



Partnership with EDUonGo Empowers Entrepreneur to Launch Product in Hundreds of Schools

Software Engineer Creates Solution Now Used in 380 Schools Across the U.S.

Not long after selling his Seattle-based mobile advertising company, Jason Rukman started brainstorming his next venture. With more than 20 years of experience in software engineering, Jason wanted to apply his coding skills in the field of education.

According to a report from [Code.org](https://code.org), only 40 percent of K-12 schools in the U.S. teach computer science. Realizing that his own two young daughters were getting little exposure to code, Jason began volunteering at their school and other K-12 schools across Greater Seattle in an effort to help teachers incorporate coding.

While many students already possessed a basic understanding of code through campaigns such as Hour of Code, Jason saw that the greater need was to sustain continued engagement. So he began training teachers to use resources such as Minecraft, Codecombat, Earsketch, Scratch™ and Microsoft's Touchdevelop.



EarSketch



However, Jason quickly observed the roadblocks they encountered while leveraging open web resources.

"Teachers were overwhelmed as they juggled multiple accounts and sign ins," says Jason. "What they really needed was a proper curriculum format—an environment to unify all of the resources."

That's when inspiration struck Jason and he suddenly found his next venture within reach.

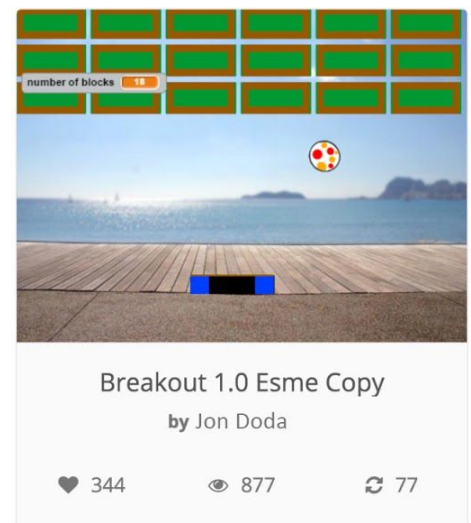
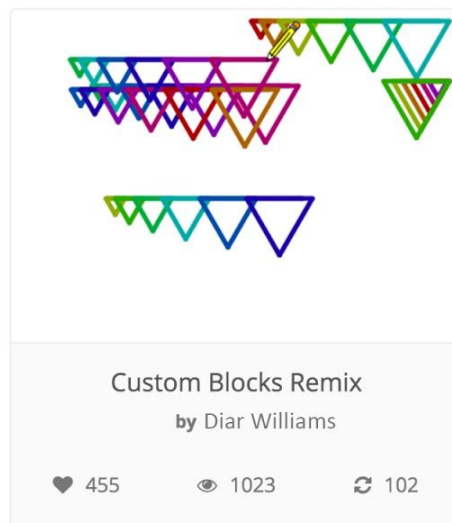
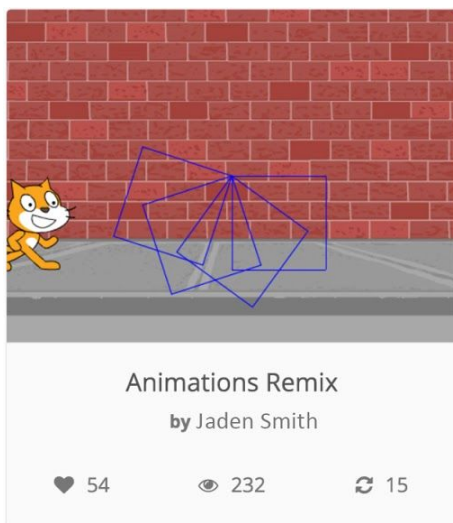
EDUonGo as a flexible platform and Launchpad for core product

Having identified a pain-point for teachers, he began outlining a solution to improve the coding experience in classrooms while containing all of the popular coding resources in one place.

Jason consulted with his friend and former colleague, Steven Yee. Steven had recently helped co-found EDUonGo, an e-learning company based out of Bellevue, Washington. As Jason described the type of solution he wanted to provide teachers, Steven suggested he test EDUonGo's learning management system.

Jason signed up for [EDUonGo](#) and created an academy called "Ucodemy." With the help of EDUonGo's software engineers, he soon had a private server equipped with the tools to create his feature-rich solution.

After launching Ucodemy, Jason turned his attention towards building his core product. He used the platform's LTI feature to create a single unified dashboard incorporated with lessons from the popular visual programming language, Scratch. He calls it [ITCH](#).



The ITCH dashboard provides ready-to-go coding lessons for teachers to use as well as tools to create their own curriculum. Private workspaces allow students to share their projects instantaneously, while teachers use the secure social network to manage assignments without the hassles of the open internet.

Today, Ucodemy equips and trains more than 2,000 K-12 teachers with ITCH's dashboard, coding curriculum, collaborative teaching tools and professional coaching. The program has been implemented in more than 400 schools and has reached 80,000+ students.

“EDUonGo’s LTI function was a huge help,” says Jason. “Integrating Scratch with their system made it possible for me to create a complete solution for teachers to get their students into coding, fast.”

Outside of K-12 education, Ucodeemy’s curriculum has been used by the YMCA’s summer coding camp, a prison parolee reform center, and an international learning center franchise in South Korea.

EDUonGo as a strategic partner

In addition to helping Jason develop his learning solution, EDUonGo has been a key partner in his sales and marketing efforts.

EDUonGo connected Jason to some of their existing customers, such as Detroit’s Clintondale School District. After introducing him to their education partner, Code.org, ITCH became a featured resource on the Hour of Code’s website.

“As Jason’s strategic partner, we take the time to understand his model and sales process,” says Steven. “We’ve been able to connect him with the right clients—including some of our own.”

Positive customer feedback

Tim Lagerwey, an eighth grade teacher at Valley View Middle School in Snohomish, WA, uses ITCH to customize his class assignments. Although he had no prior coding experience, the curriculum and format made it easy for Tim and his students to learn quickly. For one project, he asked students to create interactive commercials. After reviewing existing Sunchip commercials, students were able to recreate their own versions using ITCH.

“Kids are responding to it,” says Tim. “When you hear comments like, ‘I wish we could stay here longer,’ or the bell rings and they’re still working instead of lined up at the door waiting for their next class. They’re engaged.”

Similarly to Tim, Cheryl Steenson—an English high school teacher at Secondary Academy for Success—had no coding knowledge when she implemented ITCH. Despite her inexperience, Cheryl was soon using the program to facilitate digital storytelling and class assignments.

“ITCH gives my students and I reliable access to the tools found in Scratch as well as video tutorials,” says Cheryl.

“ITCH helped me incorporate coding into my English class, where students can tell creative, interactive and meaningful stories while learning a real life skill.”

The future of Ucodeemy and EDUonGo’s partnership

As Jason continues to grow his business, he plans to expand Ucodeemy’s reach internationally.

Recently, the Core Educational and Coding Early Literacy organization ([CECEL](#)) partnered with Ucodeemy to incorporate ITCH into their Korean franchise learning centers. Similar to the trends seen in U.S. K-12 schools, countries like South Korea are beginning to mandate coding as a prerequisite subject in their primary and secondary schools.

Back in the U.S., Jason has received requests from teachers looking to create their own customized courses. Washington's Bellevue School District has already created nearly 30 customized courses using ITCH.

He is also working to augment his product for higher grade levels by integrating text-based programming languages.

"EDUonGo has become an inextricable part of my business," says Jason. "The expertise and business connections from the team has been instrumental to the success of Ucodeemy. I look forward to strengthening our partnership."

About Jason Rukman



Jason Rukman is founder and CEO of Ucodeemy, a learning platform that delivers coding resources to K-12 classrooms. Prior to this he ran a mobile advertising platform called [Suhari](#), which he later sold to a B2B mobile analytics provider in Seattle. He is also the former Director of Product Development at BSquare.

His passion for coding began at 13 years of age in the computer lab of the school he attended. He and his friends were often found programming games during lunch hour. After college, Jason was recruited from Australia to the United States to work for Apple Computer. He later worked at Phone.com to build the first mobile browser for cell phones, a product that was later shipped worldwide to 1 billion handsets. He has been implementing code in K-12 classrooms since 2015 and regularly conducts workshops to coach teachers. To learn more, visit <https://www.ITCHcode.com>.

About EDUonGo

EDUonGo is a cloud-based turn-key solution and learning platform that empowers companies and institutions to [create professional and corporate training courses](#). Companies save time and money by using EDUonGo as their custom eLearning solution. The platform's flexibility and development support makes it a great [alternative to traditional LMSs like Moodle](#). For more information, visit <http://www.EDUonGo.com>.