

The Weekly Listen: Is AI actually coming for your job, do customers care about values, and the subscription divide

Audio

On today's episode, we discuss whether generative AI is actually coming for your job, how much customers really care about a company's values, whether there is a subscription divide among groups of people, whether audiobooks could be the next frontier for advertising, some karaoke facts, and more. Tune in to the discussion with our analysts Evelyn Mitchell and Max Willens and vice president of Briefings Stephanie Taglianetti.

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Episode Transcript:

Marcus Johnson:

Hello, everyone, and thanks for hanging out with us for the Behind the Numbers Weekly Listen, an eMarketer podcast made possible by Cint. And this is the Friday show that hates karaoke.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

What?

Evelyn Mitchell:

Disagree.

Marcus Johnson:

With me.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

Hard, hard, disagree,

Max Willens:

Picked the wrong panel.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

Hard disagree.

Marcus Johnson:

So it's a soft no. It's a soft no. Okay. I'm your host, Marcus Johnson. In today's show, is AI actually coming for your job?

Evelyn Mitchell:

But in terms of job loss, we as humans will find a way to continue to make a living, working and the skills needed will be different.

Marcus Johnson:

Do customers really care about company values?

Max Willens:

If you can find something that's organic or fair trade and you can afford it, you're going to buy it. If you can't afford it, you're going to buy the cheaper thing.

Marcus Johnson:

Is there a subscription divide?

Stephanie Taglianetti:

Consumers are eventually going to hit a ceiling with their subscription spending, so perhaps that ceiling will come sooner among older demos and women.

Marcus Johnson:

Could audiobooks be the next frontier for advertising? And I have some facts about why karaoke is terrible. It's not about why it's terrible. I just have a lot of facts about it.

Join me for this episode. We have three people. Let's meet them. We start with one of our senior analysts covering digital advertising and media based out of Virginia. It's Evelyn Mitchell.

Evelyn Mitchell:

Hey, there everyone. Happy Friday.

Marcus Johnson:

Hello. Hello. Also joined by our vice president of briefings based out of New Jersey. It's Stephanie Taglianetti.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

Hey. Happy to be back after a little hiatus.

Marcus Johnson:

Hello. Hello. Welcome home. And finally, we have one of our senior analysts also covering digital advertising and media. He's based out of Pennsylvania. We call him Max Willens.

Max Willens:

Yo.

Marcus Johnson:

Hey, fella. So what we have in store for you, we start with the story of the week. Is AI actually coming for your job? We'll check. And then we move to the debate of the week where our panel will give us the best for and against arguments they can from three different news

stories and related questions we have for you. We move to dinner party data at the end. Our final segment about random trivia that we just learned. We start of course with the story of the week.

Is AI actually coming for your job? At the end of March, the BBC noted that artificial intelligence, AI, could replace the equivalent of 300 million full-time jobs, according to a report by investment bank Goldman Sachs. The new research believes AI could replace a quarter of work tasks in the US and Europe, a quarter of work tasks in the US and Europe, but may also mean new jobs and a productivity boom. So we're going to be talking about this report, which seems quite alarming at first glance, 300 million, basically 300 million people or 330, but 300 million people in America. And that's total people, not just adults. So the idea of 300 million full-time jobs going away because artificial intelligence definitely gets folks attention. Evelyn, I'll start with you. What do you make of where we are in terms of AI and the idea of actually coming for people's jobs?

Evelyn Mitchell:

I think one of the things that stuck out to me most was actually from another article you sent us, Marcus, from Vox. And that was a quote from Dr. Matt Bean from UC Santa Barbara, and he said, "Exposure predicts nothing in terms of what will change and how fast it will change. Human beings reject change that compromises their interests." And exposure there refers to, in the Goldman Sachs study, which jobs are kind of at highest risk to be disrupted by generative AI. And I think that quote from Dr. Bean is a comforting sentiment. And I think it's true in many cases, but there are also countless examples in history where humans adopted a new technology quickly or not, despite our best interests as a civilization, either because at the time we didn't know what the consequences would be in the long term or because the short term benefits were too great and too tempting. We are not as a species very good at turning away from temptation, at least not indefinitely.

And I think the coal industry offers an interesting if not perfect parallel here. It has lobbied its way into continued existence despite scientific consensus of its harm because there are economies and livelihoods and personal fortunes built on it. We know that widespread use of renewable energy sources is more than possible right now with updated infrastructures, and yet change is happening at a glacial pace to the detriment of future generations.

Now, generative AI has the potential to touch every industry. And from what I've gathered, this has more disruptive potential than any technological advancement that has happened to

date because computing power is growing exponentially. And ultimately I do think AI has the power to get out of control. But in terms of job loss, we as humans will find a way to continue to make a living working and the skills needed will be different. And in my opinion, our government has a responsibility to ensure that members of the workforce who built their skillsets for a different time won't be left out in the cold, and that means education, training, economic infrastructures, all of that is imperative.

Marcus Johnson:

It's certainly a scary, intimidating, anxiety inducing at first glance. But so was things like the ATM machine. People thought that was going to mean there was no more bank tellers needed. And actually it created more jobs because people needed more access to those services. And so part of this is trying to explain to the worker, convince the worker that AI is a good thing and they're not going to get replaced, convincing them that maybe it can be complimentary to their job, and also reminding people that new jobs could be created as a result. According to the Goldman report, 60% of workers are in jobs today that didn't exist in 1940. The problem is, as Chris Valance of the BBC was noting other research suggests that technological change since the 1980s has displaced workers faster than it has created jobs. So I guess the takeaway here is no one really knows what's going to happen.

Max Willens:

I think if you also look at that, I think the BBC had this study, even if it creates jobs, the likelihood that it will create high paying jobs or jobs that are high value is I think pretty well. The issue with whether 300 million are going to get wiped out in the blink of a couple years or if it takes a little longer, there are definitely small clusters of jobs that I think are on the chopping block right now, kind of low level accountants, people that write kind of SEO optimized content, people that maybe do paralegal services. Those guys should probably start burnishing their resumes quickly. But to me, the key issue here is the idea that even if it does create a new class of jobs, the idea that those jobs will, I think, be secure or high compensation jobs to me is pretty unlikely.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

And I think that leveling up in skillsets really, really important. We're being smart here at Intelligence with starting to expose ourselves to generative AI pretty early on. I mean, my team in particular is actively piloting how generative AI is assisting in the creation of articles,

just as an experiment to see what can and can it not do right now. And so if you think about it as a junior employee right now and delegating those tasks to it, it means that the folks on my team are able to level up and prioritize some of those higher value skills in their roles as analysts when some of the more menial production type tasks are being offset by an AI tool that does a pretty good job with SEO and key wording and things like that that high paid writers really ought to not be doing in their day-to-day anyways. So I think too, if folks are in those sort of jobs that are on the red alert for being displaced, I think it's smart to start thinking about how to level up in skillset early.

Marcus Johnson:

I wonder what this does to internships and a lot of those, because you have jobs that could disappear, but maybe more importantly right now is certain tasks that could disappear and the impacts can vary across different sectors. But, Max, you mentioned a couple there with legal admin, 46% of tasks in admin, 44% in legal professions could be automated. This was from that BBC article from that Goldman report. But just 6% in construction, 4% in maintenance. Things like artists, they're concerned the AI image generators could harm their employment. And then a recent Wall Street piece from Lauren Weber and Lindsay Ellis noting accountants have one of the most exposed careers to generative AI, according to a study we quickly mentioned from University of Pennsylvania and open AI maker of ChatGPT. Researchers found at least half of accounting tasks could be completed faster with the tech, same as true for mathematicians, interpreters, writers, and 20% of the US workforce. So maybe the immediate question is what tasks could get replaced as opposed to jobs per se?

Max Willens:

You want a four-day work week? That's one way to make it quicker.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

Can we just become more productive to the point that we get to a four-day work week? I don't know. Things like efficiency and productivity are very scary words.

Marcus Johnson:

Let's do it.

Evelyn Mitchell:

It makes me want to learn a new more physical skill. I spent a lot of time this weekend weeding, maybe I can brush up my landscaping chops and make sure I have a backup.

Marcus Johnson:

So jobs could be the casualty, but also wages. And so Carl Benedict Frey, Future of Work director at the Oxford University said "We can't know how many jobs will be replaced by generative AI." ChatGPT can let people with average writing skills produce essays and articles, so journalists will face more competition, which could drive down wages and less demand picks up. Think about GPS and Uber. Suddenly knowing all the streets in London, like London cab drivers used to have to know, they used to have take a test called the Knowledge where they knew literally every street in London, that all of a sudden, and it was almost impossible test to pass, that almost all of a sudden has barely any value. And cab drivers, as a result, saw wage cuts of about 10% according to some research that Mr. Fray had done. So the results were lower wages, not necessarily fewer drivers.

Final thing I'll say here, it seems like it's just basically impossible to ignore. Something's going to happen. Chief executive of the Resolution Foundation think tank Austin Bell was saying, "That's not to say AI won't disrupt the way we work, but we should focus too on the potential living standards gained from higher productivity at work, cheaper to run services, as well as there's the risk of falling behind if other companies or economies better adapt to technological change." But it does seem like something that's going to affect everybody, at least at some degree. According to the research from the University of Pennsylvania and Open AI, 80% of workers were in jobs, four and five were in jobs where at least one job task can be performed more quickly by generative AI.

That's what we've got time for the story of the week. Time now for the debate of the week. Today's segment make the case.

Marcus Johnson:

Where our panel Evelyn, Stephanie, and Max presents the for and against arguments for each of the following questions based on three news stories. Two contestants face off per question. Also, the following takes don't necessarily reflect the analyst's personal views. Their job is just to present the best case regardless and offer objective analysis. They'll each have 60 seconds to present their cases. Let's begin.

Question one, and we're talking about whether customers care about company values, consumers values, and their loyalty depends on them. Now it's an Ad Week piece written by Sai Koppala, the CMO at verification company Share ID. He writes that from eco-conscious shoppers willing to pay a premium for sustainable goods to socially minded customers who disavow brands over political positions, consumers have increasingly signaled the importance of tying purpose to their purchases. The question here is, do customers actually care about a company's values? Stephanie is going up against Max. Stephanie, you are going to present the they do care. So customers do care about a company's values. Make the case.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

All right, so people do care. They're very willing to change where they shop if they perceive that a company is not in line with their own values. In a recent Glow and Nielsen survey of 33,000 US shoppers, about half of respondents either started or stopped using a food or grocery brand based off of that brand's ESG behavior. And that figure jumped up to seven and 10 among millennials and people with children, even more so, consumers will heavily scrutinize brands when they think that they're appearing inauthentic with an attempt to tap into their core values. For example, consumers have said that they want to see more LGBTQ plus inclusion in advertisements. And in Harris Media Survey, 73% said that they think more highly of companies that advertise with LGBTQ media, but half of customers in that same survey said that the ads that they see feel inauthentic. So at the end of the day, values matter. They influence not only perception of a brand, but also whether or not a consumer decides to shop with them.

Marcus Johnson:

Max, you're up, customers don't actually care about a company's values. Make the case.

Max Willens:

I just think that brands values are a nice to have. They're not an essential ingredient. I think that if you know this was really true as a sort of defining operating principle for most consumers, then Amazon's business would be in big trouble. And instead Amazon's business goes up and up and up and up. And the same is true of lots of large CPG companies that use palm oil or resort to child labor. And it just doesn't seem to have material impact on the economic health of lots of these companies. That same Edelman study, which is sort of a bedrock of the Adweek author's article, points out that inflation in the economy remain

leading factors in their buying decisions. At the end of the day, people care more about price and convenience than anything else. If you can find something that's organic or fair trade and you can afford it, you're going to buy it. If you can't afford it, you're going to buy the cheaper thing.

Marcus Johnson:

Excellent start, folks. One other thing that jumped out to me from that Edelman Research, consumers top issues, social, political type issues including employee treatment, 75%, climate change, 64, economic equality, 60 and racial justice with 60 as well.

Let's move to our second question. We're talking about the subscription divide. Millennials love them. Baby boomers are dubious suggests a recent Morning Consult article by Ellen Briggs. In the new survey, folks were asked to indicate their interest in paying for subscriptions across nine different products or service categories, things like retail, transport, entertainment and media, et cetera. Gen Z adults, so older Gen Z people and millennials expressed the highest levels of enthusiasm across nearly every category. So that's what basically twenties, people in their twenties and thirties and also in their early forties, expressing the highest levels of enthusiasm across nearly every category In terms of subscriptions, men also over-indexed. But the question is, are subscriptions just for certain groups of people? Stephanie going up against Evelyn. Stephanie, subscriptions are only for certain groups of people. Make the case.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

Yes. So the Morning Consult data that you just cited, younger consumers, men much more interested in paying for subscriptions than older people and women. This is not surprising. The subscription economy is extremely overwhelming. We're really reaching that point of subscription fatigue. This is most acute among boomers. They have the lowest rates of subscriptions among any demographic in that survey. And they also report being the most overwhelmed by the sheer volume of subscriptions that do exist. Overall, consumers seemed pretty split on whether they were content or overwhelmed by the subscription economy. I think this sentiment could really threaten the long-term growth of the subscription market. Blake Drosch notes that the number of subscription buyers is growing more slowly today than it was five years ago in his 2022 report. And consumers are eventually going to hit a ceiling with their subscription spending. So perhaps that ceiling will come sooner among older demos and women.

Marcus Johnson:

Evelyn, subscriptions are actually for everyone, not certain groups. Make the case.

Evelyn Mitchell:

No one is going to like or buy into every subscription, but everyone likes or buys into certain subscriptions. And it's not really the subscription that matters here. It's the benefits of a subscription. It's the value exchanged for the subscription fee. And we all appreciate value. There are few people under the delusion that everything of value can be provided for free. And whether or not we think that the value associated with a particular subscription justifies the expense is another matter. And whether or not we can afford the expense is yet another, especially when you consider monthly pricing versus annual pricing versus lifetime pricing. But everyone likes the benefit of a subscription.

Marcus Johnson:

One point for me from that data, restaurants had the highest levels of subscription interest across every demographic group. Half or more of Gen Z adults and millennials expressing interest in healthcare and retail subscriptions as well. Very nice, folks.

Let's move to our final question of the segments, question three. Could audiobooks be the next frontier for advertising. Evelyn against Max.

This is a question asked by Alyssa Myers of our sister company Morning Brew. She explains that Audible is conducting limited testing of ads in audiobooks with non-members. Non-members getting ad supported access to a limited set of Audible titles, according to their help page, and can hear up to eight ads in a 24-hour period. Ms. Myers notes that Spotify has indicated it might make a similar move because A. Last summer it closed a hundred million deal to buy audiobook distributor, Find a Way. And 2. Former CCO Dawn Ostrov said Spotify was looking at bringing ad monetization into audiobooks, though there's been no official announcement. The question here is, could audiobooks be the next frontier for advertising? Evelyn, you are going to give the could argument, audiobooks could be the next frontier for advertising. Make the case

Evelyn Mitchell:

For the record, I don't think that every available medium should be overwritten by advertising, but I think it makes more sense to incorporate ads into audiobooks than movies. Movies are

typically made to be consumed without interruption. That has not stopped TV networks, and consumers accept that if they're watching a movie on cable, for example, that they will see ads. At least audiobooks have breaks kind of built in, right? There are chapters and they're longer, they're not meant to be consumed in a single sitting. So as long as platforms don't overdo it, audiobooks can definitely be an effective vehicle for advertising. And the thriving AVOD and SVOD markets have shown that consumers will find the subscription option that fits their preference there.

Marcus Johnson:

Max, audiobooks won't be the next frontier for advertising. Make the case.

Max Willens:

I think for it to be a frontier, there has to be a critical mass of advertiser interest. And the reality is that that audiobooks are a tiny market. And for all the kind of rosy statistics about their recent growth as a medium, they remain small relative to print publishing overall. And obviously ad loads in emerging media grow over time, but if you're talking about eight ads over a 24-hour period of listening, that's about eight ads, that's like an added day basically for someone who's spending a really meaningful amount of time listening to their audiobook every day. And I just don't think that juice is going to be worth the squeeze. Spotify might try to make it a thing, just sort of create more inventory that they can pipe their ads into, but to me it's not going to become any great shakes or anything really meaningful within that market.

Marcus Johnson:

So I was wondering whether to put this story in, because my thought was, well, audiobooks, is that a big enough medium or media channel for us to really talk about? So I looked at some PEW research numbers. The share of Americans who have listened to an audiobook, this is in the past year though, so we're not talking any high frequency here, because I've accidentally listened to one that someone else in the room was listening to, or maybe you tried it and then stopped for the next 11 months. But from 2015 to 2021 is the time period. So over those six years, the share of Americans who had listened to an audiobook in the past year went from 12 to 23%. For young folks, college graduates and the slightly wealthier, over 30% had listened. But, Max, to your point, it still seems like a small market regardless of these numbers is once a

year. It still seems like a small market. Do you guys listen to audiobooks? Can you see it becoming a thing?

Evelyn Mitchell:

I sure do.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

I do not.

Marcus Johnson:

Oh, yeah?

Evelyn Mitchell:

And pro-tip, if you want to listen to an audiobook, there we go for free, there's a good chance that your local library can hook you up with that.

Max Willens:

Yeah. Highly recommend checking out audiobooks in the library. I don't do it. My wife is an avid audiobook listener. I'm too scatterbrained, and if I have audio on, I'm just too tempted to either look at my phone or start fiddling with something and then all of a sudden I go, "Wait, what did that guy just do in that book?" And this is just because I have ADD that's untreated and unchecked, but I can't listen to audiobooks.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah.

Evelyn Mitchell:

All right. I find them extremely helpful to occupy that part of my brain, that distractable part of my brain. I cross stitch and craft pretty avidly, and so that's exactly the kind of thing that's helpful when I can't... I can't watch TV because I have to pay attention where I'm stabbing a needle. But it's kind of like a movie in your brain. I appreciate it.

Marcus Johnson:

Movie in your brain. There's a slogan. Spotify, don't steal that. Okay, that's Evelyn's. Very good, folks. Excellent job, this week's debates of the week.

We move now, of course, to dinner party data.

It's the part of the show where we talk about the most interesting thing that we've learned this week. We start with Evelyn because she came up with Movie in Your Brain, which is brilliant. What do you go, Evelyn?

Evelyn Mitchell:

On this day, in 1912, the Titanic set out across the Atlantic for the first and last time. So tomorrow is the 111th anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic. And I have some Titanic facts for you.

Marcus Johnson:

Nice.

Evelyn Mitchell:

The ship was 882 feet 9 inches long. For comparison, the average cruise ship today is 1000 feet long.

Marcus Johnson:

Wow. It was only just, it was 85% roughly of a regular cruise ship size?

Evelyn Mitchell:

Which was utterly massive for those days.

Marcus Johnson:

Wow. That's stunning. We can make aircraft carriers, but cruise ships are the same size.

Evelyn Mitchell:

It's probably significantly safer now building them though than it was back then. The Titanic burned 825 tons of coal per day. Its passengers and crew of 2,223 people consumed 14,000 gallons of drinking water per day. There were 40,000 fresh eggs in the ship's provisions and 1,000 bottles of wine taken aboard. The ship took 160 minutes to sink after hitting the

iceberg. Only 31.6% of the people aboard the ship survived. And even if all 20 lifeboats were filled to capacity, which they were not, almost half the passengers and crew would've died. So an estimated 1,517 lives were lost in this tragic event, which still fascinates many, including myself, today.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah. Wow. They are some, yeah, shocking, amazing, and rather sobering facts. I mean, two hours for it to sink. That's a long time. That's a really, really long time. And I didn't realize that 30% of people, you said just over 30% of people had survived. Wow. Phenomenal. Stephanie, you're up.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

Sure. So earlier this week, it was National Barber Shop Quartet Day. So I thought I-

Marcus Johnson:

No.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

Yes.

Marcus Johnson:

You're going to perform?

Stephanie Taglianetti:

No.

Marcus Johnson:

"So I brought my friends."

Stephanie Taglianetti:

The three-piece of my quartet of friends specifically for this occasion. No, but I am, yes, I am competing this weekend, but I'm going to hit you with some barbershop factoids. The reason why it's National Barbershop Quartet Day is because the first meeting of the Barbershop Harmony Society occurred 85 years ago today on April 11th, 1938, at the Roof Garden of the

Tulsa Club in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The first ever quartet contest was held June 1939, and then that expanded to choruses for a contest in 1953. Today, there are approximately 20,000 members and associates who are active with the Barbershop Harmony Society, though the total population of barbershop singers in various societies is expected to be more than 70,000 singers worldwide. There are approximately 1,200 quartets registered with the Barbershop Harmony Society. I am one of those. And about a thousand more are active but not officially registered. And then finally, what makes Barbershop, Barbershop is what's called a dominant seventh chord. Songs must contain dominant seventh chords anywhere from 40 to 60% of the time to be considered a barbershop tune.

Marcus Johnson:

Huh.

Evelyn Mitchell:

That's cool.

Marcus Johnson:

So for context, so Stephanie sings in one of these, which she kind of hinted at throughout this, and you, Stephanie, can we say what yours is called?

Stephanie Taglianetti:

My quartet is called Smoke Ring. And then I sing with the choruses Gotham and Sirens of Gotham.

Marcus Johnson:

And we've posted on our Instagram page before, right?

Stephanie Taglianetti:

Yes. You posted me singing with Gotham, who I am also competing with on Saturday, competing with my quartet Smoke Ring on Friday.

Marcus Johnson:

Podcast underscore, what is it? What's the behind the numbers? Something?

Victoria:

Behindthenumbers_podcast.

Marcus Johnson:

Thanks, Vee. That's where you can head to see videos of Stephanie singing. Incredible. All right, Max. You're up, mate.

Max Willens:

All right. So I am gearing up and trying to prepare myself mentally and psychologically for the-

Marcus Johnson:

Beat by the Cavs?

Max Willens:

... playoffs. How dare you. But I was thinking a little bit about all the sort of basketball media that I consume has basically spent most of the last month vociferously debating who is going to be the MVP of the NBA this year. And I was struck by the fact that the three kind of leading likely vote-getters are from Cameroon, Serbia, and Greece. There's no American that's going to sniff third place at best this year. And it got me thinking about the sort of just global popularity of the NBA. And so I dug up some data or really attempted to dig up data. It was remarkably difficult to do this. I found some GWI data, which suggests that basketball is the second most popular sport in the world after soccer, based on some WOW survey data that they use, which found that 40% of the world's population is at least interested in basketball.

The reason that I take this with a grain of salt is that the GWI numbers don't include cricket, which seems like a big, big oversight. Cricket is sort of thought of as this kind of exotic random sport. But India and Pakistan essentially grind to a halt during the cricket tournaments that happen every couple of years. And when you also include Australia and England, and to a lesser extent, Canada, it quickly starts adding up. And so by some estimates, cricket is the world's second most popular sport. So I just thought I would leave you with that interesting bit of trivia that you can share with your bored spouse as you watch the NBA playoffs this weekend.

Marcus Johnson:

So I just looked up "share of NBA players who are international." This is from 2020 Statista saying 22% of NBA players were classed as international players, 22%. And the nba.com says there are 120, I think there are about 450 to maybe 500 NBA players. So this seems about right in terms of it being about 20%, but 120 international players from 40 countries and six continents.

Max Willens:

It's really remarkable. I remember there was a conversation among a bunch of NBA heads here at Insider Intelligence on Slack, and we were having this argument about if you took the best international players in the NBA and made a team and you took the best remaining American players and made a team, which team would win? I think the US team would lose. And I don't think that's too extreme a position. I feel like if the NBA really wants to jazz up its all-star game, they're going to make it a US versus a world thing. And that I think would truly be must watch television if you're a basketball fan of any stripe. But they will probably never do that.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah, I couldn't agree with you more. I'm waiting for the day that they go US versus international because then they have something to play for. There's pride involved, especially given how the Olympics have played out the last however many years. And this feeling that international players are getting a lot better and kind of encroaching on a very US dominated game for so long. But that's such a good with, I mean, Embiid, Yiannis, Jokic, Luca, you can just imagine such a, I mean, it's a heck of a, they're also incredibly tall starting five if you were to play international. And then versus again, like LeBron, Cady, Steph, I mean, it's such a great game that's just staring them in the face. So I think it's a matter of time hopefully.

Evelyn Mitchell:

Me and Stephanie have been glazed over now for...

Marcus Johnson:

They get it.

Evelyn Mitchell:

Bring on the karaoke.

Marcus Johnson:

Karaoke facts. Let's go. Okay. So I spoke about this on the Daily quickly as a fact of the day, but found out there are so many other stats about karaoke that I thought I would share some for dinner party data. And it's unfortunately good timing because every year, the fourth week of April, America has National Karaoke Week.

Evelyn Mitchell:

Shut up.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

It's called the Barbershop Harmony Society Convention. It's happening. I'm just kidding.

Marcus Johnson:

And so where did it come from? This is what I said last time, but just to set the table, karaoke comes from the word and also the thinking from Japan. But the word comes from the Japanese language kara, which means empty, and okie, which means short for orchestra, so empty orchestra. First karaoke machine was invented in 1971 by Daisuke Inoue, a Japanese musician looking for a way to let people sing along with pre-recorded music, but he never patented the machine. The first patented karaoke machine was invented by a Filipino, Robert Dell Rosario, four years later in 1975. Five other karaoke facts for you. One, the most requested karaoke song of all time is...

Evelyn Mitchell:

Oh, oh, we're supposed to guess.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

Number one karaoke song of all time?

Evelyn Mitchell:

Piano man.

Marcus Johnson:

Nope. That's pretty good.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

Benny And the Jets.

Marcus Johnson:

Nope. One more guess.

Max Willens:

She loves you?

Marcus Johnson:

Nope. Billy Jean, Michael.

Evelyn Mitchell:

I probably would've gotten there eventually.

Marcus Johnson:

Dancing Queen by Abba and Sweet Caroline by Neil Diamonds.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

None of those are in my karaoke duck.

Marcus Johnson:

In your repertoire? What were you going to?

Stephanie Taglianetti:

I have a whole sheet on my iPhone.

Marcus Johnson:

Oh

Evelyn Mitchell:

Oh, I have a playlist on Spotify called "karaoke."

Stephanie Taglianetti:

Just in case I ever find myself in a situation, I have a go-to list.

Marcus Johnson:

You have list, prepared material.

Evelyn Mitchell:

Stephanie, you and I are on the same page.

Marcus Johnson:

Max, don't do it to me.

Max Willens:

No.

Marcus Johnson:

So Stephanie's like, "I don't know what I would sing," breaks out her little music book, thumbs through a few pages.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

That's precisely right.

Max Willens:

I instead have a bunch of skeleton keys that I would use to break out of the locked karaoke room that I would be in.

Marcus Johnson:

I would borrow one of those.

Max Willens:

Not a big fan of karaoke myself.

Marcus Johnson:

It's awful. Yes, Max. I knew you'd come through.

Second fact, according to the Guinness World Book of Records, the record holder for the longest karaoke marathon by an individual is held by Leonardo Polvarelli lasting just over four days. He sang nearly 1,300 songs in September of 2011. That is mortifying.

Third fact, the world karaoke-

Max Willens:

What day did his friends leave quietly?

Marcus Johnson:

After the first hour. Once they found the skeleton key. The World Karaoke Championships began in 2003 in Finland, I did not that these existed, with seven countries taking part. It now features over 30. Rather embarrassingly America, you currently hold the top place for most gold medals in karaoke. What are we doing?

Fourth fact, the Philippines has the most, I think the UK has the, I think we're in second, which is tragic. Philippines has the most at home karaoke boxes in the world.

And final fact, Japan who have the most machines at nearly one karaoke machine for every 1,000 people. It's a country of about 120, 125 million folks. They also have the most advanced machines that can measure everything from how well you perform your songs to the number of calories you burn while you are singing.

I hate karaoke so much. I hate it more after reading all these things out, Victoria, Victoria's furious right now because I know she loves it.

Victoria:

I do.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

Oh yeah, I do too.

Victoria:

I'm not good at it. But I love it.

Marcus Johnson:

Do you have a booklet too?

Victoria:

No, I have a shortlist.

Marcus Johnson:

You have a shortlist you go to? Okay.

Victoria:

I have a short list of the classic hits that I like to turn to.

Marcus Johnson:

Prepared. I like it. That's what I got time for this episode. Thank you so much to my guests.

Thank you, Stephanie.

Stephanie Taglianetti:

Thank you, Marcus.

Marcus Johnson:

Thank you to Max.

Max Willens:

Always a pleasure, Marcus.

Marcus Johnson:

And thank you to Evelyn.

Evelyn Mitchell:

Long Live karaoke.

Marcus Johnson:

Oh no. Cut that out. Thank you to Victoria who edits the show. James, who copyedits it. And Stuart, who runs the team. Stuart, look to that four-day work week, would you? Thanks to everyone listening head to behindthenumbers_podcast for outtakes, interesting charts, or to

send us a message and say hi, or to watch Stephanie performing in Her Barbershop Quartet. We'll see you guys on Monday for the Behind the Numbers Daily.

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