IBM Systems MEDIA

Terminal Talk: 'The Mainframe Podcast I Didn't Know That I Needed'

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Think back to your first day working on the mainframe. You were probably completely overwhelmed and wondering why everything had to be so complicated. To make matters worse, the mainframe has developed its own culture, terminology and library of acronyms that seem like they were inherited from a sci-fi novel. It's confusing and there's so much to learn. How can someone new to the mainframe platform ever expect to catch up, much less have fun with it?

This is where the "Terminal Talk" podcast can help. Our goal is to make the mainframe less threatening and more accessible. We chat with some of the best and brightest in the field about the mainframe and why they love it. While some of the podcast emphasis deals with how things came to be, quite a few episodes focus on new and emerging technology. Even if you're not new to the platform, we guarantee you will learn something from our podcast.

The idea of creating a podcast came to us during an exceedingly long car ride. We used the seemingly endless miles to come up with a format, the first few guests and how we'd make it fun. Then, it was just a matter of

buying microphones, sending out some emails and booking the first recording. Our first guest, Anthony Sofia (STSM, IBM Z Software Design and Development) was very patient, even after we lost his initial interview and had to rerecord the episode. That first episode went live on June 19, 2017. From that humble beginning, the now famous "Terminal Talk" boasts dozens of sometime listeners.

While many might disagree, we like to think we have a set of driving principles in our show. Sound quality is of paramount concern and, so far, all guests are recorded live, in-person. We carefully select our guests: people who know a lot about the episode topic and can talk about it with the same passion that we have for the mainframe platform. We strive to create an environment where the guests' enthusiasm for their work make the topics compelling for the listener.

As we quickly found, producing a show that sounds casual and informal requires a deceptive amount of work. Once we have a topic, we start searching for a good guest to talk about it. This is more difficult than you might think because we need to find people who understand the topic well and can relate its importance and relevance to people who are new to the platform. No one listens to podcasts to hear someone read from a set of PowerPoint charts. We try to record over the course of an hour and then edit the episode down to 30 minutes (or so). Extraneous sounds are erased, levels are mixed and show notes get created. The process, from idea to release, takes about five hours.

We expect 2018 to be an awesome year for new "Terminal Talk" episodes. In addition to experts from within IBM, we will continue to find people across the industry who provide new and different insights into the mainframe. And, in addition to recording in the office studio in Poughkeepsie, New York, we will be recording and producing new episodes at SHARE, Technical University and other conferences.

To subscribe to our podcast, search for "Terminal Talk" from your favorite podcast player. We are listed on iTunes (https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/terminal-talk/id1246775230?mt=2), Google Play (https://play.google.com/music/listen#/ps/Is4kdkido6zl3zzgd63jhn325aa), and Stitcher (https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/jeff-bisti/terminal-talk-with-frank-and-jeff). You can also follow us on Twitter (https://twitter.com/TerminalTalk).

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