

### Interview with Jason Davis, Slouch.com

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<http://www.domainsherpa.com/jason-davis-slouch-interview>

Before we get started, you know [DomainTools.com](http://DomainTools.com), right? I can type whois.sc/domainname really fast and I do it daily, but until recently I didn't know how powerful their other tools were. If I want a domain name, I can set a free alert to notify me when it changes status. If it goes to auction, I can use their sales history tool to find comps and determine my maximum bid price. After I buy it and develop the domain into a business, I can set up alerts for any domains registered that contain my trademark, and I can set up registrant alerts of all my competitors so I can keep an eye on what domains they're buying and know what they're up to before they make any announcements. [DomainTools.com](http://DomainTools.com) needs to be in your toolbox, like it is in mine. Go sign up for an account on [DomainTools.com](http://DomainTools.com) today.

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you'll get your money's worth. Get your [free 14-day trial now at Protrada.com](#).

Here's your program.

Michael Cyger: Hey everyone, my name is Michael Cyger. I'm the publisher of DomainSherpa.com, the Domain Name Authority and the place where you can learn how to become a successful domain name entrepreneur directly from the expert themselves.

If you've ever worked with a really good professional recruiter, you know that the doors of opportunity are opened wider and more frequently than if you were to apply for jobs by yourself. Joining me today is Jason Davis. Jason is a professional recruiter turned domain investor and entrepreneur, who focuses on the jobs and recruiting niche of domain names. Over the past 15 years Jason has owned and developed one of the finest portfolios of job and recruiting domain names in the world. He bought Recruiting.com for \$75,000 in 2002. His wife called him crazy at the time, but four years later he sold it to Jobster for a six figure number. He also started RecruitingBlogs.com in 2007 and, again, four years later he sold it – this time in auction. We're going to learn how Jason makes smart buys, how focusing on a single niche helps him earn more, and how he gets top dollar for his job domain name sales. Jason, welcome to the show.

Jason: Hey, nice to be here.

Michael: Jason I like to start the show with a little background on the guest and then we will move into what you do today that makes you so successful as a domain name investor and entrepreneur. How did you first discover domain names?

Jason: It was 1997 and I was a recruiter at the time. I had just opened up my own recruiting firm and I read an article in a recruiting newsletter called the Fordyce Letter which is now owned by a good friend of mine. And somebody wrote in into the forum section in this newsletter saying I'm a recruiter. What is a good domain name? And the guy wrote back well if you play software engineers, softwarejobs.com would be a good domain name. And I don't

know what happened but the bells started ringing in my head and I had never thought of domain names before. So I ran up to my computer and did a search for hardwarejobs.com, because I placed engineers in the hardware industry and hardwarejobs.com was available. So I registered. And then I did a search for wirelessjobs.com and it as well was available. So I did a search for SiliconValleyjobs.com and that was available. And on and on and on and on. And the interesting thing (and I really didn't think about it too much back then) but it would just ask you do you want to pay by check via invoice or something and I said yes. So I started registering all of these names and I didn't have to pay for them until the mail man came two weeks later, a month later, three months later with a stack of Network Solutions. And each one was \$70.00. It was \$35.00 a year and you had to pay two years in advance.

Michael: So do you remember who that person was back in 1997 that wrote into the newsletter that was it sounds like published in print that you read that now opened up the whole world of domain names to you? Do you remember who that person was?

Jason: I don't but I can find it. It was in 1997 so...

Michael: That person really had a lot of vision for what domain names were going to become and really opened up a whole world to you.

Jason: Yes and I started buying domain names and I never really stopped. At one point I had, I don't know, maybe...I mean I have never been one of those guys who had thousands and thousands, I had about maybe 600 of them. But I loved every single one of them. It was hard for me to track them all. And I know I lost...

Michael: That is a funny point that you bring up Jason because I was reading on your blog when I was doing my research and you wrote a blog post in August of 2011, just recently, that made me laugh out loud, which is really awkward because I was sitting in a coffee shop doing the research. The title of your post was "Have you done this?" And the post read: I saw a name on Sedo just now that I liked. I was going to make an offer on it and I thought I'd see what other domain names the guy owned. I clicked the link to see and it turns out that I already owned the domain name."

Jason: Yes that happens to me. It happens often and there was a time once where I actually bought a name for I think it was \$8,000 or \$8,500 and it struck me about two weeks afterwards that I was the original owner of that domain name and then somehow through my lack of organization I lost it and I bought it back. And that happened again with a domain name I had bought for \$1,800 and then I forgot to renew it and then I ended up having to buy it back for \$2,800. But I just sold it about a month ago for \$20,000.

Michael: So you recouped your losses pretty well.

Jason: I recouped my losses. It was a good domain name and I wanted it.

Michael: So how many domain names do you own today and what TLDs do they shake out?

Jason: I own about 160 of them today. Almost all of them are in Go Daddy so it is easy for me to track. And then I had got a couple elsewhere.

Michael: So one of the things that you did was you put all your domain names with Go daddy so you are less likely to forget to renew them if you don't get an email?

Jason: Exactly. So they are all .coms with the exception of right now maybe two. Two or three which are .nets and that is it.

Michael: If you had to give up all your domain names except for three of them do you know which three you would keep and why?

Jason: I would keep Slouch.com because I like it and we can talk a little bit about it later. I'm building out a business on that. So I would keep that. It is from where I sold Recruiting.com. That was the only one word domain name that I had and I sort of wanted another one word domain name so I scoured the planet for months until I found on that was cheap. That was really cheap. And I found it on Great Domains Slouch.com. I think they were asking \$10,000 and I think I paid \$4,800 for it. So I was happy with it.

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So I would keep Slouch.com, I would probably keep DirectorJobs.com. I don't know three is tough. But I know that that is my choice. I don't really know let me think on it.

Michael: Why would you keep DirectorJobs.com? Is that like directors for movies? Is that what you mean?

Jason: Well no there is lot of people who do searches for director related jobs.

Michael: Oh the status. Like BP Director, Manager.

Jason: Yes there are a lot of people who do searches for that. I don't really know from an ad sense to a cost per click or anything like that. I never really paid too much attention to it and I've never bought, originally I've never bought domain names thinking that was what I was going to do on it. I was watching that interview you did with Rick Schwartz, which was fascinating by the way. And he had this domain name and he slapped some logos on and he is making \$200 a day like that. Like that stuff was sold for him.

To me I bought names that I thought that I could either run a business on for my recruiting firms. So when I bought VideoJobs.com I wasn't thinking corporations can video themselves talking about the job or a candidate could put a video resume of themselves tell you why they want the job. These were all categories that the engineers that I was recruiting working. So audio jobs, I don't own it any more, I sold it but audio jobs, video jobs, dsp jobs, SiliconValleyStartUpJobs.com. That was a great sale as well. I don't own it anymore. I sold it a couple months ago.

Michael: What did you sell that one for?

Jason: Again mid five figures.

Michael: Somewhere in the \$50,000 range, somewhere around there.

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Jason: The guy who bought that from me, his name is Harry Joiner, he is a good friend of mine and he bought StartUpJobs.com and he bought CEOJobs.com.

Michael: I'm not going to bring them up because I want to ask you about unique deals that you have done and what involves Harry. So I read online that the most you've sold a domain name, just the domain name, was \$95,000. Is that statement true?

Jason: Yes that is true. There was a little social network attached to it. But that domain name was sold for \$95,000.

Michael: Do you remember what that domain was?

Jason: Wireless Jobs.

Michael: Was that one that you hand registered back in the '97 time period?

Jason: All these names were hand registered. I just learned about that term. I used to call it I was the original owner. I didn't know that hand registered was the term. I don't know if I will remember to use that, but I was the original hand whatever it is called.

Michael: Hand registered. So you started off in recruiting. You started your professional career in recruiting... I want to go back in time and ask you a few questions about recruiting because I think there are a lot of similarities between recruiting and domain name investing, buying, selling, trading that I think that the audience will get a lot of benefit from your knowledge on. So you started recruiting at your Mom's recruiting firm you were telling me just before the show.

Jason: It wasn't her firm. She worked at a firm and I went to work there.

Michael: At the place where your Mom did recruiting. And so what type of professionals did you focus on placing at first?

Jason: They were electrical engineers. Hardware design engineers and guys who were designing and developing integrated circuits, doing digital circuit design or analog design or something that is called mixed signal (which is a mix of both analog and digital).

Michael: And this is the time frame when we were leading up to the .com boom and probably a lot of these hardware engineers were making good salaries at the time.

Jason: So I started in the recruiting industry in 1993 and then in 1997 that is when I started my own firm and of all of the domain names that I bought the only one that I really used was SemiconductorJobs.com. And that was a great acquisition. I had been watching that domain name. Actually I wasn't the original owner of that particular name. Somebody else owned it and it was just like a listing service for semiconductor companies. I was watching it and I could see that it was going to expire. And I'm watching it and the day comes and it is supposed to expire and it doesn't expire and I'm watching it, and I'm watching it and it doesn't expire. And then I ended up going to Jamaica and I came back and not only had it expired but I just they call it a dropping or something, some other recruiter bought it. I don't even think he had a script that he was pounding the system to find, he just got lucky. And so he bought it and I called him up and I said how much do you want for SemiconductorJobs.com? And he said \$5,000. And I said fine. And then the next day I'm writing out the check and I call him up. Okay just confirming everything and he goes I changed my mind I want \$35,000 for it. I know you buy a lot of these domain names and I learned a lesson that day. I ended up buying it anyway.

Michael: For \$35,000?

Jason: Yes, yes.

Michael: Even though you had a verbal agreement and you could have taken him into court if you were that type of person to get it for \$5,000?

Jason: Yes it was time was money and I was in the business and I wanted the name. I didn't want to risk losing the name so I bought the name. So I paid



\$35,000 for it and I made a ton of money from that domain name because what I did is I set it up as a blog. So I wrote about the searches that I was doing. I thought about the kind of things that the engineers that I was looking to recruit with the searching online and that sort of thing. That is what I write about. And I made placements as a result of it and I picked up a lot of clients doing searches. I would call somebody who wasn't a client yet and say hi my name is Jason and I am a recruiter in the semiconductor industry. I run this blog called SemiconductorJobs.com. I'd love to interview you. So I'd ask him how he got into the industry. Much like you are doing and all of this stuff and I'd put it on my site. And pretty soon thereafter they would become a client.

And now it is a big, big thing. If you go to SemiconductorJobs.com (that is my website and I have it set up as a job board, I have a blog site set up as a job board) but if you do to SemiconductorJobs.blogspot.com you can see way back at (audio skip 0:14:32.5) you can read the posts that I was writing.

Michael: That is great because I know a lot of domain investors have domain names that they may want to start getting some content on - Getting some page rank – Having inbound links and looking back at your older content is a great way to get ideas for how they should set up their own domain name.

Do you remember when you came back to him and he said \$35,000 you said that you learned a lesson that day because he went and did some research on you. What was the lesson that you learned?

Jason: The lesson that I learned was just to be careful about what emails you use when you approach people to buy domain names. The excitement that you have when you talk to somebody about the domain name that you want, in like poker no matter how good your hand is you can't win the tournament if there is still 1000 people left. No matter good your hand is you can't win it. So these things sometimes take time and you can't rush it because I'm generally an excited guy. I don't know if it is coming across right now but when I see a domain name...and I look at domain names every single day. And when I see one that I like I sort of have to slow myself down a little



because is know that no matter what I'm probably not going to do a deal today on it so just slow it all down.

Michael: So it was the pace that you were going at, but was it also the email address, the domain name of the email address that you used that indicated that you were a domain name investor and you have made a lot of sales? What was it that triggered the fact that he ended up charging you more for the domain name?

Jason: I hadn't sold any domain names up until that point. But I think it was you do a 'who is' look up or something like that and he found out. I owned a lot of really good domain names and he figured I'd pay for it. And \$35,000 for that domain name is not a lot of money. In our interview prep you said one of the things that we will talk about is how I value these things and if you are a recruiter and you place guys at \$100,000 a year, \$120,000 or \$150,000 a year out of 20 to 25% fee there is your domain name.

Michael: Right, two placements is your domain name.

Jason: And if you take that \$35,000 and put it in the bank you make no money on it. And if you put it into play and you start writing and developing and you know it gives you the legitimacy. One of the reasons that Harry bought CEO Jobs is when you call somebody up (and when I bought Recruiting.com) and say hi my name is Jason at Recruiting.com, something in their head, whether they know it or not, says that guy must have done something right to get that name. And the amount of phone calls you get back versus some generic creative crazy name that you paid nothing for you get more phone calls.

Michael: You know that comes up time and time again in these interviews. When I talked to the Castello Brothers and they say when I call up from Nashville.com or I call up from PalmSprings.com people know that that is the brand. And so it brings with it an amount of credibility that InsidePalmSprings.com or VisitPalmSprings.com doesn't.

Jason: Yes, I mean you may be an idiot, you may be a legitimate bonafide idiot in real life but if you call somebody who doesn't know you and you say

my name is Jason from recruiting.com or from Nashville.com or whatever it is; they are not going to think you are an idiot. This is yours to lose, right?

Michael: So you were placing hardware engineers doing recruiting. They were probably, were they in the \$100,000 range typically? Hardware engineers that you were placing.

Jason: At the time the average I would say salary of guys we were placing was probably just over \$100,000 at the time.

Michael: And so a typical commission that recruiters make is 20 – 25%?

Jason: Yes.

Michael: Well it's easy to see how recruiters can take one placement or a couple of placements bank that money and buy a great domain name and then use that to further their career especially if they are going to be in recruiting for the long haul. That is going to be their profession for their working life. It is a good investment.

Jason: So what you have to do if you are selling a domain name you have to understand all the different types of industries or niches within an industry that can utilize it and look at the economics and you know what? A job board might be a perfect new owner of a domain name but they are selling jobs for \$99 per job or \$299 a month. You have to sell a lot of domain names to come up with it right? But when you are a recruiter it's different. And that is how when I sold AnalogJobs.com to Texas Instruments. We negotiated in replacement fees, and then converted it to dollars. So how much do you want for it. Well I know that if you can hire 1,000 analog designer engineers tomorrow and pay \$1,000 in agency fees you would do it right? And of course they said yes. And so this is only going to cost you 5 placement fees which would have been a lot more than 465,000 that I got. And then we negotiated down from there and we settled on \$65,000 and I was happy and they were happy and that is how that happened.

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Michael: So let me ask you as long as you brought that up let me ask you a couple of questions about that. AnalogJobs.com, we talked about it right before the show, your wife actually said to you...

Jason: She said to me you keep telling people that you are in the domain name industry but you don't ever sell anything.

Michael: So you immediately picked up the phone, called up Texas Instruments and you said do you want to buy AnalogJobs.com and you did a deal.

Jason: We did a deal.

Michael: First call. You didn't call anybody else. And you did the deal. How did you know who to call at Texas Instruments?

Jason: Well I was in the recruiting industry and I had a lot of contacts and I remembered meeting this woman who (what was her name – Nancy) she worked for Texas Instruments in their diversity recruiting division. And I couldn't remember her name. But I knew somebody who knew her name. So I called him up, he gave me the name, I called her, she loved the idea, passed me on to the right person. And within three or four days I had a guest and it was done.

Michael: That's great and have you had other sales like that that have been that easy because it sounds pretty easy?

Jason: Well yes. Most of the names that I have sold I had to call them. I don't think anybody wakes up...I don't know if there are enough smart people in the world to know that they should wake up and say you know that \$100,000 in the bank, or that \$200,000 that I have in the bank, or that \$50,000, I'm going to go take it out and I'm going to go find a great domain name that I can get 10-15-20-30% of my investment back on an annual basis. I just don't think that a lot of people are thinking that. So as the recruiter in me it is the same thing. People don't wake up and say to themselves today is the day I'm going to change jobs. I wouldn't call somebody and they say I've been sitting around thinking about changing jobs and I have no idea what to

do. So thank you for calling. It's just like in domain names you have to put it into their heads that this is a value. There are objections that you have to overcome.

Michael: Clearly when you called up Texas Instruments for example you said I've got this great domain name that candidates are going to that can lead to more great candidates for you. Do you sell it based on the type in traffic or do you sell it based on if you develop it into a blog it will rank high, it will bring more traffic to you and more candidates? Which way do you sell it?

Jason: Most of my names don't have traffic. I never even considered the traffic as something that you should consider when buying a domain name. I just never did.

Michael: So you come at it straight from the perspective that if you develop it out it will be the industry leader in that topic and more people that are focused on that will come to you.

Jason: Yes. That is the way that I have done it.

Michael: Great. So fast forwarding in you recruiting career 2004 rolls along and you bought RecruitingBlogs.com. Did you hand register that one or do you remember if you bought it from another person?

Jason: No I hand registered it.

Michael: You did. And you held it for a few years before you did anything with it. Is that correct?

Jason: That's right. So what happened is I bought Recruiting.com. I built that into one of the industry's first blogs that dealt with recruiting. Not the first but it was one of the first. And that just grew and it grew and it grew and then I got a call from the CEO of this company called Jobster who's a very brilliant guy. He is actually running a company Found.com right now which is a deal site for design based items. So he called me and he wanted to buy that domain name. So he ended up buying it. I ended up working for Jobster for about a year. After that I left and I started RecruitingJobs.com.

Michael: So you just missed the blog scene and you wanted to start another recruiting blog?

Jason: I was sort of hoping what was going to happen to Recruiting.com was going to take it to a step closer to what a recruiting blogs wasn't. It never happened. They definitely had some good ideas at the time about what they wanted to do with it. And nothing ever materialized and so I started RecruitingBlogs.com.

Michael: So what was the original vision for RecruitingBlogs.com and how was it going to be different from Recruiting.com?

Jason: Well Recruiting.com was not a social network. RecruitingBlogs.com was built on a platform called Ning which allows you to build out social networks. And I didn't know really what was going to happen but what I missed and what a lot of people miss from the old Recruiting.com days was conversation. They needed to write and fight and amuse and entertain and all of that. And that all disappeared. That is kind of what I was looking for in RecruitingBlogs.com.

Michael: What was the business model that you envisioned?

Jason: At the time I didn't really have a business model. It was just all about the conversation and building that sort of thing. And then companies wanted to advertise as it became a decent channel for companies that were making products and services for recruiters to buy text links, sponsor events. We'd send people to Jamaica, Mexico. Have contests and all that sort of thing.

Michael: So it was basically a labor of love in the beginning and then people that wanted to reach recruiters would then eventually start buying advertising and sponsorships with you.

Jason: Yes, yes.

Michael: And then in April 2010 you announced that RecruitingBlogs.com entered into a partnership with Monster.com for hosting recruiting in Boston called RecruitFest. What was RecruitFest exactly?

Jason: Well RecruitFest was a un-conference. So unlike a typical conference where you have your booths and people on stages talking at you. This was sort of a un-conference which is people go with the intention of learning something and sharing something. Nobody is really on a stage. You don't have booths. It's all about the conversation and interacting. It's more low key; it is more social and that sort of thing. The first one I did in Toronto. The second one I did in Toronto and the guy who spearheaded this on Monster side was at the second one. He flew up to Toronto to take part in it. And right away he said we want to blow this up. We want to make this big. We want to be a part of it. We want to be associated with the brand. And that is how that happened.

Michael: So it was your conference that they came in on or was it their conference that you supported?

Jason: No it was my conference. I own the domain name RecruitFest.com. Actually I don't own it anymore. The new of Recruiting Blogs I put that into it. So they came to me saying let's work this out.

Michael: So how did that, I mentioned to you before the show that a lot of domain investors have great domain names in a niche other than jobs. It could be Widgets, it could be property, it could be a specific geographic area and they don't know what to do with the domain names. They don't know how to form partnerships. How did the Monster.com partnership come about?

Jason: It didn't happen because of the domain name. I mean it could have been called anything. It happened because the concept behind RecruitFest which was an un-conference, laid back, unconnected to some very smart people in the industry who always supported some of my wacky ideas and that sort of thing. So I was lucky in that way. I always had an audience. And they were involved, Monster was...Companies like that have to be involved with what I was doing with RecruitingBlogs.com because whether they made it known that they were part of it or not they were watching and listening and

reading for that. And then when they came to Toronto for the second event I put on he got on the phone right away saying we need to be a part of this. We need to sponsor this. We actually put on a pretty huge event in Boston. Web streaming, I mean there were people in 38 countries who watched. It was phenomenal. If you go onto You Tube and do a search for RecruitFest we have a channel there with tons of very, very smart people talking about human resources and recruiting and branding and all that stuff.

Michael: So basically it was the power of RecruitingBlogs.com that you built up. You had about 70,000 visitors per month. You have 150,000 page views per month. You had 28,000 members that were signed up for this service. It was a hub for recruiters. It was a likely next step to start a conference - A place for people to actually get together in person. And did Monster approach you about the sponsorship or when you were putting together the un-conference you were looking for a major headliner so you reached out to Monster to ask them if they were interested?

Jason: No he was (his name was Eric) and he was at the second one.

Michael: That was the first time he became aware of it?

Jason: Yes he was at it and he was like we want to be a part of this.

Michael: And you were able to launch this conference, usually there is a lot of cost associated with a conference.

Jason: I lost money. I lost money the first time around. I lost money the second time around and I probably would have lost money the third time around because I just don't...my brain works in real good ways and doesn't work in other ways. And I put on a great conference and now there are other conferences in the recruiting world, they borrowed the ideas. I borrowed my conference, I am not the creator of an un-conference. It is not original to me. So that is how it worked. It is hard to make money in it. I never figured out how to do it.

Michael: Did you actually make money by partnering with Monster? Did they support the underwriting of the event?



Jason: Yes, yes.

Michael: So you ran RecruitingBlogs.com since 2007 then on June 21, 2011, about four years later (everything is in fours with you Jason) you sold RecruitingBlogs.com on Flippa. Is that correct?

Jason: It is.

Michael: So basically you went to Flippa.com which is a place where you can sell domain names and websites and things like that. From what I read you put it on auction for \$1.00 no reserve. Which makes my heart skip a beat just thinking about that because what if nobody bids except for one person? What if there is a technical glitch?

Jason: Well so then they are lucky. You know I wanted to sell it and I had lots of conversations with people and they would be interested. And I would only have conversations with one organization at a time and they need time. And I'd give them time. And then I don't know if they never sensed a sense of urgency with me. There was never a sense of urgency with them. And I just didn't want to do it anymore. I really legitimately in my heart of hearts it was time for me to do something new. And this was the only way I knew how to get out.

Michael: And you don't see it too often that great websites like that with a ton of traffic, 70,000 visitors a month, 50,000 unique visitors per month, 28,000 members, 50,000 email subscribers. It is quite an accomplishment and I'm sure Flippa.com loved having a built website that was fully functional listed. Do you remember what your revenue was at the time that you sold it?

Jason: I had essentially for the previous year from selling it it really ran like a contingent business. I very rarely picked up the phone. I just couldn't have phone sales calls anymore for \$500 items, for \$1,000 items or \$3,000 items. I mean the amount of time it took to close a deal like that, all the questioning back and forth. It was like if you looked at their salary and what my salary was worth we were spending more discussing this and that and I just couldn't

do it anymore. It was just enough. So to answer your question I was getting probably about \$6,000 to \$8,000 a month in just call in business.

Michael: And usually websites would sell for a multiple of revenue or multiple of their profit. In this case it basically you let the market determine what the value should be?

Jason: Yes it was irrelevant to me.

Michael: So you didn't want people to go through all the details of everything. It's for sale. There are 28,000 members. I saw you publicized it on RecruitingBlogs.com. Did a lot of people who were recruiters on RecruitingBlogs.com actually go to Flippa to bid on the auction?

Jason: You know what is really interesting. Almost every single serious bidder was a member. So the people who bought it were members of the site.

Michael: That's great. So it remained within the community.

Jason: Yes and it's great. They are looking after it. It is growing. They are doing business. They are happy. We speak every so often and they ask the right kinds of questions. They sort of believed in my views of how to build a community. So they are following it along and it is growing and they are happy and the membership is happy. There is a ton of activity. And it is great. I have nothing what so ever to do with it anymore.

Michael: That's great. And what did you end up selling it for on Flippa?

Jason: \$95,000.

Michael: And during the process do you ever think about using a website broker? Somebody that would represent you instead of going through an online auction process?

Jason: I didn't think of it. This was the easiest way for me to get out. Put it up as \$1, no reserve, and just see what happens.

Michael: Is that the first time that you have ever sold something on Flippa?

Jason: Yes.

Michael: And were you happy with the process?

Jason: I was happy with the process. And then there was...I had another domain name HR.net which I put up on Flippa and I think I had a reserve of \$32,000 or something like that. And I think it got to, I can't remember what it got to but it didn't get there. I ended up having a lot of conversations with some people afterwards saying I want this name, I've got some other sales going on, I have to wait until that happens. And then what happened was I got a call from someone who said that would I take \$25,000 for the name. And you know when someone offers \$25,000 they will offer you \$37,000. It just happens. If you want a name like that you want a name like that right? So what happened is he offered that \$25,000 and I was just about to start negotiating with them and then I knew of this other guy, this guy Brian who runs a very large website called Job.com and I called him up because he was interested. I said the name is to going to go I'm going to make a deal today. And he said I want the name. Let's do a deal at this and we ended up doing the deal at more.

Michael: Are you at liberty to say what the price of that domain name when for?

Jason: Yes it was \$32,000. So the name is worth more. It is an interesting story what happened to that domain name. So that domain name you know when you used to go into a candy store and for \$1 you could buy a brown bag and you didn't know what was in it, but there was always something good. So that is kind of like what this was like. There was a guy I knew who, an older gentleman, a very nice smart guy, well respected in the industry. He was ready to pack it in. And he had all of these great assets. Well some were better than others. HR.net was one. And he also had this company called Recruitersonline.com which was a great little business. And he put it all together and sold it for a price and I ended up buying it and essentially the \$32,000 that came back to me was essentially out of pocket what I paid. So I am like free rolling with everything else. So I figured you

know why not? Get the money off of the table. The name if I would have stuck to it and put up ads and build a business in that. It could be \$100,000 domain name, and \$80,000 domain name, but this way I get my money back and now I have got all these other things that I have a zero cost space.

Michael: So we have talked about a lot of domain names here: HR.net, AnalogJobs.com. You own a ton of other domain names that you have for sale on your website. How do you value job and recruiting domain names that you buy? What is your method for determining the value of them?

Jason: You know what? The way I think about the market and placement fees, that is really the way to do it. Anything less than that is less than anything more is great. Really it is what you are prepared to sell it for that day. The way I look at my domain names because most of them are not in play. Most of them aren't active. They are just sitting in my Go Daddy account so it is just dead money. Right? It is dead money to me. So if I think a name is worth \$50,000 but I get an offer for \$35,000 but there is another domain name that I want that I think is worth \$80,000 but they are going to sell it for \$25,000, you know what I'll...I just like doing the deals. I'm sure that I am leaving money off the table here and there but I've had some good sales go through that I do have confidence in the price status.

Michael: Do you remember the last domain name that you purchased? What is was and how much you paid for it?

Jason: Yes so I have been having some fun with you know that company Media Options?

Michael: Yes, Andrew Rosener.

Jason: So I enjoy getting his daily menu I think he calls it of all his crazy domain names. Some are good and some are great and some are not so great. I scan it every day. I typically only buy .coms but if I see an interesting thing...So the other day shower.net was for sale for \$10,000. I tried to buy it for \$2,500 but he said no. But I did buy a site called carsites.net and the guy wanted \$300 for it. So how do you go wrong? So I would have bought it for \$300 but I offered \$200 and he said fine and so I bought the site for \$200.

Michael: As so when it comes to a few hundred dollars I think a lot of domain investors are like how can you go wrong? Worst case scenario you make it up on the next one. Do you remember the last one you paid maybe \$5,000 to \$10,000 for?

Jason: Yes DirectorJobs.com. I think that cost me \$8,500. In a very convoluted way because it went to this person and then we switched this domain and that domain but I parted with \$8,500 on that deal. But that was a great deal.

Michael: What do you think DirectorJobs.com is worth? If I approached you today and said I'll give you \$8,500 you would counter with what?

Jason: I probably wouldn't even counter at that. I get a lot of offers every week on domain names and I don't know sometimes most are dumb offers and it's not even worth going back but sometimes like I sold a domain name on Sedo. It was the first time I ever sold a name on Sedo and it was mseec.com which stands for masters of science electrical engineers. So every engineer that I ever placed for the most part had a master so I was the original owner of this. What is it called hand registered? I hand registered this domain name mseec.com. And mseejobs and mseelinks and all of these crazy things. And all of the sudden I'll get an offer \$1,600 for it. And I knew right off the bat that he'll pay more. I don't know why. Maybe it was a she. Maybe they will pay more but you wouldn't offer that if you didn't really want it. So I came back with I think \$28,000 or something like that. And they came back immediately up to \$8,000. And I knew I'll make a deal with them at some...So we ended up settling at \$17,500.

Michael: I can understand that they offer something, you offer something higher, and you are going to meet somewhere in the middle ground if both parties want to do a deal. But how do you know what the value is to you personally? How do you know that the value is about a \$20,000 domain name?

Jason: Because it sounds right. I'm not doing anything with it. I had it for ten years. I never made a penny. I never monetized any of these sites. I always

knew that they were good for me to develop on day or someone is going to come knocking. Like I own a domain name JobTV.com. It's got like probably zero people typing that in but it is a hell of a brand if somebody wants to build some sort of a network on a TV station or call it...they have fishing TV, camping TV, all of these things. So you know JobsTV.com. So someone will come along and they will offer me money for it and if not it cost me \$7 a year.

Michael: So similar to Rick Schwartz patience will lead you to your riches. You are just going to hold on to the good domain names until somebody comes along.

Jason: Yes and what I sell a name for today might not be what I sell for tomorrow or anything like that. I don't really have a value but you get used to certain buying or offers or behavior. Right? And you get offers for \$250 or a ton of money so when someone offers \$700 to \$1,500 right away that is more than almost any initial offers that I get. And then when they come back at \$8,500 I mean it is a big jump and I know that I am interested. So we did the deal and if you go to msee.com it's still parked.

Michael: So what number does it take in an email to you to get your attention and for you not to consider it a waste of time to reply? If somebody offers you at least \$1,000 is that considered serious?

Jason: Yes I think so. I would respond to an offer of \$1,000 or more.

Michael: If I send you a \$500 offer for JobTV.com you wouldn't respond?

Jason: Probably not. I might be in a disturbing sort of mood and write back some crazy number and count the seconds before it gets cancelled. And go chasing a cancelled. But it was the same thing I had a domain name ITune.com. I'm a guitar player and I just (audio skip 0:48:20.3) and I think it was before iTunes in the same...And I legitimately had a claim to having that and I ended up selling it. I don't even know who bought it. I got a phone call from a guy who walked into my office the next day with a certified check. Dropped it on my desk and said just transfer it to me in the next day or two. So I think that was the same sort of thing with Recruiting.com where he

didn't want any sort of negotiation. He was like here is the money and I don't remember how much I got for it. It was a decent amount of money.

Michael: So what happens if I send you an email and I say I like JobTV.com how much are you asking for it?

Jason: I'd say make me an offer.

Michael: You will never make the first offer?

Jason: Very rarely. I used to do that years and years ago but I don't do it anymore. If I call you with a domain name that I am looking to sell I'm going to tell you what I am looking for but I want to see an offer because I do believe the right offer will come from a negotiation. But if you say to me how much do you want for JobTV.com and I say x and you say fine then it is going to drive me crazy for the rest of my life.

Michael: So when you are actively selling jobs you call them up it's probably a recruiting type job, you know the person that you are calling either somebody at Texas Instruments for example or Harry Joiner who has bought a couple of domains from you and couched in the context of it is two or it is six placements it feels less to them because they are making placements every week.

Jason: They are not going to pay five, six placements worth but I'm happy to sell most of my job related domain names for probably two to three placements worth. It's fair. It's a fair deal.

Michael: So two to three placements that is probably a \$40,000 to \$60,000 range. So very similarly if you were in real estate and houses are selling for I don't know \$500,000 and a realtor is getting their 1.5 - 2% they might walk away with (I am not that good with math) \$10,000 or \$15,000 a house. Somewhere in there. Clearly if it is a higher priced house they will walk away with more. So you could similarly do something like that. If it was Seattle homes you might say this is only four house sales and you own Seattlehomes.com.



Jason: Exactly.

Michael: Sort of like poker chips. It removes the monetary feel.

Jason: Yes. I had this domain name CondoQueen.com. It is still sitting around. Most of the domain names that I don't own anymore are names that I would just sit around, think of really interesting things and put them together and search and most times they were available. But those are the ones when I was like 500 or 600 domain names that I have to keep renewing them and renewing them. It is like this is stupid. But I wish I would have kept them all now. With CondoQueen.com I got a call from a woman and she said you know I am the condo queen in my city. She ended up buying it. Same thing with the first domain name that I ever sold was Intermedium.com. I thought the internet, its new mediums, slap them together and get Intermedium. And I got a call from a company. I think they were in Iceland or somewhere like that and they said you know what the name of our company is Intermedium, or we want to start a company called Intermedium. Those were cheap sales. Those were all under like recipies101, they were all sales under \$10,000.

Michael: We talked about how you value domain names. How did you go from 600 or 700 domain names down to 150 domain names that you currently own? You just let a bunch of them drop?

Jason: I lost track of most of them. That is probably how I lost most of them. I lost track of them.

Michael: Because they were all at different registrars?

Jason: Most were at Network Solutions. But there was no way that I could log on and if there was I didn't know how to do it. Log on and see a master list of all the domain names that I had. And I just had trouble remembering things and tracking things and I'd like to think that I kept most of the good ones. Though two of them I ended up having to re-buy. One I knew I had to re-buy. The other one I didn't realize that I was the original owner until they kid me afterwards.

Michael: I understand how you bought a lot of the domain names that you currently own. You hand registered them for \$70 for two years back in the '97/'98 time frame. Now you are paying \$7 or \$10 for renewal per year. You mentioned earlier that you sat around thinking of words that you could put together and register those domain names. How do you find new job domain names to buy today since all domain names have been reserved? I've come to this conclusion. Whenever I think of a great domain name I go look it up – everything is reserved. How do you find good domain names to buy today?

Jason: I have to call the people or they call me. I mean I get a lot of phone calls from people that have job and recruiting related names that they are looking to sell. And the problem is I never sold one of my names through a broker, ever. And I've had brokers try specific names, you know lock up a name for 30 days or 60 days and it just doesn't work. So you kind of have to know the industry. You have to know the people in the industry. You have to know the players, the companies who operate in that space and you have to understand the economics that dictate how business is done in that industry. Most people who own job related domain names are just speculators. They are investors and they have no idea what they are worth. Like that is really what the problem is. They don't know what they are worth.

You know you can go onto these online evaluators, Estibot and Epik and all of that and some...I've got two names that Epik says are worth over \$350,000. I don't think I would ever get that. But then they will evaluate a name where I have sold it for three times what it is that they say it is worth. Right? I've got names that I think are so unbelievably valuable to a recruiter and the market is going to look at that and say it's not worth anything. So you have to find the people who operate really, really, for the most part myopically in that industry, in that part of the industry and then let them know you know what you should be thankful that I am calling you today because I am going to make you think about something that really you probably never thought about and I can show you why this is smart.

Michael: So I have heard you say during this interview over and over again that you will call up the person when you wanted to sell a domain name or when you wanted to buy a domain name. I think a lot of domain investors will sit behind their computer and will shoot off an email and you never

know if it is going into a spam folder or if it is being considered with the attention that it should be. Do you physically call most of the time when you want to do a deal?

Jason: Always.

Michael: You pick up the phone.

Jason: I don't have a secretary to do it so it's got to be me.

Michael: But you don't shoot off emails.

Jason: Well I have in the past but mostly it's I'll pick up the phone.

Michael: Do you do that because you get a better response by phone than you would by email?

Jason: I think so. I want to have a conversation with them. I was telling you about (in our pre-interview) about that domain name hashbrands.com that I have. So this morning I called somebody as it turns out that if you do a search for hashbrands there is a company that makes something called hash which is not the drug but corn beef or something like that. So I called and I left a message for a senior level marketing person there saying that I have no idea that you made this product and I'm thinking about developing this name completely for something else but I'm happy to sell it to you if you want it. Call me back. So she will get the message and she will think about it in a way that they didn't think about it before, because they didn't call me saying they want to buy it. So nobody in this corporation is thinking about it but they are on Twitter, and they are here, and they are there, and Tweeting and making noise about all this stuff. So I'd let it go for a reasonable period of time just so save me from having to develop it.

Michael: Will you ever call that person back again with a follow up call?

Jason: I'll call them back one more time because I really think they should buy it. Sometimes you are calling people and you are hoping that they will be interested or whatever but there are certain people who you think to yourself

they really should buy this from you. Like Texas Instruments when they bought AnalogJobs.com.

Michael: How long will you wait before you call them back and try and get a hold of them again?

Jason: Tomorrow.

Michael: So a couple of days.

Jason: Yes I call them today and I'll call them tomorrow.

Michael: And after the second call are you done?

Jason: Yes probably in this case.

Michael: It's nice to know what your tactics are for follow up because you want to appear like you are responsive to this person but you don't want to hound them. Right? I'm sure when you were a recruiter you would call up people that you heard were great candidates for jobs, they are thinking about it, well I'm happy with my job, I'm not going to switch, I'm not going to call the recruiter back because I don't know them. And you want to be responsive and follow up with them again in case there might be a possibility but you don't want to hound them.

Jason: You do sort of want to hound them without coming across like you are hounding them. But there has to be a sense of urgency. Right? There has got to be a sense of urgency. I feel strongly that that company should buy this domain name and if she is not feeling the same way either she is not the right person that I should be talking to or I have to explain it. But either way they will get a phone call tomorrow.

Michael: And you always try to create a sense of urgency like the job is going to be filled soon or I am going to develop this domain name or it is going to be sold?

Jason: It's not always create the sense of urgency but you have to identify...Like deals don't happen if there is no urgency. Like you don't change jobs because you are getting 10% more. Most people don't do deals that way. There has got to be I'm going to spend \$20,000 or \$30,000 on a domain name not because I want to keep it for ten years unless it is a \$100,000 domain name that the guy has got to sell and I was just lucky that I was there. There has got to be urgency. So when somebody has got a big, big brand and they are pushing a product that matches really, really close to this domain name there should be urgency. So I have to tell them that or speak to somebody. It's like that old thing you are talking to somebody that doesn't have the authority to say yes then you are not talking to the right person. And it is a great way when you are talking to people on the phone and you want something and they clearly aren't giving it to you most times it's not because they don't want to it's because they don't have the authority to do it. So who can I talk to that is the authority to say yes to this request of mine?

Michael: And is that how you would phrase it because a lot of times they might take offense to that don't you think?

Jason: That's too bad. I'm trying to be an ass. I have this mini battle with my cell phone carrier that I wanted something that I felt that I should be entitled to and the person wasn't doing it. So I said can I talk to somebody who has the authority to authorize it. And they said one moment let me put you through to my manager.

Michael: So you saying can I talk to the person that has the authority to make a decision about this domain name will actually work? People will say that will be so and so let me transfer you.

Jason: Yes absolutely. I mean you can talk to somebody and they yes this is great I agree, I agree but if they don't have the ability to write the check or they don't have the ability to sign off on it then what are you doing?

Michael: So we spoke before the interview that you have some other entrepreneurial ventures that you are working on. I saw on your blog that you built an app for Twitter called hashlove. Can you tell me a little bit about that?

Jason: Yes hashlove is a really cool application. I'm not really on Twitter a lot. I used to be on it more. I use it mostly as a search engine and I think that it is very, very interesting as a search engine. I think that is really where the future of all of this is going to be. So hashlove is a system where you can send birthday cards, or congratulatory cards, or get well cards, or Hanukkah cards, anything. You can upload your own card if you want. And what happens is you authenticate into the system. You choose your card, who you want to send it to, and write a couple things and then it sends it and it comes out of your Twitter account so the person who you are sending it to gets notified and that sort of thing. But what is interesting about it is it identifies who the mutual contacts are. So if I send you a card and there are five or ten or fifty people who follow both you and I what happens is I then have the ability to direct message those people saying it's Michael's birthday today. I sent him a card. Go sign it. So then they come and they sign it. So there has been 740/745 cards sent. Some of the cards have hundreds and hundreds of people who have signed them because depending on the network and the influence within that network you get a lot of people. So some cards have two, three, four, five, some have hundreds and hundreds of them. And what is interesting about it is I think a proof of concept for a lot of other ways to distribute and market and promote information on Twitter. So I'm looking at that. I'm looking at that in a lot of different industries. I have a lot of different hash something on the end of it. Probably about 15 to 20 which are different than the job related stuff that I have. And so it is a great system. It's built well and it works.

Michael: So if I send you a thank you hashlove note via hashlove.com saying thanks for coming on the show right after this it will look to see who are DomainSherpa's contacts are and who your contacts are and then it will direct message the ones that match and show them the message.

Jason: Right Andrew Allemann, at DomainNameWire.com – he is like the only guy in the whole...I don't talk to anybody in this industry. You are really the second person I've ever talked to in the domain name industry. He's the first. You are the second. So he is following both of us. And I'm not sure if he is but if he is you will have the ability to press a button that brings up mutual contact and then you can click which ones you want to let know



about this and then send them a message and would get a dm (a direct message) and with a link that he can come and sign it too.

Michael: Very cool. Well I'm going to send this out right after our interview and we will test it out live. It sounds like a fantastic opportunity for people who are on Twitter and I think the new generation is getting a lot of their news and staying in contact with people via Twitter. You look at what is going on around the world it is happening first on Twitter.

Jason: I think the whole thing about Twitter is that the greatness of what will be will be in the interface. The noise is there, the content is there and we all need that information but I may want it would of a glass with ice and may want it out of a glass with no ice but with a big straw. The guy down the river or down the street may want to drink it out of the Twitter River with his face in the thing. We all want the information it's just how we go about getting it. So I think it is the interface that will drive this and there is a lot of really good innovation going on.

Michael: So why did you think of hashlove to begin with?

Jason: Well I just kept seeing all of these people wishing happy birthday, happy birthday, get well and all of this and then it's gone. It comes and then it is gone. Whereas this puts it all onto a card and it keeps it. And the other great thing about domain names and Twitter, so first of all I think that in a perfect world you have the domain name and the Twitter account because Twitter is a great way to distribute and promote content. And so I don't have the @hashlove Twitter account. I try to buy it from the guy and he wanted \$5,000 at the time. I didn't even know if this thing was going to work or not so I didn't buy it. Now most of the times when I buy a domain name if I can't get the Twitter account with it it is just...I don't know if it is worth less in the real world but to me it is worth a little less because now there is so much content on Twitter, so with the domain name you have instant content.

And it is more interesting than what you see on Google. If you do a search on Google for the word Jamaica what you see today is really probably what you saw last week and the week before and what you see two weeks from now. But if you do that search on Twitter, the word Jamaica, it's like it is moving.



It is interesting. You find things that you would never find on Google. So on Twitter, the word Jamaica, it's like it is moving. It is interesting. You find things that you would never find on Google. So you know to set up domain names just start putting original content and Twitter feed widgets and all of that at least you create something that you know if the person comes back there is something new.

Michael: Definitely. And did you have the idea when you bought hashlove.com domain name and when you were building out the idea that you had? Do you think about in terms of if this takes off I might be able to sell it to Hallmark.com or to American Greetings or some other greeting card company as a new media equivalent of the card?

Jason: Yes I've thought about it but it runs on autopilot right now. It's not something that I think about. I check it once a day. I look at the new cards and there are some funny cards up there and that sort of thing. But I don't know. I feel good about it. You know when I started, when I put it out it was all the people that I knew using it. And now the vast majority of people who use it they are out of my circle. I don't know who they are. So it's good.

Michael: That's fun to see.

Jason: And there is lots of it. So I own the engine and the engine could power a lot of different verticals and a lot of different ways. So I think a lot of what I'll do with that engine. It is certainly in a year from now but it will be more sites off of that engine than just this one.

Michael: And did you build that engine yourself or did you outsource it to somebody?

Jason: I outsourced it. I have a friend of mine Ben who built it.

Michael: So in terms other entrepreneurial interests you mentioned earlier in the interview that the only other single word domain name that you ever purchased besides Recruiting.com was Slouch.com. So my Mom has often called me a slouch and I'm sure it was meant with love but you have told me that you plan on developing this. Or you are developing it.

Jason: Yes I'm in the process of developing it now. And I am hoping by the end of the month, three weeks from now or so, it will be live.

Michael: So right around when this interview goes live somebody may watch this interview and here about Slouch.com and go there. It may be live, it may not be live. What can they expect if they go there at that time?

Jason: I can't tell you. And it's not original by any means. I think it is a proven concept. I see it working all over the place. But I've sort of found a little niche which is a really, really big niche but for whatever reason it is left alone. No one is doing this in this particular industry. So I'm going to give it a shot.

Michael: And I found this entire interview to be really enriching Jason because we have talked about so many domain names and how you value them and some of the mistakes that have happened, losing domain names and domain names going from \$5,000 to \$30,000 or what have you. Will you come back after you launch Slouch.com and talk to us just about that? And how you are building it and how you plan to make money with it and how you identified that little niche that wasn't being used?

Jason: Yes absolutely.

Michael: That would be fantastic. I'm sure a lot of people would love to know that. So I've got one final question for you Jason before we wrap up. It seems like you have done a lot of deals on domain names over the course of 15 plus years. Can you tell me about a particularly resourceful partnership, or a deal, that you have done that wasn't a straight case of purchase transaction?

Jason: Well a number of the deals that I have done I've auctioned them first because somebody wants \$15,000 for something or \$30,000 for something. That is a lot of money. And sometimes I want to do some due diligence. I don't want to waste any of my time only to find out that it is not available any more. So there has been quite a few deals where I will put down 10% of the money and either it is refundable or it is not refundable per the terms and I have 60-90 days to think about it.

Michael: I didn't know people were doing that. So what size domain name transaction are we talking about that you would put \$10,000 down on it and think about it?

Jason: Not \$10,000. 10%.

Michael: I'm sorry 10%.

Jason: So there was this other website that I wanted to buy and the deal, I can't remember exactly, it was under \$20,000 in and around there. So what I did was I locked it up. I wrote a check for \$2,000. And then I had 90 days to figure out what I wanted to do. So during those 90 days I went out I found a partner who came in and wrote a check for the rest of it and then we worked out an ownership structure between myself and the person who did it. There has been other times where the deal is x and I'm going to make monthly payments on it. So there is all ways. Sometimes someone wants to sell it and they don't need all the money now and I don't want to write the whole check now so you just work it out.

Michael: Great ideas for resourceful ways to purchase domain names. So what is next for Jason Davis? You have got Slouch.com launching in a few weeks. Is there more technology development on the horizon?

Jason: Well I have got some things. You know I just signed up to O'Desk and I found somebody in India who we are just going back and forth on some development that I am interested in building out. I'm really fascinated by this whole trafficking. I wish I sort of would have known about it years ago to get my names out there and that sort of thing. I don't know if it has hurt me or not. So I'm buying names now and setting up little (or plan to set up little) information sites and portals and I like writing so I will write original articles and that sort of thing. Just get these things going and you know I think I can figure out a way to run a couple hundred sites. I've got a job board network that is managed, that I outsource, and they handle everything and every month I get a check.

Michael: What is the URL of that job board?

Jason: So if you go to DirectorJobs.com or you go to SiliconValleyJobs.com or VideoJobs.com...

Michael: I'm sorry you are breaking up there.

Jason: So if you go to that website you will see it is hosted by our company called Job Targets. They handle the billing, they handle everything. And then I've got Graphics Jobs, Storage Jobs and CircuitJobs.com running on a site called Jobomatic. And that hardly makes me any money. So I just like building things. I like selling things. I'm not so interested that I get top dollar because who really knows what top dollar is? I don't know what it is.

Michael: Alright Jason if any of our audience have a follow up question for Jason please post it in the comments below and we will ask Jason to come back and answer as many as he can. If you want to follow Jason on the internet you can visit any of the blogs that he has mentioned, but he posts somewhat regularly his blog DomainNames.Blogspot.com. Is that mostly where you post when you have an idea or something you want to share?

Jason: Yes and I really went years, and years without posting anything there. But I am going to start doing it. When I first learned about Blogger I went out and bought a whole bunch of fantastic names. So I use that and my Twitter account is @slouch.

Michael: Great so you can follow Jason at Twitter.com/slouch which is the name of your new venture that is also coming out at Slouch.com.

Jason: Correct. So that Twitter account will really serve to support the new business. Right now it is my sole one but that will stop.

Michael: Alright, well I can't wait to see what comes of Slouch.com, Jason. I wish you the best of luck in that. Thank you for taking the time and coming on the show.

Jason: Thank you very much. I appreciate it. I was good to get to know you.

## DomainSherpa.com: The Domain Name Authority

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Michael: Likewise. Thank you all for watching. We will see you next time.

**Watch the full video at:**

<http://www.domainsherpa.com/jason-davis-slouch-interview>