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Amit: Good morning. Good afternoon. Good evening listeners, wherever you are. Welcome to yet another episode of Edutech Talks with Amit Pawar and Sam McNeil. Hey Sam, how are you today?

Sam: Amit, I'm doing really good, mate. It's always a lot of fun to do these podcast recordings with you. And it's been a while since we've managed to record one, so I'm looking forward to having a chat and getting back into the swing of things. And I'm particularly excited about the guest we're going to introduce pretty shortly as well because these podcasts are becoming a bit of a feature guest platform now.

Amit: Yeah, I do actually enjoy talking to you, but I really enjoy having the guests come in and giving us an outside-in perspective or sometimes we have guests from within Microsoft, so they're giving us a perspective that, you know, you and I probably don't always get to experience, so it's always exciting and we will introduce our guests in a few minutes. But you know, the other thing that is exciting as well, time is I am recording this for the first time from our new facilities in Singapore. So in Singapore, Microsoft has moved to a new office, which is, which is state of the art and it has a very exciting opportunity for customers to really come in and you know, experience our solutions from Microsoft and our Microsoft partners and really get their hands on—hands on the technology, hands on the solutions that we are bringing to market. So—there's a lot of things going on, new things, so, yeah.

Sam: Well, look, it's a beautiful office. I have had the opportunity to spend only a few hours there. Actually, I was en route to Jakarta, and I spent a day in the office there in Singapore, and they are beautiful. But you know, I actually got to experience it before I even stepped foot in it because there was a scale model built in Minecraft Education Edition. And as employees, we were invited to familiarize ourselves with the new work environment by exploring inside of Minecraft, which I thought was a pretty neat way to utilize some of our platforms, but also to give staff a bit of a heads up on the new office space. Did you give that a go?

Amit: Absolutely, Sam. In fact, we have showcased that Minecraft map to a lot of the Minecraft and really that showcases the new offices in the Frasers tower, which is here in Singapore. And we had a lot of schools in fact interested in understanding how Microsoft is developing the workplace or the kind of the office of the future, you know, for kids to really understand how they need to think about as they go through school or college or university as to what the workplace of the future looks like. I believe we, we've got a very good representation of that here in Frasers towers in Singapore. So yeah, it's exciting not just for employees, but it has already been exciting for some schools here in Singapore who have expressed their interest in leveraging Minecraft map in creating, you know, a competition or even encouraging students to create a world of their own, to imagine what it would look like to come to a little place in 2025 or 2030 or whatever it is, and when they are expected to come into the workforce. So it's exciting. The thing that it has, not, not purely from envisioning what's here and now, but also you know, helping students imagine what is the art of the possible, really.

Sam: Completely. And I think this is the amazing new platforms that educators and an educational institutes are able to leverage, right? And I know you've been spending some time at Edutech Asia and Singapore this week, you know, also seeing some other platforms that are driving a bit of traction with educators as well. So, perhaps our kind of kickoff around, around the world of tech and back again and what we're sort of seeing and the trends and tips to share something from perhaps Edutech.

Amit: Absolutely. So yeah, exciting time. We had opportunity to partner with Lenovo this year to help them, you know, address education transformation for a lot of our customers here in Asia Pacific. And it was interesting. We had customers from all over the world, Asia really from Mongolia through to Sri Lanka through the New Zealand. Everything in between is over in Australia, India and many other countries. What is very evident is we are no longer having a conversation about why transformation needs to happen, rather how the transformation needs to happen. And that is a big change. If you think about Uber trend, I'd say two, three years ago where you know companies like Microsoft and others who are in that forefront of helping customers think about education transformation. I think we've done a good job in getting their awareness about why the transformation is needed. Now, I think we need to

step it up to the next gear and think about how that looks in a practical manner. And I think our guest today is going to help us with that conversation, but we will introduce him in a minute. But I just want to get your perspective from what you're hearing in your part of the world, in New Zealand, as you are traveling, you know, getting to know more about the deployment of technology in schools, so some more on that.

Sam: Look, good call-outs. And I think that transition between the “why should we transform” to the, “how do we transform” and “please help us” is a multilayered conversation. And you know, recently Ignite, Microsoft is running Ignite and announced a few new products and services. And one of those is the merging of, you know, SCCM and Intune to a single endpoint platform. And this is pretty exciting news because it very much ties into the, how do we modernize the deployment of Windows 10 devices? And so that's certainly a conversation that has shifted from “Why should we use Intune as an MDM?” “Why can't we keep using MDT and traditional imaging?” to now, “How do we best leverage Intune and where should we bring in autopilot?” And these types of conversations are a much more really happening between partners and school customers and ministries of education. And I think that's an exciting shift, right? To see that announcement recently Ignite that, you know, now there's a single endpoint platform to manage multiple operating systems, as we've touched on in this podcast before, it's just again, evidence of that shift from the why to the how.

Amit: Absolutely. And I think the conversation that we had at Ignite with not just the education community but the business community at large, it really points to the evolution of, you know, it's about the Endpoint Management because as the subject keeps saying that mobility is not about the device, but the mobility is about the experience that the user has moving from one device to the other and having a consistent, familiar and easy to manage secure environment is really paramount. I think the commitment we've made to that with Microsoft Endpoint Manager, which is now bringing together Systems Center plus Intune as one holistic platform regardless of whether you choose to manage your Endpoint from On-Premise or from the Cloud is really a powerful message we are sending out to our customer base.

Sam: Look, absolutely. And you know, I think again that transition from the why to the how and throwing back to the conversation around Minecraft for Frasers tower and you know, learning platforms using gamify technologies. You were just mentioning to me earlier that there was a bit of a throwback there in terms of another gaming platform the educators were showing some interest in at Edutech.

Amit: Yes. I was surprised actually, I never expected this. I was talking to a few of the educators who came to the uh, little booth and uh, what was interesting was there was one gaming device that we had there, from their legion range of devices and the conversation moved towards the upcoming game, which is currently an insider. I believe there'll be an inside of, by the time this podcast comes out called ‘flight simulator.’ So, we are resurrecting flight simulator after many, many years. I can't remember exactly how many years, but it's been a few years since we had the last flexibility to come out. And I know there—it has a cult-like following in terms of hardcore flight simulator enthusiasts. Most interesting was because now see teachers looking at flight simulator as a means to help their students experience in a visually rich manner, the different biomes in the planet, right, on our planet, right? From deserts through to rainforest through oceans, and you know arctic regions and everything. Because we have created a very visually rich environment on Azure on a planet-scale. So, these are representations of the planet in a very accurate manner, which allows you to fly using different planes obviously. So, not only are other kids are the students going to experience the magic of flight, but while they're going through it, they would be able to experience the areas that they fly over on under different weather conditions, rains, thunder or you know, a clear day or whatever it is, which also helps them understand the impact of, you know, the environment and the conditions that you know flight has to happen in and potentially opens up a conversation about climate change and how we need to be more careful about how we treat this planet.

Sam: Fascinating stuff. And I think we've all probably spent a few hours on Microsoft flight simulator in the past, but look, we have a special guest. I think we should look to introduce him now because when it comes to this conversation around how to digitally transform, not just the why, he's got a lot of experience. He's got a lot of answers and so why don't you introduce our guests to our listeners today, Amit?

INTRODUCTION OF THE GUEST (09:21)

Amit: Absolutely. My pleasure. So listeners, as we have a very special guest today with us, I think this is his third time back at Microsoft. He's no stranger to folks who have been associated with the Microsoft education community. It's my great pleasure to introduce you to Mr. Aidan McCarthy, who has joined us today on this podcast. Welcome to the podcast, Aidan. Thank you.

Aidan: Thanks, guys. It's a pleasure to talk to such esteemed fellows and podcasters. Look, it's always such you know, great conversations to have it, you know. I was shocked to hear about flight simulator as well. Yeah, I can already see the opportunities that it can provide, so it's fantastic.

Amit: Yeah. Good. So look, I didn't get, Aidan was there at Edutech with me and we happened to do a round table on education transformation, which is probably a great segue for today's topic, which is the education transformation framework and Aidan being one of the founding members of the team that wrote this education transformation framework. So I think it's best for us to hear from Aidan what it is about and how our listeners who are tuning into our podcast can benefit from the education transformation framework. So Aidan, my example, you know, came in from your perspective, what your experience with education transformation framework but my early days of being exposed to it, it was really awe-inspiring piece of work that helped me understand because you know, I've been at Microsoft for 19 years, but coming into the Education Team, it was the first time I actually understood the reasons behind why we are doing what we are doing from a Microsoft perspective and also helping customers understand how, you know, platform technologies from Microsoft, as well as our partners solutions and their own people and process, can be brought together to really think about end-to-end framework for them to get onto this journey around education transformation. So I would love to hear from you Sam as well as from Aidan as to what your first experience was and then we'll get Aidan give us a bit of a history lesson, and how it came about as well.

Sam: Yeah, look, thank you Amit. And I'm looking forward to hearing a bit more about Aidan's background and you know, his two or three stints here at Microsoft and you know, his most recent work and see where as well. But for me the education transformation framework is a pretty pivotal document in our conversations with customers because it's very easy as a product company to dive deep into the various products that we've gotten. You know, the references even to the announcements at Ignite show just how easily it is to kind of get in the air. And I think we always need to be mindful of uplifting the conversation or elevating that conversation into, you know, what does this mean at an organization level? What does this mean at a national level for a Ministry of Education? It can't just be that hyper focus down on a product or a solution at any one time. And that's where the beauty for me of the education transformation framework is the breadth of scope that it has to encompass every element of the school life or the organization and administration of the educational Institute. And so keeping it at a big picture level, which isn't always easy to think it and let alone operate it us why it's pretty pivotal I think in the conversations that we had with our customers. But I'm going to pause there because I really want to hear more from Aidan. So, Aidan, perhaps give us a little bit of a thumbnail overview of you know, your pertinent experience here, which is significant. And that's kind of led up to, you know, you returning to Microsoft and some of the conversations you're having with that customers now.

Aidan: Yeah. And thanks, Sam and thanks Amit, too. In terms of those, you know, last comments as well, you know, if we step back and think about where we are today is, is that, you know, we're in this amazing time of change. You know, if we think about our personal lives in terms of how we bank and you know, movies that we watch and how we access music and all of these sorts of areas is that industry is changing so quickly. And I think one of the big things for all of us that have worked in education is that, you know, we know that, you know, education always struggles a little bit in terms of the financials and the monies and but also about the scale and the equity. How do you make sure every student, every teacher and every school has the same capability that goes all the way through? So, if I just think about what's happens in industry around digital citizenship that everyone's expecting every citizen now to have, you know, the public cloud that there's so many conversations about, you know, where our data is stored and you know, what city and how that looks or thinking about smart city initiatives and smart schools, all of those areas, every one of these, okay, has an impact in terms of how we think about transforming our education system. You know, when I think about digital transformation, it's really about re-imagining how to bring the people, which, is—students, teachers, parents, school leaders and system leaders together. It's also about the data that's created and it's also about the processes to create value for students, for the educators and for parents as well. We are in this really amazing digital first world now. You know, even for a lot of the countries that we all collectively working, they're all about it. You get 5G like India now is already trialing significantly 5G and the impact that that's going to have in terms of creating equity in terms of

access to information and content and people and resources. When we think about blended learning and virtual schools, all of those really actually come to life. And so, you know, when I think about my history and you know, I've got, my hair's turning white I'm starting to turn into my dog now and so, but, but the reality is that it's education for me for the last 30 years has always been innovating, okay? Teachers are always been changing and innovating, as well. And system leaders have been reflecting what is required of their governments, you know, whether it's around skills and new curriculum or new assessments or worrying about how they rate in terms of OECD schools, all these sorts of things are all things that impact what we see on a day-to-day basis in our education area. And I think the digital transformation framework has been something that I've been able to work with some amazing people and leverage in terms of the school systems that I've gone back in and out of as I've gone back between education and corporate because we need frameworks. We need, I suppose, signposts in terms of when we're thinking about change, you know, what, who is this going to change and how it's going to change and is it going to actually be better? And so, you know, my sort of final comment around this is that, you know, I'll like, you know, OECD brings out some amazing reports around schools and organizational change and the one thing that I see at the moment is that that real organization of the formal and the informal learning environment means that we're seeing massive changing about how we can reimagine content delivery. The role of a teacher, where a teacher is, and where I see at the moment is that one of the systems that had been the slowest to change in our schooling systems has actually been around the administration of our schools. And that includes the administration of learning. And so there's been so much that has occurred in a classroom and, and I was with Amit yesterday and the work that he's been doing with a lot of the companies that are driving amazing devices for students and software for students. And even when we think about O365 for collaboration, communication, all those areas, there's been a lot of innovation over the last 5 or 10 years, but most of our schools are still operating with administration systems that could be 15, 20, 25 years old and our parents want great understanding. We want better analytics, we want better capabilities to be able to leverage those great technologies like AI or even thinking about security and safety and ethical use of data. All those sorts of things come to life, but you need a really good administration system to be able to manage all of that expectation.

Sam: Yeah. Look, such, such a good overview there, Aidan, and appreciate you kind of sending that through. I think that your comment around the need for frameworks, the comment for the need for signposting, they shouldn't resonate with educators, right? Because that whole idea of scaffolding in the classroom in terms of the teaching and learning process because there's something that's very familiar with that. Most students don't just instantly grasp concepts. They need that scaffolding that they can hang their ideas on and then they can evolve on them and their learning process and journey kind of goes from there. And so what you're suggesting at an organizational level, at an institute level, at a department of education level, these frameworks like the education transformation framework are critical and helping them see where they need to go and where they are on their kind of journey of digital transformation. That's kind of what I'm hearing from you about what you just shared in, right?

Aidan: Yeah, absolutely. And you know, just to take a couple of other thoughts is that, you know, one of the things that I'm doing at the moment on otherwise finish my, you know, doctoral studies and one of the things that I've been doing in that area is actually looking at the whole area of digital transformation in education. But what I've done is actually analyzed what are all the different frameworks that do exist. And when you look at those frameworks is that most organizations in banking or outside of education, they're using companies like, you know, Deloitte or EY or Forest or KPMG, you know, Gartner, all of these companies have digital transformation frameworks in terms of how they're going to change their organization with some really good guidance. And then there's technology companies like us, you know, we've got our education transformation framework and, and to be honest, when you analyze that, most of what we have in that is very similar to what all of the other big organizations and research organizations like MIT Sloan are indicating about what you need to do. But when we go into looking at just the education frameworks that do exist, they become very, very specific. And so it may look at it from a pedagogical perspective or looking at it in the context of thinking about, you know, the change that may want to occur in terms of curriculum or thinking about effective digital schools. And so I think about, you know, how do you, in terms of Australia has done a lot of work around visible learning as an example. And so lots of schools are thinking about how they're going to look at that from the effective digital classroom where we look at inquiry based learning in terms of thinking about pedagogy. And then as you start thinking about digital schools, and I know in New Zealand, you know Samuel, you know there's been a lot of work with Michael Fullan around new pedagogies for deep learning there and they've done a lot of in Australia as well in that particular area. But we also see like organizations like ASCD in the U S about their whole child, their whole school, whole, community approach. And so these are all really good sort of frameworks when you're clear about what you're doing there. I think what the ETF doing is helping at the very big, the system level, but also guiding them in

terms of the big picture. So when you're looking at these other little frameworks, you know where they fit. And so thinking about curriculum and assessment, then we've got a really good, you know, why of looking at some of these other frameworks that sort of sit underneath. So, so when we think about ETF at Microsoft is that these are guiding posts that should also then integrate and leverage all these other really good academic and research focused with a lot of evidence in terms of really driving what this could actually mean for our schools.

Amit: So just so just to bring it back for some, some of our listeners—is the ETF, the Education Transformation Framework, something that is Microsoft specific or is it based on what I've just hearing? It is something that can be applied regardless of the underlying technology but really is a guiding principle that you keep coming down to, because when I speak to a lot of guy teachers or educators and school leaders, they come to me and say, well education transformation framework sounds interesting, but does this mean that I end up having to go down the path of a Microsoft-centric world only, and I typically have to come back and reset their expectation of what ETF really is. This is not intended to be any kind of a product brochure or a product kind of showcase. It's more high level than that. And they get it. And if we were to go through the four main pillars of, of ETF, that might help address some of the concerns that our listeners may have in terms of, well is this more product-centric? Is this more, as you say, system level? How do we think about the various aspects? And from what I, what I understand the four aspects we are dealing here is leadership and policy, more modern teaching and learning, intelligent environment and technology blueprint. And I typically try to address each of them depending on where their particular interests might be or they would be coming to Microsoft to kind of address their transformation needs. So I would love to hear from you, how do you position this to somebody who has never heard of it? It was, someone come in and said, well, I want to transform, I don't really know what it means to transform. How did that, how can they start it?

Aidan: These really good questions. Yes. So I think if we go back to what we set up right at the very beginning of the podcast where he talked about the why, and a lot of schools and systems understand some of the why. Okay. And it may be why we need to change our way. We do assessment. And so you have systems, you know, such as in Finland who are changing the way that they not only create the curriculum but how they assess as well. And so other systems are thinking about, well how does that work for us? But what we do know is that, okay, we can look at that particular area. And in the education transformation framework that we have is that we put that into one teaching and learning area. When we're trying to change the curriculum, it means there's, a whole lot of other things that need to change with that. It may be in terms of the professional development for teachers, or it may be in terms of how are we going to communicate with our parents that basically assessment is going to be changing. And this is why we're actually changing that assessment. But we also know that there's so many amazing technologies now that are available such as the use, utilization of AI or whatever that can help in terms of maybe the way that we do assessment can be different to what we were doing before. And so the transformation of framework is not product-oriented, it is discussion-oriented. It's a complex set of conversations but like everyone is that when we think about and getting that clarity about the why and then the what we're going to be focusing on in our transformation and the areas that we may have impact on is that we also then want good case studies and evidence and research that may be exemplary technologies that we could showcase as part of that area and so, and that's why you know here at Microsoft we all have our partners throughout the whole, our Ecosystem, they all use the ETF in their own way because they're all different conversations that may focus on different areas. But the critical thing is that it's that it is based on evidence. It is based on other systems using it and how they've used it. Also informs us as we keep on innovating and transforming that framework itself to leverage not only those best practice but also we take into account a lot of the changes that are happening within our systems.

Amit: Absolutely.

Sam: Really, really interesting stuff there. And I think I like your focus around as research lead and research informed and you know as educational institutes, you know, you and I have both worked and Aidan and that research lead pedagogy is a critical pillar there. Most schools will really stand on and stand firmly on them with good reason. So, I'm interested in, given the four key pillars of the education transformation framework, if a school was, or a district or a ministry was going to be approaching this as any one of them more accessible than any of the others, or are there some low hanging fruit that you see they typically dive into the modern teaching and learning or is it the intelligent environments or technology blueprint as some lead themselves more than others in terms of getting some quick wins for, for schools and districts that are wanting to digitally transform?

Aidan: Yeah. Another great question because I'm reading out MIT Sloan do some amazing work around transformation and, and one of the articles they talk about is, is that, you know, digital transformation is not about technology, it's about people. And one of the things that we know within our schools is that, you know, we are hierarchical on the way we operate our schools. And so there's different people that may be in charge of different areas that could be learning area or it could be someone that's involved in just the design of the school or managing the building of the schools or there's different people that are managing that engagement with parents in terms of what's happening there. What I think the ETF does is that it doesn't actually matter where you're starting from, but it shows that the whole organization needs to be aware of all of the things that are happening within their school. Who owns it, who's working with it, how we can share, and then what's the impact on whatever that change may be happening in our school on all other areas. And so, I like the ETF in that context because within the, the area of leadership and policy or modern teaching and learning or around the actual environment that schools have, and we call it intelligent environments, but it's sorts around the IT and the technology. All these things must always come together. If I think about what's the lowest, um, in the hanging fruit area, I think whenever we try to change what's happening in the classroom, it's always hard to see the benefit of that in a very short period of time. And so it could take a number of years as students are growing, learning, developing or whatever, you know, an area that we're seeing major change at the moment is certainly around the whole area of social, emotional wellbeing of kids. And so thinking about, okay, how do we answer the number one question about transformation and the number one trend, the number one question is, how do we know? And if I can answer, how do I know question that means then I must have access to a lot of data, a lot of analytics and having all of these silos or information that may be sitting in my school all in the one location easily accessible means I can answer whoever that question may be asked of that 'how do I know?' As simple question may be on the parent, ringing at the school because I'm really concerned about my child just because I'm a parent and I'm always concerned about my child and I'm, and so I ring up the school just to say, you know, how's you know, how's my son, Sam, I'll use you said, how's my son Sam going? And often what we have in our schools at the moment is data is everywhere and a lot of it is in teachers' heads, you know, because our teachers really know with these personal relationships that they have with the children is they have more information. And so it may take, you know, 24 hours before that principal gets back to the parent asking all the teachers any updates having it could be, you know, some of our assessment systems of the LMS are looking at attendance and looking at pastoral care notes or looking at other sorts of bits and pieces to be able to get that information. So when I think about what's a quick win, the quick win is, is about how can we rethink where our data is sitting and how can I get analytics out of that? So I could always answer the question, this is how I know.

Sam: Yeah, and that goes back our partner Ecosystem that you mentioned earlier, right? That many of them have expertise in the different pillars and side of the ETF itself. And you know those platforms can be leveraged for that data storage but also their data reporting. And of course there are first party Microsoft visualization tools like Power BI, and you know, we did a podcast recently with Jake Wills from New Zealand who was doing a lot of great work with data visualization and Power BI and as is that level of reporting that can provide educators with that instant answer to many of those questions be it the parent, board of trustees, the senior leadership team in the school. All of those who are asking questions around the how do we know? Yeah, I like that point.

Aidan: Yeah. I think just on that too is that you know, you need schools and systems that they spend a lot of time on vision and mission statements in their schools. And it's so important because it gives clarity in terms of their vision and the direction of this school. But often, you know, if I was to ask them, you know, so how do you know, okay that basically you're delivering on that vision. Then that's where now we have a whole range of different discussions. And that's where I think in a way the ETF sort of helps in terms of thinking about all these different components that makes up the ETF to think about, well how do I answer that question? What would I need to change? What do I need to think about? And so that, that takes us from that why statement, that vision, that mission to what is it that we need to, to be able to represent that and what do we need to do to change? Then it's the how part. And then this also takes into account the who. Okay, so who will this have the impact too? And it could be a school leader; it could be a parent, could be that year one student that's just, you know, started in their first year of school. Or it could be that student as they're leaving, you know, to be become alumni of that school as well. And how they support that. But it's really important to always keep asking those questions about, you know, how do I know? And is that information that I'm getting actually going to make a difference in terms of the direction on where we're taking our school or our system.

Amit: This was a very fascinating conversation, Sam. I'm getting a lot from what in the sharing with us. I hope our listeners are also getting an idea of how the ETF really has helped to grow to help them. My question, did you both

Sam and you, Aidan and it's really something to think about, so as a listener, somebody who's new to this, where do I get started? What's my first step? How do I get more immersed in this fascinating world of you know, education, transformation and where, I mean you've made a references to a lot of the external research, and I understand that we have made references to that even without within our documentation, but from, from our documentation and really getting our customers to understand how to get started, where would they go?

Aidan: Yeah, it's a really good point, too and I make the, I suppose the connection too between education transformation and digital transformation. When we look at organizations outside of education, they are all using the word 'digital transformation.' Why are they using the word digital? It's actually not because of the technology. It's reflecting the changes that our society is having, which actually does include digital. And so when we think about it from an education perspective, digital must be on there and but the reality is that we also need to be thinking about more how will this change from a pedagogical perspective and a curriculum assessment, all those sorts of things sort of come into it. But my number one recommendation is do some searching for digital transformation. See what people are saying and hearing about that because it's going to be important in terms of rethinking vision and change. But the number one thing that they all talk about is, is that all transformation is always about people. And one of the things that I suppose that I used, and I sort of recommend you know, for your listeners is that you know, I spent a lot of time rethinking about let's benchmark where all of our people are today. And so that could be teachers or students or parents or school leaders, whoever they are. And so, you know, further, you know, Institute of Technology have got a really good, you know, set of resources and the one that I used with the Technology Integration Matrix with without team, you know, Catholic in Western Australia. But the reason that that's such a good tool is it actually helps look at the perceptions of where your people are today. And what we began to do with a lot of our schools is do a pre and a post at the end of each year, but it's really, it's a three-year journey. And you know, what we really found was, is that you know, many school leaders, you know, think that their teachers have got either better or worse digital skills then they actually had. And what it also then did is helped in terms of the development of their teachers, but also the preparation of their students as well. So, getting tools and resources and doing some analytics in terms of understanding where your people are at helps in the transformation process. But it also helps in that resetting as well. You know, the only, the only final sort of comment that I'd have on that is, is that anything to do with digital or technology must be owned by everyone, okay? It can't be given the responsibility to the IT, or you know, the digital transformation lead or wherever that is that this is a transformation of the organization and everyone needs to be touched and felt and also have impact. The team of the technology people, they then are going to require a lot of support to be able to execute on it. But it's not job to, you know, oversee all lead or drive the school leader in that leadership team. They must be the owners of it because if it's going to be transformation, it means everything changes from policy through to what happens in a classroom to help parents engage.

Sam: Yeah. And look some, some really salient points there that you've raised Aidan. And Amit, I've got a couple of thoughts just to throw in there as well and kind of conscious of time, too. But for me, where do we get started? I think the one thing we can throw our listeners really easily is www.aka.ms/ETF. All right. We've got a shortened lane to get you straight into the Education Transformation Framework and that is www.aka.ms/ETF. We'll throw that at the bottom of the podcast as well so you can check that one out and encourage you to do so. I just want to pick up on a second or I guess reinforce the point Aidan made earlier that outside of education, plenty of businesses, corporates, industry sectors, they're already well down this path on digital transformation and I think it's very smart for educational institutes to look at where they have seen success outside of that. And one of those would be around intelligent environments and I was in a project, well we were revamping our learning space at a school and ran the library and rather than having a traditional library, it was going to become more of a stem environment, innovation and information kind of area. And we went and looked at a number of, of very large corporates and what they were doing and rethinking these spaces for their people in that kind of modern workplace type environment. And that included elements of smart buildings, IOT, you know, different furniture layouts, more inclusive design, and there's a lot of learnings that the education sector can pick up on and piggyback on some of those early adopters and bring them back in and then weave it into the teaching and learning programs and the pedagogical outcomes as well. So I think that's a very cool point. Then from Aidan and then I just want to back up and reinforce as well, but I can't believe we've almost run out of time on this one. And then I think we might need to do part two on this one at some stage because this has been a fascinating conversation from my perspective.

Amit: Absolutely. The other thing that I want to highlight to our listeners is that we have now evolved the conversation about Education Transformation Framework with the nuance around K-12, higher education and now recently around

libraries and museums. So not only are we catering to the traditional education markets, which is predominantly K-12, but really thinking about how transformation now is impacting higher education and libraries and museums. The other resource I want to also put in our podcast link here is the ETF book that was written earlier about 18 months ago or so, where we really talk about how, you know, the research that's been done, evidence that we've gathered, we've put that in and compile it into a book that really is more of a guide on how-to, in terms of things to look for and things to avoid and more importantly, avoid and learn from the experiences that you know, we as Microsoft have had the fortune of, you know, working with a lot of education institutions, ministries, higher education institutions, and learn from their mistakes and learn from their successes and be able to guide our listeners who are embarking on this journey or are already on this journey to really dig the step forward. As we speak, we are also evolving the organization around creating tools that really help the customers in analyze their current journey in terms of their education, where they are and that education transformation. So for the book I want to highlight a URL which is aka.ms/ETFbook and that will get you started on this journey in terms of the various aspects from the research, the policy guidance and cheat sheets in terms of what you should, what you should not do and validation from industry experts really to bring that, you know, external point of view as well. So as I said, Aidan also mentioned that this is not a Microsoft framework. This is some framework that we have built by talking to many educators like our listeners and the experts will really been thinking about what transformation looks like, what it could look like and how that is going to impact the outcome for our students. This has been an exciting and an amazing experience for media, regardless. Podcast with Aidan, he is such a wealth of knowledge and I hope that you know, our listeners get an opportunity to come and interact with Aidan face to face at one of the events, perhaps in our BET London or BET Asia or some on some of the other industry events. And we really are, you know, looking forward to learning from you as listeners. So, provide us feedback on what you think about ETF, not just as a podcast subject, but also as a subject that you are on and give us feedback on how are we going to have to be having a dialogue with you in terms of your education transformation journey. Sam, I really think this has been an exciting episode for us, and yes, I agree with you. We should expand this conversation to be yet another episode soon.

TIPS AND TRICKS (40:44)

Sam: Okay, great. So let's finish off with kind of weekly how we finish our podcasts around tips and tricks. When you expect things, something that we can give our audience and listeners that they can take away and do right now. Mine one it's kind of an interesting one. I'm going to throw out the Chromium Edge browser, so this is a really revolutionary rethinking of the browsing experience from Microsoft that we have built a new browser based off the chromium rendering engine open source platform and this is going to go general availability in January 2020, so it's not too far away now for you to be able to get your hands on that. It is available in beta. You can download it at a quick look inside of microsoft.insider.com, and you'll find that there, the Chromium Edge browser, it's going to have some interesting cross platform plays in there. We know that it's going to appeal to a lot of Education Institute, it's very safe, very secure, very fast browser, have very low requirements in terms of hardware, so that's one I think you should definitely go and check out. Do you Aidan or Amit have a tip or a trick or something for our audience to check out?

Amit: I do have a tip. So at the Edutech, we had the pleasure of showcasing teams, rooms, content, and the camera, now imagine if you will—you are leveraging a normal whiteboard in your room, just a traditional whiteboard with pens that you would use in any classroom. Now we are able to leveraging the team's room's hub devices, connect a content camera or the content camera is always looking at the whiteboard and capturing the content on the whiteboard and as a person walks over the whiteboard in a traditional camera, you would have to kind of imagine what's behind the person because obviously the person's not transparent, but with the teams room camera, content camera, because it's capturing the content of the whiteboard at all given times. It's able to overlay the content on top of the person's almost semi-transparent image that feels like the person is there talking to you, but the content is still coming through from behind the person. So it looks eerie, but at the same time it looks very good in terms of giving you the ability to read content, especially when you're doing remote learning. There's a very powerful way for remote learners to engage with the educator and still be able to see their facial expressions and body language while they are explaining the content that they're putting up on the whiteboard itself. So it's a great new advancement to the team's room solution that we've been bringing out to market with our partners like larger tech Lenovo and others.

Sam: Very cool. Well, thank you, Aidan, again for joining us on our podcast. Hope you've enjoyed your time, sharing with our audience.

Aidan: Yeah, it was. It was fantastic. Yeah, thanks guys for the opportunity and love the podcast.

Amit: you're not off the hook. Aidan, you will be back. So it's been amazing again, Sam collaborating with you on this podcast series that we've got going. I love the feedback that we're getting, and we love the encouragement from our listeners. Please spread the word. I think we are also expanding our reach to different channels. Sam, did you want to tell our listeners about that?

Sam: Yes, indeed. So our podcasts based on demand are now available on the Apple podcast platform, the Google podcast platform, and of course on Spotify as well. So I think we now just have to say, leave your review. You get your favorite podcasts from—you'll find Edutech Talks check it out, Amit Pawar and Sam McNeil and great guests appearing regularly like Aidan McCarthy that we had today.

Amit: Love it. Thank you very much, Sam. You enjoy your afternoon, evening in Christchurch while I get out in the sun to have them some lunch here in Singapore.

Sam: Thanks very much guys. Thank you, Aidan, and thank you podcast listeners.