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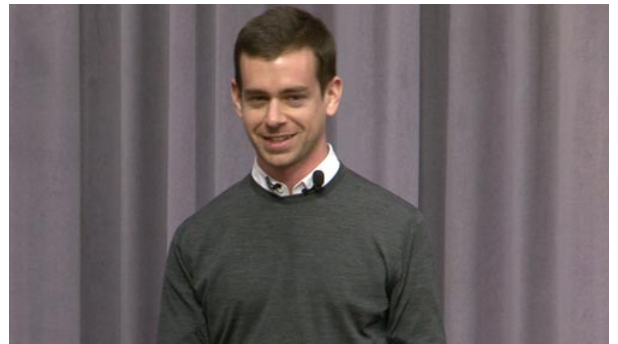
The Right Idea at the Wrong Time

Jack Dorsey, *Square*

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/2638/The-Right-Idea-at-the-Wrong-Time>

Square and Twitter Co-Founder Jack Dorsey describes the experience of having the right idea, but at the wrong time. In 2000, Dorsey had early ideas on how individuals could share updates across networks. He shares a humorous story of first trying out his idea on the original BlackBerry device, while visiting San Francisco's Golden Gate Park.



Transcript

That is really where a lot of my focus has been on. It's visualizing data, visualizing information, moving around in real time. I took that concept and eventually in 2000 realized that I had this beautiful picture of the city but it was all verticals. There were no people in it. Where are all the people in the city? That's when I started working on a very, very simple prototype based on some inspiration from Instant Messenger with the Away status and also a service called LiveJournal, which was a very simple journal blogging application that allowed you to compose a blog post and it would go to a friend's page. I also had the first BlackBerry because I was still working in dispatch at the time. It was called the RIM 850. It was basically just an email pager. But what it allowed is I could be anywhere in the world, anywhere in the city, and I could share what I was doing and maybe I could also see what other people were doing. So, I wrote some very simple software to receive an email from my BlackBerry and then send it out to an email list of some people I put on that list, with my friends and my family on it.

I got that done in about a day. Then, I went out to Golden Gate Park and I went to the Bison Paddock. We do have live bison in San Francisco, if you haven't seen it. They're awesome. And I typed out an email that said, "I'm at Golden Gate Park watching the bison." It went out to my service and was broadcast out to all these people. I merely recognized two things. First, no one cared what I was doing. [Laughter] Second, no one else had a BlackBerry. So, I was alone in my sharing and also receiving. So, I was getting my information back.

Wrong time, good idea, put it on the shelf.