

Forum:[Hack Forums](#)

Thread: [Steve's Testimonial ~ A Tribute to My Friend](#)

Steve - September 27, 2017, 11:43 am

My Journey

Preface

While my journey on Hack Forums officially began on June 12th, 2015, I actually had been vaguely aware of the site for at least a year prior. I had met my now best friend through a mutual friend. As we started to spend more time together every now and again he'd mention something either directly or indirectly about Hack Forums. I never really knew what he was talking about and just figured it was some hobby he was into. I had heard from a few of our mutual friends that he was the 20th most reputable member and a big name on this site, which I thought was cool but didn't really understand anything about it.

The Beginning

Eventually we became roommates and he made me make an account. He'd bring it up to me every now and again so I finally caved and signed up. I actually thought it was pretty interesting and spent my time on HF mostly in Education Nation helping members with math. I thought it was neat how when I made some sort of progress on my account, such as making a post or gaining a rep, that that progress would be updated on all of my previous posts as well. As you can probably guess, this was the first forum I had ever been a part of. I built up a decent reputation fairly quickly for a new member, but then entered a brutal semester in the fall and went inactive until March 2016.

My Return

In March finally had more time to devote to hobbies, but at this point I don't think I could call HF a hobby. I had only really been active for 3 months and really only signed up because my friend made me. I did enjoy the site when I was on it and a few times my friend expressed interest (or 'pride' - if you will)

in how I was actually building my account, so I figured I'd start activity up and maybe one day my account could be comparable to his.

With his mentoring I was able to get approved for Ub3r only 2 months later in May of 2016. During the time from March-May I was learning much about how the site operated and the dynamics between members. This wasn't just a bunch of random people posting, this was a community - a network of users,

each of whom built an online identity around themselves. With awards, account stats, signatures, and avatars, it was easy to recognize users who even changed their names. It's hard for me to put into words, but each user is unique and more than just a random post online. This is something I still find most fascinating about this site.

Cracking Prestige

During that time I had asked my friend about how prestige worked. He told me that there's a formula that calculates it but it hadn't and won't be released, but that some members were trying to derive it. Apparently he had tried to crack it a few times a few years back.

I told him that we should try to figure it out. I thought that with my background in math and his experience in coding we might be able to pull it off. I mentioned this a few times but he never seemed to take the offer seriously, so I just started to do it on my own.

At the end of May 2016 I moved away for a 10 week internship, but still had plenty of time to devote to HF. My focus now was on collecting data and trying to figure out what factors went into the prestige formula. After I had actually made some progress I told him what I was doing. I showed him where I was at and he finally took it seriously and joined in helping me. I was away for most of that summer, but we collaborated over skype and messenger and eventually refined our formula to the point where we were convinced and ready to make a thread claiming we cracked it. I wrote up the thread for us ([which you can read here](#)), posted half of it, and sent him the other half to post. After a few days Omni finally visited the thread and confirmed that we had figured it out. This was a huge accomplishment for us and we stayed up until 5 am replying to posts and celebrating via messenger with each other.

My Guide

This was a big step in my HF career and I was unsure of what to do next, so in the meantime I just kept being active. I had remembered that my friend had mentioned a few times that he had 2 threads that are stickied on the forum but never received the Sticky Man award. He was light-hearted about it and said it in a joking manner, but I could tell that he really wanted it. I had already been working on a thread for Education Nation and told him that I want to make it High Quality enough to get stickied. Again, he didn't seem to take this too seriously, for how could I get one if he couldn't do it?

Unfortunately my friend went inactive that August. He was still around but has yet to return to Hack Forums. I now had to prove that I could be successful on my own. Eventually I perfected the thread and posted it [here](#). It ended up getting stickied in September, which was another great accomplishment. The award was secondary, I really wanted to see if I could be a valuable member and just contribute to the forum in general, and this helped prove that.

Mentor

I was in the middle of my Fall 2016 semester, but this time I was able to remain active on HF. At this point I wasn't working on anything specific for HF,

but just posted around where I could and started learning the rules and helping out in RANF, and eventually was promoted to Mentor in January 2017. Since then I have been helping out moderate the forums and tried to contribute in any way that I could. I've remained active through the present day doing what I can around the forums. For a brief period I joined the Wiki Team as a Journalist, but found it wasn't for me.

Conclusion

It's only a matter of time before my friend returns. When that happens I hope to blow his mind with how far I've come. My friend has not had an easy life, Hack Forums was and is his escape - another identity that not many people understand. I could see the joy and appreciation in his eyes when I

started taking the site seriously. Somebody who he could share this world with. I genuinely enjoy contributing to Hack Forums, helping people, and learning, but what drives me most is showing him I understand and we can both be the best we can be here.

This is only the beginning of my journey. I am so thankful for this site not only for the resources and community it provides, but for strengthening a friendship that I truly hold dear.

None of this would have been possible without my best friend, and so the very least I can do is tribute this testimonial to him.

Thank you.

[Xerotic](#) -