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SPEAKERS


Ryan Fleury, Rob Mineault, Richard Rieman, Steve Barclay


 **Rob Mineault** 00:09
Hey, and welcome to another episode of AT Banter.


 **Steve Barclay** 00:23
Banter, banter.


 **Rob Mineault** 00:26
This is of course the podcast where we talk with advocates and members of the disability community to educate and inspire better conversation about disability. Hey, my name is Rob Mineault. Oh, and joining me today, pulling off a perfect introduction we have Mr. Steve Barclay.


 **Steve Barclay** 00:44
Yes, yes, I do.


 **Rob Mineault** 00:47
And our cowbell player himself Mr. Ryan Fleury.


 **Ryan Fleury** 00:51
Yeah, it's still ringing in my ears. It was too close to my head.


 Steve Barclay 00:55
Well, long as you're not hitting it with your head you shouldn't be ok.


 Rob Mineault 00:59
I have to say that went off without a hitch.


 Ryan Fleury 01:01
Pretty solid hit.


 Rob Mineault 01:05
That's eight years of practice. That's right. Stay in school kids. You too could pull off a perfect podcast introduction. Hey, how are you guys today?

 Ryan Fleury 01:19
Good.

 Rob Mineault 01:22
Jim dandy. Yeah, yeah, it's a beautiful day here in Vancouver. Yep.

 Steve Barclay 01:27
The flowers are coming up. I'm just wondering, are we gonna get another one of those springs where the cold weather comes back and just murders everything?

 Rob Mineault 01:39
Right? Like the weather is so unpredictable now. Like it's just weird. Okay, well, I think we're ready to start the show.

 Ryan Fleury 01:47
Sure. Let's do it.

 Rob Mineault 01:50



ROB MINEAULT 01:50

Oh, yeah. Well, enough of that. Hey, Ryan? Yeah, Rob. Just what the heck are we doing today?



Ryan Fleury 01:59

Today we are speaking with author and narrator Richard Rieman, who is making illustrated children's books more accessible to all children. Welcome to AT Banter, Richard.



Richard Rieman 02:12

Thank you, Ryan. Great to be here. Hi, Steve. Hi, Rob.



Rob Mineault 02:17

Hello, hello. Yeah, thanks so much for joining us. So before we really dive into it, maybe you can just give the audience a little bit of background on yourself and a little bit of background on what you're doing.



Richard Rieman 02:29

Sure. I was a storyteller the moment I started to talk. And I was a writer, professional writer in second grade when I would write stories with my classmates' names in them, and charge them a nickel to read it. So I got comic book money. So I'm a storyteller for quite a while. Turn that into a career and radio news, actually in Chicago and New York and Washington DC in the RKO Radio Network. Anchoring news, covering news. I was at the hospital when John Lennon was pronounced dead in New York City and went off to the towers and was there with the crowds in front of his home and morning, so I got to cover some some interesting stories along the way. Then after 35 years of doing Radio News, basically, it got deregulated, which meant in the US that radio stations no longer had to carry news and public affairs. And within six months 90% of radio news jobs are gone. That's, that's what happened. And I said, okay, what else can I do? I'm used to telling stories in front of a microphone. Okay, I'll be an audiobook narrator, I can do that. I was an actor in high school, you know, and so why not combine those things. So I became an audiobook narrator and producer for many years, wrote the Authors Guide to Audio Book creation, interviewing some of the top narrators out there about to what authors should do and how they should do it. And then, you know, I was a volunteer for Learning Ally, and also a guide for blind skiers. So I got to be part of the Blind community that way. And they said, you know, there's this huge gap in in the audio book world, children's illustrated books in that, you know, little kids just don't have access to them unless they're in Braille. And not many children are learning Braille, not as many these days. So I said, well, what if we combine audio description have the pictures. Just like audio description is being used in movies, TV shows, live theater, and describe richly described all the pictures with a co narrator. And so began imagination video books first than imagination story books, because we were doing both audio and video. The Deaf community said, how about if we add if you do the pictures, and we add sign language interpretation, and captions? And then we said, okay, how about a downloadable Braille file to go also with the videos. So we've done all those things the past two and a half years, through Imagination Storybooks. And that's what got me to where I am now.

S**Steve Barclay 05:51**

you know, my experience with writers in the past. So when you say, got you where you are now, so you're, you're broke.

R**Richard Rieman 05:57**

Running a nonprofit is not very profitable thing. And actually, I, my nonprofit Imagination Storybooks, just merged January 1, into the Described and Captioned Media Program in the US, which is funded by the US Department of Education, and run by the National Association of the Deaf. So they're now in charge of our video channel. And basically, that has freed me up to do a for profit company, you know, wow. Like, being able to charge money for things. That's, that's Illustrated Audiobooks. So that's what I'm working on now.

R**Rob Mineault 06:45**

Well, you know, this is one of those ideas that it just it kind of boggles my mind a little bit that it's taken this long for someone to think of and someone to pull the trigger on. Because you're absolutely right, it this is a really huge gap. Because you know, if you think about the, the audiobooks sphere, you know that your audiobooks, in general, that's great, we can, we can create those as an option for people and adult books, it's, it's no big deal. But children's books that are always so illustratively rich and, and vibrant. And that's a lot of the appeal to to a lot of children's books, and to have no sort of accessibility built into that - that is really a huge gap. So I really love this work that you're doing.

R**Richard Rieman 07:34**

It's almost a different art form, because we have the freedom with audio description, to take our time, unlike, you know, the movies and TV shows and live performances where you have to put the description in between the dialogue and sometimes very quickly and, and, and succinctly. Well, we have the time to actually add to the story. And we make sure that it blends together with narrators with the story, and I know I have a few examples because it's easier to to show rather than tell of some clips of some of the illustrated audiobooks we've done. That's an example of what we are putting together - taking the rich illustrations and describing them. That was Tristan Snyder doing the audio description. Tristan is our Senior Producer and audio engineer and narrator and all around audio genius Pro Tools guy who's been blind since birth, and we try to employ as many blind low vision or other voice actors with other types of disabilities as we can.

R**Rob Mineault 10:04**

So just to get into the technical components of this, then so what you're really doing is you're taking the undescribed version of this would just literally be, you know, the narrator, like speaking the text and in the audiobook format. And then you add to that by adding this layer of image description, is that is that right?

R

Richard Rieman 10:31

Yes, we are telling the story with word pictures. So that goes with the text that's already in the books.

R

Rob Mineault 10:42

So even in that example, I mean, you can just you can just imagine, without that image description of just how much of a different experience that is. How do you choose which books you do this with? Is there a process? Do you pick certain types of books, do authors approach you guys? How does it kind of work?

R

Richard Rieman 11:04

You know, we're always on the lookout for books that feature children or differences, not necessarily disabilities, but just challenges. And because we like it when children or you know, a fox with cochlear implants, is the star of the story. So we pay attention, especially to those kinds of books. But once word got out we were doing this, authors started approaching us, especially on Facebook, forums, and things like that, wanting to get their books into accessible audio and video versions. So in the past couple of years, we've done almost 200 of these videos, they're about 10 to 15 minutes long, once you add the audio description. You know, in some cases, we've done stories that are just silly. They're not all the serious stuff. And in fact, we've gone back into the public domain. And in the past year, we did Winnie the Pooh, the accessible version. And I was the narrator for that one. Once upon a time, a long, long time ago, about last Friday, Winnie the Pooh was walking through the 100 Acre Wood. So we got a cast of voice actors from an international cast. We had some Canadian voice actors as well as US voice actors. And we did Winnie the Pooh and all the characters. And we put the audiobook accessible audiobook version on Audible and all the other audiobook websites. And it's still a best seller after a year, it's made 1000s of dollars in royalties for charity. So we're showing that there's an audience for audiobooks with audio description.

R

Rob Mineault 13:11

Yeah, the interesting thing about this is that this, this really benefits all kids. This really enhances any of the just audiobook versions. I mean, there's really no reason that publishers shouldn't be taking this model and building this out right at the at the, the audio narration level.

R

Richard Rieman 13:33

Absolutely. We are building a ramp to make audiobooks, children's illustrated books accessible to everyone. And that is the point we're trying to make is that, please don't limit your thinking to just this being for blind or low vision kids. Come on. This is for all children now can listen to

an audiobook in the car, over you know, whatever, Alexa device or whatever they have, however they listen to on their phones, they can now listen to illustrated books.

R

Rob Mineault 14:11

Exactly. And I think that maybe once once the publishers realized that or or this sort of creates a bit of a demand, hopefully, maybe we will see publishers go in that direction. Have you had conversation with with publishers? What kind of response are you sort of getting getting at that level?

R

Richard Rieman 14:32

Yes, I've had many conversations with the top audio book publishers. In fact, I'm a member of the DEI Committees for both the audio Publishers Association, and the Independent Book Publishers Association. So I'm trying to work from the inside. And overwhelmingly the reaction has been, it's wonderful that you are doing this, but we don't see the money in it. We don't think that there's enough money in short audiobooks because Audible subscribers probably won't use their monthly credit on a 15 minute book. We don't believe that this is going to be a profitable venture. So that's why I've set out to show them the wrong. We partnered with Dreamscape Select, part of the Dreamscape Studios. And, you know, they're taking our audio books and putting them up on on Audible on Libby, Overdrive, all the library sites, putting them on internationally on audiobook sites. So we are paving the way to show the publishers, hey, look, you can actually make money doing this?

R

Rob Mineault 15:49

That actually surprises me, because that seems really short sighted to me. What is the cost to say go in and create this additional track for a typical book?

R

Richard Rieman 16:00

Well, you know, it costs us about \$600 US. And that's because we pay the audio description writer, the narrator, the narrator of the book, the audio editor, and then we add the video editor, and captions, and sign language and Braille file. So all in all, that's the big investment we make to make a both the audio and video versions. But if we provide an audio described script to the publishers, or an audio described script with a professional narration of it, then we're talking a couple of \$100. And that's why there's no real cost barrier to publishers who want to do this.

R

Rob Mineault 16:56

No, not at all.

S

Steve Barclay 16:57

 Steve Barclay 10:57

That strikes me that's, that's a drop in the bucket compared to, you know, there are other related costs to print publishing,

 Richard Rieman 17:05

They can just add our audio description right into their audio production and into their system. Not not heavy lifting.

 Rob Mineault 17:13

So in a way, you guys are sort of creating this blueprint for them. Hopefully, like clue into the fact that there's a there is a real demand for this.

 Richard Rieman 17:26

Well, we're we're working on them. And, you know, we're just showing them, especially with the success of Winnie the Pooh, they can combine many illustrated books by the same author into one audio book, you know, there are take audio books of the same theme or similar fee with a bullying or something, and put them into one audio book. So this is a way that it's being discovered. Now, the Library of Congress heard about what we're doing. And the so they set up, they purchased 100 of our audio books to put in the in the barred player for for the Blind in the US. So we're starting to get the word out.

 Rob Mineault 18:17

What type of reaction have you gotten from some of the authors?

 Richard Rieman 18:22

The authors love it. You know, in the piece we played, there was a little bit about little green alien doll or something the author had never noticed that was in the picture until it was described. So we're adding to their work and creating another dimension of their illustrated book. So they're thrilled with it. But we don't want the authors to be the ones that have to pay to produce these books. So that's why we're, you know, we're looking for corporate sponsors. And, you know, seeing if we can go to small publishers at least, and say, you know, let us do 20 of your books, 50 of your books, because we have volunteer narrators lined up from around the world, as I mentioned. You know, Bruce Horak, who played the blind alien in Star Trek, the latest, Strange New Worlds. He's our scarecrow in our new production of The Wizard of Oz. Aria Mia Loberti, who is the star of the Netflix series. All the Light We Cannot See is our Dorothy in our Wizard of Oz. So we have actors from around the world who have given their voices to create a new accessible version of it. And that will be out in a few months.

 Steve Barclay 19:58



Steve Barclay 19:59

Wow. Fantastic. Have you done anything with graphic novels?



Richard Rieman 20:03

You know, that's interesting. My friend, who is voice you heard, that was the first thing he asked is, can we do graphic novels? You know, you talk about another gap out that's out there in the world. You know, I would love to, but they are so richly illustrated. The bottom line is it becomes not just a little 15 minute book, it becomes, you know, a real production. So we haven't yet touched graphic novels. But you're right, I mean, a perfect opportunity for someone to add audio description to graphic novels and make them into audiobooks. I mean, just imagine that, the audience for that?



Steve Barclay 20:57

Yeah. Oh, absolutely.



Rob Mineault 20:59

Well, and I feel like this is a, this is an area that we have seen a lot of growth in, especially in the last 10 years, just audio description in general. I mean, it wasn't that long ago, that even having an audio described movie or a TV show, was a real big deal. And now, it's more common. I mean, it's very rare that you see any any big show, you know, come down on Netflix, without audio description. So, you know, we are seeing it more and more. So I feel like this is the perfect time for something like this, to really take hold and, you know, into publishing and to try to get some movement here.



Richard Rieman 21:42

What's nice about our effort is that audiobooks are a standard format. So you don't have to struggle to find out whether the movie is described on Amazon Prime, or Netflix or whatever service that you're listening to. Whether the DVD has audio description. I mean, right now, the world is a little bit of Tower of Babel, because there are so many different companies and different ways of providing audio description for movies and TV shows. Whereas with audiobooks, there is one standard, and it's across all audiobook formats.




Rob Mineault 22:26

I'm also curious to learn about sort of the licensing of all of this and how that part of it works. Because, you know, things like the Marrakesh Treaty, I know that it allows people to, you know, make books accessible, without having to pay licensing and all that, how does that work for you guys?



Richard Rieman 22:46



Yes, we've taken advantage in the Marrakech treaty to do some of the popular books, including The Little Engine That Could, If You Give A Mouse A Cookie, Dragons Love Tacos. Many, many of these books that basically as a nonprofit, we have the right had the right to produce under the Marrakesh Treaty. And as long as we don't sell them, that's the drawback is we can't make them into audiobooks and pay royalties to the authors, as we do with their works. But as far as copyright goes, the authors always retain their copyrights. We do an agreement that just says we have the right to distribute the audio and video versions. And in fact, with the Described and Captioned Media Program, blind children, deaf children, their parents, their educators can register on the site for free access to not just our illustrated books, but also many, many other things that are excellent education things with audio description. And, you know, if you're sometimes the because it's a US education funded program and it's like, well, if you just explain, you know, basically they will provide a code to anybody who really asks, and, you know, we certainly put in my contact information, I can provide a code to any Canadians who want to make sure they get access to www.dcmp.org.

R

Rob Mineault 24:42

I mean, that just goes to show you that I mean, this is this is really important stuff. And this is actually something that, you know, we should look at recreating here in Canada because you have a resource like this. I can't even explain how impactful that it is.

R

Richard Rieman 25:00

And, you know, we've made it a point for professional production. To get professional narrators, professional audio description writers who write for Netflix and HBO and TV networks. They're the people who write our audio description. And you know the difference between that and live, you know, on the fly, and a highly produced version. Let's, let's play another sample. This book is Alexander the Avider. It's about a little boy with sensory processing disorder. So that's an example of a book about a child with sensory processing disorder that normalizes it. And as you can tell, you know, we weave the pictures, the descriptions of the pictures right into the story, to try to have it be as seamless into the story as possible.

R

Rob Mineault 27:27

And, you know, it really strikes me too. You kind of forget about this as an adult, or at least I do. But you know, kids engage with these books very differently than we engage with books when we're older. They don't just read them once, and then you know, put them down or you know, put it on a bookshelf and never read it again, they engage with them over and over and over again. And for people who might think that, oh, well, you know, the an audio accessible audio version of a children's book would replace, say, a braille version or whatnot, that's, I don't think that that's the case. I mean, really, you know, a kid who is partially sighted or blind, could listen to the audio version, and then go engage with the braille version of the same book and have, you know, a different experience and still really enjoy themselves with it. So you know, it's not even really a matter of replacing one with the other, it's just more of an enriching experience, based on on which one they're they're reading at the time.

R

Richard Rieman 28:32

And that is why we also provide a downloadable Braille file with with our videos at DCMF because kids can experience reading along with the book with audio description. If they'd like on their on their reader or even if they have a braille printer, print it out. So we're, you know, making sure that that is part of the richness of the experience.

R

Ryan Fleury 29:05

One of the issues we in the blindness community have faced when it comes to audio description is knowing as you mentioned earlier, what titles actually have AD. I can't tell you how many times to go through Netflix looking for a show that as AD just to find out it doesn't. So I flip to the next title and the next title and the next title till I find one. You know, it can be a bit of a nightmare. So if you're looking on Audible, is there a tag or is there a way to know which books actually have your audio video components?

R

Richard Rieman 29:38

Well, it's interesting because I have been in discussions with Audible. We are adding the AD logo to the cover of all of our audio described audio books. And they have told me inside sources that when we get to enough books, they will add an audio described audio book category and make it searchable. They want to make sure we have dozens of, you know, at least the books available because they don't want people to be disappointed if there's only five. So but we are working with Audible to make that happen.

R

Rob Mineault 30:23

So really what what kind of schedule do you have? Like, how long does it take to produce one? And you know, how often are you sort of adding new new titles to the library?

R

Richard Rieman 30:35

We have been averaging two books a week, for the past couple of years. And that's, that's an easy pace to keep up with. And we actually could do more than that, if we had the funds for it, because we have we have audio editors, narrators, some of whom are some of the top narrators like in the US. So it just is really amazing that a lot of these narrators volunteer their voices, which keeps our costs down. And almost everybody is doing it in a booth at home. And these books are you know, 10 to 15 minutes long. So it's not, not heavy lifting for them.

R

Rob Mineault 31:33

Yeah, that's true. You know, that's a you have to say that, you know, that's one thing that came out of COVID. Right, this this whole shift to online, and a lot of people just went out and bought like really high quality audio production equipment for their home and have, like, basically

recording studios, you know, in their living rooms or their their bedrooms. Has that really made this a lot easier to happen than say, maybe if you're attempting to do this, like say 10 or 15 years ago?

R

Richard Rieman 32:03

It has, because although we have an agreement with one of the major studios in the US Edge Studios, they have studios in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Atlanta, many places. They actually give us recording time in their studios. If we bring in a voice artist who does not have a home setup, they can record at their facilities, and you know, takes about an hour and there, they just donate the time. So the Edge Studio people, you know, it's, it's great, because not all blind or low vision, voice actors have access booths at home. Happens to be voice actors too, this way we can reach into theater actors, and just bring them into a local studio and record it.

R

Rob Mineault 32:58

So talk to me a little bit about because you mentioned that, you know, you're sort of you've spun this nonprofit side off to Described and Captioned Media Program. And now you're sort of taking a stab at the for profit side. How's that going? I know it this just all just happened. But what's what's that process been like for you? And how is it going?

R

Richard Rieman 33:23

Yeah, I mean, we are just starting, you know, we're finishing up the website Illustrated Audiobooks, but we're very excited about the possibilities. I put one post on Facebook and Children's Illustrator group, Children's Author and Illustrator group. And I've had dozens of requests for more information. So we know that there's an audience for this because we have set it up through Dreamscape, we are going to price these audiobooks at \$10. And the author will get between \$2 and \$4 in royalties per audiobook sale. So that is how we feel we can get more authors to just say, sure, I'll I'll put hundreds of dollars in ads to get a return on my investment of royalties and the royalties are paid directly to them. So it took a while to set up, you know this system to make it work very easily for everyone. And of course, we in addition to the audiobook, we promote that for just a couple \$100 more they can we'll create the video for them with with sign language and everything else. They own the rights to the audio and video and can use it to promote their books. And when you put it on Audible, the audio book will be on their Amazon Author Page. On the book page, so it'll be available right next to the paperback and hardcover and ebook versions.

R

Rob Mineault 35:06

Wow, that's brilliant. I don't see how this could not just take off, because it's a win win all across the board, these books are really important to really have in as many different formats as they can. Because sometimes for a kid to listen to the described version of it, you're activating your imagination much more than if you're just sitting down and looking at illustration, as beautiful as a lot of the illustrations are, it's just a different way of engaging with

it. You can read, quote, read at different times, whether it's on a walk or in the car, or whatever. So it's just, you know, it's, it's, it really is one of these moments where I just, I slap my forehead and go, why didn't we think of this, like 20 years ago?

R

Richard Rieman 35:58

Yeah when, and it took members of the blind community to tell me as a narrator, you know, this, this is such a missing area in audiobooks. You know, is there any way you could do something about this? And as it turns out, ironically, I'm losing my own eyesight, I have progressive glaucoma. And I've had a couple of surgeries already and going in for a couple more. So I'm becoming a member of the low vision community. And, you know, it's important to me personally, as well as professionally, to make sure that we get as many illustrated books out there and audio as possible.

R

Rob Mineault 36:49

I was gonna ask you what's next, but I think your, your plate kind of sounds pretty full with spinning up a new company. But other than that, do you have anything else that's sort of on the horizon for you?

R

Richard Rieman 37:01

Well, for me, yeah, I've decided that at my age, I'm over 70 now, I would become a children's illustrated book author myself. So I wrote *The Day The Clouds Went Away*. It features a blind princess and her clumsy wizard Fumbledoor. She has a guide owl named Iris, and she decides to order the clouds to go away. And in fact I, of course, I'm turning that into an audiobook. And we happen to have a sample of that. So my book, my narration and actually, my daughter Erin is an audiobook narrator too and she was the voice of Princess Claudia. I love it. I love the project. Let me tell you, we're in Vancouver so we could definitely use that spell. Yes. This book was will be out next month in March and the sequel's already written. *The Day The Bees Went Away*.

R

Rob Mineault 40:03

Oh my gosh, wow, the sequel already?

R

Richard Rieman 40:05

Yes, what would happen if basically there weren't any bees. So that's, that's also in the works.

R

Rob Mineault 40:14

Fantastic. So I want to I just want to make sure we get people as much information as we can on where they can go to access all of this amazing content. Where can they where they can go

to sort of keep an eye out for The Day The Clouds Went Away? So where's the best place to go to sort of begin their journey with accessible audio?

 Richard Rieman 40:39

Well, you can begin your journey at Described Captioned Media Program .. www.dcmp.org. And if you put in Imagination Storybooks, you will have access to about 200 video versions that have the audio description and the option to turn on ASL, the American Sign Language and captions. So that's the first stop. And as I said, if people have trouble accessing it, registering it, they can contact me directly. I'm richard@illustratedaudiobooks.com. So that's my email address. And I'm also building a website, it's www.theaudiobookwizard.com. And that's where I'll have a ways to purchase my book, and also sign up to get any illustrated book made into an accessible audiobook or video book.

 Rob Mineault 41:51

Excellent. And we will make sure that we include all of that in the show notes as well. Thank you. Richard, thank you so much for coming on. And thank you for all this work. I mean, this is I can't even tell you how impactful this is going to be. And I'm really excited to share this with my network as well and my organization. Best of luck with the book and everything. And please come back and talk to us again. Maybe when the second book is ready.

 Richard Rieman 42:23

When the second book Ready, and when the Wizard of Oz come out, because I think that one's going to hit big, especially the fact that we have a recognizable blind star playing Dorothy. Actually, the entire cast of voice actors is blind or low vision for the Wizard of Oz.

 Steve Barclay 42:48

Fantastic.

 Richard Rieman 42:50

So cool. Thanks, guys for coming on board and giving me time to talk about myself. You guys have a great evening now. Bye.

 Rob Mineault 43:02

There you go. This is honestly really exciting. It is. Yeah, like again, like this is just it's stupid that we hadn't thought of this before.

 Ryan Flouny 43:15

R Ryan Healy 43:13

Well, maybe somebody thought about it. But again, it was like audio description. It was a long uphill battle before it became adopted. And still, not everything has audio description. It's still a fight that continues on.

R Rob Mineault 43:31

Yeah, children's books in general. Like they, they're, they're so illustrative really rich, it's amazing that even when publishers sat down to create the audiobook version that they just like, read the text, and they didn't actually describe the pictures. Like, why why not? You know, the real irony of it is, is that the publishers have it in their power, they could make these accessible right from the start. The storyteller or the actor, or reading the text is there in the recording studio, all they need is an additional script for the audio description track. And they could record it right there again, it's not even, it wouldn't even be an added cost. I mean, maybe a little bit like Richard said, a couple 100 bucks. When you compare that to all of the other production costs, I mean, that's nothing.

S Steve Barclay 44:34

Yeah, that part when you said between 200 and 600 bucks, my jaw dropped. I had no idea it could be done that inexpensively. I would have thought you know, you know, paying for the talent and that sort of stuff would have cost more than that. But I guess you know, because it's it's short form literature it's quite a bit less.

R Rob Mineault 44:54

I can't imagine a publisher be like, what 200 bucks?? Oh God, we can't invest that in this! Are you kidding me?

S Steve Barclay 45:02

Yeah, they probably spent more than that on lunch out.

R Rob Mineault 45:05

Yeah, exactly. Like, it's ludicrous, right? And it just it adds so much value to everybody. You can't even really point to this and say this is a niche like this was this would be only be useful for blind or partially sighted kids. Not at all. Like, it would really benefit absolutely every kid because you know, then they would have some options. They can read the physical book, they could listen to the audio version, I wouldn't be surprised to see this really take off.

S Steve Barclay 45:32

Yeah. And, you know, he mentioned that that author who hadn't noticed the alien. You know, for other kids reading that book, there may be a lot of things in that audio description that they

for other kids reading that book, there may be a lot of things in that audio description that they might not have noticed. So it adds a real richness for, for not, again, not just, you know, the kids with visual impairments, but for any reader.

R

Rob Mineault 45:54

Yeah. 100%. For sure. Yeah, it fires your imagination in a different way that it doesn't when you're looking at the picture and reading the text. It's just it's different. Yeah, it's very evocative. So it's cool. I do I do kind of get what they're saying, though. In terms of like, the Audible subscription and people using like, an entire credit for a children's book, I suppose. They might have a point there.

R

Ryan Fleury 46:38

Not so much that it's a children's book. It's a 15 minute read versus a 15 hour novel by John Grisham. Totally different experience. And if you're using your one, your one credit for a 15 minute book. Yeah, hard sell.

R

Rob Mineault 46:55

But yeah, that is a bit of a hard sell. But I think he's right. I mean, there's a solution for that. Like, yeah, you bundle it in, or maybe a credit, lets you buy, like 10 children's books or something you know? There's ways around it, for sure. They just have to have the willingness to do a little bit of work on on their side and make it happen.

S

Steve Barclay 47:20

So what could be a whole different business model for two that they haven't considered, you know, the sort of, you know, kids credit or microcredit, versus the full on credit for, you know, a novel length book?

R

Ryan Fleury 47:35

Totally, when you think you would think because Amazon owns Audible, that they have Amazon Kids, right? They have their Amazon tablets for kids to Fire Tablet, they have, they have a whole kids category. So if the book is showing up beside your Kindle book and your paperback book, absolutely, you know, there's no reason why they couldn't market it that way.

R

Rob Mineault 47:59

Yep, for sure. And I do really believe that I think that parents of of visually impaired kids would totally pay a couple extra bucks more for a really rich, accessible audio book version of some of these children's books. Absolutely. There's absolutely a market.

- R** Ryan Fleury 48:18
We pay five times more for Braille Scrabble or Monopoly than a typical board game at Walmart.
- R** Rob Mineault 48:23
So true. Yeah, for sure. And that's, that's even, like they shouldn't even have to. That's even if the publishers were greedy and they really wanted to try to make you know, a little bit extra money and recoup some of these quote extra costs to producing these maybe there's definitely a business case for it for sure. I wouldn't be surprised as you know, another five years at this is just it's it's now a thing it's such a common thing that all new children's books have these versions, but it just makes way more sense if they should just do it at the at the you know, at the publishing level. Why didn't we think of this?
- R** Ryan Fleury 49:23
Well...
- S** Steve Barclay 49:24
We're not smart. Because we're dumb. We're just dumb.
- R** Rob Mineault 49:30
That does explain a lot. Explains a lot about this podcast. Well, anything else to say about anything before we start to wrap things up?
- R** Ryan Fleury 49:41
Nope. Hey, Steve?
- S** Steve Barclay 49:53
Yeah, that's me.
- R** Rob Mineault 49:57
Where can people find us?
- S** Steve Barclay 50:30
...

Well, if people can find us at www.atbanter.com

R Rob Mineault 50:32
Hey, they can also drop us an email if they so desire at cowbell@atbanter.com

R Ryan Fleury 50:34
They can also find this on Mastodon and Facebook anywhere else?

S Steve Barclay 50:58
Isn't Mastodon extinct?

R Ryan Fleury 51:03
The beast is beast.

S Steve Barclay 51:07
I heard they were bringing it back.

R Rob Mineault 51:12
Are the accounts frozen?

R Ryan Fleury 51:17
Nice. You are on it today.

R Rob Mineault 51:20
That's right. That is going to about do it for us this week. Big thanks, of course to Richard for joining us. And we will see everybody next week.

S Steve Barclay 51:33
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