

ART - BUSINESS - SCIENCE
Team - Group - Crew - Club

Have free time?
Looking for a project?

Well, so am I.
But then, I don't have anything specific in mind.
So, I'm open to suggestions.

Bonus points for having an interesting idea, but being an interesting person, who is capable of getting things done trumps all.

My skill base includes:

- Writing
 - Heavy
- Computers
 - Light
- Administrative
 - As a profession

The ideal project:

- Costs Nothing Down
 - If money is to be involved, I want it flowing in my direction.
- Has easily achievable milestones
 - Many small steps being easier to manifest than one giant leap of faith amongst strangers.
- Consists of an assembly of equals
 - If it's your ship, you can sail it.
- And has some hope of leading towards Fame and Fortune
 - Or at least, some public good.

If interested, drop me a line. And let's get the conversation started.

(Note: I don't need to be the 'leader' and it's not important that we start something new. I can be a joiner if you've already got something going that you're willing to share.)

“Oh, wait! Hold the phone! What's this down here? The fine print?”

“Yeah. Nothing major. Just that I won't sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement and we don't have a partnership, contract, agreement, or anything like that until... well, until we meet in person and sign something in honest to goodness wet ink. You know, if and when we ever do. But not before loads of emails and a fair bit of collaboration to test the waters.”

“So basically, you're just going pump me for all the information you can get and then steal my idea?”

“Sure, if that's the way you want to look at it, then sure. I admit it. I plan on watching you in action, ascertaining your level of mastery, and seeing if we can work together. But if we don't click (or the will to perfection for the project at hand is not there in both of us) and by some magical coincidence I like the idea, then sure, I'm going to feel free to pursue that idea and incorporate it into my life and work and goals and do whatever I want with it to the fullest extent that I am able. And if you want to call that stealing, then fine, call it stealing. I call it sharing. But the truth is, I don't respect raw ideas very much, anyway.”

“And that's why you steal them?”

“No, look. Let me tell you a story.”

“I don't have time for a story.”

“Sure you do.” I mean, you've read this far. “And it's a good story. Well, actually, it's a mediocre story, one I wrote a long time ago, one of those zombie things, but you know, way before everyone else was writing about zombies.”

“I bet.”

“No it's true. And I called my story *Zombie Nation*.”

“What a second, isn’t that the name of that big time zombie website?”

“Yeah, I know. Odd coincidence that, but I came up with the title before I heard about the website.”

“Oh, I bet.”

“Hey, it only gets worse. I called the main zombie character in my story Stubby...”

“On account of how his fingers were cut off.”

“Yes, exactly.”

“I think I saw that in a video game, once.”

“You did. And not just there. Stubby is the number one name for zombies in fiction. Coincidence?”

“I think not.”

“Or then again, maybe it is. Maybe it just sort of makes sense to call a zombie with missing appendages Stubby. And likewise, since this little story does have a moral to it, maybe that idea of yours, that one you think is so grand and deserving of a NDA just sort of makes sense. Heck, maybe it’s just the next logical step in the natural progression of technology or some such thing.”

“You’re just saying that because you don’t want to sign a NDA.”

“Well, true. But I tell you what; you sign my NDA...”

“OK! There! See, I’m no thief. I don’t mind signing a NDA.”

“OK. Fair enough. I’ll just check your ID, make sure the signature matches, and everything’s in order. And then, my idea (drum roll please) is to take the web to the next level, make the killer app, a social media interactive site that uses dynamic processing of user generated content to leverage...”

“What a second! You’re just prattling off one buzz word after the next. If I didn’t know better, I’d say you were just saying the first thing that popped into your head.”

“Well, you should know better, and that’s exactly what I’m doing. And as an implementable idea, it’s totally worthless. But as a contractual document, that NDA is golden. You try, you just try, to develop anything close to a... to a... well that thing I just described, and

if you're just the least bit successful, well, now that you've signed my NDA, I can sue you for half."

"Half?"

"Yeah, half. We're partners, right? Worked together on a project without an otherwise stated formal agreement, and the default name for that arrangement is a Partnership, my friend, and the default compensation level for a party of two in a partnership is a fifty-fifty split, and that means half. Eh, but maybe I'll be kind and settle out of court for a few million or whatever I think your lawyer's fees will add up to, so it's not worth your time to fight my nuisance lawsuit."

"But you only came up with the idea. And it sucked! It's worthless! And you never did anything after that."

"Yeah, I know. But the law doesn't distinguish between good ideas from bad, meaningful contributions from crap. A partnership is a partnership. And besides, sometime the idea IS the hard part..."

"But that just goes back to what I've been saying. Unlike your random nonsense, my idea is good; it's golden. So great, it's deserving of a full blown Non-Disclosure Agreement."

"I can feel your passion. You're probably right. And based on that, I'm going to recommend that you contact a lawyer (not that they'll sign an NDA themselves -- hey, they're not fools -- but if you pay them, they'll write a real nice NDA for you and recommend you get everyone to sign that sucker before you pitch your idea to them, so you'll have the pieces in place for a lawsuit if it comes to that, which is the only thing a NDA gives you in the first place: the right to sue). But really, more important than all that, I recommend you patent that fantastically brilliant idea of yours and start employing folks on a work for hire basis so you own it all. You're obviously sitting on a gold mine."

"Well..."

"But you're not ready for that step, are you?"

"No. Not really. I still need to dot a few I's, cross a few T's, and work out a few bugs."

"Like, for instance, how to actually implement that idea of yours, you know, make it work, the patent-able part of it all?"

"Yeah."

“Of course, for most things that I’m interested in, patents don’t even apply. Recipes, artwork, and story lines are not patent-able (and though computer code is patent-able, writing even the simplest program without infringing on someone else’s existing patent could well be nigh impossible in this day and age, but that’s a whole different can of worms). But to take it all a step further, most aspects of art aren’t even copyright-able: the concept, for instance, which in the world of art is the Big Idea, is not a protect-able thing. But then, that’s the brilliant part of this entire thing: that non-protect-able part gives us the perfect place to start on any collaboration: neutral ground from which to flourish.”

“And how’s that? Give me an example?”

“Well, lots of folks that I talk to say they’re a photographer or an artist or something. And I think it might be interesting to do a joint project with one or more of them (or even another writer, physicist, programmer, or whatever), some sort of collaboration that leveraged our respective talents, but that came together as a greater whole. Perhaps we could start by tossing out generic ideas (where we’d start on our own, if working solo) and then refine those ideas in light of the others point of view, perhaps putting together some sample copy or project or art...”

“And then, if it didn’t work out, you’d have their art and you could steal it?”

“And they’d have my writing (or insight or effort or whatever I’m bringing to the table and contributing). But then, it’s not like they’d own it or have an interest in it (especially if the thing in question isn’t own-able in the first place). For example, if a person brings a picture to the table, then they own the copyright to that picture. And it doesn’t matter if they show it to someone else in an effort to form a collaboration or not. And by the same token if I share words, well, those are my words, and I own the copyright on those words.” (Yes, even if I post them out on the open on *{that list that Craig manages}*, though this gets a little more complicated.) “And if things don’t work out, then we can go our separate ways. And there is no ownership of the other’s contribution, no lasting liability towards a stranger, none whatsoever. They can find new words. I can find new artwork. I don’t have to scrap what I’ve done and they don’t get to own half of it. But you know the truth of the matter is,

if my words or their artwork is so interchangeable that they are easily replaced, then there probably wasn't much value to the relationship in the first place; it wasn't really a collaboration. But then, if it is obvious that there is value and things are clicking, then that's when you sign a contract and formalize the entire thing with clearly defined relationships, ownership rights, obligations, and that all important clause: the terms of dissolution."

"I suppose that sort of makes sense. But that's stories and art, business ideas are different."

"Yeah and no."

"Uh-huh, here it comes. I'm wise to you, now. You're going to say something slippery right about here, aren't you?"

"Slippery? Eh, maybe. I'm a word guy. Using words in creative ways is the name of my game. But I tell you what would really be deceitful..."

"Yeah, what's that?"

"Not telling you any of this and just screwing you over any way I could. But the fact is, I want to work with you, the next guy, whoever comes along who looks like they might add value, you know, winners. But a person who just has a good idea (even a great idea) and then says, 'Well, that's my bit, that's the idea, now it's all on you,' ain't a winner. They are a leach. I got no time for them or their foolish ideas about NDA's. But a winner? Now, that's something else, because a winner is somebody who is willing to work the hardest for their idea, you know, because it's their idea, and they love it, feel passionate about it, want it to succeed, and are willing to suffer for their art, idea, scientific experiment, business adventure, or whatever and make their dream a reality. Well, a person like that, you don't just throw by the wayside. That person is your best asset; and flat out, you nurture them as best as you can. And if they have a shortcoming you find a way to fill in the holes without cutting them out, because in the end, they are the project."

I would put it to you that:

You're a winner!

I'm a winner!

And we should do whatever it takes to nurture each other as best we can as long as we can!

So as they say, maybe you've got an itch I can scratch.

Where are you at?

What are you working on?

What's the next easy to implement step?

And/or where would you like to begin?

In short, what are you willing to share?

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