Brandt Krueger:
All right you guys set and ready?

Michael Doane:
Ready to go.

Brandt Krueger:
Let's do this thing. Hello everybody and welcome to another edition of the Event Tech Podcast. I'm Brandt Krueger, Event Technology consulting Will Curran is gallivanting around the world. Not sure where he's at, he's stuck in an airport somewhere but he is the significant Will Curran, keeping up with the adjective of the week. So he is the significant Will Curran, will join us if he's able but unfortunately he's stuck in traffic somewhere.

Brandt Krueger:
But in order to deal with that I am joined by not one but two fantastic guests. So we are going to be talking today about accessibility and specifically how event technology and accessibility can work together to make our events more accessible. So we've got a couple of folks from CadmiumCD. We've got Michael Doane who is the marketing manager, there we go. I scrolled past it on my screen. The marketing manager from Cadmium and we've got Meghan Capiaghi who is the web developer from CadmiumCD. Now if you haven't heard of CadmiumCD, we'll give those guys a moment to fill you in a little bit but the reason we wanted to have them on is that Cadmium has really been making an effort to make their products more accessible, specifically their web products. And starting with their Abstract Scorecard product. So Michael and Meghan, thanks for joining us today.

Michael Doane:
Yeah thanks for having us, Brandt.

Meghan Capiaghi:
Yeah thank you so much.

Brandt Krueger:
So let's start with the basics for anybody who's been living under a rock and hasn't heard of CadmiumCD over the course of the last few years. Mike if you could just tell us a little bit about CadmiumCD, kind of the origins of the company and what you guys do as far as event technology?

Michael Doane:
Yeah sure so we were founded back in 2000 by husband/wife team, Michelle and Peter Wyatt. They were doing recordings of conferences on CDs back then, which is where our name came from because they came from chemical engineering background and CD on the chemical chart is cadmium, so CadmiumCD worked out perfectly.

Michael Doane:
They were doing that and then they just had clients coming to them, asking them for different things, like, "How can we manage our speakers? How can we get our content on the web, etc, etc?" And we kind of organically grew into the technology company we are today where we offer a lot of different software products from submissions and review management to speaker and exhibitor management, all the way down the line to attendee engagement products on the web and in mobile applications.

Brandt Krueger:
All right so yeah, perfect. There is the elevator pitch, so well said, well spoken. You caught me sipping my tea there as you finished up there. So tell us a little bit about ... as I know there are some web standards that are behind this effort, tell us a little bit ... is the WCAG standards, is that correct?

Michael Doane:
Yeah so Meghan, you want to talk a little bit about this one?

Meghan Capiaghi:
Yeah definitely. So it's the WCAG standard, so it just stands for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. And recently in the past year, in 2018 in the summertime they released a 2.1 version of this and this is just a bunch of guidelines to follow to make sure that web content is accessible and is really equal access, equal opportunity, gives people the ability to use websites and mobile devices in the same experience, no matter what kind of disability you have.

Meghan Capiaghi:
So that's the basics of it and the standards are just ways to test your website, ways to test the mobile apps and things to just make sure that they're all following the same guidelines.

Brandt Krueger:
and I think you touched on something-

Michael Doane:
Just to add on to that-

Brandt Krueger:
Go ahead.

Michael Doane:
The 2.1 standard that was released last year is different from the 2.0 standard because the 2.0 standard was released back in 2008 when smartphones weren't really so smart and they were less prevalent. So 2.1, and correct me if I'm wrong, Meghan but 2.1 basically takes these devices into account and adds some additional guidelines around mobile accessibility as well.

Meghan Capiaghi:
Yeah that's definitely something that was added in 2.1, and the other thing that was added in 2.1 is cognitive disabilities. That wasn't really considered in the 2.0 version, so cognitive disabilities were added into 2.1 as well.

Brandt Krueger:
Well that's exactly what I kind of wanted to touch on, is that we're not just talking about people who might have issues with their eyesight. That these standards go well beyond that. What are some of the other groups that these guidelines affect?

Meghan Capiaghi:
When I first started looking into it I was actually impressed at how many different disability categories that this really falls under. There is even people who might have a disability for a limited amount of time, so say you broke your arm, the standards would help even if you aren't able to use one of your arms for X amount of time.

Meghan Capiaghi:
So there's people who might use a stick to use the keyboard, so they are limited in mobility with their hands, they're not able to use a mouse, clicking, arthritis might be hard so you have to use a touch pad. There's standards for colorblindness, people who just have low vision, maybe need to use a magnifying glass on the screens. So it definitely covers a whole wide variety of disabilities.

Meghan Capiaghi:
And then again with the 2.1 version just being released, having disabilities be covered now, so there's standards to follow for making sure your website is understandable. That the text is readable. You can't be using large words on your website, so your mobile devices, you have to make sure that the language that you're using is perceivable and understandable for most people groups. That's something that they really look at when you're really evaluating a website.

Brandt Krueger:
When you started to look at your Abstract Scorecard product, what kind of a timeline are we looking at from the moment this commitment was made to getting up to these standards, to the moment you're like, "Okay it's basically done." All the testing and that kind of stuff. What kind of timeline did that take for you guys?

Meghan Capiaghi:
It probably took us about 12 to 18 months, I want to say to really ... because we started from scratch rewriting the whole thing and we had to train up our developers to know what to be looking for, how to make the writeup and the HTML accessible and to do things the correct way. And there is a lot of iterations of that so from planning to the end it probably took us 12 to 18 months but I would say we probably had about a six months period that was hyper focused on

testing and we hired a third party to come in to audit our site. And that was about a six month period where they audited our site and gave us a lot of feedback and opinions.

Meghan Capiaghi:
I was the lead on that project at that time and it was really awesome to be working with the third party because the person who I was working with, he actually was blind so he is a person who uses these softwares, the screen reader softwares. And it was just great exposure to really seeing how he interprets our website and how he interprets the page and just how he navigates around the page. It really provided a different perspective that I don't have on a daily basis so that was about a six month period where we were going through an audit and getting a bunch of feedback. I was meeting with him weekly to make sure that the elements of the page are accessible and the things that we're incorporating and trying to help the end user to use is every end user to be able to use in their day to day use of the product.

Brandt Krueger:
So at that point, that auditing, that was on the new site or on the old site?

Meghan Capiaghi:
That was on the new site. So we did that once we put in what we thought was all the accessibility guidelines and things, when we felt like we pretty much hit the guidelines and made all the updates, we had him audit it and then it was another iteration that took about six more months.

Brandt Krueger:
So you knew pretty early on, I know you said that you started from scratch but you knew pretty early on in the process that this was going to be hard. We kind of just completely throw out the old site and start over?

Meghan Capiaghi:
Yeah we tried to do it where we weren't going to have to do a rewrite but it definitely lent itself to being that and in the truest sense, if you're using the markup and the HTML correctly, it's going to be accessible. And what I mean by that is there's HTML tags like heading tags? Sometimes people just use a bold tag to display it as a heading on the page but if you actually use the H1 elements or the H2 elements, that's going to interpret it to the screen reader that it is a heading and you interpret that visually with bold but not through the screen reader software.

Brandt Krueger:
I'm trying to think of a ... I'm familiar with these terms because I learned how to do HTML coding way back, way, way back in the day and these are kind of the most fundamental coding of websites and whether it's a bold or a paragraph or a heading like you say. So for the lay person, just being really specific about, "Hey this is a heading. This is ..." rather than just like you said, making it bold and making it larger or something along those lines but really using those tags effectively and for your intended purpose, is that right?

Meghan Capiaghi:
Exactly, yeah. You want to use them correctly. I always use the example, kind of the game. You know when you were growing up and you would play that telephone game where you would whisper something in someone's ear and they whisper it to someone else's ear and by the end you'd come up with a really funny sentence? So basically what I'm doing as the web developer is I am creating code that is going to be interpreted by a softwares that's a screen reader or whatever type of accessibility software they're using and that software is then going to interpret it out to the person.

Meghan Capiaghi:
So we want to make sure what we're putting in is going to be as close to what comes out, and in that game if you put in something that's very complicated, kind of like a rhythm or something that has really complex words to it, you'd get a funnier outcome in the end. But if you put something very simple in at the beginning, you get something that is very similar to what was the intended sentence from the beginning of that game. That game always kind of helps understand this idea from code to an actual website.

Brandt Krueger:
All right so I want to put a-

Michael Doane:
Yeah and as far as these simple tags go, everybody has some familiarity with them because if you've used Microsoft Word you know that you can add titles and subtitles and paragraphs and images and things like that. If you just think about that on the back end of things, you're basically just telling the computer that you want to add one of these headers or one of these title tags and you're breaking down the hierarchy so that it's easy for the computer to read and then display it as a user interface.

Brandt Krueger:
So I want to put a pause on the process for just a moment, take a step back and go over to you, Mike. And just talk about where some of this commitment came from within the company? So how, as it occurred to me, "Okay here we are. We're making a decision here to basically throw out this product and start it from scratch." How does that decision get made in the company and where did that commitment come from in the company?

Michael Doane:
There were a few things. I mean the commitment came from the top. It came from our CEO, Michelle Wyatt who is very familiar with W3C, the World Wide Web Consortium who kind of sets the standards for website development and has set these WCAG standards as well. And one of their core beliefs is that the web is fundamentally designed to work for all people, whatever their hardware, software, language, location or ability.

Michael Doane:

And so Michelle understood this and said, "As a software company that services and supports global users with various backgrounds and needs, we need to take it as our duty to uphold this mission to the best of our ability." And something that we've been talking about is we've been focusing on the Abstract Scorecard which is one of 12 of CadmiumCD's products and we don't want to claim that any one of our products is not accessible, that hasn't gone through this audit that Meghan has explained. So we use the Abstract Scorecard of an example where we started from scratch and rebuilt the product and then went through the audit. Some of our other products may be accessible or may fit some of the guidelines but we want to be very careful of not saying that those are accessible without having done that process.

Michael Doane:

That being said, Michelle took it as kind of our duty to uphold those standards just because if you think about the industry we service, especially the events industry, a large chunk of that is the Association World. And the Association World, in large part we deal with medical conferences. We deal with users from all over the world with different needs that are coming to these nonprofit conferences to further their own education and we want to make sure that when people are using our products during that process of either gaining knowledge or sharing knowledge, we want to make sure that they have the same level of accessibility as someone who may not have a disability as we've described.

Brandt Krueger:

Back to you Meghan. Give us a little bit of a breakdown of that first step of really building things up from scratch. How long did that section of the process take?

Meghan Capiaghi:

After we got tasked with this job to make this website accessible, we really had to ... I mean I've only been in the web development field for about two and a half, three years now so we needed exposure to just what that even means, what that looks like, how much work that will entail. So we started to just use the W3 resources that they have to really understand what our starting place really needed to be and we took the website and just really rewrote it from that part and took page by page, just going through and implementing the different attributes and things that will help make the site accessible.

Meghan Capiaghi:

And learning about the different relationships that you can create on a page, all accessibility is from a coding standpoint, is just really making what is visually prevalent on the page be communicated through a screen reader which just may mean the relationships between different elements on the page, whether it's a heading and the body of the text or if it's an icon, making sure that there's description with that icon. And really just taking it element by element and breaking it down to the lowest level that we really could.

Brandt Krueger:

So you go through that process the first time, right? So you're building everything up from scratch, you bring in your auditor and your auditor goes through the system and says, "Okay good job with this, not so good job with that." What was the biggest surprise of, "Oh man, we didn't even think about that," once you started getting to the auditing process?

Meghan Capiaghi:
That's a great question. I think what was really surprising to me was really what I was explaining with those relationships. There's things like there's buttons on a page and there's links on a page. And so a button is something that really allows something on the page, it makes an event happen on the page. So maybe a popup appears or it brings you down to another part on the page.

Meghan Capiaghi:
What we weren't really thinking about is that experience, if you're just going from the top of the page to the bottom of the page, it is a seamless experience. But the minute that you are clicking on a button to take you to the bottom of the page there needs to be some sort of relationship or something that gets explained to the screen reader that now we're at this part on the page. And just the idea of helping somebody understand where they are in our system, where they're at in the process was something that I think we really had to restructure. Especially with the Abstract Scorecard you're submitting your abstract, you're submitting a submission to the site and so you could go through multiple tasks, multiple different steps in the process and whatever page you're on really needed to be descriptive enough to be like, "Okay that's exactly where I'm at in the process."

Meghan Capiaghi:
So having the initial page load explain to you where you are in the process without you visually being able to see anything was probably the biggest hurdle we had to encounter that we weren't thinking about in that first iteration.

Brandt Krueger:
I think there's so much that we just take for granted. You think about a situation like you're talking about where you're submitting an abstract and all of that, we take that relatively simple interaction for granted when we've got full access to our sight and full access to our touch and all that kind of stuff, and hearing, that it's, "Okay, just tadada, take this in, tadadada fill that form out and away we go."

Brandt Krueger:
And it's something that we do a thousand times a day on the web. To really break that down like you say into the relationships between this button and the rest of the page, what happens when this pops up, what is now on the screen versus what was on the screen a moment ago and how that is all indicated to the user is a significantly more complicated process than a lot of people would give credit for. So kudos to you guys for taking the time to really have to really think that out and make it work.

Brandt Krueger:
So once you've gone through the audit process, you're going back and now you're bringing in another iteration, how long does that part of the process take?

Meghan Capiaghi:
When we're going through the audit ... I mean the whole audit time took about six months so that was a pretty ... that six months I was meeting with him weekly so -

Brandt Krueger:
Were you iterating at that point or is more just the sitting through and saying, "This is what you got to work on?"

Meghan Capiaghi:
Yeah it was more that, sitting through and this is what we got to work on. It was kind of like, "This one page we're going to work on and fix these couple things and then next week we'll make sure that those things were addressed and move on to the next page." That was the easiest way to break down each element because in the end it gets very ...it can be very overwhelming when you're going through 20 some odd pages.

Brandt Krueger:
Right, "Here's the 4,700 things you need to fix, go."

Meghan Capiaghi:
Oh my gosh, that was the first audit we got back. It was a report of like 150 pages that I was just like, "This is not what I was expecting." So yeah. That was a shock when we first got that back and I was like, "All right we got to take this step by step for sure."

Brandt Krueger:
How long now have you been up and running?

Meghan Capiaghi:
We've had the site live now since the beginning of January so we've had what? That's been about six, seven months now.

Brandt Krueger:
Fantastic. What were you about to say there, Mike?

Michael Doane:
I was just going to go back to something you said about your surprise at all the little elements that you have to think about, and thinking about what Meghan was talking about with all the requirements that came back that we had to go through line by line. We don't want to scare anyone away from this process because the reason we're here today is that this isn't just about

the Abstract Scorecard, it's not about our other products. It's not about us necessarily. It's about the industry and I think it's really important to talk about this process so that when other technology companies decide to undertake this, that they know what they're getting into but they know that it's also worth it because opening it up like we've done to users with some of these impairments and vision and hearing and sight, it really makes a conference more inclusive.

Michael Doane:
And I know that's a very important thing for many meeting planners out there. Making a conference more inclusive and so when you have that built into your technology, when you can reach a wider audience with your technology, not only do those people who are using the product or service but you also do the meeting planners a big service because now they have a product that they don't have to worry about, "Will my certain subgroups of users be able to access this?" It's going to be out of the box. And I think it's important not only for W3C and the wider technology community to have these standards but I think within our own industry it's really important to uphold those standards because we are reaching those wider conference goers.

Michael Doane:
We had a client that told me a few years ago that meeting planners aren't necessarily the people curing cancer for example, but they're feeding the people who are. And they're providing education for the people who are. So it's really important to reach as many people as possible and this is just one small way to do it. So even though it is a process, it's worth doing and I think, and Meghan correct me if I'm wrong, but going forward when we're doing new development on new products this is something that we can take into consideration and it's a lot less of a process when you consider it up front.

Meghan Capiaghi:
Oh yeah it's definitely much easier now as we move forward, now that we've done it with the Abstract Scorecard, we have a baseline of where we can go. And just to reiterate what Mike is saying, I feel really fortunate to have been a part of this project because it's really opened my eyes, like we do take things so for granted and even down to just the websites that we use every day. And just from a personal standpoint it's really opened my eyes to the different things out there that can be better for a smaller group of people who need to be able to access these things.

Meghan Capiaghi:
And I'll be at the pool and I'll not see a wheelchair accessible chair to get into the pool and I'm now aware of those things. So not just from the website standpoint but also just as human beings it's almost down to the basic rights of being able to all have the same experience. It's definitely been eye opening for me from that standpoint as well.

Brandt Krueger:

I imagine it has and I'm glad you went there Mike, because that was where I wanted to go next was to say, "Look, yes it's a lot of work but this is something we have to do." And so I tend to be a scare first and then get to the good stuff later type of person on the show so believe me, if you want to check out the cyber security episode, we spent probably three quarters of the show scaring people and then the last 15 minutes on, "Here's the things that you can do about it."

Brandt Krueger:
But it's not just the right thing to do, it's the more inclusive thing to do. Like you say, it opens your eyes to so many things, I mean we had an issue with my daughter where she had some health problems and was in a wheelchair just for about a month, and that in and of itself is enough to open your eyes to start to realize, "Wow this is really inconvenient to get from here to there. And why is there no ramp on this?" And that kind of thing.

Brandt Krueger:
Like you say unless you steep yourself in that world for a while, you're much less likely to think about these things. The other thing is exactly what you brought up Mike, the idea that the first one is probably always the most difficult but once you do that, once you've got that code base, once you've got something to go back to and refer to I imagine that you guys are going to be starting to apply this to more of your systems and more of your products.

Michael Doane:
Yeah not only that but like I said earlier some of our products may have some of these things built in but we never want to accessibility on something that we haven't gone through the process on. Another thing I'll say to that point is that right now it's not compulsory to put these in your systems, it's just good practice. But for those who drag their feet or don't look into it, they're going to have that rude awakening like they did with GDPR where it's going to come down the line.

Michael Doane:
I know currently in the European Union and then I think California as well, government sites are required to have some level of accessibility. So if you're not ready to just do the right thing and implement some of these practices, at some point down the line it may be required. That's another consideration as well.

Brandt Krueger:
Let's take things out to the 10,000 foot level or even higher than that. What do you guys think that we could be doing more of in industry? Obviously you guys are focused because your product is basically web based. There's a lot that you're focusing in on that. I'm wondering if we can maybe take some of the lessons that you've learned and start to extrapolate that out to the industry as the whole.

Brandt Krueger:

I'd like to ask each one of you, what would you say would be a good place to start? A good priority looking at the industry as a whole, using technology to make things more accessible? So why don't we start with Mike?

Michael Doane:
One thing that I've learned, because Meghan actually did a webinar for CadmiumCD a couple of months ago on accessibility and from that webinar we created a document that outlines some of the guidelines that we require ... just a little context here. So the product, the Abstract Scorecard is accessible but it's not accessible if clients don't follow certain guidelines within their specific project. If they're not making sure that they're tagging the HTML markup correctly or if they're not using colors and contrast a certain way, up to a certain standard, or if they're not tagging images with a description tag, and alt tags and things like this.

Michael Doane:
So we actually created a document for them to make sure that they're following the guidelines once they get into the system and one thing I took away from that is it's very easy to make ... in my specific role as a marketing manager who runs a blog and email campaigns and things like that, I've started to be more conscious of how I'm using image tags on our blog so that they're a little bit more descriptive. So I always try to step foot in a user who is using some of these technologies like the screen reader technologies and I say, "Okay well, this image, how would I describe this to someone who can't see it?" And I make sure I add those descriptions.

Michael Doane:
It's a little bit more work, it's a little more time but it's a small thing that I think makes a big impact and I know a lot of meeting planners who are maybe working with their marketing team to publish blogs or even working with speakers to have speaker descriptions on their website. They can make these small adjustments in their process to make sure that these things are added into the workflow. That's one small aspect that I can [crosstalk 00:29:40].

Brandt Krueger:
And Meghan I know you're more on the web development side but is there anything you can extrapolate out to the industry as a whole?

Meghan Capiaghi:
I think what I learned most from this process, it was very daunting when we first got tasked with this. Like where do we start? This is such a huge thing. Not only are there these big standards that we have to parse through, figure out, but you're also talking about people. You're talking about their feelings, their emotions and sometimes people can be offended with how you handle things and that in and of itself can be very daunting.

Meghan Capiaghi:
But something that was really encouraging throughout this whole process for me was just talking about it and really taking that step, taking one step to be like, "Let me hear from your

perspective. Let me see how you are handling this situation or how you're handling this software. How you're handling these different events and things." And so it was really cool to just even ... people would ask me like, "Oh what are you working on at work?" And I'm like, "Oh making this website accessible." And they're like, "Tell me more about that. I don't know what that even entails or what that means."

Meghan Capiaghi:
And for me it was interesting just how many people were curious to know more and just really wanting to hear a different perspective or a different case that they might not have to think about all the time. Just taking that step to be open, like, "I don't know what I have to do because this is very daunting," but just taking that step to ask those questions and say, "Well this is what I am doing. Is that helpful? Is that hurtful?" Just really being open to where you're at and asking those questions to see where you want to go. That's really what got me through that whole 12 month period and then that later six month period of like, "I'm not sure how to take this next step but I want to continue to just ask questions and learn more." That was the only way to really get the site to where it is today.

Michael Doane:
Yeah Meghan, I'd like to add to that. That's actually a really good point is to not be afraid of this topic and like you said, just talking about it helps you understand it. I know when we got booked for this podcast I asked a few others if they'd like to be part of it and they were like, "Well I'm not really an expert in that topic. I'm not really sure if I would speak to it well enough." And Meghan and I are here, not as experts either, just people who are curious, interested and want to learn because we know it's going to help people and help more people use our products. And just help people in general so I think that's a really important point, that we shouldn't be afraid of this topic and we should be willing to talk about it and be curious and share a conversation even if we don't know too much about it so that we can learn something about it and maybe be surprised how much we actually do know about it.

Brandt Krueger:
It's a really great point for the larger conversations of just making sure that we're having these conversations, right? And being able to talk about these things in a way that's safe and, "Okay what would it take to improve this part of our event for the attendee experience?" Or even just being more aware of our attendees and saying, "Hey you know I've noticed we actually have a significant portion of our attendees that have this issue or are allergic to this," or those kinds of things. Being more aware of our attendees and what their individual situations are and saying, "Okay how can we make their experience better? How can we make their lives just a little bit easier as they navigate through the meeting experience, or the conference experience, or the trade show experience? All the different aspects of the meetings and events industry that we go through?"

Brandt Krueger:

You know I'm actually a big fan myself of using screen readers, for me it's easier when I'm bringing things in through audio. I listen to a lot of podcasts, I listen to a lot of audio books and things like that and so for me to sit down and read an article actually is kind of difficult so I lean on screen readers a lot and even I've noticed in using that technology, exactly what you were talking about Meghan, just being aware of the image tags and so what does that say? And are you describing what that image is? And so often they're just dumping the caption information into that descriptor tag and so what you wind up with is, "Copyright 2015, photograph by so and so." And it's not actually describing what's in the photo, it's the copyright and the thing.

Brandt Krueger:
And then it reads that again because that's in the caption so you actually get these weird like, "Wait, is it stuck? Is it a broken record kind of thing?" And sometimes you'll hear the exact same thing three times in a row because then also it's a highlighted quote in the blog and you're just, "Oh man." And you can't even imagine if that was my life, to be navigating that kind of poor user experience through those things.

Brandt Krueger:
So really fantastic points that we're talking about here, like you said this is not something that we need to be afraid of, this is not something that we need to be, "Oh I'm not an expert in the field so therefore we can't talk about it." I'm not an expert in anything and I love talking about our industry and ways that we can improve it and make it better for folks. And part of why I love working on these types of shows is that we get a chance to stop and talk about these smaller topics. And obviously I can do my fair share of talking so it's one of those things.

Brandt Krueger:
I want to ask you guys as we start to wind down here, it's our friend Lindsey's favorite question. What's the one question that we didn't ask you as far as this process and accessibility and event tech in general? Stumped.

Michael Doane:
Stumped, yeah. I think ... let's see.

Meghan Capiaghi:
I guess maybe what resources did we use or what kind of websites did we use ...

Brandt Krueger:
There we go, yeah. Let's bring it on.

Meghan Capiaghi:
That would be a good one to cover. I know Mike has mentioned it a couple of times but the w3.org is a very good resource. It has a ton of different ... it breaks it down really easy, there's a bunch of videos and it goes into why it's important and it also has the technical side of what you can look at for HTML. And then I also use webaim.org a lot. They have a really awesome color

contrast tool that really helps you ... I know we didn't dive into color contrast too much but this site really helps you break down what your ratio of your color background is to your text color and really just helps, has a bunch of different tools like that that really help you to make sure you're following the guidelines.

Brandt Krueger:
And that was webaim?

Meghan Capiaghi:
Yup, A-I-M.org yeah. Webaim.

Brandt Krueger:
Okay we'll make sure we get that into the show notes. Well you know we usually ask folks for resources yeah, what are some other resources you guys have?

Michael Doane:
Yeah also if you type in accessibility CadmiumCD into Google, the first result takes you to the press release of what we're talking about here today with the Abstract Scorecard but at the bottom of that article there's a little section called Additional Resources, it'll provide you the link to the W3C website and also to the document that I mentioned that we created for our clients that give you guidelines on making sure your colors and contrast ratio on your website are correct. What to do for your banners and images, your markup. Different resources like that so you can go there to find that document as well.

Brandt Krueger:
All right I want to make sure that we don't forget some of the most important questions that we ask all of our guests on this show. So Meghan you're up first. What is the craziest fun fact about you that nobody would expect?

Meghan Capiaghi:
Oh man. I guess it's that I listen to Christmas music all year round.

Brandt Krueger:
Like intentionally or it just happens?

Meghan Capiaghi:
Oh yeah, oh yeah all the time. I mean at this point it's just happening and I don't even realize it but it's something that just makes me so happy, I want to listen to Christmas music.

Brandt Krueger:
Okay [inaudible 00:38:29].

Michael Doane:

So I remember last, I think it was June or July, I was helping the quality check team go through some of our products and make sure that certain things after our development were put into place. And Meghan was sitting next to me and she was humming Christmas tunes so it's not only that she listens to them all year round but they're going through her head too, I guess.

Brandt Krueger:
You know, we all have our things, right?

Meghan Capiaghi:
Called out.

Brandt Krueger:
So when I'm down on a project, I definitely have the music that I need and so I know when it comes to coding-

Meghan Capiaghi:
Sounds like it's turning into an intervention.

Brandt Krueger:
And things like that though, I think you're allowed to listen to whatever is going to get the job done. So for some people that's like death metal, other people it's yoga rock, so whatever works for you. I'm not going to judge. I'm not going to judge much.

Michael Doane:
Yoga rock? I've got to learn more about this yoga rock.

Brandt Krueger:
All right Mike what about you? What's the thing that we're not going to guess? The craziest fun fact about you?

Michael Doane:
I would say I'm also a fiction author in my spare time. I don't know why I do it to myself but I already

Brandt Krueger:
You got to give us some titles so we can look and have folks look them up.

Michael Doane:
I've three written, the only one I've published is called The

Brandt Krueger:
Okay, is that available on Amazon or ...

Michael Doane:
It is yeah it's about a motorcycle journey across the US.

Brandt Krueger:
Okay, all right well we'll get those links into the show notes as well and see if we can get you a couple more copies purchased by our guests. So we'll check that out. Okay, any other resources maybe not necessarily tech related, you want to throw out before we wrap this puppy up? Maybe...

Michael Doane:
You know I do want to talk about something tech related because before the show you were talking about our friend Alex Plaxton who is at a conference currently.

Brandt Krueger:
Yes I totally forgot we were talking about that.

Michael Doane:
And he mentioned that there was ... I guess there was a session on accessibility or a...

Brandt Krueger:
I don't have all the details, we were just having a conversation kind of behind the scenes earlier today and he's on site bring it up here, on site working at an event this morning. Our keynotes are a deaf gentleman using text to speech technology and a woman with no use of her arms using a pedal to advance her slides. So great, thank you so much for bringing that back up. I wanted to at least throw that out a little bit that there's so many other aspects of our events like we were just talking about a little bit ago, that we can start to think about how can we adapt our technology and use our technology to ... yeah yeah?

Michael Doane:
Yeah and so I want to say with that in mind that the tech companies that are listening to this, just start providing more accessible software. If you're an AV company, try to think about things like that where if you can have a pedal to advance slides for someone who maybe can't use a hand clicker, have that available in your repertoire. Have at least access to it and then for the planners in the audience, I think it's really important to think about how you can do your part in just constantly asking, add these kind of things in your RFP. When you're putting on request for proposals, make sure that you're saying, "Hey, is your technology accessible?" Because the more times you ask that kind of question and the more that technology companies see it, the more they're going to understand that, "Okay, this is something that's really important to the industry and we need to really think about how we're going to do this. "

Michael Doane:
It reminds me of, our industry was kind of slow to the software integration topic. I'm in marketing so marketing software since the 90s has been very easy to integrate with other tools. In our

industry we were kind of siloed for a long time. You use this whole platform or you don't use any of it and if you want to get your data out of there, you have to export it and then import it somewhere else.

Michael Doane:
About two or three years ago we started seeing big conversations around that topic and lo and behold, now everybody integrates with everybody and I think it's similar with accessibility that we really need to make sure that, as planners we're driving the conversation forward and we're telling people that this is something that's important to us so that it does show up more often.

Brandt Krueger:
Fantastic point, thank you so much for bringing it back. I had completely forgotten that we were going to mention about that. And it's exactly right that once we start having ... it's kind of going back to what you said before. Once we start having these conversations ... or I guess Meghan was saying that ... it starts to expand our horizons and we start having conversations about integrations, integrations, integrations and now all of a sudden everybody is talking about their integrations in their marketing speech.

Brandt Krueger:
So yeah if we start pushing on accessibility, accessibility, accessibility, maybe we can start making a dent in that and get other people to start putting in the time and effort to make everyone welcome and everyone inclusive. Or events that are inclusive to everyone regardless of their abilities.

Brandt Krueger:
So Meghan, other than a non-stop Christmas Spotify playlist, what's working for you these days as far as technology or resources?

Meghan Capiaghi:
Oh gosh, I'm not ready for this question.

Brandt Krueger:
You thought you were going to escape it because you distracted me with the Alex comment.

Meghan Capiaghi:
Yeah I was plotting my ... I was like, "Yes that's something we need in this industry and ..."

Brandt Krueger:
Doesn't have to be technology related, anything good that is working for you these days? Meditation app?

Meghan Capiaghi:

Oh my gosh. Yeah I mean I've been using the Sleep Cycle app and that also it allows me to wake up at a certain cycle of my sleep so I've been waking up much more refreshed.

Brandt Krueger:
Very good, it's something I played ... I had an app that I loved for that on my phone and it was just one of those apps that kind of got abandoned and slowly just stopped working one . And alarm clocks that don't work, yeah that's not great. Soon as I started seeing the first bugs coming into that, I was like, "Yep I'm out on this." So okay great. Do you want to share what kind of it was or which brand it was? Sleep Cycle, is that Android or iOS?

Meghan Capiaghi:
The app is called Sleep Cycle. iOS yeah. So it gives you a whole chart of how you slept that night and gives you some statistics and stuff too which I've been really enjoying with my sleep cycles and stuff.

Brandt Krueger:
Fantastic, all right well thank you so much for joining me guys. I really appreciate it, it's an important topic to brought up and I'm really glad we were able to have you on. Mike if you can tell us a little bit more about where folks can find out more about Cadmium or maybe about the products we've talked about today, now would be the time to do it.

Michael Doane:
Very simply go to www.cadmiumcd.com. We have listing of all our products there. You can take a look more into the Abstract Scorecard, eventScribe, Conference Harvester. But also go to our blog or the resources tab at the top of the page, we have webinars. One of those webinars was the accessibility webinar that Meghan did so I would definitely tell listeners of this show to check that out specifically but then we also have our blog and we have different white papers that we put out on different topics. So check all of that out [crosstalk 00:46:13].

Brandt Krueger:
And Meghan if you're comfortable, is there any place that people might be able to follow up with you if they had any questions about the process, any public twitter accounts or anything like that you're willing to share?

Meghan Capiaghi:
Well actually I'm not on Twitter but my ...

Brandt Krueger:
I don't think you need to apologize for that, I mean at this point I think that's okay.

Meghan Capiaghi:
Yeah I can only keep up with one social media. I'm on Instagram, my Instagram is @meghannoelcaps, M-E-G-H-A-N-N-O-E-Lcaps, C-A-P-S. So that's probably the best place to

reach out to me and my email is on the mycadmium website as well so feel free to reach out by my email.

Brandt Krueger:
I was just going to say, I'm sure if they reached out to Cadmium, they'd be able to get a hold of you if necessary. Again guys, thank you so much for joining me, I really appreciate you being here today. And thank all of you listening at home, we really appreciate you as well. You can find out more at eventtechpodcast.com, that's where you're going to see all the show notes, the links to all the resources that are shared. You can find out about the Sleep Cycle app and you can find out more about Mike's books. We'll have all of that in the show notes and resources there as well as the transcript of the show so you can see every, "Um," that we stammer as we go along and do the show.

Brandt Krueger:
You're going to find the links there to subscribe in your favorite podcast apps, whether that's iTunes, Pocket Casts, Google Play, we want to be where you want to listen. Let us know if there's a platform that you want us to be on and then do us a favor there when you're on those platforms and please do rate us five stars if you like what you're hearing. If you don't like what you're hearing please reach out and let us know. Contact us, #eventtechpodcast on all the socials or you can actually use good old fashioned email at eventtechpodcast@helloendless.com.

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Thank you so much for listening and we'll see you next time on the Event Tech Podcast.