

"The Frame-Up" Podcast Script

S1E3 - Who Is John Travis?

January 31, 2026



Progress Report: 7450 of 4000 total words! [186.25%]

Welcome to the Frame-Up podcast... Where the usual suspects in construction cases are given an entertaining if not vigorous defense... Here's your host, Blair Calhoun...

Alright, Alright, Alright... I'm Blair Calhoun, and this is the third episode of the first season of The Frame-up Podcast...

This is the culmination of four years of contemplating, conjuring, concocting, and every other con in the dictionary to use storytelling to improve the way builders, engineers, designers, and owners bring buildings, facilities, and structures into existence... To be clear, we're sharing stories NOT training tips... Training courses are great resources to improve your understanding of a subject or ability to master a task... But here's the thing: what motivates a person to improve in the first place?

We're going to present stories in a format or motif that we hope entertains as well as spurs folks to rethink how they imagine, construct, and use buildings and their myriad systems... The Frame-Up's philosophy is best described by the late film legend, Orson Welles, who said "I can think of nothing an audience won't understand. The only problem is to interest them; once they are interested, they understand anything in the world..."

You're probably familiar with the informal term "frame-up" which is shorthand (does anybody out there know how to write shorthand) for a scheme to make an innocent person appear guilty of a crime! We're going to present real stories where the crimes perpetrated or thwarted were against effective, safe, and/or efficient design, construction, or use of buildings... We're inhabiting the stylistic approach of film noir (more on that to come) but with a couple of twists... The first act of each episode is a story that has nothing to do with construction or crime for that matter... Why? Just listen... I guarantee it will be interesting... Think of each episode's second act as "jury" preparation... Why? When you hear the case in Act 3, you'll be serving as *de facto* jury members... We want you to be better prepared to understand the thinking of the usual suspects in the case before you render a verdict!

In 1977's "Life In The Fast Lane", Eagles drummer and vocalist, Don Henley sings "Are you with me so far?"

Intro – 541 words



Sports! Yes, sports... A lot of folks LOVE sports... The word "sport" applies to a seemingly endless set of activities and games... Athletics: Track and Field, Swimming, Weightlifting, Gymnastics... Stick-and-Ball: Lacrosse, Baseball, Cricket, and Golf... Just Ball: Volleyball, Basketball, Football, Futbol, Handball... Racquet-and-Ball: Badminton, Tennis (Table and Court), Racquet Ball, Squash, Pickleball... Lower-body-centric: Figure Skating, Speed Skating, Skiing, Snowboarding, Skateboarding, and Surfing... Upper-body-centric: Bowling, Archery, and Target Shooting... Combos – Hockey (stick-and-puck-and-skates!)... Motorsports: F1, NASCAR, NHRA, MotoGP... I could go on (maybe I did)... What do people

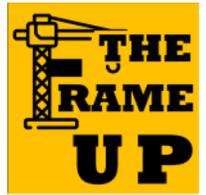
love so much about sports? They love competing in them, coaching others to compete in them, watching others competing in them, wagering on competitions and competitors, creating and following their "fantasy" teams as they "compete" ... But the thing people love MOST about sports is TALKING about them!

The only thing that is truly endless about sports are the debates they produce among sports fans... Who's the GOAT: Willie or Mickey, Michael or LeBron, Tom or Joe, Tiger or Jack... What about the other "goats" who are the subjects of sports debates: Bill Buckner, Scott Norwood, Russell Wilson, Dennis Eckersley... Sports debates are hilarious in their extreme inanity, yet ubiquitous for the same reason... ESPN, FOX Sports, Regional Sports Networks, and local sports radio stations fill hours of daily programming with debates at their core... Though I love sports and the debates they engender, I really can't stand these debate shows... My biggest beef is that lack of knowledge on the part of the self-anointed experts... Everyone has an opinion... Some opinions are informed, but the vast majority are NOT!

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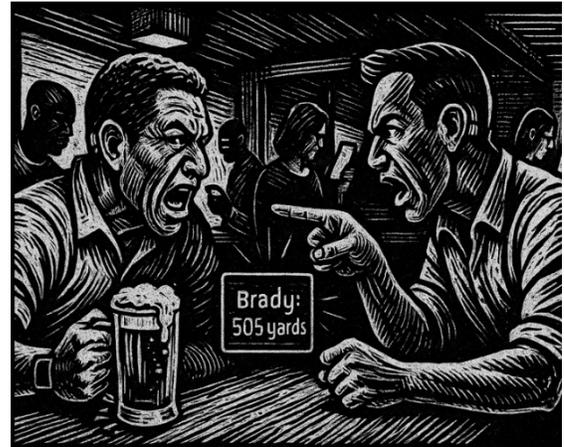
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That said, the sports debate is as old as sports themselves... I bet dollars-to-donuts that Socrates honed his “method” by steering debates about the ancient Greek Olympics into more cooperative dialogue... Good luck with that today! Suffice it to say, sports debates are ubiquitous not confined to talking-head shows... They happen almost anytime and anywhere... I can pretty much guarantee if you spend more than 30 minutes in any drinking establishment in the western world, you’ll witness, and if you’re game, participate in a sports debate... The tongue liberating effect of imbibing a libation or two surely primes the pump of the give-and-take, back-and-forth, pronouncements, and proclamations of the participants that often number more than three or four... Seriously, why does EVERY bar, pub, or tavern have at least one television showing sports? There was a time that juke boxes, pinball machines, dart boards, and pool tables were the only forms of entertainment one could enjoy while throwing a few back!



Regardless of venue, the sports debate almost ALWAYS starts the same: “I think...” Seriously, the debate begins with the announcement of an opinion! That’s all it takes... Maybe humans are hardwired to engage in verbal combat as a form of bonding! That I’m a contrarian by nature makes me especially vulnerable to bouts of uncontrollably contesting the counter-factualism at the core of so many sports debates... “Well, if this ‘fill-in-the-player’ didn’t get hurt...” “Well, if this ‘fill-in-the-team’ played in this era...” “If the officials or umpires or referees made this call...” As these utterances hit my ears, I’m the person who interjects “Um... the fact of the matter is...” Well, THE FACT OF THE MATTER!

After the break, we'll return with Act One: Who is John Travis?

Do you have a construction story to tell? Or an idea you'd love to see put into action to improve project outcomes? Maybe you'd like to become an ad sponsor for the show... Whatever you'd like us to know, please use the comments section to contact us... Also, please share links to the show with colleagues, friends, and neighbors... Go ahead! It doesn't cost a thing... Now, back to the show!

Act One: Who is John Travis? – 1,097 words



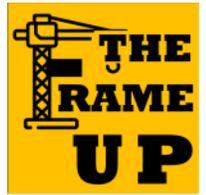
Fibbar MaGees is an Irish Pub style bar and grill located in the heart of Silicon Valley in Sunnyvale, California... It is a mere 2 miles south from the birthplace of the semiconductor revolution, 391 San Antonio Road in Mountain View, where William Shockley founded Shockley Semiconductor Lab (later Shockley Transistor Corporation) in 1956... Facebook, Google, Nvidia, and Intel campuses among many, many others are within a 10-mile radius from Fibbar MaGees... Along with a traditional bar, table tops, and booths, Fibbar’s “sports” ten (10) big-screen TVs showing... Yep,

SPORTS... Sometimes, music videos (remember those) appear on a screen or two during slow sports days or nights... But those are rare... Well, one night, a few of us bar flies and the staff are chatting about, what else? SPORTS... One of the new bartenders, João Silva, hails from Portugal and has questions about American football... We’re all trying to explain

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this most ridiculous of sports to a neophyte when I suggest he watch popular films about football... That starts the DEBATE! What is the best "football movies" of all time? Those of us in the know are throwing out titles, fast and furiously: Remember the Titans (2000), Rudy (1993), The Longest Yard (1974) NOT the remake, Friday Night Lights (2004)... I bring a brief halt to the discussion with a pronouncement that "Brian's Song" (1971) is the GOAT of football movies!... What? Since the movie was made in 1971 when everyone else's parents were school children, the quizzical looks were expected...



The thing about the sports debate is it rarely ends with consensus on the topic under consideration... Seldom are positions on the topic changed or enlightenment attained to think of the topic in new ways... But like a chameleon changing the colors of its skin to blend into its surroundings, the topic of the sports debate changes to generate another subject to deliberate, discuss, dispute, and deconstruct... "Brian's Song" is a melodrama (what else!) that tells the real-life story of the friendship between Chicago Bears' running backs Brian Piccolo and Gale Sayers... Piccolo and Sayers form an unlikely but enduring friendship that ends when Piccolo dies following a battle with a rare cancer at the age of 26... Sayers' career continued to great heights but ended prematurely from knee injuries... His all-purpose running over a mere 64 healthy games earned him induction into Pro Football Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility in 1977... Is Sayers the running back GOAT with such a short career? Doesn't that title belong to the Cleveland Browns' RB Jim Brown? Brown retired from football after establishing all-time NFL career records for rushing yards and touchdowns to pursue an acting career... " Fellow Hall of Famer, John Mackey, said "I once thought that Superman wore a cape and an S on his chest, but I found out that he wears number 32 and plays for the Cleveland Browns..." What about Cowboys' great Emmitt Smith, the current career rushing yard leader? Walter Payton? Barry Sanders? As other names are tossed out and considered, another feature of the sports debate arises: the debate crasher... Akin to the party crasher, the debate crasher enters the fray without invitation or prompt... The crasher this night is named Henry... He interjects "Hey, what about Earl Campbell?" Good one... Henry's companions are amused...

Again, it's a sports debate: all are welcomed! After a few minutes of good-natured give-and-take, Henry confides "Hey. My father played in the NFL!" Wait? What? "Yeah, it was before I was born, but he told me he played for the San Diego Chargers in 1967, I think... His name is 'John Travis'"... After a break, we'll see if Henry's claim is on the up and up...

Young man or woman, there's no need to feel down... The odds are in your favor if you enroll in a construction trade program at your local community college... You will embark on a legendary quest to become a VIB, very in-demand builder, of construction... Build is what every verb wishes it could be... Go ahead! Learn to hammer your frame! Now, back to the show!

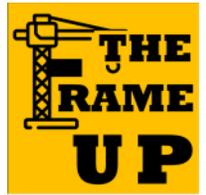
Debates are always contests between opposing opinions, but that doesn't mean immutable facts, not to be confused with "alternative" ones *aka* LIES, are not valuable tools in bolstering or weakening the basis on which those opinions were developed and defended... Sports debates almost always require an acknowledgement of facts... Those facts can be deemed irrelevant or superfluous to the positions being debated, but their existence cannot be denied! The scourge of the modern sports debate is the mobile phone with its split-second access to a world wide web of FACTS... Merely reaching for one's phone during a sports debate, can cause an opponent to change the topic, or worst, concede their opinion was someone else's, the ever-present "they" or "people" or "experts"... So, did Henry's dad, John, play for the '67 Chargers? Though it would be another three years, before I started following the NFL in a serious way, I knew of a few of their Hall of Fame players, QB John Hadl and WR Lance Alworth,



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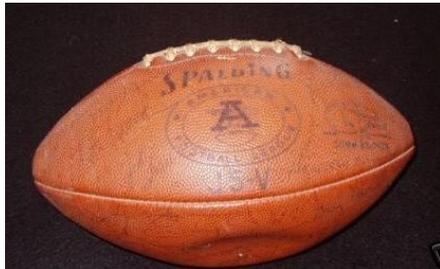
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who were probably on that team... So, as Henry and others drifted into other topics, I started looking for the FACTS... I quickly accessed my first resource for all things NFL, the web's Pro-Football Reference site... I look up and down the names listed on the '67 roster... No John Travis... I think "why would someone make up such an easily verifiable fact?" So, before I go all "well, I hate to tell you..." I click the site's "Next Season" icon and search the names of the '68 roster... Still, no John Travis... Okay... A couple of clicks on the "Previous Season" icon and Eureka! John Travis, FB, drafted in '66 in the 18th round from San Jose State University which lies less than half-a-dozen miles from Fibbar's as the crow flies...



I excitedly rush over to Henry to show him his father's stats from the '66 season... Henry is overjoyed... I'm curious to know why he didn't just look it up himself, but maybe he feared the disappointment if he discovered that his father was shading the truth a bit... Before his excitement wanes, Henry asked me "Hey. Do you think there was ever a trading card for my father?" For those unfamiliar with player trading cards, long before Pokémon, in the late 1800's as professional baseball and photography were gaining in popularity, so to were baseball player trading cards... Trading cards for pro

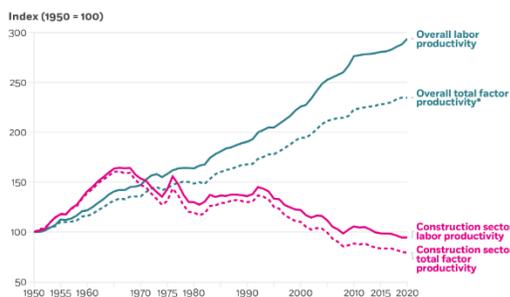
football players followed a similar trajectory some 100 years later in the 1960's and 70's... Since Henry's dad, John, only played one season, I doubted a trading card would have been published for an unheralded rookie... But I pressed on with a search all the same... After a few minutes, I couldn't find any evidence that his father had a trading card, but I DID find an advert for a [football autographed](#) by players for the 1966 Chargers... Guess what? John Travis was among the players who signed the football!

After a break, Act Two: The Innovators...

Do you have a construction story to tell? Or an idea you'd love to see put into action to improve project outcomes? Maybe you'd like to become an ad sponsor for the show... Whatever you'd like us to know, please use the comments section to contact us... Also, please share links to the show with colleagues, friends, and neighbors... Go ahead! It doesn't cost a thing... Now, back to the show!

Act Two: The Innovators – 1,125 words

Productivity in the US economy and the construction sector, by type



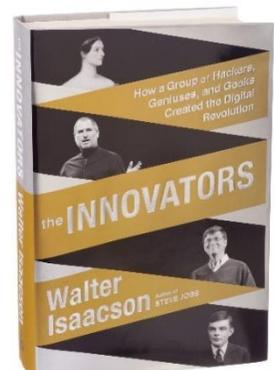
*TFP = combined capital productivity and labor productivity
Goolsbee and Syverson, 2023



Finding John Travis on the roster of 1966 Chargers was easy but imagine the same task in 1966? And that's the challenge for us in construction: imagination or lack thereof... According to Austan D. Goolsbee and Chad Syverson of the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business, [a construction worker in 2020 actually produced less than a construction worker in 1970!](#) We need to jump start our collective imagination to use technology in all its forms to at least MATCH our productivity of 50 years ago!

In his book, *The Innovators*, Walter Isaacson crafts the story of "How a Group of Hackers, Geniuses, and

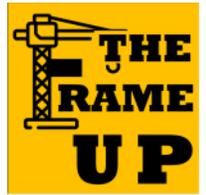
Geeks created the Digital Revolution." Alan Turing was by all accounts a genius! Some may remember Benedict Cumberbatch playing Turing in *The Imitation Game* in 2014... Before his work to create the deciphering machine to break the German's Enigma codes during the 2nd World War, Turing wrote a paper in 1937 conceiving of a *Logical Computing Machine* that could "...be used to compute any computable sequence." Though Turing envisioned the computer, Isaacson gives credit to Presper Eckert and John Mauchly for



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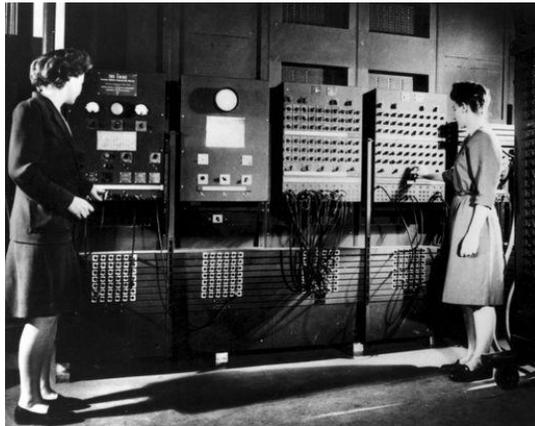
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inventing the first computer, ENIAC (Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer), in 1945 while working at the University of Pennsylvania...



ENIAC was a marvel that soon spawned other computers from companies such as IBM, Bell Labs, and Honeywell... Though these early computers were electronic, Turing's concept of a programmable "universal machine" capable of doing the work of an infinity of single-purpose machines was still a few years away... John von Neumann, a mathematician who was a mentor to Turing in Princeton, was brought in by the ENIAC team at Penn to work on improving its programmability... Though their relationship was fraught with back-biting and idea stealing accusations, they did create the stored-program architecture that is the foundation for every computer since... During the presidential election of 1952, CBS News featured the UNIVAC built by Sperry Rand alongside a young anchor named Walter Cronkite... Based on early exit polling

data, UNIVAC predicted an easy win for former Allied Commander Eisenhower with a probability of 100-to-1... CBS News initially withheld the prediction with Cronkite fibbing that UNIVAC "had not yet reached a conclusion..." After actual votes confirmed Eisenhower's win, CBS News correspondent Charles Collingwood admitted on air that UNIVAC had made the prediction at the beginning of the evening's broadcast... The war between man and computer had just begun!

The on-off "switches" at the heart of these early computers were vacuum tubes which were much faster than their mechanical relay predecessors because they didn't have moving parts... In 1947, John Bardeen and Walter Brattain working at Bell Labs, produced a semiconductor amplifier or solid-state replacement to the vacuum tube... Their boss, William Shockley (remember him), built upon their work to invent the modern-day transistor in 1948... The three were awarded the Nobel Prize for physics in 1956... Again, Shockley created his company in Mountain View earlier in the year... He had assembled a "Dream Team" of wunderkinds, Robert Noyce, Gordon Moore, Jay Last, and Eugene Kleiner... Though undeniably brilliant, Shockley soon became a caricature akin to philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche's *Übermensch* or *Superman*!... Shockley's attitude and behavior led to a mutiny of sorts, as Moore, Noyce and six other staff members left Shockley Semiconductor in 1957 and set-up shop a few miles south down the then Bayshore Freeway, now, 101, to form Fairchild Semiconductor, a division of Fairchild Camera and Instrument, in San Jose...



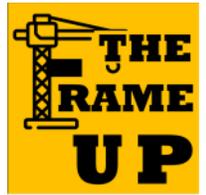
After a break, we'll continue the origin story of the semiconductor...

Ice Cream... Who doesn't like ice cream? Everyone has their favorite flavor and maker... Alone or with pie, ice cream is simply delish! The HHS' new food nutrition pyramid may be figuratively and literally upside down but promoting the consumption of more dairy products and saturated fats *i.e.* ice cream is a controversy to brook! Now, back to the show!

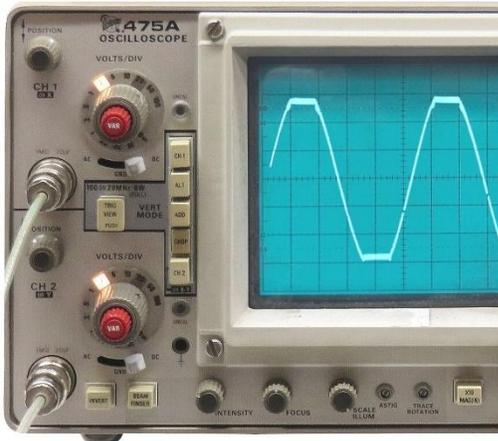
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In July 1958, Jack Kilby, recently hired at Texas Instruments, wrote down the foundations of the “monolithic idea” in his lab notebook: “the following circuit elements could be made on a single slice: resistors, capacitor, distributed capacitor, transistor.” Two months later, Kilby connected an oscilloscope to a tiny “chip” of circuit elements that mimicked an oscillator... At the push of a button, the tell-tale wave appeared on the screen... The microchip was born... a few months after Kilby’s demonstration, Noyce at Fairchild came up a similar microchip concept that had significant improvements over Kilby’s design... A patent battle between Noyce and Kilby began... Years before it was resolved, both sides decided to avoid a pyrrhic victory and agreed to share licensing deals with other companies... In 1967, Moore and Noyce left Fairchild Semiconductor along with its Asst. Director of Development, Andy Grove, to form Intel Corporation

in Santa Clara situated between Mountain View and San Jose along that same 101 Freeway... In November four years later, Intel unveiled the 4004 micro-processor, the first modern “computer-on-a-chip.”

On a parallel timeline starting in 1958, the U.S. Department of Defense created the Advanced Research Projects Agency, ARPA, with the purpose of funding basic research at universities and corporate institutes to get a leg up on the USSR as the Cold War begins... In the mid 1960’s, the director of ARPA, Charlie Herzfeld, gave the go ahead to create a network that would permit research centers to share computing resources and collaborate on projects... In October of 1969, a simple message, “LO”, was sent from a computer terminal at UCLA and received by another at the Stanford Research Institute (SRI)... ARPANET was born... Many similar packet-switching networks were developed but lacked compatibility and, therefore, interoperability... Bob Kahn, a project manager at ARPA, and Vint Cerf, a researcher from UCLA, set out to solve the problem... During much of 1973, the two intensely collaborated to create a set of common protocols for all packet-switching networks to follow which would facilitate linking these networks without a “translation” system... Their Internet Protocol (IP) for how to “address” packets and their Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) for how to put the packets back together in the right order were published in a paper called “A Protocol for Packet Network Interconnection”... ARPANET and its brethren soon became the internet as we know it...

The late Steve Jobs was not an engineer by training or inclination, but he was a master marketer! He knew a good idea when he saw one, he knew how to bring ideas together, and he was a visionary in understanding the value of the “user experience” in technology... He and co-founder Steve Wozniak started Apple Computer in 1976 in the Los Altos home of Jobs’ parents less than 2 miles from 391 San Antonio Road... A year later, the duo popularized the personal computer with their Apple II... After a messy boardroom fight, Jobs resigned as Apple CEO in 1985 but returned to the top spot in 1997... He revived the flagging company with the introduction of the iMac, short for internet Macintosh, PC in 1998 to capitalize on the growth of internet use among the general public... The iPod followed in 2001 and soon dominated the growing digital music player market... The iPhone was launched in 2007 creating the “smartphone” market we enjoy today (BTW: The one I purchased in 2007 still works!)

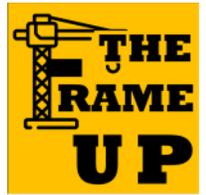


OK... We got all this powerful tech literally at our fingertips... What are the ways we’re using it in construction? After a break, Act Three: The Case of Felonious Friction

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Act Three: The Case of Felonious Friction

The 1,250-ft Empire State Building in New York City was completed after a little more than a year of construction. At the time of its completion in 1931, the men's marathon world record was 2 hours, 30 minutes by Harry Payne of the United Kingdom... In 2025, the 1,025-ft Waterline Building was completed in Austin, Texas after a little over 2 years of construction, and the world record for the men's marathon stands at just 2 hours set by Kelvin Kiptum of Kenya... If the best construction workers were as productive as their marathon running brethren, the Waterline project would have been completed in 10 months not 25! Why the difference? Friction!

In physics, friction is a force that resists relative motion between surfaces in contact arising from microscopic interactions... Colloquially, friction is any step or task that slows down a process... To create frictionless processes is the goal of every industry... From using face recognition to unlock your mobile phone to Amazon's "buy now" button to QR codes to sign into your favorite streaming service, firms are working to eliminate steps in every process... Apparently, the many players involved in the construction industry: owners, designers, engineers, authorities having jurisdiction, and builders, didn't get the memo!

With that, please welcome the podcast's third guest ever, Jean Goyat... He's a "low-code" development and solutions architect at DPR Construction, the 7th largest general contractor in the U.S. for 2024 according to Engineering News-Record... Jean is an expat from France where he grew up in Orleans (not the new one) just outside Paris... He came to the states and earned his Masters' degree in Construction Engineering and Project Management from the University of Texas in Austin in 2012... He joined DPR shortly after graduation and currently works out of its San Francisco office...

Blair Calhoun: Introduce yourself, where you work, and what you do!

Jean Goyat: Yeah, so my name is Jean Goyat. I work at DPR Construction, so a general contractor for the past 14 years, right out of college. And I'm now part of our software development team in the company. So I'm a low-code lead and API manager, if you had to put a title to it. I definitely did not start my career there, but that's where I'm at right now. So more coding aspects and less operations. Okay.

Blair Calhoun: Next question, where did you start. And what were you doing at the time?

Jean Goyat: Yeah. So when I started, my research back in college was around kind of using BIM tools for traffic management on infrastructure projects. And so what I loved is that the ability to use a model to communicate intent and have people communicate around that model, that's what got me into BIM on the building side. So I started as a BIM engineer back in the day at DPR, and so building information modeling, which now is called VDC, virtual design and construction engineer. But I started my career as an engineer on a large, very large, the Apple Campus 2 project. So I was thrown pretty much straight from college into like a massive mega billion dollar job. And that's how I started. Like I started like managing a little piece of that building as a 3D modeling guru to get people around the design and communicate around what it is. So that's where I started. And after 14 years, very different. Okay.

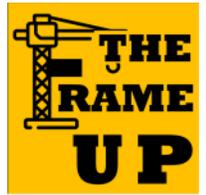
Blair Calhoun: Now that you've kind of broken down the VDC start, explain VDC to the outsider.

Jean Goyat: That's one of the things. So it started as BIM. So BIM, the building information model was kind of the name of the process and the tool back in the day. And it was the re-centered kind of communication of the design and coordination of the design around a 3D environment. So instead of looking at 2D plans, you're looking at a 3D object that represents

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the design, way clearer and way more easily understandable than what the 2D plans offered. So notably like clashes between systems, very difficult to figure out through 2D plans. They used to use light tables. So put transparent pieces of paper on top of each other to try and figure out what was clashing. We've evolved that into this BIM building and permission modeling process where you do that through different types of software that automatically pick up on clashes. So this helps showcase a lot more of the errors in the design or improvements that we could make at a scale that wasn't possible before.

Blair Calhoun: I asked, since its adoption two decades ago, has VDC delivered on its promise of accelerating IRL or in real life construction?

Jean Goyat: Yeah, so the eternal question that I think would make anyone a billionaire is, what is the BIM ROI? It's something that can be Googled extensively. No one has really been able to explain and to validate the value that BIM brings, just quantitatively, just because it's inherent to the construction industry. Like, you're never building the same building twice, or if you are, it's such a simple design that BIM is then overrated. It's like a bazooka for that type of project. So it's very difficult to quantify it. The qualitative aspect, though, I think, has really delivered. It has accelerated business processes in the fact that buildings have become more complex. So, it just enabled a level of complexity that we weren't able to achieve before, I think. So specifically on accelerating, I don't know if it's faster, but if you consider that it's less error-prone, then yes.

Blair Calhoun: Yes, Buildings are generally more complex than they were 100 years ago. VDC has facilitated this increase in complexity, but at a cost.

Jean Goyat: Agreed, yes. Well, one, it's a different expertise. So it's something to develop as an expertise in people and like what you expect from the people working on the job site. But I honestly don't know how we could do some of the projects has been on without it. And again, it's qualitative. It's just the amount of design options and ways to iterate. So it's a double-edged store, I would say. I would go back and say, because it's opened the door to so much more changes, people have taken advantage of making more changes. And so that is inherently something in the construction industry. When we had to take three weeks and write a letter for an RFI and post it, I think people were a lot more diligent in getting the RFI right. Now that BIM has accelerated being able to pinpoint issues and design and prefer solutions, I think the cycle is going to a lot faster, but therefore there's a lot more of it. So, it's taking the crutch away a little bit from a good design, I would say, into the realm of like, we'll fix it during coordination

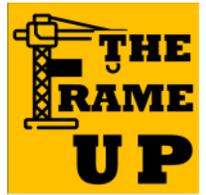
Blair Calhoun: RFI. Request for information is just that. As John explained, VDC has promoted a shift of some design coordination from prior to construction start to after it is well underway. With more design coordination required in the "field," I asked about the training of VDC engineers in the field?

Jean Goyat: Well, my initial reaction is that that's true for pretty much every role that we have. Like, I'm thinking about a junior estimator, for example. So, when (he or she) comes out of college as well, and gets into estimating, doesn't have field experience just like a new VDC engineer. And so, there's a portion of it that, yes, we definitely should train our folks to learn. There's also like the reality of like we're not, so most of the VDC engineers coming out are experts in construction and technology. so the focus is on making the software work well and it's more like which one that you're going to train someone in so we've had I've had field people join when I was a VDC manager that joined the team that had a lot of field experience and the blocker was the software and so it had the same type of output as someone who had a lot of software experience not field experience so it's just you know this is more of a people aspect of knowing what strengths and weaknesses someone has and then showing those up to coaching management. I think the main responsibility is still the VDC engineer and I think we're getting into kind of why I love the role. It's more the ability to communicate, to escalate and get agreement on some of the issues and just getting people out around the model to communicate. I'm kind of retailing the world, but that's alignment is the big thing of BIM. So it's less about, I think, knowledge and more about knowing who talk to, knowing what questions they ask, and getting people to discuss and

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validate the design through that process rather than actual knowing how to design. Absolutely needed. I just think the role of the VDC engineer is that communication platform more than the design expert.

Blair Calhoun: That's the rub. VDC is a powerful tool. But as with all tools, its capabilities are limited to those of the welder. A VDC engineer with limited field experience or a field engineer with limited VDC experience is a source of that friction I spoke about.

Jean Goyat: I said, I think the BIM process has also enabled back in my own career. It has pushed the design over to the contractor to an extent where I think it's needed more for the BIM engineer. I don't know if it's intended or not, but we've started putting a lot more on the shoulders of the coordination team, which is kind of the VDC engineers and subcontractors that are part of the design to figure out the design. And that's just a symptom of our construction industry again, of trying to go faster with sometimes less resources and lower margins, where the design is not always completely finished when we get a hands on it as contractors. And therefore, the expectation is we kind of finish it in coordination. And that for me is the piece that's not really fair to either designers or the coordination team. That's what becomes apparent. Now we're putting design responsibilities on someone that doesn't have a design background.

Blair Calhoun: As we discussed in the beginning of the interview, Jean recently transitioned from his VDC manager role into a new software development role. I asked him to describe the transition.

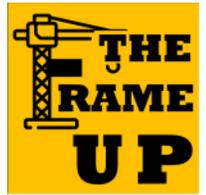
Jean Goyat: So, the path I took was deep into the weeds on projects for coordination, got promoted to manager, where now I had a team of engineers I had to plan for and figure out for a given project where the level of effort was going to be to put the right person on the job based on skill, based on expertise and level awareness of the types of projects that were on. So, I built myself a tool to help manage the team to plan kind of those requirements to then staff them correctly. That tool grew popular after a little push. So, over a few years, that became the national tool across our VDC group to start planning BIM requirements on jobs, VDC requirements. And I called it VDC project plan. So, it's literally a planning tool. That type of application is not restricted to BIM. So, the similar concept of VDC services can apply to a lot more. Design integration services. How are we going to help out the design something? Prefab, same thing. So, the company saw a need for someone that could develop those types of solutions at a scale that my role did not allow for as a BIM manager. So, when I shifted over to the development team, I became kind of a low code lead to help develop those types of efforts. And so, now it's kind of my full -time job. In addition to a lower level of getting the right data, it's providing tools for people to lower down that risk. So, part of it is planning. Others is just making sure the information flows during the different phases of the job. So that VDC project plan application covered everything. Pursuit, Pre-con, and construction for the slice of work that was BIM, and I build other tools that go the other way, across deep inside of a given phase across multiple work groups. So my day now is making sure that those platforms are developed to spec with the data underlying the underlying data through all these, like all the models, but not 3D models, the models of the data, are in line with what people expect to see and the level information they need at a given point. A lot of talk to say, I am low-level trying to develop the information pipelines that would then feed the applications to help with the planning process. So, I was enough of this squeaky wheel explaining that we needed this, that it said at some point, well, if you're so passionate about this and want to solve it, you go do it. So, now I'm in the role where I can actually action on this and define, for example, from one stage to another, what becomes the source of truth, not just in design, but say in cost, say in schedule, what software from a list of software is the most up-to-date and the one that people are going to need to look at a given point in time? Wow. So it's just taking the BIM level outside of just the 3D world and taking it across our datasets to do what I used to do the receive image engineer, which is creating that communication platform, which is, I'm just doing it at a bigger, larger level with some technology knowledge that I've acquired in addition to kind of my business knowledge. So I'm a unique position to be able to action upon data for use cases that I've actually experienced. Wow. That's a great, great place to be.

Blair Calhoun: Sounds like John's current role is developing software to address certain points of friction.

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Jean Goyat: My synonym to friction in my role is all at the information exchange. So, points, so the points of it, the interface in between different team, different phases, that's where I see a gap in kind of the process, where information fails to go through, where it's not accurate, where it's missed. Think of it as someone that has a lot of knowledge in the field and then retires, that right now is a lost pool of knowledge that is not translated back and moved back in the system. That's what I'm trying to solve right now. It's not inside various specialties or word groups. It's going to be added in between those and the information exchanges where I'm trying to more seamlessly like level kind of the exchange of information, so nothing gets lost. Because that for me is the point of friction right now. There's too many exchanges with too many losses of information at those interfaces.

Blair Calhoun: As we discussed AI's potential impact on the industry, I asked John, so you're king of construction for a day. What is your first royal decree?

Jean Goyat: Every building there's the door, there's a roof. Inherently, it's pretty much the same thing. That loss of information and that data mining of existing content has been possible even before AI. I think the roadblock was categorizing it in a way that helps inform the next building. And I think AI will have probably not as much success on that front until we figure out kind of that common language first to feed the AI. So, I'm going to go a lot more lower level for me. And back in the day, I was, for example, trying to kill PDFs on my job site. So, it was like no more PDFs on the job site to transfer design information. So, no more email attachments. It was like to try and prevent people from sharing designs that were too old. If I had to expand now, King of Construction for a day, I would say no more emails. That's it. We're not using emails anymore to exchange information. We're going to be using the platforms that we have with comments and kind of the tools and we're going to be restricted by the tools. Yes. Again, it's completely unnatural and unrealistic. But for example, back in the day, we were saying job sites would be paperless. I'm not saying the paperless, but you should see the amount of paper that magically disappeared as soon as emails became a lot easier to use on the phone, et cetera. So, at some point, I would love to see, even with AI, it could probably help with that. There's no more exchange of information to email as much. Yes. COVID, for example, has prompted, like, the chat and teams messaging to go a lot, a lot more predominantly. So, yeah. I would kill emails.

Blair Calhoun: Jean mentioned the challenge of determining the return on investment or ROI of using VDC. As we discussed AI in the industry, I stated that the real investment in AI or any new technology is time, and sticking to the tried and true is just another form of friction.

Jean Goyat: It's a carrot. And that's what makes people move towards it, I think. It's like AI will need that stuff to be in a single place where it can consume it. And so what we've seen, I've seen some of the tools in the startups now, kind of correlate on their information in one platform, which is connecting directly to ACC [Autodesk® Construction Cloud platform). So, then you have to have your stuff in ACC, because the AI output feeds from it. So now it's motivating people. If they want the carrot of AI, they're going to have to play ball with it, which is then using single, so I see the value of AI, not so much as an inherent product or tool, but in a way to motivate people to use those online platforms in a way that AI uses it, which is then in line with kind of what we're just talking. So, I'm more excited for that and the possibility of, you know, that's the first, the top step is AI and how do we get people on that stair is because they want to get to that top stage at some point.

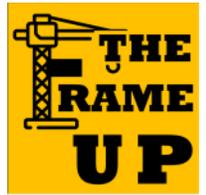
Blair Calhoun: Well, that was cool... I'd be remiss if I didn't acknowledge that construction is a very physically- and mentally-demanding activity with enormous hazards to workers' safety and health... There were five (5) recorded fatalities attributed to the construction of the Empire State Building, a really low number for the era given the complexity of the project... By comparison, there were zero recorded fatalities attributed to the construction of the Waterline project in Austin... After a break, some final thoughts...

What do the following four things have in common: sewing machine, bicycle, state park day pass, and 3D printer? You can check them out at your local public library! So, check out what you can check out. BTW: you can't actually take the printer home. Oh, they also have books at the library. Go ahead. You already paid for that stuff. Now, back to the show!

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The Outro – 438 words



Generative Artificial Intelligence is all the rage... Every major or soon to be major, technology firm is investing considerable resources in developing and deploying AI-based solutions for elementary school education to global cyber-security and everything in between... So, I decided to give Microsoft's generative-AI app, Copilot®, the same question I was given to see how it stacks up to the "human"... "Did John Travis play for the San Diego Chargers in 1967?"... "Yes, John..." Wait... No, he didn't...

Though it correctly noted that Mr. Travis was indeed drafted in 1966, it misstated that he was on the 1967 roster... When I told a couple of folks who are very familiar with the ins and outs of AI-chat bots like Copilot®, they both asked, "what prompt did you use?"... I explained that I used same prompt, nearly verbatim, that I was given?... Then on cue, I was told "Well, there's a whole science behind crafting the 'right' prompt..." I retorted to both: "If a user has to be a computer scientist to use it effectively, how useful is it really?"

I told my daughter the whole story during our weekly Sunday evening chat... She was amused then asked "why didn't you just 'Google it'"... Just didn't occur to me really... I knew where to look... So, why waste time looking thru search responses that were likely the first steps in wild goose chases... But our daughter is super smart, in the middle of a doctorate program in animal behavior and gives me great ideas and things to consider all the time...

As I looked at the many Google responses, most of them quite useless, one caught my eye... Something about the Continental Football League, CFL, a pro league made up of fifteen (15) U.S. and two (2) Canadian franchises! ... I'd never heard of it... Curious, I clicked the link and was looking at the roster of the 1967 San Jose Apaches! Notwithstanding the questionable team moniker, I found a real treasure! Turns out, John Travis played for his hometown team! The site had images from a game-day program... As I glanced at the images, I spied "Hall of Fame Coach and mastermind of the 'West Coast' offense" Who is Bill Walsh?... Yes, in what appeared to be his first head coaching gig in the professional ranks... Walsh's "West Coast" offense continues to cast a long shadow over the NFL some 50 years after its invention...



I gave Copilot another chance to see if it had "learned" anything... Just listen: "Short answer: No — John Travis did not play for the 1967 San Diego Chargers... He was on the Chargers' roster in 1966, appeared in 6 games, and in 1967 he played in the Continental Football League for the San Jose Apache, not the Chargers..." Copilot is a fast learner!

I hope you enjoyed our third episode... If you missed the first two, don't worry... You can access them from same site as this episode under Season 1 - Episodes 1 and 2...

Again, I'd like to thank my guest, Jean Goyat of DPR Construction...

A big shout out to our announcer, ad break voice, and idea generator, Siobhan Calhoun... Couldn't do it without you!

Our Theme Music, made famous on the "Perry Mason" television show, is "Park Avenue Beat" by Fred Steiner!

Please share the link to this episode and return to The Frame-up site for Episode 4 to be released next month!