

BI Radio Episode 25
A Silver Anniversary of Sorts

(00:00)

Station ID: This is BI Radio

(00:11)

Montage:

- I'm like, I'm a wreck. It's coffee induced, kind of, but I'm like, am I okay? Why? What? Is this on? Hello! I'm nervous. Hi, I'm Kelsey. Sorry.
- Okay, now which one is the volume for me, my headphones? Are we ready? Oh, there we go. All right, in three, two, one. Hi, I'm Delaney. Sorry, I'll do that again.
- Hi, I'm Don Campbell, Vice President of Platform Strategy and Technology.
- And I'm Andrew Kowal, Product Manager.
- I'm Stephan Jou, technical architect.
- You're not even in it!
- I think that'll flow just fine.
- Fix it in post. Yes, that's what we always say.
- Okay. We'll just try that one more time.
- It was so good up until then.
- I'm still just not sure how I'm going to start things off. You know what? I'm freaked out, so I'm kind of doing it. Let me just take, I'll take a spin. I think we can get it going fine. So I'll just read the intro. Hit a button over there.

(01:14)

Ken Seeley: Hi there, and welcome to BI Radio. I'm Ken Seeley. On the show today, a silver anniversary of sorts. Three years and 25 episodes in, we look back, we look around and we look ahead. Joining us in the studio for the special roundtable discussion, we have contributing producers Kelsey Howarth and Delaney Turner. From our Technology Soup panel, Don Campbell and Andrew Kowal. And finally, the voice of our commercial segments, Justine Karam. Thanks everyone for joining us today. Now how about we start off about the show? How do we actually come up with some of the themes and ideas that we brought to our public here?

Kelsey Howarth: Each show we try and break it into three different themes, something that we think is going to be of general interest to everyone: a segment from a business author, an analyst, some of the big thinkers. We then like to have our own people participate in Tech Soup, some of our industry directors, some of our marketing people, and then we really love to have a customer participate. The themes kind of dictate

themselves, but we want to make sure that people hear from not just us, but people outside of our organization.

Delaney Turner: Yes. The performance management story is such a multi-faceted, multi-dimensional story that you can come at it from a bunch of different ways. You can come at it from a product and various different products. You can come at it from an idea, as you can come at it from business value. You can let the customers talk themselves, or tell their own stories. And there's a lot of that content out there. And what we try to do is find a unifying principle among all of the different assets that we have. And as Kelsey said sometimes the themes express themselves and other times we pick, we find something that's in the news and something that the customers are talking about, and those two things come together.

Kelsey Howarth: For me as a writer, it's always a unique thrill to reach out to these business authors and ask them about their work. There's so many good segments, but if I had to pick two that really stuck out in my mind over the last three years, I would probably pick the one with Dr. Martha Rogers. She was talking about the Tylenol bottle tampering scandal of many years ago. But she was talking about how the company pulled every single bottle of Tylenol off the shelves immediately and took a huge financial hit.

Dr. Martha Rogers: Now they could have said look, it's not our fault. The drugstore should go check, see if things have been tampered with and, you know, good luck. But instead they made the decision to do the right thing.

Kelsey Howarth: Another segment that really, really has had a big impact on my life was with Dan Gardner who wrote a book about risk.

Dan Gardner: I can't emphasize strongly enough how profoundly grateful we should be that, you know, we are at risk of course, we have serious dangers, there are things that we should worry about certainly. But at the same time, we should realize how much lower the risks we face are today and how much greater our life expectancy is, how much safer our children are, and we should be profoundly grateful for that.

Kelsey Howarth: That was a very powerful and emotional message.

Andrew Kowal: Heavy.

Kelsey Howarth: But on the upside, we also have some great friends of the show and people like Patrick Lencioni and Mark Jeffries. Please, if you have a chance, listen to their segments. They're just charming and hilarious and insightful and they both bring a very powerful message.

Delaney Turner: We do have to put on our corporate hats. It is a labour of love. Derek and I both have backgrounds in media and news, and I get to pretend that I'm still a news reporter and that's a lot of fun. But you know, we do make sure that we are wearing the

hat, and we talk about the themes that we pick and the people that we interview. You know, we try to get across the core theme or the core brand story about better decision making and how people use information. And in the case of Dan Gardner it was about looking at just the statistics about risk and actual...

Kelsey Howarth: Real risk.

Delaney Turner: Real risk versus perceived risk and looking at the actual data.

Kelsey Howarth: There's a few others that lead right in. Patrick Lencioni wrote a book called *The Three Signs You Have a Miserable Job*. And the three signs are you're anonymous, you're irrelevant, and you're immeasurable. So it led into our message of measuring what matters. It was really quite perfect. Stephen Dubner is another person that really looks at actual statistics, aside from what the media does with it. Again, it comes back to our message of finding the sweet spots of information.

Ken Seeley: You know, when you talk about wearing your corporate hats, and we're here, I look back at the Technology Soup panel, because primarily that podcast was an internal podcast. You know, your audience was certainly Cognoids or IBMers at that time, right?

Delaney Turner: Smelly geeks!

Ken Seeley: So being a part of BI Radio, which we have a much larger external audience, how has that changed that particular panel?

Don Campbell: I think there is an unserved population of enterprise viewers. You know there's a lot of podcasting out there around technology, but it's for consumers and specific interests around mobility or, you know, photography or whatever you have. But to be able to talk about something that's relevant to a corporate enterprise or a technology that's interesting to corporate enterprise, I think that's still a focus for us, and the person in my mind that I'm really speaking to is not just the typical consumer, but somebody that lives and works in an enterprise and needs to understand this technology just like the rest of us.

Andrew Kowal: A knowledge worker whose job depends on quality IT and needs to understand the trends and that.

Delaney Turner: A lot of the business authors that we talk to have experience or have new ideas on that, and we like to bring that perspective to the readers, or the listeners. And if we can match the big idea people we call the gurus and fun stuff, I'm just looking at the big wall of ideas, and we put those under the gurus category. If we can find the best shows I think are the ones that take the authors with the big ideas with the customers who are doing them, then the listeners and the customers get something out of it that said it's not just an abstract idea. There are actually people who are doing it. And that's what

people get out of the podcast. It's a fun listen, we hope, and it's something that they could actually go oh, okay.

Andrew Kowal: People respond to stories, and the abstract might be interesting, but it doesn't really feel real until you hear about people who have gone through it.

Ken Seeley: Well you know it certainly sounds like podcasting is still a very viable way to reach our business users right now. You know, looking back, can we share any memorable moments we've had in the last three years? You know, those really good lessons that we've seen along the way, even sharing from our customers' experiences?

Don Campbell: We had to get to a bell. Somebody sent us a bell, remember, for the politically incorrect moments that Andrew would offer the show. And yes, so that we could mark those very specifically on the show.

Ken Seeley: We should get just an outtake of all of the bell ringing.

Andrew Kowal: Oh, man, it's one long beep.

Don Campbell: Sounds like the Church of St. Mary after a whole hour.

Delaney Turner: You could do an entire episode, let alone segment of me saying sorry, I'll do that again. Or just I flub my intros. I never do the intros until afterwards because there's an initial 30 seconds where I get over that adrenaline rush of being in a studio again. And then it's okay. Then I'm like yes, that's fine.

Kelsey Howarth: Yes, I think for me it would be the giggling. I am not a giggler. I don't do it in any other area of my life, but when I'm talking to one of these authors, I get all nervous and there's no other place in the world do I giggle except taped on the show.

Ken Seeley: But then you know they tell two friends and they're giggling and then the whole booth is going.

Kelsey Howarth: It's contagious. I think it just sounds silly.

Ken Seeley: Well, what have been some of the things that you've been able to share that you found that literally helped people?

Don Campbell: Well, podcasting has, you know, really risen as a form of communication; and internally when we release a Technology Soup podcast, it gets the kind of listenership that other PR and marketing would just dream about having. And it just seems to be something that reaches people, a certain class of people, and the people want to sit there and do something else but just listen to information coming at them. This is a wonderful way of doing it, and it doesn't have to be over-produced and it doesn't have to cost a lot of money, and you can do it on the fly with some skunkworks

talent, and it works very well. And so I've really seen that taking off as a form of communication.

Delaney Turner: The technology is really very simple. It's an MP3 file with an RSS feed. And that's essentially, but there's a behaviour and a new discipline around it. Say it is a legitimate form of communication with very simple technologies.

Kelsey Howarth: I think as well, when I think about this show, I want to go back to where we started with podcasting. It was an idea we were very intrigued with. Our group, the writing team, was approached to write five white papers. White papers take forever. You have to interview the subject matter expert, do drafts, research, approvals, art room, posting.

Delaney Turner: Very high touch.

Kelsey Howarth: Yes, it was going to take us about six months, and in the world of technology, that is unacceptable. So we pursued podcasts as a way to get our message out quickly, let the subject matter experts tell their own story, not have us tell them for it, and I think we were done all five in a month. It was really a tremendous first experience with it.

Delaney Turner: Well I think too is we've seen BI Radio legitimized by the numbers that we get in terms of downloads and subscribers. But if I just look at the iTunes Store, the number and variety of podcasts on every conceivable discipline from the DIY to the Harvard Business Review, everything and every possible interest is there, and it's only growing. So I think it meets that on demand of everybody expects from their content, they want it when they want it. And it's also portable. So it just fits so many of the different demands and expectations that people have.

Ken Seeley: We talked a little bit about how the show is run as far as the theme and the ideas. What about the difficulties of finding our customers or even our own IBMers to come and have those conversations, some of the authors around there? What is that task like?

Delaney Turner: That's a lot of fun. It's probably the easiest part actually. Kelsey's got more experience in this domain than I do.

Kelsey Howarth: The really amazing thing we've had a number of serious business authors, bestsellers, and we've just reached out to them, asked them to participate in the show, at no cost, and they are incredibly giving. They're happy to share. It's a great vehicle for them as well to promote their efforts, they're speaking. We have been very, very fortunate with the business authors. Our customers also, they want to share their successes as well. So it's been really, really nice.

Delaney Turner: You know, we've been blessed. We're generally talking to people who aren't shy about their ideas, and when we approach them and say here's a vehicle to

reach an audience for a limited, for a very small, about half an hour, 45 minutes on the phone, and we'll look after everything and give you some free publicity, they're generally very, very happy to help.

Andrew Kowal: On a slight tangent, I have seen that people, that the technology does enable people to connect in ways you probably wouldn't have expected. I, for example, was recently having an argument with somebody over the H1N1 vaccine, and they said well, there's a study that showed that it was inconclusive, that it wasn't doing anything. So I actually looked at the study and saw the author and thought I'll just ping the author. And so I just, you know, there's the email address, I emailed the author and said, did you mean this? And she immediately replies, no, that person you're talking to is wrong, and this is why: Bang, bang, bang. It was like that scene in Annie Hall where the guy pulls over Marshall McLuhan and says: You know what? You're full of crap and here's Marshall McLuhan and he'll tell you why. And it's wonderful that way to be able to actually go and find people.

Delaney Turner: So maybe real life is like this finally.

Ken Seeley: So that's kind of looking past, right? I mean, we looked at some of the stuff that we've seen come to light within the last three years. Where are we going then? I mean what kind of technology?

Don Campbell: Flying cars, Ken, flying cars!

Ken Seeley: Hey, I love it. Can I get one now?

Andrew Kowal: Rocket packs. Rocket packs.

Ken Seeley: You know, but what is going to help? What's going to propel our businesses in the future, especially with the theme of technology? What is going to be put in there? And the near future. Let's not go off to rocket cars. Like what's coming up soon?

Delaney Turner: What's going to be the next big thing? Is it going to be a device? Is it going to be a technology? Is it going to be an idea?

Andrew Kowal: I think it's going to be an integration. I think it's going to be more... Like it drives me nuts with personal productivity applications that phone numbers show up for calls that I have to make, and then I immediately have to read it off and type it into the phone that's beside me. This thing should basically call for me and ring and say, you're now on your call, pick up the handset. That type of thing should be going on, and I think that we're moving more and more in that direction.

Don Campbell: There's still too many disconnects between the applications that we use on a daily basis, and having me be able to do something that's work-centric rather than tool-centric is really the design goal of the future. Let me be able to take this task and

accomplish it. And frankly, I don't care what the tools are that help me to accomplish it. And I don't want to see splash screens and I don't want to know that I've got different tools and different interfaces. I want to work the way I want to work, and I want the information to sort of appear into my world and integrate the way that I've customized it to look. And they just, some of them are coming from the search and some of them are coming from the fact that I'm geo-spatially located in a certain spot in town, and they're coming from different IT systems and they're coming from colleagues and all of that. But it's all coming together in a way that is just letting me progress on the task that I have rather than saying I'm going to stop doing that and I'm going to do a little bit of this, and I'm going to go back to that again because my tool forces me to.

Delaney Turner: Yes. The best tools are the ones with the applications or the ones that fall away. You don't even know you're using after a while.

Don Campbell: Right. You know, maybe cloud's going to be a part of that, if we can standardize on applications on the cloud and some interfaces around integrating them, maybe that's a good design for the future is to allow us to be able to do it all offsite rather than on the fact that I happen to have this tool on my desktop right now. And if I go to Andrew's office, he doesn't have that tool on his desktop, so we can't do the same task.

Ken Seeley: So it's just really building in that trust figure like you say and as well, IT's got to start trusting that some of the social contribution is going to be there and be at least accepted. We have to start trusting that the technology, no matter where it's housed, is going to be available, be secure, and be really there when we need it to have that information. So that trust level has to be built as well.

Andrew Kowal: Well, borrowing from Don Tapscott, and I fully believe that part of the shift is going to be demographic, just like people my age tend to point at things and dial things using my finger and kids that grew up with Nintendo use their thumb. People my age are digital immigrants. I mean, I grew up with rotary phones and my kids laugh when they see them.

Delaney Turner: I love rotary phones.

Andrew Kowal: Rotary phones are beautiful. They're wonderful things. But now we have kids that when you try to talk to them about technology: cell phones, the Internet, it's like talking to a goldfish about water. Like what? Yes, of course. And this stuff should follow you and the cell phone is simply your portal into just another aspect of your life. Everything's on the cloud and I try to push that away. I still have my rotary phone mentality in a lot of ways, but most of my, all my personal email, my personal calendar, my to-do lists, all that information for me is on the cloud right now. So wherever I go, I've got my phone with me; I can access it all, my contacts, everything wherever I go. And I think that that type of approach, simply because the digital natives that are now growing up and entering the workforce, is going to be a huge push.

Delaney Turner: You can remember a time when it didn't exist.

Andrew Kowal: Yes.

Delaney Turner: It used to be for programming the VCR for our parents was like the blinking 12:00 o'clock. And for me now you talk about the Nintendos, for me the technology break was the new controller with the thumbs. I can't get my head around it. I grew up with a joystick. And I just think in technology there are certain break points that indicate a new generation that's out of the way, it's coming. I still can't get over those things.

Andrew Kowal: No, me either.

Delaney Turner: Forget it, you know.

Ken Seeley: What helps our customers hearing this? Is it something that you're using because they're using it, or is it something really to show some of the newer technologies that people are interested in using?

Don Campbell: Well, our customers are at various levels in their technology adoption. Some of them are really just struggling and trying to sort of maintain the systems that they've got and keep them effective for their business, and others are looking at technology as a competitive differentiator. And so they want to know what's that leading thing? What's something that might give me that leg up on the competition that I can adopt next year? And we try and give them a little bit of that insight so that they can see how to maybe get ahead in the years to come.

Ken Seeley: Well, so looking back to these last three years as far as the show's been on, what are some of those business and technology changes that we've seen along the way?

Delaney Turner: Well, I think mobility is possibly one of the biggest stories of the last three years.

Andrew Kowal: The explosion of mobility for sure.

Delaney Turner: Yes, everything from BI on a BlackBerry to just expanding it to almost everything being able to do on a mobile device.

Don Campbell: Yes. Well, you know, also the consumerization of IT. Mobility is part of that. We all have carry our phones around and we get more and more technology in those phones and can do more with them, and we want to bring that technology into the business. But we see it in other things as well too. Search, for instance. Look at how important a search engine is to you in finding information on the Internet, bringing that into the business and now having enterprise level search where you can get at the real business content and find a place to make that decision. Those kinds of technologies are really making their way I think from the consumer space.

Andrew Kowal: Most recently I would also argue that cloud has probably been that consumerization trend that's starting to really impact enterprises. People are seeing advantages in that approach, and wondering how they can translate that to business success as well.

Delaney Turner: When we talk about the consumerization of corporate IT, is the inroads of consumer tech and the behaviours around that, is that because of the impact or the new ability for people to work anywhere, the blending, or sorry, the blurring of home and work? I'm thinking if you're using consumer technologies at home and you're working at home, you just expect applications regardless of how they are to work a certain way?

Don Campbell: Right. I would say it's a combination of a number of things. One is the best technology I ever had access to used to be in the office, because I couldn't afford that at home. Now it's very inexpensive and so I have great technology at home as well too. Kids who have grown up with this kind of technology are now coming into the workplace, so there's a little bit, you know, a change of expectation there as well too. Plus the fact that often your office is at home. And as you were saying. And so it's a combination of all of those things where I don't want such a dramatic change from the tools and the technologies I access at home to the tools and technologies I access in the workplace. I want to be able to put those two things together, and the things that I like at home, I like to go in and get my maps and find my directions to places. Well, why can't I find a direction to the next place to put my store? So you really want to bring those two things together, and there isn't such a dramatic change between work and home anymore.

Andrew Kowal: I find the translation though of consumer technology to be... I mean who was the futurist that said that the future is here already, it's just not evenly distributed? And I think that technology, consumer technology is like that, and some of it will never make it, at least in a form that we recognize, the consumer world into the corporate world. Search was a good example. Searching the Internet is frankly different than search behind the firewall. You go to an application and it doesn't have search, you can't say well, this sucks. I have to go to the next application. You're kind of stuck with that app usually because it's doing the thing that you need it to do. And although they're getting better, even the types of data that you're looking for and so on, it's a different paradigm. It's narrow but deep as opposed wide and shallow like the Internet. So it's going to be a bit of a different experience. However, search is progressing to be optimized, and so well now you can search and query content, which don't really do so much on the Internet. But now you can do that behind the firewall. So new opportunities come out. Mobility, I think maps fairly well. But some stuff still needs to find its footing, like social media, social interaction. People want to see Facebook behind the firewall, and is that really happening? I haven't really seen anything compelling yet.

Don Campbell: Well, I think that's one of the things that's going to change though as we get used to Flickr and Facebook and YouTube and all these places where I can contribute content into the site. Now I come into my workplace, and I know why there was an issue in our lab last month. And so I want to be able to contribute that back into

the intelligence system of the enterprise. And years ago I don't think people were very comfortable with having information in the corporate IT world that wasn't just owned and fenced off by IT, and we have to become more comfortable with the fact that we aren't going to be able to trust absolutely every piece of information, but there's value there. When you look at something like Wikipedia, let's not ignore the value that it's got, even though you know you can't trust it at 100 per cent. And I think that corporate decision-making culture is going to grow to the point where we add new content that comes from users that IT doesn't own and they can't validate, but there's still something in there they've got to learn to trust.

Andrew Kowal: That's true, because you do see, it is just to contradict myself, but there are tools that certainly are as opposed to large applications, like Wikis, for example, I find are more and more prevalent. Forums have sort of always, well, not always been there, but have always been a way of that sort of social interaction. But friending people, and even in the mobility world, who in the corporation actually uses SMS to send information around, right? There are differences in terms of applications of some of these tools that just don't apply to the enterprise, or at least we haven't found an application for them yet.

Don Campbell: In some ways I think that the enterprise not being as shallow and broad as you were describing before, right? The Internet is like that. But it's narrower and deeper, and it's got all this rich metadata around it. And so when you are doing a search, you can take that ontology of the company and apply it to it and get much more valid results than you ever can just by looking at keywords like Google has to on the Internet. And so in some ways, some of these technologies I think should be applied and be more effective in the enterprise than we could ever hope for them to be in this broad disconnected world on the Internet.

Delaney Turner: Justine, what do you get out of this?

Justine Karam: Well, I'm part of that generation that was really born into most of the technology. So for me, it's almost taken for granted. So I have to admit that a lot of this you just assume that it should have been that way, and I can't honestly know what it would be like without it. And I do have a lot of younger siblings, and they're more ahead than I am. And sometimes you just feel like you're not where you should be considering you work in this industry, there's always new things, but it's hard to keep up.

Ken Seeley: It's incredibly eye-opening to again watch your children being teenager years blast through technology, but parents taking a bit of adversity to try to figure out why or should I. There's just that wall that it's hard to break sometimes. You know, like you just take it for granted. It makes sense. If my commercial life or my consumerism life is easy and I have all these gadgets and widgets and devices in order to make my life easy, why don't I have that at my work to make that same experience better for my employer, make my end of day more productive for my boss?

(28:00)

Ken Seeley: Well, that's a wrap. I'd like to thank our guests today. Contributing producers Kelsey Howarth and Delaney Turner. Our Technology Soup panellists Don Campbell and Andrew Kowal. And last but not least, Justine Karam. Finally thanks as well to our head producer, composer and audio engineer, Derek Schraner.

Ken Seeley: A reminder to check us out online at radiocognos.com or our new home at ibm.com/cognos. Or you could listen to previous shows, download individual segments and view the transcript of each broadcast.

Ken Seeley: You can also follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/ibmcognos, or email us at biradio@ca.ibm.com.

Ken Seeley: I thank you for listening. I'm Ken Seeley. We'll see you in about six weeks.

(28:37)

Andrew Kowal: I would say learning Ken Seeley's broadcast voice has been probably the highlight of my experience. He's sort of taking a little bit of Howard Stern and combining it with a bit of, who's that old guy on 60 Minutes? Mickey Rooney. Why do you park in a driveway but you drive in a parkway?

Ken Seeley: That's good. Thanks, man. And that's a good one or a bad one?

Andrew Kowal: That's a good one.

Ken Seeley: Okay.

Andrew Kowal: You got a little bit of William Shatner in there. Pauses. It's important to set up a certain dramatic pause.

Andrew Kowal: That's good. Thanks.

Don Campbell: What was the question, Ken?

(29:22)

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