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## RR003

## Messaging the future with Kathleen Tandy, Meta

Capgemini

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Start talking and doing it. No, no, I'm gonna I'm just gonna I can't tell by looking at your face. No, don't worry. I'm working on my face people like to look at anyway. I wouldn't I wouldn't know, is good. This is going into my head.

 (00:27.246)

Dave Chapman. I'm Esmee van de Gieze. I'm Rob Curden. And this is Realities Remixed, an original podcast from Capgemini. And this week, we are going to talk about the integration of messaging into customer and consumer interactions. And I am delighted to say that later in the show is Kathleen Tandy, Global Director, Head of Business Messaging Marketing at Meta as always with the new structure of the show. If you want to skip straight to Kathleen's conversation with us, you can find the time codes all in the show notes. But before we get to that, now we talked about Rob's new toy. Es, you've got a new toy too. Yes, I'm all in for the remarkable. And I know a lot of people will probably say, I've had it for years. I know, but the size for me was very unhandy. I already had an iPad Pro, so it didn't feel like a real addition.

But I actually sold the iPad because I was only watching Netflix on it and I still got a lot of money in return. So that gave me an excuse to go for a remarkable move. So you sold your iPad multifunctional device and you traded it in for unifunctional device but doing that one thing much, much better. Yeah, because I already used my iPhone. I already used my MacBook. So in the end, I was like, what am I going to do on an iPad? instead of scribble once in a while, but I didn't even do that. I was only watching Netflix on it. So that's why I decided to trade it. so what we've got here is the secret let go of an Apple product for somebody else's product. And I think slowly as we're to see you as an Android person by the end of the year. no way. no, no, no, It's coming. It's happening. It's It's happening. This is it. This is that this was the first step into a new ecosystem. Nope.

So let's not get distracted by Robert trying to influence you in a terrible way to the dark side, but let's talk about what you're enjoying about it from an experience perspective. Yeah, think, well, as you said, it only does one job and it does it really good. I think that helps. It feels like paper, obviously, but I have so much post-its everywhere. And that was my administration because I don't like to have a laptop in front of me when I'm in conversations.(02:38.616) that feels a bit unpersonal or that there's something between us. So I started using Post-its everywhere and then I put the Post-its in my bag and then at the end of the day, I take them out and then well, They make no sense whatsoever. Yeah. It's like all of your thoughts during the day all jumbled up on tiny bits of coloured paper and then stuck together and you're like, I don't make no sense of this whatsoever. No. And then I just keep on adding Post-its. and not actually, well, working them through. now I've got- What you mean doing the tasks? Yeah. Yeah. The actual work. And I like the move size because it's like a little notebook. So it feels convenient. yeah. So, and it also integrates obviously with an app on the Mac book and an app on the iPhone. yeah. And now of course, Robert, who's got- many gadgets has got one of these. Oh, I was an early adopter. I was like in with the early crowd. I'm like, I saw that one. The bit, a for me is it, it feels like paper and you get, cause you get the slippy screen experience. don't like the slippy screen experience where your thing goes all over the place. So you can be more accurate with it. But to be honest, Rob, we're sponsored by the way. This does sound like an infomercial. because tell us when was the last time you actually opened it? I just checked, actually, as we were having the chat before we started. haven't used it since October.  October 2025. Yes, it's been a while. Anyway, I restarted it. I promised to get back into the, but like you, also have a pile of little note things next to me desk, which I write on and then they go everywhere and I lose them. And so you were saying that you had a particular point about a sensitive tip, Rob. A sensitive tip. Titanium. Oh no, sorry. Tip Dave tip. That's what I said.

So I got an aftermarket titanium tip for it because the tips wear down. then it doesn't, it makes it a bit slippier, but actually it's a good halfway house. There you go. As you're getting one of those. Yes, obviously. I love Rob always has these catches that really, you know, make sense because he's a real good, you know, reviewer. He's like the best. He is. He's, he's well regarded in the Google online restaurant review world. I'm one of the most. (04:49.998)

Prolific, let's use that word, a bar review is in the United Kingdom according to Google. Prolific doesn't normally necessarily equal good. No. But you know, you try your best. Social, I believe in, we've had this conversation before, reviews are very useful. You should leave an honest and open review about your proper experience. And please, my claim again, stop taking pictures of your family and leaving that as part of the Google review. I'm not interested in that bit. You should take pictures of the thing I'm actually going to visit.


Anyway, on that note, I have a bit of a story, would you like to hear it? We are sitting comfortably, you may begin. So, a couple of years ago, I was doing some work on my house and I was looking for a new bed. You go into bed

shops normally and they're all broadly much of a muchness, but I found this Italian one that had a really nice wooden frame and stuff like that and it was ridiculously expensive in the UK. So I did a bit of searching around and found that like actually in Milan where, you know, the thing was made, it was more cost effective. I had to some tax to import and stuff, but it was more cost effective. Anyway, so I ping the website and start to have a conversation with the shop that then transitioned onto WhatsApp. And I completed the entire transaction, including the purchasing and then including the...you know, having to get it shipped with like specialty shippers, they joined the chat and the whole thing was done on WhatsApp. that's the first time like one, I hadn't actually tracked that WhatsApp was being integrated into customer experience in that way. So I did have an initial reaction to it, which is like, am I being scammed? Is this like a real thing? Am I actually talking to a actual real shop? You know, I did have that. experience and I decided to go with it, which could have been a foolhardy decision. But after I'd got over that, the actual transacting of it was exceptionally smooth. And Kathleen, who's going to join us later, who's been working on this integration is going to give us some insights from her perspective. Ez, you think a lot about human interactions and experience creation and things like that. (07:12.352)

In your head, this integration messaging sort of like, did it really, when did it come about and how were people thinking about it? If you look back in time, I think when the world was really small and you only had a village and that's it. didn't travel to... back way further than that. It's just going to a long monologue. No, just wait. you know, in essence, the bakery around the corner, you knew that person. And when you...you stepped in and that person knew what type of bread you wished for and they already asked how are your kids doing, cetera, et cetera. So that's business relations, right? And then suddenly you were able to go and travel to other cities and then it really was about, okay, let's make sure that they come back to us and not to others. So that's building trust. And I think that's also what you talked about with, know, is this trustworthy? Even when there's technology in between, does it? makes sense because we also know that it's about the mass. So how many automated messages are being sent and is there anything or anyone involved that's not, you know, trying to do the best thing for you. So I think in essence, that's still what we're looking for in connection with businesses is the human part. And obviously you want, in your case, you wanted to have the bed, you want something done, you want to have a service or you want to have a problem solved. but you want to do it in a way that you're really being helped. And I think that connected messaging and we've seen that, especially in the last 10 years. It's been evolving. Suddenly we were talking about omni-channel, right? We first used only letters on paper and then, we also have email and then we have two channels and then we had chat and then we had integration with chat. So it's increasing. And I think the key point here is how can you still make it feel authentic? talk a lot about customer journey touch points. I've been in a lot of workshops and it's really difficult to identify the different types of touch points because every customer jumps in on another point or another preferred channel. So it's not that obvious. And I think that a lot of organizations, you know, they started with the happy flow. So those are the touch points and then you as a customer should exactly follow those touch points. And in reality you don't. So, and then it feels crooked. (09:37.792)as a, from a customer perspective. think that's right. I think the thing that once I decided to go with it, the thing I liked about it, I sort of had to, or it would have turned into email exchanges or whatever would have happened as a secondary choice, but it felt intimate. It felt quick. It tailored specifically to the questions I had.

And you could do like a lot of very fast follow up questions. So when they would send like, you know, like, I don't know, a diagram of it so could measure the size of it or something like that. You could ask a bunch of questions about various different things and feel like you're getting a, and it was definitely a human, like a human responding and giving you their advice. What do you stand on intimacy, Robert? You know me, Dave, very British, keep it at arm's length. Don't go for it. I want to be very formal, transactional. and just as needed. You prefer like letters, like actually physical paper letters. If you've not put a wax seal on the letter, I'm not trusting you. But it's interesting you raised that point about trust where you actually talked about other forms of communication like post or email. They're dramatically less secure and easily spoofed compared to like WhatsApp, which is encrypted end to end. As long as you trust the identity of the human you're talking to, then actually everything in transit between you is significant. So actually it's better from a technology perspective to do it that way as well. Very much so. And it's funny you mentioned that you link that point to the letters joke, but I actually had to send a letter recently like about tax. so therefore I was putting on that letter, I was including quite a lot of personal information.

There's definitely a sign of the emotional reaction you have to these things. I'm this physical letter out and I'm like, God, I hope nobody sees this unless it's the intended person I'm writing to. know what I mean? Well, it's that whole, the problem, you hear it all the time with government organisations all around the world. There's a story, I left this on the train. There's ones where they're walking into the office and the reporter takes the photo of the

paper and is able to read the text and all this sort of stuff.(11:59.736) Paper, printed paper is very insecure and you can lose it and somebody can pick it up and then they've got you and you don't know who's got it and can go anywhere in an office environment. It's like we shouldn't be working this way anymore but we still do. And do know what else is interesting? I don't know if you have it in the UK as well but we have a lot of, we do not trust a postal company at the moment because suddenly packages get lost or they get delivered like three blocks away. So that also makes you feel like, I'm sending this letter now and you don't like...used to, like back in the days we trusted them to deliver every letter and they did, but now they're a bit flunky so you don't trust it. And then you're even more aware of where's my letter going to end up. So I've got a new business model now. We'll go old school as, cause you went back to the days of where you lived in the village. I'm going to create a new service, which is a bloke turns up on a horse and takes your wax sealed letter and then is entrusted to deliver it only to the person you've requested to be delivered to. And that's a new thing I'm going to do. And you want to be the bloke, right? on the horse turning up in sort of 1700s regalia and saying, will do it. Marcel actually has like the cowboy look, right? I just like the hat, the, know, the big hat with the point on the front and everything. like the word Marcel is looking at. This is, it's an audio, so you can't say, but Marcel looks baffled at the thought of his cowboy look. Which particular outfit you're thinking of is, is it the day watch apps? that the way you're thinking about it? took a picture of me in a cowboy suit in Vegas when I joined a store. I wanted to bring you to that store and have a laugh, but you refused. It was Rob. It was Rob. was being surly. you know what is it for it? You go into shops like that and you go, Ooh, they're a nice pair of cowboy boots. And like for 30 seconds, you think it's ace. You buy them, you walk out and then you put them on back home and you just go, this was a massive mistake. And someone should have warned you. Someone should have watched it. Your friend should have said, are you sure that won't look the same as you walking down Clapham High I suspect you weren't trusting us to give you good advice. No, no, not there. I'd be like, Rob, I think there's one over there with a slightly higher heel. I think you should go for that. You tried to convince me to buy a bootlace tie. did. I think it could have been the look that you could have gone for. It would have been unique. You'd stand out in the office. (14:23.342)Sorry, how's it going? Well, now if you bring this back to the conversation, trying to level it up, if we bring it back, then someone in the personnel in the store, I love it when I had that the other day, someone said, well, that's not really the right color for you, is it? I love that honesty. Honesty. That's also building trust. Just say like, okay, I don't want you to just buy everything because it will give me money, but just to be honest towards your customers, like maybe Rob.

The lace. No, I cottoned onto it straight away. Dave was trying to get me to do something so he could create a hilarious situation that he could then witness. was being used and manipulated. I spotted it straight away. No, that doesn't sound was right on it. No, no David. Anyway, let's get back on topic. Rob, talk to us about interaction models and how they've shifted over time and some of the parameters to think about in that.It's the classic, as new channels have become available, physical or digital, organisations tended to build a model around that. So you would have to stay within that channel. So what you've ended up with is this loads of bits of customer state that may be distributed throughout an organisation. And then there's been a huge push to try and integrate that experience. So I've done something online, I need to speak to the contact centre, I'm off on WhatsApp. can that organisation track me across those channels? And it's actually quite complicated, especially if you're coming from a legacy architecture with siloed data sets. It's not an easy thing to be able to get that state across. And then if you're talking to another human, they're having to try and aggregate everything together. In fact, AI and summarisation is one of those very useful features that appeared recently that can go across these information sets and try and get you to a situation where you can then interact. in a way that works for you. So obviously if you stay in one channel it's a bit easier. But I think there's this realization about having to connect all that together. Now, there's like recently with the AI and the LLMs and everything else, that's created the final piece of the puzzle that might allow the context and state to be easier to interact with. But yeah, it's still an ongoing fight that many organizations are having to try and bring that consistent experience. Now, the other aspect of the conversation with Kathleen (16:45.176) that honestly I hadn't been tracking. And you know, sometimes something so obvious happens that you hadn't been tracking. You're like, my God, how did I miss that? And it was the emergence of meta in the enterprise space. I've got to admit in my head that is, I had them compartmentalized and completely foolishly hadn't really been thinking about it, but the presence is very high this year at re-invent in particular, I thought. So Rob, what are you making of...

of Meta's move into enterprise space and it starts with WhatsApp and messaging I think. think they have a thing, that product, ironically not as well used in the US as it is everywhere else in the world in WhatsApp. Yeah, it's strange though, the cultural acceptances of different messaging platforms, you'll hear in the conversation with Kathleen how they're having to take that into account. It's very interesting actually. Yeah, and there was a sort of...

When the technology came, we were used to text messaging point to point, but WhatsApp allowed us to create group chats. gives us guaranteed delivery, it gives us security. You've got a thing there that's well trusted by individuals who've been using it point to point or in groups with family. Everybody's got a family WhatsApp group or, you know, Telegram or whatever you use. We've embraced that. Text message has gone, it's had its day. The blue-green bubble fight between Apple and Android is a, well, it is mostly a long distant. memory. And so they had a thing that was trusted and well-liked and an interface that everyone was used to. So actually, if you think about it, it's natural to allow you to open up to the business ecosystem. So I'm interacting with socially everyone, but I can interact with business as well. And so it was a really nice thing and a sensible decision. just suppose until you've actually had a business contact you on it, you didn't really think about it because you didn't need to think about it. I'm not surprised by your point, Dave, that you didn't see it happening. actually, especially with airlines, they picked up on it very quickly to give you flight information and it's working quite well. you had something that everybody had adopted. So why not open it up to business? It makes perfect sense. Why not? So yeah, like I was saying, Meta visible at reinvent this year for all the reasons that Rob's just said, but also they had like stalls in the Expo, that kind of thing, which was interesting to walk around because you don't really get consumer stuff. (19:01.898) at things like reInvent. They're very business to business, how you consume kind of large scale technology. But Es, I know you were quite thrilled by it. Yeah, absolutely. Because Kathleen actually tipped us, like go see the MetaGlasses. So we absolutely did that. And it was quite surprisingly good. If you talk about enterprise and you just say navigate to, you could see, okay, navigate to that pizza place. But you can imagine that you can also pick that up as an interaction in your WhatsApp business. So it was completely integrated. think Rob Marcello and I had quite some fun figuring it out, know, tapping on the side of the glasses and seeing how it works. it's also, it obviously again is, we going to wear this in real life? I'm not sure about that though. I'd say that they're very, very close, if not there on creating a device that looks almost the same as a normal pair of glasses. I'd say they're a little chunkier. But you know what my favourite thing out of that, your little exploration there was? The picture you took of Rob where he looks like a 16 bit video game character. And now it's a sticker in our own... But that's my dream, a computer game character. You have achieved it Roberto and every time I look at that sticker one, it actually makes me laugh out loud. But secondly, I have...some sort of like little 16 bit bit of music going on in my head. some Mario tune. We should create you like a theme tune. Anyway on that note let's go to our conversation with Kathleen Tandy at Meta.(20:49.678)

We are here with Kathleen Tandy, who's the global director and head of business messaging marketing at Meta. Kathleen, how are you? I'm great. I'm so happy to be here today. Delighted to talk to you. It's actually the first person we've had from Meta on the show. So really excited to dig into it a little bit. Well, fantastic. I'm happy to break new ground. Yeah, well, Meta, an interesting organization, aren't they? Because obviously everyone knows aspects of them, but maybe don't fully understand how the whole piece comes together and...and what it's like there now. maybe start us off just by painting a little bit of a picture of the situation for us. I'm to. I think everybody is very familiar with what Metta was anchored on, starting with Facebook. And really that grew to our whole portfolio of social platforms. So Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Messenger, and with billions of people who use those platforms daily to learn, stay informed. I remember that moment when Zuckerberg announced the name change to Metta and there was even a bit of like, is that happening? Is it not just Facebook? So yeah, it's interesting to know like what a quite extensive portfolio there is there now. It really is. And I think people know the company. think it really represented taking a broader view of all aspects of the company. And of course we have our social platforms. businesses are very familiar with Metta's ads business because hundreds of millions of them rely on them as a growth driver for their business. And then, more recently, I think we've made quite a name for ourselves with our fantastic Metta Ray bands. They're very, very hot commodity today, right? But what I think a lot of people don't know about is how it extends to solutions of the one that I get to work on, which is bringing technology capability to businesses around the globe to leverage our messaging platforms to drive growth. Yeah, it's interesting, isn't it? It's like a, it's it's a move of consumer technology into the business sphere and leveraging the sort of the ease of use, the, the, the natural use that everybody has with those technologies today. So it is a bit, it is a bit interesting.

(23:04.278)

It's a popular, I mean, you just use the app. It's easy to use. It's very popular. It's a perfect channel for communication. So it's like, makes perfect sense from a sort of consumer perspective, doesn't it? does. And it's really, it is really based on what consumers, how they want to communicate. increasingly, and this is very, very much the case in regions of the world, Southeast Asia, Latin America, most of Europe in the Middle East where It is ubiquitous. It is a way of life for people to use messaging for those who use WhatsApp and a lot of our solutions

are anchored on WhatsApp, right? It is just a way of life. And I think that is, that's the source and the driver here, which is this is how increasingly customers want to communicate. And they don't want to communicate differently for businesses than the rest of the ways they communicate in their life. And businesses are taking notice. How do you curate such a narrative, which is global, but you want to... touch upon the local cultures and the stories and how do you do that? How do you orchestrate that from your level of orchestrating the entire narrative? That's a great question because we started off talking about meta, but really when it comes down to it is what matters and resonates is the local platform that people use. Right? So in a lot of countries like Brazil, we do a lot in Brazil. It is WhatsApp. It is a love brand. That is how people use. In Thailand and Vietnam, it's based on Messenger. In Turkey, it's based on Instagram. Right? So it is a little bit of a challenge, from a brand standpoint to cover all of these things. But I think what we really anchor in doing is anchor in helping businesses use a solution that is what their customers want to use. and anchor on what's going to work in helping them connect with their customers. I was going say, you know it's a successful one, because when we first got it, I remember a little bit of excitement because you could do group chats and we got the family on it and you know it's easy to use and it's compelling because the parents jump straight on it because they realized they could communicate to the whole family in one fell swoop and suddenly the convenience and the ease of it was very, very compelling. And when you get that sort of generation instantly embracing it, you're like, you you've got something good.(25:18.478)

We're going to have to bring you on as a spokesperson to help drive adoption of WhatsApp in the United States. I think that's he's angling for. I'm not paying him. There's no money changing hands. We constantly say no shilling on this show. It's like, what did you not get the memo? I remember way back when it was really new as a platform and I was actually the one that paid the 99p for it. was exciting. I actually got it solved a big problem. I was like, Oh my God, this is the answer. Yeah, yeah. anyway, I'll stop there. case in point, I love this because you can see the passion from a consumer perspective we have here. Right? So think about how a business can leverage that trust, right? That excitement, enthusiasm for using that platform, right? To engage with that, with that customer, you're to have much better loyalty and connection than, than email. I can also.Imagine that it's your personal space. think we had the same with Facebook, at least I'm in the Netherlands. We also had, oh my God, now my parents are actually able to see me. Oh shit, I need to, you know, I can't unfriend them. Well, you can, but it'd be very unpopular at Christmas. you see the same with WhatsApp business? Because it also feels like businesses are now entering my personal space, which is WhatsApp, and that feels quite close.

Do you see anything happening there? So, you know, what's fascinating about that is I think this really speaks to shifts in consumer expectations that we are seeing around the globe. And what we are seeing is like everything is kind of is becoming seamless and people are expecting fast, immediate response, whether it is to communications, to people or businesses, right?there is just a host of changing expectations. And I think that that's blurring the lines between these platforms. And so it's less about, think people have channels, they have ways to be able to separate that, but increasingly they are expecting businesses to adapt to what they want, not having for them to adapt to what a business wants. So having to go out of their normal, (27:36.472) communication channels to go to a separate app or to a separate site versus all of this to be clear is based on people who've opted in. So this is not spamming. This is based on, and it's a variety of way for consumers to discover this. So one of the options we have is, lots of businesses choose our, what we call our click to ads, which are ads on Facebook or Instagram. that have the option to click into a messaging thread on one of our platforms and WhatsApp. So by doing that, they've signed up, they've volunteered and they've opted into a conversation. And with that, they then just expect a seamless conversation. They expect the business to know what they want. And I think part of this is just again, shifting trends, shifting demographics, shifting ages of the population, right? This is, they just expect everything to work this way.

So I just want to step back real quick to the point that Es made a little while ago, which is about the different platforms that you guys have got. the point that you were talking about in our little chat before we started to record is about the marketing adage of go to where your customers are. when you're initially engaging with an organization that maybe not already on these platforms, or they think they're kind of wondering about how they leverage access to those audiences and platforms. How and where do you start to kind of help them understand like, yes, you've got this amount of audience on the Instagram platform, you've got this amount of audience on the WhatsApp platform. How does that conversation go? Well, so first of all, it's anchored in what is the business trying to achieve. Yeah, sure. And there's a difference between global companies who are trying to manage global technology platforms. And I think every business has different platforms based on different market needs, depending on their global reach. But I think they most want to be successful, they're gonna want to anchor in what makes sense for their markets. So kind of starting local. So really, businesses and markets where WhatsApp is ubiquitous, it's not a hard question. They're gonna start with WhatsApp.(29:54.7) businesses in Southeast Asia, countries in Southeast Asia, Thailand, Vietnam, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, et cetera, Indonesia, like they're

either, they all run on messenger or they all run on WhatsApp. So it's really not a hard choice. It's quite straightforward then because the- It's straight forward. Right, I see. That makes sense. a societal drive then it's sort of- It's the flywheel effect of that's just what the countries use as a natural community built and that's the stack they're on. Getting off that stack, that's quite a wrench then, isn't it? Because everybody's ingrained it in their lives. So I suppose that's very, very sticky then, isn't it? So it's not going to go away. So you've got the confidence to say, well, it's going to be here and it's going to stay. Because actually, if you think about the concept of messaging, it's quite straightforward. And I think it takes it back to marketing 101, word of mouth. Yeah. Because now I also added a new app. because my dad was afraid that, I don't know, he's being their spies looking out for him. don't know. just don't. Did foil hat in the corner type. Definitely going to touch it on that. have coke hangers hanging from the roof? Yeah. now he's the only one using that app. okay, so now I've got three in that that one is only my dad. Right, okay. So it's word of mouth. Just get him under WhatsApp Esme, get him under WhatsApp. No, I'm sorry, but he just left WhatsApp for whatever reason. that's the, know, if he's the only one, I'm gonna use it because he's my dad. But if it's not my dad, you're gonna drop off that. Yeah, So it's like the mass and the word of mouth. It really is a flywheel and it really is based on what we see consumers adopt. So a lot of our business frankly is based on WhatsApp. There are 3 billion users of WhatsApp. on a daily basis. Yeah. Right. So one, with that reach, it just makes sense as a solution and companies know where they wanna start based on their markets and based on where their customers are. So it's really easy for them to choose and then they can leverage our host of APIs and platforms to be able to hook into their Martech stack. think the biggest question for businesses is figuring out where they wanna start. Right. Because you can, the... (32:01.166)

And a good news, bad news, the good news is you can use these platforms and this really this new channel, customer engagement channel across every touch point across the customer lifecycle. Whether it's exploring and discovering your brand or showing a catalog of your services or whatever it is you're interested in buy to the purchase transaction. to getting them onboarded with the product or service, to if there are any customer support issues, you can use it for that. You can use it from re-engagement. You can use it for everything, which is great, but there's so much possibility. I think one of the things we see that is the biggest challenge is helping companies know where to get started. What do we wanna use it for first? And then that really needs to be based on where the business is, what some of their biggest business outcomes that they're trying to drive. I'm interested, before we delve into that a little bit more deeply, which I'd like to come on to the challenges that they're trying to overcome, I'm just interested in the development of your charter. So think you picked up the brief, what was it, three years ago? I did, yes. And what kind of state did you pick it up in and if you can share it, what's your strategic outlook? Sure. So it was a big change for me. I've spent my life in B2B tech. Right. in the cloud world for 13 years with a company called VMware. Prior to this, before that NetApp, Hewlett Packard, so hardcore, know, tech infrastructure. Right. Right. And then joined Metta three years ago. And one of the reasons why I joined was for one, it was kind of nice to come out of what we call the IT basement and to be able to go move to the front of house and have a solution that is a clear growth driver for businesses. So that's kind of exciting. But the opportunity for me was to help build enterprise DNA at Metta. Right. Right. So help build and help them understand how to have an audience centric way of approaching the market, being anchored in business solutions, bringing what is fundamentally a technical infrastructure platform to businesses and helping Metta. And this must have been around the time of the Metta rebrand, was it? Was it like right in the middle of that? (34:22.4) It was post. It was post the meta, the meta-reband. What was the conversation that was going on within the organisation at that time? Was it like, right, we're kind of intentionally trying to move into the enterprise space and therefore we need help from leaders like you to do that? It was a little bit more organic. like a lot of, a lot of businesses, we think back to COVID.

which was just a huge digital transformation driver. We all remember where we were five years ago. couldn't keep up fast enough with the pace of digital all been on video conferences with a glass of wine. And frankly, a lot of this business followed customers hacking their way and using these messaging platforms because all of a sudden they couldn't meet customers face to face. we saw Ford in Latin American Brazil switched to standing up WhatsApp as a way for people to discover and purchase cars. Right. We saw, so, you know, out of necessity, we saw a huge number of social organizations, public sector organizations, governments start to use it for service messages, engagement. So it really became when you can't be face to face. especially in markets where WhatsApp is such a trusted channel. Yeah, of course. That it just became a new territory and ways for people to engage. So the business had already started, kind of, know, 2019, 2020, and it had grown. And then there were ambitious plans to really formalize it and take it to the next level. Right. That's when I joined. Internally, that must be quite a big cultural shift as well, because Going into the enterprise space is very different from building tech products that consumers use. there must be quite a lot of conversations where you have to educate people on, doesn't

quite work like that. You have to think of it like this. This is the way you need to engage, that sort of stuff. What's your experience there? So it is. It is different DNA and a different approach to delivering solutions.(36:28.962) know, enterprise is typically like a little more stability, a little more lead time versus shipping code updates frequently, right? But frankly, it's not that much different than most of my other, if I look back at my career in tech, so Hewlett Packard, Unix company, and product, I was product manager for 486 based platforms, right? The start, so.

It was, how do you get attention for the Upstart business? It's slightly different. VMware, were core with server virtualization, then we extended that into management, networking, storage, and every one of those adjacencies. He was like, this is different. Different buyers, different approaches, right? So, every company that is a portfolio company, And I'm sure AWS is exactly the same, right? Every company that has a portfolio company that has a core and that has adjacencies, it's exactly the same story. Well, let's return then to the companies that you're trying to help. So when you're looking into them, they're coming to you, there might be an initial, from them, are they engaging with you? Because it's a different type of...dialogue, isn't it, where you're leveraging extensive scaled consumer platforms that are already existing. So they're not building, they're integrating to them presumably. So what are the challenges that you're helping them walk through to get to a point where they understand what platform, what they're trying to solve and how they're solving problems that they have running out in a legacy and tech debt that they've got? What's that initial conversation like?

Are you helping them reframe the way they're thinking about it? Or do they actually quite well understand it in the committee? go, dude, do we need to get on WhatsApp? Can you help sort us out? So one, it depends on the market in the country. I think in markets, again, where WhatsApp is ubiquitous, it's not a hard sell for them to want to use the communication platform that's preferred by their customers. Simply, the number one job to be done is helping people be aware (38:48.782)that these solutions exist. It's number one. And helping them see the possibility and then helping them see where they could get started in their organization. That's number one. Number two though is going on the next journey of what would they use it for? How do they integrate it? Cause fundamentally it's APIs that integrate into their tech stack. The hardest part is deciding what they wanna use it for and then change like all technology change management is a...huge factor for all companies deciding what you want to use it for and how you're going to adopt it and integrate it into your motions, et cetera. And that's for us where we rely on a really broad partner ecosystem. Partners around the globe of all size from service providers and ISVs and tech providers really play that role face-to-face with customers and taking them through and helping them understand what makes sense for them.

What business problem are they trying to solve and then helping them take forward with the integration? So really, I think, this is leading the marketing for this, it's one, helping people see the vision, helping them be aware, and then connecting them to the resources in our ecosystem to help them get started. And a lot of resources online, of course, that they can do with their own developers in-house. I remember when we implemented CRM, I did that a lot. And then having WhatsApp integrate in that, that was huge. That was a huge step because you have your customer service line and your tickets. But that WhatsApp channel was not always available, but that first step was crucial in customer journeys and touch points. And I love the fact that it's now broadening the ecosystem. Is that also what you see? it's across your tools, obviously your entire stack, but also into the broader stack overall in customer journeys where you integrate.

can be integrated across all aspects of the customer journey. I think it's where customers want to start based on what business problem they most want to solve, which is very unique to, you know, the businesses, business strategy and their dynamics in their market. So if you see businesses that are customer service oriented, (41:06.348)maybe they're having a challenge in drop-off rates and appointment show-ups. Frankly, even automotive industry, right? A lot of them rely on test drives. You get someone in, but you can book a test drive, but then they don't show up, right? Simply using WhatsApp for appointment and booking and service reminders can dramatically increase the number of show-ups, right? Which significantly reduces cost. and also accelerates, you know, income, income and growth. it really, it depends on, and that's the richness of this solution. It can solve so many different needs. So it's really working with customers to understand what is their business need, where do they start? And then we see them start with one kind of use case and then quickly spread to others and then build out across the, across the customer life cycle. there's an interesting change in the dynamic, which is a simple peace of mind point. which is a simple low cost asynchronous message saying you we've got your order or this is your reminder or something very simple. It builds a lot of confidence when you work with that organisation. Whereas before you might not have got that positive feedback to say don't forget you're here or we've got your

order or that sort of stuff. The biggest change I remember that we did in UK Gov was you ordered a passport and it used to be a black box. You'd send it in, you'd cross your fingers and three weeks later you might get your passport back. And then they implemented this sort of thing and they would tell you, they'd send you a message very simply, your passport is now here, it's been authorized, it's been approved, it's been sent out, bang, and you get this sequence. then it relaxes you about the process. Builds trust, relaxes you about what's going on, great. So it's like, there's a really powerful human aspect to the confidence you can build around your services. I mean, it really is about delivering a seamless, but amazing experience for your customers. And it is that's personalized, that retains their history. So you don't have to keep telling, you know, the new information all the time. It's instant travel. You know, we see a lot of air, actually Heathrow, Heathrow uses WhatsApp. but a number of different airlines using them for flight rebookings, like booking reminders. And, you know, that is a situation where your flight has been canceled, right? And, you know, (43:30.542) Well, that's stressful for all of us, right? And being able to get a media. Rob is a nervous traveler. So, you know, can, we can just, you know, de-stress you if you're going to go ahead a quick update from your airline in WhatsApp, a channel you trust, right? With a, don't worry, we've got this. Right. We're going to rebook you. Here are your options. We're good to go. And here are reminders on the light way. You're going to keep going back to that airline. Exactly right. Because it's that kind of experience. You seem very positive about that. Would that make you feel good? It's a classic. If my interaction works with an organization, I'll keep that organization on the books. And you might actually end up paying slightly more for service because you've got confidence in the delivery. And these little nudges that a company can give you through this type of channel can make a massive difference to your perception of

I think it's a very important point. One of the things that Roberto here likes to do when he travels is print out all of his stuff on paper. So I wonder if you're going to have any kind of that was something my dad used to do. With multiple copies and plastic sleeves. He has the plastic I'm not getting caught up. I'm not getting caught out. does have plastic sleeve. He's also got a lamination machine. You know what? When you laminate something, it makes it a little bit more official. It builds confidence in there. You know, I don't know anybody under the age of 25 who would agree with that. me a piece of paper. Great. Hand me it laminated. You love to carry like, you're going to rely on this WhatsApp service to give you confidence when you travel.

You'll have to get a little printer. little thing pops out the message. Print out the last sort of thread. We're going to get you to the point where if you're using WhatsApp, you're going to feel like you don't need to print it out because you're going to be able to rely on it. You are setting a high bar there, my We are, but we can deliver. Yes. I'm going to watch that with interest. That would be a success. You could case study that. (45:33.006)And then, and then if you're speaking at a conference like Metis Conference, could be the case. We have one, it's called conversations. We'll invite you, we'll invite you. The emotional trauma got removed. I think, you know, one of the other things that when you start to look at this kind of a channel and you're thinking about how do you deliver an amazing customer experience, one of the other things that companies can consider is the many types of rich formats of information too. So. Right. Everyone's familiar with text. Text is very static. I don't trust text as much as watch out. Blue ticks, blue ticks, blue ticks. Did you give it some money? Text is unreliable. don't know where this is coming from. go. There we go. Right. But it's words. It's words. Words still can be good. You can still rely on words. increasingly we have generations who expect

video, right? Who expect pictures, who expect digital. And frankly, there are also a lot of countries where, you know, it's just a more visual video culture. So the other beautiful thing is the many rich text formats. So from video to images to, and yes, still written words and voice calling. And the other opportunity which we have is You know, cause sometimes a business does need to actually connect a customer to an aid, you know, a real live person agent, right? Who can help really help them through whatever the situation is and having the ability to, you can bring the voice into the thread. Um, yeah, the customer doesn't have to leave. They can bring that. So I think that's also something again, but it's around really having companies think about delivering richer experiences. that seamless experiences for their customers to keep them coming back. Well, maybe let's try and pull up out of Rob's travel neuroses, unexpected case study. I just added to the conversation as the case study about why I prefer this type of platform. You added richness. A lot of bombshells in it too. Well, I want to just maybe bring our conversation to bit of a conclusion with the inevitable, how does AI fit into all of this? So obviously you guys have been kind of working with (47:50.942) with AI in your platforms for 10 years, I don't know, like maybe even longer. What does it look like from your perspective and how are you feeding it in? AI is a fabulous technology enabler for these platforms. So first of all, I'm sure there are, everybody is racing to imagine all the different ways we can bring this powerful technology into our solutions, into our customers' experiences in ways we probably haven't even imagined. But the way we're imagining it right now is when you integrate messaging into your technology

platforms, right? At the end of the day, those are messages between people, right, in your business. It's a lot of messages, right? And you have to be able to respond to them instantaneously with personal relevant information. And figuring out how to do that, right, is challenging. So very, very small businesses, micro businesses can do it, you know, with a person answering chats. But what we see typically at scale, is companies who automate that through chatbots, right? Which has been, we've had chatbots for a decade, right? In a structured way. What really unleashes the personalization at scale is when you start to marry AI solutions and AI agents, like Meta's business AI solutions into the mix, which allows one, true personalization and response at scale from the ability of AI agents that can learn about that particular you know, customer experience, and then also help companies be able to mine all of the insights and signals from across all of these touch customer touch points to further automate and improve their experiences. that has been the problem with chat bots so far is they're working to some sort of call tree structure that actually it almost always feels like well mine slightly more nuanced, you know, exactly. That first is dynamic. Can deal with ambiguity and. (49:56.78)

That's the agentic thing, isn't it? The ability to deal with different scenarios as they vary, as opposed to tight scripted, as you say. That's where a lot of magic comes from in that experience. can kind of take a different human interaction that's slightly different, but still get you to the same point. Absolutely. And so we really see this being able to, as we build it into the platforms, our partners are building it on top of the platforms, right? Really being able to unleash the full potential of these solutions at scale. Yeah. And are you leveraging it in ways that are allowing you to pull in organizations like global organizations where they're leveraging a number of your platforms? Are they getting like a unified view across all of the different platforms on like where all of them might be? It feels like something that could be mined or pulled together. So, you know, I think it depends on the size of the business, right? The larger, more complex the business goes, the more set of legacy systems.some might refer to it as tech debt, right, exists that you have to work with, right? That makes it more complicated, slows it down. I think we're seeing smaller businesses with simpler, more cloud-native systems being able to adapt and use this first, which is, I think it'll be a real interesting trend to see as we've seen so many different waves of technology come. from the internet area to the cloud era. I think in a lot of cases over my career, I've seen it's the smaller businesses who can adopt new technologies and get those advantages first because they don't have the legacy systems to manage through. I can imagine that especially large enterprises, think identification is key, right? Especially with those touch points, you have your phone number, which is, think, is your key to pin down. all the interactions you've had with that same customer, but with legacy systems you've had. know that we did CRM implementations and there was in the phone field, were 27 variants and it actually said, this is the phone number of the dad only call at (52:07.808) after 7pm in that same... We could have an entire podcast on managing contact databases and having master source code. That's key, right? It's not hard. The bit I always struggle with...

And it's a set number of digits. How have you got that wrong? I just, cause I've come across it as well in data. You just think how has that happened? Zero plus sometimes the zero on the inside. Sometimes not with a zero, sometimes bracketed. Yeah. Yeah. Like, you can deconstruct it very quickly to a standard format.

Why don't you walk us through that right now, Rob? No, I'm not going to do that, Dave, because you're baiting me. You're baiting me. But I think Esme's point is a great one. it shows that's just a very simple use case of some of the complexity that companies have to manage, which just really then gets to adopting any new technology. really about the change management can become the hardest part. It's not the technology, it's the change management for companies to manage. It's actually an excellent example of where AI is winning in data cleansing. which is you can stick an AI over the top of that and it can take that horrible string of text, work out what the phone number is, reconstruct it and sort it out. And a lot of people are doing that. They're running AI over their datasets and it works really, really well. Very good. So maybe just to draw us to a conclusion. When you look out over, I don't know what kind of timeframe, what horizons you're working to at the moment. So pick your own horizon. What does the evolution look like for meta in the world of enterprise?

Everyone loves a tech prediction type conversation. So it's less a tech prediction. It's more how fast can we help companies around the globe adopt these solutions? It's more the question of when. So we have amazing solutions that have proven value. It's how fast can we spread the word, connect them?(54:18.668) right, with partners who can help them adopt and drive and start to see that, know, inflection points of companies then, you know, in markets like, this competitor has it, I've got to get it too, which is what I expect to see too. you know, we are available globally, have again, more concentration to start in markets that are super WhatsApp oriented or more WhatsApp concentrated, but we're expanding fast to Middle East, to Europe, to across all of Latin America, all of Southeast Asia. India is a huge market for us. So, you know, next year. Fabulous. Kathleen, thank you for joining us

today and giving us some insight into a developing position at Meta, which has been fascinating to talk about. It's been a pleasure you (55:26.19)

Now, don't leave yet because what we like to do is ask our guests what they're excited about doing next. And that could be something in your personal life, got a great restaurant book to the weekend, or it could be something in your professional life or a little bit of both. So, Kathleen, what you excited about doing next? So you know what I'm excited about? Go on. I am a massive college football fan. Okay, cool. I'm to talk about, which also talk about a very dynamic changing you know, environment between NIL and team realignment and coaches changes and Lane Kiffin going to LSU and leaving Ole Miss. But what I, so what I'm really excited about is championship weekend, this weekend, and I'm looking forward to chaos in the rankings and which teams are going to end up in the college football playoff. And that's one of the things we love about college football is chaos. Now, maybe you've just actually touched on it there, but For those of us outside of the US, where we have different variants of football, and actually, what is the distinction between the NFL and college football, and what makes college football more attractive? So, NFL is a purely professional sport with a small number of teams, 32 teams, very governed by the league. College football, 134 teams. right, that are anchored in people's colleges and universities around, you know, the United States. And the thing that I love and that makes it really special, I have several different teams based on my affiliated universities and family universities, but it is the team where you were a student, you went to the games, it was on campus, was Saturdays in the fall, that emotional campus, and it is generational.

Like your family rooted on these folks. And this is generation of a sport that, know, is a hundred year legacy, that just runs, runs deep. There's an emotional attachment. think it might be, you know, similar to some of the deep attachments that UK football, which are also multi-generational, but I think there's just something magic about it being associated with, you know, as a student, you know, you're, free on campus. still follow the team that you went to college. (57:46.606) I follow Stanford where I went undergraduate. I follow UCLA where I went to graduate school. Neither had great seasons and both just got new football coaches. So we have fantastic hopes for the new coaches and this is the other thing, there's always next year. And at the start of the season,

Everyone is undefeated. Hope plays eternal. Do you have any concept of leagues or is it all just one big melee? it all together? we have leagues where you get promoted and you get relegated. fascinating dimension of college football. There are not leagues. There are conferences. And conferences were associations of schools and universities that used to be associated with geographic areas. So there are roughly 10. And there were a group that were the biggest ones with the most elite kind of schools that had the most dedicated programs. So there are a number of conferences which are loose associations of universities. And that has also, again, college football is about chaos.

Because what's been happening now is teams moving based on TV contracts. The answer is money. Now what's the question? Um, and it is just messing everything up. So again, college, what's the difference? The NFL is orderly. It's regimented. College football is messy. And we love it. That's great. Isn't it? There's definitely some sort of analogy in that. Embracing chaos. You know, like sort of more complex world, need to iterate faster, there's a bit more movement. More drama, isn't it? there is drama. You don't need to watch The Housewives of any particular place. Just watch and listen to college football. The best reality TV show. On that note, Kathleen, thank you again. And we wish you just all the luck in college football, but also in your mission at Metta. (59:58.636) Fantastic, it's been a pleasure. If you would like to discuss any of the issues on this week's show and how they might impact you and your business, please get in touch with us at realitiesremix.capgemini.com. all on LinkedIn, we'd love to hear from you, so feel free to connect in DM if you have any questions for the show to tackle. And of course, please rate and subscribe to our podcast, it really helps us improve the show. A huge thanks to Kathleen, our sound and editing wizards, Ben and Louis, our producer Marcel, and of course to all our listeners.

See you in another reality next week.

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