

Home

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layout: post

title: Marcus Quinn: Ecommerce Designer & Developer

author: Marcus Quinn

abstract: |

Ecommerce website designer & developer with interests in software, music, video, science, sailing, surfing & volunteering.

keywords: [Personal Website, Work, Ecommerce, Social Media, Links, Software, Hosting, Marketing, Communications, Copywriting, Technical Writing, Services, Preferences, Audio, Music, Video, Markdown, Plain Text, Links]

...

Introduction

—

Hello!

I'm guessing you're here to learn more about me, or find something I use or recommended, so here we go...

*My life's work, as instilled by my ever thoughtful mother, is simply to; **leave things better than I find them.***

The majority of my work is in ecommerce web design and development — creating and using a variety of software.

My focus is on creative communications and efficiency systems, designed to achieve more with less.

It seems fitting to make my home page a collection of useful links to all the places I share my experience, tutorials, published articles, templates, resources, and the tools I like working with.

*I hope my ongoing research & development can help you to **find in minutes what took me years** to refine.*

And, if you want to make a simple and free page like this too, there's a step-by-step guide and source-files below.

Thank you for your interest. If I can help in any way, that's the good karma I live by — and if I already have, please do subscribe & share.

Marcus

My online world & link tree

Latest work

Most recent first:

- [Brandlight](#)
- [Swanson](#)
- [Health Shop](#)
- [Health Monthly](#)
- [Authentic Produce](#)
- [Agent Design](#)

Personal links

My preferred method of personal introduction is by email to: hello@marcusquinn.com

All personal links are for reference if we already know each other. If we don't, please start with a follow on [Twitter](#) or [another platform](#), so I can learn a little about you too.

- [Website](#) – marcusquinn.com
- [Email](#) – hello@marcusquinn.com (preferred contact method)
- [Twitter](#) – twitter.com/marcuswquinn (follow for news & muse)
- [GitLab](#) – gitlab.com/marcusquinn (code & resources) & marcusquinn.gitlab.io (website mirror)
- [GitHub](#) – github.com/marcusquinn (GitLab mirror) & marcusquinn.github.io (website mirror)
- [Discord](#) – discordapp.com/users/marcusquinn#2650 (daily chat)
- [Instagram](#) – [instagram.com/marcusquinn](https://www.instagram.com/marcusquinn) (life)
- [LinkedIn](#) – [linkedin.com/in/marcusquinn](https://www.linkedin.com/in/marcusquinn) (networking)
- [Spotify](#) – spotify.com/marcusquinn (playlists)
- [SoundCloud](#) – soundcloud.com/marcuswquinn (productions)
- [YouTube](#) – youtube.com/user/marcuswquinn (subscriptions)

- [Gumroad](https://gumroad.com/marcusquinn) – gumroad.com/marcusquinn (resources)
- [Medium](https://medium.com/@marcusquinn) – medium.com/@marcusquinn (articles)
- [Reddit](https://reddit.com/u/marcuswquinn) – reddit.com/u/marcuswquinn (insights)
- [StackExchange](https://stackexchange.com/marcus-quinn) – stackexchange.com/marcus-quinn (insights)
- [Dribbble](https://dribbble.com/marcusquinn) – dribbble.com/marcusquinn (designs)
- [Zazzle](https://zazzle.co.uk/store/marcusquinn) – zazzle.co.uk/store/marcusquinn (branding)
- [Tumblr](https://tumblr.com/blog/marcuswquinn) – tumblr.com/blog/marcuswquinn (new)
- [Telegram](https://t.me/marcusquinn) – t.me/marcusquinn (chat)
- [Facebook](https://facebook.com/marcusquinn) – facebook.com/marcusquinn (musing)
- [Skype](https://agentdesign.slack.com/marcusquinn) – agentdesign.slack.com/marcusquinn (chat)
- [Slack](https://skype.com/marcusquinn) – skype.com/marcusquinn (chat)

Bookings

- [Calendly](https://calendly.com/marcusquinn) – calendly.com/marcusquinn
 - Assuming we are already corresponding.
 - Otherwise, start with a follow on [Twitter](#) or [another platform](#) and [email me](#) first.

Hobby links

- GitLab.com/ableton
 - My music & audio production templates, presets & education for electronic instruments.
- [Analytic Trading](#)
 - My high-frequency algorithmic-trading software development & education for financial instruments.
- [Bootstrap](#)
 - New site — *coming soon* — maybe. For in-depth software, services, product reviews & recommendations.

Experience & Preferences

If you want to do some or all of the things I do — or you need me or my good friends to help you — this is what we know and use...

Operating Systems

In order of experience:

1. Mac
2. WebApps
3. Windows
4. Linux,* Ubuntu* & Pop!_OS*
5. ChromeOS
6. iOS
7. Android

*Free (as-in freedom) Open Source Software (FOSS)¹

Software & Services

In approximate order of usage and recommendation:

Communications

- Discord (preferred chat app, private & secure)
- GitLab (preferred project & code management app)

¹ *Free (as-in freedom) Open-Source Software (FOSS) – is an ethical way to provide software services for; transparency, security, freedom, privacy, data-ownership, collaboration, developer credit & promotion – and simply good online citizen karma in return for the countless community projects you already benefit from that form the foundations a free and inclusive internet. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_and_open-source_software*

- [GMail](#) (auto-organised emailing & personal CRM)
- [Thunderbird](#)
- [Zero Bounce](#) (email validation)
- [Mailchimp](#) (mailing-list integrations)
- [Email Octopus](#) (more contacts for less cost)
- [Freshdesk](#) (multi-channel support)
- [Crisp](#) (website live chat & support)
- [Brandlight CMS](#)* (private, secure & encrypted)
- [Apple Messages](#) & [FaceTime](#) (private, secure & encrypted)
- [Telegram](#) (private, secure & encrypted)
- [Signal](#)* (private, secure & encrypted)
- [Whatsapp](#) (secure & encrypted)
- [Slack](#) (secure)
- [Facebook Messenger](#) (convenient)

Productivity

- [WebCatalog](#) (for all frequently used websites & webapps)
- [Ulysses](#) (for Markdown notes and used to publish this page)
- [iA Writer](#), [Scrivener](#) (for longer articles and creative writing)
- [Apple Notes](#), [Reminders](#), [Calendar](#) & [Siri](#)
- [Google Apps](#) (almost all of them)
- [Woven](#) (awesome multi-calendaring and time-planning)
- [LibreOffice](#)* (documents & spreadsheets)
- [Nextcloud](#)* (file storage)
- [JumpDesktop](#) (remote desktops & servers)
- [Guacamole](#)* (remote desktops & servers through a web browser)
- [Alfred](#) (search & navigating shortcuts)
- [Short Menu](#) (url shortening shortcuts for shorties)

Security

- [Enpass](#) (password manager & two-factor authentication)
- [Bitwarden](#)* (password manager & two-factor authentication)
- [Lastpass](#) (password manager)
- [Dashlane](#) (password manager)
- [PrivateBin](#)* (secure messaging across insecure platforms)

- [Authy](#) (two-factor authentication)
- [Cryptomator](#)* (secure files on insecure storage)
- [Strongbox](#)* (secure files on insecure storage)

Accounts

- [Xero](#) (accounts)
- [Quickbooks](#) (accounts)
- [Microsoft Dynamics NAV](#) (accounts & logistics)
- [Quickfile](#) (accounts)
- [Google Sheets](#) (accounts & analysis)
- [Odoo](#)* (accounts and other webapps)
- [Brandlight ERP](#)* (ecommerce)
- [Stannp](#) (print mailing)

Design

- [Adobe Photoshop](#), [Illustrator](#), [InDesign](#) & [Acrobat](#) (design)
- [Shutterstock](#) (imagery)
- [Zazzle](#) (branding)
- [Sketch](#) (interfaces)
- [Affinity Designer](#) (image processing)

Development

- [GitLab](#)* & [GitHub](#) (code & project management)
- [Wordpress](#)* & [WooCommerce](#)* – [PHP](#)* & [MySQL](#)* (default website stack)
- [Ghost](#) (recommended personal blog, publishing and membership platform)
- [Atom](#)* & [GitHub Desktop](#)* (coding and deployment)
- [Apple Terminal](#) (sometimes it's quicker)
- [Integromat](#) (API integrations)
- [Google GSuite](#) (identity and services management)
- [Microsoft Dynamics](#) (resource planning & data processing)
- [Orbis TaskCentre](#) (integrations)
- [Sequel Pro](#) (database design & analysis)

- [Transmit](#) (file storage & sharing)
- [Mountain Duck](#) (file storage & sharing)
- [Odoo](#)* – [Python](#)* & [PostgreSQL](#)* (alternative website stack)
- [Electron](#) (webapps)

Hosting

- [Hetzner](#) (website & webapp hosting, including network-level DDoS protection)
- [Scaleway](#) (website & webapp hosting, including network-level DDoS protection and affordable – Kubernetes)
- [Vultr](#) (website & webapp hosting — \$100 sign-up credit)
- [Upcloud](#) (website & webapp hosting — \$100 sign-up credit)
- [Digital Ocean](#) (website & webapp hosting, including managed Kubernetes — \$100 sign-up credit)
- [Microsoft Azure](#) (websites & databases)
- [Google Cloud Platform](#) (translation & data-processing (AI))
- [Amazon AWS](#) (when alternatives in the above don't exist)
- [GitLab](#)* & [GitHub](#) (code & project management)
- [Cloudron](#) (\$30 credit with code d28ae00540f92a76)
- [Backblaze B2](#) (file storage and backups — efficient alternative to Amazon S3)
- [Wasabi](#) (file storage — efficient alternative to Amazon S3)
- [Digital Press](#) ([Ghost](#)* hosting)
- [Updown](#) (website status & speed monitoring)
- [Tab Digital](#) ([Nextcloud](#)*) (file storage & sharing)
- [Google Drive](#) (file storage & sharing)
- [Dropbox](#) (file storage & sharing)
- [Sync.com](#) (file storage & sharing)
- [SparkleShare](#)* (git-based file storage & sharing)
- [Paperspace](#) (remote desktop clients)
- [iRedMail](#)* (email servers)
- [Runcloud](#)
- [Rancher](#)
- [Grafana](#)
- [Prometheus](#)

Marketing

- [Brandlight Ecommerce*](#)
- [Google Ads](#)
- [Microsoft Ads](#)
- [Google Merchant Centre](#)
- [Google Manufacturer Centre](#)
- [Amazon Marketplace](#)
- [Ebay Marketplace](#)

Analysis & Reporting

- [Google Analytics](#)
- [Google Search Console](#)
- [Google Sheets](#)
- [Microsoft Dynamics NAV & MSSQL](#)
- [Wordpress*](#) & [MySQL*](#) with [MariaDB*](#)
- [Matomo*](#)
- [Metabase*](#)

Domains & Network Management

- [Namecheap](#) (good if you need collaborative assistance too)
- [Ionos 1&1](#) (covers some other domain extensions)
- [Marcaria](#) (international domains others don't cover)
- [Sedo](#) (domain resale marketplace)
- [Cloudflare](#) (hosting direction & security, good if you need collaborative assistance too)
- [DNS Made Easy](#) (fastest DNS service)
- [DNSimple](#) (fastest managed DNS service)
- [BuddyNS](#) (backup DNS)
- [Amazon AWS Route53](#) (alternative DNS)
- [DNSPerf](#) (DNS performance & service comparison)
- [DNSFilter](#) (DNS-level user protection)
- [BunnyCDN](#) (fast and affordable Content Delivery Network for speeding up website access to audiences around the world)
- [X4B](#) (firewall as a service for hosts that don't have that)

- [Sercurius](#) (test your website & web app for security best-practice)

Payment Processing

- [Paypal](#) (default)
- [Adyen](#) (international)
- [Citypay](#) (alternative default)
- [Bitpay](#) (Bitcoin)
- [Coinpayments](#) (more cryptocurrencies)

Banking

- [Transferwise](#) (multi-currency-banking for lower exchange-rate costs)
- [Monzo](#) (multi-currency payments to save on exchange costs)
- [Blockchain Exchange](#) (the cheapest & safest way I know to buy Bitcoin and other crypto-currencies)

Music & Audio

- [Spotify](#)
- [SoundCloud](#)
- [MixCloud](#)
- [Apple Music](#)
- [Ableton](#) & [GitLab.com/ableton](#)
- [Logic Pro](#)
- [Splice Studio](#)

Video

- [Wondershare Filmora](#)
- [ScreenFlow](#)
- [FinalCut Pro](#)

- [After Effect](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [Vimeo](#)
- [Udemy](#)

Utilities

- [WebCatalog](#)*
- [Choosy](#)
- [Smooze](#) (faster scroll-wheel scrolling)
- [Backblaze](#) (unlimited backups)

News

- [New Scientist](#)
- [The Register](#)

Federated Publishing

- [PeerTube](#)* (**FOSS** alternative to [YouTube](#))
- [Mastodon](#)* (**FOSS** alternative to [Twitter](#))
- [Diaspora](#)* (**FOSS** alternative to [Facebook](#))
- [Pixelfed](#)* (**FOSS** alternative to [Instagram](#))
- [Textile Photos](#)* (**FOSS** alternative to [iCloud](#))
- [NextCloud](#)* (**FOSS** alternative to [Office](#), [Google Apps](#), [DropBox](#) &c)

How this page was made

This was all written in [Ulysses](#) with [Markdown](#), exported to HTML using [Ulysses Styles](#), and published to [GitLab Pages](#) hosting with [Cloudflare](#) domain security — all for free :)

Plain Text & Markdown

First a campaign for making [plain-text](#) writing your default — so your focus is on your content, and it is never restricted for portability by proprietary software, like Word and Google Docs, where it never looks quite the same on two different computers or applications.

Markdown

If there is *just one thing* I can recommend to you, and highly recommend that everyone can and should learn easily, it is writing in [plain-text](#) with the simplest possible formatting using [Markdown](#)!

Markdown variations

More advanced or industry-specific variations, include; [MultiMarkdown](#) (academic writing), [asciidoc](#) (code developers), [LaTeX](#) (maths & science), [fountain](#) (screenplays), [ABC notation](#) & [VexTab](#) (musical melody), [Tablature](#) (fretted instruments), [Drum Tabs](#) (percussion), [jTab](#) (guitar), &c.

Focused writing

It's also nice to write [Markdown](#) with a fixed-width font like [Courier](#), for the added bonus of feeling like a good old-fashioned typewriter — putting you in the mood, as an enthused wordsmith, for the craft of writing.

Mostly, you will only ever need plain & simple standard **Markdown**, as used to write this web page.

It truly is the best investment you can make in organising your notes, thoughts and publishing to be simple and transportable.

It is already commonplace in academic, programatic and creative writing. It has a written digital-literacy expectation, and necessity, for anyone working with subject-standardised information formatting to work with and share.

If you work with information, it will help you. If you have knowledge to share, it will quickly broaden your horizons and potential audience. It returns your focus to the quality, insight and value of your content to your audience.

Once you have a habit using **Markdown**, you will find your writing is faster — and your communication will be structured, with respect to the needs of your reader.

All you need and nothing you don't!

It really isn't *techie* or complicated either. Actually, it is less complicated than the infinite ways that you can use traditional word processing software — where the complexity of formatting and design options can distract from the quality and purpose of the content itself.

Markdown is just a few additional characters within normal writing, in a plain-text file format, that all plain-text editors can open, edit and save.

You may already use 1. numbered lists, * bullet points, *emphasis*, **importance**, #hashtags, :emojis: and @mentions, so you're half-way there.

There are an increasing number of applications and industries now preferring or insisting on **Markdown** text, because of this portability and reliability — so if you aren't already, I hope this page gives you a good starting point.

Then you can as easily export to **PDF**, **ePub**, **Mobi**, **Kindle**, **DocX**, **Static HTML** and publish to **CMS Blogs** like **Wordpress** & **Medium**, or your own web page like this, with **styling** appropriate to your medium and **audience**.

You already type in so many ways, and on various devices, so make **Markdown** your default. It's never been easier to share your knowledge, publish your ideas and build your profile as an authority on your favourite subjects!

Text editors

This is an areas that you might not have know you needed until you try.

Once you adjust to this way of looking at text, with a focus on the value and effectiveness of your communications, you can see how word processors can over-complicate writing, with more time spent on formatting.

Plain-text returns your focus to the successful communication of your knowledge, thoughts and creations.

If you aren't already a convert to plain-text writing and **Markdown** formatting, then I hope my research into many dozens of applications, to then recommend just a few of the best for you to try, will show you by example — because their specialist subject is in offering a self-explanatory application.

It will save you time, it can both save and make you money, and will open up possibilities for you in organising your research and ideas — to then publish and share your own unique knowledge and experience with those you wish to help.

If you hadn't guessed already, I am so confident in the value of learning this, I personally promise you it will be one of the best investments you ever make in what you can do with a computer. Try it! And **let me know**.

I'll start with the Mac & iOS apps I use, enjoy and recommend — in approximate order of usage...

Text editors for Mac

Ulysses (Mac & iOS)

- <https://ulysses.app/>
 - This is my go-to do-it-all app. All writing starts here now.
 - For organised Markdown, standardised noting, documenting, authoring and publishing.
 - Synchronised between your computer and other devices.
 - I wrote this whole page in [Ulysses](#) and exported the HTML using the [Ghost 2 Casper](#) theme from the [Style Library](#).
- <https://styles.ulysses.app/>
 - Favourite editor style: [Atom One](#).
 - Favourite HTML styles: [Ghost 2 Casper](#), [Simplicity](#), [Pro Sans](#), [Medium Style](#), [GitHub](#).
 - Favourite PDF style: [Standard Article](#).
 - Favourite ePub styles: [Simple](#), [Amazon KDP](#), [Gemmell Novel](#), [Meet Charter](#), [Half Way](#), [Medium](#).

*Atom**

- <https://atom.io>
 - This is used more commonly in code development but comparable as a text editor to [Ulysses](#) and [iA Writer](#).
 - It is vastly more powerful and extendable, although for some this might be at the expense of the focus that the above have for freeform writing, the beauty of Markdown's simplicity, and the convenience of background synching across devices.
 - Sometimes it's just more satisfying when the tool is designed for the job — but [Atom](#) is free, and a powerful option.

iA Writer (Mac, iOS, Windows & Android)

- <https://ia.net/writer>

- For focused writing, with a focus on focus!
- Distraction-free typing, grammatical highlighting and readability statistics.
- I proofread this page in [iA Writer](#) & [Hemingway App](#).

Scrivener (Mac, iOS, Windows & Android)

- <https://www.literatureandlatte.com/scrivener/overview>
 - For creative writing, novels, poetry, lyrics, broadcast scripts, screenplays, thesis, journalism &c.

DEVONthink (Mac & iOS)

- <https://devontechnologies.com/apps/devonthink>
 - For gathering research from many sources, in many formats, and mapping relationships between people, places and other entities.

Deckset

- <https://www.deckset.com>
- <https://ulysses.app/integrations/create-beautiful-presentations-deckset>
 - Presentations without Powerpoint.

Velum

- <https://vellum.pub>
 - **Beautiful** ebooks & paperbacks.

Text WebApps

For a collaborative-writing experience, similar to Google Docs and Office 365 online, and for free:

HackMD & CodiMD (Web or Self-Hosted, Collaborate)

- <https://hackmd.io> (private & public collaboration with brilliant documentation, templates and [tutorials](#))
- <https://demo.codimd.org> (shared — and a brilliant sample reference document to learn from)
- <https://github.com/codimd/server> (self-hosting)
 - Basically, Google Docs for Markdown – perfect for collaborating!
 - Being online-only, make sure you regularly download anything important so you have local copies to work offline.

StackEdit (Web, Cloud Sync, Collaborate)

- <https://stackedit.io>
 - Similar to HackMD & CodiMD above.

Hemingway App (Web & Mac)

- <http://www.hemingwayapp.com/>
 - Great for proof-reading.
 - The online version is free.

Text editors for other platforms

Followed by similar Windows & Linux apps that do almost the same thing, with of course some minor differences in features:

Joplin (Mac, Windows, Linux, iOS, Android)

- <https://joplinapp.org/>
 - The closest thing I could find to [Ulysses](#) on Windows, Linux, iPhone & Android.
 - The only one here with encryption-at-rest, which is particularly important if handling sensitive data like; personal, medical, financial or security information.

Typora (Mac, Windows, Linux)

- <https://typora.io/>
 - Similar to [Ulysses](#) & [iA Writer](#).

Zettlr (Mac, Windows, Linux)

- <https://www.zettlr.com/>
 - Similar to [Ulysses](#) & [iA Writer](#).
 - Focus on academic writing, based on the esteemed [Zettelkasten](#)² method of notation & citation.

Inspire Writer (Windows-only)

- <https://www.inspire-writer.com>

² Zettelkasten is German for “box of notes”, and has become a synonym for the guiding principles in gathering, organising, digesting and using notes in writing, with interesting further reading on the subject at: <https://zettelkasten.de>

- The best interface on Windows similar to Ulysses.

SmartEdit Writer

- <https://www.atomicscribbler.com>
 - The closest alternative to Scrivener on Windows.

Compare Markdown Tools

- <https://www.markdownguide.org/tools/>

There's a lot of choice, and that's the whole point, you can work in any or many plain-text editors with the same transportable and simplest possible file-format.

Start with the first in the list for your platform and see how you get on, if there's something missing, try another.

Let me know how you get on...

Make your own page like this

1. Download a copy of [my index.md page template](#) from GitLab, or start with a blank text file called `index.md`. (In [Ulysses](#) type `@: index` on the top-line to set the file name.
2. Choose your preferred text editor from those above. I'm using [Ulysses](#), as you well-know by now.
3. Write and refine all the things you think others might like to know about you and your unique experience.
4. Export a copy as HTML called `index.html`, using any style template you like (the apps above have many, either built-in or add-ons). You can use one app to write and another to export, if you like the editor in one and publishing styles in another, that's the point of [Markdown](#) being portable.
5. Create a free [GitLab.com](#)** account. On your [GitLab](#) profile page click + to create a new project, this one is called `marcusquinn.gitlab.io` as the naming convention recognised as my user page. [GitHub](#) uses the same convention with their `.io` Pages domain, eg; `marcusquinn.github.io`.
6. To the right of where it says Master, click + > New File, and upload your `index.html` file, `css` folder and `css.css` file, and `images` folder if you have images too.
7. In your project repository, click Setup CI/CD > Apply a template > HTML > Commit changes. This deploys your files and page setup.
8. It's now live on your `gitlab.io` (or `github.io`) URL!
9. Open the [GitLab Pages instructions](#), where you can find details on what your `gitlab.io` link is (something like `https://username.gitlab.io`), the first part being your username and add the relevant `/project-slug` if you have other project pages to publish as well.
10. In your GitLab project, go to Settings > Pages > New Domain to enter your domain name if you are using one, and follow their guide on how to setup your domain name.

That's it, your 100% free, easy and secure home page to grow with your learning and audience.

The reason we do this with a static page `.html`, and not a data-base driven content-management system is simple; it requires zero maintenance for it to remain secure forever – simply because there's nothing to hack when the pages and images you upload for public display are the only data on the host.

By using well-capitalised free services like [GitLab](#), [GitHub](#) (and [Namecheap Cloudflare](#) if you want to use your own domain name), it can stay alive forever on the `git***.io` domain — and with no payments ever needed to keep the `.io` URL versions of the sites live for as long as the internet itself — you can make as many free sites & pages as you like!

It's also a great way to make a free, and easy to maintain, **link-tree** page — to include in your social media profile, in a way that you own the data, and without any tracking, privacy issues, security worries or card details — ever.

You could make it multi-page too - but let's keep it simple for now as it's quite a nice format for that simple *link-tree* or a longer article on yourself and your interests.

And just add a [Namecheap](#) domain if you want to use your own domain name too, the `git***.io` domain will still work & live forever alongside, including if ever you stop renewing your own domain for any reason.

[GitLab](#) specifically also offers a succession planning feature too — should you wish someone to inherit your work — which is a subject for a longer post another day!

***Why GitLab in preference over GitHub?*

*One word: **ethics**. Its my primary guide to all decision-making. Open-source and transparency is simply more secure and efficient.*

I do use GitHub and other closed-source products too — but always keep an awareness of open-source alternatives, and aim to keep my content created and stored in open-formats with transparent-terms, to stay transportable between systems and platforms as they may evolve.

Thank you

If you made it this far, maybe you found something new?

Let me know how you get on, and if there's anything I can help with!

Source & Downloads

- [index.md](#) (written in [Ulysses](#))
- [index.html](#) (exported from [Ulysses](#))
- [marcusquinn.com.pdf](#) (exported from [Ulysses](#))

This page is just over 3,000 words, 2-days of writing and maybe 1-week refining. What will you share now you can easily publish your notes too?