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Richard Campbell

*Text Transcript of Show #218*  
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**Dare Obasanjo on Windows Live Services and Other Cool  
Projects  
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## Dare Obasanjo on Windows Live Services and Other Cool Projects 03/08/07

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(Music)

Hey, Rock heads! Stop studying for the star fleet midterms and listen up, it's time for another stellar episode of .NET Rocks!, the internet audio talk show for .NET developers with Carl Franklin and Richard Campbell. This is Lawrence Ryan announcing show #218, with guest Dare Obasanjo recorded live, Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2007. .NET Rocks! is produced by FranklinsNet - 'Training Developers to Work Smarter', and now bringing the Just-In-Time Team System class with Joel Semeniuk onsite for your development team online at [www.franklins.net](http://www.franklins.net). Support is also provided by 'telerik' - combining the best in Windows Forms and ASP.NET controls with first-class customer service - online at [www.telerik.com](http://www.telerik.com); and by 'CoDe Magazine - the leading independent magazine for .NET developers - online at [www.code-magazine.com](http://www.code-magazine.com). And now, the man whose mom's VCR is still flashing 'Midnight' - Carl Franklin.

**Carl Franklin:** Thank you very much, and welcome back to .NET Rocks!. It is a pleasure being here with you for the second time this week. Hey Richard Campbell.

**Richard Campbell:** Yes sir, how are you?

**Carl Franklin:** Good. Welcome to the Thursday show.

**Richard Campbell:** I love the Thursday show because earlier this week, I was down at Microsoft.

**Carl Franklin:** You were?

**Richard Campbell:** I were, I were, I was.

**Carl Franklin:** What were you doing down there?

**Richard Campbell:** I was at their TechFest, which is something they've never done before; it was...

**Carl Franklin:** Could we sound anymore phony? Come on! We're just like too good at this man; you were at Microsoft? sMicrosoft? No kidding. God! Really!

**Richard Campbell:** So Microsoft Research opened their doors for the first time ever to the public. Now it wasn't really the public; we were 'influencers', but the doors were open. And admittedly, not open very wide. They showed a few things, they had a little booth area, a bunch of little booths there, and they actually had...

**Carl Franklin:** Lot of stuff you can't talk about.

**Richard Campbell:** Well no, it was public; that was the whole thing is, they put it out on the news and so on. So, apparently every year, Microsoft does this Microsoft Research thing, but it's all internal; only the Microsoft people go to it. And this year, they had a one day, which was on Tuesday, where they allowed some influencers and so forth to see some things. So, apparently there is more, but we were not allowed to see that unless we worked for Microsoft. What was fascinating about this was, the researchers themselves were manning the booth - not a marketing person in sight. So, we really had a great time; I was with our friend Tim Huckaby, and Rocky Lhotka.

**Carl Franklin:** Well, can you talk about what you saw?

**Richard Campbell:** Absolutely I can talk about it.

**Carl Franklin:** So, what was it?

**Richard Campbell:** I saw so many things, you wouldn't believe it. So they showed a whiteboard communication system, where they had a camera aimed at the whiteboard, and as you drew on the whiteboard, it repeated it on another screen elsewhere, and vice versa - when they drew on the whiteboard it came back.

**Carl Franklin:** Well, aren't there such things as SmartBoards already; don't they already do that?

**Richard Campbell:** Yeah there are, but they are real expensive; this is a very inexpensive software based solution. So, they are showing is, you can make this much simpler. So, that was very clever. They even showed, you can play chess that way with the same sort of system, and Tic-Tac-Toe - it was ridiculous.

**Carl Franklin:** The Wii is still cooler than anything they can come up with.

**Richard Campbell:** They were doing really interesting stuff with Heart Rate Monitors, Accelerometers, GPS, and Cell phones, so that people jogging would have a detailed record of their run, which is not that particularly innovative. Tim's done stuff similar to that before, but the really bizarre part or clever part was, they created



a sort of social interaction piece around it. So, it took this record of your run, and it knew how hard you worked on it, and you share it with everybody else that does run. So, you can sort of compare runs; and that way, based on how much physical fitness you have, it could suggest other runs for you, that were of comparable difficulty; and then you imagine that across multiple cities, so it's like, "Hey, I am going to Seattle and I want to do some biking", and based on the biking I have already done, it will make suggestions for comparable difficulty biking. I thought it was very clever.

(00:05:25)

**Carl Franklin:** That is interesting; I always thought that GPS is like you running; your bike was neat -- so, in case you forgot where you went.

**Richard Campbell:** Or where you were. Well, Tim's always been about that; he wants a continuous stream of where he is at any given moment; but I think that's mostly to do with his wife.

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah, okay. Well, that sounds cool. I couldn't go, just from scheduling or whatever; I was invited, but I couldn't go. We'll talk some more about that at the MVP Summit where we are next week actually. Couple of announcements before we get to some email; the New York tour is still a hot commodity; Greg Brill's Infusion New York City tour offer, which you can read about at [shrinkster.com/kh6](http://shrinkster.com/kh6).

The gist of it is, if you want to work in Manhattan for a really progressive and fun company - Nick Landry works there - Infusion, you can go to Manhattan, they'll move you there, they'll give you a free apartment for a year, they just want some really good people down there - some .NET people - [shrinkster.com/kh6](http://shrinkster.com/kh6). Also, there's a gig in Washington DC for ASP.NET Gurus. I talked about it in depth in last week's show. I haven't yet blogged about it with all the details, but I will. It's in Washington DC, basically ASP.NET. You have to be an ASP.NET God, but it's a competitive salary; you get benefits and equity, and if you are interested in that, email us at [dotnetrocks@franklins.net](mailto:dotnetrocks@franklins.net). And speaking of email, we got an email from Bill Tudor - just came in, just before we sat down to record this in-show.

He says, "Did I hear correctly? Christmas in March? Two shows per week! I think I'll run out and buy a bunch of telerik r.a.d. controls; or maybe even send a resume to Greg Brill at Infusion Development. I am going to have to listen to that last episode of .NET Rocks! one more time, just to be sure. Keep up the good

work. P.S. I have only about one more hour of commute time per week to fill up." - To Hanselminutes? "Your quality is top notch in both content and presentation. Thanks for every show so far. Bill." That was fun.

**Richard Campbell:** That's true. And hey, it's Thursday and there's a new show, so it must be true.

**Carl Franklin:** So, like the ultimate experience is, listening to .NET Rocks! just after it comes out, sipping on some coffee - if in your .NET Rocks! Mug, ordering up some telerik r.a.d. controls, and emailing your resume to Greg Brill man, we're just like...

**Richard Campbell:** You're out of control.

**Carl Franklin:** You're out of control -- living the life. Okay, you got something over there?

**Richard Campbell:** I do have an interesting one; and in a previous show - I believe it was Paul Randal's show - 217, we mentioned this Website about the Top 10 most influential people in the Microsoft .NET World; and it was published by a fellow by the name of Yow-Hann Lee. Well, lo and behold, I found an email from December where he mailed us and said, "Dear Carl and Richard, I am a long time listener of your show and I wanted to thank you guys for bringing enthusiasm and excitement to the .NET community. My fiancée and fellow tech geek even finds it funny when she catches me humming along with the Toy Boy song.

**Carl Franklin:** Okay. Sorry.

**Richard Campbell:** It's all very viral, isn't it? "My favorite shows include Michelle Leroux Bustamante -- what an awesome name -- Huihong Luo, Roy Osherove, and the TechEd Europe Agile Panel."

**Carl Franklin:** That was awesome.

**Richard Campbell:** "Roy did such a good job singing an Agile rendition of Que Sera, I just have to show it to my friends."

**Carl Franklin:** That was great. He was good.

**Richard Campbell:** "On a side note, any thoughts of having him join your band?"

**Carl Franklin:** Well, since he lives in Israel, that would be kind of tough. And last time I looked at Real Time Collaboration software, it wasn't happening between Israel and Connecticut.

**Richard Campbell:** Not working all that well.



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**Carl Franklin:** Not going to work all that well.

**Richard Campbell:** You've tried some of this. Then he goes on to reference this -- in any case, sort of my suggestion have you not seen this Top 10 .NET people on the Internet? And then he goes on to reference his Website with his Top 10 .NET people and we've talked about that in the previous show at [shrinkster.com/ml5](http://shrinkster.com/ml5), and mentioned that we came in as a pair - apparently we are connected at number five - and he suggests that perhaps we could do an online poll to vote for your top .NET people.

(00:10:04)

**Carl Franklin:** That's a great idea.

**Richard Campbell:** I think that's kind of a cool idea.

**Carl Franklin:** I don't look at us as sort of like .NET gurus as much as we are 'enablers'. We just sort of find the people and talk to them and let them...

**Richard Campbell:** We are drug dealers of the .NET world.

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah. Well, we don't really make the content; we just sort of enable it.

**Richard Campbell:** That's right.

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah.

**Richard Campbell:** So, an interesting idea - and we are going to be doing some more stuff with the Website as far as it's concerned; I think we should do this.

**Carl Franklin:** It's not a bad idea.

**Richard Campbell:** Let people put in their names. "All the best for future shows. Yow-Hann Lee."

**Carl Franklin:** Very good Yow-Hann; and sorry it took us so long to get to that.

**Richard Campbell:** He did ask for a DNR swag, so we'll see if we can arrange that for him too.

**Carl Franklin:** One mug, coming up. All right Richard, let's get to our guest shall we? This is going to be a great show, because Dare Obasanjo is here, and he is a Program Manager on the Windows Live Communication Services Platform team. He brings his love of solving problems with XML to building the server infrastructure utilized by the Windows Live

Messenger, Windows Live Hotmail and Windows Live Spaces teams. Before that he was a member of Microsoft's WebData team, which among other things, develops the components within the System.Xml and System.Data namespace of the .NET Framework. He is also the author of RSS Bandit, an Open Source RSS reader written in C#. Please welcome Dare Obasanjo. Hi Dare.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Hey.

**Carl Franklin:** Hey.

**Richard Campbell:** Now, I poked at the Wikipedia and found your entry there, and I think what you left off your bio is, you're the son of the President of Nigeria?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah, that's my dad.

**Richard Campbell:** Wow!

**Carl Franklin:** That is really cool.

**Richard Campbell:** That also leads to some terrible jokes.

**Carl Franklin:** Well, I mean, yeah, because the only thing I know about Nigeria is, that's where all that spam comes from.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Every once in a while, somebody at work forwards me some spam and says, "Hey can you send it up to dad to do something about this?"

**Carl Franklin:** Oh wow! So, are you from Nigeria or is he from Nigeria, what's the geographical...

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah, I am originally Nigerian; I spent I guess my first 17? 19? -- I spent my teenage years there, and I moved over here to go to college about ten years ago -- make it 17.

**Carl Franklin:** I see. Does dad want you to get into politics like him, or is he happy that you are out of it?

**Dare Obasanjo:** I don't know; but he definitely doesn't understand why I work at Microsoft, because I should go back to school and finish my education.

**Carl Franklin:** Oh! Okay.

**Richard Campbell:** Do something real huh?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah. So, like this goofing around at Microsoft, messing with computers it doesn't seem like a real living.



**Carl Franklin:** And it's not just messing with computers; I mean System.Xml, System.Data, these are fundamental namespaces -- I don't know of anyone who doesn't work with them in .NET. So, way to go. What all did you do on pick one of those namespaces?

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, I probably worked on stuffing some XML; so I was a PM for all the XML Schema related technologies; so, XML Schema Validation, the Schema Object Model. I was a PM for the XPathNavigator and the DOM for about two years.

**Carl Franklin:** Okay.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Oh yeah, and then I worked on the Extreme XML Column on MSDN, and I got the XML MVP category created for XML, so I was the MVP Liaison for a while as well.

**Carl Franklin:** Don XML is very happy for that, I am sure.

**Richard Campbell:** You've done some serious work on the XML side of things. I get the sense that a lot of people don't take XML all that seriously, but the capabilities are pretty insignificant. And of course the other thing is RSS Bandit, which by all accounts you just rattled off on a whim.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah, because I think I had heard once that it was really easy to build a GUI app that embeds Internet Explorer in C#. So, I was like, that's cool, I have never written a GUI app before, or how hard could it be, and at the time, I was doing the Extreme XML Column, and I kept looking for like ideal ways to show, here's how you do some stuff with XML, here's how you do XSLT Schema Validation messing out with the DOM, without it just being a plain, boring, old code sample. And I saw the stuff and I was like, "Hey here's a great example of doing cool stuff with XML."

(00:15:00)

So, I slapped RSS Bandit together in about -- as far as really -- the very, very first version in about a weekend. It took me maybe like a week to at least get the code cleaned up, so a good code sample.

**Carl Franklin:** And let's tell everybody what it is, just for those who don't know.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Well, RSS Bandit is an RSS Reader, so you can use it to subscribe to blogs, news sites, video feeds, whatever, and read them all in like, a desktop app in one place.

**Carl Franklin:** Okay.

**Richard Campbell:** Hey, RSS is a big part of this show.

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah, it certainly is; like you said Richard, it's one of those things that -- it's GUI and it's Plumbing, and sometimes hard to get excited about that, but lots of developers are; in fact, one guy we know Don Demsak changed his last name to XML -- or his nickname is Don Xml anyway. He is that excited about XML; it certainly has enabled a lot of real world technologies.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah, he was one of the first crop of MVPs that I got to pick; that was pretty cool.

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah. So what about System.Data? Is it just because the two are so intimately related that it spilled over into System.Data, or did you work any ADO stuff or...

**Dare Obasanjo:** The teams were merged, because at Microsoft we looked at XML and Relational Data as a pyramid of data access technologies. So, we saw the developers kind of have this triad of data access technologies; they have XML, which is usually how they transfer the data; they have Relational, which is how they store the data; and then they have Objects, which is how they manipulate the data. So, we got the XML and Relational aspects all together, and we kept on trying to bridge the rocks triangle we used to call it. So, Relational Objects and XML. And there are people on our teams who used to work on -- it used to be called -- it was called a lot of things; it was called X#, then Cw, and it eventually turned into LINQ. And LINQ is -- and XLinq and DLinq are basically a manifestation of that vision of treating all of that as just one, kind of, data access stack.

**Carl Franklin:** So, LINQ started as X#? Now, I wondered what happened to X#.

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, a lot of that -- well, that was a lot - a lot of ideas in X# eventually made their way into it.

**Carl Franklin:** I see.

**Richard Campbell:** Because LINQ does have sort of an origin with Anders, right? I think...

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah. So, X# turned into Cw, and then you can go out and try like -- I think there is actually a download for Cw, and I wrote an article about Cw that's on [XML.com](http://XML.com). I can see some of the early ideas that eventually made their way into LINQ.



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**Carl Franklin:** So, really it's suffice to say, you are an XML guy; you don't really do the relational stuff or the dataset stuff or anything like that. All right. Well, it's been a long time since System.Xml shipped; what have you really been focusing on since?

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, about two-and-a-half years ago, I moved over to what was then the MSN Communication Platform team - I think we are now the Windows Live Communication Platform team? I don't know, the names change all the time.

**Carl Franklin:** MSN replaced with Windows Live basically -- search and replace.

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, I worked on the backend for Spaces -- well, Windows Live Spaces which is our blogging service. So, I designed Web Services, kind of designed data modeling - if you would, for a number of our features around Access Control, Social Networking.

**Carl Franklin:** How is that Windows Live Spaces blog thing going; is that popular?

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, according to comScore, Windows Live Spaces is the most popular blogging site in the world.

**Richard Campbell:** Wow!

**Carl Franklin:** Now, is that just because every Microsoft employee has a mandatory account there; is that why?

**Dare Obasanjo:** No. Actually, nobody has a mandatory account there.

**Carl Franklin:** I am just kidding.

**Dare Obasanjo:** You could say it's because we have the widest reach; so, people always kind of question that number, they go, "Well, it's not as popular as MySpace", and that is true in those markets; it's not as popular. Like, it's not number one in the US, but it's like number two or number three in different markets like in South America, in Asia, and in Europe, which in aggregate, makes it the most visited blogging service or social networking service in the world.

(00:20:03)

**Carl Franklin:** That is amazing. I would not have thought that.

**Richard Campbell:** So, how many people are we are talking about here?

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, the last ComScore numbers were 100 million people - almost.

**Carl Franklin:** Geez!

**Richard Campbell:** Yeah, so much for our traction.

**Carl Franklin:** Really. So, it really is a sort of a MySpace kind of place, right, where you setup a space.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah, you could call it that; like overlapping feature sets.

**Carl Franklin:** Because that's the popular one in the United States, so that's why we have it -- Windows Live Messenger - the Client as well as the backend service, and there is also the communication services -- every developer gets email from Microsoft, and you see this Windows Live Communication Services and stuff, but I never had it explained to me as to what it is. What is that?

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, the Windows Live Communication Services are kind of -- I like to think of them as our -- like our social or communications applications -- the platform that powers them. So this is, Hotmail, Messenger, Spaces - so, the backend to support people communicating with one another in Windows Live.

**Carl Franklin:** Well, do you need to run that though? I mean, isn't that something that you guys run at Microsoft or is it something...

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah that's all in the cloud.

**Carl Franklin:** Oh, I see. So, I sort of had an idea like it's a server that you setup in your company to do like, privately controlled chatting in your enterprise or something like that. That's not what it is?

**Dare Obasanjo:** No, that's not Windows Live. We do have a Live Communication Server, which is...

**Carl Franklin:** I think that's what I am thinking of.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah, Live Communication Server is an Enterprise IM product that you can install in your Enterprise and have IM within your Enterprise.

**Carl Franklin:** So, the word 'server' versus 'services' is what differentiates those two things.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah.



**Carl Franklin:** Cool. And I imagine the server is -  
- you have encryption and all kinds of stuff that  
Enterprise is like - private messaging and stuff?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Blogging...

**Carl Franklin:** Blogging - yeah, big brother stuff.

**Dare Obasanjo:** That's what Enterprise is like.

**Carl Franklin:** They do, don't they? I am so glad  
I work for myself man, I just can't tell you. So,  
MSN Messenger, the Communication Services --  
so, the Communication Services is also behind  
Hotmail - and that underwent a redesign recently,  
didn't it?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yes.

**Carl Franklin:** I didn't see it myself, but one of  
the RDs was commenting about how nice it  
looked. Did you have any hand in that?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Not directly, no.

**Carl Franklin:** Behind the scenes?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yes. In some of the services at  
the Hotmail team user. So, the services with  
power like the contacts and so on, I worked on;  
but the stuff that people -- new people are mostly  
impressed by how the use of AJAX and how  
Outlook, like it now is, and I had nothing to do in  
any of that.

**Carl Franklin:** I got to say that, if I worked at  
Microsoft, I think I would like your job the most of  
anybody I have ever talked to, because you're  
actually forming the structures and the services  
that power all these really high profile and highly  
used services. I really like that idea.

**Dare Obasanjo:** That's kind of why I first got  
interested in XML, because XML was kind of a  
building block - fundamental building block for  
data interchange, and I saw that everybody was  
going to be using XML and in a few short years,  
everybody at Microsoft was; I used to work with  
practically every team at Microsoft. Office does  
stuff with XML, SQL Server does stuff with XML,  
BizTalk does stuff with XML, Visual Studio does  
stuff XML, everybody was doing things with XML.  
And about two-and-a-half years ago, I kind of,  
now looked around and said "Well, it seems that  
XML -- the doctoring curve was kind of over, it  
was now a maturing technology, and I started  
looking at, "What would I like to build?" And I had  
looked at RSS Bandit, and I like building  
consumer software. So, then I looked within the  
company like, where can I be at the core of  
building software that lots of consumers, even  
people like me can use; my girlfriend, my mom,

my sister, and I came over to - at the time MSN,  
and I remember sitting down with my boss and  
he said, "Well, we're thinking about building a  
blogging service; it may have, like social  
networking - what do you think?" And I was like,  
"Wow, that sounds pretty awesome", and I came  
on the team; I got there just after Spaces got in  
there, and the growth has been phenomenal  
since then. And I have been working on  
Messenger -- working with Messenger team as  
well, and Messenger is like, the world's number  
one IM client -- I think short of 50 million active  
users.

(00:25:07)

**Carl Franklin:** Now, what exactly you do in  
Messenger?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Right now, if you are on  
Windows Live Messenger, you see -- and one of  
your friends has a space for example, you get a  
notification that there has been some changes  
about them.

**Carl Franklin:** Like they put up a message on  
their space or something?

**Dare Obasanjo:** You get a notification that  
something has changed about them and when  
you click on that you see this little window into  
what they have done in their space. So, that  
feature set is called Gleams and ContactCards,  
and I wasn't there for the original design of the  
feature but I have been working on that feature in  
-- over the past year.

**Carl Franklin:** Wow!

**Dare Obasanjo:** So it kind of -- which takes your  
IM client from being just a communication device  
for simultaneous synchronous communication,  
we kind of turned it into -- like an aggregator of  
what your friends and people close to you are  
doing.

**Carl Franklin:** Now you are working on the  
services that the client calls; you don't work on  
the actual client, right?

**Dare Obasanjo:** No, I don't work on the actual  
client; I work on the services the client calls -  
that's correct.

**Richard Campbell:** I guess the challenge here  
is, making sure you get the right data in the right  
place, so that those clients have something to  
show. I mean Gleams are a very clever idea, that  
you are able to see just enough to know there is  
something different - it's almost like an  
enticement to go look.



## Dare Obasanjo on Windows Live Services and Other Cool Projects 03/08/07

**Carl Franklin:** I would like to mention that this portion of .NET Rocks! is brought to you by our friends at telerik - telerik r.a.d controls – “the most comprehensive suite of components for Windows Forms and ASP.Net applications”, and you can find them online at [www.telerik.com](http://www.telerik.com). Hey Dare, every once in a while, the Windows Messenger Server goes down for a few seconds or something and it's just something that we have learnt to live with - can't log you in right now, try back in five minutes. What happens in that time? Does some of that -- have you ever had a situation where like, somebody runs into your room and says, “blah, blah, blah” and you got to like, go and edit an XML file somewhere before the world can get back to IMing?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Well, outages happen, sometimes it's -- like I said, we have 258 million users, which is a lot more users than anybody else in the world has, and sometimes...

**Carl Franklin:** Just a little pressure.

**Richard Campbell:** That's arguably one quarter of the total population of the Internet has an MSN account.

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah.

**Dare Obasanjo:** And uses it actively.

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah.

**Richard Campbell:** Yeah. So, it's got to be real - must be a phenomenal engineering challenge to keep all of those -- it's not one computer somewhere; that's a whole lot of machines trying to work in concert.

**Carl Franklin:** So people probably get really nervous, when that happens, right?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Well, yeah, and I guess the other thing is like, you share things like -- maybe be somebody says, “Oh, we have an outage or, somebody tripped over a cable, or a network switch is bad or something, and it affects half a percent of our users or something -- well, half a per cent of 250 million, that's....

**Richard Campbell:** Yeah, still over a million people.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah, that's still over a million people.

**Carl Franklin:** Have you heard stories of, like the phones ringing off the wall and people like, sending memos that are really angry and shit - I can imagine.

**Richard Campbell:** Taking MSN pretty seriously.

**Carl Franklin:** Okay, well I don't want you to really talk about that. That's okay, we could move.

**Richard Campbell:** Well, what can you say? I would only -- the other thing I would throw in there is, it's got to be a site that's hacked at all the time.

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Oh yeah.

**Richard Campbell:** It's just like a non-stop -- the greatest exercise of security and reliability on the Internet today -- out there is one of the most extreme systems that exist.

**Carl Franklin:** And let me just say that I know that it doesn't -- I know that everybody probably gets really stressed out when that happens but the reality is, if IM is down for 5 seconds, it's not the end of the world for anybody - I don't care who you are - if it's down for a few seconds it's really no big deal. So, you wait a few minutes, it's really no big deal. Okay, next topic Richard, how to bring an interview show to its knees -- screeching halt.

**Richard Campbell:** It's only MSN. It's not a big deal.

**Carl Franklin:** I don't think it's a big deal personally...

**Richard Campbell:** I know we all use it everyday; I mean, it's like water.

**Carl Franklin:** If a doctor is using it to talk to somebody in the field who is like, giving brain surgery or something, then that's kind of important but....

**Richard Campbell:** I think that's more of an issue for the doctor; why are you using IM for that?

(00:30:00)

**Carl Franklin:** I think you are right Richard; it's a chat program, come on!

**Dare Obasanjo:** I mean, a lot of our users don't feel that way though; they get really passionate about it.

**Carl Franklin:** Well, you would be surprised how passionate people get about this show - it's a show and we get -- sometimes we get...



**Richard Campbell:** Pretty anxious emails.

**Carl Franklin:** Pretty anxious emails. Web Data Team; Dare, there's got to be a lot of stories in there about things that you worked on - in general.

**Dare Obasanjo:** I think one of the things that I thought was really cool was, X# and LINQ and Cw on XML -- I mean when I first got to the team, I guess like five years ago, it was interesting because we had this bunch of people who worked on the first generation of the product, and they are like, "We don't think we like a world where there is one set of APIs for accessing your data on the wire, another set of APIs for converting it to -- for what they use to manipulate it in memory and yet another set of APIs when you want to start unless you move to a world where you have -- it's just one consistent model - and instead of continually building, let's build a new XML API, let's build an XML document, let's build an XPath Navigator, let's build a new DOM, let's build a new kind of dataset or whatever - why don't we just build one consistent interface that supports the operations you want to do, whether it's query or whatever, and party on."

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah.

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, I came in actually was working on -- so we had like people doing stuff kind of in parallel; so I was working on the .NET 2.0 and they were working on -- the X# team at the time was working on, like feature stuff. And there was a bit of resentment on our side like -- I mean, people who were working on stuff, because we are like, "Hey man, we are trying to ship, and you guys are working on crazy futuristic stuff." And we'd have presentations and we are like, "Here is what we are working on, with your shipping stuff today". And they would say, "We are working on this really cool, fantastic stuff, and maybe it will be X# -- maybe it will be bound to X# -- and we are like -- I'd think to myself "That's crazy", because we already have C# and VB.NET, people don't want yet another .NET language, which is never going to fly. I mean I am kind of like sure enough, X# kind of, morphed something the product team was working on into something that we kind of, pushed out to research in Cw. But then I started actually looking at the language, after spending a whole bunch of time working on -- so, worked on XML Schema - one of the biggest problems people had with XML Schema is that using Schemas as a way to map the objects is a very error-prone activity and task because XML Schema has all these rich concepts that don't really map very well to the concepts in your object-oriented language. So, I kind of had gotten burned with

thinking that you can have totally different data tasks and data models, and you just kind of convert between them, that instead we should unify it. And then I started looking at Cw and it was actually pretty brilliant stuff. And it was not only, kind of, unifying the models, it was things like, why don't we make querying a core part of the language, not something that maybe you want to do XML, you fire up something, and shoot an XPath string off; you want to do SQL, you fire something up and you shoot a SQL string off to some SQL interpreter, and we want to loop over objects, you do a For loop - why don't we just have like, 'Select' and all of that in the language, move those semantics up and have the -- whatever, if it's XML, it knows what to do with 'selects' and that's statically typed. And let's do some like myths -- and one of the problems we also had with XML Schema was, XML by nature is like dynamic data; like, one of the cool things about markup language is that you can put any markup in -- you can put any markup, you want in there, and if the processor doesn't understand it, it skips it.

**Carl Franklin:** Right.

**Dare Obasanjo:** But the notion of like, static typing where you know, all your type's upfront and you err if you don't understand the types is actually in conflict with that. And that's something we kept hitting up against and we knew the solution...

**Carl Franklin:** That's why we moved to the dynamic language...

**Dare Obasanjo:** ...the solution wasn't just trying to figure out how to build static languages over XML but it was for the languages to become more dynamic like XML.

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah.

**Dare Obasanjo:** And that's kind of like the folks behind X# and Cw, and eventually like, they kind of spread the virus, I would like to call it, to folks like Anders and they loved it.

(00:35:01)

And now we have LINQ.

**Carl Franklin:** So, if I am hearing you right, I mean, were you one of many who had this realization or did you just sort of, come into a meeting one day and say, "Hey, I have figured out that we need this, this and this, and they said, "Yeah, that's interesting", and then LINQ was there.



**Dare Obasanjo:** Erik Meijer who is one of the key folks behind C#, X#, and I guess works closely with folks on LINQ, especially VB.NET - VB 9.0 I think they call it?

**Carl Franklin:** Right.

**Dare Obasanjo:** He and I used to talk all the time; so he would infect me with his ideas, I talk to him about my experiences with XML Schema and so on, so it was kind of a cross pollination.

**Richard Campbell:** I do get this vision of like, three paths, the C#, the X# and the LINQ guys, all walking towards the same point and going, "Hey, we are kind of going to the same place." And then, a whole lot of synthesis between those different ideas coming together - and they seem to have gone in different ways now again.

**Carl Franklin:** Concurrent thinking; yeah, that just sort of meets up in the middle. It's pretty interesting.

**Richard Campbell:** Is that reasonable? Do you think - is that what happened?

**Dare Obasanjo:** No, actually it was kind of an evolution; so X# kind of evolved -- X# was what we built on the product team, and that kind of evolved into C# when it went into the research division -- and then some of the thinking from C# became LINQ - also with other ideas that the C# team also brought in as well; it wasn't a search and replace, C# became LINQ, but there are other ideas that the C# team brought in and that kind of, informed the creation of LINQ.

**Carl Franklin:** Now, did C# ever find its way outside Redmond?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah, I think there's a download available and I also wrote an article about it in January of 2005 for XML.com called '*Introducing C-Omega*'

**Richard Campbell:** So, I shrunk the link; it's at [shrinkster.com/m0f](http://shrinkster.com/m0f), and that's a link to Microsoft Research in C#, and there is a description, some documentation, and a download, if you want to take yourself for a spin.

**Carl Franklin:** Very good.

**Dare Obasanjo:** That's what it was called, that's right. It was X#, zen, C#.

**Richard Campbell:** Okay, and ultimately some of that has influenced LINQ as well.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yes.

**Carl Franklin:** Fascinating.

**Dare Obasanjo:** And you can see, there are a bunch of papers from Erik Meijer talking about unifying -- there are links for papers on that page; Unifying Objects, Tables, and Documents, Programming with Rectangles, Triangles, and Circles, which was his play on Objects, Documents, and Tables.

**Richard Campbell:** Fascinating stuff. I remember years ago when XML was just started getting hip and people talking about replacing databases with XML. And as a database guy, I was pretty offended.

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah. Well, the kinds of databases that you work on are huge; you can't even imagine XML replacing that.

**Richard Campbell:** It does strike me that XML is not relational. Am I right there?

**Dare Obasanjo:** No, it's not; it's not meant to be relational which was kind of dis-cool for a lot of relational people to grok, because it's all about restructuring it in hierarchies, and we had hierarchical databases back 20, 25 years ago, and they lost out to Relational Databases. Relational is the better model for storing like interlinked, long persistent data. It's not like -- but XML works for singular documents that are like, self-contained.

**Richard Campbell:** Right. And you do need querying tools for that kind of data too, and hence C#, C# -- I mean all this work has really been around treating that data effectively.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yes.

**Carl Franklin:** Are you satisfied to the extent that C# and VB.NET have become more dynamic, or do you feel that there is more work to do after Orcas?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Well, actually haven't tried C# like real recent like -- well, not the C# 3.0 previews real recently. In fact, I haven't really tried much in the C# compiler previews. I think C# is never going to be fully dynamic. So, I have been doing -- because I work on Web stuff now, I have been doing a lot of JavaScript development - and I have looked at Jython.

**Richard Campbell:** Oh, right.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah. I think it's really cool that you can send some stuff over the wire and be like, foo.name - if it has a name - if there's a name field there, there's a value there, if there's no name field there, it's null.



(00:40:07)

You don't have to predefine anything; you just kind of do that. And it's like -- the language is just -- you don't have to know what's coming on over the wire; you don't have to put data in straitjackets. And I think VB used to be like that, and I believe it will want to go back in that direction with VB 9.0; and I don't think C# - C# is probably never going to be that dynamic, because C# developers like the fact that the languages statically typed. Erik Meijer has this quote...

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah, that's my next question. Do you think VB is going to pick up the slack there and change or are we looking at a Ruby for .NET eventually, that's going to be the dynamic offering; what do you think?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Well, I think there's room for a lot of these languages, because there already is the Python for .NET which I should start messing around with. So, I think that we should move away from -- try and have just the one language and force everything into that one language, and use a language that's best suited for the job.

**Carl Franklin:** But you know that most developers just program in one language. I mean that's the truth.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Then that language starts to become a kitchen sink. In the Java world, they are facing that problem today, because Java -- unlike C# developers for some reason like, the Java developers I guess are up in arms about Java wants to be -- it is introduced like more functional features -- querying, new keywords, they are all up in arms.

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah, because it's changed and change is bad. So, there must be a fundamental rift I think, maybe between the people who sell development tools and languages, and then the innovation that's going on, which threatens to move people to different languages, when clearly the majority says, "I want to do everything in the kitchen sink". - That must be a very interesting dynamic at Microsoft.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah it is. What is actually surprising to me is that I haven't seen as much angst around the language being evolved in the .NET and C# world as I have in the Java world. In the Java world it seems like people are like, language is around for ten years, we're done; we don't want to learn any new stuff. Like we get new stuff -- we didn't get new stuff for the past ten years; we want it to be like C or C++.

**Carl Franklin:** Well, they have finally figured out -- they've swallowed the pills and learned all the stuff that you need to do to get Java to work, which is more analogues maybe to the C++ programmer who comes through and learns all the tricks and the little techniques that you do and you program those little keystrokes and your pinkies and your ring fingers, and then, oh my God, you got to learn all this new stuff.

**Richard Campbell:** We had this stickiness with Microsoft technology; I am thinking VB 6.0 -- the number of people who were appalled at .NET and didn't want to leave.

**Dare Obasanjo:** That's right. I don't think VB 6.0 was mature for a while. Now that I think about it, I think the difference with C# is that C# hasn't been around as long, and the second thing is that C# has evolved with every new version, when we did -- with C# 2.0, there's a bunch of new stuff -- it is a language. So, C# developers are kind of being trained at -- in a big new release, there will be radical changes to the language - like C# 2.0, there are templates and so on - sorry, it's generics, not templates. But with Java for a while, there wasn't like anything radical being done for the language for like - I think like the first five, six years. I don't remember anything as radical as like the Tiger release where they did a bunch of catching up to C# with generics and 'foreach' and stuff like that. I think there's more shock there - and I guess the same with VB.

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(00:45:00)

Some day Richard, we got to have Jay my brother on the show to talk about his experience with Java. He writes in a text editor; he doesn't use any development tools, he does everything POJO, Plain Old Java Objects, which I don't know Dare, you seem to be a little more plugged into the Java community; do you think more people in Java are doing things that way without



relying on tools, or is most of it being done with UI - that kind of stuff?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Well, most of the developers I talk to use Eclipse, which probably is really cool.

**Carl Franklin:** Jay must be in the minority.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Although I have also seen a bunch of Java developers who used like the old school tools like Emacs or Vi. I don't think I have ever met a C# developer who used any of those...

**Carl Franklin:** Except for Don Box.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah.

**Richard Campbell:** We only ever did it as a gag, just to show we could.

**Carl Franklin:** That's true. I don't know, I kind of think Don likes Emacs. I think he might use that if he ever is going to write code. And Chris Anderson too; two of them are like two peas in a pod. So, getting back to your bio here that you emailed me - things to do, if I become an Evil Overlord - number 190, why is that at the end of your -- or is that just your email tag?

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, there's this list on the Web, the 'Evil Overlord' list, and I found it like when I was in college and I thought it was really cool, because it reminded me of that movie "*The Princess Bride*", well some of them are similar to the stuff in "*The Princess Bride*", and I actually used that signature for a while and then I remember about -- and it's random, it's always changing, and it's stuff like -- what's the one I sent you.

**Carl Franklin:** It says, "If my mad scientist/wizard tells me he has almost perfected my Superweapon but it still needs more testing, I will wait for him to complete the tests. No one ever conquered the world using a beta version."

**Dare Obasanjo:** There's a one, it's like, "If I am dangling over a precipice and the hero reaches his hand down to help me, I will not attempt to pull him down; instead I will let him rescue me, thank him properly, and then shoot him."

**Carl Franklin:** Because you are a gentleman after all.

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, I thought they were funny, and I was using them when I first got here. I think during my second year, I had a manager -- like my bosses boss show up and like, "Hey, you send a lot of mails to private companies and customers and so on, but you think it's kind of

weird for a Microsoft person to have an Evil Overlord doing a signature?" Does that send the wrong signal? I was like, "who wants to do work with the evil empire?" So, that was appropriate.

**Carl Franklin:** Isn't that the goal? Yeah, come on!

**Dare Obasanjo:** I actually like to take that out for until I switch jobs; and now, like my current boss doesn't care; he thinks it's funny.

**Carl Franklin:** Well, your current boss probably understands developers.

**Richard Campbell:** Let's jump back to Windows Live for a second, the Windows Live SDK -- and this is pretty recent stuff. It hasn't been officially announced yet? Is it public?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah, it is public, yes.

**Carl Franklin:** What is it?

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, the Windows Live SDK is -- if you go to [dev.live.com](http://dev.live.com), it has links and information about Windows Live SDK, but Windows Live SDK is primarily a collection of Web services that are live to interact with Windows Live services.

**Richard Campbell:** There's quite a few.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yes, quite a few; so, Search, Spaces, Alerts, adCenter. It also lists some -- Virtual Earth Maps - and it also lists some of our client SDKs as well.

**Richard Campbell:** So, it will get into -- even it will get into Messenger.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yes.

**Richard Campbell:** So, what can you do with Messenger?

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, Messenger has -- we call them activities. So, you can initiate either like a game or video sharing or file sharing or whatever, like in a side window with another person. So, I think if you right click on your messenger today and select 'start an activity', it actually takes you to a drop down of a whole bunch of photo, swap, search, and a bunch of games; like you can do whiteboarding, you can do application sharing. So, the add-in SDK -- allows you to actually build these applications.

**Richard Campbell:** Wow! Now, how do you distribute them?



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**Dare Obasanjo:** Well, like you just distribute them as you just do with any like regular application.

**Richard Campbell:** So for us to play a game, I have to install your add-in.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yes.

**Richard Campbell:** But then we're able to share that; there's no real automated distribution mechanism.

**Dare Obasanjo:** No. There's no way like I can push executables to you, because that would be problematic.

(00:50:02)

**Richard Campbell:** Well, and these aren't really executables anyway; they're running off of messenger, and I've recorded your notes I'm looking at here, they're using code access security to kind of keep it inside of a Sandbox.

**Dare Obasanjo:** This messenger was a .NET app.

**Richard Campbell:** Yeah, it's all .NET based.

**Dare Obasanjo:** But Messenger isn't .NET based.

**Richard Campbell:** The Messenger itself isn't, I see. That's part of the problem.

**Carl Franklin:** So, any plans for that? There must be an army of people pushing for that inside Microsoft.

**Dare Obasanjo:** For Messenger or more SDKs?

**Carl Franklin:** Or even just a .NET based Messenger.

**Dare Obasanjo:** I think people have talked about it. I know that Yahoo! just did a .NET 3.0 of their IM client. So, it seems like an interesting direction. I have heard people talk about it.

**Richard Campbell:** The other one that really interests me is Windows Live ID, which Microsoft flatly missed. This is 'Passport' reborn.

**Carl Franklin:** Well, wait a minute, how does that work with OpenID; or does it?

**Dare Obasanjo:** There's Identity Metasystem that Kim Cameron has been working on, and it allows you to specify different authentications, different services - identity service providers, I think it's called -- it is -- identity service provider -

so you can say -- this I can say, I accept Passport credentials or OpenID credentials, or Yahoo! credentials or Google apps credentials. So, whoever requires the identity just says, "Here are the identity providers that I respect." Like, the LiveID service could be one, and OpenID could be another.

**Richard Campbell:** And InfoCard is one as well.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yes.

**Carl Franklin:** All right, that makes sense.

**Richard Campbell:** It's cool, it is integrated. Pick your methodology, they all work.

**Carl Franklin:** Well, that's always been the Microsoft way; never force one over another. Let them fight it out; see which one floats to the top or maybe nothing will float to the top, maybe they'll all be used.

**Richard Campbell:** The Virtual Earth SDK; so is that really -- this is our mashup to be able to build our own geocentric apps online?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yes, that's correct.

**Carl Franklin:** Okay. Well, tell me about this; this sounds interesting. What can I do with this?

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, you can create a mapping mashup. You can build -- have you seen the various Google Maps mashups? Have you seen those? So, you can build mashups just like that; and you get like, the advanced Virtual Earth features in the mashup as well.

**Carl Franklin:** I haven't seen this.

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, like bird's-eye view and so on; you get that as well.

**Carl Franklin:** I haven't seen this; so tell me what I have been missing here.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Similar to what you can do with Google Maps. You can include scripts on your page, and instantiate the Virtual Earth Map control, and build whatever mashup you want on top of Virtual Earth.

**Carl Franklin:** A mashup, meaning, you can add your own stuff, coordinate based, over the maps that are there.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yes.

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah, all right.



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**Richard Campbell:** I am always wow!'ed at how snappy [maps.live.com](http://maps.live.com) is; it's got a great interface on it, just use your roller wheel on your mouse and drag around, and you're moving and shaking on the map really quickly. So, I think that having a programming interface to this is pretty compelling; it makes for a great app.

**Carl Franklin:** So, if this was around last year, they could use this for the Road Trip; in fact, I think Dr. Neil used the beta version of this for the Road Trip live map that we did to show where our RV was as we drove across the country in real time.

**Richard Campbell:** Well, and that was over a year ago now.

**Carl Franklin:** It was.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Well, actually we created that mashup with using Virtual Earth showing where movies were playing in the Seattle area.

**Carl Franklin:** Oh cool.

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, I will send that to you guys to check out, so you can see like the kind of mashups you could build. You just see how easy it was; and actually it wasn't that hard.

**Carl Franklin:** Cool. And you include the source for that?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yes. Did I write that on to a hard disk, I think I did. Yeah.

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah. We'll put a link to that on the Website - absolutely. Thanks for that.

**Richard Campbell:** Let's go after one more; and this is a discussion in general for guys like us who are heavily Web centric business wise, and it's an AdCenter API. So, I mean, this is a competitor to Google Ads?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yes.

**Carl Franklin:** Sweet!

**Dare Obasanjo:** Hold on, wait a second. So, Google has two ad products; well, they have a bunch of -- two Web ad products

(00:55:00)

**Carl Franklin:** That's right, AdWords and AdSense.

**Dare Obasanjo:** They have AdSense and AdWords. So, AdWords for buying ads in Google

search results, and AdSense is for placing ads in other people's sites.

**Carl Franklin:** Content.

**Richard Campbell:** Right.

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, we currently don't have an offering -- or I think we talked about doing one for placing ads on other sites. So, our current offering is, you can buy ads to show in like, Live Search results.

**Carl Franklin:** I see.

**Richard Campbell:** So, what does the AdCenter API do then?

**Dare Obasanjo:** The AdCenter API allows you to manage your ad campaigns.

**Carl Franklin:** Oh, I get it.

**Richard Campbell:** So, being able to build your own client to be able to buy ad space in Windows Live Search efficiently, quickly -- whatever style you want to do it in.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Or just to keep on top of your -- like manage your keywords, generate reports, do estimates, like figure out how much buying this keyword is going to cost you, if you want to do better visualization of the data than what's on the website.

**Richard Campbell:** And you can build something a little more real time, as time goes by and those things are going to change.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yes.

**Richard Campbell:** That's very cool.

**Carl Franklin:** Very cool.

**Richard Campbell:** All right. And one I don't understand at all; Windows Live Expo. What is this?

**Carl Franklin:** It sounds like second wife.

**Richard Campbell:** Is it like Classifieds, is this eBay?

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, it's Classifieds; I would say it's probably more like Craigslist and eBay. So, it's like a free classified listing service. It's supposed to draw into the fact that you have -- we were first talking about building Expo, one thing what the Expo team talks about was that, a lot of people may not sell stuff to strangers, we have kind of, everyone has sold something to a



friend once, even if it was like a CD you didn't like, a calculator you wanted to get rid of, and you are like, well I can make \$20 from my friend, and so on. So, we have 250 million users in Messenger, like over a 100 million people using Spaces, what if we allow these people to -- we facilitate like, interpersonal communication within your social network -- and that's what Expo enables.

**Carl Franklin:** We've been using LinkedIn; is it sort of like that? Have you seen [LinkedIn.com](http://www.linkedin.com)?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah, I have seen [LinkedIn.com](http://www.linkedin.com). LinkedIn kind of has a social networking aspect, but Expo is more of like a listing -- so, think of it as a -- what would be a good analogy -- imagine it like Craigslist was integrated into Messenger.

**Carl Franklin:** Okay.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah, something like that.

**Carl Franklin:** So, a series of links that you want to expose to your friends?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yes. And then, there is also like a -- there is a Website aspect, you can go on the Website, like, comment, contact you to purchase it, IM you, you can show the things you have for sale on your Space.

**Carl Franklin:** Okay, that's cool. Utilization of [Live.com](http://www.live.com), is it growing, is it up; what are the numbers like?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Oh! because don't work directly with the [Live.com](http://www.live.com) team so I -- I know a lot of people like it, but I don't know what the last numbers were.

**Carl Franklin:** All right. Do you get a sense that it's very popular though?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah.

**Carl Franklin:** It's a good answer.

**Richard Campbell:** So, the SDK hasn't had really a loud launch yet, right? It's just being sort of, quietly launched. What was your involvement in actually putting all this together, because I got to imagine there's a lot of XML involved in all of this?

**Dare Obasanjo:** I have worked on the Spaces APIs. So, I was in charge of figuring out what the API story for Space was going to be, and I kind of looked at the doing SOAP APIs and so on and eventually we picked the MetaWeblog API, because that's what most blogging services use.

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So, I kind of was the PM for that feature, and I wrote all the documentation about that. I also just kind of got involved in the team that's coming up with the SDK and Messaging and so on around it. You will hear more about it like in upcoming conferences, because stuff's coming out.

**Richard Campbell:** So, is it going to be a loud launch or we're just going to start talking about this in the shows?

**Dare Obasanjo:** MIX is coming up, and PDC is coming up; there will be more talking about it at events like that. So, right now, we've just kind of thrown this out there to get feedback from developers about what they like, what they don't like, what they'd like to see.

**Richard Campbell:** Have you been involved in that?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Indirectly, but not directly.

**Richard Campbell:** Cool.

**Carl Franklin:** Dare, you're a Microsoftie and yet your post RSS Bandit is an Open Source thing.

(01:00:00)

Is RSS Bandit something that you're doing just as you, or is this an officially sanctioned Microsoft product? What's the dynamic between Microsoft and Open Source and RSS Bandit?

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, RSS Bandit is a project that I just work on, on my own on the side. Microsoft is aware of it, because I think my employee agreement says that any intellectual property I create belongs to Microsoft, yada, yada, yada.

**Richard Campbell:** Right, of course.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah. So, it kind of started off organically, because I created a code sample, and this guy, Torsten in Germany said, "Hey, this is actually a pretty cool idea, but your GUI sucks. What if I build all the GUI stuff and you deal with like the XML and networking, and we can just keep working on that?" And it kind of, grew organically out of that; a couple of thousand people started using the application, it used to be hosted on got.NET but eventually, the project got busy enough that I took it over to SourceForge, and I have never got any negative feedback from like, management or anybody at Microsoft about it -- like a lot of Microsoft people actually use it.

**Richard Campbell:** Interesting.

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah, it is interesting.



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**Richard Campbell:** And of course Microsoft has released some stuff into SourceForge as well.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Wicks is on SourceForge I believe.

**Richard Campbell:** Right. You've described the classic Open Source scenario, where you are just throwing out a code sample, somebody says, this is pretty cool, I want to contribute to it, because your UI sucks - and boom, you've got yourself an Open Source project - two developers who are in separate places, each contributing different bits to the same project.

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah. We have done similar things here, but the thing is, I think - correct me if I am wrong, but I have heard some blue badgers say that Microsoft really isn't anti Open Source they are anti GPL. Do you think that's a fair assessment?

**Dare Obasanjo:** I wouldn't say anti - like the GPL -- because my product division -- RSS Bandit isn't GPL license, it's a BSD license. The GPL puts restrictions on how people can share it - distribute the code that I personally think are unfair. Because RSS Bandit - if you grab some of the code and you have like some app and you want to -- and it's an app that is not Open Source, you can grab my code and do whatever you want with it as long as you say, "Hey we got some code from RSS Bandit," that's fine.

**Carl Franklin:** Right. Give credit where credit is due.

**Dare Obasanjo:** It's just about credit, and it's just about sharing the code; it's not about forcing my philosophies on you, which is what the GPL does; it says, if you want to use my code, you have to be Open Source like me; and I just won't be able to use the application, and I loaded every code sample for the people -- I first started with a code sample, so people could learn how to use .NET, and now there's all sorts of stuff I've learned about, like writing a Windows application beyond just things about doing stuff with XML or Networking, things about interacting with IE, security...

**Carl Franklin:** How long did it take you to figure out the licensing part of it, and what is involved in that? Is it like you read a document, you include it with the software, do you have to sign something and send it in? I mean, what all is involved with that?

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, that really depends on how rigorous you want to be about stuff like that. For example, I believe like the Apache project for example, requires like, anybody who sends in a

code sample or a patch has to sign some documentation saying, "I officially handover my copyright to the Apache Foundation" - or if it's like the Free Software Foundation.

**Richard Campbell:** If you're talking about Apache, in that circumstance, it's a huge app.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah. So, like that's kind of the official process. With RSS Bandit, like the person I just kind of talked about it, we're familiar with the key Open Source licenses the GPL, BSD or whatever, and we didn't feel that we have to push people to give away their -- be Open Source -- they don't want to use RSS Bandit, like I felt like if somebody uses my code in their app, and they say like, well we use your code, and we have like all these users, that was the point of giving away the code in the first place.

**Richard Campbell:** Yeah, the whole reason you did this was to make sure people did it right.

**Carl Franklin:** So, what I want to know though, is like, what all was involved in publishing some software with a BSD license? What are the mechanics of what you have to do?

**Dare Obasanjo:** You just have to get a copy of the license; you have to make sure that everybody who has copyright in the code agrees to the license, and you have to - like a list of copyright holders. You also have to distribute the license of the code, which I actually I wasn't doing for a while. So, if you went to SourceForge you will say that this code is BSD licensed, but when you've got the code, there is no license in there.

(01:05:00)

**Carl Franklin:** But there is no central place that you have to fill out a form and fax it and sign it and get approval, and there is no official process like that?

**Dare Obasanjo:** No.

**Carl Franklin:** All right. So, you release it and you obviously read the license, you understand what you're getting into. You have to, when somebody installs the program, and they have to agree to the terms of the license, right?

**Dare Obasanjo:** Or you distribute the license with the code.

**Carl Franklin:** You distribute the license with the code.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah. So, like for example there was -- I've actually had a bunch of corporate



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users of RSS Bandit, which is also like, Sys Admins were like, "Hey, in our 100 man company we actually -- RSS Bandit is part of our install; like we install Windows with RSS and RSS Bandit, and we realized that you don't have a license, and that like violates our code for it like purchasing policy or something. So, I have had to deal with stuff like that and then make sure that we have the license and it clearly spells out here are the copyright holders, here is who you contact. We use some code from this guy, but his license is fine, it allows that, so here is who -- because we use some of -- Chris Sells has the Genghis Project?

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah.

**Richard Campbell:** Sure.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah. So, we use them on his code; and that's kind of like, called out.

**Carl Franklin:** Yeah, it's got to be pretty awesome to hear reports of people rolling that into their system installs. So, we've come to about the end of the show and I just got a feeling that Dare, I think we should ask him Richard the question. Sometimes we ask it, but he seems like the kind of guy who has some things to share. Dare, what's the coolest thing that you've seen online lately; maybe you've downloaded something, or maybe you got a new toy or a new gadget or just something that's new that not a lot of people know about, that you want to give some props to?

**Dare Obasanjo:** I don't know if it is new; the coolest thing I've seen on the net is [20Q.net](http://20q.net).

**Carl Franklin:** What?

**Dare Obasanjo:** 20Q.net, it's like, it plays 20 Questions with you.

**Carl Franklin:** Oh, it tries to guess what you're thinking of?

**Dare Obasanjo:** And it's pretty scary; like, it freaked me out when I solved it.

**Richard Campbell:** 22.net?

**Dare Obasanjo:** 20Q - the letter Q, there are three letters.

**Carl Franklin:** My daughter has one of these little plastic devices that does this; and it's pretty scary too.

**Dare Obasanjo:** Yeah. So, I went online and I picked some -- I know, I was thinking of a guitar, and it asked me like some random questions like

- question 16<sup>th</sup> like, you're thinking of a guitar. I was like, "Well...". And then, it criticizes some of your answers, it's like, I asked you if it has strings, and you said no, but a guitar does.

**Carl Franklin:** Oh man!

**Dare Obasanjo:** So, that's probably the coolest thing I've seen online in the past couple of months.

**Carl Franklin:** That is cool.

**Richard Campbell:** That is spectacular.

**Carl Franklin:** All right. Well, Dare thank you very much for being on the show. Our guest has been Dare Obasanjo, Program Manager on the Windows Live team -- Windows Live Communication Services team. Thank you Dare. It's been a pleasure talking to you.

**Dare Obasanjo:** All right. It's been a pleasure talking to you guys too.

**Carl Franklin:** And we will see you next week on .NET Rocks!

(Music)

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(Music)