

## An Interview With Chris Pirillo, Geek & Technology Enthusiast

Hello, this is Lon Safko, co-author of *The Social Media Bible*, published by John Wiley & Sons, the most comprehensive book ever written on the subject of Social Media, and today we are here with Chris Pirillo, geek, tech enthusiast, all-around cool guy; and we are going to be talking about community building, Social Media, and of course, we are going to talk a lot about Chris Pirillo.

So Chris, man how cool is this...from Seattle having you here today. Thank you.



**CP:** No problem. I mean, now thanks to the internet anybody can communicate with anybody else, anywhere, anytime.

**LS:** I've actually heard of the internet, and not only that but the cool thing about this presentation is for your 360 (or so) viewers that are looking at your website right now (of which I am one of them) we're talking on the phone, digitally recording it; but at the same time viewers from all over the world are actually watching this take place on [chrispirillo.com](http://chrispirillo.com) live! How cool is that!

**CP:** Well, that's another one of those things that I kind of stumbled into. I mean, every year something new pops up onto my radar; and a couple of years ago the ability to live-stream without really paying anything other than your ISP, so I thought, "Hey, why not!"

**LS:** That's totally cool. I love this because I'm watching you watch me talk to you talk to me.



Usually in the beginning of the interview, I'll just say, "Can you tell us a little bit about yourself" but I wanted to just, for the listeners, to get a full appreciation of who Chris Pirillo is. Just kind of throw out a little bit of statistics; you've recorded over 1,000 videos in the past year, you cracked the Top 100 Most Subscribed throughout the whole of Utube, your live stats are more impressive, with five million unique video viewers watched Chris do his thing in 2007 with a total of 2+ million live viewer hours with an average viewing of 25 minutes per visitor. Holy Moly, man!

August, this past August, your live video feeds are recorded 279,000 viewer hours with over a million viewers; 827,000 unique viewers; 395 average viewers, and 707 hours of live broadcasting! Holy Mole!!!

In addition, in the first seven days of launching your web community for geeks, you logged in 587,000 page views. I mean, this stuff is unbelievable and here's one that is just totally cool because it's so simplistic; you are the #1 hit on Google for the word "Chris." Now how cool is that?

**CP:** Mostly that particular statistic will hold true for the duration of my life, I don't know....There's only one place to head, and that's down, after you're #1 "Chris" on Google; although I haven't had it happen yet. I'm praying that they never change their algorithms or another more important "Chris" potentially comes along and usurps my position. (Laughter)

**LS:** (Laughter) Well, that's pretty darn impressive, though, for as generic a term as four letters, "Chris." The only other person I had ever heard that happened to was when I was interviewing Robert Scoble. And if you type in "Robert" he is the official Google "Robert." So you are the only two.....

**CP:** Yeah, it took a while for him to get there, but he finally did.

**LS:** Yeah, he finally did! He probably took some of your advice. (Laughter) Okay, well again, this is where I usually just ask for a bio and a background, but I cannot ask this question any other way, other than, "Who the heck is Chris Pirillo?" I mean, wow, you're out there!

Can you tell us a little bit about your background?

**CP:** Sure. I turned a personality disorder into a career, as I have been prone to say. There's really no one thing that I do. I'm an omni-geek, so an [04:04.0] geek some might call me; someone who has just always been attracted to technology, much like a bug may be attracted to a light hanging on the porch in the middle of summer.

Sometimes it works pretty well for me and other times not so much. Umm, but I'm a content publisher, I help other people publish content and now have gotten more and more into increasing and sharing my own video experiences when they're live or, of course, recorded on Utube.

The direction that I have been going is just largely just being myself. So enjoying talking about technology during the sharing of information; and when that's directly with people like myself, or specifically in talking directly to companies either on a sponsorship level, or specifically, a consultancy.

**LS:** And you talked about generating content, and really it's for the intent of building community. And based on my experience and interviewing all of the different people in Social Media ecosphere, it keeps getting back to participating in a community of a trusted network of people that have something in common and build credibility with your audience.

Can you just mention a little bit about the term "Community Building?"

**CP:** Ahh, you know it's ongoing and where as when I started online there really weren't a lot of pools to facilitate community building; it hadn't really grown. Today those tools are plentiful. There are plenty of ways that you can build communities and draw people into the things that you are interested in, and help build their interest and their experiences with you. The hope in community building is that you feel less and less alone in this world, and no matter your background and the chances of some other people sharing your similar interests, or similar enough, are pretty strong.

You know, the internet is a big place and community ebbs and flows, but certainly the one thing that you're obviously going to have going for you is yourself. So as long as you are honest with yourself and with your friends and the people who are not yet your friends, the chances of you maintaining a level of integrity on an ongoing basis (no matter if the tools are not where you're at) are pretty strong.

It's all about being honest and direct and that really is...it's not so much in the area of community building, it's just more in being (I guess) a good [06:59.3] in general.

**LS:** And I have watched a lot of your videos and I think that the most important thing that comes across to me is your sincerity. I mean, you really believe in what you're doing and you really are honest with yourself and with your audience.

**CP:** Well, you can't talk about something if you don't know what you are talking about. I mean, that's...when people do that it's pretty obvious that they are just either a hired gun, hired talent, or shouldn't be doing the things that they are supposedly doing.

**LS:** And that's a really good point; the sincerity and knowledge really does come through. You cannot hide that.

How did you create such a.....I mean I was looking at some of these statistics. How did you create such a huge following? How did so many people find you and become loyal to what you do?

**CP:** Well, like I say I'm an omni-geek, so the people come and opportunities come in a multitude of directions; and certainly I started...well I started cultivating a lot of it back in 1992, but unofficially (at least in the commercial path) in 1996. From that point forward, you know, it was kind of an up hill battle because I was left to my own devices. This was long before Social Networking was a "word" and we had other services like FaceBook and MySpace and Twitter; and you name any one of those services that it really there to help give anybody a voice to share with the rest of the world. And, of course, that came not long after blogging.

I've surveyed the landscape of these services efficiently. There's always something new to look at. And so look at all of these resources and being able to leverage my own knowledge and passions against these resources to reach the same people or potentially new people, is really kind of key to, I think, any success for community building.

It's not just being there, it's really getting what the tool is and where it fits, specifically in your (I guess) modus operandi. Then of course, I was doing all this stuff before I had started to work on a radio show as a host; and before I had done a stint at Tech T.V. Some people believe that I got my start at Tech T.V. and they really don't know me at all (Laughter) if that's the case. And it usually is. They seem to believe that everything came because of Tech TV, but no, no, no, no. Everything...Tech TV only happened because of everything that was done before that, including writing books, sending out newsletters and doing community building a lot on my own.

**LS:** So you're basically a 20-year overnight success?

**CP:** Well, not quite 20 yet, just half a decade.

**LS:** Yeah, that's funny. When people, all of a sudden when you spring into the limelight everybody thinks that it just happened overnight. They don't realize, really, it takes a decade or more of building and working towards that goal.

**CP:** Well, I've been doing it for a while now, a few months, of working with CNN.com, doing a live (I guess) segment every week, and carte blanche in terms of the content part, but I'm looking to involve myself a little

deeper with CNN.com as the tech expert. And that only came about because of everything else I am doing. So one thing builds on top of another, on top of another, on top of another.

**LS:** Well, that's pretty cool to be involved with CNN; to be considered their tech expert. That's really awesome. How long have you been doing that?

**CP:** There certainly seems to be people who say, "Oh, you know he got his start on CNN.com." No, that's not how it goes.

**LS:** It was just one step along the way. Now I know our listeners cannot see that really incredible pooch, but what's his name? I see a puppy....

**CP:** Like it?

**LS:** Yeah, what's his name?

**CP:** Wicket.

**LS:** Wicket?

**CP:** Yeah, like an Ewok.

**LS:** Oh, okay! So he's cool.

**CP:** He looked like an Ewok when he was a baby, a puppy.

**LS:** Yeah, he's got that little Ewok look going even now. That's cool.

So, in all your work one of the things that I see for sure; I mean one of the things that I teach in marketing is it always has to have a, "What's in it for me" value, from the viewer or from the customer perspective. And in addition to this techie stuff, which has a tremendous value, isn't a lot of what you do also have an entertainment value?

**CP:** Oh of course! I mean, if something couldn't be entertaining why would anybody watch it. I mean that should be informational and entertaining at the same time. I approach the classroom in much the same way when I, at least when I was student teaching. I am a teacher by degree, but never actually became one in any kind of school; much beyond my education in becoming a teacher.

But, yeah, I believe that it's extremely important. I mean, even if...here's the thing...even if I've got my live-stream going and nothing's going on and all the people are doing is staring at the back of my head or listening to whatever I'm listening to, or whatever...then at least I've got a chat room that's integrated with the experience.

So even if I cannot be entertaining, well maybe I can be informative.

**LS:** Good point. And speaking of being entertaining; as you know I travel around the country way too much, 100 cities last year; but I was looking through your videos and I found something that our listeners really need to know about if they fly, and that is your new flight-safety instructional video. That was very helpful, by the way.

**CP:** Oh yeah, the airline safety instructions. That was the first video I uploaded to Utube and it made it to the front page of Utube.

**LS:** Did it really?

**CP:** Yeah it was the first one, and it made it to the front. I mean, it was three months into it, but it made it to the front page...kind of funny! You know, I've been recording video since I could. I use to record videos, I'm pretty sure, on a Sony Mavica here and used a later series to actually record videos onto a floppy disc. I did that.

**LS:** That is quite a while ago for doing video.

**CP:** If it didn't go on the Mavica, then I know it did on an earlier version of their digital cameras. And I was like, "Oh wow, I can record videos! This is so cool!" Of course, they were stamp-sized but they were still good.

**LS:** Yeah.

**CP:** Sleek!

**LS:** Yeah, and the rest is history. Now, you're into video and there's no doubt about that and your streaming video is really cool. I had a chance, if you're familiar with Jody Gnant, who is a live-caster.

**CP:** Yes.

**LS:** She embarked in the One Red Paperclip, and she was telling me how stressful it is to do this 24/7 livecasting. And I saw one of your videos this morning. Can you tell us a little bit about your streaming, your livecasting; and is your wife, Ponzi, really fed up with it?

**CP:** Umm, you know in respect to live streaming, I seldom move the camera. I mean like now I started to take my work out of a little...it's called [14:31.0] it's in the other room. I usually play the Xbox 360. I just started to bring my laptop in there and then I switched the stream over to that. But usually I only keep one camera on, and I can leave the room at any time and not feel, you know, obligated to take the camera with me.

Umm, and because of that I have set out that particular boundary. Some people violate that particular boundary, you know, whether they share personal information about myself that I would rather not have shared, like a phone number or what-have-you...anything like that, you know. But for the most part, I'm in control. Ponzi's got, you know...I know she's not...she's appreciative of it in the sense that she can now watch...keep an eye on me throughout the day. Hey, you know, what wife would not want that?

**LS:** (Laughter) good point!

**CP:** But at the same time, it's not her thing, so....I don't really know how to answer that question... hopefully I did not successfully dodge it

**LS:** No, that was fine! I was looking at your video this morning where you said that your wife and you had gotten into a big fight and she didn't want anymore streaming. And then, of course, the most logical thing to do next is just get up and dance....so..... (Laughter)

**CP:** That was the April Fool's Day joke...Oh, you got Rickrolled!. That was a Rick Roll April Fools' Day joke this year.

**LS:** Ah, that's what it was, okay. Because then I got scared, of course, and went over to your live stream, and of course you were still live streaming.....

**CP:** People still watch that now and say, "Oh, he quit live streaming and look at the date. (Laughter)

**LS:** (Laughter) yeah....that's great!

**CP:** That was a good one. I had quite a few people call and they couldn't believe that! "Chris is stopping live-streaming? What! What's going on?"

**LS:** Well you caught me, too, this morning. I had to run over to your live stream to make sure you were still there!

**CP:** Well, yeah, I've been busy with a few other things but I knew that I wanted to connect with you on this, so...

**LS:** And one of the things, too, that was interesting was when you had said that you still maintain a certain level of privacy, where Jody basically did not. And...how did she put it...."it significantly cut into her personal life" so to speak.

**CP:** Yeah, I would not have gone as far as Jody did, that's for sure.

**LS:** Yeah, umm, but you still have that following. I noticed this morning when I logged on. Your studio was completely dark and you still had 323 viewers.

**CP:** That's in the room, yeah... I was not awake yet.

**LS:** (Laughter) I mean that's totally cool, though. I mean people are waiting for you; you've got an avid fan group.

**CP:** Well, it's easy to have on in the background. You've got desktop widgets for Linux and Mac and Windows so people just keep a widget of my live video feed going.

**LS:** Yeah, that makes sense. That way it's not disruptive and we can see what you're up to.

**CP:** Yep. I'm not alone.

**LS:** Not alone. Yeah, and you know what, that's one of the things that Jody said, is that there was one person that came out of a coma and started to watch her and it touched this person in such a way that it actually gave him a will to live; because he was participating in her life. And he actually got better and she said that was one of the most emotional moments that she has ever had, because people relate to...

**CP:** ...yes, she told me about that, and I'd be a little creeped out!

**LS:** (Laughter) Yeah, as long as he wasn't stalking you...

**CP:** I make my life by live streaming, I'd be like, "Whoa, dude." You need a better one than that. That life's not much of one.

**LS:** Well, when you're in a comma you don't have much, so.....

**CP:** Right! That's true.

**LS:** But with that following that you've built up; I mean this tremendous following, you also got some pretty sponsors following you. Microsoft, Google, Yahoo, Go Daddy, Gotome, PayPal. Is that true? Is that how you make some of your money? Do you actually have sponsors?

**CP:** Yes, absolutely. It's all about sponsorship and those kinds of partnerships. And certainly other things come from it as well. Whether it's me [18:34.8] at something, or Valunet...interesting that I like to surround myself with....that's just the direction I've followed and that kind of stuff follows me.

Certainly sponsors have been extremely supportive in the things that I try to do and that's...not an uphill battle, necessarily, but since my model is usually a little different I have to, kind of, ride the cusp between what they're use to and what I think the next step is going to be. You know, it usually works out pretty well.

**LS:** And that's pretty cool, because these are Fortune 500 companies that aren't really known for being innovative; and for a company like Microsoft to sponsor somebody who travels around talking about building community and livecasting, I would think that that's a difficult sale, unless of course, you have that following, which you do.

**CP:** Well, yeah, and that's a big deal. It's a huge deal. And, you know, we continue to work with a lot of those companies...many of those companies are along on the efforts. [19:36.5] brand that we've been doing for the past, oh, nine years.

**LS:** For nine years?

**CP:** Yes.

**LS:** Wow.

**CP:** Going on nine years.

**LS:** So, and that's what the next question was. Do the sponsors actually encourage and sponsor you to go out and to talk about community building and Chris Pirillo and their product?

**CP:** No, not so much. It's usually I come up with a wacky idea that works and then find a way to underwrite it with the sponsor, and that's how it goes. I have never been asked to go out and speak on community building by any one of those companies. I certainly welcome it, but I've never had the opportunity.

If it's kind of how my career path is going, and an opportunity will come up, and do I have the time and it's something that I'm interested in and will it be fun; yeah, yeah, yeah, then I will give it a shot.

**LS:** (Laughter)

**CP:** That's usually how it happens.

**LS:** Yeah, that's a really good point and that's the way I liken my career as well. I would say that God has a sense of humor, because I graduated with an engineering degree and I've been doing marketing and high tech my whole career, which is not what I trained for.

A few years ago I wrote a book called *Life is but a Dream*, and the metaphor is that you are in a rowboat... now you can try to row against the current if you want but the best-case scenario...you're going to stay in the same place. So just take what life has to give you and follow the current and you'll be surprised and pleased where you end up.

**CP:** Yeah. Kind of the hope for me.

**LS:** Well, I bet you ten years ago you never guessed that you'd be where you are and doing what you're doing today?

**CP:** No way! No. Every year I'm always surprised what's coming up for the next year, always.

**LS:** Now you also mention that you get a chance to try out products and stuff, and I noticed on your website...I don't want to call it an obsession, but there was an inordinate amount of references to coupons. Can you tell me a little bit about coupons?

**CP:** Sure. Umm, I love saving money and, more importantly I love helping people save money which I've done over and over and over and over again; and everybody loves to find a good coupon...and so now people will email me and say, "Hey, I'm thinking about buying produce X, do you have a coupon for it" and I go find one. And then just sharing it with them, I share it with the rest of the world.

And so because of that, I'm able to close that loop between myself and the community and also create a value-add for everybody else. So, yeah, I like posting a lot of coupons on the blog. And then Coupon Bot and [22:07.8] I think is the place where you can generate your own feed for it.

**LS:** That's really cool, and who doesn't like to save money. And again, that's one of those things where you never would have guessed, but it just kind of sprung up out of a need.

**CP:** Yeah!

**LS:** What is the Locker Gnome? Was that your first website back in the early '90's?

**CP:** Pretty much! Locker Gnome is what started it all on LockerGnome.com and that's still around. Now, well I guess, trying to build it into a blog network and a community and beyond. But unfortunately a lot of the platform choices out there are really limiting. I tried a lot, but unfortunately they're really, really expensive or really, really impossible to work with. So I try to find the "sweet spot" in the middle that I can give people a voice and give them a chance to get paid for what they know, like blogging.

**LS:** That's a really good line that you say on the end there, "Getting paid for what they know." Many of us just give away our information for free because of our passion for the subject.

**CP:** Yeah, I mean there's a time and a place for everything.

**LS:** That's a really good point.

If somebody came up to you and (because that is what this book is about; to learn more and get started with all of this) ask for advice, how do you start building community?

Now Robert Scoble and Chris Heuer and some of the others told me that one of the most important things is to pay attention to the community first, don't just jump out with both feet and start blabbing your lips. Pay attention! Then when you become a little bit more comfortable with how the dialogue goes, then participate. Participation was really a key word.

What kind of advice would you give to people who want to actually build their community?

**CP:** I think that...by the way, that assessment was pretty accurate...I always believe that the best community tools can't be written, it's what's in you head, what's in your soul. It's your passion. If you don't have any of those things, or maybe some of those things but not all of those things, then when you try to build a community it won't work. And that's where most communities kind of fall flat. It's less about the software that you choose and more about how you go about engaging the community.

Like...and, of course, there is also the glut of communities that may be out there. For instance, if someone were to come along and say, "Hey, I'm watching a technology community," I'd be like, "Okay, okay...good luck. Oh, there's a group of people that just have not been served by the internet!" (Laughter)

**LS:** (Laughter)

**CP:** You know it's like they've got these great ambitions for something that is going to ultimately, just fall flat, not just in traffic, but in everything. Unless you've got some extreme value-add, or partnerships on board, or the ability to drive traffic, it's going to be an uphill battle for them. Know your subject matter, you know, be a, somewhat, SEM matter expert.

**LS:** So yeah, you were talking about having to be a subject-matter expert and you also talked about partnering. You had mentioned partnering. What kind of partnering would you recommend to somebody?

**CP:** Well, you know it's looking at your own assets and what you can do with what's around you; but it's also looking around at what other people have been doing, and matching or making sure your interests align with theirs in a complimentary fashion.

For instance: "Now it would be great to stream my life on line. Well, I've got to wait for a service. Oh, hey, there's a service, but I would really like to use your service, but I'm a power user....I need more, I need more, I need more."

Pretty soon, before I know it, I'm a top producer for Ustream and I also sit on their board. And that only came about because of my passion and my feedback for their particular platform. That's not exactly a partnership, per se, but it just shows a symbiotic relationship where in any kind of relationship you always want to give 110%. Then ultimately it will be happy, but a good partnership is less likely to come about if you have exactly what somebody else has. You want to find somebody who has what you need, and you have what they need. That's usually where a partnership or a good partnership forms.

**LS:** And that's a really good point, too. When I do my presentations I talk a lot about marketing and when I look for strategic partners what I tell the people is, "Look for a complimenting/non-competing".....I think that's the easiest way to see it.

And in the case of Ustream, I think that really is a partnership and if you can sit on their board, you can drive traffic to their website and awareness, that is really a complimenting/non-competing relationship.

**CP:** Yeah, well I'd like to believe so.

**LS:** (Laughter) yeah, for sure! Now using community building, can you think of any company/business example success stories that you can share with us that have been done? You, obviously, are a success story. Can you think of some others?

**CP:** I wouldn't call myself a "Success Story" but umm...success....oh, Myah Angelou had a great quote on success, "Success....something along the lines that...success is like when....success is liking what you do".....I'm going to leave it there. Her words work perfectly.

In terms of a successful company that I think is engaged in the community in ways that other companies have not....Microsoft....believe it or not.

**LS:** Really! I used them as an example earlier, of not really being on the cutting edge. Can you elaborate a little bit on that?

**CP:** Yep. I mean, they allowed a lot of their employees to open up and be as transparent as possible (in the blogosphere). There are a lot of people who work for Microsoft that have their own blog, and they work for Microsoft. And it's just really cool. You don't see that...you certainly don't see that for people who work at Apple. You hardly see it for people who work at Google. You know, it's that they almost.....they didn't make

it a policy that everybody has to blog, but they let it be known that, “Yeah, be transparent if you want to do it, you can do it.”

I think it’s been successful in the sense that these are people who care about the things that they do for the company they work for, and on several occasions I’ve been able to get in touch with, like, product managers and product groups because of the fact that they were blogging and they happened to read my blog; and then they responded in their blog.

I mean it is just a dynamic interchange of information and relationships, and I think Microsoft is the exception in this capacity, and it should be the rule.

**LS:** You know, I’m really glad you pointed that out, because I really wasn’t completely conscious of that. But you know, you’re absolutely right. Most of the companies that I speak to around the country are terrified of Social Media. They consider it chaos, and, “Is somebody going to say something wrong.” “Are they are going to say something litigious or off-brand that’s going to knock their brand off.”

And, of course, my comeback it that, “You can have chaos or you can have controlled chaos, and that just means to set up some basic policies.” But it’s going to happen with or without your permission, so stop fighting it and embrace it. And you’re right, Microsoft does. I guess that attitude is really what launched Robert Scoble.

**CP:** Scoble was, in that sense, more of a pioneer. Robert had been doing this, at least all the way back to 2001. I met Robert back in the late 90’s, but he was doing it in an unofficial way. But then he inadvertently became the unofficial/official blogosphere spokesperson for Microsoft because of his efforts. And, of course, we had other pioneers. You know, Channel Nine launched by Lin Pryor, Justine Quist, and then Robert Scoble as well. And other individuals, as well, but I just know those people personally. And Channel Nine was a chance for Microsoft-centric developers to find out who’s going on to network with one another and they are just building a community.

And they are, certainly like you said, a rare exception. Everything that they did there was absolutely organic, and it’s really depressing when I see other large entities launch these pseudo-communities and they’re nothing like communities at all. It’s really kind of sad.

**LS:** Yeah, they just don’t get it.

**CP:** Right, because they’ve got an agenda. Everybody’s got an agenda, but it’s that you need the mind and heart and soul and passion. You need all these things, and if something’s contrived, if something’s not organic it’s just a little “off,” you know.

**LS:** Yeah, and you can sense it.

**CP:** Right.

**LS:** That’s a really good point.

A close friend of mine, Mark Dickson, works for Sun Microsystems and he's been blogging for years. As a matter of fact, he was the first person who had introduced me to blogging, and his company let him; and I was shocked at a company the size of Sun Microsystems would allow him to do it.

He told me a story not that long ago, that he was at a huge, very important meeting with a client and the CEO himself, from Sun Microsystems, came out and when they both walked into the room for the very first time the CEO walked over to Mark and shook his hand, recognized him from his blog and told him to, "Keep up the good work.":

**CP:** Right.

**LS:** Isn't that sweet! I mean...from the Chief Executive Officer of a Fortune 500 company to pat you on the back!

But, yes, the thing about Mark Dickson is that he is completely sincere and passionate about Sun Microsystems and what they do.

**CP:** It's important! Of course, even as an independent you always get accused of selling the company line, or being a shill or sellout. That's the problem! I'm getting excited about something because I think it's cool and then everybody asks questions.

You know, they start questioning my integrity and that's one thing I will not stand for, or sit for!

**LS:** (Laughter)

**CP:** I cannot abide by that. Don't question my integrity!

**LS:** Well, absolutely! And I am shocked that anybody would do that after watching you in just a couple of your videos.

**CP:** Some people are just jerks, online or offline!

**LS:** (Laughter) that's true, no matter what group there's always one in there.

**CP:** Right.

**LS:** So, just to conclude here, because I don't want to take up more of your time (although it's been awesome); what else can you say? I mean, how can you summarize community building and what you do, and advise people who want to get involved...small businesses, entrepreneurs...how to build their own community. Just to summarize....

**CP:** Start with what you know, follow what you care about, and if you're curious as to what to do first, ultimately you're going to be skilled in (well hopefully you're going to be skilled) one particular area.

Are you good at writing, are you good at talking, are you good at presenting, are you good at representing, or making art? How do you choose to communicate with the world? Where do you excel? And maybe you excel at many of those things, but, you know, let's just say conservatively you're only good at one. Start that way.

If you can write really well, fine, then start writing. Start engaging in that capacity. Start making connections for people. Start pontificating. Don't regurgitate.

I mean there's....it's all of these things. Ultimately you need to build a personality for yourself so that even if....and I get this all the time...people come up to me, like at a conference and say, "Hey, Chris, I'm sorry I haven't read your blog in a while but I wanted to ask you...." My immediate reaction is like, "Well, duh, you don't read my blog!"

The internet is a big place and what kind of ego would I have to assume that everybody looks at what I do, or just because you know me means that you have looked at everything that I've done. It's more they know "of" me and that's sufficient in this day and age where brand is becoming increasingly distributed. They know "of" me and that's always going to trump the number of impressions I might get in a blog, or the number of viewers I might have to me and to the live video feed. It's the knowledge that people have knowledge of me.

**LS:** Well, you've built up both a brand and a good reputation.

**CP:** That's right!

**LS:** (Laughter) well I think so! That's just my opinion.

**CP:** [34:23.9] let me tell you. I get [34:27.0] eggs to make an omelet.

**LS:** (Laughter) yeah you sound like an egg-breaker. No doubt.

**CP:** I am. I absolutely am.

**LS:** So if our listeners what to find out more about some of the crazy stuff that you are doing now, what is the best place for them to look for you?

**CP:** Google. Just Google "Chris."

**LS:** (Laughter) Just Google "Chris."

**CP:** And there may become a time where I slip to #2, or heaven forbid #3, in which case I don't know what I would do with myself! I would go on a linked-building campaign if I slipped to #2. I would say to everybody, "Okay everybody go get a blog and link back to me. Please! Right now!" I couldn't necessarily pay for that, but I thought I would give prizes away, or something, to get back to #1.

Let me tell you, it's the thing that makes sense to a lot of people. Or you know what I tell my....it's a little over 40,000 subscribers on Utube right now and I've been pushing for that, of course. There's a lot more and more people and companies coming on line on Utube, so that space is getting competitive. It always has been competitive, but they're giving you more and more tools to build community as time goes on.... [35:38.8]

So I'm on Utube...just Google "Chris" you'll find me.

**LS:** Okay, well if you start to slip, let me know and I will do my best to help you get back on top.

**CP:** Thanks Lon.

**LS:** This is great. I would really like to thank Chris Pirillo, both geek and tech enthusiast, for being with us here today, and talking about community building and Social Media and, most importantly, about Chris.

So Chris, awesome. Thank you so very much.

**CP:** Well, thank you Lon.

**LS:** This is cool. This has been Lon Safko, the co-author of The Social Media Bible. Be sure to check out our other valuable Social Media tactics, tools, and strategies that can be found in The Social Media Bible book and its companion website, [www.thesocialmediabible.com](http://www.thesocialmediabible.com).

For more information about me, Lon Safko, please go on over and visit my website at [www.lonsafko.com](http://www.lonsafko.com).

And Chris, truly, this has been a heck of a lot of fun. Thank you so much.

**CP:** No problem!