

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

Brandt Krueger:

Hello, everyone. And welcome to another edition of the Event Tech Podcast. That gentleman over there is the languid Will Curran of Endless Events.

Will Curran:

And that man over there is the mammoth Brandt Krueger of Event Technology. But first, wait, what word? I've never heard that.

Brandt Krueger:

Languid.

Will Curran:

Langwood?

Brandt Krueger:

It's of a person, manner, or gesture displaying or having a disinclination for physical exertion or effort. So think, like a slough.

Will Curran:

Oh, interesting. And mine is like a mammoth-

Brandt Krueger:

Relaxed, unhurried.

Will Curran:

I think mine's ironic because mammoths are big wooly mammoths covered in fur and hair.

Brandt Krueger:

Well, I know you're going to be really calm today, so we're going to keep this one nice and calm, nice and easy.

Will Curran:

Calm. Take a deep breath.

Brandt Krueger:

As we speak today, there's breaking news so we wanted to make sure that we were covering it on the Event Tech Podcast because it is major news in the event tech world. And that is, PSAV has announced that they plan to move to a new master brand and it is... Encore. So, as we have covered on this show in the past, we announced when PSAV announced that they were

acquiring Encore Audio Visual Services. Encore, probably one of the second largest names in in-house AV. And it was announced last year, or was it even now the year before? Let's see if it's in the press release.

Brandt Krueger:

Doesn't say, but I want to say that was towards the end of actually 2018 when that happened.

Will Curran:

Yep.

Brandt Krueger:

They announced that they were acquiring Encore, which was the latest in a series of acquisitions by PSAV. So, as of stardate March 3rd, 2020, "PSAV, a global leader in event experiences, announced today that it will align its portfolio of companies under a new master brand and will assume the name Encore." Now, just to get our caveats and biases out on the table, Mr. Curran, you, sir, are in charge, the head event Einstein, chief event Einstein of-

Will Curran:

Endless Events, yeah.

Brandt Krueger:

A third-party AV company, is that correct?

Will Curran:

A third-party AV company. Yeah, yeah, that's correct. Yeah, so I want to make sure that everyone knows that, obviously, I'm willing to lay down my sword and say I'm 100% biased on this one, that I own a third-party AV company that does compete against PSAV and Encore and all these brands a lot of the time. But I think that, most importantly, I think that it just needed to get this news out there for people to be aware of. I, happily, if I get beat by them, I'm happy to admit that there's times where they are a great vendor and times where I work with them and they're actually one of my suppliers as well when we were doing rigging and things like that.

Will Curran:

So, we want to keep a great relationship with them, but we obviously want to make sure that we share this news. Because I think that theirs is a very obvious move they are trying to make. If you just look at even the fact that they are saying the new brand will be adopted March 31st, it's not like a, "Hey, we're going to slowly transition our clients over, over the course of..." Literally, they have 28 days to be able to move this entire brand over, which means they already had built the website, they are ready to go, and they're ready to do this really quick and as fast as possible.

Brandt Krueger:

All right, so now, before we dig into this, I will throw my biases out on the table. So, as an independent technical producer, I work with all kinds. So, like you said, I want to make sure I'm getting the best deal for my customer or, to be perfectly frank, I'm going to do what I think makes the most sense for my clients. So, sometimes, that's the in-house AV, sometimes that's third-party. If budget is a primary concern, obviously, then we start looking towards third parties just because as a general rule, they tend to be less expensive. But sometimes, convenience is the overall majority thing that we need to be keeping in mind, that we want it all on the same master account. We want the equipment to be all right there. Things are going to be changing a lot on the fly. You and I have talked about this quite a bit on the road. We've talked about it on the show. We've done our traveling AV SmackDown, where you represent the third parties. I represent the in-house, because it's been increasingly more difficult to get someone to represent the in-house.

Brandt Krueger:

But as far as my own personal biases, I believe whatever it's going to be, that there's a time and a place for all of the different models, right? There's a time and a place for in-house, time and a place for third-party. That being said, this is curious. And I mean, it's curious to me. I think there's no doubt in my mind even trying to stay relatively independent, relatively above the fray on this, that this is clearly, in my mind, an acknowledgment that they have a branding problem. And I think that stays, I think that rings true because pretty much everyone that I know, almost every planner that I know of, when they say the word PSAV, do it with a little bit of disdain in their mouth. Because I think it being such a large company, at some point or another, they're going to have been burned by a PSAV crew, in one way or another. So, that tends to stick, that tends to linger. And so, this to me, is kind of a tacit acknowledgment of the fact that their brand is tainted at this point.

Will Curran:

Definitely, definitely. And I mean, I'm looking at this from a purely business standpoint. I mean, if I was PSAV, I would be making the same move as well. Maybe we can talk about how we think they could have done this better, but I think that when they are acquiring companies and becoming so large now that we've talked about the word, the M word, monopoly, I think that it has to be in check at some point too and we have to have these sort of conversations and be hard about it. And the same way that I hope as well that any vendor would also want to keep my company in check. I don't think I'll ever be as big as PSAV, but I would hope that everyone wants to hold each other accountable, and is willing to kind of call what I will say, to use some Event Brew terminology, as bullshit, in a little bit and we have to be willing to call bullshit, I think, when bullshit is happening.

Will Curran:

But yeah, talking about the brand portion, I definitely in the same way, I mean, we sit at all of these conferences. And all the time, they have people who are coming up to us saying they don't enjoy the brand, they don't like PSAV. And it's really kind of sad, I think, for them in some ways because there are good properties. I mean, there's parallels, I think, similar in the same

way that PSAV purchased Swank and then renamed everything PSAV. And I know that you have some more history on it, so I'll let you definitely talk about that. But I think that, in the same way, there are some good properties, and they're surprised they do fantastic jobs. I know at certain scales of budgets, they do a phenomenal job, and I've talked to clients that said they do a great job on this sort of thing.

Will Curran:

But the interesting thing is that it kind of sucks for them because it's all under that same brand. So, when everyone assumes PSAV, they assume it's the same across the board. But yeah, changing over to Encore. Interestingly enough too, and let me know if you think this is an okay pivot to kind of make is that Encore for a while was the other large in-house AV company across the United States. And they were the one that honestly also got a lot of flack, mainly I think because they were the in-house, and they had very similar strategies to PSAV and how they want to get people into contracts and kind of force you to work with them and things like that. But I think that they had a slightly more respectable brand and I don't know if you agree or disagree at all?

Will Curran:

I guess you worked with the recent, you worked with the property though that probably would have completely reversed that.

Brandt Krueger:

Well, I continue to. I continue to work with them. I'm currently working on a show right now where I'm getting a quote from Encore, and Encore is the local in-house AV. So, I absolutely work with these companies. To touch on what you said before is, I still firmly believe that you can feel whether or not you are at a former Swank company or a Swank property. There was a certain level of commitment. There was a certain level of quality and customer service that I felt came with the Swank AV brand, which was one that was purchased many years ago now. And I feel like even to this day, you can still kind of get a vibe like, "Yep, these guys, they used to be a Swank location before they were bought out by PSAV."

Brandt Krueger:

And so, for me, I've always been able to kind of separate to a certain extent, okay, this is a good crew, a good property versus the brand. But because they are so ubiquitous, I think that is often why the in-house gets a bad rep because of the fact, like I said, kind of to open with, chances are, if you've done many events over the course of a long career, you've probably gotten burned by them once. And because it's the same name, it's going to stick with you. Oh, PSAV. Oh, Encore. Oh, I had this nightmare group that just went terribly... Well, that kind of thing. So, I think that's a little unfair, but it's also human nature. And so, it feels like, again, that they've got their brand and they're trying to shift to a brand that has slightly less animosity towards it.

Brandt Krueger:

I was kind of looking through the list here. It looks like only the first brand, Freeman AV Canada is the one that's going to adopt it by March 31st, so that's going to be-

Will Curran:  
Okay.

Brandt Krueger:  
The one to start to roll things out. It says, "Over the coming months, the migration strategy for the complete portfolio will be defined, beginning with Freeman AV Canada," which I had to quick double-check to make sure that that wasn't the same as FMAV which was-

Will Curran:  
No, no, yeah, totally. Yeah, yeah. Owned by Freeman.

Brandt Krueger:  
I'm pretty sure that wasn't the case. But I just wanted to double-check that. Because the list, just again to kind of go back as we're talking about, Hargrove, Hawthorn, KFP, FMAV, Eclipse was another one. They've been slowly buying up all of these brands. And so, it's interesting. It's big news.

Will Curran:  
Yeah. Yeah. I think... So, I mean, my biggest concern with this whole thing is that PSAV has had a bad reputation and now, they're trying to rebrand the name, I think to cover that up and go as Encore Event Technologies. It's interesting. They just say this new name is just going to be Encore and I think they're dropping Event Technologies, which is kind of interesting to me as well. But I just feel like it's... I will not name the person who said these exact words, but I heard someone say it's kind of like polishing a turd, essentially. Is that like, "Hey, nothing to see here. This is not what you expected. These are not the terrible AV company you're looking for," as Obi-Wan would say. And I think that we have to be concerned about people not knowing that this exists.

Will Curran:  
Because what... If you think about it, if you Google the word PSAV, I bet you, there's hundreds of articles, people talking about it, reviews. I mean, look at their Glassdoor profile, things like that. There's so much baggage that brand, they're probably trying to sweep a lot of it under the rug because they know that they can just take this new kind of step forward, I think, along the entire way.

Will Curran:  
And I will tell you the value of this. As someone who owns a company, I have rebranded and I will tell you, it makes people think it's a new company. I'm not going to lie. When I went from being the DJ company back in the day to starting the AV company, and we went from a basic DJ company name to Endless, people thought it was a completely new company. People

thought I was acquiring companies. People thought, they thought we were going to have way more services. We literally didn't change anything. We just changed our logo on our website and that was it. And not saying that we were a bad company, I think we had high NPS scores, all those things like that. But people's perception when you change brands is, something new and crazy has happened. I mean, I'd be curious to pull up also large companies that have recently rebranded in a lot of different ways and see kind of how they have. I bet you that's what Brandt's been doing. He's got a big smile on his face.

Brandt Krueger:

Maybe. I might've been looking some stuff up while you were there. So, I did run across just some top-level things, and then I want to be a little bit of devil's advocate as well, but just to... Interestingly, one of the Glassdoor descriptions was that it's the McDonald's of AV. It's mass-produced. It's all about squeezing every dime of profit out of all of the equipment and that kind of thing, so I can't entirely disagree with that when you've got something at that level of scale. The Yelp reviews are also quite interesting. They're not real nice. If you start looking up PSAV under Yelp, you're going to find some not very nice reviews there. Now, to be devil's advocate, which I'm trying to do in this scenario is, okay, let me ask you this. What does PSAV stand for?

Will Curran:

Presenter Services Audio Visual.

Brandt Krueger:

You know that for a fact or you're just making that up?

Will Curran:

No, no, no. I'm 99% sure that's what it stands for.

Brandt Krueger:

Right. Okay. What does FMAV stand for?

Will Curran:

Oh, it's the two names of the owners.

Brandt Krueger:

Right. Yeah, exactly. It was Frischkorn Mediaco, if I remember right.

Will Curran:

Yeah, yeah, yeah. That was good. That was honestly, I'm not going to lie. I honestly, FMAV's brand is like, I'm surprised they didn't do FMAV, to be honest, because their brand was so clean, so high regarded in the industry. Yeah, I was just very surprised about that as well.

Brandt Krueger:

So, the reason that I'm asking that question is because, let's just try and think of this objectively, all right? So, you've got this handful of brands, they could have chosen any of them. I mean, you could have chosen Hargrove. Hargrove has a great reputation but it is, I'd say, it has a stronger East Coast feel. Most people, more people know of them East Coast. They're known for the big presidential inaugurations and things like that. So, they had options of which ones they wanted to go to. I think they went with, honestly, a more global-sounding brand. It's going to be something that's translatable to something that's kind of around the world, even though it's an English word. You're not sitting there wondering, what does it stand for? You're not wondering what its heritage is. It's just a brand name, like any other brand name, like Apple or anything for that matter.

Brandt Krueger:

So, the argument could be made, if you're trying to be devil's advocate, that of their handful of brands, it was the one that was already the most global, and the one that had kind of the most legs as far as rebranding, if you think about new logos and all the new business cards and all that kind of stuff. Just kind of thinking about it from a branding standpoint, I think, can go a long way as well.

Will Curran:

Yeah, totally. I found an article I'm going to link down below, is an article. It says, "Behind every great merger is a great merging branding opportunity," essentially. And they talk about a couple of different ones in here. One interesting one that I almost complete forgot was Wachovia and Wells Fargo. Wachovia was a pretty solid brand and they went with Wells Fargo. And obviously, I'm not in that industry of banking portion but I bet you, it's a similar thing that happened as well.

Will Curran:

Maybe... I don't remember if Wells Fargo is more well-regarded, I mean, you look at, for example, Lenovo, Motorola. So, a lot of Lenovo stuff, Motorola stuff, got rebranded as Lenovo. And there's so many of this. It's also really interesting to look at this from a perspective of... And maybe we should do some sort of case study comparison to this. But like P&G, Proctor & Gamble. I mean, think about that too. They have all these sub-brands. But what's interesting though about it though, and this is why I'm so surprised that PSAV didn't do this is, why not break into sub-brands? If you're having an issue where people are taking a bad experience they had and applying it to every experience, why not break in a sub-brand so then that way, you don't tarnish it. I've also thought about this as well.

Will Curran:

It's like, at some point too, PSAV's customer, almost as much as it is the end person. I almost feel like the customer is more the properties because they don't do a lot of offsite stuff. Honestly, they got to make the properties happy. Why not let the properties brand? I'm probably doing all the marketing brainstorm for the senior vice president of marketing or something like that, but why not also just let it roll into the property, so if it goes poorly, it's a reflection on the property? So you don't taint the rest of it and lose your revenue potential on this other one. But I'm

guessing it also has to do with some infrastructure things as well. That means you got to have individual email addresses for everybody. I'm sure there's something beyond that as well.

Brandt Krueger:

I think the venues like that extra layer of... Can't think of the right word.

Will Curran:

Protection?

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah. Protection, to a certain extent. Yeah. Because if things do go south, they're able to like, "Oh, well, what can you do? We got a three-year contract with them."

Will Curran:

Oh, that's true. And think about it, too. If you have a separate name too, it also dissolves you a little bit of liability as well. Because they have, technically, if something went wrong, you're not like, "Oh, well, we subcontracted to PSAV and we have a vendor relationship but they didn't give us a kickback back." Yeah.

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah. They're always listed as a preferred vendor even when there's no preference involved, even when the contracts are clear that you have to use them. We've done through this show and talked about some of the exclusivity contracts that we've had to deal with when dealing with in-house AV, where there was no option to get out. We had to use them. And it can be... I think then, you can kind of play it off of each other. It's like, "Well, it's not our rules. It's their rules. And it's not..." That kind of thing. And so, yeah, having that extra level of disambiguation is probably the closest word I can think of to it. To be able to say, "Oh, no, that's not us." And playing, when things go south. Just in case you're wondering, it also stands for porcine stentless aortic valve apparently in the world of cardiology, as well as post-secondary adult vocational skills. But you are correct, sir. It is Presentation Services Audio Visual.

Will Curran:

Yes.

Brandt Krueger:

Which is kind of stilted. I mean, that's kind of a stilted... So, anytime you have to ask, "What does that brand stand for?" It's not necessarily a good fit, a good brand, especially if you're trying to come out as a more global company. And gone are the days where people are looking for an AV technician. I've often been frustrated at the fact that now everybody is a...

Will Curran:

Event technology specialist?



Brandt Krueger:

Exactly. An event technology director or director of event technology. It's like, "No, you're the in-house AV guy." But they've been doing that for years, calling those people event technology specialists. And so, I think the more that they can remove themselves from this idea that they're just a projector and screen company, is probably the best. So, I can see more than just the cynical reasons for doing this.

Will Curran:

And as I'm reflecting on this, I think they very closely worded this, obviously, this press release that came out, and there's something interesting. So, the CEO talks about, "Together, the brands in our portfolio provide creative, production, advanced technology, staging services to customers around the world. We are excited to begin this transition that strongly supports our mission to connect and inspire audiences." And I think what's interesting, I think I did mention it earlier, is I'm surprised they didn't go with Encore Event Technology and they just called themselves Encore.

Will Curran:

I bet you, similarly as well, we had this conversation recently on the show about the difference between a production company and an AV company. I'm wondering if they want to move away from being known as the AV company as well. And so, they know that they just bought all these companies that do beyond AV and they know the Internet's the future. They know VRs, potentially future ARs, all of these technologies in general are wrapping together and the lines are blurred. Maybe they're like, "How do we, A, get rid of AV out of our brand? How do we fix our brand from being tainted? And then, how do we move forward with a more generic name like just Encore? That's what we are." And you can slip event technology, AV production below it all day long, is very interesting. I think that shows that they're probably trying to make that move.

Brandt Krueger:

So, before we kind of go into what does this mean for the future, let's just take a quick moment and talk about our good old friends over at the Event Leadership Institute. Just want to take a quick reminder of all the things that they offer for you folks that are listening. As a reminder, that these are the folks that are providing education to our industry that isn't locked into a single conference and event. We're at an interesting crossroads right now in our industry, as people are dealing with "maybe I don't want to go to that conference, maybe I don't want to do this." IMEX just announced that they're moving forward with Frankfurt, as far as they know, with their IMEX Frankfurt, but people are starting to look a little warily at conferences, looking a little warily at airplane travel because of the whole Coronavirus, COVID-19 business that's going on right now.

Will Curran:

Well, even, on top of that too, people are also now also concerned that, "Hey, I don't know what's going on with all these mergers of these AV companies. I need to know more about AV." And I know a great resource that you can have to start that too, on top of that.

Brandt Krueger:

There you go. I don't want to, in any way, shape, or form imply that we're saying, "Oh, stay at home" or anything like that. This is our lifeblood, right? We want people out and about. But what I am trying to imply is, that it could be more convenient to stay at home. What if you could get those education sessions 24-7? You can get those education sessions on your schedule when you're working an event, you've got a little bit of time, downtime in the evenings, a little bit of time over lunch. That's what the Event Leadership offers, the Netflix-style, watch as much as you want. You can do subscriptions or you can take individual courses, five-week courses, six-week courses, on all kinds of topics that are out there including business and sales, creativity, design, my technical production class, maybe, planning and logistics strategy and ROI. All of these great things that are going to make you a better planner, whatever the particular niche that you have, whether it's corporate, associations, weddings, it's all going to go toward making you a better planner.

Brandt Krueger:

And it could also go for CMP credit, depending on the class. A lot of the ELI courses qualify you for CMP credits. So, be sure and check it out. [EventLeadershipInstitute.com](http://EventLeadershipInstitute.com). We've made a short code for it because that's a mouthful. That's a lot of things to tippity-type. So, ELI, the number four dot me slash ETP, that's [ELI4.me/ETP](http://ELI4.me/ETP). There, you're going to see a 20% discount code that you can use on either the individual courses or 20% off on your monthly membership. So, we want to make sure that we thank the Event Leadership Institute for their support of our Event Tech Podcast.

Will Curran:

Thanks, guys. Well, making that transition right back into talking a little bit about the news.

Brandt Krueger:

Back into it.

Will Curran:

Talking about the future and where we see this go. I kind of hinted that a little bit about maybe they are moving it towards this for full-service kind of company and don't want to be known as just the AV company. Brandt, do you have any theories for where you think this can go in the future?

Brandt Krueger:

I do think, despite my devil's advocacy of a few moments ago, I do think it's kind of a curious choice to do brand. Because I think, you mentioned Procter & Gamble. We've got the Google slash Alphabet model. We're seeing more and more of these kind of umbrella companies. Unilever, they've gotten a hundred different brands that most people don't know the name brand Unilever, but they make soaps and shampoos and kind of like Procter & Gamble does. So, you know the individual brands. They had an opportunity here to start doing that. It would enable

them to still gobble up smaller companies. But they could have kept the branding and just started redoing the logistics and the back-end stuff. My wife works for a dental service organization where you don't know the name of the company that's behind it, but they're the ones that are helping manage and part own the local dentist office. So, these types of companies exist.

Brandt Krueger:

And going to the fact that PSAV is an investment opportunity by, it was originally Goldman Sachs, now that I think it's Blackstone still, if I remember correctly, don't think it's been sold since then. That seems like a perfect opportunity for them to go down that road, where you've got all of these little sub-brands. And so, you could have, like the hotels do, where you've got Hilton and all of their various brands, but each one with its own niche. So, then you would have your event technology more focused thing, your more expo-focused, building on the Freeman brand, building on each of these individual brands. I think it's interesting, potentially a missed opportunity that they are going to try and bring all of these brands under one umbrella.

Brandt Krueger:

Now, they don't say, like you said. It's carefully worded. They don't say they're going to change the name to Encore for all of these things. It just says that there will be this new brand that will be launched later in the summer, and that we're going to bring all of these other brands as part of the portfolio, and how it will be defined is yet to be, so.

Will Curran:

Yeah, I mean, technically, in the title, it says, "PSAV announces plan to move to new master brand." Then it is almost saying PSAV itself is going to change. But I mean, the fact that plans to move, I mean, I think that the two, they're going to also know that they're going to have to react to us. I mean, I hope they're a smart business and they hear all this feedback and they're going to be like, "Oh, wow, maybe we did make a bad decision. We did this. Maybe it's a good decision." I don't necessarily think it's necessarily a bad decision. I think more so on my end, it's that planners need to be educated. And the further we get removed for this, less and less people are going to be aware of what happened in the past. So, my hope is just that there's enough news coverage of this to be able to let people know like, "Hey, this is where this happened and what the past looked like for this brand beforehand." So.

Brandt Krueger:

Do you think that people will just kind of let this trickle out of their knowledge? I mean, we can only hold so much in our heads at any given time. You think people would just be like, "Oh, it's an Encore property? Okay, cool," and that PSAV will just slowly disappear out of sight, out of mind? And especially the younger planners who may not have the experience, do you think that brand just withers away and dies? And or is that what they're hoping for?

Will Curran:

I think as a brand manager, I would say yes, I hope that happens. But I think at this point, I'm not sure if it's because I'm in the AV industry and they're a competitor and I'm aware of this and that sort of thing that it's very fresh in my mind. But I think a lot of people are aware. When I remember right when the Encore thing happened, how many people were making jokes about how, "Oh, encore would be like, 'Oh, blah blah blah. We're so great.'" And we're like, "Yeah, you just got bought by PSAV." Even the Encore people knew. They were trying to do the best they could to damage-control it as much as possible as a property per property basis. They're not the big wigs at the top.

Will Curran:

I don't ever get a chance to talk to any big wigs at other AV companies, but I think that it is cemented into event planning lore, event planning knowledge at this point. And I think that it might end up still being a joke for years to come. Though, I only very recently on Event Brew got to make the PS, they're an AV company joke, and Dustin didn't know about that and he just laughed really loud on the show. I think I actually didn't say it on air. I don't remember if I said it on air or not.

Brandt Krueger:

That's one of my better jokes. So-

Will Curran:

That's one of the best jokes ever.

Brandt Krueger:

I'm not going to name names, but PS, they're an AV company. See, maybe that's why they did it. They wanted to take away my joke opportunity.

Will Curran:

Yeah, exactly. Well, they're going to come out for one final encore.

Brandt Krueger:

That's kind of where my mind was working, something along those lines is that I wanted to give them one more chance, one more encore, if you will. So, that kind of thing. All right, Will, what have we forgotten on this? What do we need to do before we put this one to bed?

Will Curran:

I mean, I'd be curious to see what happens in the future. I think that in the next month or so, obviously, leading up to that March 31st day, a lot more information is going to come out and we're going to see a lot of things happen. But I think the best thing for you to do as a planner, I think if you're a planner listening to this, obviously AV guys already made up their decision, anyway. They're just laughing at this podcast or they've already made up their mind at this point. But if you're a planner and no matter what, you should always, as Brandt always talks about, there's a time and place for everything. Always feel free to get the bid and just evaluate the

vendors for more criteria than just price. I think that's one of the best things that you can do because there's a lot of factors that go into picking an AV company and I don't think it's just price. It's not who can get the equipment the cheapest. It's not who pays their labor the least, that sort of thing.

Will Curran:

So, I think the best thing you can do is just make sure that you're aware, you're an aware consumer, you're a knowledgeable consumer, and just have those great deep conversations and I think that's where you'll be surprised the difference between different properties. And I think as this goes on too, my hope is maybe some, I don't know, maybe someone from Encore will now reach out to us and say, "Hey, we want to talk about our side of the story" and I'd love to hear that as well and kind of where they're going. What are they doing to untarnish this brand and make the next level? I think I'm just very curious to see where it's all going.

Will Curran:

And just stay knowledgeable. Obviously, you're listening to this podcast, so you're already way 90 steps ahead of most people are, but just continue to always learn and grow and I think that it will help you make the right decisions along the way.

Brandt Krueger:

100%. Be an active participant in the process. Ask questions, get references, do the due diligence. I frequently tell people to get references even when you're dealing with the in-house because, especially if they're saying that you have to use the in-house... I always want to keep my options open. I always want to keep the possibilities open. If they're saying you have to use them, then you say, "Great, I would like to speak to two to three clients of yours that had groups about the same size of mine." If you're going to make me use your folks, then I want to speak to people that have used them in the past." Recently, the recent past because there's a lot of churn in in-house AV companies.

Brandt Krueger:

The other thing that I'll throw out just before we tie a bow on this is that I do also think the timing is a little curious. It's almost like that they just recently realized that there might be an image problem or something like that. Because it is well over a year now at this point. There was a big joke here locally. Minneapolis was a giant Northwest Airlines hub before Delta bought them out. And so, the kind of running joke is that Northwest Airlines and Delta Airlines merged, so they decided to keep part of the names from each. So, it's Delta Airlines. And so, it kind of feels like the same thing here, right? It's, we're going to keep the AV so now, it's Encore AV under PSAV. So, but it is curious that it's taken this long for them to decide to go this route.

Will Curran:

Well, you think about it too. I mean, and having conversations too. I've had some conversations, some people in the back-end who, I can't say on the source, on the record who exactly.

Brandt Krueger:  
On background.

Will Curran:

But I have heard some people that this, that yeah, on background, is that this process also took a long time, that even when they were purchasing companies, stuff was not solidified months after this announcement that they had been acquired had even happened. So, I think also potentially that maybe they were working through the paperwork and then, I think that potentially, as they were acquiring, they realized, "We get the name, we can do whatever we want with the name." And then I'm betting someone within the marketing department was like, "You guys, I think this is the time to do a rebrand." And they start building this out.

Will Curran:

But I mean, I think this is what always blows my mind about big companies is just how slow the process is. If I realized something was wrong, I would change within a month. I'd move on a dime and I would want to get it done right away. But yeah, you are right. That it is taking a long time for this to happen, which honestly, I think is going to also mean that there will be a long time that people will still be aware that this transition is happening. So, it almost, in some ways, while it seems like they might be trying to just pull the rug from underneath everybody like, "Tada, look what I did." Or pull a mask over everybody. I bet you, a year from now, you'll still see cases being pushed around properties. Even if they completely get rid of PSAV, it's all gone.

Brandt Krueger:  
Oh, absolutely.

Will Curran:

You'll still see the case being pushed around with PSAV, so it will be very, very hard for them to get rid of the brand 100% very, very fast.

Brandt Krueger:

Yeah. My garbage company got bought out five years ago and I've still got the cans from the old company because, why bother?

Will Curran:  
Totally.

Brandt Krueger:

So, yeah, it's going to be a long time before those cases get spray-painted black and those names get changed.

Will Curran:  
Definitely. Definitely.

Brandt Krueger:  
All right.

Will Curran:  
Well, take us home, Brandt.

Brandt Krueger:  
I think we can put this one to bed. Yep. Thank you very much for listening. We really appreciate everyone out there. Please let us know if there's an aspect of this that we have neglected to talk about. Like I said, I tried to keep it as evenhanded as possible regarding our own personal biases. So, if you disagree, please do let us know. If you agree, please do let us know. Reach out and let us know at #eventtechpodcast or EventTechPodcast@HelloEndless.com is the old good old-fashioned email, and let us know what you think this does for their branding. Is this a smart move? Is this going to kind of give them an opportunity to reset and take things over or is it going to be the same old, same old? Please do let us know.

Brandt Krueger:  
Be sure and check out the podcast at EventTechPodcast.com. There, you're going to see all the show notes, all the links to all of the things that we've talked about here on the show, all of the resources, and all of the subscription links for your favorite podcast apps there, whether it's Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts, Spotify, all of the good old-

Will Curran:  
Casting casts.

Brandt Krueger:  
All the pockets, all the casts, all the casting, and all the pods. Be sure and check that out. Be sure and subscribe. That way, you'll get this beamed into your ears on a weekly basis. But don't forget to stop by that EventTechPodcast.com. That's where all of the freshest content is going to be. Thank you all so much for listening. Thank you, Will, for joining me on this kind of special edition...

Will Curran:  
Breaking news.

Brandt Krueger:  
To the presses, Johnny. We've got to get... That's a tough one. PSAV is changing its name. And as always, we thank you all for listening out there and we'll see you next time on the Event Tech Podcast.

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