



Jack Dorsey Goes to Back to School

Students at a New Jersey prep school were treated in May to a question-and-answer session with Jack Dorsey, the co-founder of short-messaging service Twitter Inc. and of mobile payments company Square Inc.

In the session with students at the Pingry School, the 35-year-old Mr. Dorsey discussed how he splits his time between two fast-growing start-ups, his childhood fascination with maps and dispatch technology, and how he knew he was onto something with Twitter. Hollywood agent (and Pingry alum) David Bugliari arranged for the visit and hosted the Q&A session.

According to a transcript provided by Pingry to The Wall Street Journal, Mr. Bugliari mentioned that Mr. Dorsey teased him about the age of the operating system on his Apple computer.

Here are some edited excerpts from Mr. Dorsey's session at Pingry, from the school's transcript:

On the moment Mr. Dorsey knew Twitter was going to be big:

"When we first launched Twitter, two days afterwards it was the weekend....My phone starts buzzing and I get this message and it says from Twitter, and it says earthquake, and then I actually feel something like that immediately. That was a huge moment for me because what it indicated was that, with the communication

from the technology, it could be much faster than the seismic quake.... I knew that other people were out there experiencing the same thing and the world suddenly feels very small.

On Mr. Dorsey's introduction to computer programming during his childhood in St. Louis, Mo.:

"I would look at maps and I would plaster these maps all over the walls in my bedroom, and my parents thought I was the weirdest thing ever....My parents got a computer in 1984, when I was 8 years old...Eventually, I learned how to program it, and the first thing I wanted to program was a map, and so I learned how to draw a map on the screen....My parents also had a police scanner, and they also had a CB radio, and these were pretty active in St Louis, Missouri, so I would listen in and I would hear ambulances, and when you listen to these ambulances they are constantly reporting three things: They report where they are; where they are going; what's going on...I could actually plot the ambulance moving through the city—I could watch it. Then I hooked up more ambulances, I hooked up police cars, taxi cabs, and black cars, and, eventually, I had this living breathing system of the city."

On how he can work at two companies, Square and Twitter, at once:

"First of all, we have an amazing leadership team at both companies....That's my number one job—to make sure we have the best people in the roles that really bring the company forward....Number two is just organizing time...I kind of 'theme' all my days. Monday is focused on management....We have our directional strategic meeting for both companies on that day. Tuesday is focused around our products....Wednesday is for marketing and communications, and growth. I try to arrange all of my external meetings on Thursdays. This includes meetings concerning partnership and anyone we have to meet outside of the company. And then Friday is focused on the company and the culture...Friday night through

Sunday morning is my time to go with friends, have dinner, go hiking, visit schools....
I spend about 8 hours a day at each company."

Dorsey discusses his parents' meet-cute:

My father, when he was 19 years old, opened a pizza restaurant with his best friend that was called Two Nice Guys. They were two nice guys. My father was from St. Lawrence, so he loves meat of all kinds—so his pizza was the Tim Special, which was all meat. It didn't even have tomato sauce. So the pizza restaurant started doing very well, and they wanted to make sure they maintained the business and also maintained their friendship as they grew, so they made one rule which was that they would not date the wait staff. They had to hire people. The first person they hired was my mom. The week after she was hired, my dad fell in love with her and went to his best friend and said, "I fell in love with this girl. Marcia. I broke the rule. The business is yours." I was born ten months later.

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