



Hi, I'm Kathleen. Great to be here!

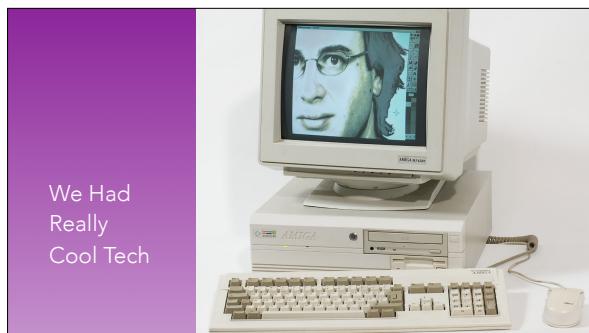
So... Origin Stories. We all have them. A story about how we got from one place in our life to another, and they're generally an interesting and winding road.



- I've been in the industry ...for a while (dinosaur).
- **Who here remembers when interactive was called multimedia? How about when UX wasn't even a thing? Anyone remember the days of the web as a bunch of blue links on a page?**
- Well, I do. Here's some backstory of where I've been. <click> (umass)



- UMASS Amherst, Mechanical Engineering major, <click>
- Math/Physics major, semester off, <click>
- BDIC. Multimedia Development. Hop on that train.
- Traditional, 2d and 3d computer animation, education classes, video internship and voila! Make your own major, yo.
- Back then we had some pretty cool tech. <click> (Amiga)



Like... the Amiga. <click> (quadra 700)

We Had
Really
Cool Tech



And the Macintosh Quadra 700. And rad software like... <click> (disney animation studio)

We Had
Really
Cool Tech



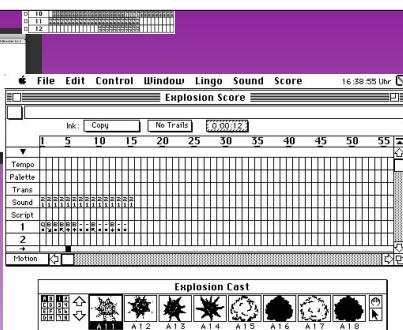
Disney's Animation Studio <click> (photoshop 2.5)

We Had
Really
Cool Tech

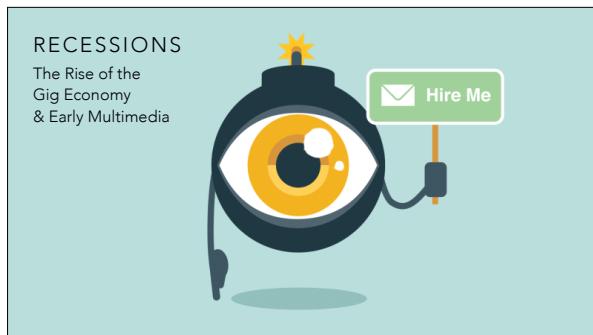


Photoshop 2.5, <click> (director)

We Had
Really
Cool Tech



Macromind Director <click> (infini-d)



Infini-D. And we stored our files... <click> (box of discs)

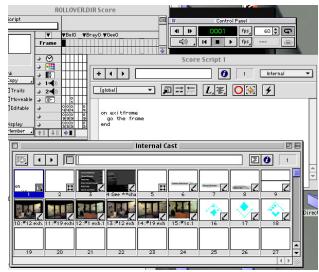
...like this. <click> (recessions, rise of contractor)

After graduating, it was pretty tough to get a full-time job right out the gate, thanks to a Bush war economy 90s recession.

Nobody wanted to hire full-time employees and pay benefits. You had to do the temp to perm thing to get your foot in the door anywhere, so ... I got a stint at a consulting company for a bit, making PowerPoint slides. At the same time, I took **another** workshop to get more multimedia skills. Thanks to a couple of classmates, I learned of a opening at a multimedia firm, so...



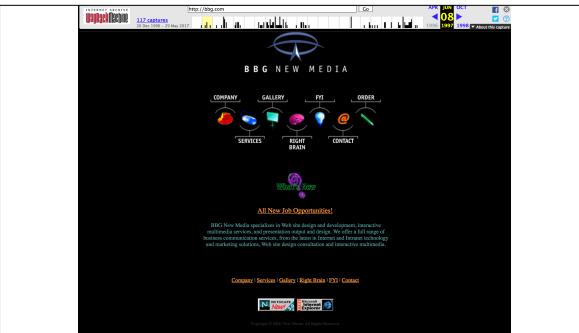
I got hired as a Multimedia Producer at BBG New Media. Those days, we were the cool kids on the block. We did things like... <click> (sales pitch cd-rom)



...interactive sales pitches on CD ROMs. Using Director. Then... <click> (flash)



...Flash was released. Then, we started making sites look a little bit better than blue links on a page(csc site). Using HTML4. Like this... <click> (bbg site)



...And maybe some CSS1 if possible. <click> (baby web)



The internet was in its infancy at the time, so if we had any questions about technical issues, we had to refer... <click> (books)

What Google?



...to these. And we had one or two browsers, my favorite was...<click>
(netscape)



...this (netscape logo). Working in the tech industry at that time was and fast paced. Just like today! In a different way of course, considering the newness of all things digital.

But with everything, there are drawbacks. <click> (cool work, long hours)

Exciting... But! Long Hours



Working in the tech industry can be exciting!

But with everything, there are drawbacks. <click> (men get promoted...)

Glass Ceilings



I was three years out of college, working 60+ hour workweeks and watching the leadership roles in the company go to the men, while the women of similar age and experience weren't even considered. They got a senior role, if they were lucky. So... <click> (freelancing)

ENTER... FREELANCING

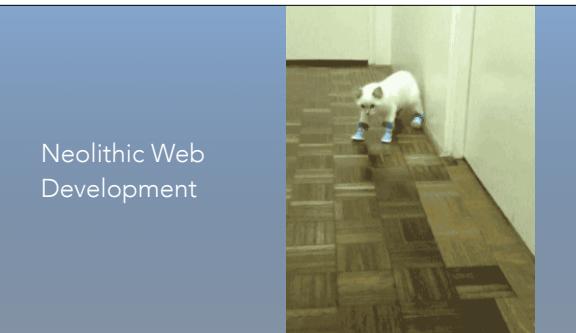
Enter freelancing <click> (jhancock)



Neolithic Web Development

First gig, web dev. Here. Doing this. (jhancock site). Target browser: IE 3. Which meant, no fancy just-released CSS2 or Netscape. So we had to use tables and spacer gifs to make our sites work. And some javascript rollovers.

Which kinda felt... <click> (kitten shoes)



...like this: (kitten shoes)
<click> (seattle interactions)



- It was a fun gig, but I moved to Seattle 8 months later and existed on projects like banner ads, more interactive pieces heavy on the visual design and motion graphics.
- Pretty much missed all of the HTML4 and CSS2 days. Kinda bummed, yet, kind of not considering all those growing pains.
- During that time I **did** make some nods towards personal marketing in-between gigs since that's what you do as a freelancer... <click> (under



Hanging Out
The Shingle

Like this masterpiece <click> (flash)



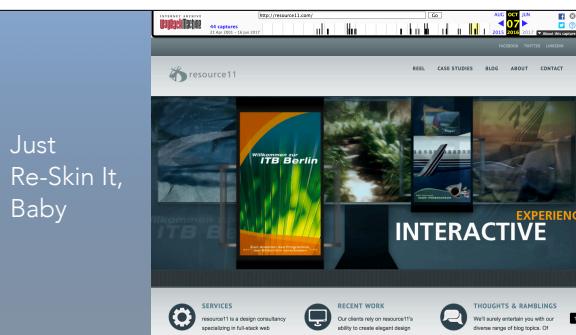
The
Flash Site

which, of course, had to become a flash site. Because... trendy. <click> (wordpress)



Word.
Press.

And then... Word. Press. <click> (re-skin)



Just
Re-Skin It,
Baby

- And the magical ‘buy-a-theme-and-reskin-it’ site, to avoid **any** sort of painful layout work.
- Like many freelancers, the work **can** be plentiful. Yet not always the work you’d like.
- Often pigeonholing can tend to happen.
- Since I could design and animate, and I admitted I knew the software, I got **lots of gigs creating presentations**, and occasionally working corporate



- for events like this <click> (EPG stage shot)



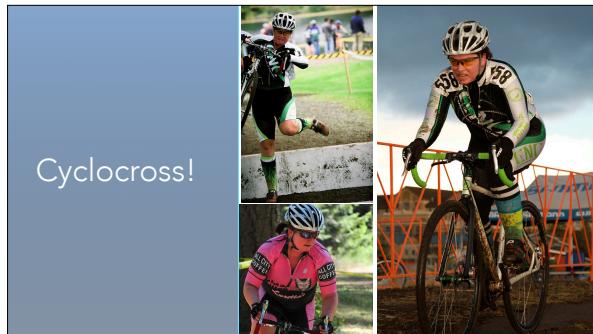
- ...but mostly I just did **lots. Of presentations.** And the glamorous backstage A/V crew part happened too infrequently.
- I was starting to feel like this <click> (homer monkey)



My work-life balance went out of whack, so I decided to take up... <click> (bike racing)



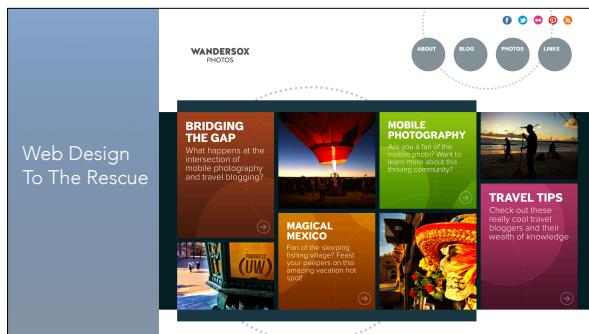
Bike racing. Pretty soon, I discovered my **favorite** type of racing. <click> (cyclocross)



- Cyclocross. Off-road obstacle course racing on a bike
- It definitely helped take the edge of the frustration of being in that work rut. <click> (web design to rescue)



- But I couldn't stop there.
- I also took a web design certification course in 2013 at the University of Washington to get back up to speed with web dev.
- Got a basic understanding of this fancy new field called UX, along with more modern web dev techniques. <click> (wandersox)



- I ended up designing something like this (wandersox), but I created a pretty ambitious site design and got mired in the complexity. Naturally.
- So I didn't build out more than a few pages. It was my first foray into CSS and if you're new to CSS... making layouts work is... <click> (homer blinds)



- ...tricky (homer blinds). And some of the things I wanted to accomplish with the site needed to use JavaScript, and I didn't know **that**. So I put the site on the back-burner for a while and picked away at the site as time allowed.
- And kept working doing too much of this. (backstage photo)



- and still feeling like this. <click> (Homer monkey)



...so I started racing bikes **more**. <click> (spam costume, nerds costume)



- In **costume**, this time!
- During one of those races, I was mentioning my frustration with CSS and my need to learn JavaScript to a fellow racing friend, Marcy Sutton. <click> (Marcy)

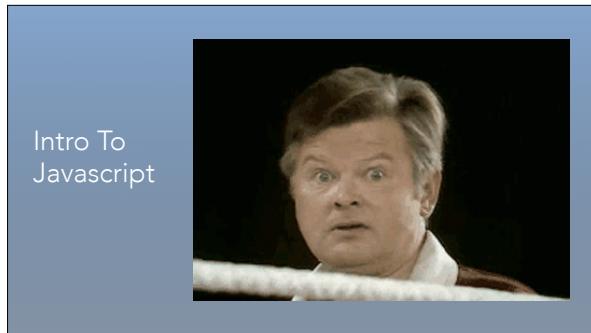


- She is a web developer and a chapter leader of this group called Girl Develop It. Marcy encouraged me to go to a workshop she was teaching. So... <click> (GDI Seattle)



...Intro to jQuery it was. **And** Intro to Sass. Then **back** to Intro to HTML/CSS. And RWD. **Aaaaaand** Intro to Javascript. **All in 6 months.**

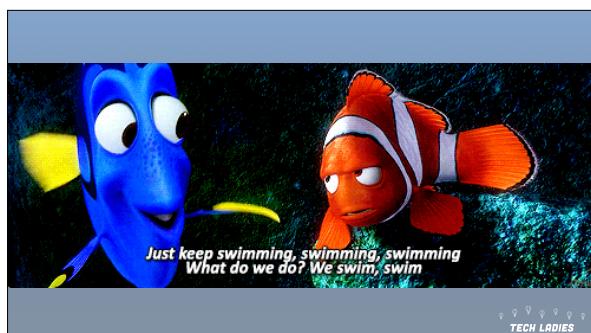
Admittedly, I got a **bit** into the weeds with Intro to Javascript.... <click> (benny hill)



Because for loops syntax were like... <click> (dog ball)



...and figuring out logic syntax got frustrating. However. <click> (just keep swimming)



No matter how frustrated I got, Marcy always encouraged to keep at it...
...So I did. (dory) <click> (move to boston)



GDI Boston
and more
Groupiedom



Then... I moved back home to Boston. And immediately joined. GDI's Boston chapter. And dove into Intermediate HTML/CSS, and Intro to Git, and Intro to Java... while taking Intro to Javascript.

And I **definitely** did this... <click> (natalie portman swan)



GDI Boston
and more
Groupiedom



...during that first intro to Java class that was held almost at the same time as the Intro to Javascript class.

But! There was that **one moment** in Javascript when... <click> (sloth)



GDI Boston
and more
Groupiedom



(sloth) it all started to click

And then I **finally** started to **love** web development... <click> (jungle book dance)



GDI Boston
and more
Groupiedom



...(jungle book dance)

I felt like I was **onto** something with this JavaScript. And **that** prompted me to sign up for ... <click> (GA wdi)

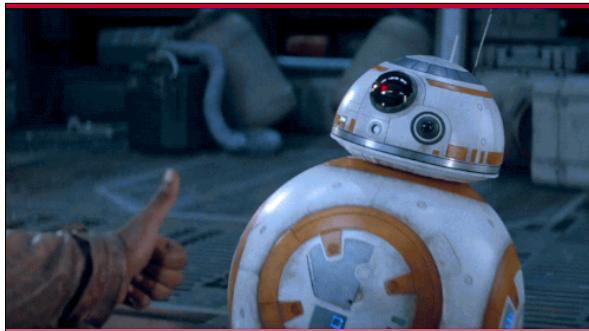


GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- General Assembly's Web Development Immersive program.
- And if you're familiar with bootcamps, that's **pretty** much 12 weeks of...
<click> (firehose)



- ...in terms of coding.
- Which eventually led me to getting hired... <click> (mit/bb8)



...as a UI/UX Engineer at MIT... so it was worth it
<click> (journey continues, give back)

THE JOURNEY
CONTINUES...

TECH LADIES

- Of course the journey doesn't end there, I was so thankful for how GDI helped me shift my career back on track, that I decided it was time to give back.
- I volunteered to TA HTML/CSS, while taking some more Git classes.
- And Angular! ...more TAing. Intro to UX? Javascript? React? Or ES6? ... more React?
- The list goes on, and the journey continues. <click> (most important part -

Because...
The Community



TECH LADIES

Because the most important part of this journey, is the women in all these communities, supporting each other. Helping each other find their own way.

And that's awesome, because we all need ... <click> (rad origin story)

...a rad origin story (ww shield) Thank you



TECH LADIES

THANK YOU.

TECH LADIES