

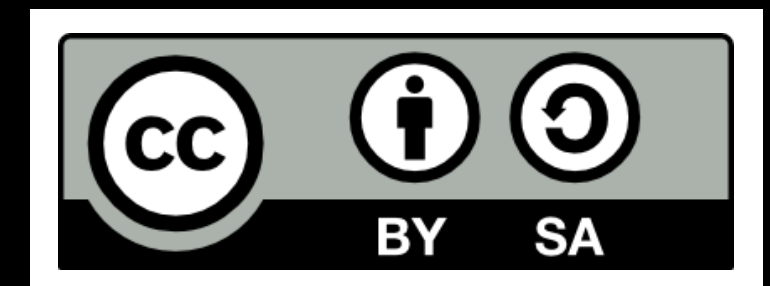
# SitePassword

A Different Kind of Password Manager

Alan H. Karp

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18 January 2023



**“Passwords are terrible, and we won’t be using them in 10 years.”**

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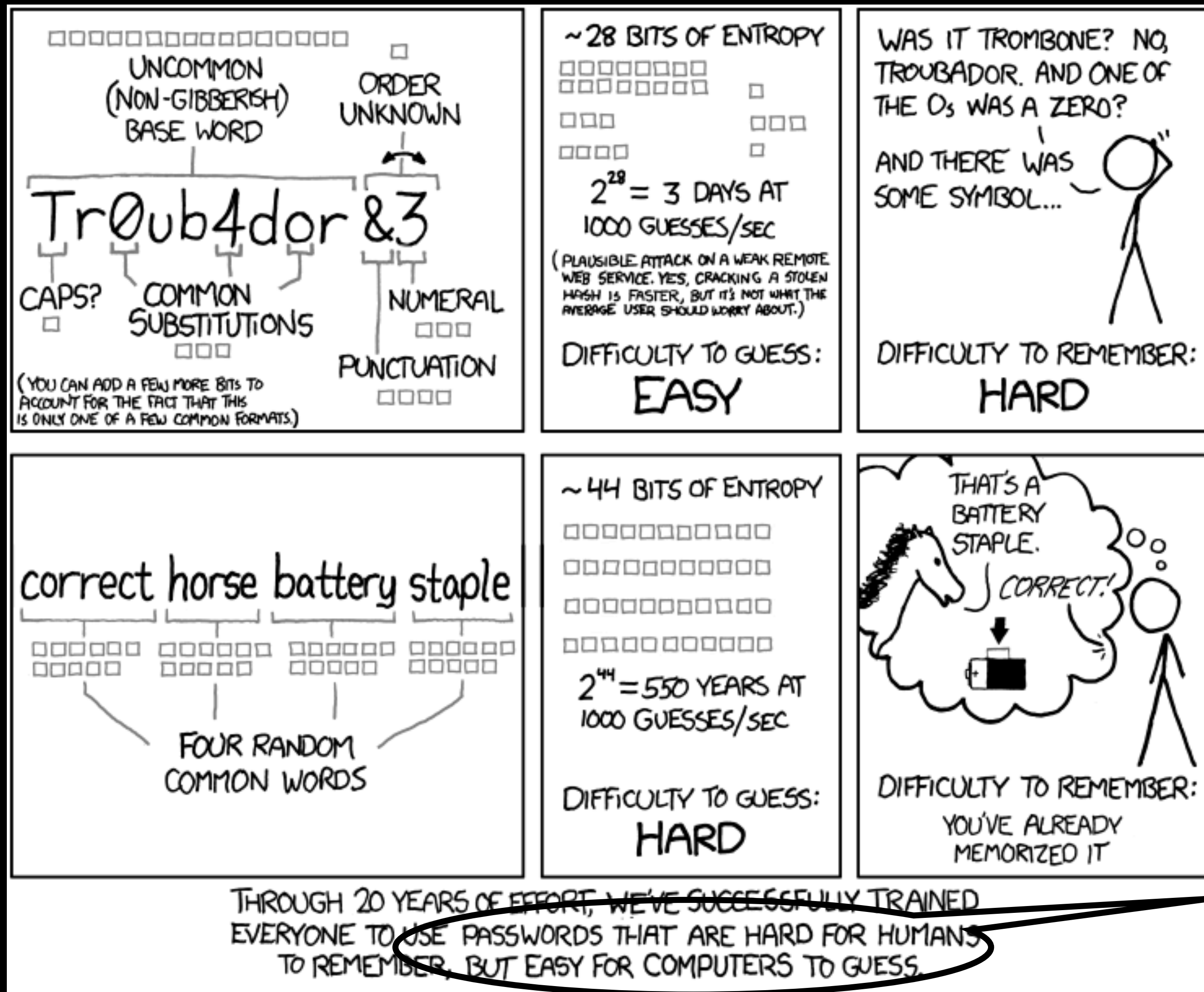
**Everybody**

**“Passwords are terrible, and we won’t be using them in 10 years.”**

**Everybody**

**2013 2003 1993 1983 1973 1963**

# What's So Bad about Passwords?



Passwords are hard for people to remember and easy for computers to guess.

# Do You Use a Password Manager?

One of the top recommended security practices but only 40% use them

# Do You Use a Password Manager?

One of the top recommended security practices but only 40% use them

- 1Password (\$36)
- LastPass (\$36)
- DashLane (\$60)
- Keeper (\$35)
- ZohoVault (Free or \$54)
- Avira (\$32)
- RememBear (Shutting down)
- PassBolt (Free)
- Bitwarden (Free or \$40)
- LogMeOnce (\$48)
- NordPass (Free or \$36)
- PasswordBoss (Free?)
- RoboForm (\$24)
- Your Browser (Free)

# Password Manager Characteristics

- Requirements
  - Easy to use
  - Engenders trust
  - Secure
  - Use from anywhere
- Other desirable features
  - Strong passwords
  - Different for every site
  - Easy to change (Ask me why that's bad)



# What is a Password Manager?

A software application designed to **store** and manage online credentials. It also generates passwords. Usually, the passwords are stored in an encrypted database locked behind a master password. — [malwarebytes.com](https://malwarebytes.com)

A password manager is an app on your phone, tablet, or computer that **stores** your passwords, so you don't have to remember them. — [ncsc.gov](https://ncsc.gov)

A password manager is a service that helps you generate and **store** long, unique passwords for all your online accounts. — [consumerreports.org](https://consumerreports.org)

# So What's So Bad about That?

- Where are your passwords stored?
  - On your machine?
  - In the cloud? Who's cloud?
  - How are they stored?
- It costs money
  - To manage your account
  - To pay for the cloud resources

# And then There's This to Worry About



LastPass

Notice of Recent Security Incident -

...

7:35 AM

We recently detected unusual activity within a third-party cloud storage service, ...

We have determined that an unauthorized party, ...was able to gain access to certain elements of our customers' information. **Our customers' passwords remain safely encrypted due to LastPass's Zero Knowledge architecture.**

# A Different Approach

# A Different Kind of Password Manager

## Don't Remember Your Passwords, Calculate Them

- It is free
  - No accounts to manage
  - No password storage needed
- Can even be used without network access
- **You are in control**
  - Carry a piece of paper with everything you need to get your passwords.
  - It's not great if you lose it, but it isn't terrible either.

# A Brief History of SitePassword

# The Earliest Days

2003

# The Earliest Days

2003



Site-Specific Passwords Versio...

 invent

Your password

Site name

Site password

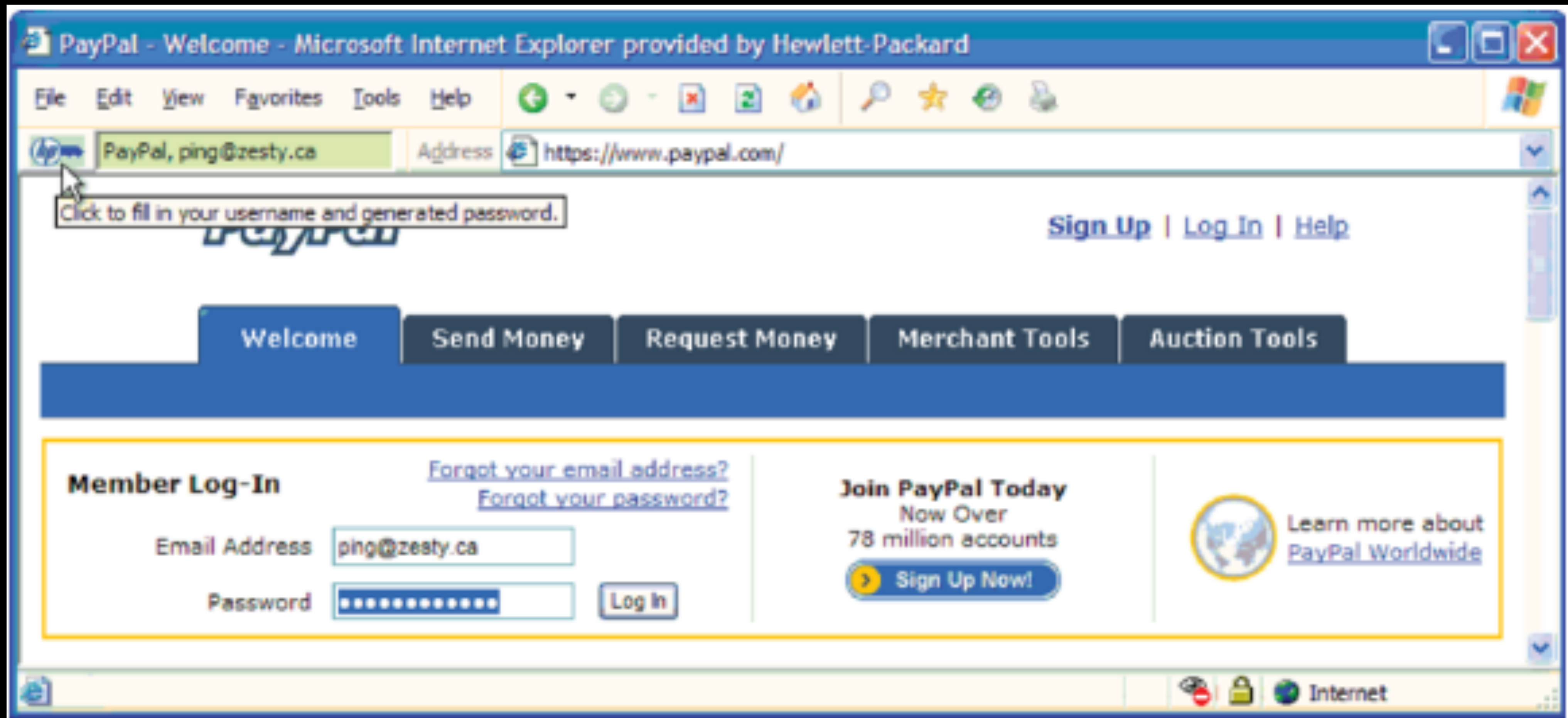


# HP Anti-Phishing Toolbar for IE

2005

# HP Anti-Phishing Toolbar for IE

## 2005



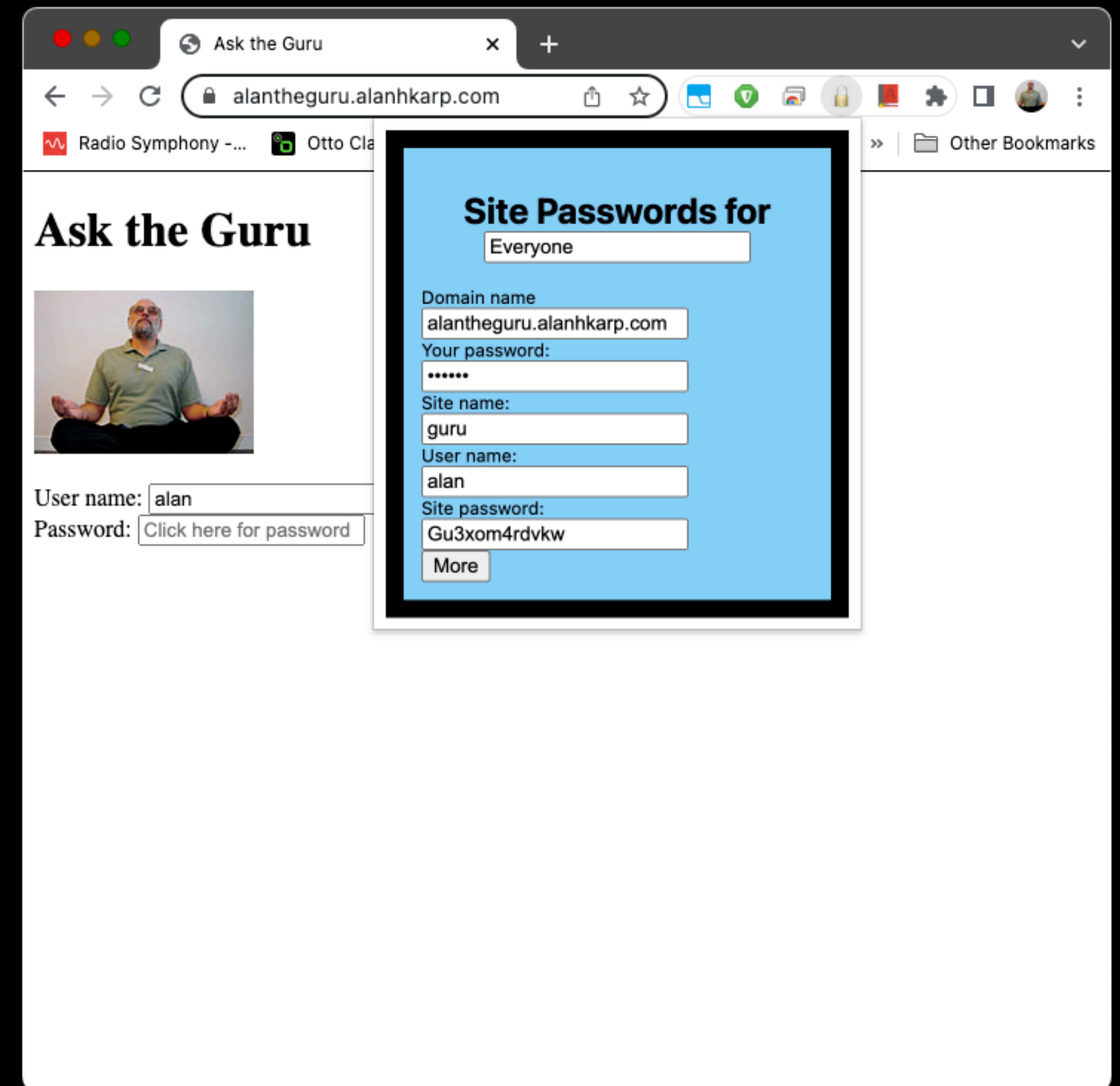
# Chrome Extension

## 2012

# Chrome Extension

## 2012

- Some Problems
  - No sync across machines
  - Unhappy with personas
  - Only finds 60% of password fields
- Only available for testers
- Only I used it for the next 10 years



# And Then

## 2021

- Google says I have to update it.
- “No problem,” I say to myself. “It’ll only take a week or so.”
- A year later .....

# Why It Took So Long

- Google's changes
  - From a persistent background page to a transient service worker
- Everything is async
- Fixed what I didn't like
  - Always(?) finds password field
  - Synchronizes across machines
  - Handles different personas



# Let Google Do the Heavy Lifting

- Store settings in bookmarks
  - Every browser syncs bookmarks
  - But Google doesn't merge conflicts
- Supporting personas with Google Profiles
  - Switch Profile without logging out
  - Each Profile has its own bookmarks

# A Taste of SitePassword




Ask the Guru

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Radio Symphony -... Otto Classical


Other Bookmarks

# Ask the Guru






User name:


Password:

 **SitePassword**


Don't Use







Clear Clipboard



Ask x Site x Did x Boo x Site x +


← → ↺

alantheguru.alanhkarp...

☆

Radio Symphony -... Other Bookmarks

# Ask the Guru



User name:

Password:

🔒

SitePassword

alantheguru.alanhkarp.com

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Don't Use

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Clear Clipboard

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Ask x Site x Did x Boo x Site x +

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# Ask the Guru




User name:

Password:

Ask the Guru

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# Ask the Guru



User name:

Password:



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Radio Symphony -... Otto Classical Pandora » | Other Bookmarks

# Ask the Guru



User name:

Password:

Site Password

sitepassword.info

Radio Symphony -...Otto ClassicalOther Bookmarks

Site Password

Choose a strong master password

Don't Use

Paste the login page URL here

...then, paste a SitePasswordData bookmark

...or fill in the form below.

A unique nickname for this site

Your user-id for this site

Generated site password

Remember SettingsForget Settings

Did you approve this \$1,000 pu x

Ask the Guru x

+

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🔒 ⭐


Other Bookmarks

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Otto Classical


P

# Ask the Guru



User name:


Password:



 **SitePassword**

.....

🔒

Don't Use

Your user-id for this site 

Generated site password  



Warning: The domain name

allanthe guru.alanhkarp.com

is different from what you saved for this site name. You may be at a fake site that is trying to steal your password.

Get me to safety!

Trust me. I know what I'm doing.

Did you approve this \$1,000 pu x

Ask the Guru x

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Other Bookmarks

Radio Symphony -...

Otto Classical

P

Ask the Guru



User name:

Password:

SitePassword

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.....

Don't Use

A unique nickname for this site

Your user-id for this site

Wk?q!@Y92p6B

Clear Clipboard

☐ Clear master password on use.

Password is 12 characters long

Starts with letter

Requires at least 1 lowercase letter(s)

Requires at least 1 uppercase letter(s)

Requires at least 1 number(s)

Requires at least 0 of /!=@?.\_-

Download Site Data



# Usable Security

# Usable Security

No system can be secure if users don't understand the implications of their actions.

# Ping's 10 Principles for a Secure UX

1. Path of Least Resistance: Make the easy way the secure way.
2. Appropriate Boundaries: Make distinctions matter to the user.
3. Explicit Authorization: Authorize only by explicit user action.
4. Visibility: All security related decisions must be viewable.
5. Revocability: Make it easy to revoke granted permissions.
6. Expected Ability: Don't make user think the tool will do what it can't
7. Trusted Path: It should not be possible to spoof the UI.
8. Identifiability: Give each object an identifier that the user understands.
9. Expressiveness: Allow users to express policies that they want.
10. Clarity. Make effects of actions apparent to the user before acting.

# My User Experience Goals

## Make it as easy to use as Candy Crush

- A Help button is a crutch for developers
- Can't break anything by experimenting
- Encourage good practices
  - Warn on weak master password
  - Use clipboard only when needed and warn after use
- Choose a readable font, particularly for site password
- Focus the field the user will be needing next

# My User Experience Goals

## Where I failed

- Can't always make “Click here for password” show up
  - Resorted to tooltip, but it takes a second or so to appear
- Forgetting settings for a domain
  - Delete the corresponding bookmark
- Closing the popup

# Password Manager Security

# Mobile Devices

- Situation is really bad
- Too easy to spoof app identity
- iframes inside Android WebView can spoof messages
- One password manager pulled their app

# Built into the Browser

- Pluses
  - Better than not using a password manager
  - Never resorts to the clipboard
  - Always finds password field
- Minuses
  - Not as secure
  - Some don't generate passwords, only store them
  - Many don't detect the password policy



# As Bad as it Gets

## Chrome does all 4 things a password manager should never do

### 1. Autofills with no user action

Make it easy to steal passwords

### 2. Can't customize generated password

Might not be able to use password generator

### 3. Has an option to show existing passwords

Encourages password reuse

### 4. Uses same password for [alan.alanhkarp.com](http://alan.alanhkarp.com) and [allan.alanhkarp.com](http://allan.alanhkarp.com)

You can be fished if alan and allan have different owners

Plus it warns on weak passwords too late

# It's More than Just Passwords Strength

- Autofill
  - Put the password into a form controlled by an attacker
- Storage Security
  - Stolen, didn't get the passwords but got the metadata
- User Communication
  - Allows weak/reused passwords
  - Generated passwords sometimes weak (oMMMMMMT?m\*m)

# It's More than Just the Passwords

- Avoid using clipboard but sometimes the only viable backup
- Phishing sites and phishing the password manager password
- Domain name errors - google.evil.com vs google.com
- Accessibility features
- Code size - one password manager is over 200,000 lines of code
  - SitePassword 1,500 lines of JavaScript, 750 HTML, 250 CSS
- Worst of all - Not using a password manager due to lack of trust

# The Evil Coffee Shop Attack

## Autofill with no user action

1. The user sets up several sites with a password manager.
2. User connects to a rogue router in a coffee shop.

The attacker can inject, block, and change network packets.

3. Attacker directs user's browser to a vulnerable page at the target site.
4. Attacker injects login form into the vulnerable page by modifying packets.
5. Your password manager fills it in.
6. Repeats for another site with a vulnerable page.

# Related Attacks

- HTTP login page - submits forms with HTTPS
  - Doesn't happen much now but (Schwab, eBay)
- Broken HTTPS
  - Usually an expired certificate (HP)
- HTTPS with active content fetched over HTTP
- XSS (Cross Site Scripting) on any page at the victim site
- Clickjacking

# SitePassword Security

# The Good

- Require click on password field
- Callback registered only on visible password fields
- Use iframe domain name if its password field clicked
- Use `zxcvbn()` from Dropbox for password strength meter
- Site name and user name act as salt to defeat pre-computation attacks
- Warn if password might still be on the clipboard

# The Not So Good but for Good Reasons

- Settings in bookmarks
  - Not encrypted
  - Stored on disk and in Google cloud
- Site password visible by default
  - Gives you a sense of how random looking the site passwords are
  - Don't often open the popup
- 12-character passwords by default
- Doesn't handle `dartmouth.edu/~alanhkarp`



# The Ugly

## An Offline attack against master password

1. You create an account at a bad guy's site
  2. Bad guy knows site password and username and can guess site name
  3. Bad guy starts guessing master passwords
- Mitigation
    - Strong master password
    - Hash a minimum of 100 times to get site password
    - Any guesses that produce the known site password must be tried online
  - Defeated by a hard to invert hash function that produces lots of collisions

# War Stories

# Finding the Password Field

Websites do some weird #%^@

- Put password field in an iframe with a different domain name than page
- Add password field dynamically
- Add password field with type=text and change to type=password
- Make password field visible only after you click a button
- Add CSS at runtime that makes password field visible

# Finding the Password Field

Websites do some weird #%^@

- Change contents of page based on the fragment
- Password field in a shadow root (shadow DOM)
- Clears the field after I set it (Who the %#^@ knows why)
- Don't want to update password field at sitepassword.info

# Is the Password Field Visible?

Harder to figure out than you may think.

- Does `window.computedStyle(element)` say it's visible?
  - Correct most of the time but not always
- Is parent visible?
  - `offsetParent != null` if `position != 'fixed'`
- One clickjacking trick
  - `element.style.opacity = "0"` reported visible
- Other tests needed?

# Finding the UserID Field

- Many password managers use the same algorithm
  - UserID field is the one immediately before the password field
  - Except when it's not
- Sometimes to the left
  - Arabic, Chinese, Hebrew to the right?
- Sometimes intervening fields
  - Some of them not visible

# Crazy #%^@

Done by big companies with professional programmers

- Login form at a completely different domain
- Username and password fields have the same id
- A bunch of errors when the page loads
  - Failed cross domain accesses for data that's never used
  - Took 30 seconds to time out on 4 bad GETs - [myacm.acm.org](http://myacm.acm.org)
- Unnecessary dependencies
  - Many use jQuery on their login pages

# How Bad Is It?

One password manager has  
special cases for over 200 sites.



# Summary

# Future Work

- User studies
- Other browsers
  - Brave, Edge, Opera - Works
  - Firefox - Should work but doesn't
  - Safari - Need to figure out how to use Xcode properly
- iOS and Android apps
  - Monitoring a serious security issue

# References

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- Oesch Thesis - [https://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=7785&context=utk\\_graddiss](https://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=7785&context=utk_graddiss)
- Oesch Paper - [https://www.usenix.org/system/files/sec20-oesch\\_0.pdf](https://www.usenix.org/system/files/sec20-oesch_0.pdf)
- [https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/158056/8/Revisiting Security Vulnerabilities in Commercial Password Managers 2.pdf](https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/158056/8/Revisiting_Security_Vulnerabilities_in_Commercial_Password_Managers_2.pdf)
- <https://www.usenix.org/system/files/soups2019-pearman.pdf>
- <https://crypto.stanford.edu/~dabo/pubs/papers/pwdmgrBrowser.pdf>

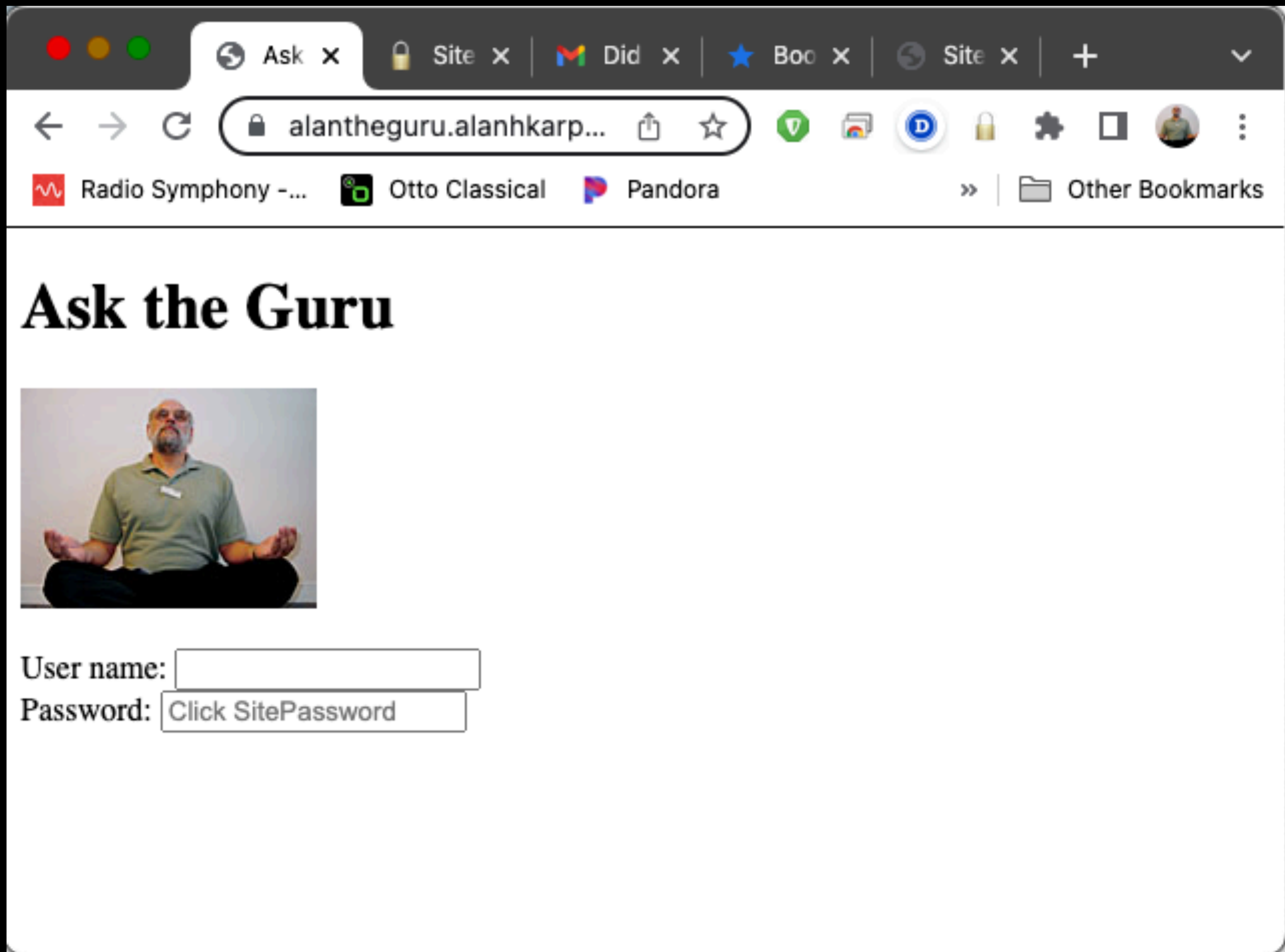
# Takeaways

- Use a password manager - a bad one is better than none at all
- Turn off any setting that fills in the password without a user action
- Prepare for the worst - Some have gone out of business
- Use it wisely - use strong passwords even if you don't have to

OR

Take control and use SitePassword

# Demo




Ask the Guru

alantheguru.alanhkarp.c...

Radio Symphony -... Otto Classical


Other Bookmarks

# Ask the Guru




User name:



Password:




## SitePassword


Don't Use







Clear Clipboard



Ask x

Site x

Did x

Boo x

Site x

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←

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alantheguru.alanhkarp...


☆

Radio Symphony -...

C

Other Bookmarks

# Ask the Guru



User name:

Password:

Click SitePassword

🔒

SitePassword

alantheguru.alanhkarp.com

.....

👁

Don't Use

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Ask x Site x Did x Boo x Site x +

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Radio Symphony -... Otto Classical Pandora » Other Bookmarks

# Ask the Guru



User name:

Password:

Ask the Guru

alantheguru.alanhkarp.c...

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Radio Symphony -...Otto ClassicalPandoraFriam Hangout»Other Bookmarks

# Ask the Guru



User name:

Password:

Ask x Site x Did x Boo x Site x +

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Radio Symphony -... Otto Classical Pandora » Other Bookmarks

# Ask the Guru



User name:

Password:

Site Password

sitepassword.info

Radio Symphony -...Otto ClassicalOther Bookmarks

Site Password

Choose a strong master password

Don't Use

Paste the login page URL here

...then, paste a SitePasswordData bookmark

...or fill in the form below.

A unique nickname for this site

Your user-id for this site

Generated site password

Remember SettingsForget Settings

68

Site Password

sitepassword.info

Radio Symphony -...Otto ClassicalOther Bookmarks

Site Password

Choose a strong master password

Don't Use

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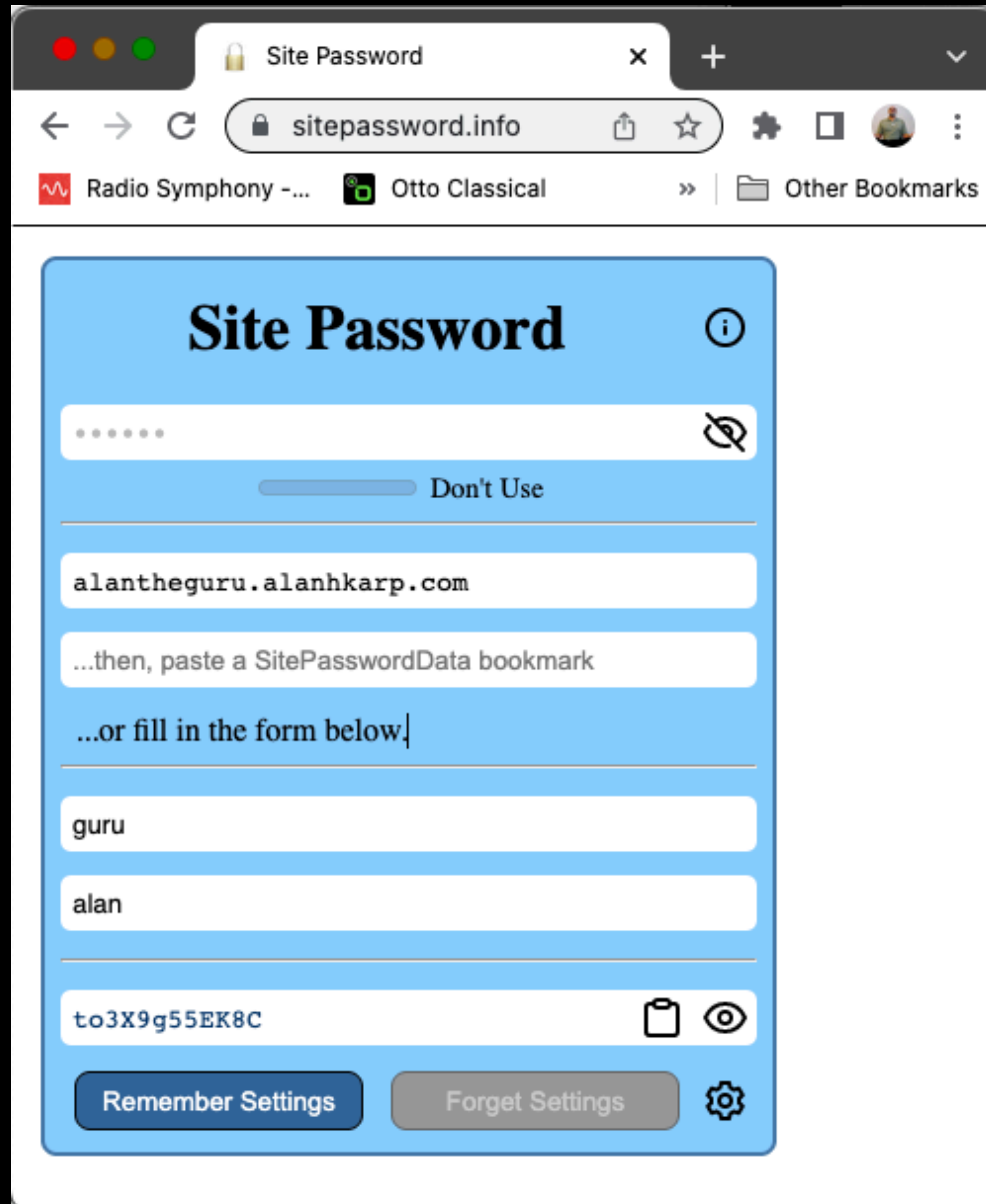
Generated site password

Remember Settings

Forget Settings

69





Site Password

sitepassword.info

Radio Symphony -... Otto Classical

Other Bookmarks

Site Password

.....

Don't Use

alantheguru.alanhkarp.com

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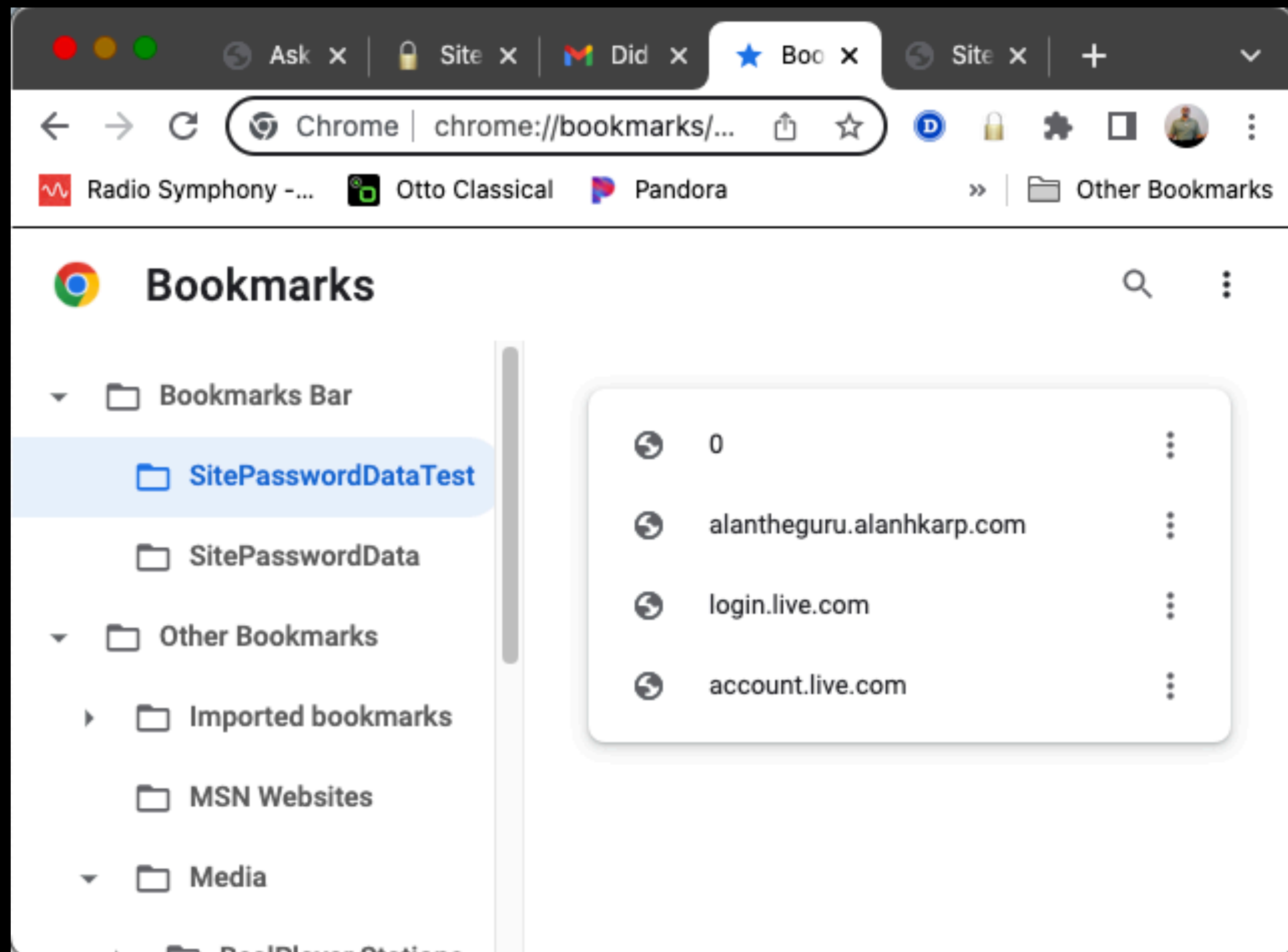
...or fill in the form below

guru

alan

to3X9g55EK8C

Remember Settings Forget Settings





Site Password

sitepassword.info

Radio Symphony -... Otto Classical

Other Bookmarks

Site Password

.....

Don't Use

alantheguru.alanhkarp.com

...then, paste a SitePasswordData bookmark

...or fill in the form below.

Guru

alan

to3X9g55EK8C

Remember Settings Forget Settings

Did you approve this \$1,000  
purchase?

Inbox x

Demo x



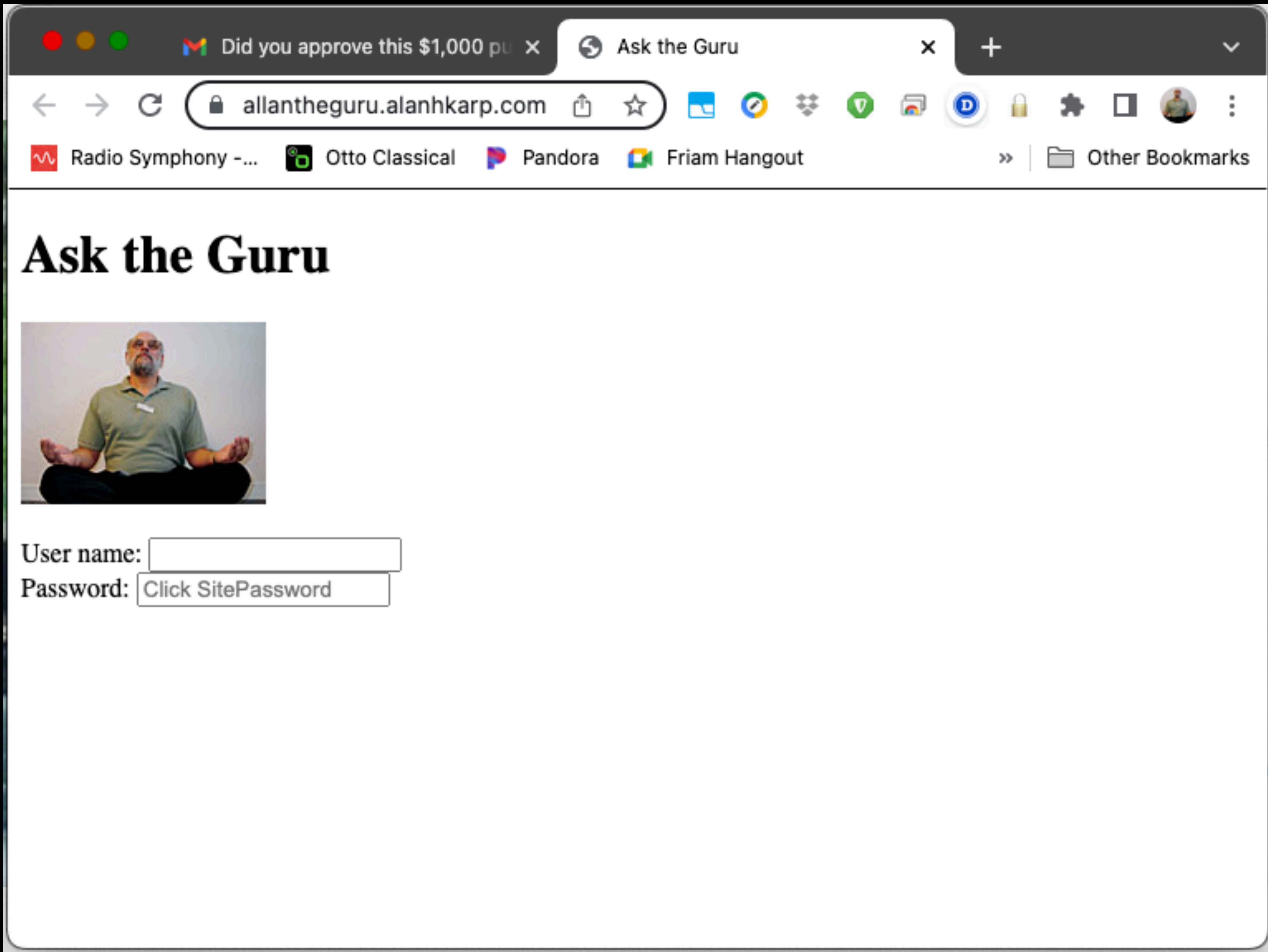
**Alan Karp** <alanh... Nov 11, 2022, 2:02 PM (11 days ago)  
to me ▼



Log into <https://alantheguru.alanhkarp.com> if you did not place this order.

-----

Alan Karp



Did you approve this \$1,000 pu x

Ask the Guru x


+ v

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Other Bookmarks

# Ask the Guru



User name:

Password:

SitePassword

allanthe guru.alanhkarp.com

Don't Use

guru

Your user-id for this site

Generated site password

Warning: The domain name  
allanthe guru.alanhkarp.com  
is different from what you saved for this site  
name. You may be at a fake site that is trying to  
steal your password.

Get me to safety!

Trust me. I know what I'm doing.

Clear Clipboard



Did you approve this \$1,000 pu x

Ask the Guru x

+

▼

allanthe guru.alanhkarp.com


Other Bookmarks

Radio Symphony -...

Otto Classical

P

Ask the Guru



User name:

Password:

SitePassword

allanthe guru.alanhkarp.com

.....

Don't Use

A unique nickname for this site

Your user-id for this site

Wk?q!@Y92p6B

Clear Clipboard

☐ Clear master password on use.

Password is 12 characters long

Starts with letter

Requires at least 1 lowercase letter(s)

Requires at least 1 uppercase letter(s)

Requires at least 1 number(s)

Requires at least 0 of /!=@?.\_-

Download Site Data

SiteData.html													
File   /Users/alan/Downloads/SiteData.html													
Radio Symphony -... Otto Classical Pandora Friam Hangout My Personal Web... Espeak on the Int... SiteGround Web H... Dale's Zoom >>   Other Bookmarks													
Site Name	Domain Name	User Name	Password Length	Start with Letter	Allow Lower	Min Lower	Allow Upper	Min Upper	Allow Numbers	Min Numbers	Allow Specials	Min Specials	Specials
Guru	alantheguru.alanhkarp.com	Alan	12	true	true	1	true	1	true	1	false	0	/!=@?._-
microsoft login.live.com		alanhkarp@outlook.com	12	true	true	1	true	1	true	1	false	0	/!=@?._-
microsoft account.live.com		alanhkarp@outlook.com	12	true	true	1	true	1	true	1	false	0	/!=@?._-

Browser tabs: Ask x, Site x, Did x, Boo x, Site x, +

Address bar: alantheguru.alanhkarp... | Share | Star

Bookmarks: Radio Symphony -..., Otto Classical, Pandora, » | Other Bookmarks

# Ask the Guru



User name:

Password: