

1. ÍRIS ASKS!

AMBER BRANDNER



Amber Brandner is a lead facilitator and organizer with [absoluteSUM](#) and Co-founder with [Trippin Inc.](#)

Amber understands the importance of building a strong community when investing in the new economy. Her work lies in exploring common narratives and shared goals whilst building conversations which bridge individual understanding into meaningful action. In the last decade, Amber has worked with brands and organizations such as TEDx, National Science Foundation, KPBS, Overnight, and World Economic Forum Global Shapers.

(Íris) Naturally, we shall start from the beginning so our readers can be introduced to your work. Before blockchain, what kind of technologies did you work with?

(Amber) With each new technology or medium developed we have the opportunity to redefine our collective narrative and explore how we relate to one another, to create the future we would like to exist within, and to build worlds that support an improved reality.

My early work in film production involved everything from creative conception to editing. It was out of sheer necessity I learned some simple web dev and design. Eventually, my work in storytelling and community development led me to working with a number of startups in the sharing economy space as well as a network of social impact organizations.

As cofounder of Trippin, a tool for sharing knowledge within trusted networks around the globe, we are building with React Native and looking at blockchain as a solution for some of the permissions and democratic processes within the community.

AbsoluteSUM seeks to help multiple sectors for the good of people and the planet. What are some of the other projects you've worked on recently?

AbsoluteSUM introduces emerging technologies such as blockchain, through collaborative problem solving where together we identify shared values and a collective mission. We recently launched the San Diego Livewell Blockchain Incubator which has been running for two months. We are gearing up to host a hackathon focused on Sustainable Development Goals at the Voice of Blockchain Conference being held in Chicago at Navy Pier this August. AbsoluteSUM is now in pre-production for several locations around the globe.

How has blockchain helped develop this project, and what difference is it making?

The introduction of blockchain has opened new possibilities in collaborative processes. AbsoluteSUM embodies much of how we would like to be in the world by encouraging thoughtful conversations about what can be done and should be done with this technology.

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What are some of the most exciting companies you've been working with, and what are you working on?

I've been most excited about The Live Well Challenge in San Diego. We started with a forum discussion and expo to educate the community of San Diego about blockchain technology and further develop the ecosystem. We then facilitated a hackathon where teams were guided through problem identification and ideation while considering the UN Sustainable Development Goals and

the role blockchain can play in the development of both local and global solutions. The Live Well incubator is in collaboration with UC San Diego and XYOnetwork, and is supported by BC4G, Nanome.ai and ICTE.io.

The incubator provides mentorship, physical space, educational resources and access to a network of support to help teams develop open source solutions for global issues presenting as local challenges. Throughout the summer and fall teams are working on solutions for urgent problems including Clean Energy distribution, News Authentication and meeting BASIC human needs. This work has been so fulfilling and there is a clear need for more.

How do workshops and hackathons by AbsoluteSUM help new companies strengthen their business model?

Rapid iteration and innovation, and inclusion of diverse mindsets help to build perspective and thus a richer product or more complete solution.

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What do you think is the best approach for including women in blockchain and tech?

Inclusion takes effort. We have to make the effort to invite more capable leadership. I hear “We tried to get more women but ...” or “We just hired the best candidate from those that applied” or “We don’t know any women for this

panel/talk.” Well, luckily there are people and organizations that have made it their job to engage the excluded and invest in their success. Inviting these individuals and organizations makes inclusion easy.

The binary language and “othering” we see across every tech sector and throughout the world does not serve our collective success. When we separate the conversation of equality and inclusion into a bucket, rather than integrate it into the fabric of Who We Are, we perpetuate exclusion.

Why is it important to include more women in the blockchain space?

Diversity of perspectives builds better solutions, period. If blockchain is the “next internet” and we are not ALL engaged, we ALL miss out. In order to evolve, to survive, we must do the work of dismantling the gender roles and stereotypes we have allowed, throughout history, to dictate how we work together and value one-another.

As an entrepreneur, what are some of the hardest lessons you’ve learned through experience?

Being very clear about your values and mission, and committing yourself to YOUR path gives you permission to say “no” to everything that is not in 100% alignment with your life mission.

Lastly, do you have advice for aspiring entrepreneurs who seek to work in blockchain technology to change our world for the better?

Start with having conversations with the people and organizations you respect, be willing to learn and experiment, and most importantly - seek understanding before you seek to provide answers. Oh, and please join us at absolutesum.co.

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Found the leprechaun of magic internet money in 2016. Part hodler, part wannabe trader. Nothing a good FA can’t heal.

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