

Welcome to the Event Tech podcast where we explore the ever-evolving world of event technology every week. This show is brought to you by Endless Events, the event AV company that doesn't suck. Now, let's talk tech.

Will Curran:

Hey, what's up everybody, it's Will Curran from Endless Events, and I am joined by the ever-intellectual Brandt Krueger in the house.

Brandt Krueger:

Happy to be here.

Will Curran:

Thank you for joining us. Today we're talking about Google IO and Microsoft Build, two conferences that happened on the same week and had lots of tech stuff going on. So we figured, you know, Event Tech podcast, we should probably cover this again.

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah there's a lot of meeting and events angles to this thing as well as just the events themselves that are worth talking about because they were very different events from what they've been in the past and compared to each other. So there's a lot of different things we thought we could dive into.

Will Curran:

Absolutely, and for those who don't know, Google IO and Microsoft Build, two separate conferences, are both kind of the... each company's developer conferences. So you're really getting in to the really nerdy developer side of things, so a lot of talking about the future of what their technologies can do and how developers can take it to build other apps on top of it and things like that.

Will Curran:

But what's really exciting about this is that it's really bleeding edge because it's not just consumer tech, though I think when we kind of dive into the comparison between the two we'll see some differences between them, but you're definitely getting into the... I think the really technical side of things. So should we no longer, delay no more and jump right on in to all of the crazy things that are happening?

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah, yeah. So maybe we take it out from the 50,000 foot level first and just talk about the events themselves, and the fact that these things came so quickly on the heels of each other so there's a question there that I think for all the planners in the audience or marketing people, was that smart? Was it smart to have these two major conferences back to back? Somebody staked their claim first and then somebody decided to piggy back, and I don't know, which came first, the chicken, or the egg.

Brandt Krueger:

The Google or the Microsoft but somebody along the line made the decision to put these two conferences back to back, and you know Apple, frequently when have their developer conference, you know that's you know, historically Steve Jobs would come out and announce new iPads and all kinds of wonderful things and so as a result they would kind of soak up all the oxygen in the room for about a week before and about a week afterward. So having these two things back to back I think is kind of an interesting call.

Will Curran:

Yeah absolutely, and I thought that was really interesting too. I obviously follow a lot of different tech sites and it's always interesting to watch what slows down announcements. And I saw a very similar thing happen as well with Avengers Endgame when it came out, is literally no one was announcing products because everyone knew that the news was just going to be filled talking about this movie. It took three or four days after the movie was out before finally everyone's like, "Huh, yeah we can start talking about some stuff..."

Brandt Krueger:

Now we can start talking about Game of Thrones.

Will Curran:

Yeah exactly, exactly. But the same thing on the tech side, you definitely don't want to cannibalize the marketing side because it's very much a press event as much as it is a chance for developers to see what's going on.

Brandt Krueger:

Right, right. So and the other problem that comes with that is that now because they're so close to each other you can't help but compare them. You know, I mean they were literally two days apart. And so let's dive in to Microsoft, which came first, and you can't go into this event without mentioning the fact that they started the whole program with a massive demo fail.

Will Curran:

So I didn't get to see this, so can you kind of explain what exactly happened?

Brandt Krueger:

So it's really kind of sad too because, so its one of the lead guys that started Photoshop and another guy, I forget who they were off the top of my head, which I probably should have looked up before we started, but basically, this has been a passion project for these guys for years and years and years. And they discovered a whole bunch of telemetry data from the moon landings, so it was just the numbers, and they had been converting the numbers from the telemetry from the moon landing as we approach the 50th anniversary of the moon landing.

Brandt Krueger:

Oh and the other guy was from Unreal, so the Unreal Engine, which is used in video games. So they used the skills of this guy from Photoshop and this guy from Unreal Engine to create this fully modeled 3D redo of the moon landing, using the actual NASA data that they had. So they'd been working on this for years and of course it worked flawlessly in rehearsal and then they were having this kind of a Q and A before the keynote with these kids that I think won a national science fair or something like that, and they were literally... the press in the room were going boy this is going really long for a couple kids Q and A for some kids that won.

Brandt Krueger:

So apparently behind the scenes the demo had already failed, and they couldn't get the laptops online or whatever. Whatever was powering the HoloLens demo and for anybody that doesn't know, HoloLens is Microsoft's augmented reality headset. So you can still see the world and then they're projecting the 3D augmented reality over the top of the real world. So what would have been happening is being able to see this fully 3D rendered moon landing stuff layered over your reality.

Brandt Krueger:

So behind the scenes they're telling them stretch, stretch, stretch with these kids and finally they're just like, "We don't have any more questions we can ask these kids." So they really weren't ready, and they kind of pushed these two guys out on stage and literally it's about the worst you could possibly happen. They kind of said, "We're-

Will Curran:

Oh wow, yeah, they just walk off.

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah. It's worse than the Michael Bay teleprompter thing. They're like, "Um, well, so it doesn't work. I guess it's harder to do a HoloLens demo than land people on the moon." And boom they walk off. They just turned around and walk off. And it's like, okay. Nobody even really understood what the demo was supposed to be. It was just these two guys standing on stage and yeah, really, really rough stuff.

Brandt Krueger:

A rough way to start a con... and apparently it's even a little bit worse than that because they had strewn all of these references to the moon landing and moon shots and rockets and all this kind of stuff throughout the keynotes as everybody came through. So none of that made sense anymore because they weren't able to do this demo. So yeah, and immediately now, like I said, you can't help but compare that to the upbeat, high energy Google IO that came just a couple days later.

Will Curran:

Yeah, totally. Well what's crazy is I'm watching the actual physical demo, and it's actually pretty cool. I mean just word to the wise I think for everyone who's planning the technology around events is just be prepared for it to fail and always have a backup option, right?

Brandt Krueger:

Yep and we've talked this, that as much as we as planner types and actual planners want everything to be bulletproof, no matter how often you rehearse it, no matter how much money, I mean Microsoft just became a trillion dollar evaluation company. So they've got all the money in the world, and you can still have a demo fail.

Will Curran:

Absolutely.

Brandt Krueger:

And you have to be prepared to deal with it.

Will Curran:

Well it was smart, I mean, well I guess smart, I don't know if it was smart or just on accident but apparently they recorded the practice session 100%, so they ended up releasing that as free to be able to see the demo and post recording, and I guess that was smart. The question is was that done on purpose? I don't know. But it doesn't erase it.

Brandt Krueger:

Right and it doesn't erase it. Yeah. So people are able to still see it but it doesn't change all of the people that were in the room and all of the people that were live streaming. Now you got to go get it. It's one thing to have it passively thrown at you and quite another to have to actively go watch it.

Will Curran:

Yep. Absolutely, absolutely. So all right, what other crazy things? I mean we've got one whole other event to cover. Let's keep diving in to it. What else was going on? I mean I think one of the exciting things is just the interesting side of the Cloud too right, and I see that's, in your notes as far as what you wanted to talk about, and I want to hear what you're excited about when it comes to Windows.

Brandt Krueger:

Well Microsoft I think has in a way started to step away from Windows, right? Windows was the cash cow. Windows and Office, right? That's Microsoft. Windows and Office, Windows and Office, and under the tutelage of Satya Nadella as he took over for CEO, they've really started to make a shift and its shift to being kind of the infrastructure.

Brandt Krueger:

To being, it's their Azure Cloud development stuff. They've still got the consumer facing things. They've still got the Xbox, they've still got Windows, and they've still got Office but all the real money is in the behind the scenes stuff. So I think they barely even mentioned the word Windows at any point in time, and the Office stuff that they were showing was showing off functionality not, oh hey look this is our new auto-correct thing.

Brandt Krueger:

Oh that's another thing that I got to drop in here at some point when you're talking. I thought that just in general the whole keynote and apparently a lot of the sessions that followed are really emphasizing the cloud and less windows. And in the past Nadella had said things like, "We want to be where all of our customers are but the best experience will always be on Windows." And he's not saying that anymore. You know, so I think we're really starting to see Microsoft saying we want to be as good as we possibly can be on all platforms wherever our customers are.

Will Curran:

That's a really good point and I think you have to be in that point now. For everyone when you're developing your mobile apps, you can't no longer say, "Oh this is just an app for IOS. Just an Android app, or just a web." It has to be everywhere and a part of everything that you do. And I think that goes to show too, the fact that there's so many different types of hardware. I mean just like this wasn't a Microsoft build but for example they just announced the Surface Hub 2S and it's this just gigantic TV with the collaboration and sharing features and the features of it aren't primarily Windows. I mean it is a Windows computer but it's more that it's about the experience than it is about the fact that its running Windows. Before Microsoft might have just been like, "Here's a TV, it runs Windows, good luck." Lets everyone else do everything else.

Brandt Krueger:

Right, right. And along those same lines, I mentioned they were kind of talking about the functionality changes and so, one of the things they were showing was really highlighting the collaboration. In the past when we thought about collaborating on documents it was really much more Google Docs as being the lead in that, but I think with the amount of emphasis that they're putting on the infrastructure, the back end stuff.

Brandt Krueger:

They're really starting to come forward in the collaboration space of hey... So what they were showing was a demo of here's a person who's working on a table in Excel and then I've got that same table in another state in a Word document, and we're working on it together and updating, and it's all live and being done in the back end and really de-coupling the bits and chunks from their individual traditional Office apps.

Brandt Krueger:

So if I want a table I'm going to drop that object into a Word document or something like that. You know that table in and of itself has all of the power of a table in an Excel document and so really kind of trying to take the bits and chunks, or if I'm editing a graphic, and you want to edit it

as well, I can have it in a Word doc, you can have it in Publisher or One Note or something along those lines and showing a lot of that behind the scenes collaboration, which I thought was an interesting take.

Will Curran:

I think almost like a major theme of everything too is just the collaboration between everything and I think that's one we're about to go down a list of cool things that we saw that we liked a lot. Like almost all of these on this list are all collaboration related stuff.

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah absolutely.

Will Curran:

So I mean if you look for example, one of the first things which is one of my favorite things, I thought was exciting that was going to affect events industries is live transcription that was going on. And I'm going to post a video for this down in the show notes and a see notes video about a minute and 45 seconds in or so they show this and it's really interesting that essentially it just starts a live auto-transcribe, which we'll talk about how that affected Google and what Google sees use for that.

Will Curran:

But I think this is incredible because for events we have multiple speakers, you don't have time to program it out and have the transcriber write the captions and everything and it's expensive. I mean you're talking thousands of dollars for each language and things like that, but if you can turn the text and the voice that's happening at the event and what's happening on stage turn to text and translate it live, that's just mind-blowing. I think the coolest thing about this too is there's a point where one of the guys didn't bring his phone, didn't bring his laptop, it recognized his voice and started to transcribe with his photo and his name attached to it.

Brandt Krueger:

Wow.

Will Curran:

So cool.

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah like in a meeting environment, right? Am I remembering right?

Will Curran:

Yeah it was like a meeting. Yeah that's how they demoed is definitely like it was a three person meeting, them just kind of talking and going through it. But I think we do this for our sales meetings for all of our video calls and everything, we transcribe everything but what's so great about it is all of a sudden now it makes it 100% searchable.

Will Curran:

And I forget if it was this one, I'm pretty sure it might have been Microsoft Build, but they show how you can search and then quickly pick up and show that... Yeah this was in Microsoft Office in different demos. Actually I think a demo for their new team service where they do meetings and it records it and transcribes it and what's so great about this is that you can be sitting there and be like, "Oh well let me bring up the meeting where everyone just said my name so I can see all the actual items that mention me."

Will Curran:

You can search that person's name and boom bring up all the clips from that meeting and show it. I mean it's just making it so people can get to exactly what they need to do and get things done, which I think is just really exciting for A, planners and everybody in the events industry and owners of businesses and ho my gosh it's just so exciting for getting more stuff done. But I think that this also can be applied to transcribing events live as well.

Brandt Krueger:

Right and another example of kind of the getting stuff done department, despite the fact that Cortana has not exactly taken off as a personal assistant compared to Google Assistant and Echo. They've said, "We're not going to get rid of this stuff."

Brandt Krueger:

They've invested a fair amount and again, they're emphasizing the back end infrastructure so the assistant itself is not going away but it sounds like they're either going to be building it into other products or perhaps white labeling it as something that you can implement yourself in your company.

Brandt Krueger:

And they were demoing really rapid fire. It was like a woman going through her whole meeting day. Like what do I have at 8:00 okay, great, let's reschedule that for 10:00 on Thursday. And it was so fast and back and forth, it was like, okay great, I've changed that to Thursday and then it was talking about weather.

Will Curran:

That'd be cool for multiple data sources too.

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah it was multiple data sources, weather, transportation, it was this whole, and clearly again aiming at directly at the business market. I don't have that many meetings per day where I would have to be going through the day that she had but a lot of people do. And so I thought that was another interesting thing and we're going to come back to that in Google as well.

Brandt Krueger:

A couple of these things as we're going through them also kind of pop their heads up in the Google one. But I think there's definitely an emphasis on that getting things done rapid fire, assistants not sitting around going, thinking, thinking, thinking, I can see it's raining outside, you know that kind of stuff. It's really moving.

Will Curran:

Yeah absolutely and I think that was really, really interesting, is just yeah the rapid fireness of it and me as a productivity nerd, I get so excited with it and I'm just super stoked for it but I think this is just going to make... I'm just thinking for everyone in the events industry how busy we are. It's just going to make our lives so much easier to have a digital assistant who's so smart and can pull from multiple data sources and everything like that all together at one.

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah I think we're going to have to come back to data and privacy when we get to Google as well.

Will Curran:

Oh yeah. Absolutely. Absolutely. All right lets fire into the next favorite thing that we had from Microsoft Build.

Brandt Krueger:

Well yeah the next one I had on the list was one of yours, so let's throw into the HoloLens Mattel demo.

Will Curran:

Yeah totally. So HoloLens did a demo and this one actually worked and basically what they did is the guy was kind of showing up and saying, "Look, we're trying to figure out ways to make HoloLens and those virtual meetings I think better." And so what was really cool about it is essentially they were like, one of our clients is Mattel and Mattel is working on these new designs and they worked together to show each other designs and things like that.

Will Curran:

I mean to be honest, its best just to watch this video where they explain how it all happens because I can do a play by play but essentially what they did is they turned an augmented reality meeting where one of the guys was there with a HoloLens and you can kind of see his perspective.

Will Curran:

The other gal was an avatar and you can see her moving her arms and basically putting things on the wall and drawing things, but then all of a sudden they have to bring in another person who doesn't have HoloLens and just brought a video window but then somebody who was nearby was like, "Oh I want to see what's going on but I don't have a HoloLens, so let me bring up my phone and I can see the whole room. And what everybody's working.

Will Curran:

I can pull stuff from PowerPoint and Excel and throw it on the wall." I think it basically is just eliminating the need for an in person meeting to have these items and to get close ups on designs. Like I think when I show this I send this to all my production designers, I said, The future of this is that we can... I think we might have said CAD at some point on doing this but I can imagine taking a 3D render of an event and us all putting headsets on and throwing it down and not only just walking through the room to see what it looks like but also the ability to draw on it and everything like that. It's just, it's so exciting for the future I think of working together across huge gaps of distances.

Brandt Krueger:

Well and it's another example of Microsoft really emphasizing not only the collaboration but also the we want to be everywhere that you are. So you don't have to have a \$4,000 HoloLens headset in order to be able to participate. You can do it on your phone, you can do it on a Surface, you can do it on a Surface Hub which is their big wall mounted touch screen thing.

Brandt Krueger:

You can do it with a HoloLens, you can do you know. So I really like the fact that they're not just saying, "Hey this is something we can all do when we all own a HoloLens and we can all..." You know that kind of thing. It's something that even if we're on the road or we're able... we can still participate in a meaningful way.

Will Curran:

Yeah I think that an important is that having that meaningful way, like a portion because yeah we currently have this ability. I mean it's been leapfrogged in terms of ability for just having meetings over phone, right? And now we're doing video calls and things like that and granted, I still see a lot of pushback from people who are willing to hop on video calls and do this sort of stuff.

Will Curran:

I'm hoping that this pushes it even further. People are willing to really get into it but it just creates this amazingly intimate experience and it just allows you to get, I think just so much more done quicker with this sort of stuff. Versus, hey let's share this doc. Okay cool, I'll review it in the meeting afterwards and I'll send you some emails back or some notes back via email.

Will Curran:

Okay cool and they send it over. Okay this way. We can hop in a meeting and boom, get everything done as if we're in person, which I think the gold standard. I hear it all the time whenever we're doing site visits, people say, "Oh my gosh we got so much more done in person than we ever would online."

Will Curran:

And this and that and that's cool but I think we're getting to this day and age where if we can try to eliminate that the better. I think we did a whole episode on event icons called how can you plan your event with never having visited the venue? I think we're getting to that point very, very quickly.

Brandt Krueger:

Yep, yep. Getting closer and closer to my dream of being able to pop on an AR headset and go, "Okay where'd the power drop? Where are the outlets? Where are the rigging points?" You know, all that kind of stuff. We're getting closer every day. You know one of the things that I wanted to bring up earlier in this discussion and kind of forgot about was when we were talking about more the event themselves.

Brandt Krueger:

Is one of the things that Microsoft did that was kind of interesting was that they actually had multiple keynote tracks. So in addition, we're pretty used to the concept of the breakout right? Where everybody comes together for the keynote and then we all go to our individual tracks. They actually had keynote tracks where after the initial keynote to everybody, they broke into still, two larger rooms and if I remember right it was kind of a business track and more of like a front end software track and then more of a back end track.

Brandt Krueger:

So I thought that was an interesting thing for folks to consider as well but sometimes maybe it's worth not necessarily splitting off into seven or eight breakout tracks but just dividing your room by one, you know and splitting it so you've got one track here and one track there. I thought that was an interesting thing.

Will Curran:

Yeah totally. I think it's important too because normally some of these announcements were big enough that they could have been on one single stage, but they don't apply to everybody and with a big company like Microsoft, when it comes to developers, developers are very niche right? They have this one piece they're working on, the person whose maybe working Azure, which is kind of like their big cloud service, that might not really care about anything HoloLens related.

Will Curran:

But then the HoloLens people I'd don't care anything about Azure, I just need it to work. So I think it gives people a choice and the freedom to get more specialized in what they're doing and I don't know about you but I usually find that most the value and this is coming from an AV company that primarily makes their money off of general sessions. I find that I always usually find when I'm getting nerdy and deep into a topic and I want to go to a conference to learn I learn more in the breakout than I ever do in the general sessions which is real interesting.

Brandt Krueger:

Sure, sure. Well and just giving you attendees even that option to be able to narrow in at that macro level to take it one step in from everybody I think is a nice thing. Lots of other small things announced during the event but I feel like we should probably start moving into the Google world. A couple of interesting things and one of the more controversial ones that came out which I think is a lot of ado about nothing is that they're playing around with what some people are calling a political correctness engine.

Brandt Krueger:

When actually all it is, is you know, much how the grammar, if anybody uses a product like Grammarly it'll suggest hey maybe you want to soften that language a little bit, or that seems unnecessarily harsh. It's actually a pretty cool product. They're just incorporating some of that kind of stuff into possible functionality in Word and other documents where they're actually looking at diversity and inclusion.

Brandt Krueger:

So what it would do is say, "You know you might want to, instead of saying mailman, say mail carrier." Something along those lines where we're just starting to take a look at the way that we're writing and maybe see if there's a way to make it a little more open for inclusion and diversity. Again a lot of other click baity headlines of a political correctness engine and all this kind of stuff coming in.

Brandt Krueger:

And there's a debate that could be had about okay who decides that and who decides what's right and what's correct and what's wrong. I think there's engines for that, but I don't want to spend too much time on it. The other interesting thing and now I lost it. Oh no, oh no. This is why you got to write things down. Oh this is super nerdy, so for the super nerds out there, get your propeller caps on and give them a whirl.

Brandt Krueger:

They're actually putting in a Linux kernel into Windows and if you know what that means, then you will understand that, that's kind of a big deal. If you don't know what that means it doesn't affect you what so ever. Feel free to skip that, I'm not going to spend a lot of time on it. So with that maybe we should turn things over to Google IO.

Will Curran:

Yeah so Google obviously completely separate event going on. I had some really interesting things and obviously the thing that primarily came out of it was just the single keynote. I mean it just hit all their big changes and things like that happening inside of that. I did want to give a shout out, we were talking about this as a team, but I loved the curved LED screens, like the rounded edges.

Will Curran:

So if you get a chance to watch the recaps that shows a little bit about all what happened, you'll see what I'm talking about when it comes to the stage design. I just thought it was really, really pretty. It looked really cool. And I also thought was really interesting, again, think they did vertical screens last year for their imag for their camera to screen but in this case they did vertical but then they made it look like the camera was inside of a phone, which I thought was really interesting too. So it's just funny how we go from oh hey we have this multi-million dollar LED screen with rounded corners, and we're going to make it look like it's on a cheap phone. So yeah just a lot going on, but speaking of cheap phone.

Brandt Krueger:

Well I'm real curious before you move on, on the screen, I didn't look that closely, so here's my question. Is it actually rounded corners where they removed the pixels or is it just a square screen and they formatted everything with rounded corners?

Will Curran:

I mean this is where I'll talk to my production designers, I don't think anyone ever mentioned this, but I'm pretty sure the corners of it are actual panels that are cut to be rounded edges. And to be honest I think there's so many custom shapes I'm sure it exists now but yeah, it's just super clean. I mean look at it, its just one single corner is rounded, and I think it looks so clean and so good and it just looks slightly different. Familiar yet slightly different.

Brandt Krueger:

Well and what's funny is when you think about fast fold projection screens the corners are slightly rounded on a lot of them, you know? And we just kind of accept the fact that, that area is being blacked out especially in rear projection.

Will Curran:

Totally and you look at original tube TVs too, rounded corners and now everything's so hard edged and everything, yeah. So interesting.

Brandt Krueger:

A very different tone and feel right? Like I said, you can't not compare these two things because they were right on each other's tails. Or outdoors, outdoor amphitheater, it was a little overcast but it still feels brighter and more open and a much more exciting level of stuff. It's so tough, that so stinks that Microsoft X had to start with that demo fail. Because from the start this was a totally different feel.

Will Curran:

Totally different feel, and yeah a lot of big announcements going on. Obviously again, because they didn't split things up into smaller sessions very quickly it's a lot of just the high level here's the big things happening, check it out across mobile, across device launches, across bigger game plans and things like that. Security, all that sort of stuff altogether in one.

Brandt Krueger:

Lots of emphasis on security. That was something that you know and Google has traditionally not emphasized that because they've been much more of a "Hey we're an advertising company, so we need all your data." That kind of thing, and so in the past they've always emphasized yes but we use all that data to make your life better.

Brandt Krueger:

Whereas this time, they definitely were saying "Yeah we're going to use all this data to make your life better and we're going to be using less of that data. And we're going to be doing more on the device."

Brandt Krueger:

They talked about that quite a bit where they took these, you know basically the Google Assistant engine and significantly reduced the size so that it's not having to go talk to the server all the time. It's actually able to process much more on the phone locally and with significantly less memory being soaked up by it.

Will Curran:

Absolutely I thought that was one of the most exciting things about it and we can talk about it not only for the just from the privacy standpoint but also for convenience standpoint but definitely I think that was the big year for them to say, "Hey, yes we have all your data but we're also going to give you full control over it."

Will Curran:

So for example, even small things like now on the new Android software, Android Q, they have the ability that when it requests your location there used to be an app that did this called Bouncer that was just literally what the app really did was it said, "Hey do you want this permission permanently?" So for example it can always pull your location, like tracking wherever you are at any time for example it would give you local recommendations as your walking by a coffee shop.

Will Curran:

Or do you want the location service to only work when you have this app open. I mean something so simple as that, I think is just giving people more full control because I think they're realizing is that in the past, I think most people didn't really care or didn't really know how to do this but now it's oh hey, I do know how to do this and if I can make it a simple pop up when it requests location to say use it only when I have this app open it gives people more control.

Will Curran:

Because for example, I don't really care about Yelp having my loc... Like I don't want Yelp to have my location where ever I'm going, I don't really want it to know when I'm pulling up the app and I'm looking for food. I don't need it to track me everywhere I go and have that data for example. And I think it's so great because its protecting consumers.

Brandt Krueger:

And that was the issue with the bro culture days of Uber right? So Uber was tracking you for the time before you got in the car and the time after you got in the car and selling that data and that's something that they've since said they're not going to do anymore. But yeah that ability to say, "Hey I only want you to access those permissions when the app is open and not when it's not."

Brandt Krueger:

Is a pretty simple sounding thing but a huge deal. The other thing that they did on location settings is allow you to delete it after a certain period of time. So you're saying, yay, I want the ability to have my assistant know, you know we just talked about in the Microsoft demo and they had another one in the Google IO that was very similar. This rapid fire and what's the weather going to be tomorrow and what am I doing at 3:00 and rapid fire assistant stuff.

Brandt Krueger:

If you want it to be making decisions or offering suggestions based on your location data, it needs that data. So what you're able to do now is say, "Okay but I want you to delete it after three months or after a year." So again, just more of it's your data, you have the right to do with it what you want. So if I want to get the benefit out of my assistant knowing what my schedule is and where I'm going, and what route I usually take to work, that's great but they don't necessarily need to keep that information for more than three months or a year.

Will Curran:

That's so true and I think it's just again, super simple iterative changes to things that is giving you more control. Like that was one of the really interesting things. Some people said this Android IO is a little boring but I mean a lot of it was just little small changes and perfecting what they're doing. And I'm definitely really excited I think for where everything's going on the privacy and data side.

Will Curran:

Again it's one of these things where it's like, hey we acknowledge that we're taking all this data but we're going to give you the choice to do with it what you want. Because to be honest you're going to have users like me that are like, look I want you to have all my data because you make my life easier but then for someone who doesn't want as much data might be comfortable with certain things and not certain things. It gives them more full control.

Brandt Krueger:

Absolutely and I think there was even, if I remember right, kind of a shift in what Google's tag lines is and it's now something to the effect of... it used to be this business of trying to index the web, right was kind of their initial thing. Because it was a search engine so it was all about indexing and organizing the world in a way that makes sense and now it's much more about making your life better. Its something along those lines of improving people's lives as far as the

tag line goes. So a lot of these new features and things like that are definitely surrounding that motif of making your life easier, making it better, making you more productive.

Will Curran:

Definitely, I think and that definitely shows. I mean look at for example, we talked about the rapid fire system but just if you watch that demo where they show it going back and forth, it is so fast it is crazy. And I think there was little small things that they're doing too that are just using data, yeah again to make people's lives easier.

Will Curran:

Like so for example, one of the features that I'm really excited by for Android Q, I'm jumping all over the place, so I apologize. Is the suggested action's thing. And if you get a chance to see this demo basically, whenever a text pops up, it can automatically guess how you respond to it.

Will Curran:

So for example, if someone says, "Hey I'm running late." The three choices might be, "Okay no problem." Or "Don't worry let's just cancel." And the last one is, "Hey send me a map of where you are so I can see how far away you are." Or something like that. Right? And it's just these quick popups when you get a notification to all of a sudden making it so they can use that data to speed up your processes and things like that.

Will Curran:

And I think this is just really, really exciting because I've been waiting for this since before Android Pie which is the last iterative one and they had their own separate app when they were testing this, I don't even remember what it was called. I think it was called Smart... maybe it was called Smart Actions or something like that. But I remember I had it and it made my life so easy.

Will Curran:

Granted it's not always accurate, you know, someone says, "My grandma died." Sometimes the system might not know exactly how to respond to that in the right way but now it's like I switched to the Android Q beta which I'm sometimes regretting and there's some really exciting things happening and it's pretty darn smart and it's really helpful when someone says, "Hey I'm running late." And you just need it to say, "Okay cool I know I'm aware you are late now."

Brandt Krueger:

Well I'm finding the smart predictions in Gmail to be more and more accurate. You know at first it was like well, no, no, that's not what I'm trying to say but more and more it's like, yeah that's pretty much exactly what I was about to type. You know and you just tab and it drops it in and you've just saved yourself a second. Not very much but every little bit here and every little bit there.

Will Curran:

Totally, totally and I think that's the big thing too is that people say, "Well this isn't going to be a leapfrog in productivity, but it's just little things here and there that I think really, really help." Speaking of little things that help a little bit as I try to make a pivot into this one is that they announced their new phone, the Google Pixel 3A and obviously this isn't massively changing the event's industry, but I figured it was worth a quick talk about. Essentially it's the same exact thing as my Google Pixel 3 I have but \$400. So much cheaper.

Brandt Krueger:

It's a really weird play. I'm very confused by this. That they would less than a year after announcing flagship phones at the same kind of iPhone, Samsung \$900 price, they've undercut themselves by almost 50% with phones that by all accounts are just as good. It's little things like it's plastic instead of glass but anybody that's felt it, and the reviews that I've seen so far says it actually feels the same.

Brandt Krueger:

It's got the same kind of texture and that kind of stuff, it's probably going to be more resilient. You know, so that if you drop it and it's not going to shatter and go crazy. So I'm very confused by the fact that they would release two new phones for almost exactly half as much as what their flagships were.

Brandt Krueger:

With by all accounts the same camera, all of the same computational software behind it that's doing the night site and all of the cool stuff. And really the camera was what the pixels I think had the most going for them right? That it was by most people's accounts the best camera out there. So to give something that costs half as much the same number one feature as your flagship phone is a really kind of weird play.

Will Curran:

That's very true. I think though it has to do with cell phone fatigue. That cell phone costs have been rising like absolutely crazy and getting a little out of control. Like let's be honest, people, they've seen that cell phone sales are down this year and so I think Google who saw that Google Pixel 3 was priced higher than it ever had been was also not doing really well and they were like, well I think they're smart.

Will Curran:

I think that luckily, I forget what video I was watching but they made a really good point that a lot of the times things like Amazon who have these gigantic web server companies that are just almost pure profit really do fund the other sides of the company for these kind of more moon shot plays and I think that they're doing that... that's the thing, they realize that expensive cell phones aren't working and they're going to test.

Will Curran:

They're going to see, will people pay \$400 for a phone and I bet you the phones are profitable and yes, they definitely are cannibalizing themselves in a little way but at the same time too, if this works, they know oh my gosh, people won't care about wireless charging. People won't care about glass backs. We can charge \$1,000 for that, maybe a couple people will do it but we'll make way less of those phones and we're going to make way more of these Google Pixel 3A's for way cheaper right?

Will Curran:

And I think that's something, and to parallel this to the event's industry, and obviously this is the tech side and not necessarily design and that sort of side of things. But the same thing can be applied to events as well is that event tickets are getting higher and higher. People are wanting more of a premium experience. I mean you look at things like for example, the Summit series, it's like \$10,000 to attend this conference and they take care of the hotel and you feel like a VIP and all these things like that.

Will Curran:

But in reality, some people are just like, look, give me the \$100 ticket and I'll get my own food and I'll figure out my own hotel and don't give me a crazy huge production. Maybe give it good enough so it has the core things I like, like the networking and things like that, but give me a cheaper experience. Do you like how I brought all that into the event's industry like that?

Brandt Krueger:

Well yeah and there's another through thread in that. That they emphasized in reference to the phones and they emphasized in reference to the assistant and in a couple other different ways. And that is accessibility. So that, and when we're talking about the phones we're talking about making it more accessible by making it less expensive right?

Brandt Krueger:

So the more people have the ability that... there was even kind of a jab I think at Apple where they kind of said something about something to the effect of privacy shouldn't be a luxury item or something along those lines. So the ability to try and 1, get phones into people's hands, but then the other accessibility that they talked about was trying to make the assistant work better with people who don't have the crispest English language, being able to speak to these things.

Brandt Krueger:

So they talked about people with accents, they talked about people with lisps, they talked about people with MS that's affecting people's speech and really working with people to make it so that their assistants could respond to them just as well as it does to other people as well. And in addition to that, they announced that they were actively looking for more people to help them with that. So to come in and maybe do some recordings of how you say certain things so that they can make the assistant smarter in dealing with people that don't have perfect diction when speaking to their assistant.

Will Curran:

Can you just talk like that for the rest of the podcast?

Brandt Krueger:

I could but it would get very annoying.

Will Curran:

Oh my God it just reminded me of some movie character, I'll eventually remember which one.

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah it sounds a little Vulcan or something.

Will Curran:

Yeah exactly. Well I think on the accessibility side too, not only is getting the assistant to work well with people as well but my favorite, absolutely, and I saw this feature and immediately said events industry, events industry, events industry was the live captions. And the immediate play is that obviously for a lot of events now you can even see it I think if you look at Microsoft Build and I think you look at Google IO, they're all doing captions on their screens for the events.

Will Curran:

So then that way those of hard of hearing can see what's actually being said and everything like that, obviously you usually have an ASL interpreter as well as someone doing sign language but the live captioning is so cool and again to go back to that live transcription we saw at the Microsoft Build event they basically are like, look we're going to make a feature where not matter what app you're in, you can get live transcriptions of what everyone's saying.

Will Curran:

And for a world that is hard of hearing, is really, absolutely so cool. What's interesting though is not even just on the accessibility side of things but there's basically been some studies and it's something like people watch 50 or 60%, something really high, watch videos with no audio turned on.

Will Curran:

So it's like I'm at work and I'm not supposed to be looking at Instagram, let me watch this video and if it doesn't have captions, people are going to tune off. Especially if it's someone talking. This is going to make it so they always know what they're saying using I think AI to transcribe what we're saying is so cool. I'm just so excited.

Brandt Krueger:

Well and if I remember right, this was the demo whereas they were doing it, she was kind of showing it and it was doing it live, subtitling on stage and then at the end of the demo she said, "Oh and by the way I've been in airplane mode this whole time."

Will Curran:  
Yeah.

Brandt Krueger:  
So it not only was it doing it, subtitling it, it was doing it on the device.

Will Curran:  
Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Absolutely. So super duper cool and I think this is one note too, it says that it's going to be added to phone calls as well, which is really, really cool I think just to have that functionality.

Brandt Krueger:  
And another accessibility step like you said.

Will Curran:  
Absolutely, absolutely. And speaking of taking what people were saying and using the audio to get information things like that, there was some advancements made with Duplex, which if you didn't watch last years Google IO, essentially Duplex was their hey you can tell your robot to call a restaurant and make a reservation for you. Everyone thinks it's an actual human being.

Will Curran:  
They use um's and ah's and blah, blah, blah, just look up Google Duplex I think and you can learn a little bit about it. I've used it before because it actually works in Phoenix. It's one of the few markets it works in. Super duper cool. Honestly I forget it's there most of the time so I usually end up just doing it the old school way but they've added some additional features which is that they've now made it as well that now you can have a Google Duplex style receptionist answering your phones for you.

Will Curran:  
Not like the call screening, the call screening obviously is super duper popular and I love that feature from last year as well but for example, if you run a business, you can have the receptionist who can take appointments for you. Or who can take reservations, obviously mainly toward service based companies and restaurants but imagine if for example you wanted to get a meeting for an event and meet with a vendor, blah, blah, blah.

Will Curran:  
Instead of having to deal with a receptionist or something like that, you could just deal with a robot. Imagine just telling your Google Assistant, "Hey set up a meeting with this person." It calls for you and sets up the meeting. I think that's really, really cool as well from the productivity standpoint. I'm not sure if you feel the same way Brandt.

Brandt Krueger:

It's one step closer to our robot overlords because, so what you're going to do is have your Google Assistant call my Google Assistant receptionist and then they'll just start talking to each other. So it'll be like, so your robot talking to my robot and then they're sitting by the fire and one robot says to the other robot, "I'm going to set your phone on fire."

Brandt Krueger:

Something along those lines but it really is interesting to me this idea that at some point here relatively soon, we're going to have our robots talking to each other to do dinner reservations and things like that. And will they continue to have these human style conversations or at some point they're going to go, "Bedeedo, oh you're a robot? Bedeedo, oh I'm a robot, great. We can have this conversation in the next two seconds."

Will Curran:

Totally. I think it's totally... I know, there's no way they're going to talk English or vocal things. They're going to be like, oh yeah, they're going to recognize they're both robots, and they're going to be like, "We're going to connect." And not even two seconds, milliseconds.

Brandt Krueger:

It connects like with an old 26k modem.

Will Curran:

That'd be awesome. And for everyone who doesn't understand that reference, we appreciate you tuning in at such a young age.

Brandt Krueger:

Then your young and I'm old, yeah I got it.

Will Curran:

I love it, I love it. Well that's I think, that's a lot of the stuff that we covered that was happening. I think just a lot of exciting things happening with transcriptions and meeting together and just, I think computers are doing some amazing technology going on. Was there any last minute stuff that you wanted to add?

Brandt Krueger:

A lot of little things in Android Q where they're continuing to expand things like dark mode. Everybody's into dark mode. I really like dark mode myself, but some people find it really frustration. It frustrates me that some of the core Google apps still don't do dark mode. I'm sure they will at some point like GMan and stuff like that are pretty...

Will Curran:

Yeah. I was so excited this last week One Note got dark mode. So I can now take notes in dark mode, and my life is changed. I think we talked about that during our favorite apps episode is how much I love dark mode.

Brandt Krueger:

And One Note is a very underrated app. I know that's going a little bit far off field, but we were talking about Microsoft earlier, so it's actually a pretty quality app.

Will Curran:

Absolutely and yeah definitely good.

Brandt Krueger:

Right, any other lessons to take from Google IO and Microsoft Build? I think it's very interesting again, that we have very different things and Microsoft clearly went a more geeky, down tone event whereas Google is still kind of doing the Steve Jobsian, big... all of these things used to be really nerdy. They're developer conferences. They used to be low key and nerdy and it was really Jobs that first started making a thing, you know where we have the big keynote, and the big hardware reveal and all that kind of stuff.

Will Curran:

Definitely, definitely. And I think the important thing too, as a take away for everybody too is that even if you're not really, use the word, nerdy as us, these things are really interesting to watch. These 10 minute recaps on what happened because eventually these things are going to roll down to the events, and we talk about this a million times when it comes to things like CES and things like that.

Will Curran:

Just look, whenever a big event like this, you hear about it, like a Google IO don't be like "Oh cool that doesn't apply to me, that's not my industry." Just search the title and look for these like, the biggest announcements in 10 minutes and literally you can watch these things and just have an idea of what's going on. Or just continue to listen to the Event Tech podcast and we'll just tell you what's going on as well.

Brandt Krueger:

That's right. Well that's probably as good a place as any to wrap it up. Any closing thoughts?

Will Curran:

Nope, I think that does it. I'm just really excited for everything going on. Don't install Android Q on your phone.

Brandt Krueger:

Don't do the beta, all right, good to know.

Will Curran:

At least not until it's stable.

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah but I want it. I want it, I want dark mode. I want all that stuff but Samsung never does the betas until it's too late. Not worth it?

Will Curran:

It's not worth it. I mean it's worth it until your phone's, like a core app just continues to crash. But then it usually gets fixed by the next day, so you know. Yeah. It's just if you want to do it, if you want risk it, risk it.

Brandt Krueger:

With great risk comes great reward. All right. Well thank you so much for joining me Will. It's been fun to break this down with you.

Will Curran:

It's always such an intellectual conversation with you.

Brandt Krueger:

That's the word of the day, everybody scream. Thank you so much all for listening out there. You can find out more at [EventTechpodcast.com](http://EventTechpodcast.com). There you can see the show notes, links to all the resources that are shared there. All of the transcripts. Will's been dropping time stamps and all kinds of things like that into the show notes, so you can go back and check out all the stuff that you missed from Microsoft Build and Google IO. What do you think? We want to know what you think. Send us an email to [eventtechpodcast@helloendless.com](mailto:eventtechpodcast@helloendless.com) or use the hashtag [eventtechpodcast](https://twitter.com/eventtechpodcast). We are, what is the Twitter handle for the show?

Will Curran:

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Brandt Krueger:

Save those three characters. Save you three characters you have to type. So eventtechcast on Twitter. You can contact us there as well. Let us know what did we miss? Was there something buried in Google IO or in Microsoft Build that we did not take note of that you think we should have included in our list? Let us know. What did we miss as far as the functionality?

Brandt Krueger:

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