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Rivalry - December 20, 2017, 3:17 pm

Hi all, I'm Rivalry. Probably most people won't remember me, but upon reflection HF has had an inordinately large impact on my life and I wanted to drop a quick note here saying thanks.

I first found HF in 2011 when I was looking for Minecraft griefing clients. You had to register to be able to see the download links, so eventually (in January 2012) I did - and here I am now. I was inactive for quite a few months until a friend recommended I give HF another try, so I came back. In the interim I'd become interested in graphic design: I'd seen cool YouTube designers (anyone remember Apex Predator? Stratzeh? Cenz?) and wanted to make awesome stuff like they did.

I practised design every day, pretty much. At first I'd give my work away for free, but then I saw that some users on HF were making money from their work and thought I'd give it a shot too. I remember getting my first payment of like \$5 or something; it seems totally inconsequential now, but back then I was grinning like an idiot for hours and couldn't believe it. It was the first money I'd ever made for myself and it was amazing to see my creativity and work vindicated and appreciated by somebody!

It wasn't all good, of course. I had a lot of setbacks on the way, and had to learn to take harsh feedback and criticism from people who didn't think I was any good, and just come back stronger when my work got trashed. But the highs kept me motivated and I kept practising, and eventually I got invited to an arts group called Fly by Night - that meant so much to me as a young, 16-year old guy trying (and mostly failing) to get better at design. The feedback and inspiration I received from that group's members really pushed me to better myself and improve.

I've never made loads of money from design: that's never been my objective. I was more interested in improving and learning skills and making work I was proud of. I'm happy to say I'm very proud of most of my work for clients on HF - I always tried my best!

I'm now 20 and six months away from graduating from university. My time on HF has given me design skills, which helped me to pick up multiple job offers from some of the largest advertising agencies in the world: I was one of only 6 people (out of 1400 applicants) to be offered a full-time role at AMV BBDO, the UK's largest ad agency! In large part this is directly because of HF: few other candidates can point to a portfolio as extensive and business-oriented as I can, because I've been working with live clients for years. But my time here has also put me in contact with lots of very industrious and hard-working people roughly my age. That motivated me so much. To be able to see people like me making money doing things they love and producing (sometimes ?) quality products/services really inspired me through my teenage years to be better, to push myself, and to learn as much as I could. It also gave me an insight into the world of cyber-security, in a strange way. Learning the rudiments of pentesting, stress-testing, keylogging, doxing/detracing, encryption etc by working closely with these people on their design projects was, looking back, a formative moment in my life. I've turned down my offers from advertising and I'm now pursuing a career in cyber-security consulting with one of the UK's largest and most prestigious consultancies, which will lead to an extremely lucrative and (hopefully) very rewarding career. I can't wait to start!

This would never have happened if, six years ago, I hadn't been looking for a Minecraft griefing client and stumbled across HF. So thank you, Omni, for building a site which allows people to network, share knowledge, and build far more than would ever be possible alone. I hope you know

how many lives this site touches and - just occasionally - changes every day. And thank you also to the members, to everyone I've ever worked with or talked to or even admired from a distance, for being there to motivate and teach me to be a better, more rounded person. Thanks for your money (hehe), your criticism, your support, your knowledge, your experience. It's changed the course of my life for the better :)