Taking a Website Live

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About Me

- **Previously a CSE 143/190L TA**

- **Product Manager at Redfin**

- **Created www.cellarspot.com**

  - **Social network for wine connoisseurs**

What is Cellarspot?

- Social network for wine connoisseurs
  - Taste notes, collections, friends, etc
- Rewrote the whole site 3 times in a year
  - In PHP at first, then two rewrites in JSP (Java)
- Was my first money-making website
- Was in your shoes when I started
- Got the idea from my Dad; I don't like wine

Enough about Me

Let's talk about you …

What's after 190m?

- Webster is shutting down at end of quarter
- Where will you continue to tinker?
  - Use your UW student space
    - http://www.washington.edu/computing/web/publishing/students.html
  - Install MySQL on Dante
    - http://www.washington.edu/computing/web/publishing/mysql-install.html
  - Visit http://students.washington.edu/youruwnetid
  - Or setup PHP, Apache, MySQL on your PC

What if you want more?

- What if you want your own .com name?
- What if you want to make some money?
- What if you want to take web development to the next level?

The Truth

- The gap between a legitimate website and a personal project is small - **this is the beauty of the web**

- All of you are capable of making something that people will use

- Examples:
    - Cellarspot.com
    - Facebook.com
    - Rememberthemilk.com
    - Craigslist.org
    - Mobaganda.com

- All websites that started off simple

The Next Level is Hosting

- Buy a domain name
  - Example: martystepp.com
- Buy web space from a hosting company
  - They provide you with PHP, MySQL, etc
- You can buy a domain name and web space from the same company
- Good companies:
  - Dreamhost.com (Marty's recommendation)
  - Godaddy.com
  - Westhost.com
  - Wingsix.com

Hosting Gotchas

- Make sure that your host provides the services you need
    - Some hosts only provide PHP + MySQL
    - Some only provide Ruby on Rails, etc
- One-stop shops are convenient
    - Buy the domain and web space from the same company
    - Dreamhost is awesome

OK, you're live

Refine your website

Research

- First step to refinement is research
  - Research will tell you more about the problem you're solving
  - Understand your users
  - Understand use cases
- Research by interviewing, surveying, etc
- In my opinion, Cellarspot was solving a fake problem
  - I didn't research enough
  - I didn't know enough about wine connoisseurs
- Research increases the likeliness of your website being used
- It's more fun when your website is used :)

Cellarspot Focuses

- Original focus was on functionality
  - "Let's make a website with awesome functionality; the look is less important."
- Original focus was bad
  - We should have focused on a core feature set with an attractive and grabbing look
  - Wine connoisseurs need attractive websites
  - Had I done research upfront I would have known this earlier

Privacy

- Be upfront with your user
    - Specify your privacy policy in a "Terms" page
    - Facebook's "Terms" page is ~8 pages
    - Twitter had a big problem with this recently
- Bonus screenshot from Facebook:

Terms of Use

Date of Last Revision: June 7, 2008.

☑ Set date & time automatically: Apple Americas/U.S. (time.apple.com)

6/ 4/2008   1:09:40 AM

You got a good idea

Track and evaluate your website

Have you looked at the 190m source?

- ## What's this?

```
<script type="text/javascript">
        var gaJsHost = (("https:" == document.location.protocol) ? "https://ssl." : "http://www.");
        document.write(unescape("%3Cscript src='" + gaJsHost + "google-analytics.com/ga.js' type='text/javascript'%3E%3C/script%3E"));
</script>

<script type="text/javascript">
        var pageTracker = _gat._getTracker("UA-2729135-5");
        pageTracker._initData();
        pageTracker._trackPageview();
</script>
```

- ## Turns out Marty knows more about you than you think … he's got Google Analytics

Google Analytics (GA)

- Sign up here:
  http://www.google.com/analytics
- Then just install the JavaScript they give you
- GA gives you insane statistics about your site

Revenue Models

Make some money

Advertisements on Your Site

- ## Google AdSense
  - Automatically displays relevant ads
  - Paid per click (usually ~$.10-3.00)
  - Customizable look and feel
  - Any fool with a website can install these!
  - Just sign up and install the JavaScript
  - www.google.com/adsense

Cellarspot AdSense Example

Referrals

- Website owner gets commission from referred sale
  - Many e-commerce sites offer this
  - Amazon.com, Bestbuy.com, etc
  - Commission ranges between 5-10%
  - Look for "Join Associates" on Amazon.com

Cellarspot Referral Example

E-Marketing

Market your site and get users onboard

Google AdWords

- You can produce ads that show up as Google AdSense ads on relevant websites

- Keywords can be purchased that make you the "sponsored link" on the Google search page

- Cost per Click (CPC ~$.10-3.00)

- http://adwords.google.com

Google marty stepp Search Advanced Search
Preferences

Web   Personalized Results **1 - 10** of about **407,000** for **marty stepp**. (0.11 seconds)

Looking for **Marty Stepp**?   Sponsored Link
cs.arizona.edu/~stepp/   He sure is the cutest purple cow I've ever seen.

Remember those stupid <meta> tags?

- No one really uses those, right?
- Let's learn about SEO …

But first

- If you were Google, how would you determine if one website was better than another?

- Do you determine the most popular person by what they say about themselves?

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

- The way your site performs in search engines
- Learn more here:
    - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PageRank
    - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nofollow
    - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Search_engine_optimization
- Include the appropriate <meta> tags
    - Description, keywords, etc
- Use a descriptive <title>
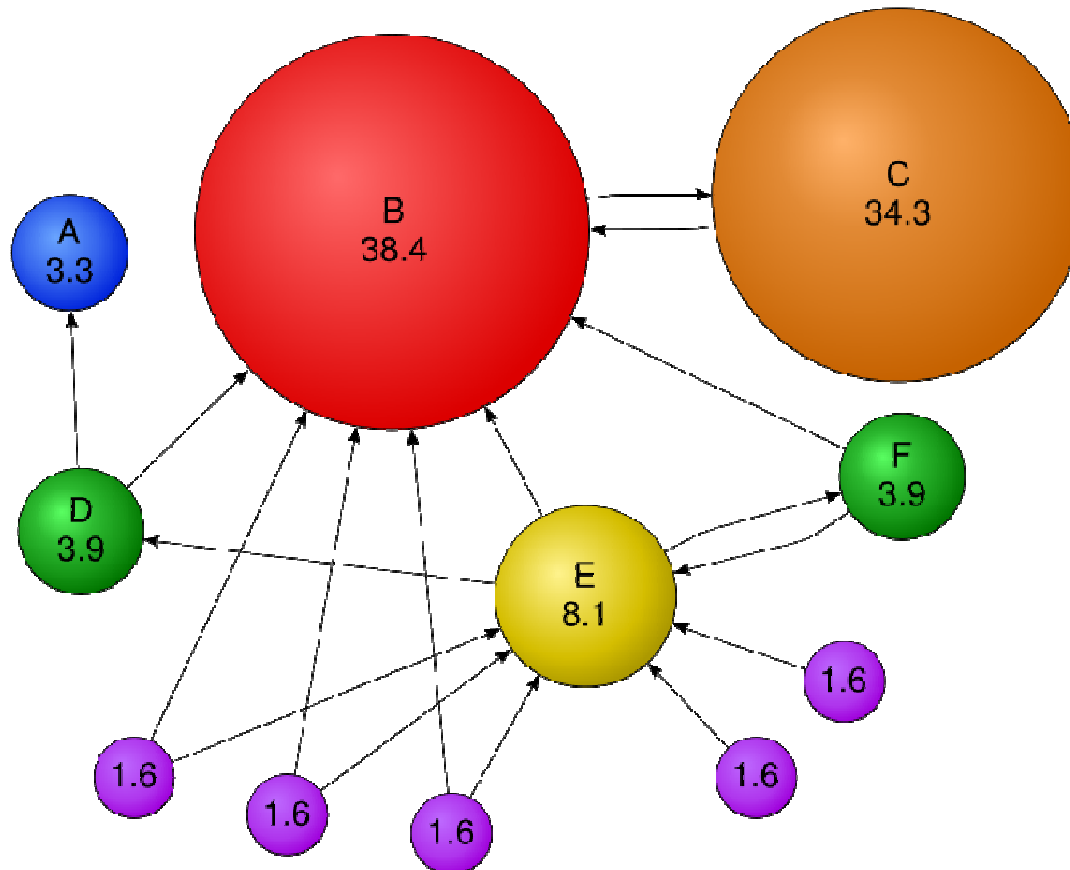   - Look at Amazon's title -- it's huge

SEO (cont.)

- See each search engine's recommendations
    - Yes, they specify them
    - http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/
- Most important:
    - Get people to link to you
    - Get bloggers to blog about you
        - Google likes bloggers

Google PageRank

- Bubbles are websites, arrows are links

SEO (cont.)

- ## Typically your website will be keyworded based on the anchor text of incoming links
  - ### Also keyworded by <title>, <meta> and content

Footer of Trulia.com:

Residential Real Estate

San Francisco real estate | New York real estate | Los Angeles real estate | Orlando real estate | Miami real estate | Philad

San Jose real estate | Chicago real estate | Arizona real estate | California real estate | Florida real estate | Illinois real est

Pennsylvania real estate | Texas real estate | Other local real estate | Home price maps

Google Bombs

- Before Google got smart, they keyworded mostly by anchor text

- Bloggers linked to whitehouse.gov/president with anchor text "miserable failure"

- Googleing "miserable failure" showed whitehouse.gov/president as the first link

- Google has since fixed this

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_bomb

A Useful SEO tool

- **Google Webmaster Tools**
  - **http://www.google.com/webmasters**
  - Useful information about your site in Google's search engine

Conclusion

- Making your own site is an indefinite success
- Cellarspot …
  - Didn't make much money
  - Was used in every single one of my interviews at Google, Redfin, etc
  - Is prominently on my resume
  - Was a great experience
  - Was insanely exciting!

Questions?

- Cellarspot?
- General web development?
- Jobs?
- Etc?

Overflow

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Cellarspot in Academics

- Pursued in 4 different classes (15 credits)
  - CSE 403 - Software Engineering (4 credits)
    - CSE majors only
    - Opportunity to work on a large project
    - Absolutely recommended (esp. with Marty)
  - ENTRE 475/476 - Planning a Business
    - 4 credits each
    - Contact John Castle (castlej@u) if interested
    - Absolutely recommended
  - CSE 490H - Distributed Systems (3 credits)
    - CSE majors only

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Legal Info

Don't get shutdown or sued

Intellectual Property

- ## Copyright ©
  - Establishes ownership of content
  - Images, reviews, etc
- ## Trademark ™
  - Establishes exclusive usage of a logo, name, or phrase
- ## Patent
  - Establishes ownership and exclusive usage of a product, algorithm, etc
  - Very complicated

Copyright

- **Don't violate it**
- **Don't use someone else's**
  - Images
  - Code snippets
    - Unless the license agreement says you can
  - Any other data on any website
- **Copyrights don't need to be specified**
  - They are implicit

Protect Yourself

- As an individual running a website, your private assets are not protected

- Protect your private assets by either
    - Registering a Limited Liability Company
    - Becoming incorporated

- Dependent on the state you operate in
    - http://www.secstate.wa.gov/corps/

- This probably isn't necessary unless you're doing something that might be borderline illegal

Software Development

- Make good code decisions
  - Will make improving / fixing your code MUCH easier
  - Try to build a team of developers, because multiple heads are better than one
- Take CSE 403