

# Darin Lee - Get Your Foot in the Door

**Mindy:** [00:00:00] Welcome to Analyst Talk with Jason Elder. It's like coffee with an analyst, or it could be whiskey with an analyst reading a spreadsheet, linking crime events, identifying a series, and getting the latest scoop on association news and training. So please don't be that analyst and join us as we define the law enforcement analysis profession one episode at a time.

**Jason:** Thank you for joining me. I hope many aspects of your life are progressing. My name is Jason Elder, and today our guest has 20 years of law enforcement analysis experience, all with the Kansas City , the

2023 IACA Annual Membership Award winner. Please welcome him. Darin Lee. Darin, how we doing? Doing

**Darin:** pretty good today. Just today? For the most part, yeah.

**Jason:** You recovered from the conference?

**Darin:** I have, yeah. That was a good conference.

**Jason:** So there's a lot that I'd like to , talk about today. As mentioned, you're the membership award winner, so I want to get your take on [00:01:00] that.

And I definitely want to talk and get your perspective on testifying, , but before we get to all that, let's first find out how you discovered the law enforcement analysis

**Darin:** profession. Okay in college, I was a geography GIS major, and that would have been back in 94. So I had been hired with the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department.

Prior to that, it was the Kansas City Planning Department that had been in 2003, and then later on, I worked at HNTB, which was an architecture engineering firm, also doing GIS, but I would attend ESRI conferences, and I would find myself always going to the law enforcement sessions talking about crime mapping, and Using G.

I. S. for law enforcement. And so my [00:02:00] interest kind of began there. I could see the value of it using spatial data to analyze crime in some of the cities specifically Kansas City, which is where I was. And then 9 11 happened, and

that really slowed down a lot of the transportation projects that we were working on at HNTB.

There I did, I worked on transportation projects utilizing GIS, as well as I did quite a bit of training with ESRI products back then. And then I applied to the Kansas City... Police department at the time I had a friend from college that was helping out with the interview process, which helped a lot.

So I got my foot in the door and so I started here in 2003 and I kind of began in terms of the G. I. S. side doing mapping and [00:03:00] analysis and then kind of the last few years. I've kind of transitioned into more of an investigative support role. For violent crimes here at KCPD. So

**Jason:** what was your interest in geography to begin with as you started college?

**Darin:** Well, I was, I began college as an undecided and I had a pretty influential geography teacher at the time. And I, I wasn't really sure what I was going to do with it, but that's the direction I went. I ended up going to grad school. As well at Oklahoma State also in geography. And so I got some good experience down there with using the software and I was able to get my foot in the door with Casey planning department.

**Jason:** That's a whole different ball of wax using geography, though, when you're talking about planning and systems and and it seems like it is [00:04:00] more developing the actual layers of mapping as opposed to the dots on the map

**Darin:** and that that was. Correct, I mean, at the planning department, , the work I was doing was basically layer maintenance.

So we did a lot of zoning and and layer development. So it was a good start, but I kind of. Became bored with it a little bit and I could see other applications, which were much more appealing to me, which a lot of times was the crime data. We would occasionally help out the police department with requests.

Because they didn't have anyone doing it at the time. And so I was always interested in and being a part of that. So

**Jason:** as you start with the police department obviously the geography, education, and experience helped you with the job, but was there anything else? I guess even just [00:05:00] working for planning, how did that help you as you were becoming an analyst?

Well,

**Darin:** They didn't have anyone here doing G. I. S. at the police department at the time. So I was kind of the first one. And so basically the, the 1st order of business was the development of of quite a few of the the boundary files and starting a process for getting the crime data into a format that we could start looking at it in terms of patterns and problem areas.

So that was kind of a slow process in terms of just you know, getting my foot in the door as well as trying to figure out what they were going to do with me. So, initially I was located within the, the programming section. Here at KCPD, and then a few years after that, maybe 2012, I transitioned more to the [00:06:00] Intel role.

Just from, from helping out some of the violent crimes cases, they kind of switch roles for me at that time.

**Jason:** Now when you say programming section, is that IT or is that? Yeah.

**Darin:** It was, it was an IT position that they really weren't sure where to put a GIS person. And that just happened to be where, where the fit was at that time.

Yeah,

**Jason:** and I could, I could understand that too, because you... You're probably going to be asking it anyway for either permissions for downloading and you're you're doing a lot of related tasks as you're trying to develop these layers and all the. G. I. S. data that you're going to

**Darin:** need. Absolutely. Yeah.

**Jason:** I find it interesting what you describe there because it seems like today everything's. Already there, [00:07:00] you know, with some of these products that most police departments have, or maybe some police departments have is that, you know, the some of the layers are already there.

A lot of the data now comes with X, Y coordinates coming out of the RMS or the cat system. It seems like there's not this idea of, you know, I, I was my analyst to as well during this time in the arts. And just getting access to layers, getting access to aerial photos, having to geocode and spending all this time developmental work just to get the data ready to

**Darin:** analyze, right?

That that was the it was kind of tedious back in the day. But one advantage I had was that. A lot of the layers that I was using here were the same ones that I was utilizing back in the late 90s when I was with the planning department. So I had worked on many of the [00:08:00] layers, so I knew where they were and I had a good relationship with the GIS people over at the city since we're somewhat separated.

From our city here.

**Jason:** Yeah. How long do you think it took you to develop and actually get to the point where you can start doing analysis, start doing reporting with with the GIS

**Darin:** information? Oh, it was probably a few years. Just kind of getting the structure and processes in place. With all the layers as well as figuring out how to download the data and then clean it and, and geocode it and getting it into a format that we could distribute out internally here.

So it did take a little while. But many, many of those things today are automated and, and we have good products like [00:09:00] dashboards to present some of that or websites.

**Jason:** Yeah. Now, did you

**Darin:** have a plotter? Yes, we did.

**Jason:** A very old one. Man, I remember, that's one of those things that I just lost. I don't even know if anybody would have a plotter these

**Darin:** days.

Actually, we still have a few, but we don't print nearly as much as we used to. Oh, yeah.

**Jason:** Wow. That was, that was a big part of it too. So it wasn't, yeah, so there was just, it's so funny when you look back at what took so much time. We talked about the prep and just getting the data ready.

And then there was this, production aspect of it. , then you printed it on a plotter and depending on your plotter and how much information it would take it all one time. It could take quite a long time to actually print out one poster. Yes. So, so I guess let's, let's then, cause you, it sounds like then once you get this developed, once you get.

Your [00:10:00] the G. I. S. to a point where it's workable at the police department and you then start doing more analysis and that's when you start finding patterns and trends. I suppose. Is that

**Darin:** correct? Sure. And then it kind of transitions into now, who are the people doing it? And then that kind of goes into the the case support trying to, help out detectives on that side of it. So then,

**Jason:** Let's get a better idea of some of the cases that you've worked on. This brings us to your analyst badge story. And for those that may be new to the show, the analyst badge story is the career defining case or project that you worked. So here it's around Around 2014, you're working a residential burglary

**Darin:** series.

That's right. I had had a property crimes detective come to me with several different residential [00:11:00] burglaries that were occurring in a fairly small section of the city. And he thought that he may know who was doing it, but he wasn't sure how many or, and he couldn't really put. him at any of the locations.

However, we did discover that he was wearing a GPS device as part of his parole for burglary. And so we coordinated with the Department of Corrections and we got a download. from his GPS device ankle bracelet. And they provided it to us in Excel. I do remember, and that had a latitude and longitude by date and time.

And so what I did was I. Took a time frame of our reported residential burglaries. I mapped him out. And then on top of that, we overlaid his GPS tracks and then come to find out that we [00:12:00] put him at 34 residential. burglaries. And he ended up being charged with all 34 of those. It ended up being 33 counts of burglary and 26 counts of theft.

So that was, I mean, that was a good example of kind of utilizing GIS and and, and blending it with the crime data. So, yeah, so that that's

**Jason:** going to be important for victims to report accurate information because one of the with like, maybe some more personal crimes burglaries, you're not going to know the exact time.

Usually that the burglary occurred, especially back in 2014, where there's not as many security cameras as there are today. But so you're gonna get, oh, I left my house at, you know, 8 a. m. came back at 4 p. m. and realized that somebody had [00:13:00] burgled my house. Yeah, exactly. So in that case, match that up with where the suspect is roaming through the area.

**Darin:** Yeah, so we had a good, we had a fairly good idea, date and time even though we had a wider range of when it was reported, if someone was, say, out of town for the weekend. Now

**Jason:** Did he end up pleading or did they actually take this

**Darin:** trial? You know, I'm not sure. I, I went back just a few days ago and, and tried to find more information and, and I, I didn't I know he was charged, but I'm not sure where he's at right now.

**Jason:** Because I'm just curious how much of a defense they put up because depending how accurate do you believe the lat longs were because I mean, you know, that would put them right in the house.

**Darin:** Right? Sure. Several of them did, or at least around the, the the property the, we [00:14:00] actually printed out individual maps of all 34 of the burglaries to show how the You know, X, Y, Z, we're kind of bouncing around either inside the house or around the yard,

**Jason:** you know, so because there's that aspect, because, I mean, you could make the argument that it was just coincidence that there he's arriving in that area at the same time that all the residents aren't home, but then to have it within the actual house is kind of I don't know how much of a defense you could put up with that unless you're challenging the accuracy of the device.

Sure,

**Darin:** exactly, but

**Jason:** it's kind of, it always makes me want, I mean, it may, you know, it always makes me kind of wonder, like, what the suspect was thinking. Like, it's one thing to be on probation and you still burglarizing houses, but to have a

device that actually Absolutely. Tracks your every move and you still burglarize 30 plus [00:15:00] houses.

It just makes me wonder, did he maybe think it was working or that no money would ever actually look at the data the way you did? I don't know what you think. Yeah,

**Darin:** I just assumed that he really didn't think anyone was looking at it. That's the only thing I could come up with.

**Jason:** You said it was in Excel. I, do you remember approximately how many records? That you got given.

**Darin:** No, it was, it was several thousand, I believe, but I don't remember exactly how many it was. Yeah. I don't even remember the time frame. It was over a few months. Okay. I

**Jason:** say that. Yeah, if that's over. Yeah, that would be I could get a lot depending on how how often the.

The thing records, right? If it records every minute or whatever, whatever it ends up being, but that could be, that could be quite a large data set. So interesting. Okay, good. And then, so then you, you go from here and as you mentioned, you kind of transition, you started the police department. [00:16:00] You set up the G.

I. S. get into discovering different patterns and trends and crimes and you start focusing a little bit more on case support. And so then that's when you said you transferred from the programming to. It was, did you say the investigative unit?

**Darin:** Sure. Yeah. It's, it's referred to as the perpetrator information center, but PIC, but that's, that's kind of our violent crimes case support section.

Okay. Now did

**Jason:** that. Did that feel different or did that wasn't all that big a deal looking

**Darin:** back at it? It really wasn't. It was kind of where I was wanting to transition to at the time anyway. So it, it was kind of natural for me to make that change.



**Jason:** Yeah. So are then at this point, are you growing? I'm assuming you're growing more.

Beyond just GIS information, you're getting into all the tools and resources that the police department [00:17:00] has to offer to help support the

**Darin:** case. Yeah, absolutely. And that, that was one of the first things I did was just you know, find the people and that had the knowledge on how do I get set up with all these different databases and and tools that we have here.

And and the more you have, the more you're going to be able to run with that type of information and and do the important digging on some of these cases.

**Jason:** Yeah, that gets into, you know, various different, you know, you have your management system, you have your CAD, but then it's all the paid tools as well.

And eventually you're going to get social media, of course, and, and all the different access points that you have and do to run with. Now does that transition in terms of going beyond the GIS? Does, did that, Yeah. Seem natural as well, or did did you feel that you struggled in the beginning trying to Go beyond [00:18:00] GIS for your analysis.

**Darin:** No, actually, I thought it was a pretty easy transition it was just a matter of Being given a problem and and trying to figure out what pieces you need to, to use and, and to look at to figure out you know, possible solutions to that or where it points to or who it points to.

**Jason:** Yeah. Now, was there a data set or maybe a tool that you identified that you like, you know, we're really missing out or we have this deficiency, we need to fill this gap?

**Darin:** Do you know? The one thing we did have was KCPD did have a lot of really good tools and they've obviously improved over the years too, but you know, like the clear and the accurate, the RMS and CAD but there's also just a lot of free tools and social media. But you really. You get a feeling when someone asks you to help out with something of I need to look here or there [00:19:00] or you just kind of have this list of resources in your head to check for what they're looking for.

And that's something that's kind of developed over the years. Well,



**Jason:** let's get a better idea of that thing because this brings us to your second analyst badge story and this is 2022 dealing with a missing persons case.

**Darin:** Yeah, we had a, a daughter of a missing person. That came to one of our stations to report her mother missing.

She was, the daughter was two years old when her mother disappeared back in 1983. And so she had come down in May of 2022 because she just had not been given a really good. Explanation of where her mother went when she was so young and so she filled out a missing persons report and that took the [00:20:00] track through to our missing persons section and which was going through some, some changes at the time, but I believe it.

Came to the detective in July or June of 2022, and he had spent quite a bit of time digging and trying to find information on this missing person and had just kind of come up with kind of a dead end at that point. There just wasn't anything that was pointing in a direction where she may be. So that's when he Came to me, I'd worked with him on a few different projects and so.

He asked for my assistance and I remember he walked in and said I've got a weird one and that immediately intrigued me Because of it sound like a good challenge to accept But we did start digging and since this was such an old case [00:21:00] a lot of our current tools weren't really useful since she'd been missing for so long, but we did do some searching and some archives and, and we did find quite a bit of data in terms of some of the old detective investigation reports from, from the eighties.

And we discovered that she had. Multiple identities multiple dates of birth. We weren't even sure about the social security number that she had, but but we ended up getting a photo from the daughter of what she looked like and that immediately. Kind of ring a bell for me in terms of a previous case that a local sheriff's department had been working that related to some bones found in 1985, which were just, this was just 2 years after, gwendolyn's disappearance. And so the the reconstruction from the [00:22:00] skull was pretty similar to this photo. And so, the detective and I both thought that that was definitely something that we needed to take a look at. So, they did run DNA from the bones to the daughter and it came back as a match.

And and all that happened within... 30 days. And so that happened really quick. Probably the most, the worst part of it was just the waiting for the DNA to come back. Because even though it was a rush, it was maybe a week or so, but within

the first few days, we, we, we'd already identified, you know, at least the possibility that they were the same people.

So that's kind of, that's kind of how it came about. So

**Jason:** how did this get on your radar in terms of the, The bones being found at the construction site in

**Darin:** 1985? Oh, yeah. Back in 2007, I'd been contacted by the deputy who they had reopened this it was their [00:23:00] murder case from 1985. They had established a cold case squad and they had contacted me and, and they were trying to figure out if we had any missing persons from that time frame that, that they could kind of look at to see if If there was any match now we worked on it for on and off for a few weeks, trying to dig through some of our old missing persons cases, but nothing, nothing really came back that matched but that had stuck in my head because he had provided updated reconstruction images of what the person may have looked like.

And when I saw the photo of Gwendolyn, it immediately it kind of triggered that memory of what they were working on. It was the same height and weight, it was black female our structure, I shouldn't say weight, but same height build. So that's kind of how we, we took that forward. Now, did

**Jason:** you [00:24:00] feel that the reconstruction was pretty accurate?

**Darin:** I thought it was. Some people weren't really sure, but I immediately saw a resemblance there. We did a lot of side by sides, and I even brought both photos into Photoshop, and I did a transparent overlay and, and did some tilting, and the, the structure of the face was the same, and, and that, had been created from a 3D scan of the skull.

So it was a fairly close match. The only difference was obviously the hair and some of that. But but it was a close match in my eyes.

**Jason:** Now, the original report of a missing person back in 1983, was that with Kansas City PD or was that with a different jurisdiction?

**Darin:** No, it was with KCPD, but it was inactivated because of no developments. [00:25:00] So it was kind of put to the side. Now, we still had record of it, but some of those older cases were just inactivated. And when she came in to file another one that's when that, that case was... Reactivated

**Jason:** and then and then how far away was were the was the difference between where she lived and the construction site or what was the distance between

**Darin:** where the the bones were located?

Yes. Yeah, it was actually in a rural area of Clay County. It was maybe 30 miles, something like that, but it was kind of on the side of a rural road where they were discovered. Yeah,

**Jason:** and then it had the the victim lived out that way or had any connection to that location?

**Darin:** Not that I'm aware of. No, she It always lived in Kansas City.

**Jason:** Okay. I'm starting to see how things happened , because and how that, [00:26:00] you know, when you started working this in 2007, I can understand you wouldn't you wouldn't have connected. Those two cases together at all. I mean given the fact that location and they were years apart

**Darin:** Yeah, and that and I really didn't have access to the that missing person case from 83 that was In a file in a basement and you know a lot of that stuff just was not digitized Or in electronic form.

**Jason:** From your perspective. How did this make you feel because this is From as i'm listening to it. You get the whiff of this case in 2007 Kind of doesn't really go anywhere and then fast forward all the way to 2022 and this Missing this other half of the equation comes knocking on your door and here you're able to put the two pieces together.

**Darin:** Right. And actually, I think I misspoke. It was 20. It was 2017. [00:27:00] Not. I, I, I said 2007, but it was 2017, I believe, but it was several, it was several years, however. But yeah, I mean, I was surprised and but a part of me was, I was thinking this probably was right just because of the circumstances, but I was still shocked when Detective Kinnick came in and said that it was a DNA match.

I still remember him walking around the corner. I could. Tell by the look on his face. So it was, I mean, it was exciting. Yeah, I mean, at

**Jason:** least the daughter gets at least some closure. Now, it's my understanding that this is actually part of a homicide investigation now that's still ongoing. So we can't go.

Too much farther into this case until telling the whole story. But in terms of , you're dealing with it. You know, you as a missing persons case, you were able to help identify the missing person. That's correct.

[00:28:00] Hi, I'm Jason Wilkins. I'm here with this public service announcement to talk to your kids about art school and be honest with them about their real ability. And maybe being an analyst is a better idea for them.

**Dawn:** Hi, this is Dawn Clausius. I just want you to know that when you hear or you think as an analyst, they don't know what they want us to do.

Always remember, you don't have to wait. Show them, tell them and be value added.

**Jason:** All right, let's go on now to you testifying. Because I mentioned that in your intro and when we were talking at our prep call yesterday, looking over your resume, and all the resumes that I've seen for this show, I do not think I've seen an analyst testify. As much as you have over the years so just want to get into that, from maybe your first time testifying and you must be good at it because they keep asking you to do it over and [00:29:00] over again.

Let's get into, , the types of cases you're testifying, what you're testifying about and just your role in the

**Darin:** case. Yeah that. That has kind of come about maybe unintentionally, but as part of the work it's also expected in becoming more for case support, I also was tasked with getting my certification and, and Celebrite and phone downloads, and so that's kind of the basis for a lot of the testimony that I deal with.

Many of those are there. Or homicide investigations, either a suspect phone or a victim phone. But what I do with that is I do download the phones and then I create the reports from that. And then I provide that back to the case detective for review. We, we do a lot of phones here. I think I'm up to around 80 phones for this year.

Wow. That I've [00:30:00] downloaded. And obviously that generates some, some reporting on the case. So then I, I do end up in, in court testifying. A lot of

times it's foundational testimony in terms of just downloading the phone and the kind of the processes, but sometimes it involves what was on the phone.

Some of those are also a suspect development. Testimonies, or there's been times for license plate readers or some of the camera work we do on, on the city cameras, where vehicles or, or people were captured on video. And so I did look and I see that I have 18 current trials on my calendar right now for this year and next, so it doesn't seem to be slowing down.

Yeah, at this point, and

**Jason:** that goes with probably what the 20 plus that you've already

**Darin:** done at least. Yeah, I haven't really kept a good track of it, but I do [00:31:00] remember my 1st 1 was in regard to a, cell phone tower investigation where the suspect had, had used different towers around the site of a homicide and, and that was my, I do remember that was my first one, so I did have to testify on that.

**Jason:** Yeah, I would, I guess with that, that is that where you're trying to triangulate, trying to get a location there. So there's that process of trying to identify the location. Yeah, that

**Darin:** was and it was fairly early on, but you can tell what side of the tower that the call came from and what times and dates and things like that.

**Jason:** Yeah, certainly gotten more accurate over the years trying to pinpointing where exactly the cell phone is.

It seems interesting to me that, well, let me ask you this first, is it, I, is it the prosecution that's asking you to [00:32:00] testify

**Darin:** most of the time? Yeah, I do occasionally get a defense subpoena as well, but it just depends. Most of the time it is for prosecution. Yeah, it's just,

**Jason:** it surprises me a little bit that you've been asked to do it so many times because I think for the most part it is.

Data, right? Is the data coming back from the either the cell phone company or the tower or whatever information that you get back and you are reporting on the data. Now, if it gets to the point where you're speculating. We're trying to do

a best guess, but if it's not, you know, we had one guy that had a GPS on his, on his car and he stopped for like a half hour.

I speculated that, that, you know, it was like two blocks from his girlfriend's house and I said that. Most likely with he was probably with his girlfriend. It was his girlfriend's house But you know and that I could see maybe a defense question that like, how do you know that?

I was like, well, I don't I'm just kind of [00:33:00] right

**Darin:** speculating But I try to stay out of the speculating and just kind of yeah Yeah. So

**Jason:** that's why, yeah, that's why I'm surprised then with what they're asking you to testify on given that , it is just data.

**Darin:** Yeah. And a lot of times they want confirmation that the data hasn't been changed at any point.

And I don't have any ability. to do that. But yeah, really, what I'm testifying most of the time is the, the actual process. And then I explained that most of the time I don't look at any of the data from the extraction. So they, they basically keep that, those types of questions to the case detective.

**Jason:** Yeah. So it is I mean, it is interesting. I I'm assuming that you have a protocol in terms of how you get the data and. Protocol make copies, make sure you're not changing the original that you can always deliver the original in case somebody is asking for it.

**Darin:** Yeah. And then I make an [00:34:00] archive back up and then I actually put that into property.

So it's needed for defense or someone doesn't have a copy and needs one. Yeah,

**Jason:** in terms of. What you've testified on. Is there one that sticks out? I mean, you mentioned the one that was your first, but is there another one that sticks out that may be a little bit more interesting than some of the others?

Or what? What do you think of when you think back into these cases that you've testified on? Well,

**Darin:** Probably, we did have one kind of high profile case where a lawyer was, was shot in his front yard and, and there was a, the main thing was that it was a very high profile case and, and I, I was being questioned on, on LPR and camera work.

Mm hmm. And had nothing to do with a cell phone. So that that was probably one of the more high [00:35:00] profile cases. Is that closed? Are we allowed to talk about it? It is closed now. He was, he was found guilty. Who was it? Another, I'm sorry, what? Who was it? The defendant's name was David Youngerman and any kind of Google search could probably find quite a bit on it.

, another one that hasn't come to trial yet is it was a serial killer case here in Kansas City, Missouri. There were six victims, but that one is yet to come to

**Jason:** trial. Yeah. Was that cell phone or was that LPR or what was that?

**Darin:** That, that was we were part of a, there was a task force created and I was part of that team that was investigating the, the links between all of those but it was referred to as the Indian Creek Killer case.

So,

**Jason:** okay. So did that were you able did you get in early enough to be part of the task [00:36:00] force early on the door? You're searching for suspects or was it towards the tail

**Darin:** end? No, absolutely. It was it was brought together fairly early and we, it was a series of detectives and I was the civilian analyst assigned with one sergeant.

So but it was a, it was a, interesting process, too. Yeah, because you're

**Jason:** just running down all the leads obviously doing the starting with the victims and then trying to find connections to the victims. Exactly. And whatnot. Now do we was it? I don't know. Are you allowed to talk about the case?

**Darin:** Probably not at this point. It's still you told

**Jason:** me it was interesting. And now I'm interested in knowing what happened. So



**Darin:** yeah, I think it's due here. And I think the case is coming up in a few weeks or a few months. Yeah.

**Jason:** Do you think you're did you get subpoenaed already to testify or you don't? I haven't

**Darin:** yet, but it's on my calendar.

So. Yeah. [00:37:00] I'm still waiting on that one. Yeah,

**Jason:** so I guess in terms of with the LPR testifying for that data, that one's another interesting aspect to it as well, because again, it's, it's the data that's coming back from either if the LPR is on the car or the LPR is on a pole. It's, it's the data that's coming back

**Darin:** to you, right?

Yeah, most of the time we have them on poles. I believe we have over 5 LPR cameras. And so mainly in the, in the core part of the city, but that information is is used quite a bit in terms of helping identify vehicles either coming or going from a scene and We're able to pick up maybe unique features of the vehicles like, like a dent or missing hub cap or something like that.

And then we can also query it by the actual license plate or even a, [00:38:00] a partial license plate. We can do wild cards to, to find some of that or run it for a specific time frame going through an intersection. So there's, there's a lot of aspects and, and unique features of, of using that data.

Yeah,

**Jason:** again, that to me would be pretty straightforward, but I guess again, if the prosecution wants to just get use it as evidence and make sure that it fits procedure and. And I guess that's why they would have to testify. Yes. All right. In these cases that you've testified already, have you gotten much grilling by the defense?

**Darin:** I did on a few cases. They one aspect is that a vehicle tag wasn't captured going through an intersection, but there's, there's several possible reasons for that as well. I mean, if it was next to a bus or a semi truck, then [00:39:00] that plates not going to be read or if it was too far to one lane, it may not have been captured or it was blocked somehow.

But I have had that specific question before. Hmm. From the defense.

**Jason:** All right. And then I guess you mentioned the certification from, from Sellbright. Does that certification specifically teach you how to testify in cases?

**Darin:** No, it doesn't. And, and that's, that's always kind of the tricky part is how that's going to be, you know, presented in court.

But but in my reports, I do Stipulate if I did review the data or not, but what I can talk about is my process and getting the phone and who provided it and, and the details of the phone and, and the process of actually downloading the data and, and saving it no, are you, are you

**Jason:** following when you do that?

[00:40:00] Are you following cell brights recommendations or. Do you have a specific standard operating procedure at the police

**Darin:** department for this? Yeah, it's it's more of a policy here For that piece of it. Okay. All right,

**Jason:** that's that makes sense and then curious How much of your geography background comes into play with this?

because I can imagine if if you're dealing with especially the cell phone records and Dealing with mapping the fact that you have This is a degree in geography and your your employment doing a geographical task. How much do you think that has impacted the you at now testifying for all these

**Darin:** cases? Oh, I think it's been a benefit just foundationally in terms of a lot of the spatial data that we get throughout some of the Investigations.

A lot of times you'll have to go out and and get this [00:41:00] information and actually map it out. Kind of a, an example would be following the route of a, of a vehicle or if we, if we did get GPS information that we can, that we can show the track of a, of a person in a vehicle, say, and then, and kind of marry it up with either license plate, Reads or some of our city camera footage and so we can, we can track a lot of that and more than 1 realm, I guess.

Yeah, that

**Jason:** gets pretty. Yeah, that gets pretty daunting though. Right? Is trying to. Follow that and then trying to follow all the different cameras and working through the exact time and trying to marry up all that information. Yeah. And,

**Darin:** and then you do have surveillance cameras that don't have the correct time on them.

And then you have to figure out, you know, how those all piece together and then getting it into a, either a [00:42:00] PowerPoint or some kind of media that you can present to the jury as well.

**Jason:** Yeah, no, that's that gets I guess time consuming as well trying to identify the exact cameras that picked up a vehicle or a suspect or whatnot.

That's that's, that gets a lot of work as well than trying to show side by side and all the different angles of the same event.

Sure,

All right, let's talk about advice for our listeners in terms of testifying then. So now that you have all this wonderful experience testifying in court what is your advice for listeners?

If maybe they are first timers that know they have to testify, have an uptimely trial that they have to testify, or maybe they've just only testified a couple of different times.

**Darin:** Yeah, I think probably the, probably the main thing is, is trying to keep yourself from, from speculating and just sticking, sticking with the facts and and, and really not [00:43:00] elaborating so much that you're, you're kind of tucking yourself in circles, but just, just kind of the simple answers to the questions and, and sticking with the facts and, and keeping what you think happened maybe out of it and, and just sticking with it.

With with the information that you do have, that's probably the biggest piece, you know but the more you do, the easier it does get.

**Jason:** What I've heard from other analysts is this is where certifications really help. I think the certifications that you have as an analyst, when it comes to testifying and in trials that it does help that you have that certification on your resume and that when you're up there talking, it's presented as such that this is a certified analyst talking here.

**Darin:** Yeah, absolutely. And that was. The initial piece of it is that we want everybody that is downloading the phones to be [00:44:00] certified so that we don't have any issues with that in court. Yeah.

**Jason:** Yeah. So I've only testified once and I've I've told this story on on the air already, but basically it was a mapping.

I always laugh about it because I was testifying on on the GPS in the car and then the. Yeah. The points from the, that the GPS created from the car and mapping those out. And they asked me, to come up to the map and to just point directly. And then they gave me a laser pointer and I was so nervous.

That when they handed me the laser pointer, it might as well have been a fire hydrant. Like, I was shaking so bad, I'm like, nope, not gonna be able to use this. That's funny. I literally had to just go up to the map and point to it to the jury because I was, I was

**Darin:** so nervous. I don't know.

**Jason:** Do you have a story that's similar or anything like that when you're testifying?

**Darin:** Maybe not. I mean, initially, I mean, [00:45:00] I was probably a lot rougher than, than, than more recently, but yeah, nerves were definitely an issue early on until you kind of got into the groove and got, you know, Kind of know what to expect from, from the questions. And and it's always a relief when they ask the defense if there's any cross and they say nothing or nothing further and then you're dismissed from the stand and it's over with so.

**Jason:** Yeah, and then most of the time Yeah, but most of the time I mean, all right, how on average how long are you testifying do you feel?

**Darin:** Probably most of the time it's anywhere from 10 minutes to 45 minutes at the most. Yeah. Usually not long. Yeah.

**Jason:** So, you're going to get a lot of tips and tricks, not tricks, I shouldn't say tricks, tips from the prosecutor who's going to lay out what he or she's Going to ask you what he or [00:46:00] she's going to talk to you about the types of questions and, and whatnot.

That's correct.

**Darin:** So you have a good idea before you go. And really the only unknown is what the, what the defense's angle sometimes is. Yeah. Or if they, if they even have one, sometimes there are no questions. Yeah,

**Jason:** Well, I'm going to task you with you should at the next conference, you should put together , a course on testify,

**Darin:** perhaps, perhaps.

**Jason:** How about just some general advice for our listeners? Maybe a new analyst or experienced analyst. Do you have any advice for them? I

**Darin:** think probably one of the, one of the main things that, that I try to do is it's really thinking outside the box.

And, and try to improve your skill set as much as you can. Always look for new ways to to find information or, or databases or, or [00:47:00] facts online. Really the main thing is to, you want to become an expert and, and all the, the tools that you have as an analyst with your organization and, and also do the networking with, you know, the analysts in your area, because you, you can constantly get New ideas or or or new tools or bounce ideas off those people as well.

So I guess you just want to create those relationships inside and outside your organization

**Jason:** and then how about return on investment. What should something that an analyst study today that 5 or so years

**Darin:** from now? Well, that probably comes down to a kind of a technology issue and I guess we don't really know what we're going to see in the next few years.

But one thing that we've ran into recently here, specifically with the cell phone downloads is just the sheer size of some of these larger phone, [00:48:00] specifically the, there's a new iPhone with a one terabyte storage. So we, we do have issues with, with downloading these phones and then, and the, the recovery and, and evidence saving the evidence to property because right now our limit on Blu ray discs are 100 gigabyte.

So Really, our next step is to, we'll have to start saving these to external hard drives and then saving those, but it's becoming more challenging with, with the next big phone and, and keeping that data. Yeah,

**Jason:** I can't imagine. I was talking with somebody recently about aughts.

If you had a cell phone that you were dealing with, you were talking specifically about the telephone calls that it made and eventually we got into text [00:49:00] messages. Right. And then it was the calls and the text messages and and but now obviously with these smartphones and all these apps and all this data that they're collecting and and retrieving on these phones, the photos and the

**Darin:** photos and the videos.

Yeah, really. Choose up a lot of space. Yeah, and it's

**Jason:** just I, man, I, I do not envy analysts trying to analyze one phone, let alone if you have a whole group of investigation that you're doing where you have. Several phones that need to be analyzed.

**Darin:** Right? And you know, the younger the person, the more data that's on the phone.

Yeah,

**Jason:** so I mean, I guess so. So there is the challenge of. Getting the the data into your into a system, saving it from the phone and that [00:50:00] certainly is, as you mentioned, is going to be a challenge for law enforcement and moving forward. But then there's the challenge for the analyst to just like, okay, I have a Terabytes worth of data on this phone.

Where do I start in terms of trying to identify relevant information from this phone?

**Darin:** Sure. And a lot of times if you look at it chronologically, you're, you're perhaps looking for a fairly narrow time frame of a crime. And so you can whittle that down somewhat, but you still have the issue of you have to save that extraction and you have to save it separately as a report.

And that is just a massive amount of data at times.

**Jason:** It's only going to get better slash worse.

**Darin:** Exactly. All right, let's,

**Jason:** Let's move on then. I do want to talk about you winning the [00:51:00] IACA annual member award. So congratulations on that. Thank you. They did read a nice little segment at the conference first talking about your the case that we just talked about the missing persons case, but it also talked about your impact to the Kansas City Metro.

Area your work on the the Metro listserv. Just helping out other detectives and analysts in the area. Pretty, pretty fast to the point where someone's questioned whether you're an AI. So again, congratulations, but I also wanted to get your perspective, , how you feel about the award, what this award means to you.

Well,

**Darin:** actually it was, I was very surprised. I, I was, I was honored that I was nominated, but I was very surprised that I actually won it. But yeah, it was just, I was really surprised I even said something to [00:52:00] the person next to me. So it was very nice. But the the part that I really enjoy is the the helping out the other agencies around here.

And I kind of use that Metro share list as a, as kind of a training tool because every time I try to find something it, it helps me personally. I'm in. And finding new ways to find information here at KCPD as well, so it's, it's kind of two folded and it's also identifying some of our problem people and in the metro area, you know, across either city or state line as well.

So there's a benefit to that now that listserv.

**Jason:** Do you have to be part of a police department to be a member of that listserv?

**Darin:** Well, you do and there may be some loss prevention people as well on there, but it's, it is supposed to be, I believe, just law enforcement. Yeah. [00:53:00] It's mainly the, the detectives and, and analysts here in the metro area of Kansas City.

Yeah.



**Jason:** Yeah, I remember those days of the listserv, you know, when the ICA had the listserv and you didn't have Google and all this other stuff that you did today. So there was people asking for help on all sorts of stuff and listserv. And I remembered. You know, taking the time to see where I could easily help out somebody that I knew.

And so it was, it was a learning experience and it was, it was a good feeling knowing that you help somebody in need and you didn't even, you know, they could be clear across their side of the country for all, you know, so it was, it was, An interesting feeling. I do in that regard. I missed that listserv.

I just I don't feel that the forums work in the same fashion. I don't know if folks are more scared that on the forum. It's a more permanent record. There will always be out there as [00:54:00] opposed to a listserv. But I do feel that you get more responses with emails and listservs from from people when you're asking for

**Darin:** help.

Yeah, I think it's just, it's a speed issue as well. I mean, if something comes through your email box, it's something you may, and if you notice it, you may respond a lot quicker than, than the additional steps of, of going through that on a webpage.

**Jason:** Yeah, so, all right, and then. Let's move on to personal interest then.

And so, I find this fascinating. You are a beekeeper who harvests honey. That's correct.

**Darin:** I started it several years ago when my kids were kind of small. But, I kind of took a break because of all the activities and then, and then just this year I, I did start a hive and in my backyard. So I've started it up again.

It's very interesting to me. Just the structure of the, of the, the hive itself is [00:55:00] fascinating.

**Jason:** So how long does it take to set

**Darin:** one up? It doesn't take long in the spring. You just need a little bit of equipment and some. Some the, the boxed elements, I guess, of the hive, but, and the foundation, but and then you have to purchase bees, which is another aspect of it, but but really it, it doesn't, it's not very time consuming.

You just have to kind of, to watch them throughout the year and make sure there's no issues. And, and then in the fall you can harvest the extra honey. Yeah.

**Jason:** Now, how much honey do you harvest in the fall?

**Darin:** Well, I just did it this, this week, and I got a little under three gallons out of one hive. Oh, wow, that's a lot.

It was quite a bit. It was very good for a first year hive since it started in May. I think I installed it in May.

**Jason:** Now, when you harvest the honey, , are you wearing special equipment? Do you like smoke them out? make them less active? Do you do anything? How does that process work? Well, I, [00:56:00]

**Darin:** the top two boxes are where the honey is at.

And so what I need to do is I take one box off at a time and there's, there's 10 frames of foundation in each one. And so I have to brush the bees off. I have a, I have a bee brush that I brush them off back into the hive, and then I place them into a separate box, which I cover. to keep the bees out.

And I have to do that for, I had to do it for all 20 frames. And then, then I'll take those closed boxes back into my garage where I actually extract the honey. And then kind of filter it out and, and

**Jason:** bottle it. How, how many times you've

**Darin:** been stung? Well, this year I was stung once. Actually, I was keeping track.

It wasn't too bad. Yeah, it was careless. So yeah, that's a pretty good normally normally not Very much, but it depends on how careless you are.

**Jason:** Yeah, so Are you keeping all that honey yourself or do you [00:57:00] sell it you give it away? What are you doing with it

**Darin:** all? Well, I I keep a lot of it for myself and then I give a little bit away to Family and friends neighbors.

So

**Jason:** very cool. I always thought that was something fascinating to do. Yeah, it was

**Darin:** It's one of my favorites Yeah,

**Jason:** my son's in Boy Scouts and one of the, one of his scouts did a carpenter bee colony, like, like a you know, what he called, what he called like a you know, a bee motel type of thing.

So, but it was, that was fascinating too, to see how that was built and how he was able to attract carpenter bees to this location. So. Yeah. That, that whole thing is, bees are, are very fascinating because obviously they're so important for all our vegetation. Sure. So. All right. And you're also into genealogy.

Correct.

**Darin:** Yeah. I I got into it a few years ago because my great grandfather [00:58:00] had immigrated from Norway and he had changed his name. When he arrived in America. So, the big challenge was that no one in my family knew what his birth name was. So I kind of took it as a challenge and I kind of learned the genealogy process through ancestry along the way.

Which has helped even on some of our investigations here in terms of knowing, you know, how to dig into family histories and stuff. But it took me over a year, but I finally located his Information kind of with the help of DNA, but but that was a, it was a fun process and one of those aha moments.

So it was, it was fun because I got to tell my dad all about it as well. So,

**Jason:** yeah, no, that is, that is interesting. And that's where those, and the skills come into play doing all that digging.

**Darin:** I think so. I, I definitely [00:59:00] utilize some of that. As well as the, you know, the online searching and, and the library databases and, and even.

The Norwegian archive at one point. So yeah, you just kind of learn how to dig and you can apply it to a lot of different things. All right.

**Jason:** And do you have another question that you're looking to answer with your genealogy? What's next?

**Darin:** I'm just interested in the forensic genealogy side of it. I've seen several presentations on it, and I can see the value of it in terms of some of these unsolved cases, and there's been some pretty high profile Suspects identified through that.

And so I kind of keep my eye on that in terms of kind of where that's going. And that kind of goes along with the what we see in the next 5 years question as well. I think you're going to see a lot more of that.

**Jason:** Yeah, yeah, I thought about giving [01:00:00] my DNA up for that purposes, but then I figured I have some crazy cousins there and I don't want to get them into trouble.

**Darin:** Yeah, that's the risk right there.

**Jason:** Oh, that's not a good reason to do that, you know, honestly, but if my crazy cousins have hurt somebody, I

**Darin:** shouldn't

**Jason:** shouldn't you know, try to protect them,

but anyway. All right. So our last segment of the show. Darin is words of the world. This is where I give the guests. The last word. You can promote any idea that you wish. What are your words to the world?

**Darin:** Well, I think what came to mind was a quote that I've seen for a long time, but it's higher character and, and train the skill.

You know, afterwards, and, and we see that when, when we're trying to develop a, a larger analysis unit here at KCPD, too, that when you are looking at candidates that really look deep into the character, and then we can, we can teach all the other stuff on the back end, but I kind of keep that in mind when we [01:01:00] kind of go through candidates.

So, I guess that's my, that's my piece right there.

**Jason:** Very good. Well, I leave every guest with you giving me just enough to talk bad about you later, but I do appreciate you being on the show, Darin. Thank you so much. And you be safe. Thank you very

**Darin:** much.

**Mindy:** Thank you for making it to the end of another episode of Analysts Talk with Jason Elder.

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