



Supporting PechaKucha's worldwide event series as it doubles in size

It started with a flight from Japan. In 2010, PechaKucha hired Table3 to offer a global search for a development shop capable of launching a website to manage and promote the international storytelling brand. In the intervening years, our partnership has grown from website development to product partner to launching the brand's first iOS app. PechaKucha has also grown. When we started, the talks were in roughly 100 cities. Now, they're in over 1000. Here's how we've helped both and support PechaKucha's growth.

[Download the app](#)

"Table 3D really understood what we were trying to do, and they really embraced what we were trying to do. It's always been a very smooth relationship and very pragmatic."

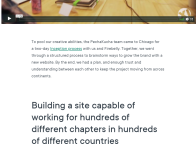
Mark Dyham, co-founder of PechaKucha

Matching the creativity of an international storytelling brand

The PechaKucha team are creative personalities. Inori Imai and Mark Dyham actually created the storytelling series on the side — their day job was running a [small computer consulting firm](#).

PechaKucha's unique presentation structure caught on quickly in the creative community. Each speaker gets 20 images and 20 seconds per image. The slides automatically advance. PechaKucha is not expected to be as polished as TED, if most people telling authentic stories in local environments. That, plus a visually rich and engagingly fast format, have helped it grow to just about every major city on earth.

To find a partner capable of creating a digital home for the brand, Mark and his team started a global search for a development firm in 2010. We partnered with Fivexy, a design firm we worked with before we had our own practice and together we showed PechaKucha we could match their sentiment while maintaining the discipline and skill to get work done on time and on budget.



To test our creative abilities, the PechaKucha team came to Chicago for a two-day [creative sprint](#) with us and Fivexy. Together, we used through a structured process to brainstorm ways to grow the brand with a new website. By the end, we had a plan, and enough trust and understanding between each other to keep the project moving from across continents.

Building a site capable of working for hundreds of different chapters in hundreds of different countries

The old PechaKucha website was impeding growth. It wasn't set up for social sharing, and it required a ton of manual work to add new cities and upload presentations. The community was growing, but the website's ability to represent it was not.

We were able to build a site that worked for five groups, city organizers and audiences. First, we took care of the organizers, who needed to promote their cities, add events and speakers, and upload talks — all in dozens of different languages. It was a big logistical challenge, but we were able to accomplish it by focusing on universal user actions. Now organizers have much more autonomy to manage their events than they had before.

"The response has been amazing. There's been not one negative comment. Every organizer has been positive about it."

Mark Dyham, co-founder of PechaKucha

Then we turned our attention to the global audience who's consuming PechaKucha talks. To help users find what they wanted, that kept up with it as new talks were added, we included functionality to follow speakers and cities, or to browse by topic. That functionality is what more crucial now that PechaKucha has ballooned to more than 1,000 chapters. There is a tremendous amount of storytelling available on the site — more than 8,000 presentations alone. The tools we built allow users to make sense of all that content and find what's valuable to them.

Learning the PechaKucha way — and using the insights to help design new products

We internalize every client, but with PechaKucha, that adoption has extended past the project group into the whole company. Everyone on our team has picked up the 20x20 storytelling format. Several of our team members have given official PechaKucha presentations or everything [from employee benefits to tennis ball games to local food and wine tastings](#) — CEO Mark Rotondo even got to give a presentation at PechaKucha's headquarters in Tokyo.

We've also incorporated PechaKucha into our official onboarding process. Each new T3 hire puts together their own 20x20 presentation, then delivers it at one of our all-hands meetings. It gives them a structured way to introduce themselves to everyone, whether they stick with a straightforward career retrospective or get creative by giving a tour of their apartment, like our developer (Dae Ha did). It also starts their time with T3 by reinforcing how much we value teaching and sharing, and how much we value learning from our clients.



CEO Mark gives a presentation at Marty's, the home of PechaKucha in Chicago.

Designing and developing PechaKucha's first iOS app

For the first few years after the website launched, we were in maintenance mode, making only a few incremental improvements. By 2015, it was time to return to the conversation about growing PechaKucha's platform and its community. Our team flew out to Japan, and we went through a version of our inception process to create a technology roadmap.

In talking with PechaKucha, we found that the best place for the brand to be was where users were — on their phones. We needed to make it easier for users to consume a little bit of inspiration every day. That's where we developed an idea for a mobile app to allow users to get a "presentation of the day" delivered to their phones.



The "PechaKucha of the Day" iOS app, launched in February of 2016, showcases an ever-changing lineup of seven of the best talks from around the world — a week's worth of inspiration. Users get a push notification each day announcing the new talk, so they can listen and learn on their commute, at their desk, or their couch, wherever they happen to be.

"To make an app that simple is really complicated. The integration of the current website into the app is really brilliant. It's a complicated thing."

Mark Dyham, co-founder of PechaKucha

This time we could rely on our own design practice, who did an excellent job making the app look deceptively simple. Our developers were able to connect the app to the existing site, so the PechaKucha team only needed to update the presentation of the day in one place for it to work everywhere.

One of the most exciting things for us was working with a client that's incredibly effective at marketing. PechaKucha has a massive global reach, and they were able to tap that audience when the app launched. We were able to really quickly see how well the app was working for test users all over the world.



PechaKucha announces the launch of the app at Tokyo baseball stadium.

Project managing across continents

It's a lot harder to build trust remotely — that's just the fact of trading in-person conversation for webcast conferences. Our project management team had to keep the momentum of our in-person kickoff meetings going across continents and time zones.

The first solution was to set up a standing meeting with the PechaKucha team, we tried on having the meeting at 7:00 p.m. our time, which was 7:00 a.m. in Tokyo. That way we could get their ideas when they were at their freshest, and we could update them after a full day of progress on the project.

Then we had to solve for streamlining progress on the app in a dynamic way. Screen shots can't show functionality, and the PechaKucha team couldn't be there with us in person to view the app in our environment. We ended up using Flicio, an iOS-development tool that creates a prototype anyone can download to their phone. That gave the team roughly the same experience users would have, so they could give the most effective feedback.

"Working with a project manager meant we would always have meetings on a regular cadence, everyone would know when they were happening. We also always knew what our budget was, how much spend we'd gone through. We wouldn't just be getting a bill at the end."

Mark Dyham, co-founder of PechaKucha

Preparing PechaKucha for what's next

There are other steps in that technology roadmap we created, but we can't say what they are just yet. What we can say is that we have plans to keep PechaKucha growing and serving its communities for many years ahead.

We're mostly looking forward to the year 2020. The Olympics will be in Japan that year, which also happens to line up with 20x20 storytelling. We're already brainstorming together on ways PechaKucha can promote its home country's Olympics. And we intend to be there in Japan when it happens.