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Dear Githubbers,

Listening to one of your own, Steve Smith, speak on how design has been critical to GitHub's success three years ago inspired me to make Github part of my daily work as a designer.

It has been the most valuable thing I have learned in my career. I am considered an evangelist and teacher on designing with Github at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, using it to do anything from publishing style guides, to running usability tests, to prototyping mandated disclosures. At a minimum, I think it helps designers to empathize and bond with the engineers they work with. At its best, it helps us enter into a spirit of iteration, and to learn why releasing early and often makes life easier for everyone.

As an old professor of mine, Smith tried to chide me into a design career six years ago. I didn't listen to him then, even though I was skipping class to play with the things I learned in his class and working for Notre Dame's web team. Instead I went to grad school for psychology and then later worked as a Mac Genius for Apple.

He convinced me three years later, when I was trying to find a way to connect an equal desire to design and code, based on an understanding of human thought, emotion, and behavior. The evening of his talk, I approached someone who would invite me to join the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's Design + Dev (D+D, yes!) team.

My experience has since then built on itself in ways that make me feel at home with user research teams and engineers alike. My psych training lets me translate between teams to define requirements and strategy. Apple taught me that aesthetically-compelling products take a lot of collaborative work between designers and engineers. In my current role, I've learned to design using an existing language, to communicate my work to my team, the Bureau, and American consumers. And because of the D+D's dedication to open source, I am an advocate for beautifully crafted, transparent, public data projects (hosted on Github, of course). More importantly, it means that I am prepared to eat my own dog food. It may or may not have also given me the audacity to ask Ben Balter for a lot of Octocat stickers.

I hope you head over to my Github repo and flip through my portfolio of design work produced for consumers, bureaucrats, the open source community, and even Steve Smith's old stomping grounds. Perhaps we can then chat over a cup of our favorite coffee or pint of beer, wherever we happen to be.

Thanks,
Desirée García