

Will Curran:

Yeah, we're going to get a little crazy right now. All right, we're recording. Okay, here we go.

Will Curran:

Hey, what's going on, everybody? Will Curran from Endless Events here. Welcome back to the Event Tech podcast. I'm not alone today though because I am joined by the cool Brandt Krueger.

Brandt Krueger:

Yes. I'm happy to be the cool Brandt Krueger. That guy over there of course is the soggy Will Curran I'm afraid to say.

Will Curran:

I feel a bit soggy after CES today for sure and definitely ready to get a little bit more fresh.

Brandt Krueger:

So we started 2019 with a look at CES, it seemed only appropriate that we do so again here as we look at this massive consumer electronics show, starts us out right at the beginning of the year. And I think, like we did last year, we can start looking at the trends, we can start looking at the stuff, we can start looking at the toys, the shiny shiny, and start figuring out, okay, how is this going to impact our lives? How is this going to impact our events and meetings? And is it, in fact, going to impact our meetings and events? So I thought it would be a great way for us to start the new year as well, just like we did last time.

Will Curran:

Yeah, I'm super excited, this is probably one of my favorite episodes of the year because we just get to talk about all the cool things, all the toys.

Brandt Krueger:

Toys, toys, toys, toys, toys. So obviously the number one news coming out of CES-

Will Curran:

Most important thing.

Brandt Krueger:

The most important, the most dramatic, the one that's going to impact our lives the most, is of course the RollBot by Charmin, the robot that brings you toilet paper when you run out. Clearly, because it was mentioned in basically every single article that was written about CES, it must be the most important thing that happened.

Will Curran:

Absolutely the most important thing. All these other technologies, episode done. Charmin robot, congratulations, you get the Event Tech podcast award.

Brandt Krueger:

Thanks so much for listening. It's been great. We'll see you all next year. It is funny though that we're starting to see now this trend that the media, and I'm not even lying, it's literally whatever is the first thing to the door in the door to the right. So understanding that power of the trade show, the power of location in a trade show, which those of us in our industry have known that for a while, it's amazing to me to see, I'm not even kidding, almost every article that I saw about CES mentioned this stupid robot that brings you toilet paper because it was the first thing on the floor to the right. How lazy is that as far as reporting goes?

Will Curran:

Yeah, I think definitely. It's really interesting too, we may have talked about this a little bit last year too, in addition to the first thing to the right but also just how it becomes a little bit of a silo that report on it and then they all just talk about the same thing. But you really have to be willing to dive deep into all the things. And same way I think if you're attending a show to go into the small hall, see all the weird things to see. Because, for example, I'm looking down the 2020 innovation awards, and I haven't seen articles on probably half this stuff. The top 10 things are always from the big manufacturers, the big things happening. I'm wondering if it has something to do with too this idea that it might be something that comes to market, and so much likely to market so therefore gets the news in some ways.

Brandt Krueger:

This thing's never coming to market. At least not any time in this form. Where does it live in your house? You have to remember to restock that. Well, if you have to remember to restock that, you might as well remember to restock the TP underneath the counter, right? It's such a ridiculous thing.

Brandt Krueger:

But it brings up a really good point, Will, that is this stuff for the market or is this show where it's become an auto show, where it's these concept cars, right? There literally were concept cars. Sony's not going to release a car. That's one of the things that came out of this, Sony has this concept car, it's all LED lit up and electric and EV and cool stuff like that. Sony's not going to release a car.

Will Curran:

No, not at all. Yeah, you bring up a super duper solid point that this year I remember people, more explicitly than last year, being shocked when things were actually going to come out. And guess what? Look at this thing. And guess what? You're actually going to be able to buy it. Let's dive into it. Or a lot of times too I saw announcements coming out and they didn't even have release dates attached to it, so they were like, "And we don't know when this is coming out and we'll let you know at some point."

Brandt Krueger:

Did they announce the Fold at CES or was it just there last year?

Will Curran:
The Samsung?

Brandt Krueger:
I feel like there was a CES connection. I should have looked that up before the show.

Will Curran:
Yeah.

Brandt Krueger:
But I do feel like that last year we started to see the folding things.

Will Curran:
Yeah, it says February, which, if I remember right, it had its own event.

Brandt Krueger:
Maybe right around it to catch some of the buzz.

Will Curran:
Yeah, it's tough because, for example, it's unveiled on February 20, but then it came out in May to all those initial reviewers but actually came out in September, everything like that. I don't think it was here but maybe folding tech ... It might have been, shoot, I'm forgetting the name of it but there was a precursor to the Fold called the ... Maybe Yaomi made it? Yaomi.

Brandt Krueger:
Something that was folding, yeah.

Will Curran:
It's a FlexPod, I think is what it was called and that actually got announced at CES and came out faster than the Fold did, but it was really poor quality, people didn't like it. I think that was the first folding screen that we saw as a demo for something to buy and that was at CES last year I believe.

Brandt Krueger:
That trend definitely continued. So as we started to see these devices actually being released, folding things were definitely one of the big trends that we saw at CES this year as well.

Will Curran:
Yeah, and can I talk about maybe my favorite folding device that is definitely making the headlines? So a couple months ago, Lenovo demoed in a private event their ThinkPad X1 Fold.

I just really wish people would come up with better model names than this stuff, but that's not as bad-

Brandt Krueger:

Just rolls off the tongue, doesn't it?

Will Curran:

Samsung Galaxy Fold Bezel-less ... But Lenovo announced a laptop that was basically a 17-inch laptop that folds up into a 13-inch laptop. Sorry, a 17-inch tablet that folds up into a 13-inch laptop. If this doesn't make sense to you, just google the Lenovo ThinkPad X1, we'll link it into the show notes as well and probably include some pictures. But it's pretty neat.

Will Curran:

My favorite part about it is you might be thinking to yourself, "All laptops fold." Well, basically it's a big gigantic screen, you can bend the screen in half. You might be thinking, "What's the point of that?" Well, then you can use an onscreen keyboard at the bottom half of the screen and still swipe up. But then they also came out with the really cool clever keyboard that overlaid over on top of it and turned it into this really small book-size laptop. I just thought it was so cool and showing that folding screens are coming and improving in so many different ways.

Brandt Krueger:

Am I remembering correctly that one of the devices that Microsoft previewed a while back was another folding screen with a flippy over keyboard thing?

Will Curran:

Yeah. I think the Neo at the Microsoft Unpacked event, where they announced the folding ... Not the folding screens but the dual screen devices. I think that they also demoed that idea, the keyboard laying on top. Maybe that's where Lenovo stole the idea and came up with it or vice versa.

Brandt Krueger:

I know this year at CES 2020, Intel was showing off a reference laptop that they called the Horseshoe Bend that CNET had some exclusive deep dives, they got to play around with it. I'm referencing a couple of articles here as we do this and we'll be sure and drop them in the notes. But CNET had their biggest top five takeaways by Jason Hiner, who's a great tech writer for CNET. So his five biggest takeaways from CES, and one of those was computers and folding things. So that was one that they had. It really looks gorgeous. I've seen your foldable phone now in person a few times and unless you're holding it at exactly the right angle, that fold just disappears. It's pretty cool.

Will Curran:

And I think that's one of the things a lot of reviewers said was there was no real crease in it too for sure. And things to keep in mind too, guys, the reason why we're excited about this is

obviously we've seen folding screens now for a while but this is actually coming. This is where I came up with that joke. It's actually coming to market and I think it drops in March or something like that that people will be able to buy it, which is pretty cool. A little expensive. I think it's \$2,000 or something like that, \$2200 or something, which is crazy because now that makes my phone seem really expensive. But in time.

Will Curran:

One of the interesting things I think about the screen crease is everyone commented there was no crease in it. And actually the reason why I think is that they're using a little bit more of an advanced technology that they worked with LG on, and it has a thicker screen and a more straight screen, so there's actual pen support for it so you can write on it, which my phone you cannot use a pen, you don't want a pen anywhere near that screen, you're going to dent it for sure. So it has a harder screen, it has some base layer underneath it too that adds to the rigidity of it. So I think we're getting there where these screens are ... No one's going to be worried about am I poking it too hard? And definitely we'll obviously have to get our hands on it to figure out can it survive the event planner's finger of doom?

Brandt Krueger:

Well, yeah, we live rugged lives. They got to survive. This is just another one of those things that's inching us forward toward my vision of the future of display technology, where everything is just these flexible bendable sheets of display that can be tiled to basically slap onto anything and make anything a display. I think eventually we're going to go away from projection entirely because anything we can ... How big do you need the screen? Okay, grab 37 tiles by 50 and we'll slap them together and there you go.

Will Curran:

You bring up a good point, the Wall was another big feature from Samsung, which was basically their LED screen. It was flex in something like a 0.0003 pitch rate. It was just insanely such a high resolution screen and people were comparing it to TVs. And that's an LED screen. Yeah, my gosh, projection is very quickly losing a battle. Granted that Wall TV, I think for a 75-inch TV it was something like outrageous, a couple thousand dollars. So we're still getting there but, yeah, LED screens are coming fast and improving.

Will Curran:

Because I think what's great about this is it used to be LED screens were just in the events industry and people buying panels, but if it makes it more to the consumer it means these manufacturers like Samsung, LG, all these things, are going to work on processes to do this at scale larger. Let's be honest, to all the LED screen manufacturers that email me every day trying to let me buy panels, you are not going to be able to compete with Samsung and LG in terms of scales of production. And when they hit it, and LG and Samsung become the LED screen providers, that's when we're going to see, I think in the industry also, a drop in LED screen prices too.

Brandt Krueger:

And these micro LEDs displays are just supposed to be ridiculous. Yeah, the pixels are so close together that it is really close to being what is essentially a regular TV as opposed to being an LED wall of some kind where you need to be back a ways in order for it to really function.

Brandt Krueger:

Definitely a lot of display technology on display at CES this year. The Wall, several of these types of micro LED-type TVs were on display, a bunch of different manufacturers showing them off. Also heard amazing things about the 8K bezel-less television that was there I think which one that one ... Who was making that one? But that was-

Will Curran:

Yeah, Samsung, Samsung.

Brandt Krueger:

Was that Samsung that did that one too?

Will Curran:

Yeah.

Brandt Krueger:

Samsung is just killing it with the displays.

Will Curran:

Yeah, totally totally. It's funny, you talk about 8K, and I'm not that person ... This person's name will be protected to remain innocent but I saw a tweet out there that said, "My gosh," and it was on the TV but it was a projector that said, "look at these 8K projectors. Event planners absolutely need this." I just lost it and just laughed so hard.

Will Curran:

Planners haven't even adopted 4K yet. I get asked it every once in a while but it's so expensive to be able to do and the quality of projectors that people need in general sessions is now 8K. Planners, we're saying it right now, do not worry about 8K, this is so far off. 4K is not full adopted yet.

Brandt Krueger:

People that were there were saying that this 8K bezel-less TV, it just looked like a window. So they were watching a soccer game transmission on it and they said there was no blur as the ball was getting kicked around, that it just absolutely looks incredibly crisp and amazing.

Will Curran:

And was it 8K content or was it upscale?

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah, it was 8K content that was being displayed on an 8K bezel-less TV. So basically it looked like a window. So there's been some discussion about that as well, that as we start to get these incredibly high resolution TVs, at some point it's just not going to matter. They're not going to be 16K because our eyes can only go so far. It's just going to look like reality.

Brandt Krueger:

But then, when you've got those kinds of things, and this newer QLED technology doesn't burn in, you'll be able to just leave them on all the time. So you could really literally have works of art or pictures of your family or use it as a smart hub where you've got the weather and all that stuff, or change it to look like a window where-

Will Curran:

My parents will have-

Brandt Krueger:

That kind of stuff or change it to look like a window.

Will Curran:

So my parents will be able to have MSNBC on all day long and not burn it into their old LED TV-

Brandt Krueger:

Exactly.

Will Curran:

... and have MSNBC logo at the bottom right?

Brandt Krueger:

Exactly.

Will Curran:

Okay cool.

Brandt Krueger:

Yep.

Will Curran:

That just called my parents out.

Brandt Krueger:

That's all right. It happens from time to time. So lots and lots and lots of advancements in display technology but still kind of incremental. We're packing more pixels in, we're making them brighter. The real innovation is happening with these foldy things. We're seeing more and more

folding devices on the show floor now. Whether it's the laptops or the phones and the vertical fold or the sideways fold and does it fold in or does it fold out and all these kinds of things.

Will Curran:

Lots of good stuff. Something I think keep in mind too, as we talk about laptops and things like that, that fold, we're still a little bit far behind anything in the software to support them. So like Lenovo One's still running traditional windows 10 but Microsoft has promised that they're developing windows 10X, which is supposed to be what's going to work with their Neos and duo devices and really be designed purely for these folding devices. It's not out yet. So if you are interested in that folding device, I've heard a lot of people say it's a cool device, but wait for Windows 10X, which apparently is going to come a little bit later this year, maybe midway through this year, the Windows 10X version of the ThinkPad. So just stay tuned for that one, which is optimized for the folding screen and dualed screen devices.

Brandt Krueger:

Man, I was just listening to a one of my podcasts that focuses on Windows and they're saying, so Microsoft just kind of quietly released a beta of a new launcher for Android that people are speculating is going to be what's on those Android devices when they finally come out. It seems to be particularly optimized for landscape view. So when you envision opening up one of those foldable devices and you've got that more tabloidy landscape view. That traditionally has been kind of a pain point for Android devices that it just doesn't scale real well. It doesn't look really great. The home screen is kind of weird and messed up when you rotate 90 degrees.

Brandt Krueger:

So people are kind of speculating that this is them starting to beta test what that new Android launcher is going to look like.

Will Curran:

Ah, interesting. I mean I'm looking at this article too and this is really, really interesting. Good find. I will link that down in below cause this is really, really cool. I have to research up on this because I am definitely switching a lot over, now I'm officially all Edge thanks to Brandt for converting me. So it's very, very cool.

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah, that's probably worth mentioning. I know we're talking mainly about CES today, but it's think it's worth dropping in that you and I both have been starting to use the Microsoft Edge browser a lot more, which is Microsoft's chromium based browser. So they're basically further deprecating Internet Explorer and then Edge, which only came out a couple of years ago, to this new chromium based browser. So it's going to be like Chrome, only less Google-y is probably the easiest way to do it. I've been really liking it. I've been on it since the beta and it's been real solid because it's based on Chrome and the open source version of Chrome and then they're really starting to take a good look at it privacy wise and what you can turn on and what you can turn off. So I've been enjoying that.

Will Curran:

And it's official now too, as of...

Brandt Krueger:

It is, yeah.

Will Curran:

As of yesterday, now it is official, it's reached the standard build and apparently in the next coming weeks Microsoft is going to push out a Windows updates. So everybody gets the chromium version of Edge and you get that fancy new green and blue logo. And that's how you'll know you have the chromium version versus the traditional version is you'll see this new really coolly designed elements that has this Firefox-esque kind of look to it in some ways.

Brandt Krueger:

And simultaneously, and then I promise we'll get back to CES, simultaneously, they pushed out an update to their Edge browser for Android as well, that gives it a lot of the same kind of look and feel. And I think that might actually be kind of Chrome under the hood as well, but it's a nice little browser for your phone as well.

Will Curran:

The one thing though, and we've talked about this a couple of times between us, and it's all their list because it's literally in the features list. You just can't enable it. It's syncing extensions across computers. That's the hardest part. I'll be like, "Oh, I set up all my extensions on my laptop." Then I'll move Chrome and onto my desktop and I'm like, "You're kidding me. Right? I got to re-download all my extensions and re log in."

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah. Yeah. And I'm making the move over to the stable channel too. So I'm going to have to-

Will Curran:

That's even further off for you now too. Yeah, I'm on the, what did we say, the Dev version.

Brandt Krueger:

The Dev yeah.

Will Curran:

That gets updated every day. Yeah.

Brandt Krueger:

Well Dev is like every week and Canary's every day.

Will Curran:

Oh, I'm on Canary now. Now I'm on Canary now, so I just want secure extensions so bad.

Brandt Krueger:

I know, exactly.

Will Curran:

Anyways, back to CES.

Brandt Krueger:

Back to CES, but let's continue in the hardware world. I mean the other thing in addition to the RollBot, the other thing that everyone seemed to be writing about was this Samsung Pro Chromebook, which apparently is just this gorgeous red, high end, beautiful display, tons of memory, fast processor Chromebook from Samsung.

Will Curran:

It's interesting because people said that it's probably like the... Google came out, the Chromebook Pro was that?

Brandt Krueger:

It was the Pixel I think.

Will Curran:

Pixel, yeah, yeah, Pixelbook. So this is like the sequel to it and high end hardware, the same stuff you get in a normal laptop and but running Chrome OS and people were saying it's really looking hot. You were living in Chromebook world for a while and considering, is this something that you think is interesting and you'd consider buying?

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah, I was just going to shout back to that. I mean we've had discussions on this podcast about our hardware journeys and part of my hardware journey is I did try to go Chromebook. I got one of these higher end Samsung Pros and I loved it. It was great for 98% of what I needed it to do. It did it fantastically. But for me personally, I had to trade it in because long story short, because Chrome has everything in these tabs, each one of those tabs is a separate instance basically of the browser. Not to get too nerdy about it, but basically just know that tabs don't communicate to each other very well intentionally so. It's a security thing.

Brandt Krueger:

And so if you wanted to open up a PowerPoint in one tab and then open up a separate PowerPoint in a different tab to try and combine those you can't, is the long and the short. So for the average planner who's just living in a spreadsheet, whether that's Excel or Smartsheets or you're actually doing stuff in Shoflo or some of these other tools and you're doing your registration on the web. And you're not editing video and you're not doing a whole lot. These days actually you can get some pretty decent photo editors in the browser.

Brandt Krueger:

It's great if that's your life and that's your workflow. I could highly recommend one of these and if they start getting a little slow you just blow it out. It's ready to go. It reloads all your extensions and you're up and running again 15 minutes later, less than, it's like two minutes later. So for the average person, the average planner, I highly can recommend Chromebooks compared to, full blown operating systems like Mac OS and Windows at this point. But...

Will Curran:

Yeah, if you're in Chrome all the time, do it, do it 100%.

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah. If you're not though, if you are a video editor and you're having to cobble stuff together on site or like Will and me, when we get handed a thumb drive full of PowerPoints and we have to build a master deck for the show, you can't do it. You just can't do it in there. It's great if you're just popping open a single PowerPoint to check it out and then close it again or you want to pop them all open so you can look at them. You just can't easily move slides from one to the other on that operating system.

Brandt Krueger:

So long story longer, it sounds like a great device. It sounds like an amazing device and I know people that unlike we've seen with iPads and things like that, I know a lot of people who actually can and do all of their work on a Chromebook effectively.

Will Curran:

I think one of the things too is the Chromebook needs to be kind of like the default and honestly for employers too just to say, "I'm going to give you this device and then when you can't do the thing you need to, you come back to me." Because I think the problem is most of the time everyone just overthinks how much they actually need to use something until they don't have it and they go, "Oh wow, I actually don't need that anymore. Okay, that actually was a stupid feature. Why am I using that?"

Will Curran:

But I think far too often we default to like, "Let's give them a Dell full Windows laptop." But reality, they're just using Chrome. But the best thing I think about those Chromebooks are so secure because it's only Chrome and Google really has a niche down on what goes in that Chrome store. It's pretty powerful to make sure that your devices are secure, which I think we have to focus on obviously.

Will Curran:

But the thing, if you do need more power, we're going to tease a little bit for the future.

Brandt Krueger:

Yes, yes.

Will Curran:

We might have an episode coming about a new device that Will's been using that I think is going to make-

Brandt Krueger:

The hardware... The journey continues.

Will Curran:

The journey continues for will to find the perfect hardware device and also just Will being a super Bleeding Edge person. But we have a device that we're going to talk about probably next episode. So stay tuned for that one. If you are looking for just a little bit more than a Chromebook, but you're looking for all that all day battery life, super thin device, super secure, we got something coming for you guys real soon.

Brandt Krueger:

Nice. I think that's effective tease. So what else is on your list of things that popped out to you at CES this year?

Will Curran:

Yeah, so on the hardware side of things, one of my favorite things that I saw was this a Hachi Infinite touch screen projector and we've kind of seen devices like this, but this was really a solid version of it. It's basically the little projector that you can put on a table and it projects down onto the table, a screen that you can touch.

Will Curran:

I think this is really cool because again, just pulling people away from having to use computers and things like that, it just provides another input for everybody. I don't know if it's going to get necessarily brought all the way out, but you know wouldn't it be cool that let's say for example you have this projector for a dinner and this is just like you want to have a futuristic Bleeding Edge looking gala dinner. You put this projector on it and then it says like, here's all your food options. And then they tap it and put in their order on it and then the plate comes down and layers on top of it. And you maybe can do some slight projection mapping and things like that. I just think it's really, really cool to show that these little neat kind of technologies of how can we change input for interaction with computers is pretty cool.

Brandt Krueger:

Exactly. That was another one of Jason Hiner's top five things, takeaways, from CNET was things getting more touchy, less techie, a little bit more subtle. And so one of the examples that he threw was this kind of like wooden display that they're using, if I remember right, kind of the sound wave technology, like the ultra haptic stuff that I've had in my presentations for a few years now, where they're using sound waves to make things feel like buttons that don't actually

exist, which is pretty cool tech. So basically it's like a slab of wood with all these kind of artificial buttons on them. And so yeah, it's kind of the buttonless phone. Is he saying the buttonless phone is closer than we think because this tech can make it feel like you're touching a button when it doesn't actually exist.

Brandt Krueger:

So yeah, touching things, touch surfaces, being able to turn to anything into a touch display. And somebody else was showing a very similar type of thing only instead of being a camera, think more like an infrared camera type thing and you could basically turn anything into a keyboard. It didn't project anything. We've had those kinds of things for a few years now where it kind of projects a little virtual keyboard board.

Will Curran:

The laser keyboard.

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah, exactly. So this is just there. You just reach your hands out and start typing as if you were typing on a keyboard and it reads those movements and turns it into...

Will Curran:

You have no visual reference?

Brandt Krueger:

Exactly.

Will Curran:

What?

Brandt Krueger:

So you got to be a really good touch typer.

Will Curran:

Oh God. I'm so bad too. I'm two finger, I'm the fastest two finger typer I think anyone's ever met. I would probably fail it.

Brandt Krueger:

But it's an amazing idea though, right?

Will Curran:

Yeah.

Brandt Krueger:

This idea that you could just reach out into the into nothing and start typing on nothing and have it be recognized.

Will Curran:

Well it's moving into this like gesture world we live in now too. Where like for example the Google phones. Okay we want to make it so we can swipe up and swipe down without touching the phone. I mean we're eventually going to get to this day and age I think where gestures are going to become more important than physical touch this button here but we just have natural inclination. Right now we all know the X at the top right means to close. Right? Everyone I think knows what the hamburger menu is, the three dots. But what if for example, I don't know, you closing your fist means to close a window and that becomes the universal gesture to close a window. Well for sure cameras are all going to know close window means close fist or something like that. I think that's definitely going to come down the road as well.

Brandt Krueger:

When you shake your fist at it it pops up the the link to customer support.

Will Curran:

There you go, there you go. I love it. I love it. Another quick piece of technology, this one's going to have nothing to do with the events industry, but if you get a chance, I don't know if I should even saw it. Did you see the future door that LG did?

Brandt Krueger:

I don't know.

Will Curran:

I'm going to tease it.

Brandt Krueger:

Future door?

Will Curran:

Just Google LG door at CES and they also had a mirror that they did as well. But long story short, it's the door of the future. I don't think it's warranted to talk about it on this episode, but LG basically did the dumbest thing. You're not going to go buy it but it feels like it's from a science fiction movie. The coolest thing though is on the backside of your front door you have this big glass mirror that has a display that shows you where all your lights are on and it also shows your incoming deliveries and the status. It's so cool.

Will Curran:

But that's an example of something I think that got no coverage because it's not coming. And honestly, I think that it's going to be one of those devices that might be like \$2,000, \$30,000 when you install it in your house. But it's purely the future and also rethinks how we interact with

our front door. So take a look at that. Super duper cool. Google LG future door or CES door. And they also had a mirror that they did something where you could scan your body and it allowed you to try on clothes virtually, which was really cool too.

Will Curran:

... body, and it allowed you to try on clothes virtually, which was really cool too. But yeah, that's coming further down the line.

Brandt Krueger:

Well, that again though is that advancement is display technology, where things are getting so thin. And between that and cameras, you can basically, you'll be able to turn anything into a display or a mirror, or all of those kinds of things. I'm not able to find it, because all I can find are their smart fridge, where you could look at the door and it would show you what's inside the fridge. So I'm probably just not hitting the right particular search words-

Will Curran:

I got you. I will-

Will Curran:

I will link it down-

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah, we'll drop it the notes after the show.

Will Curran:

... below.

Brandt Krueger:

We'll drop it in the show notes.

Will Curran:

Awesome. All right, well, Brant, what else do you got that you really enjoyed at CES?

Brandt Krueger:

Well, some of the other... This was another one that didn't get a lot of noise but blew my mind and does have a direct link to meaning in events industry, is that Delta was the first airline to ever have a booth presence at CES. And they went all in, I mean, they had main stage key notes and they were showing off a partnership with what they're calling parallel reality signage. And this just looks amazing and the fact that you can even see it in... Sometimes, this stuff only works as a visual trick and you can't really record it with cameras, and I saw camera footage of this, and so what it is depending on... Let's see if I can do this succinctly.

Brandt Krueger:

Basically, you walked into the room and it would scan your face, so it was able to recognize you. It would then use little cameras in the space to track where you were in the space, and then it would customize the signage in the space to you so that no matter where you were standing in the space, you saw your custom information, but no matter where the other people were in the space, they would only see their information. And so it was this crazy light bouncing technology that they're using to basically display only your information to you, no matter where you were in the space. And so they showed the camera panning behind the three people that were standing in the space, and you could see it just kind of shift from this person's information to that person's information, to that person's information as you went around behind them.

Brandt Krueger:

Really cool looking technology. So of course what they're thinking of is that when you walk into the Delta Lounge or whatever, it recognizes you because they've already got your biometrics, because Delta's been way out ahead on that. They were doing face recognition and fingerprinting and stuff really early on, and it would go, "Hello, Mr. Kruger. Your flight is 1787, is on time, and departs from Gate G3." But as someone who's literally right behind me, looks at the exact same sign, they would see something totally different about their flight information. The other thing that they were showing off was that it could be in different languages, right?

Brandt Krueger:

So trivially, you think of an international airport, right? If all of the information signs could theoretically be in all of the languages, depending on who's walking by, which is just an amazing mind bending technology-

Will Curran:

Cool.

Brandt Krueger:

... that again got like no coverage that I saw.

Will Curran:

Yeah, so cool. I love it. Because I mean, a lot of times too, it's the Consumer Electronics Show, so a lot of people when they see technologies that aren't... that I can't put in my house or what I use, I think a lot of people are just like, "Meh, whatever." But there's a lot of corporate and business applications for a lot of this stuff, and man, that's a great example of one and that's so freaking cool. And you definitely have to see the pictures of it. I mean, it's definitely not the most high resolution screen it looks like.

Brandt Krueger:

It's early days, yeah.

Will Curran:

But it's like, yeah. It's more high resolution than my first phone that took pictures, one megapixel camera.

Brandt Krueger:

Now, extrapolate that out and put it into a trade show floor, right? So as you walk in the door, it's checking your agenda and saying, "Hey, your first hosted buyer appointment is at 5:31." You're not having to pull out your phone. It says, "Go five aisles to the left and then take a right." That kind of thing. Really, there's a lot of potential there in that kind of directed signage technologies.

Will Curran:

Such Minority Report too, because they did the thing where it's like the screens change based on you walking by, and he was getting a personalized ad experience based on it. Jesus, that's cool. Very, very cool. Good find, Brant. Oh my gosh. That's awesome. Whoo, wow. What other crazy stuff that you got when it comes to...

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah, there is. We got quite the list and we should probably start to wrap it up here, but other big trends, 5G everything. You and I have been talking a lot about 5G. So, now here comes the hype machine baby. We start ramping it up. It's like, everything's going to have 5G in it.

Will Curran:

Every laptop has 5G. It was a lot of router, home routers that have 5G modems built into it. So the idea like if you have 5G node right outside your house, you'd be able to get fast internet that way, but every manufacturer is doing it. But again, just the cell coverage just isn't quite there yet.

Brandt Krueger:

Mm-hmm (affirmative), mm-hmm (affirmative). So that was one of the big ones, is 5G everywhere. I'm trying to think of what's some of the other stuff that Heiner had. Lots of health things, little sensors and things like that. One of the better articles that-

Will Curran:

That's pretty cool.

Brandt Krueger:

...I read, it was a long one. So if you're into long reads by Steven Sinofsky, who's one of the big names in tech, right? He did an article on Medium that we'll drop into the show notes that basically used a really great analogy that I liked, that CES is like the primordial soup of innovation. And so like we touched on earlier, a lot of this stuff isn't going to come to fruition, but you can start to see trends bubbling up.

Brandt Krueger:

You can start to see things coalescing and coming together, I think it's fascinating that we've seen a continued march in display technology, right? So that means that's probably going to continue marching down the way. The fact that we're seeing a lot of these health devices bubbling up going to probably continue to be one of the larger trends over the course of the next few years. And then two years in a row, one of the other top stories is Impossible, right? So, here we are again-

Will Curran:
That's impossible!

Brandt Krueger:
... talking about food instead of tech. Obviously, there's tech involved. So this year, last year, there was too much fan fare and now I've had a few and they're quite tasty, the Impossible Burgers. They've now released Impossible Pork in an attempt to try and replace that as well.

Will Curran:
A lot of good reviews so far, too. People saying, "Yeah, it tastes like pork." It's looking good to go, it has the texture of pork. It's rocking. And I think probably the most exciting part, and yeah, I'm the same way. I've been replacing, I actually now try to search out burger places that have the Impossible Burger, and I'll go get an Impossible Burger. But excitingly enough, I mean, pork is exciting because that means there's all these new possibilities with pork. But man, I'm excited for what they said is going to come next which is Impossible Bacon.

Brandt Krueger:
Exactly. So, if they -

Will Curran:
Oh my gosh. Like, yes!

Brandt Krueger:
... nail bacon, then we live in the future indeed.

Will Curran:
The future is there. The future is there. So Impossible Bacon's coming down the line. Well, also speaking about the future coming down the line, Samsung's Neon was one of the big news that's kind of coming out of it. I think a little bit of a hype machine, but these digital avatars they kind of came out with, where they pre-record responses. So now your Google assistants are going to have a more human reaction, interaction with it.

Will Curran:
And they do use kind of a little bit of a deep fake technology that allows you to basically, their faces will be able to move and kind of respond to you, but that assistants are going to move from being just voices, and gosh, their voices sound so real nowadays when they answer me.

But now, we're going to have actual faces attached to it, we're getting into Blade Runner technology levels right now. And it's coming for sure. So if you get a chance, check out Samsung's Neon. I wouldn't be surprised, I mean, just like we saw voice assistants come to events, I have a feeling we're probably going to see some like Neon-level digital avatar systems coming to events real soon.

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah, I mean, you already think about what we're doing with chat bots and the effectiveness that you can have with those. Now, just start layering that over an avatar using the same kind of technology. Not going to be able to answer every question, but you can imagine it then going, "You know what? I don't know the answer to that. Hold on, let me check with my colleague."

Brandt Krueger:

And then it boots you through to a real life person who could be in an office somewhere, or remote or they're on site. Or like, "Hey, I can't answer that for you, stop by the registration desk and they'll be able to help you." But then that device, that system would be able to ping the reg desk and say, "Hey, someone's heading your way with question X that I didn't know the answer to." And just like with chat bots, you'd be able to then program it in and be like, "So the next person that comes along has the answer."

Will Curran:

Absolutely. Absolutely. I'm really excited for that. And then, I think that pretty much covers a lot of what we wanted to talk about when it comes to CES 2020. It sounds like an overall good show, some good stuff.

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah, I always hear really mixed reviews from folks that it's brutal and you get the con cough afterwards, because it's so much. It's whatever, it's like thousands and thousands and thousands of booths spread out over multiple convention centers in Vegas. And so, if you don't have to be there, it's better to let someone else report on it. The only other thing that I kind of had in my list was that Toyota was promoting kind of a prototype community of the future, which sounds an awful lot like Epcot was supposed to be. But again, this kind of idea of that they're going to actually build kind of an experimental laboratory of future tech that's going to include self-driving vehicles and hydrogen cells and robots and smart homes all for Toyota to play around with.

Will Curran:

I hope they open up those cities for venues, so you can be like, "I'm going to rent out the city for my next conference."

Brandt Krueger:

Oh, that would be cool.

Will Curran:
And I get to be like, "Whoo,"-

Brandt Krueger:
Go to the Tech City to try things out.

Will Curran:
Toyota City.

Brandt Krueger:
Yeah, we're going to Toyota City on the foot of Mount Fuji.

Will Curran:
I love it, I love it.

Brandt Krueger:
It is. I'm not even joking, yeah.

Will Curran:
I know, that's why I laughed. You're right, it is at the foot of Mount Fuji.

Brandt Krueger:
Yeah, yeah.

Will Curran:
I wanted to give two plugs to non-tech related stuff. If you aren't interested in the coverage that we had for CES not related to tech, some of the more... two controversial things that happened at CES, make sure to go check out our other podcast Event Brew, as well at EventBrew.com, because we talk about two really big things that happened, and how it relates to that conference directly. We're obviously, we're the tech guys. And it's funny, the Event Brew guys were like, "Let's talk about all the gadgets and stuff." And I was like, "Nope, you don't get that. That's where Event Tech takes over."

Brandt Krueger:
Well, do you want to tease the topics of what those were?

Will Curran:
Yeah, yeah. Definitely. So one of them was Westworld, this HBO show did an activation about, where they had basically a hyper-personalization where they knew everything about every attendee that came in and they would walk up to you and you didn't know who they were and they knew everything about you. They knew your girlfriend's name, your dog's name. And it was like so scripted and well done that people at first thought these people were people they forgot about. That they met before that they just forgot about. And that was nuts.

Will Curran:

So we talk about privacy and its role within events with hyper-personalization which is really cool. And the other one too was huge news coming out of CES and leading the hashtag #BoycottCES topic was Ivanka Trump's appearance as a presenter and whether politics aside, whether it was a good fit for within the conference, and we talk about controversial speakers and manels, and all the things that have been plaguing CES these last couple of years. So definitely go check those out, EventBrew.com.

Brandt Krueger:

Rock on, rock on. All right, well, that does it for us, this wrap up of the 2020 CES. If we missed something, do, do, do let us know, #EventTechPodcast on all the socials. And tell us what... some of the other deep finds that are there. That's one of the fun things that I do enjoy is whenever you talk to someone about CES, it seems like there's always one thing that they read about or saw that you didn't, and so... because it is such a massive show. So let us know, what did we miss?

Brandt Krueger:

What was the one thing that's going to impact meetings and events that we did not see and do that again, #EventTechPodcast. Or you can send us an email, EventTechPodcast@HelloEndless.com. Well Will, thank you so much for joining me.

Will Curran:

Thank you so much for having me.

Brandt Krueger:

Digging it, as always. And thank you all for listening out there, we really appreciate it. Be sure and check us out at EventTechPodcast.com. There you're going to see all the show notes, the links to all the resources that are there, the transcripts, links to subscribe to your favorite podcast apps, whether that's Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Pocketcast, Google Podcasts, all the casts and the pods and the casts, and the podding of the casts that are out there, all of those various ones are there.

Brandt Krueger:

Be sure and check those out as well. If there's a service that you want us to be on that we're not on, please do let us know and as always, let us know what you think of the show, what kind of topics you want us to cover, what are we doing right? What are we doing wrong? Leave those reviews on those various podcast platforms so that folks can find this show and if we do... If there's something that doesn't deserve the five stars, please do let us know again at those same places, #EventTechPodcast, EventTechPodcast@HelloEndless.com. Thank you so much for joining us, we'll see you next time on the Event Tech Podcast.

Will Curran:

The Event Tech Podcast.

Brandt Krueger:

The Event Tech Podcast, out.

Will Curran:

The Event Tech Podcast, in. What?