



Taking a Website Live

Alex Loddengard


(alexloddengard@gmail.com)

(<http://www.alexloddengard.com>)



About Me

- Previously a CSE 143/190L TA
- Product Manager at Redfin
- Created www.cellarspot.com
 - Social network for wine connoisseurs



Cellarspot your wine community beta [home](#) | [browse](#) | [help](#) | [join](#) | [login](#)

email: password: search wine, users, notes...

catalog and manage your wine collection
track your tasting experiences
discover new wine
share what you want with others

interested?
[join now](#) | [why join](#)

bottles in the spotlight [browse](#)

2005 Redwood Creek Pinot Noir
2000 Calon Segur Bordeaux
2005 La Ferme Julien Cotes du Ventoux

bloggers in the spotlight

Coming soon!



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:





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

[Printed Wine Glass \\$1.59](#)

\$1.59 Wine Glasses, \$1.49 flutes
\$0.56 shot Glasses. Free clip art.
www.Discountmugs.com

[Wine Cellar](#)

Specialists In Custom Wine
Cellars. We Will Beat Any
Delivered Price.
www.VintageCellars.com

[Winery Tours](#)

Luxury Group Transportation 20
Guests On Our Limo Style Bus
winerybus.com

[Wine Shippers](#)

Parcel approved shippers, Includes
Carton, Low pricing on the net!
www.univfoam.com/productsCoo

Cellarspot AdSense Example

Cellarspot your wine community **beta** [home](#) [browse](#) [help](#) [invite](#) [logout](#)

[My Profile](#) [My Collection](#) [My Taste Notes](#) [My Friends](#) [My Messages](#) [My Account](#)

I've given in
Alex Lodd Apr 11 07 9:37 AM

I've decided to give wine more of a shot, so I'm going to buy a bottle once every two weeks.
I might quit 2 weeks in, but for now I'm going to go for it.

[remove](#) | [edit](#)

2 comments:

Carolee Apr 11 07 8:08 PM

Hi Alex,
I'll be interested to hear how your journey into wine tasting evolves.

[remove](#)

loogel Apr 12 07 11:10 PM

I know! Blog about it !

[remove](#)

Post a comment:

Ads by Google

[Wine Shippers](#)
Parcel approved shippers.
Includes Carton, Low pricing on the net!
www.univfoam.com/productsCoc

[Wine Tasting France](#)
French Wine Tasting
Breaks, Tours &
Weekends - Get a Free
Brochure!
VintageTravelExperience.com

[Eastside Wine Storage](#)
Your lock, your key, your
locker Your wine cellar
away from home.
www.eastsidewinestorage.com



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

Cellarspot your wine community **beta** [home](#) | [browse](#) | [help](#) | [invite](#) | [logout](#)

[My Profile](#) [My Collection](#) [My Taste Notes](#) [My Friends](#) [My Messages](#) [My Account](#)

2004 Kistler Chardonnay

Bottle info	
Producer:	Kistler
Vintage:	2004
Grape:	Chardonnay
Type:	White
Region:	Durell Vineyard, Napa Valley

[Wine Review Online](#)

Ratings, Reviews, Expert Buying Advice from America's Top Critics

Ads by Google

[Write a Taste Note for this Bottle](#)

[Add this Bottle to your Collection](#)

[Buy this bottle](#)



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>



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?](#)

cs.arizona.edu/~stepp/ He sure is the cutest purple cow I've ever seen.

Sponsored Link



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

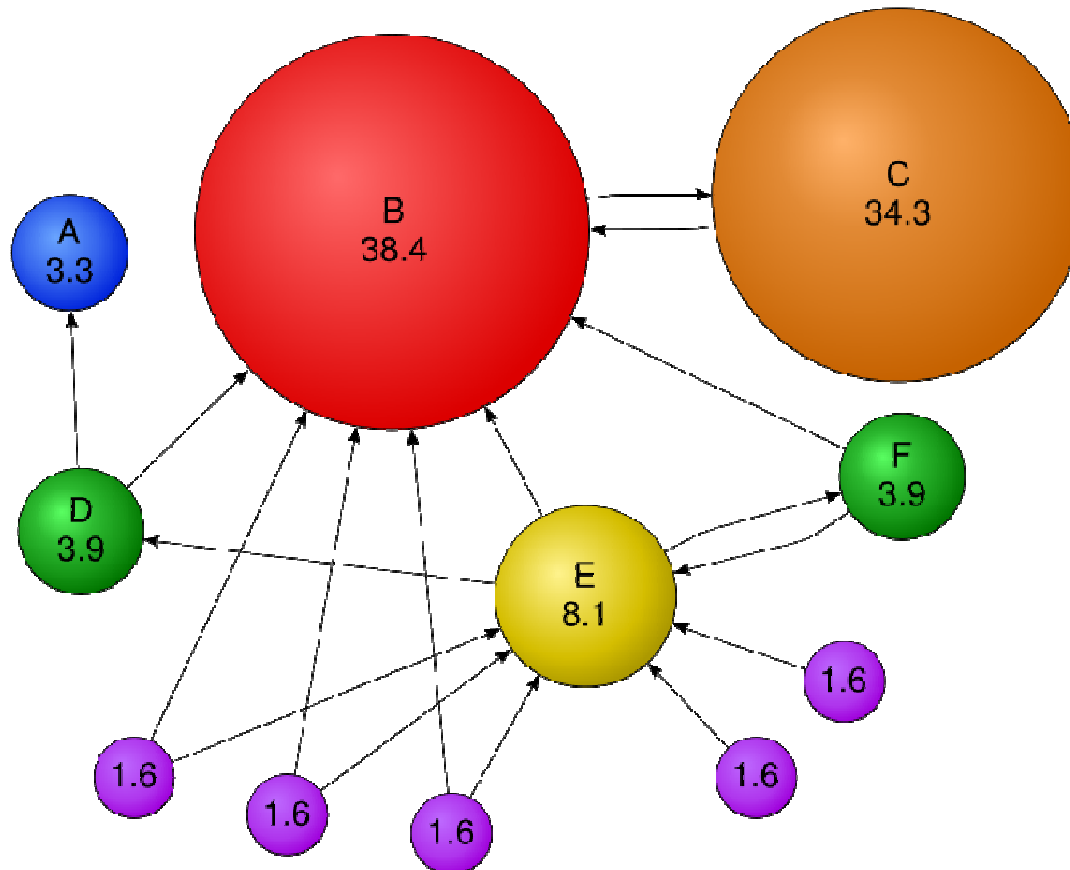


SEO (cont.)

- 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](#) | [Philadelphia real estate](#)
[San Jose real estate](#) | [Chicago real estate](#) | [Arizona real estate](#) | [California real estate](#) | [Florida real estate](#) | [Illinois real estate](#)
[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

The screenshot displays the Google Webmaster Tools interface. At the top, there are tabs for 'Diagnostic', 'Statistics', 'Links', and 'Sitemaps', with 'Statistics' selected. On the right, there is a 'Sites' dropdown menu. The left sidebar contains links for 'Crawl stats', 'Query stats', 'Page analysis', and 'Index stats'. The main content area is titled 'Query stats' and includes a list of bullet points explaining the data: 'Top search queries are the queries on the selected search property that most often returned pages from your site.', 'Top search query clicks are the top queries that directed traffic to your site (based on the number of clicks to your pages).', 'Average top position is the highest position any page from your site ranked for that query. Since our index is dynamic, this may not be the same as the current position of your site for this query.', and 'All data is averaged over the last 7 days.' Below this, there are two dropdown menus: 'Choose search type:' set to 'All searches' and 'Choose search location:' set to 'All locations'. A 'View Stats' button is present. Underneath, it says 'All searches: All locations'. There are two 'Rate this tool' sections, each with three smiley face icons. The first table, 'Top search queries', has two columns: 'Top search queries' and 'Average top position'. The second table, 'Top search query clicks', has two columns: 'Top search query clicks' and 'Average top position'. A 'Download this table' link is at the bottom of the second table.

Top search queries	Average top position
1. cellarspot	1
2. henri boillot	11
3. bossi siena	1
4. les charmes chardonnay	2

Top search query clicks	Average top position
1. bossi siena	1
2. cellarspot	1
3. "lazy creek vineyards" owners	10

[Download this table](#)



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



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



Legal Info

Don't get shutdown or sued



Intellectual Property

- Copyright ©
 - Establishes ownership of content
 - Images, reviews, etc
- Trademark TM
 - 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