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SPEAKERS

Ryan Fleury, Lis Malone, Steve Barclay, Rob Mineault

R **Rob Mineault** 00:16

Hey and welcome to another episode of AT Banter,

S **Steve Barclay** 00:22

Banter, banter.

R **Rob Mineault** 00:25

Hey, welcome to 2026 everybody. 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 still Rob Mineault, and I'm still joined by - in no particular order - hey, look who it is. It's Miss Lis Malone.

L **Lis Malone** 00:53

Hey, Mr. Rob Mineault.

R Rob Mineault 00:56
Yeah, I'm changing it up already first, first episode of 2026 I went to you first.

L Lis Malone 01:02
Happy New Year.

R Rob Mineault 01:03
Yeah, yeah. Happy New Year to you too. And also in the room. Mr. Steve Barclay.

S Steve Barclay 01:11
I am I'm here, and damn it, I'm going to have fun.

R Rob Mineault 01:15
Yeah, that's the spirit. I like it.

R Ryan Fleury 01:17
Doesn't sound very passionate, though,

S Steve Barclay 01:20
I am thrilled beyond measure.

R Rob Mineault 01:23
He's wrapped around. He's so enthused he sounds unenthused. And hey, spoiler warning, but he's already spoiled it. Hey, it's Ryan Fleury.

R Ryan Fleury 01:35

Hey, we're all here. Happy New Year.

R Rob Mineault 01:37

Yeah, we're all here. I'm impressed. Look at that. Ryan's gold star scheduling, once again pays off.

S Steve Barclay 01:44

Our future's bright.

R Ryan Fleury 01:46

Yeah, okay...

S Steve Barclay 01:47

I left my shades in the car. Okay.

R Rob Mineault 01:52

Well, you know what? That's a great segue. I was gonna do some banter, but actually, that's a perfect segue into what we're actually gonna be talking about, and I we're never going to beat that segue. So let's dive in. Ryan, tell people what we're going to talk about today.

R Ryan Fleury 02:09

Well, I thought starting off the new year, we should try to predict or look at trends that we think may appear this year, either in mainstream tech, but more so in assistive technology. You know, we keep hearing about ai, ai, ai. And of course, CES 2026 has just wrapped up in Las Vegas, and there was some announcements there that I've shared with you. So I just thought we'd have a discussion to see where we think things might end up at the end of the year.

R Rob Mineault 02:40

Cool. Okay. Well, can anybody sum up, basically, for those people who don't know what CES is, can anyone, does anyone feel prepared to actually just kind of give people a little bit of a rundown on what this thing is?

R Ryan Fleury 02:52

So it's the Consumer Electronics Show held in Las Vegas every year where some assistive technology companies, but more mainstream companies set up booths and show their wares. They have prototypes of product that may come to market, may never see the light of day, there's robots, there's home smart appliances, you name it. It runs the gamut from A to Z but it's a week for vendors to show off some future technology.

R Rob Mineault 03:25

Yeah, that's right, it's kind of like a signpost of wha the technology manufacturers out there are kind of putting together, what they're working on, like Ryan said, a lot of prototypes and stuff. So it's, it's kind of fitting that it's first thing in January, because it really does kind of set the tone for the year technology wise. And you know, you do get a sense of what some of the big players are working on. And, you know, usually every year, there's also some interesting assistive technology pieces that that gets snuck in. And I think this year was, was no exception to that. So we'll, we'll dive into it. So, you know, why don't we just start out by talking about some of the stuff that was there that stood out to anybody. So does anybody got a favorite device that was at CES that they want to talk a little bit about?

R Ryan Fleury 04:28

I don't really have a favorite device. You know, we keep seeing more and more wearables, and I think that's where a lot of people are focusing their energy, on biometrics and where, the where and how can they attach more wearables to us or implant wearables into us. But I think the interesting thing that made a few headlines was this whole assistive technology device that was speech to Braille.

R Rob Mineault 04:55

Yeah, that's right, the Nemonic Dot. I thought this was, this really stood out for me, too, Ryan. I guess what makes it really stand out to me immediately is that it's, it seems to be portable. And you know, this whole text, or, sorry, this whole speech to text to Braille is, is pretty wild. So, so basically, the device is this. It's it's a Braille label printer that connects to an an app. Is that, right? Ryan?

R Ryan Fleury 05:25

I believe, so, yeah, yeah.

R Rob Mineault 05:26

So it connects to an app, and then you can say what you want your label to say, it will, I guess, send it to the device, translate it into Braille, and then print it off, I believe, on on like you can print it off on paper or labels. So pretty wild. Steve, we've never seen anything like this before, have we?

S Steve Barclay 05:50

No, not directly like that there. I mean, there's been some devices that have used voice recognition and have provided some form of Braille output, but it's usually refreshable braille. It's not actually printing Braille. And, you know, I I wonder about this technology and how effective it's going to be, because one of the things that people would probably like to use it for right off the hop would be medications, yeah. And as I replied to Ryan when he sent that one over, you know, I wonder how it would, how it would do, and you tell it, yeah, this is hydrochlorothala zine. And you know, that's not something that's likely to get picked up well by voice recognition. And how much, how much tape are you going to go through while you're trying to, while you're trying to get it to, figure it out? yeah, so I don't know interesting. It'd be interesting to see it in action, for sure.

R Rob Mineault 06:48

Yeah, no doubt. Well, you know, it was interesting too, that the article that that I saw that was kind of the main push of the device they were really talking it up about how it was would be able to label medication. That seems to be the real use case scenario that they're using to push the product, but really it can be used to label anything. So I found it really interesting why they necessarily decided to focus on something like labeling medication for the device. Because really you could, you could pitch this as anything. You could just a, just a household labeler that you can label everything from, you know, salts and your tea, coffee tins, but you just, you just walk around and completely Braille label your entire house, if you wanted to, and but they didn't really sort of go that route in terms of the marketing. So I found that that kind of interesting. I think that maybe somebody's recognizing that labeling medication is a real pain point for for the blindness community. But there are other solutions out there. I mean, certainly more eloquent solutions, like Scripttalk, exactly, yeah, and things like that. So anyways ...

S Steve Barclay 08:05

The same sort of thing, just with Wayaround tags, right? You know, yeah, slap a way around tag on a pill bottle with an elastic band and, you know, you've got a reusable tag with very low cost, right?

L Lis Malone 08:17

Yeah. I personally like the eenie meenie miney mo system.

S Steve Barclay 08:23

What drug do I get today exactly?

R Rob Mineault 08:27

Pill, red pill, yellow pill ...

R Rob Mineault 08:29

Is it an aspirin or Xanax?

L Lis Malone 08:33

Am I gonna be wired, or am I sleeping?

R Rob Mineault 08:39

That's right. It's, it's, you know, it's prescription roulette.

R Rob Mineault 08:42

That's right. So it's interesting to see that they're trying new things anyhow, and we'll see if it actually even comes to market.

R Rob Mineault 08:49

Yeah, yeah. Well, I'd also be really interested in knowing what kind of, what kind of engine is under the hood of this thing, because, again, we've never, I don't think we've ever seen something that could translate text to Braille or speech to text to Braille in, I'm assuming, real time, like that, which and then print it off like that's that's pretty cool. Because usually, if I'm not mistaken, and Ryan and Steve, you can, you can correct me on this, but even the process of like taking, say, a Word document and typing in what you want, and then getting that out to a Braille embosser to print off, like that requires, you know, specialty software, Braille translation software, in order to translate the text into Braille. And that software can be can be pretty pricey. So isn't that a pretty involved process, like, does that part of it worry you?

S Steve Barclay 09:55

That's been another device that's come up before that HaptiBraille from 4Blind has been out for a couple years now, I think. And that one converts speech into into Braille. It does it kind of a funky way, because you got to hold your fingers on the Braille keyboard, and it vibrates the keys in correspondence to the Braille, which is interesting, but, but it has been done. So this is, right, this isn't a first.

R Rob Mineault 10:22

Well, and really, this is being marketed as, as something for the home. So I'm assuming, I mean, we don't know, I don't have the information here in front of me on, on how much the proposed retail price tag on this thing would be.

R Ryan Fleury 10:35

They are 1000 bucks.

R Rob Mineault 10:36

Okay, well, at wise, and I guess in the Braille world, that's not completely outrageous, right? For something like this.

S Steve Barclay 10:48

Depends on how many labels you're going to do, you know?

R Rob Mineault 10:51

I suppose, yeah. And I guess you know, the speed of this and how, how mechanical is this? Is it repairable, serviceable?

L Lis Malone 10:59

Well, I think one thing we've learned in doing this program is that a lot of these companies, they come out with this technology, and they haven't really thoroughly kicked the tires...

R Rob Mineault 11:07

Yeah, or talk to the Community.

L Lis Malone 11:10

Yep, pretty much. I mean, they, they come up with the concept, and they develop the product to a certain point, but then they, they don't really look at the all of the day to day uses and see all of the, I guess, you know, all the pimples and warts that lie pretty, pretty close to the surface once you take a really good look at it, yeah.

R Rob Mineault 11:34

I mean, on the surface, this seems like it's, it's a great product, and I could see it being really useful in the home, and at 1000 bucks, you know, there are more, certainly more expensive at solutions out there. I but, you know, I think that maybe one, and I think the usability sounds great. I mean, I don't think anybody would complain about being able to just, you know, speak into your phone, have the app translated into Braille, and print off a Braille label that that, or the usability sounds great about that, I think that maybe they haven't done their market research is whether or not an average person in the blindness community is going to want, is going to pay $1,000 in order to just kind of be able to label whatever they want. Like, that's where, I think that, that's where it kind of might get a little bit dicey, because I don't know that is a big price tag. I don't know if you're labeling all your your vinyl or something, or ...

L Lis Malone 12:42

That's a lot of that's a lot of cheddar. There's other options right? Yeah. I mean, just, just for labeling. And I'm not saying labeling is not important. I'm just saying that that is a steep price just for labeling. And I think that most people will just come up with their own hacks and other systems. You know what? I think everything is going to end up being codes, where you're just going to put codes on everything, and then you scan the code with your with your phone, you just run it over, and it's going to tell you exactly what it is. I mean, that's where I think the technology is going to lead us, well.

R Rob Mineault 13:19

And what excites me is that whatever technology they're using, and obviously, you know, probably 95 to 99% of everything that we're going to be talking about today is, is all AI driven. I mean, that's the one thing you look at CES this year. And the big picture is just ai, ai, ai, everything's everything's got aI baked into it. But the technology, that's the Braille translation piece of this, if they've figured that out, where it can do it that fast and that accurate, I don't know. Maybe, if this doesn't work, I mean that technology can maybe be transplanted into something like even, even an app, like a phone app that could, a braille translation phone app that could, that could, you know, interface with braille embossers or something that's, you know, 60 bucks, as opposed to, you know, the Braille translation software that's on the market. Now, that's what, 800?

R Ryan Fleury 14:13

That could be huge, yeah, but we're starting to see some pushback on AI and its reliability. And would you trust AI to read your prescription bottles in its current state?

L Lis Malone 14:25

Hell yes.

R Ryan Fleury 14:27

You're brave.

L Lis Malone 14:27

I can't even pronounce the drugs to begin with. I'm like, okay, that sounds pretty good to me. Yeah.

R Rob Mineault 14:28

I mean, you're right, Ryan, I tend to think that this is, this is something that this is a pretty positive use of AI, like I said, if it can drive down the price for some of this very niche software that's very expensive for people, and it's, again, it's able to, you know, make Braille that much more widespread, I think it's a plus. So, I mean, I give this thing a, I give this thing a, potentially an A. What do you guys think I say?

R Ryan Fleury 15:07

We wait and see.

R Rob Mineault 15:09

That's your answer for everything.

S Steve Barclay 15:11

Well, yeah, I'm with Ryan.

L Lis Malone 15:14

Yeah, I'm not jumping on board.

S Steve Barclay 15:18

I haven't burned too many times with, ooh, look at this fancy, shiny tech.

R Rob Mineault 15:23

Well, I mean, listen, I think that the device itself could flop. It definitely could flop. I mean, the price point just might be not, tenable for household users, and certainly anybody who's any organization that that 1000 bucks, you know, would be a drop in the bucket to them, that that would want to produce production level Braille. They're, they're going to want something, you know, a different solution, that that produces production Braille. They wouldn't go for this thing.

L Lis Malone 15:57

So and then, and no government agency is going to help pay for this just for labeling. There's just no way they're not going to do $1,000 a pop just for labeling, because they're going to say, well, there are so many other cheaper systems for labeling that don't involve Braille, but can be tactile in other ways. I'm not saying it's right. I'm just being realistic.

R Rob Mineault 16:22

Yeah, yeah, we have choice. There's, there's something to that, I think.

L Lis Malone 16:27

For sure, not for the Average Joe.

R Rob Mineault 16:30

What else did we have there? Oh, well, you know what? CES would not be CES without some haptics there. haptics again. So once again, they're not giving up, folks. They are determined that haptics is, is going to be a thing. So I only have the description, I actually haven't seen this thing. It's called Aleye. I don't know if anyone else watched a video of it, but it, but again, it's, it's just a wearable system with haptic feedback, so I'm assuming that it's an app that pairs with smart glasses, that conveys, I think, things like social cues, object information, again, through haptics. Yeah, I can tell you when people are smiling or frowning, people are angry, happy, sad.

L Lis Malone 17:27

So it's haptic emojis.

R Rob Mineault 17:28

Yeah, pretty much it'll tell you that Ryan is cranky.

S Steve Barclay 17:33

Actually a really good description for it Lis. That's that's pretty much exactly what it is. Yeah, where you wear a pair of glasses and you've got this wristband, and the wristband has an array, three by five array, so 15 dots on that are on the, I believe, the bottom of the wrist. And when the glasses detect a facial expression or an outstretched hand, it'll play a particular pattern on the wristband to indicate that that's what's going on.

L Lis Malone 18:06

I mean, yeah, there's no chance that's going to foul.

R Rob Mineault 18:11

Smiley face, poo face, no, what's wrong?

R Rob Mineault 18:15

Yeah, I don't know, man. This one, I don't know.

L Lis Malone 18:19

Yeah, I I question the judgment of this kind of AI, because sometimes, like a squinting face looking at something could look like a smile, and it's not a smile.

S Steve Barclay 18:32

Yeah, be smiling, could have just had his leg cut off.

L Lis Malone 18:34

Yeah, you know, there that fine line between, you know, what is it, pleasure and pain?

S Steve Barclay 18:39

Yeah, that's right, versus a smile, yeah.

R Rob Mineault 18:42

I mean, I think this falls into, who asked for this? Like, did they really talk to the community? Was this really in the top five problems that that folks in the blind and low vision community, you know, would say that they want a solution to is somebody smile like, what's, what's their facial expression?

L Lis Malone 19:04

Knew their fellow pedestrians were smiling as they stepped off the curb into traffic. Is that the only thing that this device was good for?

R Rob Mineault 19:13

Yeah, you know, the other thing I always think about with whenever somebody develops this, you know, something a haptic system is that haptics can't be a solution for everything. Can you imagine if they just tried, tried to solve everything with haptics? On my left wrist, I have my, my facial expression haptic thing, and then on my, on my lapel, I have my, my haptic thing that buzzes for obstacle detection, and then on my my right ankle, I have something else... I mean, it's at some point, like haptics, it just is. It's just not a good solution. And they keep trying over and over again, and I don't know, I. Yeah, it's kind of comical at this point.

R Rob Mineault 20:03

But I think there are use case scenarios that you know, I'm not familiar with, but there is probably a community of people out there who get a lot out of haptic response.

R Rob Mineault 20:15

Well, maybe, maybe, maybe we're being too hard on it. I don't know.

R Rob Mineault 20:20

We need to hear from our member, our audience. We need feedback at cowbell@atbanter.com.

R Rob Mineault 20:25

I mean Ryan and Steve - you guys work in the industry, obviously. So have you ever had somebody walk in who's just like, yeah, I have this haptic thing that I bought, and I love it. It's, I use it all the time. It's, it's the greatest. I don't know anybody that has ever used anything haptic.

R Ryan Fleury 20:44

I don't know, I can think of that might be somewhat, might have been popular, that Steve probably has more experience with the customers than I do would be the Sunu Band when it was around. Was there anybody who really adopted that?

S Steve Barclay 21:02

Well, I think we gave away as many as we actually sold. But, I mean, it's just another one of those that non stop parade of, you know, haptic devices for mobility, and none of them ever seem to survive. They don't survive is because the market is meh, you know, they don't care. It's, like, good. It's gonna vibrate at me. Whoopty, twang, you know?

R Rob Mineault 21:31

And most of the time I turn the haptics off on my devices.

R Rob Mineault 21:36

Yeah.

S Steve Barclay 21:38

And this one, you know, the device is right now $359 regular for $449 and then you need a monthly subscription for 29 bucks a month. So and you have to have met a glasses, because it pairs with Meta Glasses. And you have to have a iOS device running iOS 17 or higher. So that's a that's a lot of tech to get something vibrating on your wrist.

R Rob Mineault 22:11

A lot of money, yeah.

L Lis Malone 22:13

Well, that's a lot of charging every night.

S Steve Barclay 22:16

Yeah. Gonna need a power cord for everything.

R Ryan Fleury 22:21

So in the past year or so, we've been picking up a lot more products for the hearing impaired community. The deaf community would something like this work for that population.

S Steve Barclay 22:34

Maybe, maybe the deaf blind community.

R Rob Mineault 22:38

That's true.

S Steve Barclay 22:41

I mean, they're, they're positioning it for blind, low vision, deaf, blind and autism, right? So, yeah, I don't know. I again, I think this is a product that is just a product seeking a market that doesn't exist.

R Rob Mineault 23:00

Yeah.

L Lis Malone 23:02

Product looking for an audience. It's like, hey, you could use it for this. Oh yeah, you could use it for this. Okay, great, awesome.

R Rob Mineault 23:13

Yeah, exactly. So, there you go. Frowny face. Womp, womp, womp. Okay, well, it's hard. So I see there is a also the Lumen, which is some smart glasses, which are, of course, I guess this. This is specific at so this is interesting to me too, because, you know, we we talked so much over the past year about the Meta Glasses and how, you know, mainstream smart glasses were a real, real popular item with the blindness community. So it's interesting to me that someone sort of taken up the the ball, picked up the ball and has now, did they're developing these smart glasses specifically as a piece of AT.

S Steve Barclay 24:07

Okay, so, yeah, interesting. Okay, so these are another mobility aid, okay, the Lumen glasses, they are, well, according to the website, they are a wearable assistive device for the blind using sensors and AI, the glasses detect safe walking paths and guide the user in real time through intuitive haptic feedback. The system replicates the core functions of a guide dog, enabling scalable and independent mobility built on pedestrian, autonomous built on pedestrian autonomous driving, a technology similar to autonomous driving, but for the pedestrian side. So these, if anybody's ever seen a pair of E-Sight glasses, they look kind of along the similar vein. They are a big. Bulky, head worn system, and presumably they're going to help you walk around, you know, much as you might do say, with a $80 cane...

R Ryan Fleury 25:16

But with haptic feedback, so your face is going to be vibrating. Yeah, yeah. So everything have to be haptic. Well, one of the things I keep hearing from the community that have the Meta Glasses is a lot of us are waiting for, well, a longer battery, but the ability to actually have full time live detection or live description. So if you're walking, you can, instead of having to say, hey, meta, what's in front of me? Hey, meta, what's around me? Hey, meta, what's this live description that is constantly giving you updated information? Stop, there's a car in front of you, or there's a garbage can, whatever the case may be, people keep wanting and asking for that type of information, instead of having to, like I said, queue your AI all the time, something like this. Again, I don't know. Well, we don't know what mapping they're using, or how reliable the maps are going to be either, right?

R Rob Mineault 26:24

You bring up a good point, and I think that this, this could be, you know, the big difference between just using, say, the Meta Glasses and using something that gets developed, and maybe not this particular item, but say, a pair of smart glasses that's specifically built with with blindness and low vision in mind.

R Rob Mineault 26:48

Well, you could use BlindSquare Google Maps in walking mode with your Meta glasses, or any smart glasses.

R Rob Mineault 26:54

But again, you but then you have to interface with that in a way that's they're like the mainstream does, which is, you have to feed it the keyword, and have to whereas, like you said, if it's a dedicated at device, it could operate differently. You wouldn't necessarily build those, build that, that type of functionality into it. It could be more live, live camera, live feed, you know, constantly scanning your environment and telling you what's around you, without having to say, hey, meta, hey meta, hey meta, what's around me? So I could see that. But then you fall, of course, then you fall back into the, the typical at trap of well, then if it's a, if it's a dedicated AT device, it automatically is probably going to double in price.

S Steve Barclay 27:47

Let me, let me ask you a question. Can you, would you, Ryan, would you use a device like this if it was $1,600?

R Rob Mineault 27:57

No

S Steve Barclay 27:58

Good, because it's $16,000.

L Lis Malone 28:03

Lumen glasses??

S Steve Barclay 28:05

Yeah, yeah, they're 9999 euros at an exchange rate of 1.68 that's $16,800 Canadian.

R Ryan Fleury 28:16

So what do they talk about? Any of the tech that's in them? Like, does it have Lidar and like, all that sort of stuff? Because if it does, then, yeah, okay, you still can't justify $16,000 but you know, we have a $2,000 Stellar Trek that, you know has half the tech probably, and is a special, specialized, you know, at and probably doesn't do what that device can do. It'll probably get you part of the way there. So, you know, do they talk about the tech that's built into it? Like, does it have accelerometers and GPS and Lidar?

S Steve Barclay 29:04

Mapping Visual Odometry and Semantic Surface Understanding.

R Rob Mineault 29:10

Hmm, yeah, it sounds pretty cutting edge, which is, but, yeah, I mean, I mean, who's, who is this for?

S Steve Barclay 29:18

Yeah, I think, I think we're talking about a camera technology. Now they do show some pretty cool stuff, like, you know, a guy being thrown balls, and he's able to catch the balls when he's absolutely blind. Guy being presented with a bunch of apples on the ends of sticks, and he can just reach out and grab the apple and, you know, immediately find it. So, yeah, I mean, $16,000 that's, that's a big, big, big chunk just to, you know, be able to catch a ball.

R Rob Mineault 30:04

Yeah, yeah. I mean, realistically, like, I don't know what market they expect this to be for...

L Lis Malone 30:04

I can pay someone to bring me my apples.

R Rob Mineault 30:04

And who knows? Maybe this could just be, you know, some sort of a proof of concept product, right?

S Steve Barclay 30:09

No, it's out, it's out.

R Ryan Fleury 30:13

All this tech, though, keep in mind, starts out really, really expensive, right? And it'll come down in price if it, if it lasts, if it, technology decreases. But, you know, we've got bigger things happening right now in the world, like RAM shortages ...

R Rob Mineault 30:29

Yeah, well, we get to that.

S Steve Barclay 30:31

I don't, I don't see that one lasting.

R Rob Mineault 30:33

No, probably not.

R Rob Mineault 30:34

Yeah, I mean, I don't know how they can possibly find a market for it. That's, that's the big problem. I mean, the technology. I mean, listen, if it's authentic, then, I mean, that's, that's pretty impressive, but very small market, you know, having, yeah, being that expensive. It's just, it's just out of reach for, for, you know, the main population in the blindness community. So, yep, I don't know what, what good is it? What good is having a $20,000 because you get a factor exchange and shipping in their own as well. So another frowny emoji. Well, who knows? Maybe this, maybe they're, they're forging the path for for a product you know, that can come in behind him and come in at a little a little bit smaller price point that can do the same thing.

R Ryan Fleury 31:25

So Well, that'll be Apple's new vision glasses coming out next year. Or Google and Samsung's this year. We'll see.

R Rob Mineault 31:30

Yeah, so a lot of glasses. I mean, I'm not surprised. I'm not surprised that we saw haptics. I'm not surprised that we saw smart glasses. I think we were all expecting that, again, from from just scanning this, it's, you know, there's a lot of a lot in the smart home sector, both in the mainstream, well, mainly in the mainstream. But what I found interesting, and what is interesting about the whole Smart Home in general is this is where we really see the intersectionality of assistive technology in the mainstream, right? This is where things like voice activation and automation and real time assistance with wearables and your smartphone and everything you know, all working together. That's a very cool, mainstream gimmick, but it's also an incredible, incredibly powerful piece of assistive technology. So, you know, that's where I think that we're seeing some exciting, exciting things, because I feel like finally, we're seeing assistive technologies starting really being baked into some of these mainstream devices with which is what we've been yelling about for years.

S Steve Barclay 31:54

I think we're still probably a year or two away, though, from true integration. And what I mean by that is, if you're in the Apple ecosystem, you still have to be in the Apple ecosystem for the most part. And same with Amazon's and Google's. You know, there is the matter protocol, which is supposedly going to allow us to use any device, anywhere, anytime, and they'll all just work and talk to each other, but we're not there yet, but once something like that actually takes place, and it doesn't matter what device you have or what ecosystem you're in, then I think we're going to see the true Smart Home integration.

R Rob Mineault 32:16

But I don't know if that's ...

S Steve Barclay 32:16

What matters out there now it's just a matter of people adopting it. What's out there right now is Matter, the protocol.

R Rob Mineault 32:28

What is that?

R Ryan Fleury 32:30

I believe it's by Google, but it's a protocol that will allow all your smart home devices to talk to each other, whether you're Apple talking to Alexa, Alexa talking to Google, Google talking to Apple.

R Ryan Fleury 35:17

Interesting.

R Ryan Fleury 35:18

It's unites them all.

R Rob Mineault 35:20

Oh, that's cool.

R Ryan Fleury 35:21

But, you know, again, it comes down to adoption. Just, you know, Apple, you know, and others opening up their systems to allow others to, you know, share data.

L Lis Malone 35:31

Never going to happen.

R Rob Mineault 35:33

Yeah, I don't know. I mean, that would be nice. I mean, you know, it's interesting. I was reading some articles over the break, and something really resonated me, because it's something that I noticed in myself. There is this real sense of tech fatigue. And if you think about it, it's just that we're bombarded with tech all the time. You know, how many, how many apps does everybody have on the phone and and how many voice assistants or or smart watches or like, we have all of this tech that we're constantly interfacing with, and we got to, you know, configure this to work with this, and we're installing this app, opening this app. And I think that the downstream effect of that is that people get really just tired of it. And I I've noticed it in myself too. I used to love stuff like, Oh, I'm gonna, I'm gonna learn this new piece of software, or I'm gonna dive into my Windows settings and figure out how I can, you know, mod my desktop interface, and all of these things that I really like to go in and tinker. I loved doing it, and now I could give a shit. Like, I do not want to spend any time digging into settings. If something, if I don't plug something in, and if it doesn't work immediately. Oh well, I guess I didn't really need that thing. Like, I just have, I have no sort of patience for for tinkering, and I think that that is part of it. I think it's just a general sense of people are they're fatigued and they don't have a lot of bandwidth on a daily basis to do things like have to operate like 12 different apps to tie all of their their Smart Home.

R Ryan Fleury 37:21

It's not even just the apps. And when do you find time to unplug, you know, like right now, I've got four computers around me on my desk in front of me. I've got a Windows machine and a Mac machine, two microphones, two audio interfaces, a mixer, you know, just then that's just on my desk here. That's not when I go upstairs to the living room and start acting with the Smart TV and remotes and my iPhone and yeah, Alexa and everything else. Like, when do you when do you have time to unplug in you don't because you're constantly using something.

S Steve Barclay 37:55

More importantly, you're constantly having to reconfigure and update. There's no time left in the day because you gotta update.

R Rob Mineault 38:03

Yeah, that's right, yeah. Then you have to do it. You're absolutely right. And, you know, it's, you know, it's interesting. We, when we talked to Dhaval with the about the Lotus Ring, you know, he was saying exactly the same thing. You know, their goal is to try to, you know, merge all of this together, so it's just one device, and it's such a difficult thing with with the smart home, because there are, there's so many different manufacturers, and there's so many different apps, and I think that that's what's really holding that market back, is that, and that's going to be a problem for them going forward, is people just want a simple solution. I mean, they I would love a Smart Home, but I don't want 16 different devices and 10 apps that that I have to open and close and use to drive, you know, everything from my heat to my blinds to my alarm. At some point it, I think it's just gets too much for people, and especially people with disabilities, which a lot of this stuff would be incredibly beneficial for. But again, you know, they there. You have to be so careful with that, with that market, because tech fatigue is going to be a real thing.

R Ryan Fleury 39:23

And see, I don't mind the 16 devices, as long as they're standalone devices and I don't need another app. Yeah, stop giving us apps to control everything. Just give me a device with physical buttons, right? No, device with touch screens. I don't need a touch screen. Can't use it, can't see it, yeah? Me some physical buttons, no app. You know, I want to go back to the old days when things had knobs and buttons.

L Lis Malone 39:49

Yeah. I'm due to upgrade my router in my home, and I'm dreading it, having to update every single thing to read. New router and new password, and, yeah, yeah. So I've been putting it off just for that reason.

R Rob Mineault 40:06

Yeah, no, for sure, for sure, and it's really weird, and it's just something that, you know, since I read that article over the holidays, I was like, yeah, that's so true. Like, I have so little patience now for anything, like even just changing a password, I get so annoyed. It's been three months, like, let me use my password. Like, don't make me change it. Now I gotta. Now, I gotta wrap my head around that, like I just, I have zero patience and so, and I feel like I'm not alone,

R Ryan Fleury 40:34

And that tech is changing all the time too, right now, more and more websites are asking for pass keys, right? So now your password is going by the wayside, and they want you to start using pass keys. Yeah. Well, what's a pass key? That's authenticator apps.

R Rob Mineault 40:52

That's another great example, Ryan. That was something else they came up with. Windows, like, prompted me is like, hey, you why don't you just use a pass key? And, I'm like, I don't know what that means. I don't care. I don't want to think about it. Just shut up and take my password.

S Steve Barclay 41:14

We reached the height of technology when they came up with fingerprint readers, and it's been downhill ever since.

R Rob Mineault 41:21

So I don't know. I feel like maybe that is something that I haven't heard anybody talking talking about. And I really do think that Dhaval makes, he made some great points on that show. And I think that that's what it's people are just reaching the end of the rope, right? Because, you know, they just think of how much tech, how many apps, how many streaming services, like all of this stuff, it's just going to reach a point where just people are just fed up and they just can't, and a lot of these things that are very cool, and I think that would have a lot of benefits people just aren't going to engage with, because it's just at the end of the day, they're just too damn, too damn overwhelmed with with everything coming at them so well.

R Ryan Fleury 42:07

And we know what happens when you lose power or the internet goes down, because it does go down. Now you can't heat your home. Now you can't turn on your whatever, your smart microwave, your smart oven. Now you can't wash clothes because your washing machine needs an app connected to the internet, and the internet's down. Like, we're doomed. You can't cook because the internet's down, right? We're so connected, yeah?

R Rob Mineault 42:39

Well, you bring up a good point too. Like, you know, a lot of these smart devices, and this is where I mean, and you granted, I have seen a lot of pushback against things like, you know, smart fridges and smart stoves and stuff like that that that actually require Wi Fi and that are always connected to the internet. Like, I don't know, like those, I don't think, I don't know that those are being broadly adapted. I mean, unless they're just they're baking those into every new fridge that's coming down the the the pipe, and people are don't have much of a choice. But I all the stuff that I've seen about, like, smart fridges and stuff is usually it's just, like, videos of people like, mocking it and being like, yeah, I can't believe it's or people complaining because the manufacturers are like, feeding people ads into their into their fridge, like they're the display screen and stuff that's there to whatever that monitors the temperature, and I guess it gives you an inventory of what's in the fridge. And, you know, and they're getting fed ads into that. So, you know people, people I don't know. I just don't think that that again, that's going to be something that's going to be broadly received.

R Rob Mineault 43:51

Next generation's problem.

R Rob Mineault 43:53

Yeah, exactly. They can worry about that. So AI, let's talk about AI. Because you know any, any sort of conversation about what we think is going to be coming down the pipe in the next year has to include AI, right? It's in everything, and it's being baked into everything. And I think that in terms of, we're talking about 2026 trends, that's kind of what I'm seeing here, is that just AI, like every one of these devices, you know, the word AI is in it. They're using it in everything, even if it's not necessarily an AI driven app, they're still, it's still using AI in the in the background. So how does everybody feel about that?

S Steve Barclay 44:38

Well, I mean, as I've mentioned before, on on the show, I use Chat-GPT fairly extensively, and it's my go to search now, I find to get better results from it, and I don't get all the ads that I get through Google when I want to try and search for something. So you know, I definitely found a place for it in in my workflow, and it helps me a lot with. The little tasks and just saving me time and effort. But that's really the only thing I use it for, you know, I don't, I don't really use AI outside of that. I've got it turned off on my phone because, you know, my my phone is a Google phone, and when I, you know, use the command to wake it up if, if I turn on the AI feature, that command that I used to use no longer works and routines that I had using the the OK Google command now do something completely different, which I find pretty annoying. So, you know, I I have limited use for it, and I'm not as thrilled about it, I guess, as a lot of other people are. I also, you know, I see the stories about, you know, things like, you know, lawyers who are trying to use it, and they come in with, you know, hallucinated citations. They get beat up by a judge for for bringing, you know, basically total lies into into a courtroom because they were lazy. And you know, it's it's not, it's not as good as it can be. It will get better. The The question is, will it get so much better that it's smarter than us and can out thank us and get away, build a base on the Moon, start bombarding us with space rocks.

R Ryan Fleury 46:29

So let me ask you this, are you ready for AI in your home, other than your phone? Let's say it's a laundry folding humanoid. Maybe it's an AI dog?

S Steve Barclay 46:43

Well, I wouldn't want an AI dog. I'd rather have a real dog, you know, poop on the carpet and everything. But, hey, you bring me something that folds laundry. I'll think about that. I saw at CES, there was one robotic assistant that would help transfer people. A robot that will help transfer somebody in and out of bed into a wheelchair, that could be incredibly useful for so many people. Because, you know, I think about, you know, people have known over the years with, you know, different different conditions, who, you know, getting out of bed that was a major effort for them, you know. And some days it was harder than others, you know, some days they couldn't get out of bed. But, you know, that's that is a really good application of technology. But then, you know, we see so many frivolous uses of technology as well, and you know, you know, AI and toys. Do we really need AI and toys? You know, do you want your Teddy Ruxpin to be smarter than you?

R Rob Mineault 48:01

Yeah, I think we'll see a lot of advances in healthcare, for sure.

R Rob Mineault 48:05

Yeah, yeah.

L Lis Malone 48:07

I have to spend a lot of time on social media for my, my work and everything, everything, everything is fake and AI generated. It's, almost nauseating, because everything you look at now, you, if you're an adult with some degree of common sense, you have to look at it and you know, you're like, all this, all this crap is fake, and everything from whether it be spoofing celebrities, stealing identities like, you know, use making false claims to creating these videos where somebody puts on this cream and it magically vanishes, the wrinkles and all kinds of things. I mean, everything to even like the remember, everyone used to love like little, adorable pet videos. They're fake too. Everything is fake. That's what's, what's just really annoying is that you're, it's becoming as fake as regular TV. That was one thing that was cool about social media is that you were seeing things from regular people doing funny things, or talented even now. I mean, now you can't even, can't even express appreciation for somebody who's like, a great singer or who does this great dance move which, like, that's fake, like, that's not really them doing it. I mean, that's, that's, that's what it's come down to, that you you, you cannot believe anything that you see anymore on the internet or on social media, just like, you know, if you say you watch a TV show and it's fiction, you have to look at it that way. Everything is fiction. It is purely entertainment and nothing more. That's sad.

R Rob Mineault 49:50

That brings up a definitely, it brings up a social issue, I think that we're going to be struggling with, for sure, because you're, you're absolutely right. I mean. And some of some of that, just some of the quality of the generative video, like, it's, it's can be startling. I love that there's this, there's this Instagram account that I love, and it's just, they've just made, like, ridiculous AI cat videos like, you know, a cat riding a unicycle playing a trombone, waking somebody up at three o'clock in the morning. And 10 years ago, if someone showed you that video, you'd be like, oh my God. Like, how did you how you trained a cat to ride a unicycle and play it? It would blow your mind 10 years ago. I think that as a society, on a social level, when you when we don't know what's real and what's not, that that could pose a bit of a problem for us down the road. I don't it already is, yeah, and I don't know how to, I don't know how we're gonna put that genie back in the bottle.

R Ryan Fleury 51:08

Well, we used to also have an appreciation for for talent, for art, for for creativity, right? You know, we're talking about all these videos and stuff, and you used to be a lot of talent. And, you know, Rob, you know, as a graphics designer, that there's a lot of time and effort that goes went into learning how to do all that sort of stuff. And same with, you know, the music industry. Last time I checked on Spotify, the number one song was an AI song. Like, we've just lost our appreciation for human creation.

R Rob Mineault 51:43

Yeah, I would say that we're in danger of that. But I guess I'll play the optimist of the group, because I also think that I know that there's pushback against all of that. Sure there, there are people that are just like, you know, AI slop is a thing. I know people that, and I actually, I do it like, I don't always, if I Google something and I get that AI overview, I don't always like, I will sometimes scroll by that because I'm like, I'm not gonna, I'm not gonna rely on that, because I can't trust that. Or if it does give you information, I'll double check it. I'm constantly double checking, you know, and I've used, I've used Chat-GPT - I'm like, Steve, I've got an account. I've used it for things like coding. I've used it for things like, you know, helping writing or idea generation. But what I found is that you're you have to constantly double check it, or you have to constantly, like, walk it to where you want it to go. Very, very, very rarely, if you ask it to do something, does it do it right the first time. At least in my experience, you know, I was, I was working on with it, writing some code, like, just HTML and CSS code, and, yeah, it would take me, like, three or four generations of walking it through, like, no, that didn't work. Try again. It's like, oh. And it would come back and be like, oh yes, of course, I see the problem. Now. I did this and this, and it would correct itself, and it would eventually get there. But it's not a one for one process. So I think that, you know, it's still at a point where you have to really be careful with it, and it's a again, it's a tool. You have to treat it as a tool that helps you you do something, but it just can't be used as a replacement. And I think that, hopefully that's the direction that that people go and recognize it as a tool and not just as a I can just save a bunch of time and just plug this into Chat-GPT and it'll do it for me. So that's my take.

S Steve Barclay 53:43

I was using Chat-GPT a lot on our newsletters to generate the Bulldog picture at the beginning of the of the newsletter. You know, give me a picture of a bulldog doing this. Give me a picture of a bulldog doing that. And I, at one point, given chat GPT a picture of my dog Daisy when she was alive, and now that Bulldog always looks a fair bit like Daisy. But, yeah, my nephew, who's a graphic designer, oh, he was mad at me about that. Oh, he was mad. Yeah, yeah, he got really hot one day with me about, oh, you're using that AI crap.

R Rob Mineault 54:25

It's gonna take away my job.

S Steve Barclay 54:28

Well, here's the thing, it is going to take away jobs like that. Yeah, it is. It's going to have a serious impact. Because, you know, Chat-GPT will will render that in under a minute. And if I need to make a tweak, it takes under a minute to render the tweak, you know, until I've got what I want. If I go to a graphics designer, one, it's going to cost a hell of a lot more money. And two, it's going to take a lot longer for anything to be produced. And then if it has to be tweaked, it's more money and more time. So, I mean, it's filling a need, and, yeah, it is disruptive, no question. But yeah, it's that. My bigger concern about AI is the impact it's going to have on free and fair elections. Because, you know, you can, we don't currently have any really good laws around the use of AI, right, like and it's being used in deep fakes all over the place for all kinds of nefarious purposes. I bet in the in the upcoming Canadian election cycle, the upcoming US election cycle, we are going to see deep fakes like never before, and we're going to be bombarded with them, and then we're going to be bombarded with the people on social media going, did you see that? Did you see what he said? And it's just going to stir levels of outrage to to levels that we've never experienced before. I think it is incredibly dangerous, yeah, when it's not regulated, and our regulation is lagging so far behind right now, trying keep up, because AI changes so quickly.

R Rob Mineault 56:12

Yeah, and it's really who the people who need to be the the police of that are the AI companies. I mean, they're the ones that can put the actual guardrails in, and they're just not doing it.

S Steve Barclay 56:24

I mean, they're the ones lobbying government to not let that happen. Yeah, want to be regulated.

R Rob Mineault 56:34

That's crazy. Well, then it's, I don't know. Like, you know, it seems to me, and I don't know how easy this would be to do, but, like, I don't know, put a watermark, like, any sort of AI generated video, there's, there must be a way for them to put any, some sort of a digital watermark into it so that people can tell right off by looking at it that, okay, this is AI generated. Obviously, if it's a cat playing a trombone riding a unicycle, like, I'm not, I'm not fooled at this point. I mean, it worked the first time.

L Lis Malone 57:06

All they would need to do is run the file through a watermark scrubber.

R Rob Mineault 57:14

Yeah, I know. I suppose there's always going to be a way around it, but yeah, I mean, yeah, I don't know, but that's a whole that's a whole other podcast episode, like all the social problems that we might be staring down the barrel of. But hopefully somebody's somebody out there is paying attention to that, because I kind of agree, I think that that could be can really bite us in the butt at some point. There is one more thing about AI though, that I was talking to Ryan a bit, a bit about the other day, and that I do want to talk about, and it does kind of tie into assistive technology before we start to wrap up. In December sometime, RAM prices, computer memory prices really started to go up. I guess what has happened is that some of the RAM manufacturers have stopped producing RAM for for the consumer market and have strictly just, they're just making RAM for AI companies because all the data centers, they're buying up all the RAM. They need, of course, the RAM to power the computers that drives the AI. And so what's happening is that is that computer memory prices have tripled, quadrupled, just in the past month, month and a half. And of course, computer memory like that drives everything. It's not just, you know, some guy trying to build a gaming computer that's going to be affected. This is, this is in every single piece of of AT. This is in your phone. This is your laptop. You're gonna, yeah, you're, you're really gonna see the impact of this going forward, in pretty much any piece of tech. And I kind of wanted to get everybody's thoughts about that, and if anyone had some anything to add.

R Ryan Fleury 59:11

I'll just quickly say that I think we're going to see prices in the AT industry go up this year. I don't think there's any choice the manufacturers are going to have to pass the buck, and so look forward to higher costs.

S Steve Barclay 59:24

I mean, traditionally, a lot of at has been manufactured in places like China. That's all getting tariffed now. You know, we've already seen an increase in our hearing products from Bellman sim fund knocked up by 15% because they were, they were manufacturing in Taiwan, I believe. And you know, I haven't, I haven't seen it happen from the guys at Irie-AT who bring in all the CloverBook products, but that that's gonna happen. I actually shipped a unit back for repair to them, and I got hit with tariffs because they decided it was a sale and not a repair, but I got charged for a single CCTV going across the border back for a repair, $1,800.

R Rob Mineault 1:00:12

Wow, wow, wow.

R Rob Mineault 1:00:15

Which is almost makes you want to not bring anything in that may have to go back down for repair, actually exactly, because you're gonna lose all your profit.

S Steve Barclay 1:00:25

So, yeah. So now I have to appeal that. That'll take a year, but, and at the end of the day, they're gonna say, oh, no, the paperwork was was incorrect, and it's your fault, so you got to pay it. But, yeah, it's, it's nutty, and yeah, I think it will impact prices, because a lot of the components that we use, too, are made overseas. And this, all of these data centers being built, is what's killing our RAM prices, because the manufacturers are now gearing up to to make that kind of RAM instead of, you know, consumer RAM for consumer devices. So it's, it's gonna get pricey.

R Rob Mineault 1:01:08

Yeah, for sure. I like, I mean, it's really weird, and just think of the impact that this would have had if this happened a year ago, back when, you know, Windows 10 was being discontinued, and you know, Microsoft was doing this big push of, well, just you, just, everybody, just go and buy a new computer. Well, hey, I would hate to have to buy a new computer this year, because I think that it's, it's going to be considerably more expensive to buy a new laptop this year than it was last year, for sure.

R Ryan Fleury 1:01:39

Well, you kind of have to wonder too, though, what is in the pipeline like is what's on the shelves for computers? What's available? Are there warehouses full of computers? So like, if Best Buy runs out, is there going to be a shortage on computers, on TVs, on microwaves, all of this stuff runs on memory? If you can't get memory, you can't get products. So are we going to have a supply and demand issue? Big picture.

L Lis Malone 1:02:07

Look on the bright side, after all, Ryan ...

S Steve Barclay 1:02:11

On the bright side, we'll be able to ask AI all kinds of questions about it.

R Ryan Fleury 1:02:16

Yeah, but we'll be paying $300 a month for our subscription. Yeah, they got to support these data centers.

R Rob Mineault 1:02:30

Yeah, wow. Well, and that just barely scratched the surface, too. I think it's going to be an interesting year all around. I think you know, we're already, we're only the we're only, what, two weeks in, I'm already exhausted.

S Steve Barclay 1:02:47

Hey, I want to talk about one of the CES items.

R Rob Mineault 1:02:49

Okay, yeah.

S Steve Barclay 1:02:50

I sent you that link in chat there too. Yeah. I saw that a product called Naqi. And this one, to me, is the single most useful thing that I've seen come out is CES so far this year. What it is is it's a pair of ear buds, but it is monitoring the ear bud is actually monitoring muscles, brain waves and gestures. So what it lets you do is it lets you use different like things like smiling, clenching your jaw, probably twitching your nose, I don't know, but it lets you use different facial features to control things. So it's kind of like, you remember we had the SmyleMouse for a while. Yep, where it would it would use a camera, it would track your your eye movement, but then you could, you'd click by smiling or blinking or raising an eyebrow or something like that. And we still have that through. What's the other one? SensePilot, that's the one. But this one, it actually goes in your ear and and it's monitoring brain waves as well. I think this could be a real game changer for people with severe physical disabilities.

R Rob Mineault 1:04:23

Huh, wow.

S Steve Barclay 1:04:24

They're gearing it towards the mainstream. There's actually on their on their website, which is https://www.naqilogix.com. They've got videos of a guy playing a 737 simulator, just using that.

R Rob Mineault 1:04:43

Wow, wow, that's wild. And hey, I see one of the testimonials. Steve, one of the testimonials is actually from Sam Sullivan, who's the ex-Mayor of Vancouver.

S Steve Barclay 1:04:56

Oh yeah.

R Rob Mineault 1:04:57

So you'll be keeping an eye on that, I'm sure. You going to be maybe reaching out to these guys and see if you can carry this?

S Steve Barclay 1:05:04

Yeah, I absolutely will.

R Rob Mineault 1:05:05

Huh, Sorry, Steve, not available he's busy flying at 747, he'll be back Friday.

R Rob Mineault 1:05:19

Well, anything else to say about the year ahead? Anybody? I'll open the floor. You can talk about anything you want.

S Steve Barclay 1:05:27

You know, I think the only thing, just giving a cursory scan of the stuff that's at CES Anyways, if that's any a sign post of what's to come in the coming year. I'm not really surprised. I think that again, where it's going to be wearables, it's going to be AI ad AI driven wearables, I think is going to be the thing to look for, and AI baked into pretty much everything in the home. I think that that's what we're we're moving towards. And I think that that that can certainly be a huge benefit to the assistive technology market. I think that there's, there's a lot of cool stuff that that's coming out, but as Ryan likes to say, time will tell.

R Rob Mineault 1:06:19

Time will indeed tell

R Rob Mineault 1:06:22

Any final thoughts?

R Ryan Fleury 1:06:23

Nope.

R Rob Mineault 1:06:24

Going once ...

S Steve Barclay 1:06:25

I want to see hydrogen powered cars hitting the road this year. More of them.

R Rob Mineault 1:06:30

Hmm, we're still, they're still working on getting self driving cars out there.

S Steve Barclay 1:06:35

Yeah, I don't care about the self driving. I want hydrogen power.

R Rob Mineault 1:06:37

Oh, talk to the blindness community. They want self driving cars.

S Steve Barclay 1:06:41

Yeah, I suppose they do.

R Rob Mineault 1:06:42

Why would you want hydrogen? Isn't that what was in the Hindenburg? hydrogen powered car? Sounds dangerous.

L Lis Malone 1:06:56

Have they gotten any further with the self driving car?

S Steve Barclay 1:07:01

I think there's all kinds of self driving car projects going on out there right now, tons of them. There's also autonomous flying taxis out there, for goodness sakes.

R Rob Mineault 1:07:12

Yeah, I think that's in China somewhere, still, isn't it? Or did they try to do it in Vegas?

S Steve Barclay 1:07:18

They were doing a pilot project in Vegas at one point, right?

R Rob Mineault 1:07:23

I mean, not to go down a rabbit hole, but I did, I did see, I watched something, or I read something that was that was interesting, that sort of there was, it was that talked about autonomous vehicles and sort of the implications of it. I think the technology is probably there. But I think that we're where we're a long way from, is how in the heck would we build autonomous vehicles into our current city infrastructures,

R Rob Mineault 1:07:51

like the infrastructure comes on board it like

R Rob Mineault 1:07:55

there's just no way to actually implement them. I think that's sort of the bigger problem around that it's not, you can't just throw a bunch on the road and then there you go. It would require, like, a lot of retooling on the way that we we build our cities, and we've built our cities, so that's probably why we're, like, 20 years away from actually having sort of a functional autonomous fleet out there that that's that's working for people. But who knows? Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe they'll be at next year's CES. I don't know.

S Steve Barclay 1:08:26

Well, there are, currently, there are autonomous cars out there in specific cities, but they're always within very specifically defined zones, right? The mapping has to be phenomenal within those zones for it to work properly. You know, if you start talking about level five autonomy, and nobody's got that out there, and that would be like a fully driverless take you anywhere, kind of kind of car. It's like, take me to Grandma's house, and it just takes you, takes you to Kelowna and, you know, up the up the back alley, to Grandma's door that nobody's got that yet, but, but they've got it geo fenced.

R Ryan Fleury 1:09:07

So I think there's even some delivery in Toronto that is using them for for delivery and pickup of stuff. Yeah, I could see a certain like, you say, certain routes that are predetermined. Yeah.

R Rob Mineault 1:09:20

I mean, that's probably not too far away, maybe, like deliveries, but I don't know about like passenger. I don't know, I don't know how far we are from that.

R Ryan Fleury 1:09:31

I would Sorry, Steve, but I would trust a self driving car more so than most drivers out there, most drivers, because the reaction time is so much quicker. They're not distracted. I can play the music as loud as I want. Play whatever I want. You just, you don't have to worry about distractions.

R Rob Mineault 1:09:59

Just for context everybody, everybody in the audience. Ryan commuted in with Steve, probably for years, when we still at Aroga.

R Rob Mineault 1:10:10

You're walking now, Ryan.

R Rob Mineault 1:10:18

Just saying, there's nothing wrong with your driving, but self driving cars don't have to worry about reaction time, distractions, itchy nuts.

R Rob Mineault 1:10:33

It's not the autonomous car. It's when you pit the autonomous car against Billy Bob, who doesn't know how to, you know, navigate a three way stop.

R Rob Mineault 1:10:41

But the autonomous car is smarter than Billy Bob, so I'll trust the autonomous car.

R Rob Mineault 1:10:45

Won't help you when Billy Bob t-bones you.

L Lis Malone 1:10:45

I feel like we first car is going to have, like, all kinds of signage on them, kind of like you ever see a student driver on the road? Student driver? Cone on the top ...

R Ryan Fleury 1:11:04

I don't know if it was CES or something else I was listening to the other day, but they have come out with airbag pants.

S Steve Barclay 1:11:16

Oh, yeah, I saw those. Yeah, airbags for, for, like, seniors falling, yeah, falls are number one cause of senior deaths. Because they fall, they bring their hip, they die of some complication. And, yeah, happens all the time. And these, these pants are you just, you just wear them. But if you fall over, airbag,

L Lis Malone 1:11:36

think that there was some sort of test on those. I heard about those. Those are, they didn't, they didn't go off every single time. They're, they're glitchy, glitchy, right? Yeah, they're not. They're not completely, you know, fall proof.

R Rob Mineault 1:12:01

Yeah, well, I mean, listen, if you got a chance, it's better than nothing. But the question is, how comfortable they are. I mean, that big thing, when you get to that age, comfortable pants, it's important, an important part of your daily life.

L Lis Malone 1:12:16

Well, it's not so much just the comfort. It's it's how easily can you get them on and off, like during an emergency moment.

R Rob Mineault 1:12:23

or if you fall, you've got these air bags around your legs. Are you able to even move or get up? Or you're just gonna roll around like a marshmallow.

L Lis Malone 1:12:30

If you're an older person, you're probably gonna roll around like a log.

R Rob Mineault 1:12:34

You're gonna be like, it's like those sumo suits that you see. He's rolling around, which would be fun.

R Ryan Fleury 1:12:40

Actually, I think we should find Rob a pair. Steve, yeah, how much are they?

R Rob Mineault 1:12:46

Maybe we just just like, put them in, like, a big hamster wheel kind of thing. That's, that's, you know, you can't get injured in one of those bouncing around. Have you tried being in a hamster ball going down a flight of stairs? I think that would be fun. I'd like to try it actually.

R Ryan Fleury 1:13:08

Oh, we have to remember that.

R Rob Mineault 1:13:09

And I'm not the right demographic.

S Steve Barclay 1:13:13

here we have Rob Mineault. He's our newest residence in the home, we like to refer to him as head injury Rob.

R Rob Mineault 1:13:20

Try to get my helmet and my hamster ball. I'm ready, ready to rock and roll and roll. Let's get out of here. We've gone long and a lot of silliness. We're just getting silly now, Hey Ryan.

R Ryan Fleury 1:13:39

Hey Rob.

R Rob Mineault 1:13:40

Where can people find us?

R Ryan Fleury 1:13:42

www.atbanter.com.

R Rob Mineault 1:13:45

Hey, they can also drop us an email if they so desire, at cowbell@atbanter.com

S Steve Barclay 1:13:55

Yes indeed. And if they are so inclined, they can also engage with us at social media, on places such as Facebook and Mastodon and even Instagram.

R Rob Mineault 1:14:06

That is correct and Lis, I don't know, plug something.

L Lis Malone 1:14:09

It's all fake. Don't bother looking at social media. It's all fake people.

S Steve Barclay 1:14:14

Plug your company Lis. Come on. You never, you never gave yourself a plug.

L Lis Malone 1:14:17

Yeah, Fakers-R-Us.

R Rob Mineault 1:14:22

She'll never tell us where she works.

S Steve Barclay 1:14:24

The mystery continues.

R Rob Mineault 1:14:28

Okay, well, I think that is going to about do it for us this week. I was gonna say this year for some reason, I was like, wow, we're not done for the year, starting big. Thanks, of course, everybody for listening in, and we will see everybody next week.

S Steve Barclay 1:14:52

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