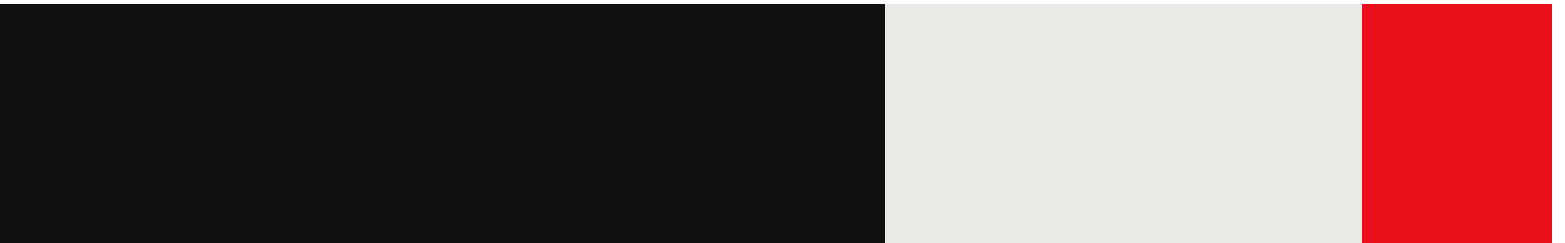


The Weekly Listen: Google decides to keep cookies, a Spotify for movies, and more

Audio



On today's podcast episode, we discuss what to make of Google deciding to keep cookies, whether a Spotify for movies service could work, if people will want to have a conversation

with their newspaper, if Disney can be as addictive as Netflix, why there are more Olympic teams than countries, and more. Tune in to the discussion with host Marcus Johnson, our analysts Ross Benes and Blake Droesch, and vice president of content Paul Verna.

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Episode Transcript:

Marcus Johnson (00:00):

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(00:18):

Hello, everyone, and thanks for hanging out with us for the Behind the Numbers Weekly Listen, an eMarketer podcast. This is the Friday show that will never let Bill Fisher host again. Okay, Bill filled in last week. The numbers looked very good. Coincidence? Yes. Don't think otherwise.

(00:41):

I'm your host, Marcus Johnson. Probably not for very much longer, let's be honest, especially if I start twirling my mic like Paul suggested I do. This is the show that's trying to be more rock and roll. We should stay in our lane. That's my thought.

(00:57):

In today's show, Google decides to keep cookies. What if there was a Spotify, but for movies? Do you want to have a conversation with your newspaper? Can Disney be as addictive as Netflix? And how are there more Olympic teams than there are countries in the world? Joining me for this episode, we have three people. Let's meet them immediately. We start with our senior analyst who covers everything retail and e-commerce. He's based in New York, the city. It's, of course, Blake Droesch.

Blake Droesch (01:31):

Hello, everyone.

Marcus Johnson (01:32):

The other two gents that we have on today's episode, we have our vice president of content. He covers everything advertising, media, and technology. He is Paul Verna.

Paul Verna (01:42):

Great to be here. And by the way, we have our own Olympic team here in Westchester County. Right, Ross?

Marcus Johnson (01:46):

What?

Ross Benes (01:47):

Oh, yeah.

Marcus Johnson (01:48):

Just the two of you?

Paul Verna (01:50):

Yeah, pretty much.

Marcus Johnson (01:51):

Sounds competitive. What events? What event would you do, Paul?

Ross Benes (01:56):

They'll make a movie like Cool Runnings about it one day.

Paul Verna (01:59):

Yes. Yeah. For now, I think, Marcus, you're asking too many questions. Bill Fisher would never do that.

Marcus Johnson (02:04):

Yeah, that's true. He was a better host, but this is who you got now, so deal with it. Ross Benes-

Paul Verna (02:10):

People love you, Marcus.

Marcus Johnson (02:11):

The other half of the Upstate New York, barely just above New York City Olympic team. He is one of our senior analysts, covering everything digital advertising and media. Ross Benes.

Ross Benes (02:24):

Hey, Marcus.

Marcus Johnson (02:25):

Hey, fella. What do we have in store for you? The story of the week is where we always begin. It's where we'll begin this week. We then move to a debate this week for you instead of a game, and we end with Dinner Party Data. But we start, of course, with the story of the week.

(02:44):

Google has decided to keep cookies. That's right. Google U-turns over its long-running plan to ditch Cookies, writes Chris Vallance of the BBC. He explains that in a surprise move early this week, Google has abandoned a plan that it first announced four years ago to block third-party cookies from its Chrome internet browser. Google will instead pursue a new approach to give users what it calls an informed choice that applies across their web browsing, and is discussing next steps with regulators. Mr. Vallance points out that this suggests Google is not abandoning its alternative approach to advertising, but will allow a third-party cookie-based system to operate in parallel to its other efforts, its Privacy Sandbox solutions.

(03:41):

Paul, I'll start with you. Your initial reaction to this very significant news that Google is going back on what it said it was going to do with cookies.

Paul Verna (03:51):

Well, my initial reaction was I was not surprised. This has been a running joke with Google that they have delayed this timeline already three times, and it just didn't seem like they were really going to get there, at least the way they initially had planned. What's interesting, though, is that what they end up with, at least according to the scant details we have right now, is a scenario not unlike what Apple did with App Tracking Transparency, which was already, what, three, four years ago. Apple did it literally from one day to the next, and Google is now basically stretching this out over several years. But I think they're going to end up in a place

where people are going to have a chance to opt out of tracking and basically adopt a more privacy-focused approach to what they see and how they're served ads.

Marcus Johnson (04:47):

Mm-hmm.

Paul Verna (04:48):

And it's not as much a kind of pulling out the rug from under this effort as a recognition that there will be a place for cookies. It's definitely going to be a diminished place, and a lot of the work that advertisers and ad sellers and ad tech companies have done to prepare for a cookie-free future will not go to waste because those alternatives are still in place. So in a sense, it's a logical scenario, but it's been tortuous and torturous to get there.

Marcus Johnson (05:24):

Mm-hmm. Yeah. Katie Eyton, who's the chief ethics and compliance officer, Omnicom Media Group UK, was saying how Google presents this choice to Chrome users could be a big focus for regulators. And Paul, you were mentioning something that Richard Lawler of the Verge had said. It might work like Apple's app tracking opt-in that reportedly cost social media platforms nearly \$10 billion when it was rolled out in 2021. He was saying, quote, "Putting a prompt in front of Chrome's billions of users wouldn't be as drastic as changing the default entirely, but it still might cut the number of users allowing third-party tracking significantly." Ross, what was your initial reaction? Where do you land on this pretty big change?

Ross Benes (06:12):

It reminded me a lot of Kathy Hochul's decision to cut congestion pricing at the very last second. You had years and millions of dollars and lots of consternation spent on this decision of Google's to eliminate third-party cookies. And then when the timeline comes up, they just say, "No, we're not going to do it anyways." So I just thought about all the people that got sucked into this. Content marketers writing thousands of posts about what the end of this era means, and then it didn't even end up happening. It just feels like Google can do whatever it wants, and it wants to appease advertisers because that's who pays its bills. The ad industry lobbyist groups were all for delaying this or eliminating the reduction of third-party cookies, and they eventually got their way.

Marcus Johnson (07:00):

It's going to be interesting to see how consumers react to this. Obviously, to see how the industry reacts to this, there's been some initial reaction. But going back to how this could be presented to folks, the quote from Google where they say that they want to make this an informed choice that applies across users' web browsing, there was some data in terms of how likely folks are to say, "Yeah, I'll opt in to sharing my data." Most consumers don't choose to share their data when prompted. There was a mobile app trends report showing iOS apps across categories worldwide. Their opt-in rate was about 29%. That was Q1 2023. So curious to see what kind of expectations folks have in terms of... I guess we have to wait to see what Google's going to do exactly before we can speculate on how many folks decide that cookies are for them. But Blake, I mean, what came to mind for you when you caught this headline?

Blake Droesch (08:02):

Yeah, I mean it does seem like it has the potential to be a worst-case scenario for advertisers because on one hand, Google is going to introduce some sort of opt-out which is going to diminish the value of third-party cookies, but at the same time, acknowledging and doing so and keeping them around that they don't have a viable alternative. So I think there's still a lot to be seen, but it's basically almost solidifying this state of purgatory that the industry has been in and saying that this is going to be the new normal. And I think that leaves a lot of uncertainty for the industry and that this four years of wait and see is going to almost continue indefinitely because now there is no timeline from Google basically showing when the new rollout is going to happen anyways. So I think it's just more uncertainty with the prospect of it being pretty messy permanently.

Marcus Johnson (09:14):

Yeah.

Paul Verna (09:15):

And of course, this benefits any platform that has ample first-party data, meaning obviously Google, Amazon. So it definitely is a sort of the rich get richer scenario, and it is going to have downstream effects. But at the same time, I think the industry has already taken so many steps to implement cookie-free solutions that that's just going to continue, especially in light of consumers having that choice and exercising that choice. So in some ways I think yes, it will impact advertisers, but maybe in a less immediate and less shocking way than when Apple did what it did a few years ago, which was very sudden and nobody had any preparation for that.

Marcus Johnson (10:07):

Mm-hmm. It does seem as though most... I mean, uncertainty is a great word, Blake, because I also wonder how this affects other announcements when big tech says, "We're going to be doing this." At this point, how much people trust them now given this debacle? But uncertainty in the sense that most people thought this was happening.

(10:31):

There was some data from ID5. 67% of marketing folks expected cookies to be deprecated this year. The rest of it will happen. Just not this year.

(10:42):

But that said, most weren't prepared. There was some Econsultancy research from last September. 29% said, "My organization has a robust measurement system in place for post third-party cookie world." So I'm sure a lot of folks breathing a sigh of relief because even though we've known this was coming, had expected for a long time, a lot of people weren't prepared for it.

Ross Benes (11:04):

Well, Google gave them four years. They went through preparation plans A through G.

Marcus Johnson (11:10):

Right, right.

Paul Verna (11:11):

That's only G. There's still a lot more scenarios to plan out.

Marcus Johnson (11:16):

I thought Jason Aten from Inc had an interesting quote. He was saying, "The entire reason for blocking cookies is that they're not great for privacy. It's why other browsers from companies that aren't primarily online advertising platforms already blocked them. It's why Google says it was investing so much time and effort to block them in Chrome. It just turns out that for Google, making the internet respect your privacy was too much of an inconvenience." Which I'm sure a lot of people are looking at the story and thinking a similar thing. Anyway, that's all

we've got time for, for the story of the week. We move to the debate of the week for our middle segment. Today's segment, Make the Case.

(11:55):

This is where our panel, Paul, Ross, and Blake, will present the for and against arguments for each of the following questions. Based on three news stories, it's two contestants facing off per question. The following takes don't necessarily reflect the analyst's personal views. Their job is to be lawyers and present the best case regardless, offering objective analysis.

(12:18):

Question one. We are talking about Spotify, but for Hollywood. Spotify, but for movies. James B. Stewart and Benjamin Mullin of the New York Times recently wrote a piece titled The Future of Streaming According to the Moguls Figuring It Out. In the article, there was an interesting concept. The authors write, quote, "Jason Kilar, the founding Hulu chief executive and former chief executive of WarnerMedia, has called for an even more radical approach than bundling: a new company that would license movies and TV shows from the major studios and pay back close to 70% of the revenue to those studios." So think Spotify, but for movies. You go to Spotify or a service similar to Spotify, you click on a movie, and you play it. And most of that revenue goes to the person who made the movie or the TV show, but everything would be in one place, is the point.

(13:14):

So could a Spotify for movies work is the question. Ross is going to argue that it can. A Spotify for movies could work. 60 seconds on the clock. Ross, make the case.

Ross Benes **(13:25):**

Well, there's been a lot of consternation over the past few years about how streaming services pay their talent. We saw that with the Hollywood strikes that happened last year, so this would be a different path for them to follow. There's a lot of obstacles, clearly, in getting all these rights sorted out, but this might be better for creators than the current model which has undervalued the content creators so much and left them out of work. So this may be an alternative way for paying talent what it is due, and you might as well try it because everything else they've tried hasn't worked that great.

Marcus Johnson **(14:00):**

Very good. Paul is going to argue a Spotify for movies couldn't work. Paul, make the case.

Paul Verna (14:06):

Yeah, the reason I don't think this could work is because it wouldn't be possible to get the studios to agree on anything. So forming a company, it sounds very kumbaya. The reason it worked in the music industry is because the record labels were operating on an even playing field. They were basically all getting hurt by streaming and people ripping off music, so they banded together and they invested in Spotify. It made sense.

(14:35):

In the video and streaming world, you have players that are coming at it from totally different places in terms of their business models, their agendas. So what might work for, say, a legacy media company like an NBCUniversal is not going to work for Amazon, is not going to work for Netflix. So I just don't think that getting everybody together in some sort of uniform licensing arrangement is realistic.

Marcus Johnson (15:02):

Mm-hmm. Very nice, gents. Let's move to question two. We're talking about having a conversation with your newspaper.

(15:09):

The Washington Post recently launched a new AI-driven chatbot on its site that answers user queries about climate with answers pulled from Washington Post articles, writes Sara Fischer of Axios. The paper plans to expand the chatbot to include other topics. Miss Fischer goes on to explain that the chatbot, called Climate Answers, was developed by the Post's product and engineering teams alongside its editorial team covering climate. The Post is working with several AI firms, including OpenAI and Meta's Llama, to power its own large language model that surfaces answers to climate questions based on multiple articles across the Post's coverage on climate. If the chatbot doesn't have an answer then it will say, "I'm not sure."

(15:57):

But Blake is going up against Ross. The question, though, is will folks want to have a conversation with their newspapers? Blake, God bless him, is going to try and argue that people will want to have a conversation with their newspaper. Make the case, my friend.

Blake Droesch (16:10):

It actually is an interesting concept. I don't know if I would've thought of it this way had I not been given this task. So thank you, Marcus, but-

Marcus Johnson (16:20):

You're welcome.

Blake Droesch (16:22):

There is a lot of concern when it comes to generative AI in terms of the sourcing of information, right? I mean, if you're having these machine learning programs that are getting information and aggregating it and coming up with a unique answer from sources that come from all over the internet, then in many cases it can either be difficult to look up the source material or even if the source material is provided, then folks might not take the time to actually look and see if this is coming from a credible source. So to have a machine learning program and then a generative AI product that does come from a closed circuit of sources, in this event being just one newspaper, I think it could actually yield some interesting results. If it is expansive enough, I think that's what will be determined with this product. I'm not sure if the Washington Post can answer every single question that exists about climate change based on just the articles that they've published as one outlet, but I do think it really is an interesting experiment.

Marcus Johnson (17:39):

Yeah, that's a great take, my friend. Ross, you're arguing people won't want to have a conversation with their newspaper. Make the case.

Ross Benes (17:47):

Well, people don't even want to read the newspaper, so why would they want to talk to the newspaper? It-

Marcus Johnson (17:52):

All right, moving on. Well played. That's pretty straightforward. Do you have more? You don't need more, but do you have more?

Ross Benes (17:58):

Well, it just... That might be cool for a very small set of people, but most readers, I think it'd be more of a punishment than a feature if you're like, "You're going to talk to the newspaper." I'm going to talk to Aaron Sorkin about his silly New York Times op-ed. I don't want to do that. Maybe if you pay me, but I don't want to do that.

Marcus Johnson (18:21):

Mm-hmm. I thought it was interesting, though, Miss Fischer of Axios pointing out that unlike some of its peers, the Washington Post yet to strike a deal to license its content to an AI firm. Same as the New York Times. So maybe they are going this route because the way that they want folks to engage with-

Ross Benes (18:38):

Well, and the Post has often been pretty active in building its own publisher tech. I mean, they used to license their CMS and other publisher tools pretty widely to other companies, so not surprised they're trying to build this rather than just partner with some AI vendor.

Marcus Johnson (18:56):

Mm-hmm. And owned by Jeff Bezos. And so yeah, it makes sense. He's probably closer to AI than a lot of other publishing owners, and so maybe that's one reason they haven't jumped into a deal with AI companies as fast as some of these other huge publishers seems to have. Good arguments there, gents. Very well played. Let's move to our final question.

(19:22):

Question three, can Disney be as addictive as Netflix? Robbie Whelan and Jessica Toonkel of the Wall Street Journal write that Disney is making changes aimed at getting streaming customers to spend more time glued to the screen. New features that could roll out this year include, number one, a more personalized algorithm to power content recommendations; number two, customized promotional art for new programs based on subscribers' tastes and usage history; and three, emails sent to remind folks to keep watching a show if they're in the middle of a series or an episode. The article notes that Disney is also developing pop-up live channels for folks who don't have time or the energy to scroll through viewing options. Think a Marvel Cinematic Universe channel or a channel for the Simpsons that just plays all the episodes from start to finish that they say could be sponsored or maybe have ads.

(20:24):

Now the question is, can Disney be as addictive as Netflix? Blake is arguing that it can. 60 seconds. Make the case.

Blake Droesch (20:33):

Yeah, I think definitely not just because a lot of those concepts I think are good and actually could help move the needle on increasing time spent on the platform, but I think Disney also has the content library to back it up, and that's really the most important thing here. It's harder to get people to consume more content if your content offering is very limited, but Disney definitely does not suffer from that problem. And I think that particularly creating ways in which to mimic the casual TV channel flipping behavior on streaming is something that hasn't really been done yet for on-demand, so I think it's a really interesting concept, and it will be fascinating to see which one of these initiatives actually can move the needle for Disney in terms of creating more stickiness on the platform.

Marcus Johnson (21:35):

Yeah. They are, really quickly, Paul, before you go, they're not too far away from time people spend watching. I should say the Disney portfolio, because Nielsen Gauge June numbers that measures TV viewing, they have Americans spending a little over 8% of all of their TV time watching Netflix versus 5% for Hulu and Disney+. There's no data on ESPN+, but tack on a little bit for that. So that's 5% for the Disney bundle, just over, and about 8% for the Netflix stuff people watch in terms of people's overall TV time. So we're not miles and miles behind. But Paul, you're arguing Disney can't be as addictive as Netflix.

Paul Verna (22:22):

I think some of the aspects of the Disney empire that seem like advantages in this case could work against them. So the fact that they come from a legacy media background means that they have contractual obligations still in that cable TV universe, where you don't have as much control over seasonality of programming as Netflix does. The other thing that I think gets in Disney's way is that its streaming portfolio is also three very separate brands. Even though they're trying to unify them into one app, those companies still have their own identities. They probably have different licensing mechanisms, so it's not just all uniform because it's under the Disney umbrella. So I think Disney's going to have a harder time doing what Netflix has done best, which is plan its programming slate strictly according to how it thinks people are going to flow through the year without churning out of the service. So while Disney can do more to

increase stickiness, and they will do more, I think those aspects that I mentioned are going to prevent them from taking this to its full potential.

Marcus Johnson (23:33):

Mm-hmm. Also at Disney+, they only just added the Hulu tile in the last few months. And there was some internal research that found among viewers who primarily use their subscriptions to watch Disney+ content rather than Hulu or ESPN+, they're watching far more Hulu content within the Disney+ app since the tile was added. So adding more Hulu recommendations to the main banner within the Disney+ app could also help Disney become as addictive as Netflix. But we'll see. Great arguments, gents. That's where we'll leave the debate of the week. We move now to our final segment of the episode. It's, of course, Dinner Party Data.

(24:22):

This is the part of the show where we tell you about the most interesting thing we've learned this week. Ross shockingly hasn't done the homework again, so I'm going to let him go last so he can try to find something as is become customary. Blake, you're up.

Blake Droesch (24:38):

Yes, I've always got data.

Marcus Johnson (24:41):

You do.

Blake Droesch (24:41):

I've got it for days. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner. So the opening ceremony for the Paris games are today, so I found some data from CivicScience asking US respondents if they were going to be following particular athletes or events during the games. 75% of respondents said that they'd be following specific events while 25% said that they were going to be following specific athletes. Among athletes, Simone Biles, the gymnastics extraordinaire, is the most popular US athlete. She's got 63% of the general population who plans to follow her at the Paris Olympics. Only 29% of the population plans to follow LeBron James on the US basketball team. But-

Marcus Johnson (25:46):

Jordan fans. Of course.

Blake Droesch (25:53):

It's got to be. But he apparently... I guess in the practice round, they were about to lose to Germany and LeBron just carried the team. Comeback came the rest of the way. So maybe-

Marcus Johnson (26:06):

I was at that game. Yes, he did.

Blake Droesch (26:08):

You were at the game?

Marcus Johnson (26:09):

Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Blake Droesch (26:10):

Where was the game?

Marcus Johnson (26:11):

Monday in London.

Blake Droesch (26:12):

Oh, really?

Marcus Johnson (26:12):

Yeah, they're doing the practice games a bunch of different places, but yeah, that game is in London.

Blake Droesch (26:16):

Oh. Doesn't count. Doesn't count then. Sorry.

Marcus Johnson (26:17):

What do you mean it doesn't count?

Blake Droesch (26:18):

No, it doesn't count.

Marcus Johnson (26:20):

It's still official. I think it's official.

Blake Droesch (26:21):

No, no. Not even an official practice.

Marcus Johnson (26:23):

Okay, fair enough.

Blake Droesch (26:24):

No, no. Sorry. Anyway, sorry about that.

Ross Benes (26:24):

Are we talking about practice?

Blake Droesch (26:27):

We can move on.

Marcus Johnson (26:28):

We're talking about practice? Allen Iverson references. Come on. We're going way back. Very good. Was there anything else in there in that study [inaudible 00:26:36]?

Blake Droesch (26:35):

No, not really. Nothing interesting.

Marcus Johnson (26:37):

Okay. All right. Fair enough.

Paul Verna (26:37):

One thing though. Props to our own Sophie Rogers, our social media maven who is on site in person at the Paris Olympics.

Ross Benes (26:46):

Oh, nice.

Marcus Johnson (26:47):

Unbelievable. Why wasn't I sent? Let's do an episode. If we do an episode on it, Stuart, can I go? [inaudible 00:26:53].

Stuart (26:53):

Do you want me to answer?

Marcus Johnson (26:53):

That felt like a soft no.

Stuart (26:58):

Do you want me to answer this?

Marcus Johnson (27:00):

Maybe not live. We'll talk about it later.

Ross Benes (27:01):

That was like the opposite of when Hulk Hogan puts his ear out and the crowd roars. Marcus does it, and there's dead silence.

Marcus Johnson (27:09):

Yep. Tumbleweed. Okay, good.

Ross Benes (27:11):

Lance, cue up the crickets, please. Thank you.

Marcus Johnson (27:15):

Lance, please don't do that to me. Paul, you're up.

Paul Verna (27:20):

Yes. So I took the Dinner Party Data thing very literally, and I have some data about dinner parties.

Marcus Johnson (27:27):

Oh, well played. We've never had that before-

Paul Verna (27:30):

searches-

Marcus Johnson (27:31):

... in the five, six years we've been doing this. Well played, sir.

Blake Droesch (27:33):

Searches for dinner parties on Evite increased 148% from this time last year, according to Evite per Axios, and searches for wedding dinner party datas on Pinterest increased 150% in the space of a year. So what is going on? Because millennials and Gen Zers are especially leaning into their hosting era, and a lot of this comes down to sharing on TikTok and Instagram where, according to Axios and I'm quoting now, "where visually-appealing content around hosting is highly valued and widely shared." But really, it's us. You, Marcus, specifically. Not even Bill Fisher.

Marcus Johnson (28:18):

Forget him. I shouldn't be this mad Thank you, Bill, for filling in so I could have a day off.

Blake Droesch (28:23):

Bill actually had a really fantastic dinner party. He invited all of us to it. We all had a great time.

Marcus Johnson (28:29):

What?

Blake Droesch (28:30):

Yeah. Sorry, Marcus. I know he asked me not to [inaudible 00:28:34].

Marcus Johnson (28:33):

I'm around the corner from him.

Blake Droesch (28:34):

You're the only one who wasn't invited. It was a good time though.

Marcus Johnson (28:38):

Great. Thanks.

Paul Verna (28:39):

And he's actually-

Marcus Johnson (28:39):

I know that's not true.

Paul Verna (28:41):

He's throwing a huge dinner party in Paris, I hear, at the Olympics.

Marcus Johnson (28:45):

This guy. He's the worst. Don't let him bring any data, because I heard his data from last episode. It was very morbid, and he will not be allowed to participate ever again. He's banned. Ross, you're up.

Ross Benes (28:57):

Oh, sure. So this information comes from graceland.com. And apparently, Elvis Presley-

Marcus Johnson (29:04):

Here we go.

Ross Benes (29:04):

... in 1957 bought Graceland Mansion, a 17,000-square-foot mansion for only \$102,000.

Marcus Johnson (29:13):

Get out of town.

Ross Benes (29:15):

And now it'd be worth, I can't find an estimate, but it'd be worth on the tens of millions for sure.

Marcus Johnson (29:20):

What do you mean you can't find... You just made that number up, then, is what you're saying.

Ross Benes (29:23):

I didn't make up the hundred thousand. That was the purchase price.

Marcus Johnson (29:25):

No, the tens of millions.

Ross Benes (29:26):

I'm saying a house 17,000 square feet in that area, it would be at least 10 million, but it might be a hundred million.

Marcus Johnson (29:26):

You don't want-

Paul Verna (29:26):

Yeah, probably more.

Marcus Johnson (29:36):

... Ross to be your real estate agent or [inaudible 00:29:38].

Ross Benes (29:38):

I give you a wide range of prices.

Paul Verna (29:41):

I'll tell you this though. A-

Marcus Johnson (29:41):

How much is this one? Tens of tens of tens of millions of dollars.

Paul Verna (29:44):

\$102,000 is probably Graceland's utility bill at this point.

Ross Benes (29:46):

Yeah.

Marcus Johnson (29:49):

Yeah. All right, Ross. Well played. I've got one for you real quick. The world has 193 countries, so why are there 205 teams in the Olympics? This is an article written by Amanda Shendruk of Quartz. She explains that in order to send delegates to the Olympic Games, a country must have a National Olympic Committee that is recognized by the International Olympics Committee, the IOC. There are 206 of these, she says, but how are there 205 teams? Amanda, what are we doing?

(30:26):

Anyway, this means that there are 13 more teams than there are countries officially recognized by the United Nations. In 1911, the founder of the modern Olympics, Pierre de Coubertin, I'm not pronouncing that right, but that's how it looks, explained that a team need not be from an independent state, saying there is an athletic geography that may differ at times from a political geography. For much of the 20th century, teams could come from both countries and regions as well. In 1996, the IOC changed its rules deciding to only approve internationally-recognized states moving forward.

(31:07):

Of the 13 teams that are not UN-recognized countries, four our geopolitically-fraught areas, places like Hong Kong, Palestine, Kosovo, and Taiwan. The other nine of the teams are island regions that sought recognition from the IOC prior to 1996. They're all territories of or linked to nations recognized by the UN, but still participate separately at the Olympics. American Samoa, Aruba, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Cook Islands, Guam, Puerto Rico, British Virgin Islands, and the US Virgin Islands.

Paul Verna (31:39):

On the flip side of this, though, England, Scotland, and Wales have their own football and rugby teams, but in the Olympics they compete as Great Britain, correct?

Marcus Johnson (31:51):

Yes. Yeah, I don't know why. We share a team when we're doing the Olympics, but we can't stand each other the rest of the time, pretty much, which includes when we play soccer. [inaudible 00:32:04].

Ross Benes (32:04):

I heard you guys really screwed up in that last big soccer tournament.

Marcus Johnson (32:13):

Maybe if we banded together as soccer team GB, we would win something.

Ross Benes (32:17):

I'm not so sure you would.

Marcus Johnson (32:18):

Probably still now. Anyway, that's all we've got time for, for today's episode. Thanks for reminding me of it, Blake. Appreciate that. Thank you to all of my guests except for Blake. Thank you to Paul.

Paul Verna (32:19):

It's always a pleasure.

Marcus Johnson (32:26):

Not really. No. You keep reminding me that Argentina's won everything else, basically everything that they can participate in. Not thank you to Paul. I'm still mad at Blake. But Ross, thanks for being here.

Ross Benes (32:37):

Hey, anytime, Marcus.

Marcus Johnson (32:38):

Thank you, sir. Thank you to Victoria, who edits the show. Thank you to Stuart if he sends me to Paris. Otherwise, no thank you. Sophie, who does our social media. Actually, no thanks. She's there already. Forget her. Lance, thank you to you unless you put crickets under my voice when I made my really funny joke.

(32:55):

Thanks, everyone, for listening in. That's all. That's all we've got time for, for this episode. We hope to see you on Monday for Behind the Numbers Daily. That's an eMarketer podcast. Happiest of weekends except for those people I mentioned.