AT Banter Podcast Episode 256 - Kelly Goto Returns

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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SPEAKERS

Rob Mineault, Steve Barclay, Kelly Goto, Ryan Fleury

- R Rob Mineault 00:56

 Hey, and welcome to another episode of AT Banter
- Steve Barclay 01:01
 Banter, banter.
- Rob Mineault 01:04

 Hey, my name is Rob Mineault and joining me in the room ... look at who it is. It's Ryan Fleury.
- R Ryan Fleury 01:10 Hello.
- R Rob Mineault 01:12
 And it is Steve Barclay.
- Steve Barclay 01:15
 What? My goodness, you're right.
- R Rob Mineault 01:18
 How are you gents this week?

- Steve Barclay 01:22

 Running around like a chicken with my head cut off.
- R Ryan Fleury 01:25
 And I'm doing well.
- R Rob Mineault 01:28
 you guys work for the same company, right?
- Steve Barclay 01:34
 Yeah, in theory.
- Ryan Fleury 01:38

 Very different worlds. Steve's the feet on the ground. A
- Steve Barclay 01:41

 And I've had plenty of feet on the ground today.
- Rob Mineault 01:44

So you've been you've been around the Lower Mainland and back again? I started off this morning with a CNIB Leadership team meeting to introduce some describe for meetings. followed it with an anti gloom Zoom Room. Yep. At a call with Adam Welton at Pier CDI. All right, good. All that went out to appointment in West Vancouver. The fella there, ran over to Rick's to pick up some equipment, ran back to storage, droped off some equipment. And here I am. Wow. Man, man about town. How's everything else? Let's go with something new and new and exciting.

- Steve Barclay 02:25

 New and exciting ...Well, I've been I've been playing with the Annie from Thinkerbell Labs in India. who
- Rob Mineault 02:35

 Really, tell you tell me more. What is it?

S Steve Barclay 02:38

It's it's a really interesting Braille training device. It's a it's a little device. It's got a Braille keyboard on it. It's got a six cell regular sized Braille display. But then in addition, it's got two large dot Braille cells that are used to introduce just basic concepts around Braille. So things like you know, what's dot one, what's dot two, stuff like that. And then it's also got a little inverted display, which is for like, teaching somebody to use a slate and stylus. So it's actually backwards, you've got to, you've got to punch your Braille backwards to to do input on it. And it's all built with this structured training system to help somebody start from scratch and start learning their contractions as they as they go on. It's it's really, it's a neat little product. And I'm, I'm hoping it can be developed to fit into the Canadian market.

R Rob Mineault 03:38
So I sorry, how new is it?

Steve Barclay 03:42

I think they've been doing it for a little while in India, they started off in India was that was where the product was developed. And it was really kind of their primary focus was to get it out there. So I think it's been out for a couple of years, but it's just never really made it across the pond. It's never quite been ready for our market because they haven't, you know, finished it off yet for localization for anywhere other than India, I guess. We find it really interesting that that a lot of blindness devices sort of start their lives out overseas, and rather than than here, is there any particular reason why that that happens? I think, you know, for a lot of products. The there's just a lot more funding in Europe for product development than there is in North America. So I think we see a lot of products developed over there just because of that. Suddenly, there's been a bunch of stuff that's been developed in India this is this is a recent thing. You know, we've got who we got, we've got Orbit, we've got ThinkerBell Labs, we've got the guys who do the Braille me forgotten their name, innovation.

R Ryan Fleury 04:53 Yeah.

Rob Mineault 04:56

So all of a sudden these three different companies that sprung up, and they're They're making products that are less expensive than stuff that's on the market currently. And, you know, I think they can probably do that just because they've got a just a massive population over there, right? So much so much bigger population, that if they can, you know, get government funding to cover the costs of either r&d or to purchase the products, there's, there's a great jumpstart for them to take it out to other parts of the world. Yeah, and I wonder if if sort of supply lines have a bit to do with it, too, because so much of the production of the actual components happens overseas, that, I guess maybe it does cut down on costs in terms of getting getting the parts to where they need to be in terms of putting them together into a, into a device? Yeah. And, you know, with with India, you know, being slowly growing its middle class and developing more and more, you know, right now, they've got a major advantage on labor costs to for for manufacturing, which is pretty helpful. And I think we're starting to see some people as as China gets more and more global aspirations and gets more and more ordinary around things like patent rights and such. I think we're we're starting to see more businesses moving manufacturing into India. So they're, they're really developing that, that part

of their economy and growing it out. So I think we'll see more of it to come. You know, that's really cool, because we do need certainly more Braille education products like that. So that's actually a really exciting prospect. Hmm, yeah. Yeah, for sure. Anything that makes Braille less expensive and gets it in the hands of more people is a good thing to my mind. As long as it's reliable, as we discovered with unfortunately, innovision the Braille me turned out to be considerably less than reliable. Oh, really? Yeah. Yeah, it's no good. Yeah, our last or last shipment from them had 100% failure rate. Oh, my gosh, really? Yep. Everything that we got on that last ship and failed. Holy crap, like right out of the box. Not some of them lasted a few months. But, yeah, every single one of them ended up with some kind of problem. And that's a shame. But I guess I mean, that's part of, you know, a newer technology. I guess that's the rescue run. Yeah, it sounds it sounds a bit to me, like maybe the the guys who started that company just didn't really stay engaged with it and went off to work on other things. You know, they, they seem to just sort of drop the ball. You know, they they weren't developing the software for it. You know, we were ever they caught up on an NVDA driver. So far as you know, Ryan,

Ryan Fleury 08:00

Honestly, I haven't even looked. Yeah, I haven't. I haven't looked either. We waited a long time for that to be updated.

Steve Barclay 08:06

Yeah. And people had to use an old version of NVDA to continue using that Braille display. They couldn't they couldn't stay current with it, which is unfortunate. So yeah, it's every every single person that I've sold. At this point, with the exception of I think, maybe two has been refunded for them.

- R Rob Mineault 08:28
 Ouch.
- Steve Barclay 08:28 Yeah. Ouch.
- Rob Mineault 08:32
 www.canasstech.com, we refund with a smile.
- Steve Barclay 08:37

Shameless plug. You know, we got to stand behind our customers. Right, you know, yeah. You shouldn't you know, you can't sell them a lemon and then say, Well, too bad. So sad.

Rob Mineault 08:47

But it's it is a really shame because for somebody who is like, excited about getting a new Braille device that is within their budget, to then get it and then it just it doesn't work. It shifts the bed on them. are do you find a lot of people

are reordering new ones? Or is the experience just kind of souring them on? And they're just like, you know what, I guess I'll just save up for you know, yeah, most of them have switched over to some other device.

Ryan Fleury 09:15

Unfortunately, the yield the limit of affordable choices, were still limited, right when it comes to affordable Braille. So yeah, you're looking at the orbit devices, which are real, very good devices.

R Rob Mineault 09:28

Yeah. They seem to be standing up so far. Yep, we've had some we've had some minor issues with them with dots that it gets stuck up or dots to get stuck down. But we'll see how all of that gets resolved ahead. I had to send my first units back for repair just yesterday as a matter of fact, But I mean, real devices, especially electronic Braille devices, I mean, they, they there's a lot to go wrong with them. Like you know, somebody sort of outside the industry may listen to this and go wow, like these things seem to malfunction quite a bit. But it's it's mainly because they're complicated. devices, right? Yeah, I mean, if you look at a, you know, your typical eight dot Braille cell has eight moving components to it as a bare minimum, and, you know, like an orbit 20. That's, that's 160 moving elements that all have to be perfect, right? If one of them isn't perfect, suddenly you've got a dot that isn't going up or isn't coming down. You know, it's, it's a problem.

Ryan Fleury 10:36

Yeah, that's right. So no eating or drinking over your braille display.

Rob Mineault 10:39

Never eat or drink. Don't eat lunch and read on your Braille display. Right. Mayonnaise is not their friend. Yeah, well, okay. On that note. Hey, Ryan.

R Ryan Fleury 10:55 Yes, Rob.

R Rob Mineault 10:56
What are we doing today?

Ryan Fleury 10:58

Today we are speaking with returning friend of the show, Kelly Goto. From Goto Media and Goto Research.

Rob Mineault 11:08

Last time we talked her -- I think you I think you were that week when we talked to her last. Is that right? Do you remember?

Steve Barclay 11:14
Yeah, I wasn't, I wasn't there.

Ryan Fleury 11:15

He wasn't here. I listened to the show. There was no Steve.

R Rob Mineault 11:18

Yeah, wow look at my memory.

Rob Mineault 11:47

Ryan Fleury 11:20

Wow. So yeah, it'd be good to have her back on and talk about, you know, what's been happening over there for the

last couple of years? Because it was 2019 when she was last on the show. Lots has changed.

Yeah, for sure. Well, I know that the last time you know, we talked a little bit about about what they do over there at goto media. And they're mainly you actually know exactly what they do, right?

Ryan Fleury 11:59

No, we're gonna ask her to refresh us again, because we're all about user experience. So they were doing in car entertainment systems, you know, they've worked with Walmart's and Netflix. And so it's a lot about user experience. Yeah. And how I guess that relates to products.

R Rob Mineault 12:19
Yeah, it's very high level stuff.

R Ryan Fleury 12:20
It is.

Rob Mineault 12:21

That's beyond us dumb asses. But absolutely. So yeah, this is gonna be exciting.

Ryan Fleury 12:29

Joining us now is Kelly Goto. Alright, so Kelly, welcome back to at banter. Of course. I am Ryan. And joining me, as usual, are Rob Mineault

- R Rob Mineault 12:39 Oh, hello.
- Ryan Fleury 12:41

And for the first time, his debut episode with you, Mr. Steve Barclay.

- Steve Barclay 12:46
 I'm so honored to be here.
- R Rob Mineault 12:48
 Thanks for joining us.
- K Kelly Goto 12:50

Thank you. Thank you. I'm so happy to be here. I'm glad we could schedule this.

Rob Mineault 12:54

Why don't we just for, just to put things in context. And just to remind anybody, letting any listeners know, that maybe missed the the episode that you were on last .. Give us a little bit of rundown of who you are, and and what you guys do over there at Goto Media?

Kelly Goto 13:10

Yeah, well, I have two companies. So that's why it's confusing. And one is going to media go to media focuses on digital products, web products, digital interfaces, applications and design. And we do lots and lots and lots of data across enterprise. Actually just designed a car, an autonomous car interface, we do lots of different things. And then on the go to research side, which is where I kind of met you guys, I focus a lot on what's the future? And where are we going? And how do we use design thinking and inclusive design practices and co creation to design a better future?

And so with that world, the go to research world is where I really dive into, you know, the older adult market, and what's happening with accessibility? And where do products and services want to go with voice and things like that? So that is probably where it's very confusing is to figure out what I do.

Rob Mineault 14:07

Well, I mean, it's slightly, but the work that you're doing is incredibly important. And, and I know we're gonna have a great conversation today about digital accessibility and a little bit about the state of digital accessibility. But I'm also really curious to hear what what your progress has been in the last few years on that as well, since you kind of have these boots on the ground, and you're sort of on the front line of making some of these changes, for sure. And plus, I really am really curious about the autonomous car interface, so we'll have to make sure we talk about that later, too.

K Kelly Goto 14:43

Okay, that sounds good. And also, you know, just for context, this is the 20th year anniversary of goto media. It launched I wrote a book, way back when and it actually came out launch date was September 11 2001. Really bad day to have a party. And we were reliving that over the weekend. And yeah, it's been it's been 20 years since my company began. And so that's been a long road as well.

Steve Barclay 15:11

Well, congratulations. Happy anniversary.

Rob Mineault 15:14

Yeah.

Kelly Goto 15:15

Thank you. So, yeah, so ask away. I don't know how what I'm doing fits into the context. But I certainly have been doing a lot of thinking about it. And then we live in the real world, which is trying to make experiences work, which is not always an easy task. So yeah, I'd love to just dive into it.

Ryan Fleury 15:32

So back in 2019, Kelly, you had mentioned that you had been working on in car systems. And a lot of what you talked about was regarding user experience with the pandemic over the last two years, have you noticed any more conversations about user experience, including accessibility, or inclusivity, because everybody's had to pivot?

K Kelly Goto 16:00

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. It's been interesting that a lot has happened. Actually, since 2019, at least, from the consumer point of view, I think a lot of car companies are experienced spear mentioned more and more, I see the lifecycle of what's happening within car systems going much faster for the smaller, more nimble companies, as as you know, like

Tesla, and some of the newer, autonomous cars that are coming out. They have the ability to design in house, so they have a lot of speed and agility that helps them progress, I guess, faster. But I won't pretend to know everything about the, you know, the automobile world. But I just know about the projects that we've worked on. And I think that when we have the ability to go in and look at systems, and so in this case, I can talk about it on a vague level that it was for a well known car company out of Japan, it was a demo for a prototype of a car that was being released originally for the 2020 Olympics, which ended up of course, eking into the 2020 Olympics, 2021 Olympics. And what we were building was kind of a concierge experience for someone riding in the back of a car. So a passenger, who would be ported here there, and what would they want to see? What would they want to know? What would they want to understand. And I will tell you that dealing with kind of this iterative process that we had of designing components of the experience, looking at the 3d aspects of the experience, porting it into their system, which was a real car, I mean, it really did work, it's just not out for public consumption. It was interesting that it had to be high contrast, that the letters and the words needed to be easily seen and scanned. Because even though we are designing a backseat experience, and there was some front seat experience as well, that came into the picture, we had to make sure that it was super easy to use, easy to view, easy to understand, easy to get back if you needed to, to another state. And so a lot of the same principles applied to 1101 accessibility. Let's make it high contrast, let's use fonts that aren't overly complex. And so as much as we wanted to design something that was super amazingly cool, we still had to go back and create really simple icons, and keep it as just only what's on the screen is things that we need to see. So yeah, I think it was an interesting lesson because we wanted to go out of the box, but we ended up staying kind of in the box. And voice has a small component. We didn't design the B voice system. But there's a lot going on with voice and in car systems right now. So yeah, it just keeps going and going. And I love being a part of it.

Ryan Fleury 19:02

Yeah, I think one of the things people might not think about and maybe I'm wrong in thinking this myself, but can we not have a very pretty fancy cool experience and have it still be accessible?

Kelly Goto 19:17

I want to believe that simplicity is beautiful in all areas. There was a really gorgeous interface that I remember with the I think it was the Oh gosh, which was the leaf, do you remember was it Nissan LEAF, Nissan LEAF, and there was this concept of helping to promote you know, the the economic savings and how much we're giving back to the environment. And so this was shown at least in a prototype that I had seen of a leaf growing a vine growing, and the more you saved gas and the more you utilized, you know, good energy, good, clean energy. The bigger the leaf would grow. And it was really such a beautiful metaphor of how your driving can actually help the environment. So I think there are beautiful ways for us to visualize how the consumption world fits into environment. And I know that's not the topic of what we're talking about today. But I do think that there's opportunity to create little, you know, beautiful metaphors, and, of course, an accessible way that translates into sales and the way the car responds, and systems that are in place that are elegant and elegant can equal beauty, as well.

Ryan Fleury 20:43

Yeah. So just to go back just for a minute, have you had more conversations with organizations, whether it's go to media or with go within go to research, about inclusivity or accessibility? Is that more of a dialogue now than it was a couple of years ago?

Kelly Goto 20:59

Absolutely. So I think the awareness is growing, I think the lawsuits have not hurt. Since 2017, I think that the increased VB by 30%, or something, I think we've we've all become aware that privacy is a is a bigger issue as well. So I think there's a lot of awareness around things that corporations especially need to take responsibility for. You know, especially as they design and, and put out new systems. So those systems, obviously, we can talk about the web, and the web feels boring, but the web still is in front of us every day, we can talk about content creation, and the importance that the web content, accessibility, how much all the changes that have been made in the last few years have played in, I think that designers are increasingly more aware, and corporations are hiring more accessibility, oversight, and programs. And they're implementing those programs every day. And I will say we have one big client VMware, and VMware has a really amazing advocate for accessibility, Sherry, burn, haber. And she writes and blogs, and she's very well known in the accessibility world. But one of the things that she stresses is there's a lot of acquisitions. And so you might have a corporation that's doing it right. And they are aware, and they have standards in place. And they're putting it across the organization and every touchpoint. And they're making sure that the current standards are, you know, that they're testing for it, and they have a plan in place, but then they acquire another company. And that company comes in, without any of that oversight. So there's a lot going on, that we see in a lot of these acquisitions and roll ups where companies need to be retrained both at the, you know, kind of corporate level the business level as to why this is important and why they need to invest in and then on the hands on level, there's always the coding and the design, and everyone needs to consistently be retrained and made to be aware of why this is important.

- Ryan Fleury 23:20
 - So it sounds like there might be some hope for mankind.
- K Kelly Goto 23:28

 At least the budgets are there.
- R Ryan Fleury 23:31
 Excellent.
- Rob Mineault 23:33

 You were here for the June heatwave, right? No, I'm just kidding.
- K Kelly Goto 23:40

Um, well, that's when I had my air conditioning installed. I actually had this decentralized air installed in my house. I had planned it for weeks, I mean, months, sorry, had it scheduled. And the guys put it in in this one weekend and kicked out our old furnace and everything. And the air was blowing, and it felt so great. And they said, Good timing, because it's gonna be really hot next week, I said, Oh, okay. And I had no idea that our timing had been perfect. So our house was one of the cooler houses in the area, I had a friend come over that needed to stay cool for her medical needs. And so she stayed in the basement and I loaned out an air conditioner, an extra air conditioner that I had two family that had an older, you know, upper 80s people living in a very small space. And so it all worked out. where both of you located Kelly? Oh, good question. I am in Seattle, and I so I, you know, I'm I used to pop up and up

and down up to Vancouver all the time. And I actually live on an island called Mercer Island, in in a lake in the middle of you know, there's Seattle over there. And then there's Bellevue over there, Seattle. You know, a view just right across the lake and then and then Bellevue just literally five minutes away, so I'm kind of smack in the middle of Amazon of Microsoft

R Rob Mineault 25:07

Hopefully I never hear the words heat dome ever again in my life as well. You know, it's it's really interesting to when when Ryan pitched the episode, and he said, you know, Kelly wants to come back on and she wants to talk a little bit about the state of accessibility and sort of how it's how it's changed over the past few years, I had to really sort of sit and, and think about it. And I really feel like, in ways from our perspective, anyways, not a heck of a lot has changed, not a lot has really gotten too much better, at least from our perspective from the outside. And listening to your talk, it's, it's interesting, because I feel like there are a variety of different perspectives that were whereas, you know, the news is actually pretty good. And it sounds like from the inside, there are changes happening, it's just that from the outside, it may, it may feel like those changes are slow. And I guess that, that that's just sort of the nature of the beast, because we kind of have to make these these changes from within. It's and it's a whole mindset that needs to change in terms of development processes. And, and I really do feel like even something like Inc, more companies being on board with inclusive hiring practices, I think is a really big deal. Because what happens there is when you have employees that have that lived experience with disability, that is going to spill into the into the workplace environment, and hopefully spill into a development process or a product pitch or whatever, whatever. It's whatever is happening. Is that kind of is that kind of how you're seeing it?

Kelly Goto 26:58

Well, you know, I had a friend, another Kelly, Kelly Pedro, and she was doing that article for a site space. And she asked me, she contacted me and said, Hey, what's the state of digital accessibility? I said, Well, gosh, I actually, I agree, there hasn't been these huge shifts in what we experienced on a regular basis. There are other ones I will talk about that in a second. But then I had her talk to you. And I actually, I mean, I think people are always looking both, I guess you just set it outside and inside views or corporate and customer views as to how things are changing. So what are we feeling? So from my perspective, I do see that corporations are taking more responsibility, I do see the accessibility conversations becoming more front and center. But I think that there is a big disconnect between what people are doing every single day to make the products better, versus the corporate chatter. And let's put something out and use it as a case study. I want to believe and I'm not a gamer, and I'm not. How do I say this? I don't necessarily design for gaming, but I do appreciate all the work that these companies have done with controllers and and how they're how they're working to create more accessible systems. And I love that. So some of the research, I guess I'll talk about the research that we've done. We have recently been doing research into 12 countries, looking at deaf people, and what we were trying to understand his gestures. And we were trying to understand how some gestures could work across cross culturally without offending anyone. How do we how do we create gestures? So gestures is really an interesting thing that I have tangentially explored since 2010. We did this study on gestures in in 18 countries. And we're constantly looking at cross cultural implications. So I went ahead and recruited 12 countries, I found deaf people in each country, I was trying to find out if we could find people in the US that were from that country, if that would work. But no, they wanted to actually go to the countries. And then I wondered about translation. So I actually was trying to pair recruit someone that could speak and speak in both languages and translate using ASL or ESL. And it ended up being that we could just recruit one person from each country who was fully deaf, that could speak English and we just interacted by texting on zoom for every single part of the study. So it worked out really well. And, and and it was just interesting to think about Why that was important to the company we did it for and there was a lot of cross cultural implications. I'll stop there. But there's other studies that we've been doing and work that we've been doing in the assistive tech space. But I'll stop for a second.

R Rob Minegult 30:18

Yeah, well, you know, interestingly enough, I think that that Ryan really hit the \$64 million question, and so goldstar to Ryan, because I think that he's kind of distilled everything down to that, that single question of, can you make something that is that feels shiny and new and really spiffy for able bodied users, while at the same time making that completely accessible? You know, and so, and I feel like, that's really that's the code to crack. That's where like, to be able to balance those two things. Because So, you know, I feel like a lot of developers feel like, well, if I have to make this accessible, well, my hands are tied, like I I'm not able to have free rein, I can't make this in a way that is going to really feel special and shiny.

R Ryan Fleury 31:18

Maybe we need to take a simpler approach to it, you know, yeah, pie in the sky would be great. But can I have a washer and dryer that with an LCD screen that I can actually use? So I can independently wash my clothes? Can I have a microwave that doesn't have a touchscreen? Or if it does, has speech output? You know, can I have a test Smart TV that has speech output, Home Home Theater receivers, you know, the list goes on and on and on and on, of things we use every day that are not accessible. So fancy and accessible would be great. But functionality, you know, give me that first.

Kelly Goto 31:56

I agree. I mean, getting down to usability one on one, when I started it was 20 years ago, we were really focused just on the basics, let's get into and it was, you know, human computing human factors. And he, you know, all this stuff happening with HCI, it was just about making things usable at a base level. And these are systems from a developer point of view. So we're in some ways, still at that level when it comes to products and services. And we have done a lot of work in this is through the research side. So I will say that a lot of the research that we do working with car companies, and TV manufacturers, and you know, different products that you guys have heard of, I mean, we are trying to address accessibility from the get go. But there's so many factors, including trying to be the latest and the fanciest that cause complications, I think voice is the one area that can serve a universal purpose and still be cool. I think that voice is still in its infancy. And that there's big differences between what conversational design is now and what it can be. And at a base level, it can be another form of alternate input and alternate functionality. But voice is still considered part of the new wave of user centered design. And I think the reason why at least a lot of companies are are thinking about that. I mean, it, it's cool. And it's important, because it covers everyone, including older adults, which I've focused a lot on is the the crossover into what's happening with the older adults in this world. But I mean, I think that the crux of what we're trying to talk about is what is happening, and why is it happening faster. And on both sides of the table. It's not like I'm able to solve that problem. I mean, I do find that, you know, in the old world, you get a car, and you still have to twice a year, change the time on the car. And it's really, really hard to do that. And sometimes you have to look at a video. So that you get why why is that? I mean, how much are you spending on this thing? And why can't it change time automatically when the timezone changes? So I don't understand that. And I still don't understand that. And, and we've been, you know, kind of dealing with that. So I mean, this could be a big complaint session, but I mean, I I don't know.

R Ryan Fleury 34:32

No, I don't care. Yeah, and I could complain until the day I die. Because we're not ever going to get to the point of full accessibility everywhere in any in everything. I think that's reality. But, you know, especially in the blindness community, we just want access to the same things our sighted peers have access to, whether that's doing our

laundry, cooking a meal, you know, I don't really care about autonomous cars. That's fine and dandy, but You know, the things I need to get through a day are important. Yeah, absolutely.

Rob Mineault 35:05

Yeah. And it's, it's really interesting. Because, you know, you can sort of pull up a few different historical examples. I mean, smartphones are a great example. You know, when smartphones first came out there were completely inaccessible. Like, this was just there was no, there was no using that at all, for somebody who is a blind or partially sighted, and it took a few years, but Apple sort of came out, and they built this, this great accessibility into it. And here we are, now fast forward. And it's probably one of the most powerful little pieces of 80, that's also a mainstream device. And it's actually something you could point to that and go, this is really super shiny and super attractive to people who are bodied. But it's also incredibly useful for somebody who with a disability. And that's because of what Apple has done. So we can we know that it's possible to do both. And but you know, Ryan's Ryan's example about these appliances is sort of a great example, on the other side, where you have manufacturers that went, well, this is great, we can make these stoves and we can make like a nice LCD panel, and it can look really sleek and shiny, and it can do all this cool stuff. But they didn't stop and go, Okay, wait a minute, how does somebody who's blind turn on their stove? Or know how hot their stove is? Like there's, there's these weird disconnects all over the place. But you know, at the same time, there are companies and corporations that that have done really well. So it's just it's, it's a little bit of a balancing act.

K Kelly Goto 36:47

Yeah, absolutely. I mean, Apple, I mean, I just, I don't know how we can have a conversation, you know, just in podcasts or in lectures, Apple just keeps getting called out is, you know, the best ever, in always. And so I was always, you know, looking, I mean, just even the upgrades that they've done in the last round of, of products and voiceover and just the accessibility features keep going higher and higher and higher up on the phone. And I mean, I know that it's been the tool that's really changed things Android, you know, has adjusted and come quickly after. But Apple had a centralized goal, I think, starting from the ground up, and yeah, Steve was part of that way back in the day. And they really concentrated from day one on making their devices as accessible as possible from from the get go. So it really does come from the DNA of the company. And I think, and I and I don't have ties to these companies. But if you take LG, or you know, I have worked with Samsung in the past, I mean, they are large, mega corporations that definitely have accessibility, now, you know, that they're working on, but it takes a while for it to really infuse itself into the entire culture in the DNA of the company. So it does take time. But that's why what you guys are doing is so important. Because there needs to be more awareness as to good design, and why it's an important to think about all aspects of user experience. And it's only going to serve everyone and grow your audience and make things you know, better and easier to use. And so it starts with that corporate mindset. They have to believe in it. They have to instill their designers and their business decision makers with the tools to make it happen.

R Ryan Fleury 38:51 Or get sued.

Kelly Goto 38:54

Yeah, that's getting threads to work. That's Yeah, that does work. It does work. It's awesome. I'm trying to think of, you know, other examples. I mean, if I think about access alone, I mean, for me, someone asked me what, what's going on with healthcare, and I said, you know, right now we have the worst access. In the EU in the US, we have the

lowest speeds and the worst access, especially because people are moving out of big cities into rural areas. We have a growing aging population, as you guys know. And the three states with the largest per capita population, I think it's like one in five people in in the states that are over 65 there. Let me see if I get this right, Maine, West Virginia and Virginia, West Virginia and Vermont, I think have one out of five people are 65 and older. I think there's stats to that say one out of four people in the US just on average have some kind of disease. ability, right? So there's a lot of people that need to be considered. And those three states have the lowest broadband access. So we talk about digital, because we're talking about digital accessibility, being reliant on having good internet systems to create smart homes. And, you know, just to access content, you know, talk about we talked about Netflix last time, you know, and, and it's not happening. So access, in itself is a huge issue that needs to be solved. And, you know, I talk about that a lot, because there's a huge break in the digital divide, that's even getting bigger during COVID. And now companies are starting to pay attention. So maybe that's the only upside to this digital divide that's happening, which is kind of this crisis that's happening is that companies are starting to pay attention. And at least making some effort to overcome some of the connectivity issues.

Ryan Fleury 41:02

We mentioned that, you know, in the last 18 months as well, you know, COVID has really, I think, open people's eyes to what is possible, whether it's virtual meetings, virtual conferences, hybrid systems, working from home remote learning, it's definitely showing people what's possible. And none of this would have changed, I don't think if the pandemic didn't happen.

K Kelly Goto 41:24

Yeah, yep. Yep. And also working from home now, I think it's actually serves a big piece of some of the issues that at least friends of mine who are blind and looking for work, they can work from home a little bit easier. And I know a friend of mine is looking for work and having access to simple tools. I mean, like, what indeed, or jobs.com, or monster used to be monster, you know, just making sure that those websites are accessible for people that are job hunting, and things like that, that's going to continue to be important. So, you know, the web is might be boring for some people, but dealing with access to content and continuing to build that into the, I guess the teachings from school, all the way to working at a company and making sure that that checklist is there, I think that we are making progress, believe it or not, because more and more people that I know, and it's not just because I'm I deeply care about the space, but I do believe that it's happening everywhere. And a lot of it was led by Microsoft, Holmes really, really brought this idea of inclusive design into the mainstream. And it takes that level of evangelism. And and it has to kind of feel cool, like, yeah, we're getting on the bandwagon for inclusive design. And what does that mean? I don't know. But we got to be part of it, we got to learn more, and so that evangelism really helps kind of spread the word.

Rob Mineault 42:59

Yeah. And, you know, we've often is, like, like Ryan was saying, like, we have said, on the podcast that, you know, one of the silver linings with COVID has, it has really been driving home, more so than ever, the importance of digital accessibility, you know, when you have organizations and you have even, you know, municipalities and government agencies that move to a strictly online format, well, that format, ie accessible, or, or our area, or else, you know, you're cutting people out of essential services. And we have examples here in Canada, even of things that are just happening recently of releasing apps and things that aren't accessible. A good example is we have a, an app that was released by the Border Services called ArriveCan that you have to go through in order to travel internationally. And when they release that app, it was it was inaccessible. People were who were using screen readers couldn't actually use it. I'm not sure if they fixed that now. But that's a that's a really, really big deal, especially when that is your only avenue to to do something as essential as travel like get home. So I mean, it's those are the things that

that we sort of come across in doing the show that that really make us frustrated and make us feel like oh, we're not getting anywhere like we're you know, we're here we are preaching the preaching the gospel, but who's listening if the government's not even listening, then what what hope do we have with things like corporations, but I think at the same time, like I really do agree that you know, companies like Microsoft, like Apple, like Google, they're really they're really really really doing some really great work in the in the space and and really helping trickle this this philosophy down.

K Kelly Goto 45:02

Well, I mean, it has to it's going to take a generation of designers. And so I was interviewing, will talking. I mean, we had a few different conversations with Jeffrey Zeldman. And he ran the original last project, the web standards project way back in late 99 1999, or whatever, into 2000. And they pushed and pushed and pushed. And they are a group of just devoted people that were that were really wanting to make sure that all the browser's were consistent. And it was this idea that content could be published once. Right? And so they did, they did a lot, I mean, but they did a lot there was there was browser wars, and they actually got, you know, at the time, Microsoft, and I don't know, the whole story. But these are, you know, really huge efforts. And they, they were just talking about how the band needs to come back, you need to bring the band back together, because I think it gets down to standards. And standards need to be re applied in this new era where there are gestures, and there's voice and there's touch. And there's a lot of different input methods now, that need to, again, align with this idea of standards. And it's sometimes weird to think of, you know, when you think about an accessibility expert coming in, like a friend of mine, Derek Featherstone has been kind of dealing with this for 20 years, and really good friend of mine, you laughed, I actually want to know why. Okay, tell me why you're laughing. Because it's sad that we don't have those kinds of standards that are in place to make this world more accessible. But there's a lot of effort from the ground up to make these things happen.

Ryan Fleury 46:46

No. Rob, and I recently Rob sent me a form to test out for accessibility with a screen reader. Now, I used Firefox, I used Microsoft Edge, and I use Google Chrome. I use jaws for Windows, and I used NVDA, the free screen reader. And in each instance, not one tool, read the website properly. My best results are I think, with what Rob NVDA and Firefox are jaws and Firefox, but Firefox rendered the page better than edge or chrome. And there were just it was a mess. And I if I didn't have the multiple tools in my toolbox, I wouldn't have been able to accomplish what I needed to do. So the browser wars are still on.

Rob Mineault 47:32

Yeah, I mean, I guess, you know, yeah. In all fairness, I mean, it is they're, you know, they're they're different browsers, so they're built differently. They're developed by different people. And so there's gonna be all these variables. And I guess that's the real challenge, right? In terms of like, the browser wars and trying to keep up you've got, you've got different people using different solutions, you know, different screen readers. And then you've also got different browsers. And so and everything is different. So to, it's probably an impossible task, to get all of those things working in the same way and getting the same result.

Ryan Fleury 48:12

But is it if the code is if the if the standards are in place for the HTML code or the CSS code, because those screen readers should be rendering? Whatever the code is serving up to them? Right, despite what browser it is, you're using that code, right? The code on the website isn't changing. Depending on the browser I'm using or the screen reader.

Kelly Goto 48:36

Yeah, no, I mean, I think I actually think I mean, I don't I don't know, because this is where I am not the expert, and I talk to people, but I love hearing your hellish experience. Because this is a simple form. I don't know, all I know is that there's all these, you know, Squarespace and templates, and Wix and everything, and my team will will not use those. And and I get it. And I think some of you know the, the templates allow people to get up quick sites up quickly. And, and some of the code is clean, but we have moved to webflow because the code is cleaner. And I don't know if that's something that you would agree with or not. But if we're building quick sites, and using templates and things like that, we have kind of moved to this other tool called web flow. And the reason is the code is cleaner. And my designers who are also coders can deal with it. And they feel like clean code is the most important thing that we can do. And of course, you know, that translates into small sites, but how does it work on a corporate level? And how are all the pages displaying so I think that it's actually a really important topic that we continue to think about because creating content, whether it's for a screen reader, or it's for one mobile device versus another versus a tab I mean, you don't want to have to code every single page separately. And we don't want to live in that world. We want to live in a responsive world and be responsible. And so yeah, I think we need to continue to push forward this idea of creating content once and publishing it everywhere. And then that way, it will read cleanly on screen readers. So, you know, how do I make that happen? How do I push for that? How do I talk to my colleagues, and continue to make sure that that's front and center with people as they develop websites, and then we move into products, products in a slightly different game?

Ryan Fleury 50:35

You know, and I think that's, you know, part of the issue is, we have to currently have multiple tools in our toolbox. And I'm just talking blindness, I don't know what it's like for magnification or, you know, switch access any of the other alternative methods for access. But, you know, if, if somebody is serving me a web page, I can look at it with Chrome and go, Well, this is sort of functional. But then if I go and bring up Firefox and say, Wow, this is fully accessible, like how do I know as a user, I shouldn't have to do the homework to pick a browser that's going to render a web page in such a way that I can use it. Right? So right? That's right. And that's the frustrating part is you just don't know, you can't expect an end user to have three browsers, three screen readers, and pick and choose, which is going to be the one that's most efficient.

R Rob Mineault 51:25

Yeah. And then you you have even more variables to be because then because everything like nobody hand codes anymore, nobody. Well, I shouldn't say nobody, because I'm sure maybe there are a few people majority don't only have like Linux on their machine, and they still write by hand. But if for the most part everybody's using like content management systems, you know, they everybody's using a backhand, everybody's like using website builders, and all those builders build that code differently. And so you've got that variable, plus you've got the different browsers, they've got that variable, and you've got the screen reader variable. So there's so many variables, bouncing around that. Yeah, I see your point, Ryan, like, I think I guess that, you know, having that one, one standard way of producing HTML code is, is just what kind of needs to happen.

Ryan Fleury 52:20

Unfortunately, that is there are web standards in place. There are standards, and they're just not being followed by

K Kelly Goto 52:28

That's right. And I think that ADA and all the, you know, I guess the laws actually, that have been put into place. I mean, it's so sad. But really, the threat of being sued is for noncompliance is one of the only ways to use scare tactics to get corporations to really comply. And for smaller organizations, they're doing their best using screen readers, I mean, tools like, you know, just browser tools to check and see if they're as compliant as they can be. But they're, they're just art. There isn't budget on a regular basis, to go past the initial display. So there's content creation, and then there's the initial display. And that could be you know, a product or a website, or an app. It just needs to take that iterative next step. And I think that's really maybe a piece that we can continue to push on with our clients, because we are building these experiences, and we are working with them and kind of identify where their budget needs to go and what needs to happen internally. And well, we say that we need to keep working on this inner iterative way, I think looking at accessibility needs to be just a standard piece of the entire development and design process. And it just needs to be embedded into corporate culture, and part of the budget and part of the timeline for testing. So I mean, it just needs to continue. And again, I mean, I know it seems depressing to talk about because you don't see the changes happening, but the work that you guys are doing, and the conversations that we have that guilt corporations into doing more, I mean, we got to use guilt, you know, got to do it. And so I think I think it will continue to improve. And, I mean, we have seen improvements, but it's just not apparent in a lot of the really day to day things and services and products that we're using. And so it's it seems a little bit daunting, for sure.

R Rob Mineault 54:29

Yeah, I was thinking about that, too, when, you know, before the show, and thinking about well, you know, here we are, we can we can tell you all the problems, but you know, what's the solution? And, you know, there is a big move right now being like, you know what, the carrots not working. So let's bring out the stick. And so this talk of lawsuits and, and actually legislating these changes. I mean, unfortunately, it is unfortunate, because you want to give people the benefit of the doubt and give corporations the benefit of the doubt that they're going to try to do the right thing. But, you know, maybe it is maybe we just we do need to just legislate more and to make people move into compliance, as opposed to just waiting for them to decide that there's a business case for it, or that is the right thing to do

Ryan Fleury 55:20

Well, we've also talked about in the past to that, you know, especially when it comes to web design, you know, if you're going to school to learn how to be a programmer, coder, whatever. Is there a touch on accessibility and accessible code? You know, I don't know, there might be a small module a 15 minute talk, I don't know. But that needs to be more of the education as well. And then people coming out will at least have an understanding of what it is.

Kelly Goto 55:46

Yeah, I think that I heard something, I can't remember what it was. But they were talking about education and accessibility. And they said, it's touched on on a super high level, kind of like how I would talk about universal design and architecture, or inclusive design, if you're approaching a new product or service, I think accessibility goes deep into code almost immediately. And I know that code isn't hand coded anymore. But for some reason, accessibility goes down a level to actually doing it and making it happen. And it's very, very specific. And there's not that higher level discussion about or sorry, there is the discussion there. But there's not a deep training into accessibility on the

on the school level. And so they get into a corporation, and you're, you're hitting the ground dealing with fires in the fires are, get it up, get content written, update the page, get the page out, and then you breathe for a minute. And then there's the other fire that has to be put out. So the thing that happens is, it's just continues. It's like exercise, we know, it's important. And we know we should be doing it. But all these other things kind of come into play, why we don't do it. And so only when you get hit with like a chronic disease, or you're being told that, you know, Oh, my gosh, if I don't exercise for 10 minutes a day, I'm gonna have a cognitive decline in 10 years, then you're like, Okay, it's really important now. So I think that, yeah, it's just, it's just about helping to make it a priority internally. And some companies are hiring in and they're getting groups together. And these groups are focused on accessibility, specifically, but it's really only happening at that really big corporate level. So it's, it's sad, but true. Some companies don't have the bandwidth or budget. So yeah.

R Ryan Fleury 57:41

And that's unfortunate that they don't have the budget, but then they get sued. And it cost them more in the long run. And a year from now, they're accessible now. So, you know, they don't have the budget yet. Somebody files a lawsuit and they, they are mandated to become accessible. They find a way.

Kelly Goto 57:58

Yeah, yep. Yep. So how can we make that happen? Before the lawsuits? I mean, was Was there one for subway? I mean, what was it? You know, people like I need my food right now. Yeah, yeah. So there's, there's a lot of stuff going on. So yeah, I don't want to be a bummer.

Ryan Fleury 58:16

You're on the inside. And, you know, it gives me a little bit of hope to know that you are hearing more discussions about accessibility inclusivity, you know?

K Kelly Goto 58:31

Absolutely. Absolutely. And, and I think it's becoming, obviously a little bit more mainstream with all of the, you know, I'm Asian, and so there's Asian awareness. Yay. And there's so much happening with rights right now, you know, just digital rights. And it's a cross. I guess. I mean, it's age is a piece of that. Race. equity is a big word. And so I think one thing that has happened in the last two years is that these concepts of digital rights and digital equity, and conversations about bandwidth and especially with kids being out of school, wow. I do think this is now something that more people are aware and aware of, and companies are being forced to do something about. I have a cousin who was a high school teacher, and she spent her own money and raised her own money to buy laptops to deliver it to students that didn't have them. Because schools were not doing enough. They could not work fast enough. She saw her students suffering. I mean, it has the teachers and what they've gone through in the last year and a half is just so incredible. And we talk about being on the front lines. So you know, kids that are at McDonald's. I mean, I have a friend who I want to do more for but he is a teacher. And he is living out of his car right now in LA. And there's places he could go. So he's choosing to do this. But he drives to McDonald's and uses their Wi Fi, and teaches from his car. And in the 110 degree weather, he was trying to be under a tree to stay cool. And his phone during our, during our call overheated, because it was so hot, and he can't turn on the air conditioning because it'll be too loud. And I'm just watching this happen. And thinking this is not the only person that is being affected by lack of access to high speed internet during COVID. And it's I don't want to over talk about COVID because God knows we've had these discussions, but all the all the people that used to go to libraries, and, you know, access, banned high bandwidth

internet, you know, I mean, people don't pay for it at home, and a lot of the work that we did originally, you know, just to think about access has to do with health care access, and we did do a lot of work with low income homes, and they had one access point, you know what that was, it was the teenager that had a smartphone that paid for their plan. And when they would come home from work or from school from their three shift jobs, they would turn on this hotspot. And that was when everyone could access the Internet, and do whatever they had to do in between their three shifts. And so, you know, we don't understand often the problems of of just pure access or having and that digital divide. But it is now something that people are aware of, and I think, and I hope that more is being done to cross that. So I think there is hope there. I mean, it's it's hard. It's called a connectivity crisis. But seeing the pictures of the kids on the streets trying to get high internet, high access, high bandwidth access, during, you know, trying to attend school. God that broke my heart. Just amazing.

R Rob Mineault 1:02:06

Yeah, and it's so interesting, too, because, you know, I feel like five years ago, that was a punchline of a joke, right? Where it's just like, Oh, yeah, they want to, you know, the internet is an essential service. Haha, like, What do you mean? Like, you know, you have to, you have to be able to surf the internet. Like, that's ridiculous. But it's true. Like, it's it because we've we've structured we've we've built this infrastructure into, like, essential services only being accessible through that, that line. And if you you don't have access, arrayed across the board of it, yeah, it's absolutely going to be a human rights problem.

K Kelly Goto 1:02:41

Yep. And I think Obama had a great quote, I can't remember it, right. But something about digital access is no longer a luxury. So yeah, it's, it's really, really hitting home. And, and I and I, and I think the changes are being made. I mean, I'm seeing grants running around and people are trying to get more money to do this than the other but one of the continuous discussions, at least around education and older adults, and low income families is crossing this digital divide. So so we can only hope that the infrastructure dollars that are being put into everything right now also, you know, we'll go into getting higher speed access wherever it needs to go. And, you know, these corporations, they get a lot of flack, but I will say the McDonald's of this world and the Starbucks, they are providing high speed access to people who need it. And, and it does serve a purpose. So you know, once people get back in person, and a lot of these things change and we that's where people are working from and, and we need to we need to make it a much better system. So there is some some benefit to junk food.

R Rob Mineault 1:03:56

Well, hey, listen, you bring out McDonald's, we just did a story last week that they have purchased the licenses for screen reading software that they'll be loading on to their other kiosks. So yeah, they're they're driving the football forward. steps.

Kelly Goto 1:04:14

Good for McDonald's. Yeah. And there's, I mean, I know that just in the in the Oh, gosh, what's it the fingerspelling world? I mean, obviously, Apple announced I can't gosh, I can't remember but I saw it. Where at least when you go into an apple store, you can call up someone in your language that can actually do translation. If you're deaf, and so I kind of thought some of those things are cool. I don't know if it's just a marketing thing. Yeah, no, I mean, sometimes sometimes if you have money and you have a lot of access to people at different, you know, physical places, then they can make this work. And I think the same goes to like Walgreens and Rite Aid and everything. Have you there?

They're continuing to have systems in place that they can kind of create and spread across. So, so yes, there could be hope, guys, I don't know. And I don't mean to sound so negative from, from a corporate perspective, but at least from what I'm seeing, there's at least there's movement happening.

Rob Mineault 1:05:21

Yeah, no, honestly, I can't I don't know about Steve and Ryan, but I feel a little bit better today, after talking to you actually, to be honest, like completely serious. It because it is nice to hear that, that those concepts are really beginning to take hold. And I think that it also gives us the perspective that, you know, these things do take time, it's not going to be an overnight fix. People aren't going to just shift their perspective overnight. So I think what what we've learned today is we're going to be doing this podcast probably until about 90, before we can finally be like, okay, everything's accessible. We can, we can go and play shuffleboard. Now, it doesn't matter, though.

- Steve Barclay 1:06:04
 Right? That still fits with our retirement plans.
- Rob Mineault 1:06:08
 That is true. Actually.
- R Ryan Fleury 1:06:09 That's the plan.
- Kelly Goto 1:06:13

 You guys are you guys are in Canada. So I think it's better than what we've got here.
- Rob Mineault 1:06:23

 Kelly, before we let you go, where can people find you on this thing that they were calling the web. And if people want to reach out, they're interested in what you guys are working on? Anything at all you want to plug?
- 1:06:38

Well, I have launched, kellygoto.com. And that that's an easy way to get ahold of me. And I actually looked at it on a wave visit. And it has this issue, so I'm going to fix them. But yeah, I built it, you know, using web flow and put that up there. So kellygoto.com is a good way to get ahold of me, and then my entities are Goto Media and Goto Research.com, and we just continue to fight the fight. And I continue to at least embed the thinking into every project that we have that we need to be accessible. So thanks you guys so much for giving me a forum to discuss.

R Rob Mineault 1:07:17

Absolutely. And listen, please come back and talk to us again.

Kelly Goto 1:07:21

Yeah, let's continue the conversation because it needs to improve and will continue to fight the fight.

R Rob Mineault 1:07:26

K Kelly Goto 1:07:28

Thank you.

R Rob Mineault 1:07:28

First, I gotta have lunch.

Kelly Goto 1:07:32

Okay, well, thanks, you guys. And thanks for your time. And it was great to chat. And please, let's continue the discussion on your PR sounds good. Okay, awesome. All right. Yep. Talk to you guys again. All right. Take care. Bye. Bye. Cheers.

R Rob Mineault 1:07:46

Oh, man. Well, you know what, that was really super cool to talk to her again. I'm really glad that that we that came through.

R Ryan Fleury 1:07:53

Yeah, I wasn't sure which direction that conversation was gonna go in, you know, we did have the topic of digital accessibility in mind. And we were kind of all over the place a little bit. But coming out of that conversation, I'm optimistic that you know, there is more awareness, the conversation is taking place.

Rob Mineault 1:08:11

So yeah, yeah, that's what I kind of got out of it too, is that the conversations are, are happening on that corporate level where I think that it has to and i think that you know, this idea of inclusion and diversity is really starting to trickle down and sort of starting to make some differences in in corporate outlooks, which is where I think that that

that needs to happen because if we really want digital accessibility to take hold that you know, it's it's gonna be the the larger corporations that that make that happen.

Ryan Fleury 1:08:43

Well, and you mentioned how connected you know, the world is now right, whether it's home appliances, smart TVs, your iPhone in your pocket, you know, we're connected 24 seven and so having access to all of the services and goods is so important to not just to not just those who can afford it but to everyone

R Rob Mineault 1:09:03

Well, that was Yeah, that was really interesting to the eye because I it's to be honest with you it's never not even really something that I considered and Kelly was so right about this idea of broadband and and how important that is and the fact that for people who don't have the means say, to be connected all the time to the internet that could really shut them out have some essential services and essential experiences you know, we take it for granted that you know, we're just always connected to the internet, but you know what, unplug your cable modem for a day and see what your life is like and and remember that, you know, not everybody is in the same boat. So that's you know, that's a really interesting whole other conversation a whole other podcast episode too. But yeah, I'm, I feel better. I'm thrilled that we had her on again, and I can't wait to have her on again because I feel like your time she's on we have an incredible conversation so, all right, well, you know what, this episode's going long my friend so let's, I think we should just get the hell out of here. What do you think?

- Ryan Fleury 1:10:09
 It sounds good to me
- R Rob Mineault 1:10:10

 All right, well in that case, where can people find us?
- R Ryan Fleury 1:10:14

 They can find us atbanter.com
- Rob Mineault 1:10:17

 Hey they can also drop us an email if they so desire at cowbell@atbanter.com
- Ryan Fleury 1:10:24

 and they can find us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

R Rob Mineault 1:10:29

You know, it's funny, I was just editing the limitless podcast earlier so I almost gave the limitless podcast or the email address. So that's funny, my brain. All right, well, hey, thanks, everybody for listening in. A big thanks to Kelly go to once again, and we will see everybody next week.