

**EPISODE 136**

[INTRODUCTION]

**[00:00:09] ANNOUNCER:** Welcome to this week's episode of Coffee with a Journalist brought to you by OnePitch. The guests on our show include some of the most notable journalists who write about topics ranging from technology to lifestyle and culture, health and science. We discuss the types of stories they cover, their thoughts on exclusives and embargoes, their favorite pitches, and how they connect to sources. Head to [onepitch.co](https://onepitch.co) and look for the video page to learn more about our new video series featuring journalists from the show.

Today on Coffee with a Journalist, we're joined by Mia Sato from The Verge. Mia is a reporter at The Verge covering digital platforms and the people who use them. During the episode, Mia talks about deceptive subject lines, pitches she receives from The Verge tip line, a recent scoop about Etsy sellers, and more. Let's hear from Mia now.

[INTERVIEW]

**[00:01:07] BB:** Welcome, everyone. This is Coffee with a Journalist. I'm Beck Bamberger, and we are chatting today with the fabulous Brooklyn-based Mia Sato, who is a reporter at The Verge, which we'll get all into, in case you're not familiar with The Verge. But I thank you for being here, Mia. Thank you for everyone listening, and we're just going to jump right into it, if it sounds good.

**[00:01:29] MS:** Sounds great.

**[00:01:30] BB:** I like it. First off, Mia, you were saying thank God, you don't need to be covering the Apple event and all this good stuff that had been happening. Tell us about just first The Verge overall, and then we'll get into your vertical specifically. So The Verge, for those who maybe are not as familiar, what does The Verge all cover? Quite a lot, so –

**[00:01:48] MS:** Oh, my gosh. Yeah, a lot of things. I guess most people would call us a tech publication. We also cover culture, entertainment, TV, movies, things like that, science. I cover tech platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, all the good stuff.

**[00:02:04] BB:** Etsy.

**[00:02:04] MS:** Or the bad stuff, Etsy. Yeah.

**[00:02:06] BB:** Or the bad stuff. Yeah. Yeah, exactly.

**[00:02:09] MS:** Yeah. We also do reviews. We have a really big reviews team that reviews gadgets and new releases like all the Apple stuff that is being announced today. We cover gaming. We cover a lot of things. There's a lot of – Really, it's a lot of people that I get to work with.

**[00:02:23] BB:** Yes. If you love tech, I mean, I don't know how you not read The Verge because it has literally everything on it. Again, it's the gaming. You even have a scooter section, by the way. Do you even know this? There's a scooter tab on the tech page. So if you're really into scooters, there is content for you. Amazing.

**[00:02:43] MS:** And cars.

**[00:02:45] BB:** And cars.

**[00:02:45] MS:** We have a whole transportation desk. Yeah. There's a lot of folks here.

**[00:02:47] BB:** All the things. You can even toggle too if you have a favorite tech brand like Samsung or Tesla or it has its own tab, Facebook. There you go. You can see it all, just amazing. I love it. And comics. Even comics are included on the entertainment section. So check it out.

Okay, Mia, you came from MIT Technology Review, which is a totally different publication, much more in depth. You've also then even come from a government publication and Wisconsin

journalism, all this stuff. Now, being at The Verge, how is your inbox and specifically with pitches?

**[00:03:22] MS:** Oh, my God. Like just out of control.

**[00:03:25] BB:** Oh, God.

**[00:03:26] MS:** I have never received so many emails in my entire life than when I started at The Verge. I think like before I even actually got into my inbox, I had pitches because people know sort of the email formats and stuff. For a while, I was locked out of my Verge email when I was being on boarded. Then when I finally got in, there were emails already waiting for me. There were pitches waiting. Yeah, people –

**[00:03:48] BB:** What?

**[00:03:49] MS:** Yes. I get a lot of pitches.

**[00:03:50] BB:** Wait, wait. So you're like, "Oh, cool. Here I am day three," and you log in now finally, and there's already pitches for you.

**[00:03:58] MS:** I know. I thought I would get to start at least at inbox zero, but I didn't even get that.

**[00:04:03] BB:** What? I've never heard of that.

**[00:04:03] MS:** It was like there were already things waiting.

**[00:04:06] BB:** How did the vultures know about this? Was there a tweet? Is that how they knew? That's probably why. Did you tweet about it?

**[00:04:12] MS:** I did tweet about my new job, like before I started, and I'm sure people just tried every iteration of my name, which –

**[00:04:19] BB:** Oh, they didn't have the email. They just tried.

**[00:04:20] MS:** Yeah, right. Right. I think, I mean, it's pretty easy. Like once you know one Verge email. Yeah.

**[00:04:26] BB:** Yeah. Oh, boy. Wow. Never heard that before. Man, okay. So what do you do to sort through the madness?

**[00:04:35] MS:** That is a great question. I have to admit, like some people are really good about organizing their inbox. Some people are really good at staying at zero. Mine is, I have to say, not that organized. I'm not very organized is the truth. So I try to catch up with emails as they come in for the most part. So I have updates on my watch, on my phone, on my computer that I'm sitting out all day.

So I can usually like – I've gotten good at pretty much telling right off the bat if something is a pitch for me or if something might be interesting to The Verge. So that filtering system has definitely gotten better the more time I spent here because it's hard to get like a million pitches every day and try to figure out what do we care about. What do our readers care about? But my sort of internal filter has gotten much sharper, I would say.

**[00:05:29] BB:** So do you mass delete? Do you ever file? Do you just let it roll? What are the coping mechanisms?

**[00:05:37] MS:** I usually – I don't really mass delete. I try to open pretty much everything just to take a peek.

**[00:05:42] BB:** Oh, you're an opener of all. I'm going to call this a new thing, opener of all.

**[00:05:47] MS:** Even if it's open for two seconds, I just look at it. Take a glance at what it is because I'm sure we'll talk about this later, but the subject lines are often deceptive. A lot of emails, you don't know what is going to be in there. The tip line at The Verge will forward me stuff, so I get a lot of things coming in.

So even if something doesn't right off the bat from the subject line look like something that might be in my lane, I do try to open things and at least take a look. Then I try to delete as much as I can. I mean, you can go through and find them later on. So I try to delete what I know I don't need.

**[00:06:26] BB:** The tip line. I haven't heard many people say, "Oh, I'm getting stuff forwarded to me from the tip line." So is it coming from like an editor at The Verge? Or are you like subjected to some random tip line inbox that just like fills you up with all types of stuff?

**[00:06:38] MS:** Oh, no. Thank God, no.

**[00:06:40] BB:** Thank God.

**[00:06:41] MS:** I would go crazy. Yes. I would go crazy. Yes. We have very wonderful news editors who man or woman or just watch over the tip line. They also are really good at telling like, "Oh, this might be a Mia thing," or, "Oh, this might be for the transportation desk. This is for health or science." So they will forward things that come into the general tip line that they think we might be interested in or we've covered before or just kind of like, "Hey, take a look at this."

I definitely get more tips straight or more like pitches and tips straight to my inbox than I do from the tip line. But the tip line, like good stuff does come through. It's just mostly people who are not sure who at The Verge might be interested. Yeah.

**[00:07:27] BB:** I haven't heard of someone using and saying, "Oh, God. I got tip line information or something." But hopefully, it's like a tip. Hopefully, it's like good juicy information. Do you ever find anything good in there? Yeah.

**[00:07:38] MS:** Yeah, for sure. It just depends on really like what the tip is and who's writing it and who's sending it in. It's just like people tell us what they see on the Internet all the time, which is an amazing relationship. For the most part, people like see something weird going on, and they're like, "Oh, The Verge might want to know," or, "Oh, I'm going to tell The Verge about this."

**[00:07:58] BB:** That is so interesting to me, by the way, like as a consumer. So I'm assuming this is not – This is – By the way, are these ever PR people using the tip email?

**[00:08:07] MS:** I'm sure the tip line – I'm sure the tip email gets PR stuff. I am luckily spared from that.

**[00:08:11] BB:** Oh, gosh. I just think, okay, you're Bob the dude, wherever. You're like, "You know what I just saw on the Internet today. Okay. You know who needs to know about it? Let me drop an email to –" Like who is this person? It's probably the same person adding comments to other people on YouTube and whatever else, like just being the Internet sleuth or something like that. Fascinating.

**[00:08:38] MS:** It's kind of like the gadfly.

**[00:08:39] BB:** Just fascinating.

**[00:08:40] MS:** Yeah. It exists like all over. It exists in City Hall, just local politics stuff. Like people who just show up to meetings, open meetings, and are like, "I want to see what's going on," who, by the way, that type of person, I love that type of person. They're the best people to talk to. They know everything, and they have just an amazing amount of attention to give to whatever they've chosen to care about. So I love them. I love them. I love people sending me weird things that they see. That's great.

**[00:09:12] BB:** Oh, fascinating. Fascinating. Okay. You hinted about subject lines and how they can be deceiving. So even though you're an open-all-email person, tell us a little bit more about the deception that you see in subject lines. What you like and what you don't like, which by the way, we're going to get into your next best subject lines in a second, but tell us on the subject lines.

**[00:09:34] MS:** Yes. Well, I would say that the worst emails and worst subject lines to get are the ones that over promise, which are quite a few. I mean, that's kind of the name of the game, right? It's like over promise something, see if you can get someone to open it, and then we'll go from there.

**[00:09:50] BB:** Disappoint.

**[00:09:50] MS:** Yes. But it's not helpful for anyone. It's not helpful for me. It's not helpful for the PR person. I know they're just doing their job, so I do not fault them. But I think there needs to be a little bit more scrutiny of like, okay, is this actually saying what I want it to? It can go the other way too. It can – I've had – I think one of the subject lines that I emailed that I shared with you is actually like under promised.

**[00:10:14] BB:** Yes, I have some here. Under promised. But real quick, before we get into those, what is, just as you mentioned here, like over – Like what? Like I have the most fantastic story ever, and you should – Like what's an over promise, where you're like, “Okay, that's not good.”?

**[00:10:28] MS:** Yeah. So I can give you – I don't want to put anyone on blast but –

**[00:10:32] BB:** No, no, no. Don't give us a real – But like what's an example? Yeah, yeah. Give us it. Yeah. Go ahead.

**[00:10:36] MS:** So I get a ton. I just get a metric ton of NFT pitches because this is in my wheelhouse. I write about NFTs. I write about communities around NFTs. I write about the culture around them. So once you do one story, you will get a billion emails for the rest of your life about NFTs, and I do.

What I've seen a lot of the NFTs is that the company or the person who's pitching the project will be somewhat related to something or someone that has name recognition. So like maybe the company that is launching this new NFT project also has done work for a musician or some sort of celebrity. So they will put in their subject line, like try to name drop that association and think that will make me more interested in it.

But then because I'm an open-all-emails person, I'll open it and then see that the connection is like very loose, if not nonexistent. It's like this person was not involved in this project. This person does not know what the hell you're talking about. It's really like sad.

**[00:11:44] BB:** Oh, no. No. Oh, God.

**[00:11:47] MS:** Yeah. It's quite tragic. It's quite tragic. So I would say that is not an effective way to do this.

**[00:11:54] BB:** Yeah, that's not. No. no. Oh, God. Okay. We're talking about the subject lines. So, Mia, give us three of your favorite subject lines ever and why. I know you already sent it to us, but do explain. What you got?

**[00:12:11] MS:** All right. So these I picked. I just kind of put them together for like –

**[00:12:15] BB:** I love that. This is great. This is great. Okay, first one.

**[00:12:19] MS:** The first one was back – This is from back in March, and the subject line was pitch: On April 11, Etsy sellers strike back against 30% fee increase. So this is a thing that I got I think a few weeks after I had written a story about Etsy's plans to hike transaction fees for sellers on their platform and –

**[00:12:43] BB:** 30%. That's horrible.

**[00:12:44] MS:** Yeah, 30%. It was a 30% jump. So they're not taking 30%. But the increase was 30% increase. I think we were like one of the few publications to write this up as news right away because I was on the earnings call, and I was like, "This seems kind of like a big deal," and we knew that it would piss people off. We knew that it would make people mad.

**[00:13:03] BB:** Yeah. Oh, for sure.

**[00:13:05] MS:** Etsy sellers are very engaged, and they're very in tune with what's happening.

**[00:13:09] BB:** It's their business. Yeah.



**[00:13:10] MS:** It's their livelihood. Yeah. So I wrote the story up. In the piece, I said this will probably cause anger among sellers. They didn't like it the last time it happened. A few weeks later, this email lands in my inbox, and it's from a group of Etsy sellers, who had decided they were mad enough about the fee increase that they were going to try to organize a strike. This became big news like after we wrote it up.

**[00:13:37] BB:** Well, wait a second. I mean, aren't there millions of Etsy sellers, millions?

**[00:13:42] MS:** There are millions. There are millions. It's also like an interesting –

**[00:13:45] BB:** It's **[inaudible 00:13:45]**.

**[00:13:47] MS:** Yeah. It's not the same kind of strike that maybe a union would coordinate and carry out. But it is really interesting kind of organizing happening that is square in my beat. I love stories like this. I love hearing about different workarounds that people who “work” through a tech platform are trying to do. There are other examples like black TikTokers refusing to coordinate or choreograph a dance, right? So there's all these really interesting examples.

In the subject line, you would not know that it was like, “Hey, we're going to try to strike.” That is not – They said strike back, but that's not really the same. So I was kind of like, “I wonder what this means.” It could be nothing. It could be something interesting. I opened it, and I realized that it was someone who was very tuned in, had read my reporting. It was very clear that she had, and she was like, “Do you want to write about this thing that we're organizing? We have a petition. We're gathering signatures.” I was like, “Absolutely. This is really fascinating.”

But the email subject line I could have easily skipped over because it's kind of worded in like a strange way. It's not very clear what's happening, and it just isn't very grabby, and it isn't very descriptive. So, yeah, I think that's actually a bad subject line, not to put them, I guess, in the hot seat. But I did.

**[00:15:20] BB:** That's okay. That's okay.

**[00:15:21] MS:** I have a relationship with them now. But, yeah, the subject line I think was not great. But the content of the pitch was fantastic.

[BREAK]

**[00:15:32] ANNOUNCER:** Today's interview will continue after this brief message brought to you by OnePitch. Are you curious to see the unique ways OnePitch helps PR professionals and marketers pitch journalists? Head to [onepitch.co](https://onepitch.co) to learn about our new OnePitch score and see how easy it is to find the right journalists to pitch your news to. Sign up for your free account today. Now, back to today's episode.

[INTERVIEW RESUMED]

**[00:15:56] BB:** Okay. So that was one that led to a good start. Okay. What's your second one? By the way, this one is an all cap – Oh, Jesus. Okay. Go ahead. Go ahead. Go ahead. All caps.

**[00:16:07] MS:** All caps and –

**[00:16:08] BB:** Never good.

**[00:16:10] MS:** This is a lot of words.

**[00:16:11] BB:** Okay. Go ahead.

**[00:16:12] MS:** Media mogul, Jake Paul, announces, launches micro betting and media company, Betr, with \$50 million. Those are certainly words. Those are certainly words.

**[00:16:24] BB:** Announces, launches micro betting and media company –

**[00:16:27] MS:** Oh, and there's more. Sorry. Betr with \$50 million, Series A. Okay. So there are several problems.

**[00:16:36] BB:** Yeah. Okay. Several problems. What is it? First of all –

**[00:16:39] MS:** Several problems. First, all caps. Do not email me things in all caps. It will feel like you're shouting at me. If I encountered a person in real life who was shouting at me, I would turn the other way and walk in the opposite direction. I would not ask you to go on and explain more. So, yeah, all caps is not a good look.

Then because I am, unfortunately, an open-everything person, I did open the email. The first thing I saw on the first sentence was a typo that was just like – It looks like it was – I don't know if they like missed a couple keys as they were typing or what.

**[00:17:15] BB:** Oh, no.

**[00:17:17] MS:** It was just a lot. It was a lot of things that made me feel like this is not something that I should take seriously. So, yeah, straight into the trash that went.

**[00:17:28] BB:** Okay. Okay. What's your third one? That's bad.

**[00:17:31] MS:** Okay. So this is going to show a little bit of growth.

**[00:17:33] BB:** Okay, growth. Go ahead.

**[00:17:37] MS:** Okay, pitch, or sorry, Etsy strike sellers form a union. This I just got like a couple of weeks ago. This is from the same people who emailed me back in March, and they, I think, got their subject line game in check. Tells me exactly what I need to know. Like even before opening it, I pretty much knew who it was probably coming from. They included a press release. They included a web site.

**[00:18:04] BB:** Oh, okay. They had –

**[00:18:06] MS:** They had all the stuff. So it was a very easy thing to just say, “Okay, I know pretty much what you mean. I know the context of this.” It's also nice to have people who you wrote about reach back out with updates. I always say like, “Keep in touch.” Some people are

better at that than others. But these folks were very good at letting me know that there was a next step in what we had already talked about.

At The Verge, we do a lot of follow ups. We do follow ups. We do day two stuff. We will write about something over the course of years. So it's like a great thing if you've already been written about or we've already talked. You should let me know what else you're up to. It's a really effective way, I think, of getting your story in front of reporters, is go back to the people who you know care about what you want to talk about.

**[00:18:56] BB:** Okay. Wow. We always love when we get live subject line examples. So thank you for giving that and shedding the light on us. No caps, everybody, please. We don't need the caps. We don't need caps. Just don't, just don't. Okay. Do you like exclusives or embargoes or neither?

**[00:19:15] MS:** Yeah. We do a lot of them. I write embargoes up almost every week. We get a lot. A lot comes through all of our inboxes. I am – We do exclusives. Those are really helpful. I mean, they're great for, I think, The Verge. We like those.

Embargoes are helpful too. We can ask the questions that we have ahead of time so that there are no errors. There's no confusion. I think it's just overall like a really – I think it's an effective way of getting your news out there and getting it out there correctly.

**[00:19:49] BB:** So you do like those. Do you ever, though, prefer more of an exclusive? I know, given the companies you work with, you're like, okay, Meta's not giving you an exclusive I don't think. But –

**[00:20:01] MS:** Yeah. I've worked on exclusives, and I think it's great because we like to have – I mean, we're a news organization. We like to have things first.

**[00:20:11] BB:** Of course.

**[00:20:12] MS:** It's just kind of like the name of the game, and it's nice when you have an exclusive, and you're able to sit down with the people, the company, and talk it through. Maybe

get an interview in and understand more in detail about what they're wanting to share. But I think it just has to really like make sense, and everyone needs to be on the same page about what the terms of the embargo or the exclusive is.

The Verge has kind of a unique policy around something. So we like it when people know how we roll. If you're not like that, then that's great.

**[00:20:40] BB:** I respect that. Yup. I like it. Is there anything, Mia, that you're reading, listening to, watching, whatever? We'll take Netflix. We'll take everything. Anything that you're loving right now, story-wise?

**[00:20:53] MS:** Well, we just – My partner and I just finished watching The Bear.

**[00:20:56] BB:** How was it? It's on my list.

**[00:20:59] MS:** Yeah. So I used to live in Chicago. Of course, I had to consume most Chicago media. My partner, his office was actually like around the corner from where they shot the show.

**[00:21:10] BB:** No.

**[00:21:12] MS:** It's a –

**[00:21:12] BB:** Okay. For those who don't know, just how would you describe it real quick?

**[00:21:16] MS:** It is chaos. It is like the most chaotic job. It's based in a kitchen in an –

**[00:21:21] BB:** Yeah. It's restaurants.

**[00:21:22] MS:** Italian beef shop in Chicago. A very prestigious chef goes home to his family business to kind of like turn it around, and chaos ensues. Very fun. It's very – The accents are hilarious and really quite good, I think. Pretty funny. The food looks great. You know what I mean? It's like –

**[00:21:42] BB:** It's just – It's drama. It's food. It's the fun. Yes, yes. Okay. I agree. That's great. Do you have another one by chance?

**[00:21:51] MS:** Let me think. Do you want like articles or –

**[00:21:55] BB:** Yeah. We'll take – If you've got a journalist shout out like, "I always read so-and-so's stuff." Sure. I should start asking that like, "Who's your journalist crush? Who do you love, if you have one, if you have one?"

**[00:22:07] MS:** Okay. Well, I really love Jay Caspian Kang. He was writing a New York Times newsletter for, I think, like a year, and he just announced that he's moving to The New Yorker. I've read his stuff for years. I love reading what he thinks. I often or sometimes disagree with him, but I do really like reading his thoughts on – He's written about all sorts of things. I mean, he's written about housing and homelessness. He's written about schooling. He's written about race relations, Asian-American issues, like all sorts of things.

**[00:22:40] BB:** Yes. He has an extensive Wikipedia page, by the way, for those who are interested. That's pretty. I think when you get that level, like when you got a Wikipedia page, you're kind of on another level, maybe. Or you hired someone really good. I don't know exactly. But I'm always impressed when I see a Wikipedia page, and it's long and in-depth. I'm like, "Oh, wait a second." So anyway, he does have that. Sounds great.

**[00:23:01] MS:** Yeah. He's great.

**[00:23:02] BB:** Oh, that's a good, okay, shout out. I'm going to have to include those in these moving forward. Okay. Mia, I have a little journalist fill in the blank section. Then we'll ask one more question, and we'll be good for today. Here we go. Fill in the blank. My favorite sources always –

**[00:23:20] MS:** Okay. My favorite sources always get my name right. This is something that you would think it would happen, but it doesn't always.

**[00:23:31] BB:** How do they otherwise spell it? Because your name has three letters. I'm just –

**[00:23:34] MS:** My name has three letters. I've had people mix up the I and the A, which always feels a little weird. I kind of feel like that's like, I don't know, a bit of like a strange like mental slip. Anyway, but, yes, I've gotten that. I've gotten people pitch me and just say like, "Dear reporter," or like, "Dear," wrong name.

**[00:23:52] BB:** That's fun. Dear blank. Oh, yeah.

**[00:23:54] MS:** Dear blank. Yeah. All those things.

**[00:23:56] BB:** Those are fun.

**[00:23:57] MS:** So it's great when you can use your name and then my name.

**[00:24:02] BB:** God. It's so basic, sometimes. Every single person who's been on here has said that. Please spell my name right. That's it. Okay. You'll never get a response from me if – Well, if your name is spelled wrong, but anything else?

**[00:24:17] MS:** I think what – Okay. So I've actually – I had this happen recently. Someone did like kind of – They like emailed me, and they were like, "I love your work. I just wanted to say hi. I don't have a pitch for you, but I just want to say I really like your work." I was like, "Oh, that's so nice."

**[00:24:32] BB:** That sounds nice.

**[00:24:32] MS:** But they got me. They got me. Two weeks later, they came back and had pitches, and I was like, "I guess that's like a nice way to do an introduction. But after that, that really soured me on that pitch."

**[00:24:46] BB:** And it was a week after, like a week to the day or –

**[00:24:50] MS:** It was like not that long. It was like a week to two weeks, and I was kind of like, "Okay. Now, I feel like I got got because I think you do this to everyone."

**[00:25:00] BB:** Yeah, yeah. I don't like that. Maybe if it was like six weeks later. I'd be like, "Okay." You know that. Okay. Yeah, that's too close. Okay. You can follow up with me if –

**[00:25:14] MS:** It's a holiday, or I was on vacation. I'm really bad at catching up with everything. I miss a lot of things. If it was a long holiday, if I had an out-of-office message, like you can follow up with me. I probably forgot or did not see it, or I'm still digging myself out of a hole. Yeah.

**[00:25:32] BB:** Okay. Fair. The appropriate amount of lead time for a story is –

**[00:25:39] MS:** I think this depends a little bit on what the story is.

**[00:25:41] BB:** Agreed, agreed.

**[00:25:43] MS:** Quick things like probably like a few days. It's really quick, like I don't like getting things a day before, but we can sometimes make it work. If it's a big thing, if you have a study, a research, like that always takes more time than you think. So that – Like it's nice to have more of a lead time.

**[00:26:03] BB:** And then last thing, my favorite stories to write are –

**[00:26:06] MS:** Anything bizarre.

**[00:26:12] BB:** And how do we classify bizarre?

**[00:26:12] MS:** I like weird stuff.

**[00:26:14] BB:** Okay. Just weird. Just weird. Okay.

**[00:26:12] MS:** I like weird stuff. I like things that take turns. I like stories that feel stranger than fiction. I like stories and people who give me crazy quotes. Luckily, I get to write a lot of stories like this. So this is a really fun job for me.



**[00:26:33] BB:** This is fun. How great. What a dream. Okay, Mia. Not to load you up with the big question here at the end, but what do you think the future of journalism is?

**[00:26:45] MS:** This is a tough one. I can say –

**[00:26:48] BB:** You are a recent journalist-ish. Okay, what do you observe? What are you observing?

**[00:26:53] MS:** So I got my start working in journalism actually doing audience work. I wasn't – I didn't start out as a reporter. I moved to reporting in the last three-ish years, and I had studied reporting. But I started off on the audience side. What I've seen, obviously, like everyone knows that there's very low levels of trust among outlets on a whole. But I think there's actually so much goodwill and trust between individual reporters and people who read their work.

This is something that I saw when I was working in social. This is something that I saw when I was working audience. People might disagree or sort of cast aside like outlets as a whole. But there are writers that they really like or there are stories that individual real people write that they really connect with. I think you see that when we're talking about like YouTube vloggers or TikTokers, places.

People are going to these individuals to get news. They're not really necessarily looking at the New York Times' homepage or The Verge home site, although we do have a lot of people who look at our front page. So I think the more that reporters cannot really like commodify themselves, but to remind people that real humans are producing this work, I think, is a good thing. I think that's a really good thing.

I think even when I was starting in reporting, it was very like keep your biases to yourself. It's not about what you experience, or it's not who you are, whatever. You do want to write fair, accurate things. But all of our individual experiences inform what we write and how we write it. So I don't really think we should shy away from that. I think that is just a reality. If you are trying to object to that, you're just being unrealistic.

So we are competing. We are literally competing with bloggers who sensationalize things and get it wrong constantly. So we need to work a little bit like they do and figure out how we can put the people producing this amazing journalism front and center, and make sure that people know that it's not just like running through like a word machine.

**[00:29:07] BB:** Yes. It's not AI writing it, by the way.

**[00:29:11] MS:** Not yet.

**[00:29:13] BB:** Not yet. Yeah. That's a whole other topic. But anyway, Mia, thank you for being on here today. Make sure everyone listening and journalists, publicists, all the people in this media empire, spell people's names right, please. I'd also say don't put your pitches in caps.

**[00:29:33] MS:** Yes. Don't do that.

**[00:29:34] BB:** Don't put them in caps. Mia, thank you so much for being here, reporter at The Verge. Everyone can find her email easily, so we don't need to talk about that. But make sure not caps, and she'll open your email, I bet. Excellent.

**[00:29:48] MS:** Thanks for having me.

**[00:29:49] BB:** Thanks, Mia. I really appreciate you.

**[00:29:52] MS:** Thanks. Bye.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

**[00:29:53] ANNOUNCER:** Thanks for listening to this week's episode of Coffee with a Journalist, featuring Mia Sato from The Verge. To learn more about the latest tools on OnePitch and to subscribe to our weekly podcast newsletter, head to our website at [onepitch.co](https://onepitch.co). We'll see you all next week with even more insights about the journalists you want to learn more about. Until then, start great stories.

[END]