Local Business Hacks







CEO & Founder @Lifter LMS

Leverage video content and get clients

Podcast transcript

Dave Nicolanti:

Welcome back local business hackers. I've got a special guest here today. I'm so excited to speak with you all about Chris Badgett, who is a CEO and co-founder of lifter. LMS is our guest today. So Chris, welcome to the call. Hey, thanks for having me. It's awesome to have, you know, we had an incredible conversation. Last time we spoke, I learned a whole bunch of golden nuggets.

I'm so excited to go through it again and share it with our audience. So again, just to give you a quick refresher and we work with a lot of businesses with local, small businesses, like the companies you run into walking down main street USA.

So we appreciate being on here that you want to share your knowledge and help everybody improve, which is what it's all about.

So, Chris, tell me a little bit about, just give me like your 32nd elevator pitch on lifter or lifter LMS.

Chris Lifter:

So basically I help course creators create launch and scale high value training programs online, and that could be a course for money. It could be a course for training employees at your small business or several courses, or you could be doing a, some kind of remote school solution or a tutoring program. lots of flexibility there, but that's what we do with lifter LMS.

Dave Nicolanti:

Awesome. So helping, helping small businesses save time, save money, eliminate repetition, and of course creation. So who's the, who's the audience that you serve? What kind of clients do you work with?

Chris Lifter:

Lots of different types. Cause our tools are flexible, basically, if you are already using a WordPress website for creating marketing pages or like a blog on your site, think of adding lifters, LMS is, adding course functionality and the ability to sell courses and stuff like that. So, the primary people that use our tool are experts of some kind. So on main street that might be like a yoga instructor. we've even got car mechanics who are creating an additional revenue stream by teaching some kind of engine repair on their website and selling it all over the world. So it can be used for things like an additional stream of income. I've seen pizza shops using lifter LMS to train their employees via iPads on the various of the, you know, the process for making the pizza. So it comes out the same every time and you know, the way the business does it. So there's all kinds of uses. Yeah.

Dave Nicolanti:

I'm imagining all sorts of different ways to help a business scale, teach that consistency that everyone's I was looking for in the brand consistency. And I know you own a small business, you are under trust and you can hand it off to somebody they're going to do the same thing. So that's kind of the way to go about teaching them as one example. So you mentioned yoga instructors as well and mean we do a lot of work with health wellness, fitness companies. So, that's awesome. As personal trainers, everybody can use videos to kind of, for these courses. It seems like we work with a lot of companies and something that we don't hear too many of them do. We don't hear about too many of them doing stuff like this. So, for companies that aren't doing it and why should they have some sort of like, what kind of benefit does lifter LMS offer in these course creations? How could somebody that's not doing it right now? Benefit from.

Chris Lifter:

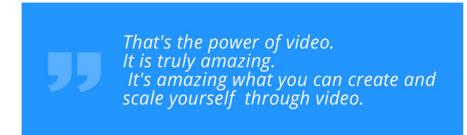
Well, I think it's an evolution for one. So if first, like recently in the world, we've seen a lot of people turn to tools like zoom, like you mentioned personal trainers trying to deliver the workout either in group or in private one-on-one sessions through zoom. The way I like to describe the opportunity is like, that's cool and that works and keep doing that. But eventually folks will find the record button in zoom and realize you can create a video out of that. Or you could even go into a zoom room by yourself, with your camera and your audio on and create a workout that becomes a video that you can then sell access to as like a prerecorded training or yoga workout or, you know, body weight, routine workout, or back pain, recovery workout or whatever it is.

Dave Nicolanti:

So the business owner can be in multiple places all at the same time.

Chris Lifter:

That's the power of video. It is truly amazing. The tools that are at our fingertips between our computers, our smartphones, the software that's out there. And the tools that we can use were really just a handful of tools. It's amazing what you can create and scale yourself through video.



Dave Nicolanti:

So video of course, creation. That's awesome. Big, big, big, big value there guys. I mean, videos everywhere. It's funny. I've seen so many reports every year dating back to 2014 that I can remember we're on social media. It's like, Hey, this is a year of video. And it still is. Everyone's saying this is a year more and more video. So that's incredible stuff there. So everyone can go out and make their own videos. Where does lifter come into play though?

Chris Lifter:

It really comes into play. When you think about wanting to monetize video or use it for teaching specifically. So part of the learning curve is, if you're not making video as a mainstream business owner, I would just recommend starting by making some videos and putting them on your social media, your Twitters, your Facebooks, your tic talks, or Snapchats and all that.

Because we as business owners, you know, we do social media marketing, but then, when we think about like, let's make something that we can sell. Then now we need a learning management system or an LMS to put that content in there to organize it, to provide a way for it, to be sold and also allow for students to have their dashboard and they can track their progress through the video content.

And that's, if we're selling it, if we're just doing it to train our people at our company, we're not really looking at selling. We're more looking at curating and capturing the intellectual property of our systems and processes in our company so that we create this training asset inside of our company. So that's kind of how I think about getting into it.

Dave Nicolanti:

Very cool. So, and I understand it, but tell you what I mean, let me ask you this. So customers, it sounds like they can do some of this on their own and lifter lift or Elon Musk simplifies that process and we keep them organized, but, what's the process look like if they were to do this without lifter, like helping them out, could they do it? And like what kind of time goes into creating something, on your own course wise that can be used on a kind of scale in the same way?

Chris Lifter:

Yeah. Well, the first thing is to really sit down with a pencil on paper, kind of like you would to write a book you want to create like that table of contents. Like this is how to make the perfect pizza, or this is how to do the workout routine for this particular demographic. Or this is how to do this kind of diesel rebuild or whatever it is, like map it out. then we want to record it and you know, we're creating video files.

I'm a big fan of beginners and don't even worry about editing it. I call it like one shot, one kill, which just means it's easy to get sidetracked into the tools and imposter syndrome. And the video I made is not perfect. I don't know how I look on camera, too many ums and AHS and all this stuff.

Chris Lifter:

Don't worry about it. Just make the content. People are very forgiving of those little things. When what you're providing is something of value to them that they really want access to. And then once you have those video files and you organize them in a certain way, really the simplest way to do it is to put those video files into a file sharing program that can handle bigger video files like Dropbox or Google drive. These types of services were somebody through the internet, other than email, which can only handle so much of a file where you can actually provide a folder of videos to people. That's like this, this whole industry online training and online courses literally started in this way of people sending out an invoice. And then after you pay me, I manually send you a link to a Dropbox folder. That is how the course creation or the online course creation industry started. Right.

Dave Nicolanti:

So share a little bit about how someone is doing all of that on their own. And there's a lot of manual components. There are lots of moving parts to take care of compared to using Lyft, or how much time are they looking at saving with using lifter LMS versus doing it manually, the old fashioned way.

Chris Lifter:

we've got a video on our YouTube channel. It shows you like if you've got that file folder of like the videos mapped out and you're organized, you're like, okay, this is the intro lesson and this and that. And let's say we had 10 lessons. You could launch that course in 20 minutes just by, plugging it and building out the structure and lifter, and then adding the content, putting a price on it. And you're good to go.

Dave Nicolanti:

And the big thing is you have that directly into WordPress, correct?

Chris Lifter:

Yeah. Yeah. So if you already are using a WordPress site it is super easy, WordPress powers 40% of the internet. then you can just add lifter LMS to it. if you're not using WordPress, yet, you know, you can buy a domain name and a hosting account, a web hosting account, which typically runs you at the low end, five to \$10 a month. And then, it comes with WordPress installed and you just add lifter and some and a theme. And you're good to go. I mean, there's more to it. We've got training on how to get started, but, that's basically all there is to it.

Dave Nicolanti:

That's awesome. So any anyone and my main street USA, they can go and essentially put many clones of themselves out there, over there on video and capture and create an additional revenue stream. So if let's say, let's say like humans at a pizza shop, so I don't know who can't use it. Absolutely. Let's go back to them. I like to go to ABC, yoga's kind of my go-to business example. ABC yoga does not have it. What are the benefits of having these courses? I mean, I see a revenue stream or an additional revenue stream. I see no geographical constraints because the internet is everywhere. What am I missing? Anything else, again, other major benefits from having these courses online that they can achieve.

Chris Lifter:

Yeah. I mean, part of it is just an authority thing. Like if you write a book or you create a course or you have a radio show, a podcast like where you're listening to you right now, you're, you're demonstrating authority and, and just a commitment to your industry. and it also just, just makes you smarter. Yeah. There's this whole loop and instructional design we call learn, do teach. And every time you go around that circle, that's how you become a true expert. So the very active teaching, whatever it is you do, it makes you better and it makes whoever you're helping better. So, and it's like a feedback loop that just keeps going. So that's another benefit. and the other thing is really just legacy. you know, when you're basically productizing yourself around a specific topic or whatever it is, you're creating an asset, which is like, will, they can literally outlive you, which is kind of wild to think about. But I mean, there's a lot of books that we read today that are from people that are no longer around and stuff like that. So you're literally creating something that can outlive you.



every time you go around that circle, that's how you become a true expert. So the very active teaching, whatever it is you do, it makes you better and it makes whoever you're helping better.

Dave Nicolanti:

That's incredible stuff. That's kind of like making you go sit back and pause for a minute. That's, that's some deep stuff I'm digging that. And it's, I had a lot of opportunities there that so many businesses aren't taking advantage of and what I want to do is pause real quick and focus on one thing you said. I mean, so many small business owners and I interact with them, deal, deal with them on a daily basis. And some obviously have that confidence and they are there, they are the best. They have that confidence in themselves. They are the experts. They know it when somebody has kind of lacked that confidence where they don't really see themselves as the expert. So I love that kind of cycle that you went over, the, the learn do teach. And just, if you don't think you're an expert and you have your own business, you've taken those steps, you are an expert and just focus and realize that for yourselves, everybody, and that learn, do teach. That's such a cool cycle. And it's been around for years. I've heard it many times in the past, but every time I hear it again, it kind of, it's, it's enlightening. It's kind of empowering. So I really, I really love that. You said that that's exciting, as a curse. So tell me a little bit about lifters. How long have you guys been in business?

Chris Lifter:

So as of this recording, we're getting close to our seventh year in business. And before that, thank you. Before that, we used to build these types of platforms from scratch without an off the shelf tool like lifter, for about three years before that. So I've been in this industry for about 10 years. And before that, I became fascinated with these, then I saw the rise of online video. I saw the rise of basically the democratization of online education, where anybody in the world could create this stuff. And it was very powerful, kind of like how anybody can write a book and put it on Amazon or Kindle or whatever. I saw this happening a long time ago in education. I became fascinated with it. So I've been around it for a bit. And it's, it's amazing to see how this industry is evolving and just becoming more and more accessible for everybody.

Dave Nicolanti:

That's awesome, man. I love the passion that you just explained with it. So cool. So you mentioned you were doing this back in the day individually for companies on a one-on-one basis. Yes. And that's kind of evolved. So you figured out I'm doing this, I need to scale this. So you make it, make it work on them on a platform like WordPress. Obviously that's pretty, pretty, a great effective way to scale and to grow. But as for the idea itself, even before you were doing it for an individual business, how do you come up with the concept?

Chris Lifter:

Well, I was actually one of my first clients that I really needed to lift her for, but it didn't exist as a yoga instructor who decided to, she was building a yoga brand online and starting to blog and create a YouTube channel. And this is, this is a long time ago. This was like nine years ago or something. And, she, she needed it and there wasn't really a good tool to do it. And she wanted to do it from her site. She wanted to build an asset that she owned. So I saw this demand also at the same time in my personal story. it's, I won't do the long story, but I used to live in Alaska. I ran sled dogs up there for 10 years. I met my wife up there. I used to live on a glacier that you could only get to by helicopter.

Chris Lifter:

And when I had my first child, I decided to, I needed to reinvent myself. And I had turned into this guy who lived off the grid with dogs and remote parts of the wild to this internet entrepreneur. So, the tree change is crazy. It was very painful and hard. But what I'm saying is in that process and with my obsession, with the, the education entrepreneur, I call them the online education entrepreneur. I decided to create some courses with my wife and some experts in a certain type of gardening niche. And I would, we would drive with our video camera to these experts and film what they were teaching in these in-person workshops. I haven't gotten on a plane and did this in Costa Rica was like a world known expert in a really small, gardening niche. And then I built this site for them where we would just partner and I would do, I would digitize their training.

I would do the website, I would do the marketing. They just had to be the expert and teach. And this is how this whole story began. And that was a very long time ago.

Dave Nicolanti:

That's incredible. That's so cool. So I can just picture you flying the helicopter to come home every, to every well, not every day, probably, and then get expensive.

Chris Lifter:

Yeah. There are about a thousand dollars an hour and, I spent a lot, I would live remotely and stuff like that, but, yeah, I mean, but I spent a lot of time thinking about that. Like, you know, making the transition to this online world. I had incredible freedom in my life because I always did what I really, really wanted to do. Even if I wasn't making a ton of money, I was always committed to living the life that I wanted to live. And then when I got into business and entrepreneurship, that wasn't my company. I was a manager at that company. I worked my way up from the bottom, but then when I realized I was an entrepreneur and I wanted to build my own thing, figuring all that out, you know, it was not easy. So, where I'm at now is like, I'm trying to help people not go through as much pain as I did, figuring out online education online, e-commerce getting leads for their business. You know, a course is like a giant business card and it can, and YouTube can be incredibly powerful for getting clients at a local main street level. And these, all these things can work together for an entrepreneur.



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Chris Lifter:

Yeah. I mean, there's so many, I mean, I've got like over 10,000 users. There's a lot of people out there, but I'll tell you about Ziv who is a, he's a man from Israel. And if you think your business is too small, I'm going to tell you about zes business.

What business Ziff does for a living is he is a balloon artist. So if a kid has a birthday party and you're going to hire like a clown or somebody that's gonna tie balloons and do a magic show, there's probably depending upon the size of your town or your city.

There's a couple of these people around.

So Ziv was so passionate about his business. He wanted to create, he wanted to help other aspiring balloon artists succeed. Now in entrepreneurship, we have a metric. We call Tam T a M, which stands for total addressable market in the entire world.

Chris Lifter:

There are only five to 7,000 balloon artists. So the total addressable market is only 7,000 people of those 7,000 people. Only about 2000 of them are serious enough to actually want to invest in improving their career. As a balloon artist, I watched Ziv go from zero to six figures with his business in 18 months, I believe it was.

And then what I saw Ziv do next was incredible, after the challenges of the pandemic and the COVID, the, the balloon artists trade and the entertaining party thing for kids was obviously kind of put on hold around the world and Ziv was facing a churn problem of all these people that, would hire, his kind of, small business or in serious trouble. So he literally invented a new industry of how do we do what we do through the internet?

How do we do magic shows through the screen? How do we make the fun of balloons happen through the mail and through the screen? And he literally watches this entrepreneur, adapt and just rise to the challenge is so inspiring. And he helps so many of his people both stay in business. His business tripled during the most challenging time when you think they would have had to close the doors. And I just see Ziv and what he does, and his passion continues to grow. The big lesson was.

Dave Nicolanti:

It was over here from listening to this. This is awesome. Yeah.

Chris Lifter:

And, and I like his story too, because sometimes we think we have to teach the world and like, Oh, if this is going to work, I'm going to need millions of people or all this stuff. Like if you have a tight niche, there's only one you is what I like to say. So yeah, there may be another yoga instructor in your town or the next one over, but there's only one you, and like, maybe you resonate with this type of person or maybe your teaching style works with that type of person. I mean, there's all different kinds of personal training. Trainers are not all the same, even if they're following a similar methodology, there's only one, you.

Dave Nicolanti:

That's like bulletin board material right there. Everyone needs to write that one down and hang it up somewhere. There's only one year. That is so cool. And what, what an incredible story, it shows you can go, how specific you can niche down and be an expert in that very, very small niche and still make money in the internet course creation. Incredible. So, so neat. Oh yeah. I'm just still trying to wrap my head around making balloons and selling it online and to show it and showing it, like, I'm assuming, like sending out the kit with balloons and instructions and videos to do it. That's so neat. What, so Chris, you're a pretty unique guy. I mean, your story is incredible. What gets you hyped up every morning? Like where do you get your energy from to help your customers?

Chris Lifter:

I think at the end of the day, one of my strengths, I'm like a really empathetic person. And when I look around and meet somebody, I always see all this value trapped inside somebody, the whole learn, do teach thing. Like I see an opportunity inside of so many people, many people don't realize what they have or undervalue it. so figuring out ways to help people, you know, teach or add value and help somebody else. Who's not, as far along on the journey, getting results really inspires me. I'm also, I'm just a big believer in small business and the entrepreneur and, you know, figuring out that path myself, you know, I call it the trough of despair when you decide to start a business, especially if you're not coming from a bunch of resources and you gotta figure it all out and you make all these mistakes in the early days of the company or a struggle, and you're making all these sacrifices. I'm, I really like the entrepreneurs' fight. And, I just like supporting them. And I believe this small business is the really the main vehicle for change and a huge driver of the economy that supports it, supporting that through my little slice of online education. It's extremely motivated for motivating for me and my life's work



I'm just a big believer in small business and the entrepreneur and, you know, figuring out that path myself

Dave Nicolanti:

Education. Yeah, love it. So, again, Chris are our audiences main street USA, local businesses, lots of, lots of great information you're providing to them here. this could be something inside or outside of lifter, lifter, LMS. what suggestion, or what kind of hack would you suggest that all business owners could use right now?

Chris Lifter:

You know, of course it can be kind of complex if you haven't done it before. So let's just break down the fundamental building block of a course, which is a video in most cases, leveraging video as a method for getting clients or repeat clients from YouTube is extremely important. and with the, the, the big benefit that main street businesses have is you have the ability to target the, your local town, city, state keywords, and that sort of thing. So if you don't have a YouTube strategy, the big mistake that I see companies make and businesses make is thinking that if they do YouTube, they have to, become a professional youtuber and make videos constantly. And all this stuff. What I recommend people do is make just a series of like three videos. oftentimes people go into pitch mode, especially if you have a background in sales.

Chris Lifter:

So often when people go to make a video for their company, they're trying to make a commercial that is a buy my stuff kind of video. Like here I am, these are my three things that made me amazing. I'll see inside, come in, mention this video and you can save 10%, definitely make that video, but make a couple more that sit in front of that video. So if I was a, let's say I had a yoga studio and I was really good at, you know, helping let's say, I really was really good at helping women who have had theirs, who have had kids get back in shape. Right? So, yeah, like I, I help women get back in shape and I have this yoga practice. I can do my stuff, by the way, I've got some online classes or whatever.

Chris Lifter:

But, before that, make a video about, something where that's the, the commercial video is what we call a solution aware video. A buyer's journey goes through these phases that are called unaware problems, aware solutions, aware products, aware when somebody is all the way down the content funnel at the product aware stage, and they're evaluating you against your competitor. That's the last step, but there's all this other content you can make about, somebody who's unaware. Like let's just, let's just say we're in, Philadelphia just came to mind and we're creating, we have a mainstream yoga business in, Elkins park, Pennsylvania, which is a suburb of Philadelphia. I might have something, some video about how pregnancy is not the end of athleticism for, you know, a 30 year old woman or whatever. And then I might make another video about different options to get in shape after pregnancy.

Chris Lifter:

You could do CrossFit, you could do running, you could do yoga, and then I might make the case for why yoga is the best. And only then do we get to the fourth video, which is about why my studio is awesome or whatever. So this essentially creates a content funnel that, you nurture a relationship down through the videos at the end of each video, you mentioned the next video.

And, people use YouTube like a search engine and Google puts the YouTube videos and the search results. So, this simple four video strategy can be very powerful for, for many different businesses.

Dave Nicolanti:

And again, I really one thing I want to drill on, cause that sounds like it could be a little intimidating for videos, but like you said, just do out there and do it if you haven't yet.

Chris Lifter:

Shoot it on the iPhone shoot on your smartphone. Yeah.

Dave Nicolanti:

All right. Phones are so much more powerful than powerful than good cameras were 15 years ago and the iPhones are incredible. So, just go out there and do it. If it has the arms, Hey, it makes you human that's okay. And what am I, what am I, as one of our guys are very entertaining. I always go, Oh, just being there is 80% of the battle. So we're just doing 80% of it. And so start that process. That's awesome stuff. That's great. So, Chris, we've reached a time with the podcast where I like to kind of sit back and relax here and make you do the dirty work. So, what is a, what is something that I had missed? What's a question that I should ask you, where you can provide some value to local businesses out there that I would say.

Chris Lifter:

I would ask a question, around how a small business can use courses and videos to help with their new employee onboarding.

Dave Nicolanti:

Okay. So, all right. I can do that. So Chris, how can small businesses out there use courses out there of courses in the video to help when it comes to bringing on a new hire?

Chris Lifter:

Do you know what the number one complaint people have when they start a new job is it's. It has to do with how stressful and most people just really don't like their first day at a new job. It's intimidating. It is, the quality of the onboarding is variable. And, if there's no system in place for the company, which is 95% of the time, then, the situation a manager will just say, all right, welcome. Here's your stuff for your first day. And follow this experience. Plan an employee around. I call it the shadow. Bob problem, like here, Bob has been here for four years. Bob meets Casey. Casey's new here. Show her the ropes and, good luck. Welcome to the company. The problem with that is one day Bob might leave. Bob might be having a bad day.

Bob might be burnt out of having, because he's actually so good.

Chris Lifter:

He's quoted, getting penalized and having to do extra work, not only doing his job, but also having to teach the new person. So what we have here is an opportunity for a company to slow down, to move fast later, I call it, which is let's actually think as a business owner, we put a lot of thought into sales and service and the product or service we're delivering. Let's think about the onboarding experience of our new people and build a system and a process there. So we have a repeatable, let's say we have a restaurant and we have a new waitstaff person come. And, you know, maybe we have some OSHA requirements they need to learn about, they need to learn like the dress code. They need to learn how we, our brand and how we treat our customers. They need to learn the menu.

Chris Lifter:

They need to learn, you know, the different days of the week, the org chart of the company, even stuff like that. we can put all that into a course or like a, some people call it an employee manual. Yeah. You could write it out, but you can all, you know, it's easier than writing it out. Go talk to Bob that you don't even have to do it as the business owner, the person, the Bob that you've sent people to a million times. You're like, Bob, we're going to take the day off. You're not going to have to wait today. We're actually going to just have a special thing. You and me and my iPhone. And I want you to pretend I'm a new hire at this company. I'm going to follow you around. And I've done a little bit of pre-work and I have these 10 business objectives.

Chris Lifter:

I want new employees to learn, and we're going to create a little video. It's not super serious. We don't know it. Doesn't have to be perfect about each of the steps I'm going to pay you for your time. Of course. So we essentially create an onboarding course by taking a couple hours out of our day or however long it takes to create this training asset. That no matter what, if Bob quits Bob's burnt out, Bob's having a bad day. Bob's so busy that we can, we can even have our new employees go through this material before they show up on their first day so that when they show up, they're confident they already kind of know what's going on. They know the drill a little bit. Now we have a training asset inside of our company. So that's, that's my, pro tip for. Yes, it's nice to make an additional income stream, but it's also nice to productize your onboarding experience through some online education.

Dave Nicolanti:

So you said something that I totally loved: slow down to move fast, slow down and get it right the first time, put the time in, put the effort in, pay the man to help you out, pay Bob, get it right. And then you just reuse it. Everyone can come to work their first day, fully equipped, ready to go, start being productive faster. And you don't have to worry about Bob having a good day, a bad day, being inefficient, whatever it might be. That's really cool. That's great stuff. And that's something everyone can do right now as well. So Chris, this has been great, lifter LMS working, working for our audience, where can our local business actors find you? Okay.

Chris Lifter:

So you can find me at www.lifterlms.com. Again, LMS stands for learning management system. So that's www.lifterlms.com. I'm also an extreme nerd on this topic. So if you like this podcast, I have a podcast for people who get into teaching online and building these types of, online courses and memberships and programs. That podcast is called LMS cast. And you can find it, wherever you listen to your podcasts. And I've been doing it for a long time where it's like 300 and some episodes deep. So there's a lot of.

Dave Nicolanti:

And I say, rumor has it. You have a podcast as well. So that's awesome. Chris, at lifter LMS kit lifter cast.

Chris Lifter:

www.lifterlms.com is the software. And then the podcast is LMS cast.

Dave Nicolanti:

My apologies, LMS cast, check out the podcast as well for Chris. Chris has been awesome having you on here. I appreciate your time, bud. We'll have to do this again. Great stuff. And, best of luck to ya.

Chris Lifter:

Yeah. Thanks for having me on the show, Dave, and for you out there listening. I know what it's like in the, as a business owner and as an entrepreneur. So don't give up, keep taking action and level up every day.

Dave Nicolanti:

You got it. Live love everyday. I love it. You're just a walking foot board, man. I can dig it, Chris. Best of luck.

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