack McDade:** Right.

**Emily Lewis:** They don't have to know some other URL. They just go to the site. They have a log in and then they can see where they can edit.

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**Jack McDade:** Yeah, it's good for that. I mean, if you want to compare it to MojoMotor just to be comprehensive about it, if I remember correctly, the one time I used it, the one site I built with it, I mean, that was like the whole CMS, right?



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**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

**Jack McDade:** You could like create a page through it. It doesn't have like that admin bar that shows up.

**Emily Lewis:** No.

**Jack McDade:** It's literally you make it do what you wanted to. Specifically, it has no assumptions, but it lets you create and edit whatever content fields that exist, you can do them with that. It's a little bit more of a precision tool than like a catch all, I guess you could say.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

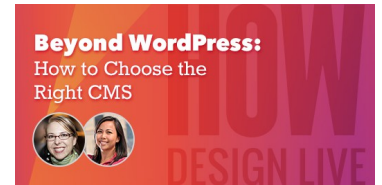
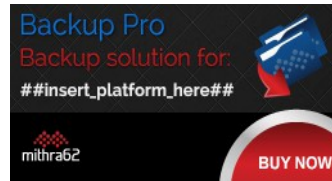
**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah, just like it hearkens back to what we were discussing earlier about where content workflows fall apart is because sometimes there are too many things in the control panel or stuff that you're not supposed to be seeing.

**Emily Lewis:** Right.

**Jack McDade:** Right.

**Lea Alcantara:** So you're pressing buttons that you're not supposed to press, but if you have something like workflow where it's like, well, you can just only edit this one box and this one page, then it's foolproof.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah. I felt like let us say there is another option for you, and maybe this is going to be it, right, without it being something like huge and overly complicated that nobody wanted.



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**Emily Lewis:** Yeah, I like that.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah.

**Emily Lewis:** So Jack, where do you think someone like me who is working with Statamic to build something for a client, where should those type of developers focus when they're customizing Statamic for their clients to make it easier? Are there things that you've seen people do that unnecessarily complicate things?

**Jack McDade:** Oh, unnecessary complication is just the default state. [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

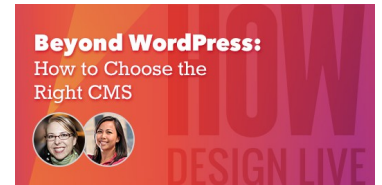
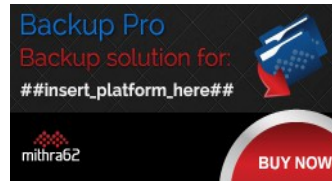
**Jack McDade:** What you should strive for as much as possible in my opinion, and this is just my opinion, is if your site is unique, you're not buying an off-the-shelf template from ThemeForest that just kind of fits like every other boilerplate sites, if your site is truly unique, so is your content management experience, right?

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** So you're going to have each page, there's probably going to be somewhat of a unique layout and should have its own fields to manage it so it has intuitive and basically foolproof as possible and that works well for pages and for like the different major sections of the site, and the place where I find you normally have to plan ahead of your client and not kind of behind them is like





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the blog news article because you start with the one dummy post and then they want categories and then they want tags and then they want, you know.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

**Jack McDade:** It kind of grows and it's a real bummer for a client to have to keep coming back to you and say, "Hey, can we have like hero images or like can we have related posts?"

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** And so what I would recommend is just always having like a process, a list of checklist of the things that you build even though the client didn't ask for it.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

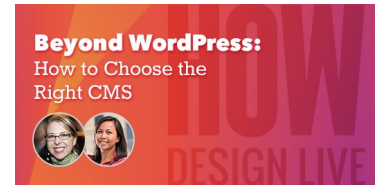
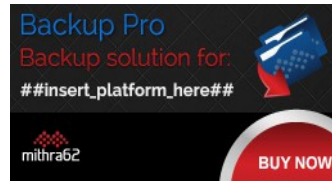
**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** Because they're probably going to want it anyway, and then they're there and then how you choose to show them so that they don't mess around with them if they don't need it is up to you. You're going to have help texts. You can collapse fields, so that they're not obvious, right?

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** Put the fields that they edit every time or fill out every time like towards the top of your big long publish page and then the optional stuff maybe down at the bottom or if your CMS has tabs, put the optional stuff in the second tab, something like that.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]



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**Jack McDade:** But just build it for them and they'll be so happy when they just click it and it works.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah, I like that as well. Something you said also prompted me to think of another thing that I learned through the years is, and it kind of comes back to naming is what you name your fields, the labels and the help text that you provide.

**Jack McDade:** [Agrees]

**Emily Lewis:** It sounds simple, but it's easy to get inconsistent, and that can cause confusion. So if there are three different types of entries but they all share body copy, I call it body copy, across all of them, and so you're creating a common vocabulary for your content authors and don't be obscure.

[Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah, be as clear and specific as possible.

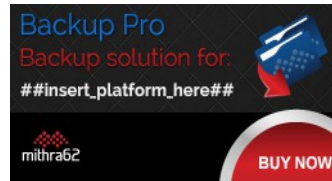
**Jack McDade:** Absolutely.

**Emily Lewis:** I guess name things and label things from the perspective of a new staff member.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah.

**Emily Lewis:** That's what I'm trying to think about.

**Jack McDade:** And if they have questions, if they're like, "How do I do this or which field do I edit?" teach them and then as soon as you hang up, sign up on Slack or Skype or whatever, just log in and like edit the help text for that field.



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**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

**Jack McDade:** And so that they're logged in and you've already beaten them to it, right?

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

**Jack McDade:** I mean, I've done that, it feels good. They're like, "Wow, you already like explained it to me again. I just saw it." It takes two minutes sometimes.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah, we actually have gone into a really good habit, especially because we've inherited a few sites that we didn't build and those companies have had new staff come on and they don't have a user manual, and so with new projects, we always give them a user manual, but with these projects that we've inherited, every time we get a support request, we help them. We clarify the control panel if necessary by changing a label or adding help text.

**Jack McDade:** [Agrees]

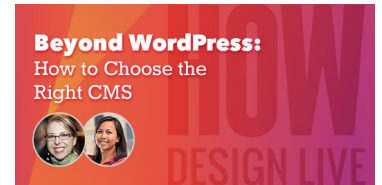
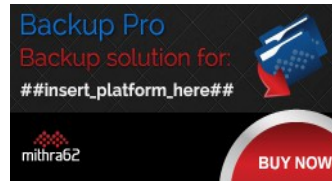
**Emily Lewis:** But then we also update their user manual and send them the link to that and say, "This is also updated for your future reference."

**Jack McDade:** That makes happy clients that don't redesign with WordPress.

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

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** [Laughs] Yeah.



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**Lea Alcantara:** So aside from the software itself, what have you learned since creating Statamic about building and maintaining a CMS? Any more valuable mistakes and lessons learned?

**Jack McDade:** I would say one of the most valuable things is don't build it because you think it's cool.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** Or don't build it because you think people are going to want it and don't ask them if they want something and have them say yes because people lie to you.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

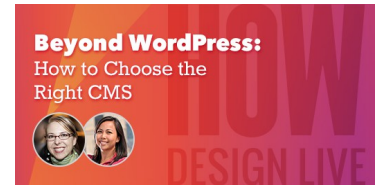
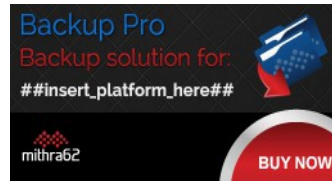
**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah.

**Jack McDade:** People don't lie to you just to be jerks. They're like, "No, that sounds cool." They doesn't sound stupid, it's just they know they're not going to use it, but it sounds cool.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** So we've really learned to go out and interview people generically looking for what their problems are versus suggesting a solution to them, and when you ask them what their problem is and how they solved it right now, "When you run into managing multiple sites, what problems do you have and how do you solve them today? Specifically, you have to be doing something, what are you doing now?"



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**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** And if the thing that they do to solve the problem is like a 30-second thing they do once a month, that's not like a huge problem you need to tackle, and this is true for even like scoping out new apps to build and other things. Doing that user research ahead of time with the problem solution fit, if you're solution then lines up to them and you say, "If we do this, would that help you?" You'll know.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** Their eyes light up. They want it and then you know like that's something worth building.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

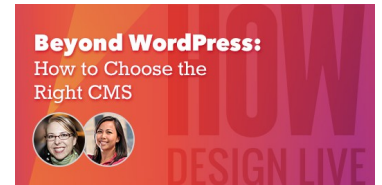
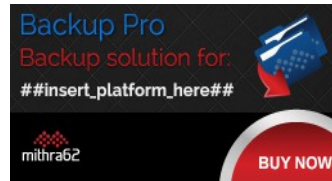
**Lea Alcantara:** That reminds me of our episode with Matthew Oliphant. He actually mentioned that he was paid to tell the client, after all the user experience and user research that he did, to not build the app.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** You see, he was paid to say like, "To save the rest of your budget, this is not going to make you money." [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** Yeah, that's good.

**Lea Alcantara:** And it's actually a good investment because you'll waste more money and time and effort and energy if you're putting it in the wrong place.



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**Jack McDade:** It is.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah.

**Jack McDade:**

**Lea Alcantara:** Absolutely, there's no point building something people don't need. Unless you want to build it to learn how to build it, right?

**Lea Alcantara:** Right.

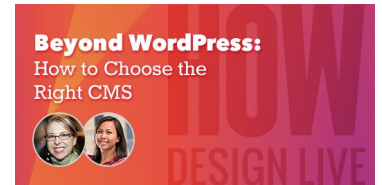
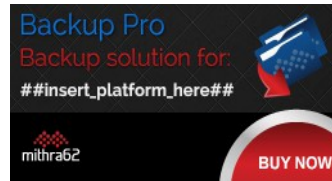
**Jack McDade:** I mean, there's that point in your career where you've got to like come up with something to like try some new technology, but yeah, I'm passed that. In my career at this point, it's got to be worthwhile or I'm not going to do it.

**Emily Lewis:** I'm completely with you. I feel fortunate that Lea and I are also at that point because as much fun as it is in the early part of your career, I literally remember something came across my radar on Twitter like 2 in the afternoon on like a Thursday and I was like, "Oh, let's build that," and I just spent the rest of the next like eight hours building something.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** And meanwhile, to bring us to today, and Lea and I are probably spending about eight-plus hours building something internally for the business. We're both learning a few new things, but it is for the business.



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**Jack McDade:** [Agrees]

**Emily Lewis:** We're really hoping it's going to make us money. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** Sure.

**Emily Lewis:** But it's not just this random, "Oh, I'm going to screw around for the heck of it." It's we're going to strategically build something and learn while we're doing it.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah, that's good. Another piece of advice I would say is just be as transparent as you can with your customers.

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

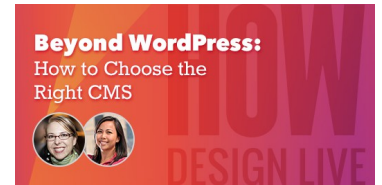
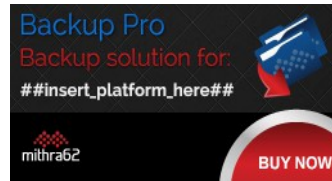
**Jack McDade:** It's a whole lot easier to kind of prep them and say something bad is going to happen and then it happened than to apologize for it afterwards.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** I know people will say like, "Oh, just, you know, we'll apologize later."

**Emily Lewis:** Yeah.

**Jack McDade:** That's only when you're focused on yourself and so being as proactive as you can and transparent and, "This is going to be a while. This is going to take some time," we've got to do that. I mean, we're building a product thousands of people are using with a small team and



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sometimes the needs in a short, you know, this spike is bigger than our team can handle, and thankfully we have some people that can help us when it happens, but it's something you learn the hard way.

**Emily Lewis:** To put you on the spot a little bit, something the community of users of a piece of software can become diehard fans with high expectations.

**Jack McDade:** [Agrees]

**Emily Lewis:** So being transparent, has that helped you avoid deep disappointments among your community of users or do you still those handful of users who are very demanding?

**Jack McDade:** Well, you're always going to have a couple, and you know them by name and you have nightmares about them.

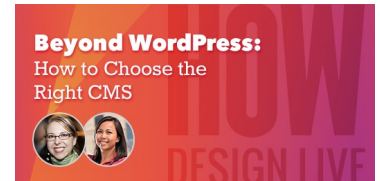
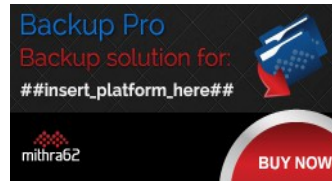
**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** I'm kidding. It's absolutely helped. And I am really happy and proud of my community how helpful they are to each other. There are so many people like if we've communicated, "We're building this feature you guys have wanted it for a long time or we're fixing this hard bug," or whatever happens and then we're kind of silent because like literally you've closed, you quit Slack, you quit Twitter because you need to get this thing done right now...

People in our community, especially in Slack where a lot of that kind of real-time stuff happens, they'll jump in, "Hey, these guys are like doing this other thing right now. They're going to get to you. Can I





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help you to help each other.” I mean, that’s awesome. That’s what I dreamed would happen in our community and that they’re – self-policing isn’t the right term, but self... you know.

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**Emily Lewis:** Self-supporting.

**Jack McDade:** Self-supporting, that’s a really good term.

**Lea Alcantara:** There you go.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah, absolutely. And not only are they self-supporting with like help, but they also kind of self-support with kind of the community with this kind of standards with have with how we treat each other and kind of the stuff we say and don’t say and how we ask for help. They’ve shown to be very helpful and courteous people and it just makes me smile.

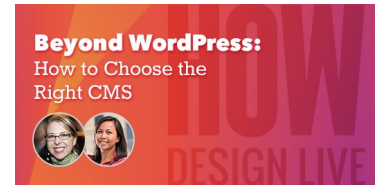
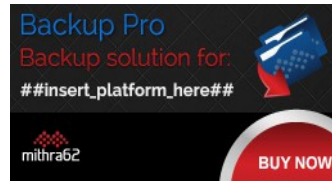
**Emily Lewis:** Well, that’s great. So what’s on the horizon for Statamic? What do you have planned?

**Jack McDade:** Yeah, we’ve got a number of things planned. The next big one is going to be the marketplace where you can sell stuff with themes and add-ons and list of directory, a single directory for all of the open source add-ons and kind of the app store for Statamic.

**Lea Alcantara:** Oh.

**Jack McDade:** Functionally, it’s complete. We finally finished it. I’m working on the Y and VAT tax. We need to figure that out.

**Emily Lewis:** Oh.



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**Jack McDade:** And once we do, we can launch it. That's really close.

**Emily Lewis:** Exciting.

**Jack McDade:** So that's coming up. Yeah, I'm really excited about that. I know a lot of people have been waiting for it. We've been kind of like over promising it for way too long and this always seems to be like will be the next priority after the next thing and then it's always like one more thing got in the way, but it's finally happening. We'll be approaching the concept of Statamic professional network or partner network pretty soon sometime later this year and all the different things that can happen with that.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

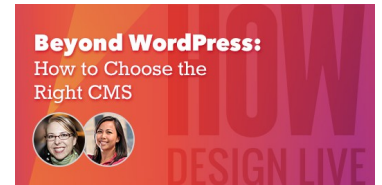
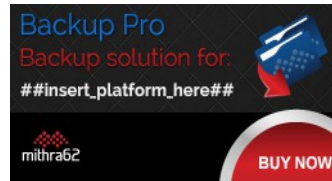
**Jack McDade:** I don't want to be really specific about it because we're still kind of nailing down the details, but I think that will be a great way to empower developers to help them build better and sell better and find more work and more projects and help each other and also kind of get the Statamic name out there so that's also on the road map as well as Statamic Version 3. I mean, at some point you have to like do the big number update.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** The longer you wait, the more it feels like it should be this like magnificent thing and so we're trying to come up with some purposeful features that aren't just for sort of cool factor.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** And one of those things will be upgrading to the latest version of Laravel.



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**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Lea Alcantara:** Oh.

**Jack McDade:** So Statamic runs on Laravel 5.1 right now, which is several versions behind and we haven't been keeping that up to date because we didn't want to increase PHP version requirements.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** But breaking number is a chance to do that and that will let us jump up to 5.4 or whatever is out at the time. So those are some big things as far as like the product and the ecosystem itself. We'll also be doing some brand updates and some marketing and repositioning. It's really to find those people whose Statamic is a really perfect fit for.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

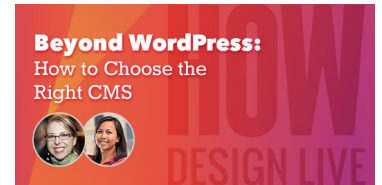
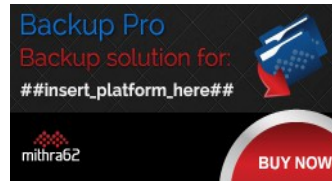
**Jack McDade:** We really want to support the single developers. We can support them better if we have a nice community, a lot of agencies basically that are using it for all of their client sites.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** We have Statamic Unlimited. It's like a subscription plan, so for a monthly fee, you can have unlimited licenses and build as many sites as you want.

**Emily Lewis:** Oh.

**Jack McDade:** Which is pretty cool for some people, the economics of it work out pretty well if you build more than a few sites a year. So we have that and we'll probably be adding another like lower



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tier for freelancers so it's not quite as like a high priced point for one- and two-person shops. We're just trying to make it more accessible for people and it is a commercial product. I'd love to make it open source somehow, but that's another set of problems and we just got to find a way where we're not feeling like we're overcharging anybody, but that it also lets us support the product.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** So we're working on it.

**Emily Lewis:** It sounds great.

**Lea Alcantara:** It makes sense.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah, it's exciting. That's all the time we have for today.

**Jack McDade:** Oh, man, we don't get to play that cool game?

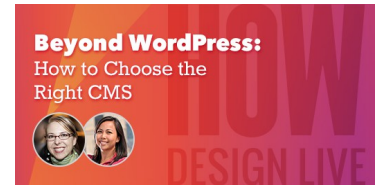
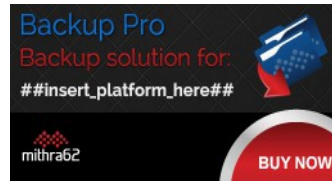
**Emily Lewis:** Oh.

**Lea Alcantara:** No, we are right now. [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** Oh, it happens now?

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]



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**Jack McDade:** Oh, cool. It's so funny.

**Lea Alcantara:** So before we finish up, we do have the Rapid Fire Ten Question Game so our listeners can get to know you a bit better.

**Jack McDade:** Cool.

**Lea Alcantara:** Are you ready, Jack?

**Jack McDade:** As ready as I'll ever be.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** Okay, first question, introvert or extrovert?

**Jack McDade:** Introvert.

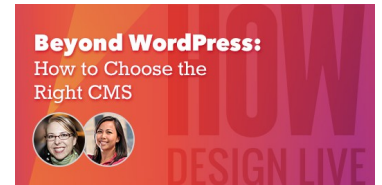
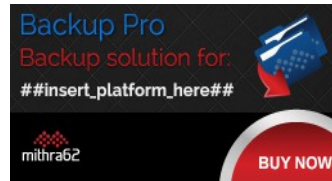
**Emily Lewis:** The power is going to be out for the next week, what food from the fridge do you eat first?

**Jack McDade:** The bacon.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** It's not even a question.



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

**Jack McDade:** [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** What's your favorite website for fun?

**Jack McDade:** I don't do that.

**Emily Lewis:** You don't do fun?

**Jack McDade:** No, I do fun. I don't use the internet for fun.

**Emily Lewis:** Oh.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** Yeah. It's a thing.

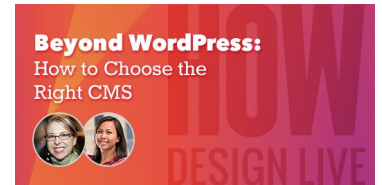
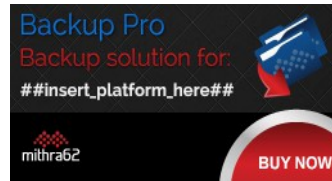
**Lea Alcantara:** Fair enough.

**Jack McDade:** We didn't talk about that, but that's a whole other – we could talk about it another time. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** What's the last thing you read?

**Jack McDade:** That would be *Never Split the Difference* by Chris Voss.



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**Lea Alcantara:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** It's a book about negotiation.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yes, that was a book I mentioned, yeah.

**Jack McDade:** That's really good.

**Lea Alcantara:** Yeah, I love that one.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah.

**Lea Alcantara:** What's the best piece of professional advice you've received?

**Jack McDade:** The one that sticks with me the most that's coming up to the top of my mind would be you can have the best idea without follow through and they'll still go nowhere, but even a mediocre idea with follow through will get you somewhere.

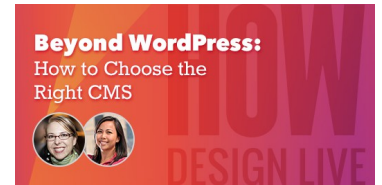
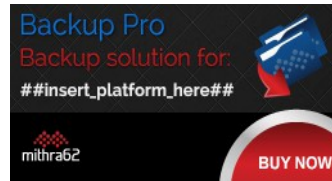
**Emily Lewis:** That's good. What about the worst piece of professional advice you've gotten?

**Jack McDade:** Work really, really, really, really hard and don't sleep.

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** That's a horrible, horrible advice.



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**Lea Alcantara:** What's your favorite color?

**Jack McDade:** Green because it's like spring and it's white right now. Oh...

**Emily Lewis:** Oh, [laughs] I feel bad I'm in the Albuquerque and we're like in the middle of gorgeous blooming spring.

**Jack McDade:** Oh, we just got back from three weeks in Florida.

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** So anyway, yeah, green. I love green. It means good things.

**Emily Lewis:** If you could take us to one restaurant in your town, where would we go?

**Jack McDade:** Oh, we'd probably go for sushi at [Mr. Fuji Sushi](#).

**Lea Alcantara:** What's your favorite board game?

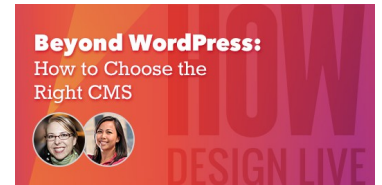
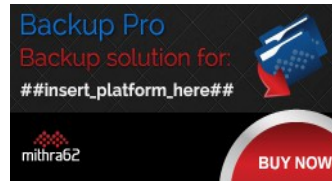
**Jack McDade:** Oh, so many. Technically, right now, we'd probably call it [Klask](#) because it has a board, but it's not traditional, it's like Labyrinth meets Air Hockey. It's really fun.

**Emily Lewis:** Oh,

**Lea Alcantara:** I love Air Hockey. [Laughs]

**Jack McDade:** Yes, it's like has magnets and a cue. It's really cool. Look it up Klask. Yeah, it's really fun.





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**Lea Alcantara:** Okay.

**Emily Lewis:** All right, last question, Hulu or Netflix?

**Jack McDade:** Oh man, I'd probably have to go with Netflix because it's stranger things.

**Emily Lewis:** [Agrees]

**Jack McDade:** But Hulu gets watched more while there are new shows. Yeah, it's Netflix. [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** All right, thank you, Jack.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah. Thank you. Really, I enjoyed this. Thanks for having me on the show.

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

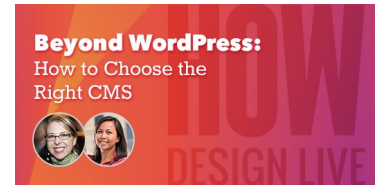
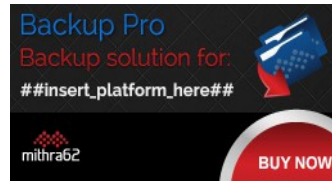
**Jack McDade:** Well, I quit Twitter which is probably that other whole thing, but I'll still respond on there, so [@jackmcdade](#) on Twitter or you can email me [shout@jackmcdade.com](mailto:shout@jackmcdade.com).

**Emily Lewis:** And where can listeners find out about Statamic?

**Jack McDade:** If you can spell it, go to . That's S-T-A-T-A-T-A-T-A... [Laughs]

**Lea Alcantara:** [Laughs]

**Emily Lewis:** [Laughs]



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**Jack McDade:** [Statamic.com](https://statamic.com) and I'm sure you'll probably link it up in the show notes to help them out.  
[Laughs]

[Music starts]

**Lea Alcantara:** I appreciate it.

**Emily Lewis:** Awesome.

**Jack McDade:** Yeah.

**Emily Lewis:** Thanks for joining us again, Jack.

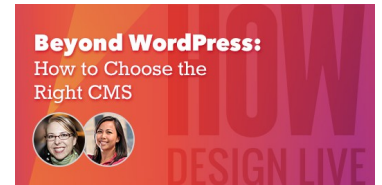
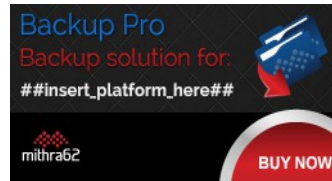
**Jack McDade:** Cool, thank you so much. Take care.

**Emily Lewis:** You too.

**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, [Backup Pro](#)!

**Emily Lewis:** We'd also like to thank our hosting partner: [Arcustech](#).

**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](#) or visit our website [ctrlclickcast.com](https://ctrlclickcast.com). And if you liked this episode, please give us a review on [iTunes](#), [Stitcher](#) or both! And if you really liked this episode, consider donating to the show. Links are in our show notes and on our site.



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**Emily Lewis:** Don't forget to tune in to our next episode when we're going to talk about niche branding and identity with Sherri and Reuben Johnson of Fly Media Productions. Be sure to check out [ctrlclickcast.com/schedule](https://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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