

Brian Boyer – Hacker journalist

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What's a hacker journalist? Picture a photo journalist -- more than just a photographer, a photo journalist tells stories with a camera. Now replace "camera" with "laptop." I'm a software developer and a journalist, one of the first two computer geeks invited to pursue a masters degree in journalism at Medill as a part of a Knight News Challenge grant.

Now that I've finished, ProPublica has asked me to join their team for an internship in New York. I'll pass the springtime working on various projects to create, visualize, and build interactivity around investigative news stories on the web. It'll be cool.

Education

Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University – MS, Journalism, 2008

As a print/paragraphs reporter, I focused mainly on health and science topics: agriculture, childhood obesity, and Chicago-area waterways, to name a few. As a hacker journalist, I've blogged, tweeted, and created non-narrative web-based news projects, two of which are detailed below.

EnviroVOTE – <http://enviroVOTE.us>

Ryan Mark and I built enviroVOTE to visualize the environmental impact of the 2008 elections. It was designed in two evenings and realized in a three-and-a-half-day long bender of data crunching and code.

Put simply, we tallied endorsements by environmental groups like the League of Conservation Voters to determine the environmentally-friendly candidates in races across the nation. As the results came in on election night, visitors were shown the proportion of earth-friendly wins, as well as the percent change since the last elections.

For much more, read my blog post on how we built enviroVOTE:

<http://sixthw.com/2008/12/19/from-concept-to-sketch-to-software-building-a-new-way-to-visualize-votes-mmm-environmenty/>

News Mixer – <http://newsmixer.us>

News Mixer is an experiment in creating community connections around the news. It was designed and built in three months, as the final project for our group of six new media graduate students.

Using an agile, iterative process, our team invented and implemented three new comment styles for news sites, and tied them back to the users' social networks using Facebook Connect.

For more on our agile process, check out the posts at <http://sixthw.com/tag/news-mixer/> and to read about the whole enchilada, visit <http://crunchberry.org/>

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign – BS, Computer Science 1996 - 2000

Graduated with honors and a minor in Technology and Management

Experience

Intern – ProPublica, February - May 2009

ProPublica is a non-profit investigative journalism newsroom. I anticipate working on data visualization and other data-driven news projects, as well as establishing agile software development tools and techniques.

Founder, Consultant – Praseos, June 2007 - Present

Praseos is a consultancy specializing in how to make software: architecture, agile development, hiring, development methodologies, product management, project management, design processes, usability, web standards, and more.

Founder, Architect – Daixo, Oct. 2006 - Sep. 2007

Daixo is building the first friendly electronic medical records system ever designed for private practice. I was a founding member of Daixo, and led software development as well as marketing until leaving to pursue my master's degree.

Director of Product Development, Sr. Software Architect – SAVO Group, Feb. 2005 - Oct. 2006

I led all aspects of the product development group at SAVO. Technically, this included architecture, APIs and interoperability, and automated testing, as well as creation of coding standards and best practices.

Organizationally, I led the creation and implementation of new practices in project management, hiring, and knowledge sharing.

Architect – kCura, 2001 - 2005

At kCura, I learned the trade of software development, creating desktop, server, and web applications and working in both consulting and product development. We were early adopters in many technologies and processes, including advanced source control and automated testing procedures, WebDAV and AJAX (before it had a snappy acronym), and Agile development methodologies.

Consultant – Lante, 2000 - 2001

Lante built dot-com businesses before the dot-com bust. I worked on then bleeding-edge web software. We played ping-pong in our Aeron chairs and used phrases like paradigm shift and e-marketplace without irony.

Tech skills

As a programmer, I'm particularly keen on using open source tools like Python, Django, Ruby and Rails, and have been doing so for the past few years. I'm extremely well versed in the usual web stuff (HTML, CSS, SQL, Javascript, etc.) and I've worked at length with C#, VB.Net, ASP.Net, and many other Microsoft technologies to build enterprise server, web and desktop applications.