Raymond Sidney-Smith 0:00
Hello, personal productivity enthusiast 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. I'm the group's and we're your hosts for Anything But Idle today is November 8 2021. And this is episode 91. The fluid framework brings us Microsoft loop. So welcome to everybody who is watching live Welcome to those who are listening to the podcast afterward. Of course each week we review and discuss the productivity and technology news headlines of the week. We usually started off by going through the blogosphere and the podcast just sphere and talking about the articles and episodes that we have heard out there. And so of course, Augusto, let's get started with our first story this week.

Augusto Pinaud 0:48
Our first story is an article from Coplin talking about the power of Never give up. And I'm going to let you start because I'm dealing with technology. Sorry,

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:01
no problem. And, and so I think this is really good to like set goals. And also thinking through it's just a refresher on that concept that if you have kind of an annual planning process, I use a plot process that I developed over the years called the Reflect, ACT, PLAN, an act guide, and it's something that I created for myself. And so you know, you're welcome to use this concept. But the idea here is that you take the 30 days of the month, you choose whatever month you want in a year, and each day you reflect on a different aspect of your life. And then you flip it and instead of the reflection, then you go ahead and do planning in each of those categories of your life. And so whether you call those areas of focus and accountability, whether you call those categories of life or life categories, you know, life domains, whatever those are, I basically go through the process of spending a single day, a few a few minutes of that day thinking through how did this past year go? Did it go the way I want to, I have a set of questions that I've created for myself over time. And then in the coming, you know, de for planning, then I think through how can I make next year, both the same for the things that were good, but also better for the things that I want to improve or areas that I want to grow in. And so that reflect plan and act guide for me is a really a great way for me to make sure that I'm not giving up on goals that I've had in the past. And therefore it gives me the opportunity to really circle back to things where I feel like oh, gosh, I dropped the ball on that this year, let me go ahead and figure out how to make sure I can push that across the finish line next year. And another like, interesting tip, I suppose, is that I start my year, my personal year off calendar year. So I'm always working on my projects and goals and my planning, starting November one, which allows me not to get caught up and in the midst of all of the holiday and end of the year stuff that happens on the calendar here. And so I'm, I'm hopefully ahead of the schedule by virtue of closing out my calendar year before my personal year, that is before the calendar year. And it gives me that kind of perspective. And my birthday happens to be in November. So I just use that as my, you know, my own stopping measure, and my own starting measure. And it really helps me deal with that kind of goal planning. How about you? Because do

Augusto Pinaud 3:27
you know, I keep mine on regular calendar, I don't make December tend to be less productive for me. The party is the kid so this, therefore, I bake that reflection time in there. That same reflection time that I know you do in the month of October. I do it in December, because anyways, it's slow. So instead of trying to figure it out for a month, that's what I do. And that's when I evaluate the person and what's coming. The other thing I do is I tried to make the year 11 months. So I plan for 11 months December is dead in the sense that there is no big goals in December even at some of them the deadline may be December the goal really is to have it by November 30. So that way, December is that reflection time and then holidays and family and kids and all that.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 4:36
Fantastic. Anything specific that you found interesting inside of the carpool lane article. Otherwise we'll move on to our next article.

Augusto Pinaud 4:44
Yeah, let's move to our next article tackling the hard task by Leo about that and he goes to tree points. Do a small bit of the bigger task. Get into the practice of choosing and trust and trusting and Then think of failing as learning. That last one thing is failing us learning was one big change for me many, many years ago, when the first time I came to that and say, Oh, that's really interesting, I begin my career in sales said you fell a lot. So that's part of the fun of that, or, or not. But I remember at the beginning of that sales career, you know, carrying that burden of the sales, and I had a good sales manager pulled me aside and say, Well, what are you learning from all this? And he was looking at him, like, we're talking about nothing? And it's a no, no, there's a lot. So he gives me that push on the mindset. And I just apply it to to other things. You know, I think it's Brian Tracy, who said, If you have two frogs, it the only one or the larger one first. And if you combine that with my dearest animal man who said Bird by Bird regarding protable book, you know, that's what that first one is. Our listeners have not read that book. They should. But you know, it's to book a story about a brother writing a paper. And his father told him, Well, do you do that Bird by Bird? You know, doesn't matter how many verts you need to cover in the report, you can only do one birth at a time? And is that was any bigger task, you know, you can only do one step one next action at the time.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 6:40
Absolutely. All right, on to our next blog article this week.

Augusto Pinaud 6:45
So our next article came from better news, how to keep your hybrid workforce engaged. And they said hold regular business, catch ups, whole remote after our activities, and set up social groups know what I was reading in that I was laughing in the after our activities, because I've been working remotely for a really smelled over 10 years and after work activities are okay, remote after work activities. I have never been a fan of them. I I have not understand it. I and I think there are better things you can do. You know, I, I had a client that he likes to do the things but instead of dude, and after hours, he do it at lunch. And then he sent a gift card to everybody. And everybody comes to this lunch. And you are there is a DoorDash gift card and you order whatever you want, and come to this hour meeting that works well, I have another client who do a coffee hour, but he's on the middle of the day, I think the remote environment works better when you take that half an hour discretionary sometime middle of that, than when you're trying to let's make an after our event. And same thing was in social groups, I have not seen it work given I dislike a slug. And those kinds of things who make my phone vibrate consistently. So I may be the anti social in here. But that has never worked well for me. And I have making incredible friends remote, you know, and I have friends who I have done incredible projects, and we have never met. So or at least in person. So it's not about the remote. It is about the organization trying to force me into the social group that in my experience doesn't work.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 8:54
Yeah, I think it really, it really depends on the organization, the tightness of that particular group, and why the social group or the after hours activities or, you know, or right, whatever the plan is, it needs to be both cohesive, it has to have a mission and a vision behind it. And the people who are engaging need to want to do it. And it's just not easy, right? It's like, I have a colleague who works for county government, and, you know, every week, it's somebody's birthday, several people's birthday at a time. And they all have to go to these birthday parties. And so it's just non stop cycle of, you know, people having birthday parties, and when it's forced in that sense. Nobody feels special about it, neither does the birthday boy or girl or or

other. Right? They and so none of them feel special. And so it just ends up being this kind of like onerous, you know, I have to show up obligatory experience and I think In that sense, it can be, it can just be better. And so in a remote sense, I think that we all have to be creative. But we also have to have buy in as it relates to all of these things. And this can't be something where, you know, and I've been guilty of this as the CEO saying to my staff, okay, go make this thing happened, right, and it ends up being like, a fun thing for the group. But because I don't have time to to manifest it, I end up delegating it without really having my own, say, in the matter. And so it ends up being something like, well, it was ordered upon us to do this thing. So we're making it happen. And so therefore, you know, it's not really, there's not really a great deal of affection for that particular thing. And so I think it really does need to be an all hands on, what is this going to do for us together, do we really feel like it's going to help create greater cohesion in the team and build upon it, you know, I've had a lot of staff who are remote for a very long time, and we have just decided that we're going to have an annual holiday party, and it's going to be remote. And it's very interesting for me, because, you know, we're all going to just come into an air meet, and we're all going to have our eggnog or, or non alcoholic beverages, and we're going to have a good time just catching up with each other, and so on and so forth. You know, in GTD Cafe, which is our GTD Virtual MeetUp inside of personal productivity club, we're going to have our annual holiday holiday party again, last year it was was out of necessity. This year, we we may have New York City may have have a holiday party, but we're not going to be able to do it in DC we're not gonna be able to do it in Pittsburgh because of the various COVID restrictions and lack of, frankly, the lack of vaccinations, right. And so, the the reality is, is that we're still forced to have the holiday party in that environment. And I kind of am looking forward to it, I'm looking forward to seeing everybody in a perspective where one I'm always usually the host of meetings right so I'm like I'm on when I'm when I'm in these kinds of environments, and it's nice to like not have to be on and being able to interact with the staff. And in this particular case, with the with the GDD virtual meetup, you know, I get to just, you know, have a good time with folks and have conversation and we can have sidebars, you know, people can join breakout rooms and have one to one conversations and then come back into the main room. So it really depends upon the efficacy of the features of the of the platform you're using for purposes of this, it also depends upon how people know how to use the technology, and then of course, the the the buy in from the entire group for being able to do so. Alright, with that, I think we have covered everything

Augusto Pinaud 12:45
you make you make a point, I think you made a great point on there and I will stand corrected in here because it is this special part what it is, it is the force it what will turn me off completely the special board, I will enjoy and I will go because when you mentioned the GDD Yeah, I will go there, I love it, I have done it. It is the force part of that, that I didn't like,

Raymond Sidney-Smith 13:17
Oh, absolutely. And I mean, it feels it feels kind of crummy to be forced into something. Whereas if you know that you're going to show up and see people that you haven't interacted with, on a collegiate level in a while, or, you know, you've had lots of, say, difficult conversations with someone over the last several months, you get to have a reset with them by sharing a drink, even if it's virtually just shooting the breeze. And having that kind of of one to one personal conversation, you know, especially in this day and age where, you know, politics might be charged. And you might say, oh my gosh, I can't deal with this person because of their political persuasion, or I can't deal with this person because of COVID-19 vaccination opinions and blah, blah, blah, all of those things aside, at least in a virtual environment. You don't worry about all those things, you can still have a one to one human humane engagement that I think is quite unique today you know, it's a it's an it's an environment that is controlled, and gives you an opportunity to interact with people, you can set aside the the other you know presets to the work relationship and enjoy each other's company. So with that we have reached our halfway point just a little early, but we have lots of discovery discuss yet, but we're

gonna take a break now. Have a word from our sponsor this week, which is co working space by personal productivity club, and then when we get back we will continue on with Anything But Idle and the rest of the show so we'll see you after the break.

Sponsor Voice Over 14:49
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.com forward slash co working to learn more CO working space lives inside personal productivity club, a digital community for personal productivity enthusiast so you can find people who use methods and tools you do to, again head over to anything but idle.com 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 15:59
Welcome back everybody to Anything But Idle. I'm Ray Sidney-Smith Joined here of course by Augusto Pinaud And we are here for the second half of the show. And this is our productivity technology articles headlines section. So Augusto what is our first technology article this week

Augusto Pinaud 16:17
grammerly rolls out a set of features for the iPad and the phone you know, when Grammarly came Grammarly is an incredible tool to help you correct the stuff but it was challenging to use the iPad, you know, and you could not use it on safari, you need to use a different browser that make change the identification anyway say then they came with a keyboard that you can start using it but it still wasn't the best. Now they are finally coming with an editor and you will be able to use Safari Extensions on iOS 15 and going up as well as the keyboard and as a heavy user of Grammarly, I am really, really excited about this.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 17:11
So is this is this a a separate keyboard that now gets enabled in the system, or is this some kind of overlay that basically acts as a, an ongoing no matter where you are editing tool.

Augusto Pinaud 17:25
So that's what they have before what they have before is a keyword and then you need to go and open now you have an editor and the keyword so you will be able to use both. So you will be able to open the keyword as well as the full editor.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 17:42
Right. So this is like you open up the application and you can edit it inside of the application, which is the Grammarly editor. But then when you go into say anywhere else, you're going to have the keyboard pop up, and it's going to help you clarify, miss, you know, correct misspellings, that kind of thing. And then additionally, on the mobile Safari side, you're going to be able to have that extension in the mobile web interface. And it's going to provide that level of correction as well. They're

Augusto Pinaud 18:09
correct. And what happened before is you only had that keyboard. So you could not use the actual application that again, it is great copy paste, but it's sometimes required, well, I use a different keyboard, a different browser, or the keyboard but the keyboard was engraved when you were editing a long text, it was good for attacks, but not not for a long editing. Now, they

extend the application and you will be able to get an editor as you get in the PC or the Mac or anything else.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 18:42
Fantastic. Great to see them, you know, just increasing the footprint of where Grammarly can be utilized, which is ultimately more useful for people who want that level of help and support. So cool. All right, next up,

Augusto Pinaud 18:57
Google workspace update. And we're going to be talking about set aside time for focus on Google. You know, most people are familiar with their having the event. And then you know, being BC free or out of the office and Google Now it's adding one more focused on so you can put the title what you're doing marketers focus time, and it give a different notification to the people who you're sharing your calendar of what you're doing. So as far as I understand, it's available for all end users. And you know, that are there, at least by now November 3 wasn't released for all users as far as I know. So by now everybody should have it. But this is really good that we are starting to recognize that and I hope that that also means that in the structure of the organization, that also means that people are going to start respecting those, you know, I have told share the story many times about my own blocking time and having bosses, you know, meeting and I have seen no clients, you know, they have that meetings Blue Book, and people is booking on top of that, like there is nothing. So I really hope with this, the users of Google Calendar, regardless if they are in the personal or in the in the workspace, they start getting more of this. And this gets to be something that is standardized in organizations.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 20:36
Yeah, so there's a couple a couple of quick clarifications here. For folks, this is available to Google workspace users. And you do have to have Google Business Standard or above in order to have access to it. So if you're in the starter plan, or if you're in essentials, which is basically the product that kind of takes away the email, but gives you all the other stuff, or any other of the plans. And certainly for just standard Google accounts, you will not have access to this. So this is a Google workspace, Business Standard and above. And the idea here is that this is a work environment thing. And frequently, what happens is in a work environment, the idea of blocking timeout for not being in a meeting, for some reason, is looked at poorly among corporate and I don't understand the perspective there. But this is solidifying inside of a major tool, that capability Microsoft has already done this in Outlook, where you can actually block time, and it's effectively saying I need to do this work. And you know, I talked about two different kinds of work flow work and focus work flow work is the is the kind of work that obviously instigates flow from the now late Dr. Chang Sanken. Hi. And, of course, then focus work are when we're working on actions, and we are not, we're using basically discretionary time to get into focus to handle those particular actions, I need to work on this project, I need to work on this, you know, context of actions, and I need to get those things done. That's a focus work session. So this flow option, this focus time option is giving you that capability of saying, in my calendar, this is a blocked out time frame, and it is legitimate work that I am doing, I'm not just blocking out time, so I can stare at the ceiling and do nothing, although mind wandering is actually really good and effective for a lot of people. So you know, mind wandering is not ineffective, and not unproductive use of time, it's when it becomes, you know, maladaptive, right? When it becomes so severe that you're not doing anything but mind wandering, then, then we have, then we have a problem, right? But, but that's the idea. Here, you will see now, the chips below your calendar description. And in essence, you can have an event, right, normally you have an event, and in Google workspace, you typically will then have now an out of office, you can identify something as a task or have an appointment slot, where you can identify different slots, and then send that calendar event and then people can choose among those particular items, a new chip will be added for those Business Standard and above, which basically says focus time, you can select that. And then of course, of course,

now you are putting in what you want to do in that timeframe, really, really helpful. And it gives you all the other features. So you can have basically a meeting with yourself, right you can have you can identify a room or location in your organization. And you can describe in the in the meeting for yourself, what you plan to do, and all of those other good things. So I think this is a fantastic movement toward kind of the the next level of what Google was trying to do with time insights. Remember, a couple of weeks ago, we talked about Google adding this time insights capability into the Google Calendar interface telling you, Hey, how are you using your time and what's going on in your calendar. Now, based on those insights, you should have the ability to say, hey, you know what, this particular time block seems to be open for me. And it's also mine bpt, my biological primetime, meaning that it's a good time for me to focus on something very highly important to me. Now you have an option to be able to turn on focus time for that time block and make stuff happen. I'm really happy and excited to see this coming to fruition. All right, next up in the world of Google, biggest in the

Augusto Pinaud 24:18
world of Google. Now they are going to allow parents guardians and legal representative to request Google to remove images of those who are under 18. From their search results. And I only have good words to say about this. There's no more than this to the news, but I think it is really recognizable that Google is doing this and really protecting minors.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 24:44
Yeah, so this has limitations. So I support Google in doing this. I think that this is not a true right to be forgotten. I think that there is a legitimate case here for people to have more control over how they appear. In the search engine, and there are just certain reasons for it and certain reasons not for it, right? You know, like, you don't want a murderer to come by and say, Hey, by the way, can you just remove all that murdery stuff about me on Google, you know, you know, we want to know that the person is a murderer for society safety. But at the same time, if you're a 13 year old, and you do something, you know, foolish, and take pictures of yourself while you're out having fun, and then that becomes something that stays with you for the rest of your life. That's a difficulty. And I think that it's good on parents to be able to parents, legal guardians, and legal representatives to be able to go out there and make those requests. However, if you happen to have done this already, and you are now above age, you're out of luck. You can't go back to Google and say, Hey, by the way, when I was a minor, you know, I did some really fun things, they happen to not be so kosher for my future employers, or even my current employer, can you go ahead and take those down? Google will not honor those requests. And to be quite honest, I feel like that should be a part of this. It's certainly for anyone who is a minor not of majority age, basically, in the United States, at least that's 18, or younger, 18 and younger, or that is under 18. Because 18 Technically starts your age of majority, but so under under 18, you should be allowed to say you know what, everything that happened, then just like expunging your record in a legal court of law, you shouldn't be able to just say, You know what, everything I did under 18, can you just get rid of anything, certainly images that you don't feel comfortable having been online, you know, young men and women, you know, go out there and they share, potentially, you know, photographs of themselves that they wouldn't want to show in their adulthood. There's all kinds of issues around child pornography and those kinds of parts that are problematic for people, I think Google should take a step further, give people that capability so that they can protect themselves, and also not perpetrate perpetuate that is the continued problems that are on the internet, and the index can do it, we know that they can do it now, because they're giving you the capability. And so this is a hopefully a step in the right direction. And I love them for making this step. I also want to push them to go further than that, and really give us a true right to be forgotten, at least for minors, you know, and times when we were minor, right? Give us that snapshot backwards and say, Listen, just under age of majority across the world, let's just go ahead and clean that up. And I think that'll be a good, at least for now. middle ground, right, that we can live on, I still would like to say, You know what, that picture of me, you know, indexed by Google looks really

bad, can you take it down, but I get that that's not going to always work. And there is some societal benefit to having an index. And there's, of course, the Internet Archive, and there's other places where things live forever. So it's not like we have the opportunity to get rid of everything. But Google, for many people is the internet. And so we need to be mindful of the fact that because of that index, and the same thing with Facebook, I feel like Facebook should have a right to be forgotten, as well. Even though, you know, you can go in and delete things. Say you have a child who passes away, you know, unfortunately, you know, you want to be able to gain access to those things and have a fluid process for being able to remove those kinds of pieces of content on their behalf. So it's like, we should just have better systems. I know the technology is new, and it's just gonna take us time to overcome those pieces. All right. We've got a lot of Google News Today. So So what's our Google News? I'm using

Augusto Pinaud 28:33
Google is Google messages working on the ability to send MMS using Google Photos. So reminisce videos using Google Photos. So Google, they use RCS, it's the technology they use to communicate, but they're trying to go back to mms I, I'm going to let you talk about this more, because I did not understood the movement and why knowing that RCS is better is more secure. Why do we want to go to mms unless we're talking about trying to reach more people in the third world who really may not have complete access to RCS?

Raymond Sidney-Smith 29:15
Yeah, so this is, again, this is a factor of, of what is going to be useful to people in the broadest sense. And so what we're going to see is, is basically, the ability to send better video across MMS via Google Photos. Right now, the way in which we share typically with Google Photos, is that Google Photos presents you with a link to the image and you can go ahead and access that over the video and you get access to the Google Photos video through that portal, so to speak, and what they're what they're trying to do here is saying okay, instead of all of the, you know, running around The actual video, we're actually going to send the video itself, you know, over the network. And I'm not sure how this is all really going to work. So right now I'm maybe I'm getting this confused right now. Is it the is it the case that they're sending? The file over MMS? Is that what what I'm what my understands what they're trying to do? Well, so my understanding right now is that you, when you send a video via Google Photos, I have to do it, I have to try it now. Cuz I'm confused. Now because I wait waits reading to me is not the way in which I have had the experience, every time I try to share something with someone, I click on Share, and say I click on messages, right? When I go go ahead to do that. It basically is attaching the file itself, but just a lower quality version of it. So so the idea here is that instead of having that lower quality version, I'm trying to find a video now just to see what what, see what I have here. So Okay, here goes a video, I'm going to go ahead and now try and share that video. With someone. Right now in Google Photos, it presents the people in Google Photos, right, so it's trying to share it within the Google Photos environment. And it doesn't even present me with the Messages app. And so now when I click on the Messages app from the share sheet, really force it to do so it uploads a low quality version of that Google Photos video, what they're what they're doing now is they're basically going to upgrade. And this is my understanding. So folks who are reading this differently, let us know if we're getting this wrong. But my understanding is that they're going to basically upload a higher quality version of it based on a setting. And therefore that's what's going to go across the network. Now, the better thing to do, in my opinion, is just to basically have it send a link to the Google Photos video, so that you get a native, high quality view of that thing. But if you want to send the actual video to someone, you are now going to be able to send basically an HD version on HD, but a sharper quality version, as they call it, as opposed to the lower quality version that was being sent before. So that's what I'm seeing when I'm doing this. I'm not quite sure why in 2021, going into 2022, that we're really concerned about this. And I do feel like the RCS component is being bypassed here. And maybe this is a is a carrier, you know, trade off. Um, you know, they're, they're basically doing some trade off with the carriers to support something that

they're finding is a problem on their side, I don't know, because it's sending a bigger file. So you would presume that they would be doing something to reduce the file sizes, not increase the file sizes. So I'm not quite sure what this is all about. But again, this is showing up in Google messages 10.4 beta. And so until it comes out in in real life, we're not really sure what we're going to see all told. So I'm not really interested in watching MMS video, just generally, because it's always so bad.

Augusto Pinaud 33:18
That was my confusion. That was a reason I decided to pick it up. Bring it up to the discussion, because it seems out of the many things Google do to move forward. This seems like Okay, let's move back.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 33:30
Yeah, it could be that there are people who are having trouble sending it via MMS and they and people who want to, right, they're just seeing a class of users who absolutely want to send the video. And so they're circumventing Google Photos by sending it through messages. I think at this point, I think for anybody who's listening, make sure you're sending it through Google Photos, you're just going to get a higher quality experience on both sides, make sure they have Google Photos, make sure you have Google Photos. And even if they don't, the link that you send them will take them to a mobile browser window, and it will just present the video in there. Plus, you're not giving them the file, which many times you probably don't want to be giving someone the video file natively. You just want to show them the thing and then be able to disconnect access at some future point. So Alright, with that, that brings us to the close of our articles this week and on to our productivity resources of the week. And so as you all know, Agusta and I come across many personal productivity tools, apps and services in our weekly journeys to bring you the news that is Anything But Idle. So in this segment, productivity resources of the week, we each bring you one new or old we think you might like and so I today thought I was scratching my own itch and was off looking for something. What I was really looking for was actually something that allowed me to be able to download a YouTube video and Turn it into a podcast, I did not win that battle. But in doing so it did remind me of a tool that I do use, which is called narrow. And I found a competitor to narrow called listen later.fm. And so I wanted to just show you what I'm talking about here. And then if you use it and need it and want it, you can do it also. So here you go. This is called Listen, later.fm. And, like I said, I'll show you narrow in a moment. But this is basically a competitor to narrow. And listen, later.fm allows you to basically go in, create a personal podcast feed. So you can add that to your own podcast app of choice. And put that into your app, and listen to things that you come across. Those could be articles on the web. They could be PDFs, Word documents and other file formats, it basically picks it up, it turns it into audio, right, it reads it using an artificial intelligence voice. And then it goes ahead and provides that as an audio file for you to be able to listen to later. And so hence the listen later.fm. And so we go down here. And the idea here is that I'm showing this in my account, because I'm going to reset this anyway. But there's a Firefox and Chrome extension, and you have an email address you can email to, and a bookmarklet, you can put in your bookmark or bookmark for your browser, there's iOS, and text and all kinds of really great ways for you to be able to do this. And you can just get everything into the listen later.fm environment, which is the podcast feed of choice, and podcast app of choice. And you guys listen to things. So if you, you know come across a really long article, go ahead and just turn it into audio and listen to it while you're walking the dog or taking a drive or whatever else, they give you five articles for free. And then you can do $36 per year for the whole shebang. Now, flip that right to, and that's unlimited articles to narrow, which is which has been my app of choice. And what arrow arrow narrow does is turning turns your articles into podcasts. And again, you can you can really only upload I believe PDFs, straight text, and then and then web articles of any kind. So you submit the article toward an article, you know, list. You submit your article through narrow, and it gets added to your reading list. And then it converts it to your own little personal podcast feed, you have lots of ways to

integrate, you know, there's an Android application iOS application, Chrome extension bookmarklet, just like listen, later.fm, you have an email address you can email into, and you get to just put it all through, they have over 25 ai powered voices. So it just automatically creates those voices in over 10 languages. So it's, it's not limited to English only, which is great. And it just allows you to go ahead and listen to that. I really love the dashboard to see how much time it's it's saved you and how much listening you've done from the narrow side. And it's just a fantastic solid application, I've only had a few issues with it. And the support has been great. But as you can see here, you have lots of options for being able to do it, you can even take an RSS feed, and throw it into narrow and it'll just automatically turn each of those blog posts into a podcast feed. And for me, this is really amazing on like the business marketing side. Because if you're really trying to turn your business blog for so to speak into a podcast, you can easily do that here with narrow. And you can just basically take that RSS feed from your blog, it automatically generates a podcast from the blog articles. And then you know, each week, you go ahead and just you know, download the narrow audio file that's been generated, and then throw that into your podcast, Apple podcast feed whatever podcast media host you're doing, it's a very easy way to launch a podcast and get that audio out there to your audience. So you know, that's not on the personal productivity side. But certainly on the marketing productivity side, it's a really, really great tool for that. So on narrow just you have a compare and contrast. They charge you based on the amount you put in, right. So you basically pay based on the number of minutes of audio being changed. And that's really some later actually, at some point for $36 per year overcomes your, the narrow, you know pricing because you're paying as you make your way along. My perspective is that of course narrow is sustainable, because they're charging you for how much you do listen later, at some point, we'll get to a point where potentially untenable for the for the platform, because if everybody buys on limited and then uses it to their to the nth degree, right, they're going to be unprofitable and that's going to be unsustainable for the platform. So I'm curious how that allow workout. Anyway. Okay, so what choice this week.

Augusto Pinaud 39:55
So my choice this week is an application called liberate and was recently selected for Apple. The story's very cool about the developer who developed this. But it's marketed as livery, the black meditation app. And it's trying to take a different focus into meditation and all this. I thought it was interesting. If you're not familiar, it's a great app, iPhone app. I believe any help any one of us can get to meditation. It's worth it.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 40:36
Absolutely. So liberate black meditation app. You can go check it out in the is it iOS, and iPad? Android? Yes. Oh, and Android. Wonderful. So it's across all three platforms, iOS, iPad, iOS, and Android. Fantastic. Thank you, Augusto. All right. And so with that, that brings us along to our story of the week Google was

Augusto Pinaud 41:02
brought here, Michael. All right.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 41:05
So this is all about Microsoft loop. Basically, Microsoft announced a new Office app called Microsoft loop, you want to you want to start us off with Gousto with what Microsoft loop is? Or do you want me to tell the story.

Augusto Pinaud 41:18
Because I really, unless I explained Google Wave, I still did not understood, I have read about loop. And I, it seems like a problem looking for a solution looking for a problem more than anything that is really needed?

Raymond Sidney-Smith 41:34
Well, it's a, it's a modern solution to a long term problem that everybody has, which is the idea that if we take data, and we create structured data, that data doesn't update, because it's it sits there in what's called a local system, right. And we had that with Microsoft OLE the the ability to overcome that by bringing data from other parts of the Microsoft environment, and updating it within that document. So you'd open up a Word document, or an Excel document, and your ole document, all a component would then go ahead and update to the latest data from the database it was pulling from. And this is kind of like having auto updated Excel spreadsheets, right? We think about these things from that perspective. Of course, Google Wave is the biggest example of something like this. And of course, it was shuttered by Google, maybe a little bit too early for its time. And Google Docs has attempted to do quite a bit of this, we now see the app, the universal kind of add functionality, the universal insert functionality. When we when we insert those pieces, that data can stay up to date. And it's kind of like if you have a Word document or a Google document and insert a table of contents, you can just right click on it and say, Okay, now update this. Well, that's kind of what loop components are loop components are blocks that allow you to go ahead and stay synchronized. If this sounds very similar, it's because it sounds very similar to notion and the way sync blocks work in notion. You'll also note that Microsoft loop looks a lot like notion itself as well. But this is kind of the weird part, loop is recursive. So loop is an application. Loop components can live inside of other places like Microsoft Teams, or Microsoft whiteboard, or other places. But you can also have Microsoft loop components. Like you can basically have a whiteboard, and utilize loop components on the other side of that as well. So it's like loop can be either way, like on top of something or underneath something in that sense, the components themselves are available to us, and allows for this consistent, ongoing, updated content across our ecosystem. So say, for example, Augusto and I were sharing content in a team's channel. So we had a shared channel. And in between our organizations, we have a shared channel and we're sharing a document, so to speak, well, by using a loop component, we would be able to have that document in real time through loop, stay in that feed, and stay updated in real time with us. And that's the power of the fluid framework that's running underneath loop. And so I think this is actually a really big deal. You know, to be quite honest, I wish they had just done this in one note, but they chose to build a whole new application around it. And so, yeah, here we are.

Augusto Pinaud 44:37
It's not that the idea is bad. By by no means is just it seems like we are adding components to make you know, Microsoft Game with teams teams has been a great addition. And now we are adding components to make it complicated. I understand that one of Microsoft skills. Okay. They're making something complicated that what it's going to do is break something that is working really well. And as you said, we have one note, we have other components already that can do that really well, why do we need something new, instead of make what we have work, I will not know,

Raymond Sidney-Smith 45:21
I'll make the argument though that they, they are doing this because people have a need for it. If I have, excuse me, if I have data, I want it to stay live and updated across many different places, that's really difficult. And what loop is doing, or at least the fluid framework underpinning it was loop components, I can now say, Okay, I've 35 documents, say, their HR manuals for different groups within my organization. With a loop component, I can now place a specific paragraph of content, I've got to update it once. And then it updates across all of those manuals, immediately. And so we can see that on on at scale, these loop components really does provide for an incredible amount of productivity, because we're not now worried about say, we record our training video for, you know, for for onboarding purposes. Well, if it's embedded in places, and it's not loop, I've got to go through all the, I've got to search for it, I've got to find them all, then I've got to copy and replace all of those with loop that goes away. Because now I can say, I'm going to embed this loop component. And now anytime I change

this video, which changes across every other place, it's it's it exists. And that's an incredibly powerful feature. And it's something that, of course, notion, you know, has brought to bear very quickly in their, in their application, you know, setup, and has been, I mean, it's really fluid. And I really like it. And basically Microsoft said, Hey, we have been working toward the same thing, we want to give it some, some publicity, let's build an entire application around it, because they have the resources to do so. But but they're popularizing loop. But loop is not the most important piece here. It is actually the loop components that are the like, think of them just like notion sync blocks, it is literally that where you can just synchronize content across a lot of different documents. And it's automatically updated, you know, think, think about what we do each week of Gousto in terms of setting up the agenda for Anything But Idle, having core components that are the same content so that no matter what, and where we are, that core set of content stays the same. And then we're just adding in the pieces that are different. And if something were to change in the future, I just go and change it once, then it synchronizes across all the documents. That's an incredibly powerful feature set that I think loop components provide us through the fluid framework. And it's something that I'm not going to knock Microsoft for having created. I'm interested actually, like just thinking out loud here. I'm much more interested think to see how Apple implements this because you know, Apple is going to and, you know, they can't sit by and not invent. I'm air quoting invent the either concept now. I'm really curious to see how they do it because they will likely do it more fluidly. Part of

Augusto Pinaud 48:27
my record, I'm going to say nothing after that, because that's all that I want to say.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 48:37
But with that, any final comments before we close out today? No,

Augusto Pinaud 48:41
we have announcements.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 48:43
Yes. There are two announcements and I didn't add the second one. So go ahead and tell us the first one.

Augusto Pinaud 48:49
Okay. First announcement is on November seven teen we are going to be or the person broke to the club is going to be talking about pro chat life that's at 5:30pm. Eastern Standard Time. And we the perserverance club is bringing back the pro chat. And it's going to be on a live feature with Twitter and Twitter spaces. So this is not the first event this is to talk about it. What is going to be in show. So join us.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 49:25
Absolutely. So if you if you're not on Twitter, you should be no, you're welcome to join us on Twitter. If you just go to twitter.com and look up me or Sidney-Smith You'll find the Twitter spaces link. And Twitter spaces is basically a live audio conversation. So it's audio only. And these Twitter spaces can be recorded or they can be ephemeral. And we also have of course tweet chats and Twitter chats, many many years of Twitter chats existing and the idea is to blend those Two together and build upon really the history and the success of Prague chat, which was the weekly Twitter chat about productivity, personal productivity. And so I'm really looking forward to it, you know, having everybody come together and really discuss what Prague chat live will look like and be, I have my thoughts, and I'm sure many other folks have them. And I'm inviting various personal productivity experts to join and host pro chat lives from week to week. And so yeah, I hope you guys can join us. The second item is that for those of you who are unaware, I'm an Evernote certified consultant, and I'm one of the Evernote

regional leaders. And so the I'm going to be hosting a webinar on Wednesday, yes. So by the time this hits the podcast feed, that is tomorrow, so Wednesday, November 10. And, and so the webinar will be on Evernote and the extended mind, basically talking a little bit about what extended binder theory is and how the Evernote features themselves, the ones that Evernote has built into the existing Evernote version 10, the latest version of Evernote really what the context and why these pieces really lean and lend toward the concept of the extended mind. And so hopefully that will help people conceptualize how Evernote really is taking over a good portion of how we think beyond our own, you know, personal memory, our own biological memory, and extends it and I'm really looking forward to sharing that. And so you can register, if you do register, you'll get access to the webinar replay for 48 hours. So just know that if you can't attend live, you can still watch the replay after there's a 48 hour time frame to it. So you can watch it for 48 hours, and then it goes away. And so the incentive is for you to join and watch it. So with that, that brings us to the end of the show.

Augusto Pinaud 51:56
Yes, yes, that's right.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 51:59
Okay, so with that we've covered the productivity and and related technology news for this week. Thank you to you, Cousteau for putting together the show this and every week. And we'll see you next week. Thank you. Alright, on anything but idle.com, you'll find our show notes with links to all the stories tools of the week, our productivity resources of the week, including some extra stories that we couldn't cover during our time together today. And then our text transcripts, those come in a readable format, you can click read more, it'll expand it, you can read it right there on the page, or you can click the link below that, which is a PDF download link, you can download the PDF for offline use as well. After looking at your at the show notes, please let us know if there's something that's missing if we missed a story. And, you know, we want to go ahead and include that, you can do that by putting a comment on the page directly. You can go ahead and tweet or DMS direct messages at Anything But Idle at Anything But Idle on Twitter, you can also use our contact form on the website. So any of those three ways you'll be able to reach us if a question or comment about anything we did discuss during the show, feel free to just do the same, you can use our comment fields on the page, you can tweet or DMS or you can use our contact form, whichever you're comfortable with. You can also join us in personal productivity Club, which is where we have a group dedicated to Anything But Idle. So if you visit the WWW dot personal productivity Club, you'll be able to join the group which is the Anything But Idle channel. So if you go to anything but idle.com forward slash community, that'll take you right to a download page, a sign up page that is that allows you to go ahead and sign up for Anything But Idle. So it's this link on screen, but Anything But Idle comm forward slash community that'll go ahead and give you the the direct sign in page or if you're already a member of personal productivity club, it'll give you a join option to be able to go ahead and do that it's free. And you can engage with us in that space if you have questions and other comments, and we look forward to always having you. If this is your first time watching the live stream, or listening to the podcast, feel free to subscribe to it on on YouTube. Of course, this is clicking the subscribe button and your podcast app. It's however you add us to your favorite podcast app inside the app. If you've enjoyed spending time or listening to us today. Feel free to leave a rating review in Apple podcasts or Stitcher or your podcast app of choice. If it's so allows your compliments help us reach more of the personal productivity listening community. And so thank you for doing that. Thanks to those who have already rated and reviewed us really, really appreciate your feedback and otherwise. With that, we will see you all next time on Anything But Idle. Here's to your productive life.