

Raymond Sidney-Smith 0:00

Hello personal productivity enthusiasts and community Welcome to Anything But Idle, the productivity news podcast. I'm Ray Sidney-Smith.

Augusto Pinaud 0:09

I'm Augusto Pinaud.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 0:10

And we're your hosts for Anything But Idle. This is Episode 86. And we are coming to you to talk about a productivity technology event that is technology event proper, which is that the Samsung Galaxy unpacked event, the part two of that event, the October 2021 event happened. And so to do that, to have that discussion, that commentary, we have invited onto the show, Art Gelwicks of course. And so Art Gelwicks is a productivity and collaboration consultant. He's a blogger at the idea pump calm, and he's the host of the being productive podcast. He co hosts the cross platform podcast with Augusto Pinaud. And of course he joins us on ProductivityCast podcast each week. Welcome to Anything But Idle art.

Art Gelwicks 0:57

I'm telling you every it sounds like I need to step up and actually do some work. So because that's that litany, I just sound like a slacker. I mean seriously.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:08

Well, it's great. Thanks

Art Gelwicks 1:09

for having me.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:10

Yes, of course. Great to have you on the show to talk about this Samsung Galaxy unpacked part two. And so a brief event. But notwithstanding they announced a few things.

Art Gelwicks 1:23

It was like a mini It was like a mini event.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:26

Yeah, exactly. So so let's get into kind of the primary thing they announced was the Samsung Galaxy z flip three, the bespoke edition, a favorite word of mine, bespoke. And so tell us a little bit about what you thought about the bespoke edition of the Z flip three,

Art Gelwicks 1:44

it the whole package of the event was all about personalization. Not only was the flip three talked about for bespoke, and I'm gonna dig into that, but also the galaxy Watch has a split, bespoke option now. And what that really is talking about is this is Samsung's unveiling of their customers supply chain, manufacturing on the fly, for lack of a better term. And if we focus on the Z three, flip the Z flip three, I'll always get that wrong. What you can literally do is go into the Samsung site and choose the color configurations that you want for the device. Do you want a black, you want a gray? Do you want a yellow Do you want a salmon color, I forget the exact color combinations they have. But you can pick and choose them. And then they will build the device to your spec for that it doesn't change the internals, you don't get to choose a better camera or a bigger battery. It's all about the look of the device. But being able to do that one is a nice feature. It's very much it targeted for the ownership. And you can see from the beginning of this mini event, and I'm gonna keep calling it a mini event because it only lasted about 23 minutes. From the very beginning, it was about ownership of the device. This is my device, this is my world. They started with another KPop star. In this case, she was outlining

how it fits into her environment, and she makes the device her own. I think it's interesting. I think the entire event probably shouldn't have happened on its own. It should have been attached to the other event, there was probably some sort of a timing issue around actually being able to say, Hey, we can do this now. Because if you ran out and you bought one of the flips right away, you now can't go buy one of the bespoke ones because they released it after the fact. So that's that's a little bit different. Aside from that, though, it doesn't it doesn't really change the space. So much. They didn't talk about a fold bespoke option. It's only the flip that they talked about. And the galaxy watch having a bespoke option which I actually think is a little bit more intriguing. Getting that custom watch configuration because while the phone personalizing the phone is one thing, personalizing the watch is a whole different conversation. Because it is it is very much closer to your person. And in most cases the phone is going to have a case on it. phone cases for phone having a case well it makes it tough. what's the what's the upside?

Augusto Pinaud 4:35

You know, there were two things you mentioned something really interesting. This may be the first steps into customizing that phone and maybe later will allow Samsung to say okay update the camera. You know start with seamless laptop. It start with a 499 model and upgrade the case the case in upgrade the camera, upgrade this and that and make it Your custom phone. The disappointing for me was when they show the constant Oh, this is cool. And because then you can instead of buying a case, you know replace this plate as they get scratch or whatever thinking they were replaceable, I didn't understood later that none of you need to pick the color. And that's it, I thought you will be able to change them. So say by blues and black and yellow, and then, but whatever color you move that morning, that's what I understood originally, then was what you pick colors. And that's what it is still. I agree with you. I don't know why they felt that they needed to have a 20 minute event this week. But I that was really, really interesting and Ziering them is starting to offer the same customization level that you may have in a laptop or or event, eventually, you will get to that will be really really interesting game for Samsung.

Art Gelwicks 6:06

This to me, excuse me was Samsung doubling down on their play of the flip three being a fashion brand. They're they're really going hard into the fact that the flip three is a phone to be seen. More so even to be used. I mean, it's definitely one of those eye catching things. And having purchased one very recently for my daughter. And looking at it and working with it a little bit just in the few seconds I had in my hand before she snatched it away from me. When it's folded closed, and you see somebody with one of those folded closed phones, you know exactly what phone it is. It's not a black slab of glass. So changing the color design of it really doesn't matter all that much. You can truly make it whatever you want. There are very few brand colors that are tied to phone manufacturers that you go Yep, that's that phone because or that manufacturer because it's that color. One of the things that intrigued me though a little bit. And this is this came after watching the Google event and then watching the Samsung event. And we'll talk about this later on. We talked about Google, Google's going hard on their design with their camera bar across the back. Nice. There are a lot of the configurations of the flip three color combination, that if you do the color combinations, it looks like a Google phone from the back. It has that same black bar. Now it's not tied to the camera. It's just how the colors layout. But to me thinking about it from a branding perspective that almost creates confusion because now Which one is it? Is it a flip? Is it a Google but as soon as you fold the thing in half, you know. So they're they're definitely double down and are going double down on this whole idea of this being a fashion brand as part of this. And they talked about to being able to customize the cases and having custom cases. And just tying that whole ecosystem in. And what intrigued me a little bit is they dovetailed it with ui 4.0 and the customizability of ui 4.0. So what we've seen across the board in every product they've released so far this year, is this presence of even though you're in our ecosystem, these are still your devices, we're not

making the decisions for you as to what they should look like. And they're going after name brands consuming is that the fashion brand that they tied to, they're already tied to I can't remember the watch one. But there's, there's really starting to make that push so while I think it was, I think there's definitely a plan behind it. It wasn't targeted at a big audience, there was a specific group to tie for

Raymond Sidney-Smith 9:12

that was really interested to kind of read through the various pieces of what they what they talked about, and why they made these particular choices in terms of, of customization and using the design house like today to to like kind of you know, broadcast an event. The the so this comes with the galaxy watch four and the buds two, those are the two that are of the Maison Kitsune a brand and so very interesting choice there. I don't know enough about that particular design house, but clearly that's a fashion house and they wanted to make sure that they were broadcasting that message to them and showing that they could do this with other fashion houses. Right and so you know, I'm sure they've got their eyes on michael kors and on Louie Vuitton and others that would that would otherwise recognize Oh, that's right, we could do this too, you know, whereas Google, you know, you know, kind of had a fossil jump on board and do, you know, a level of smartwatch, you know, development there. This is kind of the direction in which Samsung is going saying, you don't have to do all the hard work, we can actually help broadcast your brand. without all of that, you know, icky, you know, getting your hands mired in the OEM space. And I feel like this is a good step for them

Art Gelwicks 10:33

from, from a deep marketing perspective, it does make a lot of sense to me that they are going after these types of name brand relationships that may not move a huge amount of product, because it's tied to it. I don't know how many Kitsune relate, you know, branded phones, they're actually going to release or earbuds they're going to sell. But the fact is, is that the people who will be buying those are your influencers. And the influencers have the exposure on the Instagram and tik tok and all of all the other various places. And that's what Samsung wants, Samsung wants their products to be the most highly visible ones out there. Because you don't go through the effort of customizing a manufacturing and supply chain for your end users to be able to define what their products are going to look like. Unless you're really buying into this idea that you will sell more based on the ones that you sell to a select audience. And they so far, the flip has been their big winner. I mean, the fold has been popular, no question about it. But the flip has been the one that everybody has talked about, and everybody is driving around. And like I said, having held it in my hand and holding it up next to a note 20 Ultra. And when it's open, it's the same size. You're talking about a device now that even I'm looking at it going this, this has a lot of potential growth opportunities for it. So I was very intrigued by their approach for doing this again, I wish I wish this had been part of the previous event, though, I'm sure there was some logistical reason why they couldn't do it. But this really would have catalyzed it that much more it would have made it that much of a more of a showcase thing.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 12:30

And I was just looking on their website, the amazing consuming brand, and it's a French Japanese music label and fashion apparel brand. And so very, very unique and interesting play for Samsung, they're also released a series of new features on the Samsung Galaxy watch four. And so they they brought a few new things, what what did they bring to the table art,

Art Gelwicks 12:56

I know of at least and I've only been catching this after the fact because I didn't really see these during the presentation, they weren't called out as heavily as I would have hoped. But aside from being able to go in and do a bespoke watch, you know, pick and choose your display, or your configure your casing and your watch band setup. Which personally I think is

really nice because these new watches have a slightly different band configuration than the old ones, they actually have this almost quarter moon shape at the top. So you really want to get the Samsung bands if you want to carry forward that aesthetic. But that said, they're also releasing for new watch faces right away, that have different health configurations and things like that. Beyond that, I don't know if they announced anything else that was coming up. But I know they have been doing several updates as of late.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 13:48

Yes. So the features are the info brick watch face, which basically pulls together heart rate and stress to daily activity status. And then you can also have a basic dashboard, which is just basically a bunch of numbers, battery life date, other kinds of things like that steps you've taken, there's a weather center, there's also a live wallpaper, which you can change among various different kind of moving things. It's akin to what I what I have on the pixel, which, you know, you kind of have this live wallpaper, it's kind of moving and morphing as you move the phone around, which is really nice. Yeah, I

Augusto Pinaud 14:20

think it was it was again, it went really nice. I'm showing customization and show the possibility. So

Art Gelwicks 14:28

I'm very curious to see specifically around the watch faces because watch faces have such an impact on the battery life on the devices. The first three watch faces, they're releasing pretty standard, they shouldn't have much of an impact that live wallpaper, one I can only imagine is going to be a battery suck. So I'll be I'll be curious, just to see if anybody really uses. Samsung has a slew of watch faces that come along with the devices that I don't know anybody that uses them. I mean, they're just they're kind of like their watch faces on these devices are really third party types of things, you get applications like phaser. And that sort, where vendors are, developers are creating new watch faces, I have a slew of them. It's kind of funny because I actually subscribe to facer, their premium accounts, so I can have unlimited watch faces. And I will literally change my watch faces a couple times during the course of the day just because of my short attention span. That's one of the nice flexibilities of this kind of thing. And I understand what Samsung is doing with these, these phases, and they have that standard approach. But there's still, I don't know, there's there's still things I think they're going to struggle with a little bit if they can't get some of this stuff resolved. But that said, they keep sending out the updates, which good on them, keep cranking them out. So

Raymond Sidney-Smith 15:56

and is there any difference between the 40 millimeter and the 44 millimeter?

Art Gelwicks 16:02

One, not from a device standpoint that I'm aware of, aside from battery life, battery life is one thing at the rotating bezel. Aside from that, no, and I'll be honest with you, I have the 44. And it's doesn't feel large, it doesn't feel heavy, it's not cumbersome. It's very robust. From a design standpoint, I got the stainless steel one. And I use it all the time that the fast charger is fast. I mean, it charges up in half an hour, you run full time, and if you're running it full out. So you've got sleep tracking on pulse tracking on always on display, you're still going to get about 16 to 18 hours of battery life out of it. So you can go pretty solid. Yeah, it's it's absolutely it's not as good. I will say it's not as good as what Tyson used to be Tyson used to be able to go two to three days, depending on how you had it configured. But I haven't had any issues with it. And knowing that this is running where oh S is it has opened up some interesting applications that I can actually use on on the watch itself. So being able to customize it, then is really nice. But going back to what you were saying earlier, gousto. If I've already bought these devices, if I already bought a flip phone, if I already bought a watch mode, the bespoke part

doesn't do me any good. It's only for new purchases, then if Samsung really wants to carry this forward, they've got to make some way to customize after the purchase. Now I know they have some cases and some things like that. But I think if they carry this to its logical conclusion, the accessories market that they have, will expand itself if they can do on demand bespoke purchases for the products after they've been purchased. That'll just extend the life.

Augusto Pinaud 18:02

Yeah, no. And that was what I was hoping you know that I could buy whatever my phone and white and then go and order the blue plates and change that often not. Okay, I created them blue, and now my stock was blue forever,

Raymond Sidney-Smith 18:17

said there are people out there who want to not have a case. And I know that we three are probably not those people. But there are people out there who enjoy having the naked phone, and they want to be able to design it and they want to be able to show it off. And that's what this is for. It's not for the everyday person who just thinks well, I want a different color conscious.

Art Gelwicks 18:39

It's an interesting take on that too. Because when we talk about Google, one of the things that they called out is the fact that they are offering cases for their phones. But their cases are translucent cases designed to show off the color of the device, which I have a clear case on my phone right now. Why? Because I have a mystic bronze phone and I've intentionally purchased those color schemes. And I want to show it off I don't want to put it in a play playing case. I just want to backtrack a little bit though to the watch. You were asking what's in the update. While we're sitting here I actually tapped on the update say okay, go ahead and download it. So it includes the four new types of watch faces including together AR emoji bitmoji, watch face, usability all improved. The my photo watch face supports GIF files, there's an animal and character watch face. Backup and restoration of the order of the watch faces improved HR measurement accuracy algorithm, which is good because it's been a little sketchy at times. Sensitivity option in the fall detection feature has been added which is nice. There's a new gesture. Okay. The new gesture is to allow you to run a dedicated app and if I remember correctly, the gesture is a knocking gesture. I have no idea how that's gonna work. So I don't even know what app I would run. But it's interesting that they're adding gestures into this. So if that's something, what other gestures can they add? What other things can how sensitive is the motion detection on this? So I'll be curious to see how that goes. But yeah, I mean, this is this is, again, that whole customization piece, making it your own and tying it into the ecosystem.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 20:32

And I want to see more of the of the watch and, and phone connectivity with relate relating to the gestures. So that since your phone has a camera, looking at you at all times, plus a bunch of sensors, yes, with with your hand gestures, holding, having the watch on it, can those two sets of telemetry can then tell you, you know, more information, you can do more precise movements to basically tell it what to do. And I'm really curious if at some point, they'll start to pair those things together. So you would be able to control your your television, or your computer or the phone from gestures, because it knows you're actually speaking to the phone at that time, because of the fact that you're facing the phone, and you're doing some specific type of gesture. And you would only do that for that purpose. So I see that as being kind of the next generation of phones having that capability, especially with projects solely in the in the pixel devices, it makes a lot of sense with where iOS and solely built into Android really giving you that capability. So I'm curious what will happen there.

Art Gelwicks 21:42

Yeah, there's definitely opportunities for them to leverage their ecosystem. And you could see it, if you watch the multiple events, and we'll dig into this on cross platform. There is this, this approach now, of not only tying into the ecosystem itself, but building on other ecosystem concepts. So for example, Google really doesn't have an ecosystem. But they got stuff. They've got a lot of stuff. But what they don't have is the next layer that Samsung has, which is the customization of the UI interface. They're bringing that to the forebear with Android 12. But that layer builds on that's the same approach that Apple has always done for years and years, building those layers on. So when I look at things like Samsung's releases in this mini release, it just fits into this equation. It just fits into this. If I'm gonna put the money into this ecosystem, what's all the stuff you can give me back? What are all the things that and the advantages I get out of it, and these are all parts and pieces with us. And it goes into the whole one ui 4.0. The piece of it, how that expands into this.

Augusto Pinaud 23:07

And he said something important that I think Samsung is been really trying to replicate that experience that you're getting Apple, you know, integrate your tablet, with your phone with your computer, your laptop, so that way you can move information and things from one to the other the same way you do it on the Apple products. I think that's something really, really nice that Google should be able to do, but it's not doing currently. Oh, there's

Art Gelwicks 23:37

there's no question that there's a much tighter integration between their products. Samsung is continued to progress down that path. And I think we will still continue to see that even more and more. The other thing that I find interesting, though, is again, we were starting to get a lot of I want to say partnership overlaps. And this wasn't a Samsung thing. But Google went in deep on the fact that they have a snapchat partnership. But there was a Google Samsung ad I saw over the weekend. And I'm like, that's interesting. They're getting ready to launch Google phones. But yet they've got this big ad about how Google and Samsung work together on Samsung devices. So there's a lot of Co Op petition for lack of a better name that's going on within the industry. And we've been at peak device for the longest time. And I have this kind of feeling that maybe we've taken a step over that line. The foldable devices have kind of pushed us forward a little bit further, the bespoke prod or production. The the integrated verticals are really starting to say okay, where is the next step on this stuff?

Raymond Sidney-Smith 24:54

Right? And it's, I mean, unfortunately, it's virtual reality, right? It's augmented reality. It's virtual reality. It's basic. simply buying things in the virtual world, because that's unlimited. And, and so they can get more access to people. So really the ultimate point for all of these OEMs is to work with the platform partners, which is why Google, really, they try as hard as possible not to have an ecosystem other than their software and services, because they don't want to be perceived as competing with any of their major OEMs. Who they need. They need those people to be embracing Android to be embracing Chrome OS, and to be making sure that they're building for those where OS making and building for those platforms. So they want to make sure that they don't, they don't rock that boat, they don't ever want pixel to be too successful, right? Because then if they're too successful, they're a challenger to Samsung. But if they're just successful enough to say, No, we're showcasing what pixel can do what Android can do with Google services, underpinning it, then OEMs will embrace that. And I think that's the line, Google has to constantly tell because Google doesn't care about those, they care about Google Search being on every device in the world, they care about making sure that they can access advertising partners through those, those Display Network partners. So that's their, that's their angle, for as long as they can sell ads, they want to sell ads. And that's all they really want to do. But because they know that that's a dying breed that's dying over time, they've got to work with the various partners to be able to make sure that they are wherever the next thing is going to go. That's why they built out nest, right? They don't care about smart

home devices, right? They don't want to be in that market. But they know that if that's where people are searching, they've got to be there. And so they keep continuing to put themselves where they need to be in order to keep the market under their control. And I know that's that sounds a little more strong than it than it really is. But that is the reality, right? They want to make sure that they have some level of persuasion and control over the market in which they serve. So I find it to be, you know, just interesting to watch how Google plays certain angles, because they need to be places.

Art Gelwicks 27:07

Yeah, and not to, to tangent too far. But this goes back to the classic comparison of Google is to Microsoft as Apple is to Samsung. When you look at their comparative product lines, what they're offering, for so long, they have offered themselves as reference devices, what it could be, well, for Google, it's always been what Android could be. Here's the device that makes Android all it could be Samsung has always looked at it said, hey, guess what, we've got Android and our devices so good that it makes Android great. It's a different approach to it, it's a different way of thinking. And while I don't think anybody over at Samsung thinks that Google is going to outsell them device wise, anytime soon, even with these new devices, I think what we're seeing is this direction of everybody really doubling down on their own hardware and software, and buying into the fact that if you own all the parts of the vehicle, you can customize it and make it the best it can be. But if you're still dealing with other people's stuff, you're stuck based on their parameters and their limitations. So when we look at integrations, such as wero s with Tyson and one UI functionality on top of it, they're trying to get to the best of both worlds. Same with the Samsung one UI interface on Android 12. There's going to be functionality that comes in Android 12. That has already existed on Samsung for quite a while through external applications. But it's integrated into the OS. Now, owning the chip manufacturer process, Samsung Knox has been there for a long time. But now Google's pushing the tensor chips. So again, we're seeing the same concept and how does each vendor implement that particular concept? That's where I think this becomes interesting. Because not so much, they will each come up with their own way. But they're gonna keep stealing ideas from each other, and improving on it slightly. Hopefully, sometimes they don't. But for the most part, they should be continuing to revise improve, and therefore get a better iterative design at the end of the day. I think it's a good thing.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 29:28

And with that we have now lasted longer than the show itself. Any final thoughts or comments about the Samsung Galaxy unpacked

Art Gelwicks 29:40

part to do? No, I think they're done for the year. So yeah, I can, I might be surprised, but I think they're done for the year. I'm anxious to watch for their next hardware from the laptop perspective. Actually. That's what gives me more.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 29:58

My final thought here is that I'm I've now that we've gotten through the pixel fall launch event and Google clearly isn't launching a pixel watch. This year I'm going to break down and buy the galaxy watch for I am trying to figure out how to get Bixby. Put aside, put Bixby back in his box and get a google assistant to work on online.

Art Gelwicks 30:23

Yeah, there's a lot of push to do that. So I would say sooner rather than later you're going to see that as an option.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 30:31

Oh, yeah, I've, I've no doubt. Although I'll admit,

Art Gelwicks 30:35

Bixby has gotten better. No question about it. Bixby has gotten better and Bixby routines are absolutely worth looking into. If you have a Samsung device that supports Bixby routines, they are worth looking at.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 30:51

Very good, very good. I do not and I will be I am inculcated in the Google ecosystem completely in terms of you know, just everything Google Assistant does for me. This morning, the Google Assistant said, Hey, Ray, you normally turn on your Keurig at this time of morning, would you like to do that? And I said yes. You know, it's like it knows me so well. And that's the kind of thing that I think is the future of technology and kind of the hope for technology you know, setting aside if you have proper privacy and security that you have a device that is just capable of ambiently knowing you in this way and then increases your productivity in that factor of me not having to think through what's going to happen but just nudging me in the right directions just a really brilliant example of how machine learning today really is helping us all so I want to thank you Art for joining me here on the the second of three shows today. Where can folks get to know you better and learn more about what you're doing out there in the world?

Art Gelwicks 31:56

Come over and visit me at the idea.pump.com slash follow me if I'm writing if I'm recording if I'm podcasting you'll find it there

Raymond Sidney-Smith 32:06

fantastic Always a pleasure to have you and we will see you again soon.

Art Gelwicks 32:10

Alright guys

Raymond Sidney-Smith 32:13

already gousto number two we are done with this episode Thanks so much to acoustic renowned for always helping put together these episodes if you have any questions comments thoughts everything is available there on Anything But Idle comm forward slash 0878686086. And or no it's eight seven it's eight seven we read numbered them didn't weigh it. This is eight seven. I wrote it in my notes here. One or the other. I'm not sure either way if you go to anything, Anything But idle.com you should be able to find the episode noted as commentary on Samsung Galaxy unpacked part two. So with that I bid you all farewell and we will see you next time on Anything But Idle history, productive life