

**\*\*Jered:\*\*** Welcome to this week's episode of Coffee With A Journalist and it's a podcast that's just that. We got coffee. We got journalists. We've got lots of good conversation. I'm Jered Martin. I'm the Co-founder and COO at OnePitch.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** And I'm Beck Bamberger. I'm also the Co-founder of OnePitch, the CEO BAM Communications and the host for today's podcast. Today we're talking to Dave Lee. He's from the BBC and what's interesting with Dave's role is despite the BBC being one of the, if not the largest media organization in the world, thousands of people work for the BBC. He talks about how his job is all and only focused on everything technology related coming out of San Francisco. That is quite the task and he's going to tell us about how he does that.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Dave Lee, thank you for being on Coffee with a Journalist as we like to call it. You're not drinking coffee. It's totally fine, but we're here on a cloudy San Francisco Day, par for the course, and it's nice and cozy and here we are.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** Thanks for having me. We finally got it to work. Found a good time. Yeah.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Well, you're quite all over the world as it seems because you're with the BBC. And I definitely want to talk about how is it being a Brit, being headquartered in San Francisco, covering this crazy scene called Silicon Valley, but we'll get into that. We're going to get into that. First off, can we talk about this student paper that you made back in the day, the founding editor of, let me make sure I have this right, The Linc, the university's student newspaper. So let's go back to college days on what you were doing there.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** So, uh, The Linc which is spelled L-I-N-C.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Yes. Make sure you're-

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** Very clever because it was from the University of Lincoln. And, um, the journalism school I went to was based there and they didn't have a student newspaper-

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** How is that possible?

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** It was too new. There was a magazine that wasn't particularly well regarded. And so, me and a couple of friends, we made the pitch, got the money together and, and um, made this newspaper The Linc. Um, and do you know what, even to this day, it's the most fun I've had doing.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Really?

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** 'Cause it was, we started off, the first issue was a broadsheet in tone and it was dull. It was really, really dull, no one wanted to read it. And then we just found out quite quickly the way to do this was to go to full tabloids and do lots of sport and sport was the big thing. We, we put the football team on the back of the paper every week and it meant that most people would pick it up on the basis of that- much like a real newspaper actually. And we just had fun with it. We had this wonderful- the very, very last issue, we um, we got these, um, drugs testing kits and we went around to all the faculty buildings, including where the vice-chancellor or the dean, I guess you'd call it here, was and we tested the surfaces in, in various, um, in- in various, uh, various toilets and our headline on our last issue, well, my last issue as the editor was "Campus on Crack," which caused all sorts of problems. But anyway, yeah, that was, that was the beginnings I guess.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Campus on crack.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** Yeah. The uh, administration in the university were removing our stance with the newspaper and so we were then putting them back. It was, um, I kind of wished that social media hadn't been a big, big deal because we had clips of us doing these cat and mouse games where we'd be putting the stands out there and they'd be taking them away. It was, it was, it was very, very fun. Yeah. And the story was good. That's the- that was the interesting and the story was- was solid.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Wow. Huh. Well, I mean, that is fun. I'm sure you're not talking at that level today and you're almost 10 years at BBC, but we will get into that. We will get into that.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** Mischief is still a theme.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Mischief. So yes. Okay. 2008, you graduate from the University of Lincoln, which just to educate everybody is where? The UK?

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** That's in the UK. Yeah. It's um, slightly north. People above Lincoln say it's not in the north. People below Lincoln say it isn't. It's a bone of contention. But yeah.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** And you had some class honors I see from journalism. Great. When, how'd you get over here? Across the pond?

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** So, um, so the BBC is for some time now have to have one position in Silicon Valley-Silicon Valley reporter. Uh, the first person who had that, uh, is a, a great woman called Maggie. Maggie Shields. Who is now on the communications team at Google. Um, and then, uh, she was followed, some years later by my Michael Richard Taylor who is still based out here as well. He's now like an independent video journalist and the idea is always just been to have one person out here. Um, and I was, I'd been on the BBC tech team for three to four years, maybe some of that four years. And, and I'd kind of reached my point of what I need to change what I'm doing, not because I was particularly unhappy, but because there's a structure at the BBC, there were more journalists that were more senior to me and there was a feeling I had personally that if I had a good story, if it got too good, it would no longer be my story. Right. So I had to, uh, I had to sort of swallow that, which you can do for a short while, but then eventually you think, you know what, I need to make a change. And when I was having this, uh, I was pouring my heart out to my managing editor at the time and he said, well, just sit tight because in a few months this Silicon Valley job is going to come up and, and um, if you play your cards right and impress when we do the interview, then- then there's a good chance you'll get it. And that's-that's how I came here and that was in July 2015, so three and a half years ago.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** And before that, what type of reporting were you doing compared to now? Silicon Valley beat.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** Yeah. I mean, it was, it was heavily tacking me. My first ever paid commission was, uh, was with the Guardian. A man called Charles Arthur, who was their tech editor, he gave me a- I wrote a story about how I used to work at a Staples store- office supply people. There was a piece in the Guardian about how useless computer salespeople were in those shops because they didn't know what they're talking about. And I said, well, of course, we don't know what we're talking about because we're being paid six quids an hour. And I couldn't care less if someone got the right computer, frankly. I mean, I tried my best, but it wasn't, you know, it wasn't the end of the world. And so I wrote this piece about that and- and Charles, to his credit, you know, treated me like a journalist as opposed to just some guy that wanted to write for the newspaper. And he paid me and from that moment on, I kind of dined out on this, you know, I'm a technology reporter who has written for the Guardian. That opened up many different things. And then from there, it was a case of, you know, I was still at university at that time, but after

that, I was just freelancing as much as I could. More stuff for the Guardian. I worked a short time at the Evening Standard newspaper in London. A really, really good newspaper in London. I worked for a short time with Sky News doing, um, just general- general news stuff. A lot of it was writing.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** And you were also a tutor? I'm looking here. Twenty-six students for six weeks. Oh, okay. Mentored. You don't usually see people who tutor. I look at everything Dave.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** This is the LinkedIn profile and I'm now wondering how well I've kept up.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Yes, well we need to update here.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** I mean, this is one of the the, um, one of the things I had a huge amount of fun with and- and in fact, the reason why it didn't spring to mind is just because it almost felt like an alternate reality. It was, it was in New Zealand, in Wellington, and I, while I was at university, I'd been writing a blog about student media and technology and how those things kind of meet in the middle. And a man called Jim Tucker, who was formerly an editor of their national newspaper in New Zealand, one of the national newspapers, um, he wrote to me and said, "Would you like to come out for a little while and be a kind of assistant tutor to- to him and then teach students at this college how to, you know, be multimedia journalists" being in...

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** In New Zealand?

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** In New Zealand. Yeah. So I went out there, I stayed with, with Jim and his wife Lynn, who I now referred to as my- my southern hemisphere parents, such as their relationship. We managed to, uh, to grow and and it was wonderful. Yeah. Looking back, I didn't know half as much as I thought I did at that time and it was a very interesting experience of, you know, knowing when you need experience in an industry before you can teach an industry. Yeah. And so that was, you know, at the end of that time, they actually asked if I wanted to go to, wanted to carry on for slightly longer. I said, well actually I want to- I want to work. I'm going to get back to London and do all that. But it was, it was magic. Yeah. Really, really, really, really good fun.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Were they college students?

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** Yes. It was like a Polytechnic, so it's kind of like a- we'd call it a technical college back at home.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** And how do you say the name? Whitireia Community Polytechnic? I don't know.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** That's really similar to my first attempt. Actually, it's doesn't sound anything like it's written. It's a Whitireia.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Oh, God. Okay. Yeah. Yeah. I wouldn't have got,

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** Um, and I, I didn't really for quite some time, but it was just, it was just the most beautiful place to work and some years later when I was working for the BBC, there's this guy called Kim.com. Big German guy, lives in New Zealand, um, notorious, um, Internet guy who was, uh, his house was raided by the U.S. for crimes against copyright and all that kind of stuff. Anyway, Jim happened to know this guy, Kim, and so several years later, even years after I'd done the work with Jim, that knowing that guy, man, I could then go back to New Zealand and- and hang out with this guy Kim.com in his mansion. It was really fun.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Kim.com, okay. Something for us to research here. Okay, so you, so you go back, you did the mentorship thing, you were at the Evening Standard, you mentioned, and now you've been at the BBC for almost 10 years. When's your anniversary there?

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** I don't know.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Oh, you should ask them. It says it's 10 years. Yes. Three more months apparently. Yeah. And you started out with sports and then you trickled into the tech, even though you said you were doing tech before. So getting at the BBC, I mean that is a global news outlet. It's creme de la creme. I'm sure they consider themselves the global creme de la creme. How'd you get in there?

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** Well, see, the strange thing about BBC is that it's, it's, it's technically- it's one major organization, but it runs like a small industry and in the UK certainly, it's just this incredibly complex thing. Now, I had originally applied to be on their traineeship, which is what every journalist wants to do in the, in the, in the country. It's a rite of passage. When you are ready, you apply for the traineeship at the BBC.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Is that like an apprenticeship in a sense?

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** Yeah, it's essentially they, they, they have you in for a couple of months. I mean, I didn't get it. They have you for a while, but the- the ironic thing is that in the time it took for me to be told I wasn't going to get it, I'd actually met a great guy called Nick Reynolds who ran this blog within the BBC that was essentially about what the BBC was doing with technology. It wasn't journalism per se, but it did offer up this really, really fortunate chance to meet as many people in the BBC as I wanted. And through that, I was able to go into most of the world's service- that the radio side of our global news and then eventually onto technology. But it's, it's strange sometimes. I often talk to students, particularly at my old university, and often they want to have this, you know, "How did you get into it" story. I always feel like I frustrate them because I offer this real mash of circumstances. It was off an era as well because if you're a blogger 10 years ago, you're ahead, slightly, ahead of the game. If you're a blogger now, you look like you're behind- this is what everyone's doing. And so the way I came into the industry, particularly at the BBC, you couldn't do it now in the same way. So, so yeah, so it was, you know, once your on the BBC's payroll and you say to an editor like, "I can come in and work for two days and you don't have to worry about the Admin, I won't invoice you, I'll just be there and I'll, I'll bill it." Um, then all of a sudden you find yourself, um, working on all sorts of interesting things.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** You get in the ecosystem.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** Yes. Yes. And the most one of the, I'm just, I'm looking at my own LinkedIn page here reminding myself of what I did. But one of them is a sports reporter was, it was one of the more fun ones because that was a Saturday afternoon with, you know, a newsroom of people just watching the football basically.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** How fun is that?

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** You write about it and I was never writing about the big teams or whomever. I was covering Dagenham and Red Bridge versus my team, Cambridge. It was very fun.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** And then you were even doing breaking news and you had various publication it looks like you worked on. Because one question I think just for people is, and you may not know this

off the top of your head, but how big is the BBC in terms of number of employees? Thousands? Hundreds? I mean it's obviously hundreds.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** This is often not so much off the top of my head, but something I read in passing, so it may be completely wrong, but my understanding is that we have 10,000 journalists of some description. Now the phrase journalists in the BBC has a lot of different connotations, like journalists could be someone who is cutting bits of audio for a radio show as opposed to going out and reporting and, and being what we'd consider most people consider to be a journalist. Um, but it's absolutely enormous cause there's-

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Wow, look, okay, so we just pulled up Wikipedia at 20,916 according to 2016 data as the number of people employed.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** So that would be the BBC in its entirety. Um, and then of course, you have people that are freelancers. You have people and the BBC is like most broadcasters here in that they contract the making of programs out to places. So yeah, it says it's, it's absolutely enormous and that, that's its strength. I mean it comes with, with weaknesses, it's, it's makes it this enormous ship that sometimes moves slightly slower than, you know, we look over at companies like BuzzFeed and think, "Oh, they're just rolling stuff out and getting it done." We're not quite as nimble, but then I think the flipside of that is that I think people like the BBC being quite slow and steady, you know?

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** I have to say I listen to the BBC every day. It's part of my just little routine in like getting ready for work. I just like it. I like all the British accents and everything and there's nothing like, and I liked the international perspective. So, I listened to a couple of international shows now, a bunch of things, so it's not just American media. But, one thing I'm always so impressed by is they'll say, "Oh, and our correspondent who's based in Egypt right now..." And you hear that and then someone's from Tokyo and then someone's in some providence in China on the ground. I mean, there is like the sun does not set on the British empire and not on the BBC is like how it sounds.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** That is, is, is very true. I mean, I think that's particularly noted to spoil here, isn't it? When you, when you listen to American journalism, as brilliant as some of it is, it's very much about America. Um, and you know, that's, that's indicative I think of what Americans want to hear. So that's the, you know, they're, they're, they're providing what their audience wants. Um, there's a phrase in journalism about making readers "eat their greens" - giving them stories that they may not necessarily enjoy, but they're essentially good for them and I think American journalism isn't being Americans eating enough green.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** No, we eat french fries and burgers.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** That's exactly it.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** That's our problem.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** So I think, I think the BBC does a better job of that. I think also what, what some people don't realize about our output as well is that we don't just broadcast in English. Um, there are, and if any of my bosses hear this, they'll tell me often not knowing exactly how many there are, but I think around 27 or 28 different languages the BBC broadcasts in. Um, so what can we can broadcast in Chinese and Somali. We have a pidgin service now, I didn't know what pidgin is- Pidgin English, which is used in large parts of Africa and it's this very interestingly kind of the word I'm going to use is mangled- I, they don't want to sound like I'm disparaging because it's obvious this is the language that many people use and understand. But, what that means is that we're reaching people that aren't being reached by anyone else and the benefit of that is that that feeds into the, to our wider kind of perspective. You know, if you're broadcasting in someone's native language, you get different things from those countries and if you just fly in one afternoon and say, "Oh, we were here with the BBC" and then you fly out again the next day, you know, it's, it's the depth of that I think is really, really quite something. Yeah.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** So as we were mentioning, it's almost been 10 years you've been there. I want to talk now about the beat you cover, the Silicon Valley, and if you look at the array of the topics you talk about, you do all the big companies from Twitter and Apple, to more pontificating on technologies drive in the future and the damage it maybe does and stuff. So how do you, how do you do your job? Being the one person, and correct me if I'm wrong, but like the one beacon of the Silicon Valley correspondent here.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** So we're, we're, we're, we're a team of two. Uh, I'm, I'm, I'm the the the correspondent here and I work with a woman called Cody Godwin, who's, um, who works with me, crewing and, and, and so forth. Um, so it's weird this is, I get this quite a lot, not just from people outside, people interested, but also my own bosses. Like how are you making your decisions? Because it's always up for debate, I think, because on the one hand there are things that are obvious to, to cover- Apple's launching something and every year we have CES and then you think you said, well, is it obvious what we should cover? Do we cover CES? Do we need to cover Apple's new iPhone? Possibly, possibly not. So I think the decisions I make are just what feels like it's worth looking at at the time. And there's inconsistencies with that and we have to be very careful



that if we do cover the iPhone than we do cover the new pixel phone or, or similar from Google and then Samsung and so forth. But I think what it comes down to essentially is, and often when I'm, when I'm waiting to go on air, I hear this in my ear, the presenter will always use a phrase, they will say, "Oh, here to make sense of it in Silicon Valley is, is Dave" and I think that's essentially what it is. Right? So if there's anything that needs making sense of, whether it's what Apple's doing, why Facebook is in a crisis, even down to why are people leaving the scooters outside this building as they are. That's essentially, that's, that's the brief as far as I'm concerned. And what's great about that is that that can be a startup with three people or it can be a company with 30,000 people and it's equally as relevant.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** I think that's one of the most unique positions you have because unlike a lot of the other folks we talked to here on this podcast and just in other newsrooms, you know, you have a dozen or two colleagues, you're all here, you know, down the street on Embarcadero or whatever. I mean your TechCrunch or Venture Beat or you're, you're based here in Silicon Valley and there's a whole team. You were like the filter of this British empire for the world of Silicon Valley. I mean that like we're seeing it through your eyes so I like how they do those interests. I've heard them mention that. And I'm like, that is true because you have to think that there's some filtering and there's some significant subjective topics that you were just, you have to filter by sheer volume because you can't talk about 700 tech launches every day.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** No. And there's also the kind of internal workings of, of the industry that I find it hard sometimes to know what's exciting here, um, what's interesting elsewhere. So for example, you know, stories about people who, uh, Snapchat is a good example, right? Snapchat, Snap rather, they've had some people leave and that or many journalists beat here. Right? It's a big story. It's an ongoing story. One that needs deep reporting is one that is worthwhile. But I'm thinking for a, a global audience, they don't necessarily need to know that. And so sometimes it can be very, very hard and I'll be on Twitter too much. And you know, my morning routine is like scrolling from a thing on, "Oh God, what's happened?" like we were looking at tech meme and so forth. But sometimes the hardest thing is just to sit there and say, you know what, we're not going to do this A), because you know, we don't have the same kind of sourcing. I don't have the same kind of sourcing that Recode does or The Verge does and, and, and so forth. Uh, and secondly, you know, what if, if people want to read about people leaving Snapchat, then there's ample places for that to be read. The stories that I try and focus on are things that we can add something to. Now, whether that's new information, ideally, um, you know, just, just journalism obviously, but also this layer of explanation. You know this is important because, and we have a very high bar now, much higher than we're used to on things like cyber attacks. Now if there's a hack of some description, we sit back and we go, right, is this a hack that needs to be known by people who read security blogs? Or is this a hack that you want your mom to know because she needs to update her phone or a computer or something like that. And that's, that's, that's a tricky decision and that's much harder here than it ever was in London for me personally, because in London I could, well I was probably asleep when some of these stories broke and B) it, you just

felt much more out of, out of the bubble. So I mean that's not, that's not to suggest that these other places shouldn't be doing this story because actually, you should. It's just, it's just about separating what we should be working on separate from, from what the rest of the tech press is doing.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** That's so interesting that you have to think from, oh, my global audience. So the Egyptian and the British guy sitting in London right now, and maybe your Chinese consumer, you know, are they going to give a crap about the executive that left Snap or, whatever. Yeah. Interesting. Then that leads me to ask, and we have a lot of publicists who listened to this podcast particularly, do you get a lot of pitches?

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** Yes.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Tell us more.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** Has anyone ever said "no" to that question?

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** No, not at all. Not at all. But I'm just thinking, you know, when you look at your stuff and you're going, oh, you know, you're talking about Youtube and Twitter and Apple and such, but I know you're probably the only person they can pitch things to. So, what happens in those pitches? How's your inbox looking?

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** My inbox is, um, what I, I am actually not exaggerating here. My inbox is something over 200,000 emails.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** No.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** Yeah. Yeah. Um hmm.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** But right now, like if you pulled up your phone?

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** Yeah, but here's the thing, my phone can't even go up that high. So right now it says, hang on, let me find it, wait.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** I'm going to look at his screen. Let me, let me see what it really says.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** So here, you guys. All right. It says 96 thousand.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Oh wow. There was not another space for over a hundred thousand.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** I don't, I've never seen it go much higher than that. My inbox is going crazy. But I mean, look, there's, since I've been talking to you, we've got press releases.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Press releases. Oh, the mayor.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** Something about Fortnite and money laundering. I'm on so many Facebook groups, well a few Facebook groups where PR people and journalists are kind of interacting, there's one in the UK that is actually pretty good. I quite like it.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Can you tell us which one?

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** Yeah, it's called TechJPR or something. It's run by an agency and, you know, they, they, it's, it's one of the most sort of friendly and useful places. And I've popped in there a couple of times and said, I'll just, anyone know who's doing press for this, whatever. And often the discussion on that is things like, "Oh, don't call me, email me" or "Don't email me, uh, send me a text message" or DM me on Twitter whenever, whatever, whatever. And it drives me insane when I hear journalists talk like that because who in their right mind has got the time to know whether someone prefers an email, a phone call, a carrier pigeon, or whatever. And my view is, on the flip side, when I hear PR people often say, "Well, what's the best way to pitch you?" I couldn't give a damn how it's pitched because eventually the good stuff gets through. All Google does when they want to launch something is send me an email the same way that the email I just showed you as an email. So, it's not so much how the pitch is, it's just what's in it. And I think it's, it's one of those weird things where we kind of get bogged down in like, do you put this in the subject header? Do you have an email? Do you have an attachment? No, probably not. But it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter. At least not to me. And people, you know, have a very simple business. But I find that kind of stuff that there is I feel, like I'm, I'm letting the team down now. But I do think that there is an arrogance on, on journalists the thing, well I am so important because I'm this guy and therefore you need to bounce to my wish on how you send me a pitch.

Well, you know, maybe if you want Mossberg or you can say that, but you know, everyone else isn't Mossberg. Right. So, so that's, that's something some deal with say. Yeah, I, I've, I've gone on a bit of a tangent here that rant.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** But that's good. We're here to rant.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** There are lots of, there are lots of pitches, but the fraction of a second it takes me to skim over it. I don't think it was worth getting too worked up about generally.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Now than then. Let's ask about that. So do you, those 96,000 emails I just saw, do you go, how do you go through all do, how do you filter the sheer volume?

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** I scroll through, well here's the thing, ironically despite my, my thoughts there. I mean actually, you know, after doing this job for quite some time, you know when something's going to be generally in your, in your corner. And it's not necessarily that something's a bad pitch. It would just be, that's not what I cover or that's not what I want to cover right now. So if I see a pitch that mentions Fortnite in it, I'm probably not going to because fair enough. Fair enough, Fortnite, um, it's not something I'm looking to write about right now. I also, and this is a big, big thing, you know, I, I do, if I recognize the person's name, I will give that more time. And that's good news for PR people with expense accounts because it shows that it's worth it. Um, but equally, you know, I, I, I do, I do like that as, as, as, as a system that, you know, people that I know don't waste my time with stuff is, is really, really useful. I've had great interactions with PR people at big companies that really amount to say, we're putting this out, I don't think it's for you, but just so you know. And I'm thinking, you're not pitching, they're not pitching me at all that, they're anti-pitching. But it means that when the next picture it comes in, they say, "Oh, we see this is really interesting. Do you want to come in?" Then it, then it has more weight. So I filter. The filter is kind of all those, all those different things. Um, I also make sure that all the ones from my bosses go to a folder, so.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Gotcha. So you don't miss those. Gotcha. What now getting into the space of transitioned into media and the current state of media, you've been in this game 10 plus years, you've been with the biggest organization that there is arguably in news. What do you say to people who think or even say, "Hey, I'm thinking of maybe journalism, I might want to be a writer. What do you think about media? What do you think?" What do you say to them?

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** I'd say, yeah, sure. You can look at something that the newspaper, newspaper industry, right? And think, "Well that's not going anywhere." Uh, and you can look at particular

local newspapers, um, and say, "Well, we've local newspapers closing down in some cities without a newspaper, then that's a terrible industry to be involved in." And that's true to a point. I think it's changing to the, to the extent of, if someone said to me, "I want to be, I want to have the career of someone I admired who works 20 years ago", I'd say well, it doesn't exist anymore. And um one of the things that is fun is if I do talks at my old university, which I do from time to time. I always like to make the point that if you're in the first year of the course, chances are any job you're thinking about won't exist in that form by the third year and so you've got to make sure that your nimble enough to, to deal with that. And I think that's the thing. If you, if you are willing to say, right, I want to be a journalist but not be too prescriptive about what that is, then I think you're going to be okay. If you say, I want to work in a local newspaper doing this, then I want to go work at the New York Times, and do this and that, that's going to be my job. You might find yourself disappointed. I, yeah. So I, so I said, so I would, I would recommend people to go into the industry 'cause it's great. It's not a real job as it, it's, you know, we, we, we spend the whole time either talking to people, thinking about talking to people, winding people up, finding stuff out, visiting fun places. And one of the great joys of my job is that because it's television, you had to go places. You can't just ring someone up and, and do it that way. You have to go somewhere and, and that's just the, the greatest thing. So although the industry's changing massively and it's perhaps you have to kind of maybe work harder and longer and for less money than before then. Then well, that's just the reality of it, but it's still brilliant.

**\*\*Beck:\*\*** Ah, we have to end on that note. It's still brilliant, my God. Well thank you, Dave Lee. I know you have your 96,000 emails to quickly skim by. This has been so great on this cloudy day in San Francisco. Not that that's a new surprise there and thank you for being here. This was really fun.

**\*\*Dave:\*\*** That was fun. I enjoyed it.

**\*\*Jered:\*\*** Thanks for listening this week's to Coffee with a Journalist featuring Dave Lee from the BBC. If you're a journalist who loves coffee or a publicist who loves this podcast, we'd love to hear from you, head to [onepitch.co](http://onepitch.co) to drop us a line. Until then, let's end bad pitches and start great stories.