Burda - we are over 12,000 people, all with very different, interesting tasks. In the interview series “10 questions for...” we introduce employees from various areas of the company, so you can get to know us even better.

Today, we talked to Jeremy Tillman, President Ghostery. Read about what drives Jeremy, what he’s proud of and what he wouldn’t want to miss when he comes to the office in the morning.

What exactly are you doing at Hubert Burda Media?

Ghostery is an affiliate of the Burda majority investment Cliqz. As president, I lead our teams in New York City and Tallahassee, Florida. We build digital products to protect the privacy of internet users throughout the world and create transparency in the opaque world of online tracking both for consumers and professionals. This month, we are celebrating the 10th anniversary of Ghostery. In 2009, Ghostery was the first anti-tracking solution that allowed everyone to easily block unwanted scripts and cookies that leak data about their website visits to third parties. We are proud that we helped make tracking protection a mainstream technology that is widely available on all major browsers, from Mozilla’s Firefox, to Apple’s Safari, and now even by Google Chrome. For the past 10 years, Ghostery has been a
pioneer in privacy protection and is looking forward to a future where we continue to be at the forefront of innovation, whether that means using artificial intelligence in novel ways to fight the most sophisticated tracking technologies or expanding the reach of Ghostery to protect your entire device and beyond.

**When and how did you come to Burda?**

I joined Ghostery in October of 2014 and have seen it progress through many phases of its lifecycle, including getting acquired by Cliqz International GmbH in early 2017, which is when I joined the Burda family.

**If you had to describe Ghostery with only three words...?**

Ghostery protects privacy.

**Which project or initiative makes you particularly proud?**

In 2018, Ghostery won the SXSW Interactive Innovation Award in Privacy & Security for Ghostery 8, the most advanced version of our popular privacy tool. Ghostery 8 brings together the full power of the privacy technologies developed by Ghostery and our parent company, Cliqz, based on a shared vision of privacy protection.

**Which competencies are needed for your job?**

When I was a product manager, I felt like I had to be a jack of all trades but a master of none. That's not entirely fair to product managers – we have our own craft and it takes time and skill to master – but being a good product manager means that you can look at the big picture and understand all the different processes that go into building a great product, including design, engineering, QA, support, and marketing. Part of your job is recognizing the strengths and expertise of your teammates and helping bring it all together to help you achieve your product and business goals. Being President isn't much different, except now I need to see a big picture that goes beyond our products to include things like operations, HR, and finance. Like a good product manager, though, my job is to help the experts within Ghostery execute their roles well in the pursuit of our larger organizational goals.

**What is the next big goal you are striving for?**

Our next big goal is the launch of Ghostery Midnight, a new product that we’re launching in fall of 2019 that offers device level protection for Windows and MacOS. For the first time, you will be able to protect your privacy not just in your browser, but in all the applications that run on your desktop computer.

**Which was the most valuable advice for your life or career?**

In both your life and in your career, where you start isn't where you finish. I began my career as a structural engineer with an advanced degree but, two years into my young career, the world was rocked by the financial crisis, construction work around the world screeched to a halt. So I became unemployed and suffered another stroke of fate from the sudden death of
my father. I was forced to take stock of what was important in my own life and blaze a new path forward in my career. In that process, I decided to take a low-paying internship in New York City at a small tech startup and that was the first step among many in finding my professional passion and forging a new career in digital product management, a direction that ultimately brought me to Ghostery and to eventually become its president.

What would you advise young professionals who want to start a career in your industry?

If you'd like to get started at a digital privacy company, or any tech company for that matter, look for entry-level positions that let you get your feet wet, including internships and junior positions. These let you get your foot in the door, observe the different roles at the company and determine which is the best place for you to make your start. Once you figure this out, you can identify the role you want to grow into and the skills you need to get there. This process can require multiple steps over many years, but, in less time than you think, you will incrementally build out the skills and expertise you need to carve out a successful career in tech.

What is indispensable in your everyday work?

Because our team is so collaborative, we depend on communication tools like Slack, Skype, Zoom, and even old-fashioned email to keep the wheels turning on the Ghostery machine.

How do you switch off from work and enjoy your free time?

To turn off my brain, I find the time to swim with a competitive masters team, which forces me to stop thinking about work and reminds me that I can always be in better shape. When I’m looking to relax, I always enjoy sitting by the pool leisurely and reading a book. And of course, with a 5-month old baby boy, my wife and I are often fully switched into parent-mode, which is wonderfully exhausting.

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