



Dave Miles

Interviewed by

Jane Bird

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Via Zoom

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Welcome to the Archives of Information Technology where we capture the past and inspire the future. It's Thursday 17th February 2022 and we're talking on Zoom, as has become customary during the coronavirus pandemic. I'm Jane Bird and I've reported on technology and the IT industry for newspapers such as The Sunday Times and the Financial Times since the early 1980s. Our contributor today is Dave Miles, Director of Safety Policy for Europe, the Middle East and Africa at Meta, the global corporation previously known as Facebook. Dave studied history at the University of Kent in Canterbury and later gained a diploma in marketing. He began his professional life working for Dixons and climbed the career ladder through various large tech companies in the south of England. In 2008 he became Director for EMEA at the Family Online Safety Institute in Washington DC and London where he worked on child internet safety and internet governance. Then eight years later he joined UNICEF, the global charity working to protect children in danger worldwide. Among Dave's activities at Meta have been the signing of the 2017 Declaration of Rome as part of the Child Dignity Alliance and returning to the Vatican in 2019 to respond on Facebook's behalf to the Pope's call for action. Dave, welcome, I'm very much looking forward to hearing more about your life and professional experiences and insights into the world of internet governance.

Great, thanks Jane. Lovely introduction, really appreciate it, it's lovely to see it all summed up like that, but thank you.

Well, perhaps we could start at the beginning. So you were born in Cheltenham in 1957, I think, and would you describe, how would you describe your childhood, did you have a happy time?

Yes, I did, very much so. My parents, my father worked, moved... so my family background, we were born and brought up in Wales initially after we were in Cheltenham. My parents were both from the valleys in Wales. And they very kindly sort of supported me through my childhood. We initially moved to Essex, my father was a design engineer and draughtsman, and so had a very happy childhood along with my brother, very enjoyable indeed, and returned to Wales quite regularly. My parents actually retired back to Wales again, so a very stable, happy upbringing. Very supportive of my education and through that went to university at Canterbury,

and was probably the first member of my family to go to university, so that was an interesting step and one that I'm deeply grateful to my parents in terms of supporting me, and did history at Canterbury. I think during that time I was a very, very keen sportsman, so I did archery for many years and ultimately became a master bowman and trained in the United States for a while. And so it was a mixture of both schoolwork and the sport itself. And in fact, just following my university career, moved to the US for a short while to be coached and worked with some pre-Olympic archery teams out there. So yes, it was a fascinating childhood and very balanced childhood, I would say, as well.

And you were older, your brother was younger than you, was he?

Yes, three and a half years younger, yes.

Okay. So did he follow you to university as well?

Yes, he did, yes.

Yeah. So when, your parents were very supportive of your education, just looking at your early education then, you said. So you went presumably to state schools then in Essex, did you?

Yes, I did and it is interesting because I really struggled at school with the educational system. I didn't, you know, to be honest, one of the things that I found really interesting was I was predicted to get a very limited number of grades and came out with a lot more than they anticipated. And in a peculiar sort of way as a teenager I felt a bit let down by the system, I felt that, you know, my work ethic and my ability wasn't really being reflected, and that showed in the grades. And I do remember an amusing moment with one of my teachers who expressed his, just surprise that I got double the number of grades than he anticipated. And it sort of in some ways made me a little bit defiant and a little bit, even more committed. So when I went to A level and degree, I did work very, very hard, I was very driven by that and I felt that I had a capability that wasn't being acknowledged in the system. And so, yes, I think that was sort of one of my reactions. And I was an arts graduate, my brother was very

much in the sciences and physics, so, not that I had any view of what kind of career I wanted at the time, but nevertheless, went through university and enjoyed history immensely, it was a great subject, it was lovely to focus on just one subject. I am a very keen artist as well, but I felt that history was really going to be my preference at that time.

[00:05:24]

You're a keen artist as well, did you say?

Yes, absolutely. So I love to draw and paint and so it was a case of parking that and making that more recreational and then really focussing on my studies.

Yes, because you did, you did A level art, didn't you, as well?

Yeah, that's right, which I enjoyed immensely. But I sort of realised that its application probably in a business environment was really quite narrow, and the other thing too is that I also had one or two people that were in my circle in the art world who were really super-talented artists, and so, to be blunt, even as a teenager I realised my limitations. There were some people that were immensely talented artists and as much as I enjoyed it, they were significantly better than I, and I just had that long-term view, if that's what I was up against if I became an art teacher or something, I'd be up against people who were instinctively very, very talented. So I suppose that sort of tempered my thinking, but I enjoyed history immensely and I also felt history was a subject with very considerable depth. I loved Dark Age and Medieval history, just really, really enjoyed it, it really captured my imagination, so it wasn't difficult really for me to really pick the subject of history.

Yeah. So just going back to your schooling though, I mean often people talk about having inspirational teachers and in fact quite important mentors in their life when they were at school, but it doesn't sound like that really was your experience, quite the opposite really.

No, it wasn't, and that's a shame really because I think there were obviously good teachers, but none that particularly stood out, and I did in fact feel that I was relatively

sort of marginalised in the system. And so it was probably one of the reasons why later on at least for my two older boys I actually put them into the private system to start with because of that experience. They both actually then went into the state system later on, but nevertheless I was very wary of the educational system and their ability to assess my skills and competence, you felt that you were part of a bit of a machine and they weren't really understanding, one, my motivations, but two, that actually I could do what I did.

It sounds like they weren't really encouraging you to aspire to great achievement, which seems a shame. I mean, was it, did you go to a comprehensive school?

Yes, I did. And it's a good school with good facilities, so I'd no criticism of that, but also that lack of acknowledging my drive I then put that into my sport and archery, so interestingly enough, I sort of put that into, now that I'm talking about it, that's very much what I did, you know, my competitiveness and my ability to perform and everything, I could really do in that environment and became a county archer very quickly in that kind of space as a junior. So yeah, I suppose that was one of my outlets, I think.

Right. Oh, you did that from being an early teenager, in the sixth form, what were...

Oh, from thirteen, fourteen years of age. My uncle in Wales was involved in establishing one of the big field tournaments in Wales, it was the World Field Archery Championships, I think, in 1971, and he invited me along to watch all the top archers in the world going into the mountains to do archery. It was called field archery, which is without sites and it's with targets through woodland. And I was just so, I just thought it was fascinating. And so that was the inspiration and I then took up target archery, because there aren't mountains and fields in Essex. [laughs] Not at that scale anyway.

Right. So that then you, did you say that you went to America to do... so did that interrupt your schooling at all then, I mean, or...?

No. So I became a county archer, went through university, established actually the archery club in Canterbury, Kent, so established the archery club there because there wasn't one, and then just after, after I graduated, the following year I flew out to the World Archery Camp in the United States, which is in Pennsylvania, to train there, some of the top archers in the world are based there, there's a big summer camp. And I think I was the first Brit to go there, I remember catching a Skytrain, £99 fare, with all my archery equipment, to fly to the United States, and I was really the first person to go to that camp. And then the following year became a master bowman. There are twenty men and women that become a master bowman, you have to achieve a certain score. And actually my training in the United States had helped a lot. And I came back and in fact I think influenced many of the coaches here, because the coaches had not seen some of the techniques that were being used in the United States. The US team actually in 1972 had won gold, they were the leading team in the world, and so I trained alongside some of the coaches, so I found it absolutely fascinating. And it spoke to my sort of, I suppose my innate competitiveness, really, which I felt was emerging at that time.

[00:10:32]

Yeah, yeah. Okay, so let's talk a little bit about by this stage then you've started your career. So after university you went to work for Dixons.

Yes.

So at that, and that I suppose was kind of a tech company. So you'd done history, but had you at that point decided that you were interested in tech? Indeed, perhaps – sorry – before we should go there maybe I should ask you whether you'd come across computers or been using computers much until that point?

No, not much at all really and I do remember my thesis being typed up on a typewriter, so it was just sort of beginning to come in. And I went for some interviews for Dixons. It was Currys actually, they were called then, and they were developing their first out of town stores and they were developing a graduate intake system for the first time for these out of town stores. So in the early nineties, the concept we have now of out of town stores and supermarkets really wasn't there. And

they needed graduates and, you know, these stores are small businesses, you know, so they needed to train them up. So I spent, my first eighteen months was spent in an induction programme with a number of other graduates fitting the stores, opening major stores, opening our first out of town stores. So I would say, to be honest, that that was one of the great, tremendous experiences in the early stages, how to manage profit and loss sheets, how to merchandise, how to stocktake, you know, how to open stores, how to sell. It was a really fantastic grounding. And then went on to run a number of stores and then in '84, I think it was in '84, I actually won runner-up store of year, there were ten stores which are ranked. So I was very proud of that because, you know, it's a very competitive business and the responsibility's quite significant and it was my sort of first real success, I suppose, career-wise, working in that space. And at that time computing was coming in in a big, way: BBC, Sinclair, Amstrad were all emerging, and they were the big selling items, along with videos and TVs for the first time. And so, you know, one of the things I think in my career which is interesting is I saw computing technology sort of land in a consumer space there and I found that really very, very interesting. And there's no question, what then happened was that in '95 a customer of mine, who was in the computer industry, came into my store one day and said, you've sold all the products I have in my household and of my grandparents, and you very kindly went round and configured their computer for them [laughs], can I offer you a job in the computer industry. And that's how I got into the computer industry, he was just, you know, which was an interesting moment for me really. I remember going round to configure the computer for his grandparents who were most dismayed by this technology but were keen to understand it, and so in a sort of very formative way I saw, you know, some of the challenges around the consumerisation of technologies and what would ultimately become appliances, because in some ways computing has become quite appliance orientated now. But that transition to computing happened that way, and so I started in the computer industry from there. I have to say that initially when I went in, and I remember working for one or two companies, as an arts graduate coming into that space, most of the people I was dealing with were either engineers or scientists, they were more like my brother, they weren't arts graduates. So if anything, I ended up, I remember the managing director in Motorola saying, well, we need some brochures and we need to sort of talk about the benefits of a Unix system. [laughs] Rather than speeds and feeds. And so I found myself doing the marketing and the sales, really, of that. And

that came sort of very naturally to me and so therefore worked with both Motorola and a company called MBS Microtex who were really big into Altos Unix systems, which were very successful in the eighties. We had a big distribution channel with resellers and so on. So I had to learn quickly about the technology, but actually my role was very much converting the technicalities into the relationship side, and I did find that that was great. I mean my eighties and early nineties, you know, the growth in Unix based systems and the opportunities were tremendous. And I had a terrific career, really, into the early nineties in that area, in an area which is relatively technical, but seem to have thrived.

[00:15:11]

Yeah. So the chap who you'd sold all the computers to in his youth and his grandparents, that was MBS, was it?

Yes, that was MBS Microtex, yes. It was in MBS group.

Then it was Motorola, then it was Packard Bell, then it was Compaq...

Well...

... and then it was IBM. You really did move, didn't you, every couple of years or so.

Yes. And the twist was that Jamie Muir at Packard Bell who said, here's the story, because there's a twist again, really. So I was at Motorola and a guy called Jamie Muir, who's retired, in fact he reached out to me yesterday for the first time in fifteen years, which is quite interesting, and he had been to the United States and seen Packard Bell selling computers through Costco and through retailers. Now, in the UK at that time, if you wanted to buy a PC other than a consumer PC, you know, like a £399 one, you would have to go to an Apple dealer or an IBM dealer. And he set up an office in Windsor and he started to bring Packard Bell products to Europe with a free phone number for consumers. And so I was at Motorola, and so he offered me that role to lead on the UK retail side and so I did all the negotiations with Currys and Dixons and John Lewis, so to me there was an absolute connection between my retail experience, me going into six or seven years of what I would call enterprise level

computing, small to medium size enterprise, and then actually somebody coming to me and saying, actually, I need somebody that understands computing but understands retail. And that just fell very, very, as life does sometimes, fell very naturally. And Packard Bell then in the early nineties then really grew quickly, we were the largest PC supplier shipping them in from, we had a factory in Nijmegen in Holland and grew very, very rapidly. And I was only there maybe three years and then Compaq approached me to be their retail director because they were coming into that space as well in '93. So that's really how I got across into the PC sector from there, if that makes sense.

Yes, yes. So Packard Bell, was that focussed exclusively on the retail sector then at that stage?

Yes, yes. And that was really at odds with the way computers were sold, really. And I think, you know, and it was run by an Israeli company, their founders were Israeli, and they were very successful in the United States.

Selling retail?

Yes, absolutely. And to outlets, you know, so for example, you know, in the UK we did a deal with ToysRUs, I mean just extraordinary, but we sold thousands of PCs through, you know, you'd not believe that. But to me that was the consumerisation coming through there, that was what I'd seen in the early nineties was coming back again, which was that as it came into the mass market and the prices dropped below a thousand pounds, because they were very expensive at that time, as the prices dropped, you could see the uptake. And of course then in '93/94, you get multimedia, CD-ROM technology and when I was at Compaq, for example, we were the first people to do a deal with Dorling Kindersley to transfer all of their books on to CD-ROMs. And I think at that point – and I do think there's a significant transition – and this is pre-internet, you get that transition from PCs being educational or productivity tools to entertainment tools and something multimedia, you know, richly visual. And I think that was a very significant moment, I think, '95 I think we did the first internet enabled PCs, Presario Compaqs, but it really didn't have the impact with consumers that you'd think. It was, most people were relatively disappointed by the experience,

very concerned about the fact that they had to put a splitter on their phone to use the internet and it wasn't a great user experience. So for me, multimedia in the mid-nineties was really where the boom happened, I think, in the technology.

[00:19:14]

Yeah, that's fascinating. So let's kind of talk a little- so by this time were you with IBM then, because you joined in, actually that was later, wasn't it, in 1998?

Yes, it was. So I was at Compaq for five, six years, I spent quite a lot of time in Houston, working with them, and travelling to the US a lot more frequently. So just to say, you know, that's the other thing, the backdrop really is working in Houston, coming back to the UK, working with the teams. And then I finished in Compaq in 1998 and what's interesting here was, in 1989 I took a diploma in marketing and then became a member of the Institute of Marketing and one of the guys at IBM approached me, he needed a marketing director. And to be honest, I'd had sort of quite a few years in computing and I really wanted to explore that marketing side and so for a couple of years he gave me the opportunity to be the marketing director for IBM for all its consumer products, which I found really interesting, it was a new angle for me, really, and a good opportunity to go across Europe, Middle East and Africa. So to travel, that was my sort of first role really where I would say that I had a regional responsibility, shall we say, at IBM.

So you'd done your diploma in marketing in '89, did you say...

Yes, that's right.

So you'd done it some time earlier, but you...

Yes. And I wanted to revisit it, really. I had marketing people in my teams in both Packard Bell and in Compaq, but I, it was an area I wanted to explore a little bit more and I did international marketing, that was my specialised area. So again, it sort of gave me sort of a bit of a broader perspective. And IBM was in a range of products, not just laptops and PCs, but software and things like that, so it was an interesting role for a couple of years.

Yes, and I mean by this time IBM had become presumably quite a lot more of a household name? I mean the whole PC revolution was almost by accident at IBM, wasn't it really, I mean it wasn't a big strategic thing that they'd seen at the very beginning?

Yes, you're right, and actually, you know, people forget, but Compaq quickly trounced IBM in its own market. I mean Compaq means compatibility and quality, that's actually with the name, so its whole modus operandi was to really IBM product and some, you know, and also have a distribution channel to do it differently to IBM, which is very, very sort of controlled. But obviously IBM learnt from that through the nineties and then came back into the market again, as so many others did, with Packard Bell and IBM, very crowded marketplace by the nineties. So, yes, so a real progression really through the nineties and an era I really enjoyed.

Yes. So IBM, you then stayed there only a couple of years then?

Yes.

[00:22:12]

And after that was when you made your move into the Family Online Safety work and so on?

Yes.

So what sort of took you in that direction?

Well, I think, I obviously had three boys at that point and so this is where sort of personal life and business life sort of mixes somewhat. So I had two boys, one in 1988 and one in 1989, and so they were starting to become teenagers around the time I was at IBM. And then in 1994 our younger son, Stefan, was born, but within a few years was diagnosed as autistic, and so we had a very, very difficult period at home, to be honest, where we had to deal with that disability, and he went to special facilities for that. And I did get to the point when I was at IBM where I was doing quite a lot of travel, where I realised because he was at that point six years old and in a special

needs school, it was quite a difficult scenario, that I needed to probably pull back from the role. I would have gone to a next level within IBM and there was opportunity there, but... So... and what had happened was... so that became, that work/life balance became quite hard. And so I sort of decided to step away from the industry a little bit and do some start-up stuff, a bit of consulting, and I met in 2003, well I went to a Home Office event with a guy called John Carr, who's one of the world's foremost experts on child safety, and it was a Home Office taskforce for child online safety. And I met him and I suppose, it's an interesting thing, in the UK we were very preoccupied with child online safety in the very formative stages, the internet was getting established, and the Internet Watch Foundation had been established and Susie Hargreaves – and this is pre-Susie Hargreaves – and I don't know what it was, maybe because as a father and having, you know, a vulnerable child, it really struck me that there was a problem, it was both an opportunity and a problem around child safety. And I went to it and John Carr deeply impressed me, not only his passion about the issues around child safety and the role of children in the digital space as it was emerging, but much more, that there were actually some organisations set up in this area and working, so this was very early on, 2003. And he mentioned a guy called Steven Balcombe who ran something called the Internet Content Rating Association, ICRA, and they were doing labelling for websites which would mean that you could have child safe websites, which I thought was a really interesting idea. And I met Steven that same year and flew out to Washington DC and went to their board meeting, and I met British Telecom, AT&T and various others and they were all deeply concerned about what might happen in the next few years as children come online. So at that point really I sort of, if I'm honest, I then joined Steven then within a couple of years, 2007 I think it was, I did some consulting and bits and pieces, then said, well, why don't you join us. So I joined the Family Online Safety Institute really as a mere director, policy director, and then went in a completely new direction and became deeply immersed in child online safety, safety in general, the technicalities of it. And because the board of the Family Online Safety Institute – because that's what it was renamed as – was made up of industry members, I suddenly was meeting with Horizon, British Telecom, Telecom Italia, meeting with these tech companies. And so from there all the way through to 2015 I sort of worked with Steven and the team, both in Washington DC and London to build that out. And in that period we went from very few children being on the internet to where we are

now where a third of the world's users are now children and they're very big drivers of technology. So that really changed my career. I went away from your sort of classic IT based executive management role to really an NGO environment, and I think as a parent I, for want of a better term, I got it emotionally, I understood there was something really significant happening and that we needed to be part of that and that we didn't have all the solutions. And many of the technology companies I was dealing with were, behind closed doors, struggling. You know, do we put filtering on, do we put parental controls on, how do we deal with mobile technology. Those kinds of issues were very dormant then and they were posing some quite serious problems, even in the sort of late, you know, 2009/2010. So yes, so that's how my transition really happened, it happened very naturally and I think it partly reflects what was going on in my own personal time, I think, to a degree.

[00:27:09]

Yes, yes. So you, so now you've kind of really settled into more kind of long term, you're staying in your jobs longer and keeping, you've kind of slowed down and focussed more. I mean, slowed down, it sounds negative, but it's more that you've kind of seem to have reached the point where you feel you're in the right place professionally?

Yes. And sort of just vocationally really, in a way. I just felt the, you know, whilst I did find computing and working with computers very interesting, here was a space where I was thinking, no, this really, really matters, you know. And I, through FOSI in particular, where I travelled extensively, could have a really big impact, you know. So I found myself within a year or two in Egypt and The Philippines and being, for want of a better term, classed as an expert in the area. You know, you sort of start to emerge along with others, like John Carr. And we were very fortunate too inasmuch that the UK in particular has a disproportionately large amount of the world's foremost academics and experts in this area. So people like Professor Sonia Livingstone, Ethel Quayle and others. And so one of the things I think that really influenced me in the NGO community was there was a core of about seven or eight experts of various disciplines focussed on exactly the same thing, we all sensed that same, my goodness, this is an amazing opportunity in terms of children's lives, but there are also immense challenges here. And, but the technology sector was growing

enormously, but there was little or no regulation, and I think that was the really interesting thing that emerged, you know, the Child Online Privacy Protection Acts in 1998, that had happened, it was updated in 2020 [?], but you know, there was no regulation in terms of, other than the age of thirteen, there was no regulation in this space. And so for me, John Carr, Sonia and others, this was a moment of we really needed to lobby for this, we needed to work with industry to fix these issues. So yeah, to me that was a natural evolution in terms of the way I worked within the Family Online Safety Institute.

[00:29:27]

Yeah. Yeah, yeah. So then you did move on to UNICEF, was that in 2016? Why that?

Yes. So I finished at the Family Online Safety Institute in 2016 and UNICEF, so the UK government had established a fund of £50 million, through David Cameron, to tackle child sexual exploitation and abuse, which was growing very rapidly. This is probably the worst of crimes, it's illegal content. And about £50 million was given to UNICEF, based in New York, to manage globally because it was going to be applied in global south countries, and the reason for that was that many of the victims, sadly, and much of the growth for CSAM was happening in those regions. And so I was appointed to the expert roster there, it was called the Fund to End Violence Against Children, and we essentially took in proposals and then read those proposals and then allocated funding out on an annual basis to projects throughout the global south to deal with CSAM, so whether that was in The Philippines or Cambodia, so training up law enforcement.

What's the acronym that you're using there, Dave? To deal with what?

Oh, Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

So what's the acronym?

It's CSAM, so it's Child Sexual... yeah. So there are various ways of saying, so Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse is CSA, but we call it CSAM, so we call it Child

Sexual Abuse Material, CSAM. Apologies, we've got different terms. The term we don't use, which the media uses, child pornography, which we don't like. Yeah, that's the term we use. Apologies.

Right, okay. No problem. Okay, so that was, so was that always going to be just a sort of three-year role, or did you...

There were two roles there. So there was UNICEF and then I was approached to do work for the WeProtect Global Alliance, which is linked to UNICEF. It's called the WeProtect Global Alliance – you'll see it in the LinkedIn profile – and at the same time I was doing the UNICEF work, which was done annually, I was then asked to do a project to go out to what was seventeen priority countries, to go and implement something called the Model National Response. Now what this was was, it was a template that you could take to, for example, Brazil, for example, and the government could use that template to bring in stakeholders to establish the legislation and create a framework to support tackling child sexual exploitation and abuse. It's capacity building, training up law enforcement, making sure that they had the laws in place to prosecute groomers and paedophiles, making sure that helplines and hotlines, how to take a report, because it was illegal you can't view the content, how you transferred it to NCMEC, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children in the United States, and then it can come back to law enforcement. So sorry that sounds very complex, but because it's illegal you have to handle it in a certain way. So I had to go into those seventeen countries with a big team and train them up on that, that programme. So it was really very exciting, ground breaking stuff and we made a very substantial difference in what is a very heinous, very heinous crime. So yeah, so I did that work for a while and...

So you were a fulltime, you were employed fulltime while you were with UNICEF then, or were you still being a consultant?

As a consultant. Yeah, as a consultant for NCMEC and for UNICEF, so I was quite happy to do that, yes, a consultancy. So I did a consultancy for about eighteen months in that period and I did that work, so I had the UNICEF role in New York, I had the role going out to the countries for WeProtect, and I did that for around eighteen

months. And one of the other consultancy pieces of work I had was with the British Board of Film Classification, so I had three jobs going, and David Austin, the CEO there approached me. And what was really interesting was, that was a fairly marginal piece of consultation that I was doing with him, and the reason for that was that in 2017 the Digital Economy Act was passed, and that was about the age verification of pornography and he asked me to do some consulting for them. Because they're a film classifier but they were going to be the designated regulator for the age verification of pornography in the UK and that would have required adults to age verify themselves, and this was an attempt to stop children accessing pornography. And so he asked me to do consulting there and then the following year, so after just under eighteen months, he offered me the role of policy director there at the British Board of Film Classification. So that, what was a fairly marginal consultancy role turned into something much more significant, I would say.

[00:34:38]

Yeah, yeah. So the policy director there, that was a fulltime job, was it?

Yes, it was, yes. There was an eighteen-month period and then, yes, and so yeah, so, and I was there for a couple of years, two and a half years there. Unfortunately what the – I say unfortunately – the government designated us as a regulator, we prepared for it and then they pulled out of it, essentially, and decided they weren't going to do it, which was astonishing, and in that sort of confusion I decided to move on, because I was there for two and a half years and I just felt, well, you know, I don't know whether it was going to happen or not. You know, it was one of the reasons why I was here, I wasn't the only person working on it, but I just felt there was sort of a very great degree of uncertainty. And at that point, then Facebook approached me.

Right.

As it was at that time and so I then went to Facebook from there.

Right. And so that was in...

2019. Yeah. So I'll have been there for three years in July, yeah.

[00:35:46]

Yeah, yeah. So how's that been then, what's your role there and how have you found it?

Well, I sort of, because of my Family Online Safety Institute stuff I've worked with a lot of Facebook people for many years, from the time of their IPO right the way through. So I knew Facebook well and I knew Google and others very well, so in some ways, you know, when they approached me I was very flattered, it's a very, very successful company at enormous scale, one of the big west coast companies, and I knew Antigone Davis, who was my boss, well and when she approached me it seemed like a very logical step, you know, it was bringing together so many things, you know, the consumerisation of technology, the computing aspect of it, the, at that point we knew that there was going to be regulation at last, and there is, there's the new Online Safety Bill which will come in in March in the UK, with the Age Appropriate Design Code in September. So for me, all those things I'd been fighting for in the NGO space, you know, around, you know, having proper regulation, acknowledging that children's digital lives meant there was a degree of vulnerability there and that you needed things like guard rails and age verification to do those kind of things all seemed to come together here at Facebook, which is now Meta. So for me that was an incredible coming together moment in my sort of career, really, it just absolutely made sense and I'm just very grateful to Antigone to point me to a role of such sort of scale, really, because I think that the interesting thing is – and I think it is even hard, and I knew Facebook well, but, you know, you have Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, you have the metaverse, it's just an extraordinary place to be right now for all sorts of reasons, you know. And so I'm grateful for the opportunity to do such an important role, I think.

Yes, indeed. I mean from the outside it can look as if the whole, you know, as if the internet is still a Wild West and children can get round all these, you call them guard rails, and age verification things very easy, it seems to be an impossible task.

And I think that's where the public and media position, which I think is a shame, I think that's... So here's some of my thoughts on it. You know, if you take, for

example, the age verification of pornography, the technology's now there at last, it wasn't there five years ago, but it is there now to do age verification. Artificial intelligence, for example, which allows us to track the activities of groomers, to scan for content, is now there, it wasn't six or seven years ago. So it isn't just a regulatory story, it's an innovation story. And that innovation part of it, of using innovation and technology to tackle some of these issues is where I think we're getting to. So I hear what the media are saying about the Wild West, but those days are over. The reason why these technology companies voluntarily scan for the worst of content, you know, whether that's harassment or sextortion or anything else, is because they want to keep the platform safe and they know that if that experience isn't safe people don't want to use the platforms, it's no more complicated than that. Meta as an organisation and the transition to that is a really big transition, but if you take the sort of Facebook family of apps, you know, there are over three billion people in the world that use those apps. I go to countries where 94% of the population use two or more apps. And to me, this is a different order of technology phases, you know, to what I experienced in my early career, which was, you know, which is enterprise level and then it became consumer and very hardware operating system standards, chip standards. And now what we're talking about is a sort of pervasiveness both in terms of software and appliances, which is a remarkable position. And I think some of the public discourse hasn't caught up with that and inevitably when you've got tech companies of the scale of an Amazon or a Microsoft and a TikTok, the way the public process that is it's hard for them to understand what's going on when you have data driven businesses, particularly driven by advertising or artificial intelligence. And so there's a new dynamic, I think, going on in technology which is quite profound. And I don't understand it all completely, but it does mean that regulation will be key to that because the Digital Services Act and things like that in Europe, which are going to have a profound impact on the Digital Markets Act, will create the legal basis on which these technology companies can operate for the first time, not just in the children's sector, but within markets and so on and these technology companies need those definitions and that legal basis to really go to the next stage of the internet really, if that makes sense.

[00:40:46]

So it sounds like you're fairly confident that a lot of these regulatory issues and, well, the problems of dangers and risks on the internet will eventually become a thing of the past. I mean is that, do you think...

Yes, I do. I think it always takes longer than you think, but if you take age verification, for example, which I've been deeply involved with, the technology's now there. Now it's a question of deciding privacy versus safety, you know, and so you have this big debate, for example, around end-to-end encryption or age verification, which is, you know, how do we get this balance right between safety and privacy. Those are the kind of discussions we're now having and to me that is civil society making its mind up about what matters for it, you know, and I think that's really important, that's what regulation is about. And so if you look at the Online Safety Bill, which is a hugely ambitious bill, it's very exciting and I think within Meta as we are now, you know, we have very large teams working on these programmes ahead of the regulation, working with the new Ofcom regulator and, you know, the sense is one of optimism and really that now we're coming into a completely new stage.

Indeed. So thinking about the impact on society as a result of your work, you could make quite a few claims, it seems, really, at having driven all this forward.

I played my part, I hope. I think in the end, I'm just so grateful to have been within a cohort of individuals, many of whom are in the archive, at a moment in time, I think, when we were all, I think, making a difference to a degree. I mean in some ways, you know, in the notes when I was preparing this, for me it sort of comes together with the Child Dignity Alliance and the sort of the stuff we did with the Vatican, for example, where all of those people, all of those experts, many of whom I admire immensely, many of them are much more expert in areas than I am, came together to do the Declaration of Rome for the Catholic Church, all very symbolic, it was wonderful to have an audience with the Holy Father, and actually subsequently went back again on Facebook's behalf and responded on Facebook's behalf to his speech around the dignity of children. All seems very high level, but at the end of the day it's this both secular and faith-based acknowledgment that actually children's lives are increasingly

digital and there are vulnerabilities. And something that Pope Francis said, I think in one of his opening remarks, always sticks in my mind, is that society will be judged by the way it deals with its children. Well, I would take that a step further and say that, you know, technology companies too will be judged by the way they deal with children in coming years, because they're a very significant cohort, they're consumers of content, but they also don't always have the cognitive or developmental skills to do that. So things like age verification for under thirteens to me is an inevitability, is that actually anonymity for a seven year old on an open internet is not, we'll look back on it and go, honestly, that we could have that kind of content one click away. And I think those, I see a lot of rhetoric, you know, the UK government and other governments who sort of try and weaponise these issues, that we're going to make tech do this, but actually that's not the sense I get from the others, they're going to need the technology companies to come up with the solutions for civil society and in the background, you know, there's a lot of very mature discussions going on away from the media, a long-term planning, deep investments. I mean that's the other thing, you know, it may take several years to develop some of these technologies, we're working on those now and they'll emerge in a few years' time, or we'll partner with other people because we don't always have the solutions. And so living in the moment sometimes around these issues is not always a healthy thing, we have to be, I think, not only technology companies, but civil society has to be deeply committed to making sure that children's safety is a priority.

[00:44:57]

Yeah. It doesn't sound like you're thinking about retiring any time soon.

Well, no, and it is interesting because many of my peers have done so or are doing so, and I think that's probably the area of satisfaction I have, I feel vocationally very committed to what I do and so I just will go on as long as Meta will have me.

[laughs] And my health permits.

It's thought of as a young person's company, I suppose, so maybe it's quite, it's good to have a few grey hairs.

It probably is, yes, although I do notice that as the company's grown that image is sort of going away, there are many people being brought in of a similar age to me or younger, you know. I have a team of twenty-two people in my team, I'm the only British person in that team and I'm based in London. So I have an Argentinian and a Kenyan and a, you know, so the diversity of the company, which is often the case with technology companies, is very, very exciting, I find that very invigorating.

So your team isn't physically in London then, presumably?

Quite a lot of them are, but they're spread around the world, yes, in different places.

Yeah, yeah. So what about young people then, what would your advice be to those who might be thinking about careers in IT and indeed arts graduates as well, of course, and how they might, you know, sort of have a career that might be as equally as rewarding as yours?

Well, it's interesting, if I look at my sort of twenty-something self and I wasn't sure what really to do, but the industry was very different then. So, for example, when I- I'm a very, very keen member of the Worshipful Company of Information Technologists and most of them are from what I would call IT backgrounds, so they're that generation of the eighties and nineties, many of them, many of them I've worked with as well, and that community and their disciplines and skills, that's changed. In Facebook we have people like that, twenty-somethings and thirty-somethings, but now we have people that work, we have content creators, we have animators, we have marketeers, the pervasiveness of the internet is now reflected in the technology companies now. So we have big engineering teams, well, we have big marketing teams and so on. So I think what tech companies have become is more a reflection. So if you look at Amazon, for example, what is Amazon? Is it a technology company or is it a retailer, is it a distribution channel? It becomes, it reflects the pervasiveness of what it does and that's really different to a computing company in even 1990 where they would be defined as a computing company, so I think that changed. So to your question though, I think, so I think that's a hugely exciting opportunity for young people because I think people can come in in all sorts of different ways and I think we're coming into an era, particularly the metaverse, and

immersive technologies, which again, you know, it's really interesting, the name change of Meta and the sort of response to that concept, it feels rather akin to what I saw back in 2012 around the move to mobile, where there was a deep, you know, deep scepticism that actually that, you know, that was useful. And yet look at where we are now with mobile technology, and I think we'll be the same with immersive metaverse type technologies as well. I notice that Disney made an announcement yesterday about moving into that space as well. And so that's a hugely exciting opportunity for arts graduates in particular, as well as scientists and engineers and so on. So I think it's a much more open, inclusive market. I do think one of the challenges that I would point out to young people is that technology companies are very demanding, so you know, my job is a 24/7 job, albeit at my level, but even in our teams, because of the scale at which we operate and the global breadth of what we do, it's very, you have to be really very committed to your job and you do work very long hours and you have to, you need quite a lot of experience before you come into a business like ours, because the pace is very fast moving. There's a lot of innovation going on, there's a lot of what I would call breaking and rebuilding all the time, we're constantly innovating, evolving technology, doing evidence based research focus groups, you know. So that's a very fluid environment compared to, for example, the IBM world, which was quite hierarchical and had structures and had formal organisational charts and so on, it's very different in a US tech company on a scale that a Google or a Meta operates, which is very fluid. So, you know, we'll, for example, you know, you had the US election, you have teams that will move into that, we call them XFMs, but they group together and they all work on the election and the election will be over and then they'll move away again and they'll move onto another project. And that fluidity of hierarchy in the tech companies is quite new, I think. I think that's only happened in the last ten years. And so there's a new way of working going on in tech companies, which it's not just in US companies, you see it in Chinese companies and other companies too, which I think is exciting for young people and I think presents enormous opportunities for them.

[00:50:22]

Yes, absolutely. I mean it does, as you say though, I mean arguably millennials and Gen Z and so on are also concerned about work/life balance more than perhaps people who've been in the industry for, you know, thirty, forty years who grew up with

a different attitude. So perhaps that's also having an influence. I mean companies like Twitter one gathers, and maybe Facebook too, you know, say well, we're not going to dictate how much holiday you want to book, it's up to you. Do you see that?

Yeah, I mean I do think that, I mean clearly some of these companies do have attractive benefit packages and sort of say those kind of things, so I completely understand that. But, you know, I was thinking the other day, one of the interesting observations between when I came in and now is that, you know, if I think of a Compaq or an IBM, most of those companies had their offices outside of cities on campuses, now all our offices are in the centre of urban environments. So it reflects the fact that young people want that sort of integrated urban experience, you know, it's not about manufacturing hardware any more, it's software, it's creativity, it's, you know, that shift is an enormous shift and it's reflected in the way that we headquarter our business, I think, or the way our offices are structured. But I would counsel people that our kind of environments are immensely competitive businesses, you know, they're deeply innovative and they're full of deeply committed people who have a vision. And this is not just US tech companies, there are Chinese companies and European companies like this, but when you come into these businesses they emerge from nowhere, they achieve a scale which is enormous, I mean even compared to the tech companies I had before, there's no comparison between the two. And also, they come up against issues, the intersection between technology and civil society, that friction, it's all like a tectonic plate, that's where we are now, it's rubbing against, you know, civil society's trying to work out what its role is, it's still in this sort of Wild West mentality but it's, but the technology's happening to us everywhere, whether it's a delivery from Amazon or a, you know, a ring phone or a mobile, it's all around us in a pervasive form but we still have the same thinking we had sort of six, eight years ago. And actually young people, say under thirty year olds, are past that now. The other thing is I work a lot with young people and they, I remember I went to a conference in Turkey with 150 young people for a day and they invited me to Ankara to this meeting, it was a big network of Turkish young people, fourteen to sixteen, and what was really interesting was what they were saying is, that they felt that their parents' concerns about technology were a Trojan horse – they used a different term – for their parents' broader concerns about their futures in terms of education, economic prospects, globalisation and so on, and so it was quite a profound

point from them, that actually they felt that their parents' concern about the use of technology was wrapped up in this bigger issue of parents' concerns in a sort of, where parents are much more risk averse now and people are much more indoors, it feeds into that concern. And what was really interesting was the level of peer-to-peer support for each other, these Turkish young people came from thirty towns and cities across Turkey, and how they kept connected through social media and how they supported each other when they had difficulties or they had issues about wellbeing, they have a whole vocabulary at thirteen or fourteen about wellbeing, about suicide and self-harm, what it means to them, body image. A whole set of vocabulary that I at thirteen or fourteen never had.

Yeah.

And that's a profound... so those adults will live in a digital world in a way- I'm not saying they'll be better equipped, but very often the apps and platforms that they're in, their parents simply aren't in.

[00:54:40]

Indeed, yeah. Yeah, it's a different world. So it's only a certain amount of crystal ball gazing one can do, I suppose, with any confidence.

Yes. But I'm immensely optimistic and what I saw in that room and I see frequently is just how empowered young people feel around technology and how they see- and a lot of, there are risks, they're very smart. If I look at the work of people like Danah Boyd in the United States and other ethnographers, what I find interesting, and I'm very connected to a lot of academics, is academics are now not looking at the risks, well, they are looking at the risks, but they're also looking at the issues like ethics, the rights of children. There's a, you know, is it right for a parent to have parental controls on a fifteen year old's device? What are the rights of the child here, what's the agency of a young person that's grown up in that digital world? Does a parent have a right to share a picture of them as a baby at four without that child's consent. These are sort of ethical questions and issues now that academics are looking at and ethnographers and clinical psychologists, which I think is an indication of we're starting to think in a new way about it. I'll never forget Professor Tanya Byron when

she did the Byron Review in 2008, I'm a great admirer of Tanya, and she wrote the review which established the UK Council for Internet Safety. What struck me was she was a clinical psychologist coming from a child-centred perspective of technology. She was not a technology person, and that's what you're starting to see with experts now, not technologists, but bringing other disciplines to what already is a digital life for many young people. And the only other thing I would say is that there is a significant proportion of young people in the UK and in the global south that are disenfranchised from this kind of technology, either because they can't afford it or they don't have access, so this is a very uneven world. In the global north, you know, we have fast broadband, we have good law enforcement and so on. The work I did with UNICEF in particular and with the Vatican made me realise that by 2030 there will be 750 million children in Africa under eighteen. That youth demographic is getting high speed broadband. So we need to be thinking and putting mechanisms in place to make sure that that huge youth demographic, and actually the youth demographic in North America and Europe are actually either flat or declining, most young people in the next ten years will be born outside North America and Europe, what are we doing to make sure that in that part of the world we have the institutional robustness and the, use technology correctly to make sure that those young people are safe and have an empowered experience – and I don't always like to use that – but have a rich and responsible experience on the internet, and in most cases young people do get that, but I think that's important.

Yeah, yeah, indeed. What about money? You haven't really talked, I mean it sounds like making a lot of money hasn't really ever been your main motivator, but I guess you've done quite well financially. I mean is the tech sector a good way to get rich?

Certainly in the eighties and nineties, yes, you're quite right, it gives you a very good standard of living. But, to be honest, I consciously traded that in, you know, at the 2000 point, and I think that's probably because of what was going on at home at the time and also a reorientation, that sort of moment in the early 2000s where I'd met John and I met Steven and I thought, wait, you know, that just became secondary. So yes, I then spent ten, twelve years probably not earning the kind of income that you would expect, but to me that was not the issue. Now, yes, coming back to Meta, the remuneration is extraordinary, but then the responsibilities as a director within the

business, and there are not that many directors in the business, not as many as there is employees, are considerable and so therefore it's a balance really. But inevitably, these kind of organisations do pay considerable sums, but then they demand a lot and I think it's just, it's a trade-off between the two.

[00:59:10]

Yes. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay, so looking back is there anything that you would do differently?

It's difficult to say, it's my life's experience. I'm just, I think I'm grateful that there was a transition point that allowed me to reflect on what was important to me, and that was a mixture of both home and work. So I would honestly say, when people talk about getting a work/life balance, so much of what I've experienced is experiential. It's about meeting people at a given moment in time. I think the other thing I would say too, and the work of the livery company and of Dame Steve Shirley as [incomp] me to, because, just to go back a step, when Stefan my youngest, was diagnosed as autistic, Dame Steve Shirley, in an extraordinary act really, funded Prior's Court, which is an autistic school, and my son nearly went there, he actually went to another residential school for a number of years. And she was, because of her experience of having an autistic herself, her book in particular, which came out a little bit later, but actually I got to know her a bit better through the livery company, really did make me think. I mean that just, she's one of those individuals that make me realise that it is the impact you can potentially make in technology can be enormous. And so I found that quite inspiring and it's the reason why I'm involved with the livery company, although I don't really have much time in the last year or two, I have just enjoyed immensely working on issues where there can be a business or a technology problem to solve, but it's never going to pay for itself. It can be a social issue or a problem that can't be fixed on a balance sheet but needs funding, needs charity, needs fellowship and support. And I think working in the NGO community, UNICEF and people like them have made me realise that if you can tap into that, you can have a very fulfilling and long career, and you can get to the stage where I am, nearly in my mid-sixties, where I don't feel I need to stop. [laughs] You know, I'm just driven by that, you know, if you want me to go to a conference in Turkey with 150 young people, I'll go, because I love it. And I think it's that tapping into yourself and

thinking what really matters to you, and that will be different for different people. I have members of my staff who are passionate about, for example, women's safety and so they focus in that area specifically. And I think you have to tap into those kind of human things in your career and try and get that balance right. And I think then you're not retiring to leave the work sector. I think we're in a wonderful world now where you can do things on a more vocational basis and I think that's hugely exciting for young people to come through.

Yeah, indeed. And travel overseas as well of course, you've talked about you've done, really got almost a global perspective now, haven't you? So I mean it's the UK IT industry which the Worshipful Company is focussed on, I suppose, and, you know, there is a risk to being inward looking, isn't there? I mean would you encourage people to set their sights overseas and to travel as much as possible in their work?

Yes, I would and I think it's a great question. I mean clearly the UK has some wonderful technology, but the centre of gravity, certainly for me has been predominantly in the United States, but it's a combination of the way that they grow global businesses and the way they deploy technology. You know, you don't see it in Europe very much. And so I'm not making a judgement on why that is, but, you know, the way that they deploy their technologies, the way that they go global at scale means that we are in a global IT industry and I suppose, I mean when I'm in the Worshipful Company I do see some sort of very UK-centric things, but that's not a bad thing, I don't think that's an issue, but I would encourage people of this generation to really look internationally. I think one of the things I would say about child safety – and I've often said this at conferences – is whether you're a child in Venezuela or, I don't know, Japan or the UK, the issues you will face in terms of safety or use of technology are very similar. Very, very similar. And there's an opportunity there inasmuch that the way humans interact with technology is becoming relatively global, and so therefore there's a set of issues and things that if you can fix it in one country, you could fix it in lots of countries. So if we get the Online Safety Bill right here, around age verification, other countries will follow. They might tweak them a little bit, depending on their culture or something like that, so there is an opportunity to take a global approach to certain types of harms or certain types of opportunities, for example. So I think that's very exciting and... but I make no

judgement really on the UK-centric side, other than just to say that I would encourage young people to be as global as they can be, it's an exciting world out there.

[01:04:30]

Yeah. And when you do sort of try to look into your crystal ball a bit maybe and look ahead for the next ten years, what would you think would be the biggest change in your part of the industry?

Oh, that's a really interesting question. Well, I think one thing has already happened. I was at, you know, this is... I was at a meeting recently in a room in Facebook and one of the UK people, like myself, asked how many people in the room were born and brought up in London, and only a third of the audience of 500 people were actually born and brought up in the UK. So one of the things is we are dealing with a youth generation that is very, can be very mobile and it will travel to where work is. So what I'm trying to say is, we have 6,000 people in the UK, it wouldn't surprise me if a great more than 50% or maybe 60% are actually not from the UK at all. So one of the attractions of the UK tech sector, I think, and it was all the way back to Compaq days, is this company has been very good at bringing in people from outside, and London in particular does attract young people from all over the world, it's an exciting city, there's a lot more to it than just the technology now. So, you know, I think that's very exciting. I've lost my thread a bit here. But, and I think that's really important in terms of that diversity.

Yeah. Yeah, no I was asking you about how you see things differently sort of looking ten years ahead.

Yeah. I think, so I suppose two things in my view. One is I think we'll come to a degree of regulatory and technology maturity, I think that will happen in the next decade. I think we'll stop, I hope we'll stop using the word Wild West. I think civil society will make its mind up much more about what privacy and safety is, you know, we need to decide what those, in a digital age. So I think that will be very key, so technology and maturity. I think the other thing is that the arrival of an immersive environment, what we're calling the metaverse and, you know, we've rebranded, and I think, you know, a lot of people are preoccupied about avatars and things like that. I

am on immersive calls, not on this device, I am on something called a portal which gives me a 3D view of the room and I can walk around the door, the room, use a whiteboard, pull up screens over on the left-hand side and use it. I'm already using immersive technologies and if there's one thing that Covid has taught us, is that remote working is going to be much more important and the quality of remote working and of immersive interaction will be key. And so I think in the next ten years the metaverse, and for want of a better term, immersive technology, augmented reality, is going to be very, very significant, both creatively in terms of entertainment, what we experience. You know, it's interesting, Disney's announcement yesterday, but also with us as well, you know, augmented reality and so on. So I think that's a very exciting new frontier and it will change things considerably. And then the third element, I would say, is the emergence of the global south in terms of the youth demographic, which is this huge burgeoning youth demographic coming through that is digitally enabled and there I think there are both challenges and opportunities as well, if that makes sense, in the next ten years.

Yeah, yeah. And you touched on the remote working thing. Is that here to stay then, because I know you said young people want to be in the urban environment, they like having their head offices in London and so on, but on the other hand there is a move in the opposite direction as well, isn't there?

Yes, and I don't... yes, it's a good point. I think there's a sort of tension there. But, you know, for example, I was in a – I'll give you an example – I was in a call at 6 o'clock yesterday, four-hour call with eighty people from Kenya and another fifty people from all over the world on a roundtable on safety in Kenya. That's my, that's fairly normal, we've got ten of those roundtables coming in three continents and none of us are going to meet in person. So whilst I do think you're quite right, I think in terms of people's work/life balance and experience, people will want those urban environments, will want, you know, I'm keen to get back to the office as well for social interaction. I just think that there's additional immersive layer emerging which says, why do you need to really fly all the way to Kenya to do this. How do you make that experience easier. And some of the things we were doing on that call were really interesting, because pre-Covid we wouldn't have done them, you know, ministers, to be honest, in that country would have never have come to a VC, they would have

expected to be flying out. That's changed. So I think there are opportunities there. And there are challenges too of course, but I think that's interesting and I think in the next ten years we're going to see that unpack itself and manifest itself in ways that we can't think about at the moment, I think. It's a bit like mobile, if you'd said to me fifteen years ago that we would be viewing TV on my mobile phone, I would have laughed. And I worked at Motorola, I know what the device was like. You know, if you used WAP or anything like that, you just would have thought that was hysterical. And so I think it's that inability to sort of think ahead, and that's what some of these companies are really clever at, actually, you know, they invest very heavily both in the infrastructure that you need for that, and artificial intelligence is a really big driver in all that.

[01:10:16]

So, I think probably we've more or less, is there anything that we haven't covered that you feel should be mentioned?

I'm just trying to think, let me just have a quick look at my notes, because sometimes I just sort of talk off the cuff, and forgive me for... I'm just trying to think if there was anything else, really. I mean what I would say is thank you very much for the- I mean it's very rare that somebody talks to me about my background. [laughs]

Well, it's very interesting that your grandfather was a coalminer and that there's that whole, you know, you're the first one to university and so on, the tech industry has a disproportionately large number of people who do have more, you know, less establishment backgrounds, I suppose.

Interesting.

In your career, have you noticed that, have you felt it's perhaps more open and equal than other parts of the establishment which you've no doubt become more involved with when you've...

Yes. That is an interesting point. I think because technology, if you look at the number of, I mean my father worked for the same company for twenty-five years and

never thought about anything else, you know. So yeah, in a sense, you know, two or three years in a job and then you move to another one, and there aren't the sort of, if I moved in three years, somebody wouldn't say these days, well, why are you moving after three years, because the industry's moving so quickly, the technology waves coming through means, you know, there is no PC business now really, for example, in the same way that it was. And so I suppose in a sense you're right, it is less structured and so therefore it presents enormous opportunity, I think.

But lucky you decided not to have a professional career in archery, or was that ever a possibility?

No, not really, and I think as competitive as I was, my shooting partner was a lad four years younger than me, Steve Hallard, who then went on to win a team silver and an individual bronze at the Olympics, and that is what I call real talent, and I didn't have that. I shared the coach with him and I travelled to the States, but he was... so, you know. I think sometimes it's a bit like, the art moment or the archery moment, I think you have to appraise how good you think you are in a given context and sometimes people have, are instinctively really good at some things and you have to work really really hard to achieve the same level, and so I think you have to think about that in a competitive context. And that's true of business as well, where I think business is fundamentally different, because archery is not really a team orientated sport, is, and I think it's a really important point, is I deeply valued the experts like John and Sonia and Susie Hargreaves around me, that collaborative approach to a problem is, I think, one of the sort of themes that I would say the NGO period, and here at Meta as well, which is, you know, bringing in the lawyer, the marketer, the engineer to fix a problem. You know, that's what I think technology, getting past the pure technology is how do you collaborate to find a solution, is a really exciting aspect, I think, of where my career is now and I think I've benefitted immensely from that. I don't pretend to be an expert in things but I know people who are. They just feel passionately about finding the same solution and to me that's an exciting, exciting world that we live in.

Well, Dave Miles, thank you very much. It's been fascinating to talk to you and I'm sure viewers of the video in future will find it inspiring too, so thank you.

Thank you.

[01:14:11 – recording ends]