

Raymond Sidney-Smith 0:00

Hello personal productivity enthusiasts and community Welcome to Anything But Idle. The Productivity news podcast. Today's show is brought to you by co working space by personal productivity club. I'm Ray Sidney-Smith.

Augusto Pinaud 0:13

And I'm Augusto Pinaud.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 0:14

And we're your hosts for Anything But Idle. This is Episode 79 09 for September 13 2021. This is all about Google's upgrades to their systems with rooms, spaces and workspace more. And, of course, the activity and technology related news of the week. And so of course, each week, we bring you the productivity and technology news headlines of the week. And so we are going to head into our stories of the week gousto. What's our first headline this week,

Augusto Pinaud 0:47

calendar will break down how much of your work is spent in comedians. And men say this is a full Google following Microsoft Microsoft begin doing this. I don't remember we reported here in Anything But Idle when you start getting you know, how many hours are you getting into meetings, how many is focus time, one on one, what I see that they are claiming in here that I don't recall the Microsoft option doing is it's even given a breakdown when these meetings are one to one, three or more people are out of the office and I'm guessing to give you these three or more people you need to do them to make this is an educated guess. But that is really interesting. How many of these meetings are really one to one versus group meetings, and I'm unable to get this versus the other things you have in your calendar. So it is really interesting how Microsoft and Google are trying to give you this not that people don't know already, that there is way too many meetings but at least get a little more analysis on how much of this time it's really into meetings, and hopefully that will bring a better understanding for people have how to balance this.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 2:08

Yeah, I think you're giving Google a little bit more credit than they deserve here. I don't believe that they're actually analyzing Google meet meetings. I think it's literally just looking at the RSVP list. And identifying based on the RSVP list how many people are in any given meeting, I would be floored, I would love it. If they were actually analyzing Google meet meetings. I think the Microsoft Viva insights is far more built out than the current Google environment here. But I'm looking forward to seeing what time insights I've been using various Chrome extensions for several years, seeing all of the data that Google collects and provides to me about this. So I'm very curious to see how much of this will actually be useful going forward. And how it matches up with with my data, right? I'm a data tracker. So I like as a quantified self, or I like tracking all that data about myself. And so seeing the comparison between them is going to be really interesting. All told, alright, on to our next store this week.

Augusto Pinaud 3:10

Our next article, so long article from Fast Company, fantastic reads called productivity metrics aren't useful any longer. Here's a better way to get it done. And I start with a story that will make me laugh, you know, because I have experienced a version of this story many years ago, and the story's a manager who said, okay, people we are behind. So now you guys need to work on Saturdays, and this manager drive to the parking lot and count the number of vehicles, well, people's vehicle for their people is coming to the office. And then what start happening is, people start leaving the car on Friday, come back to the office and pick it up on Monday. And I have seen a version of this, okay. In in my early work as a salesman, you know, that the measurement was the coals and but never the duration of the call. So you were in trouble. Because if you didn't did X amount of calls, you're getting trolled regardless of the amount of

time you were on the phone. So what people started doing was exactly that people were dialing in, hang up, so they get to the numbers, and then they continue doing the quality calls they were doing before. So and then the part was that is well be careful. The lesson is be careful what you're measuring. Because if you're measuring the wrong thing, you're going to get the wrong results. So you need to pay attention. What is what you're measuring. So

Raymond Sidney-Smith 4:37

yeah, I think there was an interesting piece to this article. One is that the the author, I think, mistakenly notes here that we should be measuring outcomes over outputs. And that very much depends upon the business. Absolutely. In a knowledge based knowledge based or knowledge worker environment, we should certainly be paying attention to outcomes more often than outputs but not always, you know, in a retail environment or a manufacturing environment, the output is really important, you need to know how many widgets were, you know, were created, how many, you know, widgets were sold. So, so I don't think that we should be using qualitative or quantitative, we should be looking at both. And we should be understanding those as both businesses, but also as individuals. I think there's also a conflation here over the term productivity, we should consistently remember that personal productivity is very different than labor productivity, and business productivity. So when we think about this, from an individual level, we will want to measure, for example, lead indicators, but we will also want to measure lag indicators for certain parts of our lives as well. So this, it kind of is like we're jumping on this article specifically kind of dumps on productivity as being somewhat of a cult of of, you know, of productivity. But the reality is, is that what it's failing to do is understanding nuance about a topic, which, which they're talking about people misunderstanding, nuance. So we should really be making sure that we're paying very, very close attention to this, especially for an article focused on leaders, leaders need to understand nuance. And we need to also understand that, you know, there are some ways in which we misunderstand metrics, and misunderstand creating goals for people, and so on, so forth. But goal orientation is not going to be somehow dramatically, you know, transformative. If we then don't understand that there are some metrics that we do need to understand about people, you know, like ours, people are working or not, are not necessarily a useful indicator all the time. But they can potentially be a very useful indicator some of the time. And so don't start throwing, you know, things away, just because you think that somehow, you know, identifying only outcomes are going to be the thing and you know, me gousto, I've been on this bandwagon for years for outcomes, approached measurements. So

Augusto Pinaud 7:01

but he's, but he's important, but you make a real, a real important point that I that I see. And also, and it's who you are, what is the piece of the business that you're analyzing, there are pieces that yes, the outcome doesn't count. There are pieces that the outcome is exactly what is important, I say, reduce retail production. But also there is that middle. And one of the things I found in articles that this is missed that point, it is not black and white, it is black and white, but there is also grace in the middle. Because as you look into the business, they are you need the three measurements, because they're part of the business a true that doesn't matter if you are the IT guy doesn't matter how many widgets, that machine is producing, unless that you are controlling that machine. That is true, but there are other levels, and other places and other people inside of that organization, that is not really one or the other, it gets to be a combination of them. So you really make a balance into that.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 8:01

Absolutely. All right, onward to our next story. This week, a study out of Microsoft, well, not out of Microsoft, but basically about Microsoft employees. And before you kind of lead lead us up here a gousto. I will note that the title of the article says study of Microsoft employees shows how remote work puts productivity and innovation at risk. And this just goes to show how poorly the these headlines can really, you know, shed light or color, particular, you know things

and it just shows opinion too much. And so this is really important for us to understand that this is this is a colorable statement, just as a headline, considering that when you look at the study itself, it's a 14 page study produced by by nature, about human behavior. And it's called the effects of remote collab remote work on collaboration among information workers. And there are good and bad components about remote work that have been identified in this report. But for the title of the article, to say that it puts productivity and innovation at risk, misses the point of the study. And it really, I just want to make sure everybody's aware of the of these kinds of clear opinions being, you know, kind of put into these articles.

Augusto Pinaud 9:24

And the third part for me in this article is that they're picking on Microsoft who has been exactly the opposite of what they are criticizing on the article. Because I'm not I have never been a fan of Microsoft. Okay, and I have never been the defender but in this case, I'm going to defend it during this months of pandemic Microsoft has been trying to the best of what they can be to be on the lead of that to change their tools to make teams really a strong tool for this pandemic environment. Post pandemic environment, mix environment, whatever it is that we come. And they have been really working into put in there even they were the first ones who came when the Delta Varian came saying, Hey, we are not even going to have this conversation and we can have this conversation. For now we are going to continue, but then they are quoting Microsoft. Again, as you said, there is a lot of misquote on the article and, and stuff. But the studies what is interesting, in my opinion,

Raymond Sidney-Smith 10:29

well, and and the the flip side to this is that Microsoft has released quite a few pieces of these studies that have been done recently. And so on one one side, you know, with Microsoft and LinkedIn, they're talking about the very positives that have come out of this particular, you know, period of remote and hybrid work and figuring out these components. And in this particular study, you know, what was interesting in the study is that they really dived into the data around the survey of the Microsoft employees. And you could see that there's a mixed sentiment, and of course, that there's always going to be mixed sentiment among people, and you can't get people to agree on anything universally. And so like the the idea that somehow this, this bodes poorly for innovation, or productivity is purely an issue, issue of good management and good leadership, you know, with an infrastructure of technology that allows for these things to happen. And so I just, I find it to be, it's kind of, you know, interesting, I think, hopefully, post pandemic, we will have a post pandemic life, where we will then be able to do that kind of Monday morning quarterbacking, and see what worked, what didn't work in in light of that, I think we're all doing a really, I think, important level of work here, because the work we do today will be judged for the future of remote work tomorrow. And so it kind of bodes well for us all to do well, in this environment. Not everybody agrees with me on that. But the idea here is that we're being looked at and judged for purposes of what will be done in the future. And because of that, it's important for us to understand that this is a period where people are going through a great deal of strife, there's a lot of uncertainty, and there is a lot of stress, and that all of those things diminish productivity and innovation across the board. And yet, companies continue to operate, you know, things have not concerned to a halt. If it weren't for the Delta variant. The economies at least in the United States, the economy has roared back into, into into full throttle, because of pent up demand. So the the idea that somehow productivity and innovation are impacted negatively, by virtue of remote work, I think is a bit of a red herring. And I think we all need to recognize that. But I'm also curious to see on the flip side of this, what parts of our economy what types of workers are impacted negatively by remote work, and which ones are facilitated into thriving by virtue of remote work. And we should be flexible and dynamic in the face of all those things. So I just, I just don't like the idea that we're, you know, we're seeing such people who are choosing sides so quickly without understanding that again, going back to your note earlier, there are shades of gray and all of

this and so, you know, we have to recognize that not everyone is going to benefit from everything that we do. All right. On to our next Are we on to the next story, are we our

Augusto Pinaud 13:32

next is this our sponsor for this week. That is my personal productivity.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 13:38

We will see you after the break.

Sponsor Voice Over 13:42

Well, working in person may be normal for you. It's unlikely your co workers are as interested in being productive as you are, or working remotely or from home can be isolating and there's something powerful about being with productive people, even virtually that helps you be more engaged. If a flavor of these sounds familiar, co working space by personal productivity club is for you. co working space is a virtual work community designed to help members be more effective and efficient in their work and personal lives. At its core. We provide goal tracking and host focused action sessions throughout the week for accountability and camaraderie. Visit [Anything But Idle comm forward slash co working](#) to learn more CO working space lives inside personal productivity club, a digital community for personal productivity enthusiasts. So you can find people who use methods and tools you do too. Again, head over to [Anything But Idle comm forward slash co working](#) to see how co working space can help you be more productive. And now back to our show.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 14:53

Welcome back everybody to Anything But Idle on Ray Sidney-Smith joined here with gousto panelled for the second half of anything But idle, and so on to our technology stories this week, what is our first tech story this week,

Augusto Pinaud 15:07

first mega stories just to make your life difficult. And we are going to be talking about the framework laptop, and it is it is chipping. And they are right now working on the machines. The front end, we start with what is a framework like framework laptop is a project that is allowing you to really work and customize your laptop, make it upgradable by above average user, probably but but by your user, okay, one of the things was many laptops today is you can touch them, again, you can upgrade them, you want to put more memory and the solder in the board, and you can do anything with it. So this laptop, it's trying to be a fully configurable machine where you can come and change the pieces and upgrade the pieces and change the processor later on. So you will be able to have this laptop for a really long time. What impressed me about it aside of the fact that you can build all that is the fact that price wise was not unreasonable, it was actually pretty reasonable. I mean, I went and built one man, Dell, I five with 16 gigabytes of RAM, I mean nothing, but he was that 12 \$100 machine not much difference to what a Dell or an HP is going to cost me. So I hope this is the future for this. I know it's not, but I will love to be able to have this to be able to build the machine that you can upgrade you know i the realities right now that can change with right now our processors continue being fast and much faster than what we go with software and what our needs are, you know, I I have in my office, the iPad Pro, the first generation of the 12.9. And it's a still a fully capable machine is still a machine that works great. So why it will be great if I could flip the thing, open an upgraded memory RAM, then I will continue keeping the processor still good is the ram on that machine that is now showing that the machine has five years, but it will be great to be able to have that and legislation is going that way Europe is trying to get us to the right of repair and the right of repair will open the doors to things like this. I am in particular excited about it.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 17:38

Yeah, I think you're I think you're right on point here. I mean, that was the only commentary I was going to make is that we are moving in that direction from a legislative perspective. And it seems as though this company is ahead of the head of the curve. And in essence, with with this framework laptop, I think when we first reported on it, and it's its first unveiling, I was excited about it, then as I am about it now, and I look forward to seeing it in the wild and seeing what it does. And and I think it just makes sense for us to be able to keep devices in, you know, in service for as long as possible. And things like things like cloud ready. And other things just keep the electronics out of the the you know, trash piles. And that means keeping it out of landfills equates to a better environment, it creates longevity with those devices. And it's also less expensive for if you have a few kids in the household. And you know, and you're you're trying to, you know, a Florida family. buying all of these computers all of the time is really expensive. And it doesn't mean that the manufacturers are not going to be able to make money, you're going to buy the expansion slots, and you're gonna buy the upgraded hardware and so on and so forth. But at least you're not having to buy a whole new device when just one component is no longer the best in class. So I like this. Alright, on to our next story.

Augusto Pinaud 19:00

Well, Lenovo is rebooting the Chromebook duet and we both got the duet, the small duet at least and they are now coming with a 13.3 screen. Even more expensive given but it's the size of a laptop. And I really like mine. I like I like the duet I use it consistently is the machine for when I do record the show and many of the shows because it's what is sent there in there and allows me to doesn't matter what software re throw at me. I can that they The reality is the iPad doesn't do some of those things. So I need to I needed to find a different solution. So but I'm excited. It's still it's a 430 bucks, it's not going to be it's still on the budget side for a fully machine that can really be a solution. You know, I I was not really familiar to the Chromebook more than what We did with the exercise we did was that all surveys that we have shared in the show that we install Neverwhere, now that we have this, this is really an order that I got that word, this is really getting it to the next level. And I'm really enjoyed it will make me go out of my iOS No, but it's still, it will now allows me to recommend people you can get devices like this and get a really solid solution.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 20:27

Yeah, I'm really I'm really excited about this new duet, the 13.3 inch version I, I'm a little bit I'm a little bit hesitant because I don't want to buy any more devices. Well, I am I am enticed to have the larger screen. I think that's the only thing that I particularly dislike about the duet, it's like the thing I like about it. And the thing I don't like about it right is because it's small, it's portable, it's very easy to work with. And I really liked the duet for that reason. But at the same time, I like the idea of having a larger screen in that form factor, especially a 13.3 inch screen. You know, I've got I've got iPads and other tablets, I've got other Chromebooks around. And but you know, that size screen is a really nice piece of real estate for having a touchscreen to be to be able to type that. And, again, I'm still deciding on what my my fall laptop purchases going to be. And the duet might be one one part of my purchases,

Augusto Pinaud 21:24

you make a really important point when we, when when I wrote the iPad only book with Michael solinsky. That time was when the iPad Mini came into the market. Okay. And I always thought the 9.7 or 10.1, for that matter. It's a great size. But it's and my my, my machine of choice was the iPad Mini. And when the 12.9 came, I was really curious. And I'm really glad. And I still have both I have a mania and I have a 12.9. But the reality is my main driver is that one, because as the 10.1 is too big now to be really super portable, but too small to be the thinner look, hold a 12.9 to 13 inches, it is perfect for that. So I can work in this all day. And when I'm done, I can just grab the meanie and run and be effective if I need to be effective. But I don't need to sacrifice real estate.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 22:22

Yeah, I find myself really liking it. So I have a I have a 10.1 inch iPad. And I find myself gravitating towards the 10 inch screen size for both the duet and the iPad, whenever I just want a tablet to be able to read on and I just want to open it up and read something. And I'm not near my Kindle, which is either by my bedside or where I read in the house. And so it ends up being that kind of intermediary device for me to be able to do those things. And so I like that size. But absolutely throughout the day, I'm on much larger screens, right. So I've got, I've got plenty of huge monitors in front of me throughout the day that having that kind of smaller screen size, like a 13.3 inch is big enough, but it's a nice size to be able to go my last laptop was a 13.3 inch laptop. And so I feel comfortable being in that size for travel purposes. And you know, it's big enough that it's going to give you enough screen real estate to work on, but small enough that you can slip it into a bag and run. And so I think that's going to be a really nice new size and giving you options between which ones you'll use and which ones you won't for those purposes. All right. On to our next story gousto.

Augusto Pinaud 23:39

Our next story is how to install cursive. And we have talked about cursive here in the show already is the new Google for Chromebook handwriting and it works on the web. And I have cursive already Google for not letting me test this on my iPad. Okay. I have a Chromebook. But I don't have the pencil. Yeah, I can do the finger. That's not what I want to try. I really, one of the reasons I was really excited about it was because this could be that solution to have really universal handwriting, bring it to the iPad, talk, bring it to the Mac and see my notes in there opening the Chromebook opening the windows. And I was so so so excited about it. But as of right now, there is no way to run that pw a in the iPad. I can run it in the Mac. I can cheat and do it run it in the Mac, but I cannot run it in the iPad that obviously is where my pencil is. So Still, if you want to test it, here is how you can test it you will see the link. The announcement initially said that was going to be only available for the HP Chromebook x two. But if you can install it you can play we have played with it and it works really well.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 24:59

Yeah So if you go to cursive dot apps, Chrome, you will be able to spin up cursive and play with it. You have to have a touchscreen device, you know, so that you can be able to utilize it. But I think it's great. I think, eventually, you know, this will hopefully make its way to more platforms. And that'll be a good thing for everybody. All right. Our next and final story in the tech headlines.

Augusto Pinaud 25:26

Google one at five terabyte of storage plan for 2499 USD, you got, yes, yes. Yeah. And I don't know if I need more than two terabytes. But still, it made me think how much we have increased all that all this? Because five terabytes of data, okay, used to sound as something. When, okay, when are we going to? Impossible?

Raymond Sidney-Smith 26:08

I mean, impossible.

Augusto Pinaud 26:12

Okay, I am on this on the 144 megabyte, okay, floppy disk. Okay, God, I remember when you could get double of that, and he was like, and now, you know, we have devices coming with one terabyte of memory on the device, and it's not crazy. And, you know, my, my iPad has 512. So I get it that the five terabytes is not insane. I still look at and I was like, Wow, that is insane. Yeah.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 26:46

Well, and I think that the idea is, is that if you have three terabytes of data in your plan, you would have to be on the 10 terabyte plan right now, which is, you know, again, \$49.99 USD per month. And so now you can go to the five terabyte plan, you're only paying \$25 per month, which is a huge cost savings annually if you don't need 10 terabytes of data in your plan. And so I just, I find this to be an appropriate move for Google one, to provide this intermediary plan between the two terabyte 10 terabyte plan. And I'm presuming it's going to be similar to the other plans in the sense that you could pay for two terabytes at I think it's whatever, 999 per month, \$10 a month, or \$100 per year, I'm presuming then, I'm hoping that Google one then charges \$25 per month, or \$250 per year. So you get that cost savings on the annual. So and I think the same thing happens with the 10 terabyte plan, having the annual price give you that basically two months free for buying the annual plan. So, you know, I think that's a great cost savings for folks who don't need 10 terabytes per year in terms of space. And remember also that you can have everyone in your household. You know, in a in the Google household and the Google fan, they're called families in the Google family utilize the same Google one plan so you can include them in it. So it's not just your data, it could be everybody collectively together in one google google one.

Augusto Pinaud 28:13

And that's and that's in our household, how we get to the, to the to the terabyte level, where soon as my daughter started, begin taking pictures.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 28:23

Which is good, I met so wonderful, like, I look back at my Google Photos. And it's like, you know, 10 years ago, 15 years ago, because I've uploaded all of my photos, from all my, all of my history. And, and folks who are watching don't know this, but I just recently got a new niece. And and, you know, she's being born into the year 2021, where her entire life will be photographed digitally. Right and, and not that she's the first child for that to be the case. But you know, like, we've been in that space where children are growing up in a digital environment and everything they are doing is digital, they need the

Augusto Pinaud 28:59

space for you to go retro, I'm happy to send you a camera with with a film and older liquids that you can develop in your house, if that's going to make you happy and productive.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 29:09

Not gonna happen for me. But I am very happy to know that, you know, we are capable of storing all of this data in a way that will survive for many generations to be able to consume it and see, and, you know, have that family history tracked and passed along. Alright, and this brings us to the end of our tech stories for the week and on to our productivity resources of the week. And so, of course, every week, a gousto. And I call the interwebs for all the stories that we are sharing about activity and technology. And so in productivity resources of the week, we share productivity resources we think you might like and so this week, we have two as usual, and here they are. So my first one is called fibery So, I chose fiber, because fiber is really interesting in so many different ways. But the most important and interesting thing is that they have this fibery versus x section of the product. And I think this is the best way to describe what fiber is by basically showing you what fibery isn't compared to other products on the market. And so they created these really fun little drawings, where they've shown different graphs to show where they overlap in terms of work management, or knowledge management or project management or otherwise. And so you can see here they've chose, they've shown this little this, basically this color map, and they show where clickup and fibery overlap, right, so there's a lot of overlap in the work management space. But fibery does a little bit more over on this side regarding small or small, small business or small team, knowledge management, and a little more in the work management side for medium size companies. You can see here that fibery versus Aha, it shows you how it manages I don't know what even aha is, but and

then over here, it shows how coda code is really all about, you know, handling and managing mobile application document management, and how fibery and Kota overlap each other here. And we're fibery really takes the, you know, the majority of work Management Process Management kind of stuff on the top of the chart there. So like, it's this really flexible tool that allows you to be able to do work management, that is project management of some kind, task management collaboration within that environment. And also some level of knowledge management for your organization so that you can keep track of both of those pieces to move forward with it. And so it's a really interesting application, it doesn't quite work for everyone, it is for kind of a small to medium sized business. So it's in that space in terms of ecosystem. But if you're a business and you're looking for a way to take all of that knowledge work that's being done, and to put it into a repository, and then make it actionable. fibery may be something that works for your company. So just wanted to put that on people's radars. Augusta, what is your tool this week productivity resource this week,

Augusto Pinaud 32:16

my productivity resources a software called any fund. And I hear a lot of people when they work on the iPad complaining about oh, I don't have this, especially on corporate environments, okay, when you are now required to use that beautiful Times New Roman, okay, that nobody likes, but you are required to an insert standard, and people get frustrated. So any font is one of those applications you can download, you will find a ridiculous amount of phones, including that awful Times New Roman, and you will be able to add it to your iPad, you will be able to install almost any kind of fund. And now you are not going to get that error of mistake the phone is missing and all that you will download the profile, activate the profile. And now you will be able to use any kind of fund in driver.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 33:09

Fantastic sounds like fun. I know that that probably doesn't speak to many of the application providers out there who are trying to manage fonts on completely different levels. But I like the idea of being able to do so. Alright. Those are our productivity resources this week. And that takes us a long or gousto to our final story of

Augusto Pinaud 33:35

David's story of the week. Because last last You know, every week we come into Okay, what is going to be the more story and feature story what we're going to discuss. And last week, Google bombarded us with news and instead of trying to pick one we decided okay, you know what, let's go and talk about Google this week. I think that that will be the way to go. So let's begin with the first one. And he's Google meets gets a new hardware. And you can now be interactive. There are going to be massive boards, you can hang up in your office there there

Raymond Sidney-Smith 34:10

is 27 inches. The first the first one is a 27 inch display the series one desk, and then there's the board, which is a 65 inch display five

Augusto Pinaud 34:19

inch are correct. And now you will be able to get and do your Google meets and have all that I am particularly excited about it. I think, you know, this is great, especially if your business leaves in Google meat. I don't know what's going to happen with this massive thing. When do you need to go to another provider most likely that's not going to be an option. But still I think it's cool to see this board coming into the offices and into the boards into the meetings. You know they're more and more the corporate environment. It's displayed and into, okay, you are going to be a Microsoft home or you're going to have a Google Home. And they are really equivalent in what they can do and what they can do. Good. So I'm excited to see these kinds of things.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 35:12

Well, yeah, so So these were built in partnership with avocor. And they are actually WebEx compatible. So, so for those who are in the Cisco environment, Google meet, and Cisco WebEx are working together to make sure that they are interoperable, which is pretty phenomenal, right? You know, just giving that kind of interoperability the the desk, the series, one desk, 27 is also a laptop docking station. So this really helps when you want to be able to go into a conference room environment, and you are in an enterprise environment. I mean, this really felt like Google scratching its own itch, right? They they are dealing with these issues of hybrid work, people coming back and forth between in office and remote. And they want it to be able to create this level of connection for people and collaboration for people. And so the 65 inch is the one that is replacing their jam board hardware. So it has a jam board built into it, the software built into it, while giving Google meet and other capabilities from WebEx in that environment. And so I think really great that Google is, is providing this new technology and hardware for the Google ecosystem. And good on them for doing so. Alright. Next up,

Augusto Pinaud 36:25

our next one is Google renaming rooms in chat and Gmail, two spaces, all that is under way you're going to start seeing you know, the mail, the chat, the spaces, the rooms, and really trying to make a one stop shop, you know, where you come where you see your email, where you see the announcements where you see all this. So this is really interesting to see and come in so well,

Raymond Sidney-Smith 36:53

I think what I'm finding fascinating is the different approaches that the various companies have chosen to angle themselves toward, as it relates to the future of remote work, as well as hybrid work. So Microsoft, you can see, chose to build teams, and then to start kicking parts of teams, parts of the Microsoft 365 environment into excuse me into the team's environment. And for the most part, they've kept outlook completely and fundamentally separate from teams, right, you have some, some capabilities within Outlook to connect to teams. But in essence, Microsoft Teams and outlook are two islands unto themselves. And they, they ship each other data back and forth. Whereas what Google has decided, is that in whatever landscape you're in whatever Canvas you're in, you're just going to have the capability of accessing these pieces. And so Gmail has become the primary Canvas in which they have, you know, as I said earlier, caked in these other parts, so Google Chat, Google Calendar, Google tasks, spaces, all of these pieces are being put into the Gmail environment. And, you know, likewise, they're putting being put into Google Calendar. And you're seeing more of these pieces being put into Docs, Sheets and Slides. And so the components that you need for collaboration are being put together into these very smart, like modular areas within the interface, no matter which one of them you have open. And think it's very interesting just to see the the two and the differing approaches that Microsoft and Google are making as it relates to productivity software, and will be curious to see which one wins quote unquote, but I think it's, it's just a, it's a unique position to be in to be watching this happen in front of us right in this very, very dramatic environment that we're in, you know, dramatic change, considering the environment we're in, where we went from barely anyone, you know, remote working full time to everyone, all of a sudden working, not everyone, but most people working remotely full time, and, and to having to see the technology really catch up and merge and morph to to match that. Alright.

Augusto Pinaud 39:07

So our next our next news was Google workplace, you know, buying or acquiring place, pay play space. And they have been confirmed that they are in an agreement to buy and the startup basically was trying to make, you know, that work into bringing everything to the one platform. And again, it's that movement Google is bringing into Okay, now that you are in a browser, and you can be anywhere, and I think this is the reason it's strong is if you can open

this app or this web browser, you are going to have your whole corporate world in there. So interesting. What is coming?

Raymond Sidney-Smith 39:49

Yeah, I found a couple of things really fascinating about play space one I didn't even know it existed, which is I just didn't know it existed which is remarkable that it's been running this entire time. It is phenomenal in so many ways. And so I'm really sad because as soon as Google bought them, they shut off your ability to sign up for new accounts. I'm not sure whether this is an aqua hire, or whether this is for the actual technology inside of play space that they're trying to bundle into workspace. This is really fascinating. I mean, we have personal productivity club and the CO working space. And I think of how play space could be that co working space, just it's a brilliant interface, where you can very seamlessly bring people in and out of it. And there are other technologies that are trying to do this. And I have to admit, someone who has been paying very close attention to this technology space, no one particular tool is hitting all the marks yet. And so playspaces really unique in that regard. Because it's doing really some fun things. Just to poke fun at it, though, they of course, are acquired by Google. And all of their demos are shown inside of Apple Safari on a Mac OS platform. Not sure what that's all about. But Google still acquired them, so good on them. And congratulations.

Augusto Pinaud 41:09

I'm going to last long but me.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 41:12

Now, all right onto our next component of our next article

Augusto Pinaud 41:15

is in a component is Hey, the Gmail app takes now calls. So you can also do calls you can do the meet for a while. And again, is what we were discussing is one more tool that was recent, was it difficult to pick one because really, what they did was a series of announcements of how they're adding components to this Gmail app, and how you're going to be able to the chat and the spaces, and everything else. And, and I wonder if this is, from the perspective, the productivity perspective, if this is a good call or not, and people will do better with multiple applications. That said, even on the iPad, you can multitask so well, that I see more people having the screen and the calendar and the email opening, given a split view more than anything else. So I don't doubt that you will be able to use this application to be a really modern structure where everything gets in there, we will need to see again. But as you said, it's really interesting. Yeah, I

Raymond Sidney-Smith 42:23

have to say, I think this is a making of whole of Gmail, when they took away a feature. And now they're finally bringing it back. You used to be able to make phone calls from within Gmail from Hangouts. And I would like to see them tie Google Voice back to the ecosystem so that you're capable of making those phone calls. I don't know that, that this is not the case. But I'm really hoping that it is, which is that my Google Voice account, which is my primary phone number for the world, I want it to be tied back to my gmail account. It's tied to my Google account, of course, but I want it to be tied to my Gmail so that when I do make an outbound phone call, it's calling from me as it should be. And so this is a really fascinating component to be added back into the system. And so it's just like, just adding back a feature that they took away some time ago, because they were deprecating, and sunseting, the Hangouts application. So now the chat is back. Now they're bringing calls back to the system, I feel, I feel gratified that Gmail is now whole, again, to your point about the environment. Today, I see myself utilizing Gmail with the Google Calendar, open in the sidebar, almost exclusively, all the time. And that's, that's my work, email and my work calendar. And I've just found those two side by side to be very, very

happy, happy, happily residing next to each other in the interface. And that's been really useful. So I can see how all of these pieces for Gmail kind of getting the pieces together. And so just to give further, like kind of detail here, I keep my left hand sidebar, open my my navigation open in Gmail. So I can see my chats from Google Chat, my rooms, which will now become spaces down there as well. And then on my right hand side, I have my calendar open. And so in essence, I have this dashboard of everything that I need from that perspective. So

Augusto Pinaud 44:17

that's what they're trying to to, to be. Yeah,

Raymond Sidney-Smith 44:20

yeah. And honestly, it's been working really well, you know, I can answer messages back and forth between staff as they have questions for me, I can respond to email as they're coming in. And I can see how they're the the items are affecting my calendar, because if I wanted to, I could just click on add it as a task. And then that task, if I add a time associated with it, will then get docked into the calendar for view. So and if I wanted to see just my task, generally I click on the tasks icon, you see the task drop down in the right hand side drawer. So there's a there's a really smart work they're doing there inside of that ecosystem. And I hope that they do the same thing in Google Calendar. In other places so that no matter what you choose as your primary viewpoint, you're seeing the other pieces there to be able to interact with and to get things done, because it's really a highly productive environment. All right on to our final component of the featured stories of the week that Google is debuting more meat features, what the primary one is companion mode. And so what do you know about companion mode? Augusto?

Augusto Pinaud 45:30

No, no, not much. I read about it. And I, I didn't understood exactly what they were trying to do so. So you may need that we need to go and you to share, to share with us what is this companion mode, I couldn't understand excitement about it. So

Raymond Sidney-Smith 45:47

yeah, so so companion mode is basically the ability for you to to, in essence, bring different pieces of your, your working environment into the video experience. So it's, they've been talking about this for some time now. But the idea here is that Google inside Google meet, users will be able to host and join a meeting from within a conference room. And these companion mode components will allow those things to extend very easily into those in person meetings. Again, the idea is to kind of bridge the gap between those who are in person and those people who are virtual. And so you can in companion mode, share physical presentations, physical, but basically presentations up on a screen into the Google meet, you can handle audio reverbs, so that if you're all in a room together, and you have a speakerphone, that is capturing the audio, you're not getting the audio reverb into it. And as well, you can then have meeting chat, you can have whiteboard, you can have all those components, caked right into the the screen that's presenting to the room, but also to the people who are in the meet. And so this is I'm bridging that piece. That's why they're calling it companion mode, right. It's basically the the in between technology that's handling those people who are in person and those people who are virtual, and it's bringing those two pieces together. The first step to that, of course, was the ability for you to be inside of Google Slides, Google Docs, and otherwise, and sharing that document live to a meeting. And so you can collaborate live, but also see the same screen together while you're inside of a Google meet. Now, they're taking that to the next level, which is bringing that into the hardware, like the series, one desk, and the series, you know, one, board 65 inch, so that technology is now you're going to see the Google meet and everything that's happening in the meeting up on the screen, everybody in person is going to see it, but they're also able to interact and engage with that, that stuff that's happening on screen together with the people who are in the room. And

there's that little component of like, Okay, well, this bunch of people in the room, how do you deal with the conference technology? Well, the conference software will now work so that you can capture everybody's voices without there being a lot of, you know, echoing back and forth. So if I have my laptop open, and I'm in the Google meet, and my microphone is active, it's going to capture that it's going to know that and it's going to cancel out my audio so that you don't get that screeching in your ears when we've all been in been there now where it's the echoing and the echoing of people's, you know, microphones. So that all is basically what companion mode is doing for you. And I think it's really sophisticated software. And and I'm really curious to see it in real life. I'm not in many environments where I'm going to need to do that. But an enterprise reason I'm

Augusto Pinaud 48:45

not into I'm not into a lot of environments that that is critical for me.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 48:50

Yeah, but I will see this in a lot of my enterprise client spaces. I think this is going to be a real, you know, advantage for them in being able to bring people back and not feel like people are forced into coming back because they now have the flexibility of doing it in both places. All right. That brings us to the end of our featured stories of this week. And on to our announcements. So what are our announcements?

Augusto Pinaud 49:15

So we have three and four announce five announcements use. The first one is tomorrow 914 to September 14, Apple is going to be doing their event, there are a special event California streaming and therefore, the next day on the 15 on we're going to do a special event or Anything But Idle zero 80. So and we are going to have here Michaels Lewinsky and we are going to be talking about that we're going to be live at noon Eastern time. For those

Raymond Sidney-Smith 49:49

of you don't know, Michael, although Augusto mentioned him earlier, Michael is the CEO of nosb. And those be teams so yeah, Michael will be joining us for the special Apple episode. Very excited.

Augusto Pinaud 50:02

Perfect. And then on the next week on the 22nd of September, Microsoft is doing a very special event. So the next day the 23rd of September, we are going to do another special episode on Anything But Idle. See, we're at 382 sorry, with Art Gelwicks, who is our expert in all this Microsoft, so we are going to insults are going to be at noon. So there are going to be two times to come and geek out and have fun. And the last announcement is a subtle announcement for me is low caste was shutting down after losing the court battle with the TV networks. That it said no, I don't watch TV, but it's still I think they were trying to do something nice bring it into, you know, for those people who don't have cable anymore. And well, the cables when

Raymond Sidney-Smith 50:52

Yeah, or if you were I mean, if you were so low caste basically provided your local television stations through the internet. And in essence, the the court, while the court didn't really decide against low caste, it really did disrupt their ability to charge money for the platform. So they could have continued operating as a nonprofit for free. But the fact that they were charging is what actually caused the court to say you can't charge. And this all comes down to the various licensing fees that are being paid to these various cable channels and otherwise, or carriers. But you know, it's absolute rubbish. This should be legislated out of existence, something needs to be done here, we should be able to consume on whatever device we want in whatever way we want in whatever region we want. And the the true mission of the internet

was to be able to democratize information to be able to allow all of us access to everyone else and all the data on the World Wide Web. And unfortunately, we are in a place where we are really seeing the splinter net, we are seeing different countries section off or cordoned off parts of the internet from other parts. Most notably China and we have other countries in the Middle East have to have chosen to cordon that off Russia has done so as well. And and so this is dangerous, I think for you know, an open democratic world. And not that we are a democratic world. But you know that that is kind of the the ideal, at least from from my worldview. And we have the problem now have various laws being utilized to penalize bringing what should be free to people say you live just outside of a metropolitan area, and you want to be able to access your regional television news, you can't do that. Because you know, low caste no longer can do that by charging a fee just to keep the platform up and running. So it is sad. It is a sad day I think for for everybody who you know, wants access to things that they should have freely accessible to them. So anyway, I I don't

Augusto Pinaud 53:00

I think he said so. Anyways, and we have other news if you just go and check our notes.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 53:08

Fantastic. And with that we've covered the productivity and technology related news for this week. Thank you Augusto for helping to put together Anything But Idle this every week. My pleasure as always. Alright, everybody. If we missed something, first go over to Anything But idle.com forward slash 079. And there you'll find our show notes with links to all the stories we covered our productivity resources of the week and the extra story section that Augusto just mentioned. If for some reason in the extra story section, there are not there's a missing story that you think we should have covered, feel free to head over to our contact page or you can comment directly on the episode page. And let us know about that story. We're happy to cover it in a future episode or otherwise. Also on that episode page is our text transcripts, we have a machine generated transcript that's provided one that's readable right on the page is click on the Read More link it'll expand and you can read along while you listen to or watch the show. And then there is a download link below that and that allows you to download it as a PDF and take offline so you can read it alongside the show or otherwise if this is your first time watching the live stream Feel free to click the subscribe button also feel free to click the thumbs up icon that really helps to you know the the folks who are watching or are going to watch us know that you know you enjoyed it and that may be something they enjoy as well. If you listen to the podcast show Feel free to subscribe to the podcast that will of course you know get you to follow us but also get the episodes downloaded for free every week when we do put them out there instructions there on Anything But Idle comm if you have any questions so if you just click on that subscribe tab on Anything But idle.com it'll explain to you how to subscribe if you don't know how to and please feel free to rate and review us on Apple podcasts or Stitcher or wherever you might be able to review us and rate us there kinds of other platforms that allow for that now chaser and listen notes and other places where you can do that. Either way your compliments help us, obviously, it uh, it gives us joy to hear that you're doing well. But also it gives signals out there to the podcast gods that we're doing the right things and that, of course, expands our personal productivity listening community. And so thank you for doing that. With that, we will see you all next time on Anything But Idle here's true, productive life.