

Sam Steiner - The Tenacious Leader

Mindy: [00:00:00] Welcome to Analysts 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 beat that analyst and join us as we define the law enforcement analysis profession.

One episode ahead time. Thank

Jason: you for joining me. I hope many aspects of your life are progressing. My name is Jason Elder, and today our guest has, I forgot to ask, how many years of law enforcement analysis experience do you have?

Sam: Oh, , around 18 years. Okay.

Jason: And today our guest has over 18 years of law enforcement analysis experience.

All with the Austria Federal Police Department. He was instrumental in the creation of the Hysteria Crime Analysis Unit in 2005. He is currently the head of crime Analysis. If you've gone to an I A C A conference over the last decade, you are very familiar with him as he's presented on many occasions.

He's [00:01:00] currently building the European Crime Analysis Association. Please welcome Sam Steiner. Sam, how we

Sam: doing? Good. Good. Jay, Sam, how are you?

Jason: Oh, fantastic. It is wonderful to hear your voice. I think you are now the, guest that's the farthest away from me at the moment that I've ever had on the podcast.

Yeah.

Sam: Not so bad, but only let's say 10 hours away if I take the next flight.

Jason: Yeah, man. We got a lot to go over. Certainly want to hear about the European crime, an analysis association but also I wanna get your contributions to the profession. So let's start there. How did you discover the law enforcement analysis profession?

Sam: It was a, not a really a big story behind that. It, it was in 2005 after working for about 22 years against drug [00:02:00] crime. It was the situation in Australia that. The, two different police forces we had at this time, they were merged and they tried to build a, a completely new modern policing system.

And one of the, of the things they wanted to set up was a crime analysis unit. And no one knows exactly about that, what, what to do what what should be the task for this unit, but the only thing they know that, that you have to be an IT guy, let's say, or at least you know, how to deal with computer a little bit deeper than the, than the average user.

So yeah, they ask me, Hey, Sam you wanna create a crime analysis unit and, and, and become the head of that? And I said, what do I have to do? So the answer was, we don't know it at the moment. And yeah, I said, do I, do I earn more money if I, if I take this position? They said Yes. And this was the, the whole [00:03:00] story behind.

And at the, I think it was the first of two light in 2005 I was the head of a crime analysis unit without any other member except me. Yeah. One man shall, and yeah, and I was allowed to find me, some people who are willing to help me. And yeah, that was the starting point. And the next couple of weeks I tried to get in as, as good as possible information what to do, because in Vienna, at the criminal headquarter, , they had a crime analysis unit running there for a, a little bit less than two years at this time.

So with a little experience, I asked them to help me out, which was not really successful. So I tried to, to find myself information about what to do in other countries. I was well connected at this time to different countries because you know, I love to talk to other people. I'd love to network.

So my first try was to [00:04:00] talk to the, one of the guys from San Francisco Police Department who are, who were working on crime analysis. And so it started, I was allowed to go to different trainings all over the world. And it ended that in the last years it more and more I've become one of the guys who is responsible for training.

And not only for working as a crime analyst, but that's the whole story.

Jason: Yeah. So who did you work with in San Francisco?

Sam: It was a nice lady called Jean Grham. I think she's still on the job. She has to be my age or something like that. And as I remember, she's also an I c A

member. Sure. So, and she, she also said, said to me if you want to learn more and more and more, the only way to do this is joining I c A.

So in 2000. 11 As, as I remember, I joined I c a and from that day on everything was running in, in [00:05:00] a really, really good way because my personal network in the field of crime analysis was exploding after the first I c A conference. And it's still getting bigger and bigger every day.

Yeah.

Jason: So you developed this in Syria, which is the equivalent of a state. Yeah. Inside Austria there. And you mentioned that they had a crime analysis unit at the Capitol, but other, if I'm reading you correctly, other states within Austria had not develop. Crime analysis unit at this time?

Sam: Yes. It it was just an experiment.

Started in 2003. In the capital in Vienna. Mm-hmm. . But the, their responsibility was all over Austria, so not for one of the states. It was all over Austria. And after , the police fall forces were merged. They decided that every single [00:06:00] state in a. has to have also a crime analysis unit for local stuff.

Mm-hmm. .

Jason: In the beginning, what were the goals? You're given this opportunity, the folks that you're reporting to don't know exactly what it is or exactly what they want. They just want you to go do. Yeah. And so, as you're learning and networking and getting all the pieces, what are the goals?

In the beginning, what did you discover, you know, what I need to do X, y, and Z first?

Sam: They it, it started with crime statistics at the beginning. For me it was one of the most boring parts in my job at the beginning, to be honest. . But I would say less than one year later, I found out that it's more than worth to work on, on crime statistics because it was the first really good database we had in Austria where you could use this data, not only for seeing what was happened [00:07:00] in the past, it was also very helpful to calculate what's going on in the future.

So yeah. Now honestly, I'm the biggest fan of crime statistics, and when people ask me about that they said, oh, isn't that boring? And I said, no, it isn't. Because

if you, if you work on that stuff in a right way, it's, it's one of the greatest databases ever. The Austrian crime statistics, if you allow me to go a little bit more in details is a database where the data is inequality about 99%.

So what this database, database includes is good and clear data worth to use it for working to find a better way for policing in the future. Okay.

Jason: Beyond the stats then, after you got those established or worked on, what was the next.

Sam: So because the name of our unit was created, like operational and strategic [00:08:00] crime analysis and to work on with statistic data, it's only strategic and op operational one, we use this name not in the same way.

Like you guys in the US do that. It's we mean it's working , on crime cases. This is what we mean with operational. So I said to my bosses we should have more focus also on cases where we can help investigators when they are handling a big amount of data where they don't have the overview about that.

And so more and more it becomes important for our investigator. And especially for those units who work on drugs or really serious crime to contact us for helping them with their cases. So, and we developed systems where we could help them in a really good time, in a good way. So at the end, or.

Analytical products [00:09:00] were more than helpful to bring all, all their suspects to court and get evidence. So they were sent to prison. And now we have about 80% of our work in, in operational stuff. And a little bit less, I would say, than 20% on strategic. And the two or 3% we are missing.

Is , the daily crazy paperwork, what we have to do, . All

Jason: right. So looking back, what are you most proud of that was established as you're creating this new crime analysis unit?

Sam: I, I was proud finding a. Modern ways to solve cases in a way we never thought about that before. And if you allow me to give you an example I stole for me at this time, a really modern and innovative way to, to work on crime.

We [00:10:00] had a big problem with house burglar in, the outskirts of, of our main city here in the area where I have to work. And we didn't know why it always happened on a certain day of the week at during daytime. So I, I had Some lessons coming from Joel Kaplan from Rutgers University.

So he taught me about risk terrain modeling, and I tried to use this for this special type of crime in these certain areas and risk terrain modeling. Doesn't only use, uses historic data, it also uses information from different crime scenes and find out the, the, the risk factors in these areas to at the end, we, we found out that this is mostly a really nice neighborhood where, where nothing happens normally, but except, those and the reason on a certain day and a certain time most of the, of the house burglars were happened was that [00:11:00] people put their trash bins out of the house in the early morning when they.

When they went to work. Mm-hmm. and, and the car who collects all, this stuff from the, those bin. Normally is emptying these bins in the, also in the morning, but then for the next eight, nine hours, the bin is in front of the house. And it was like a flag for the, for the suspects to break in because they, they realize that no one is at home because no one brought the, the trash bin back to the house.

Mm-hmm. . So we, we tried to get in contact with the neighborhood. We asked them to find people who are, let's say retired, bringing back this, these bins as soon as possible after, it is, empty. And we also had some special covered patrol cars there. Just to help out if something happens.

And at the end, the crime went down more than 20% in the, in, in those areas. And believe it or not, especially on [00:12:00] these certain days nothing happened. Mm-hmm. . So it was, it was exactly the way how we tried to deal with it. On the other hand, it was very time consuming because as you may imagine you need to check out if you use risk and modeling very, very deep.

What's the reason why people not only burglars could also happen in other crime fields. All, all of the violent crime, for example. But you have to find out what's the reason why the perpetrator is, is there and wants to commit crime. And if, if you have the time to do it then you will be successful because then it's a, a really easy way and Everyone who, who knows a little math can fix that

Jason: stuff.

Yeah. Now, did you have most of the data readily available or with the risk for Terrain model? There was some layers that you had to go after.

Sam: We did it in two different ways. Once we, we went out, to historic crime scenes to check it in person. What might be the reason why it's like an [00:13:00] invitation for the burglar, to break the houses there.

And the second thing was, at this time, it already started with a Google Street view, so sometimes we could do it from the office. We could sign in to Google Street View, and, and we could check the area. Also online, which was, was an easier way. But the more successful you want to be, , the more you have to go there in person.

So it's always not helpful only using Google Street food. But anyway, it helps us a little bit to reduce time for finding out the risk factors. Gotcha. Hmm. And this

Jason: is not necessarily dealing with this particular case or situation, but overall, like, how is the data at your department? You, you talk to a lot of analysts and a lot of people will complain about the quality of the data that, that they're getting handed.

So I was curious Austria, compared to maybe some [00:14:00] of the other folks that you've talked to over the years , how is your data

Sam: At the beginning, as you may imagine it, it, the quality wasn't really good. Also, crime statistics, not because it the, the data was stored in a database. Only when the police officer filled out a form about statistics and

You know what happened if these guys were more than busy with other stuff, they were not really happy about that to fill out the forms. So we tried to automate it. Mm-hmm. And I was one of the guys , who was working on that this. Can happen in Austria. And when it was automated, the only thing, what we had to check is if the data is logical.

So we find some ways also building up some algorithm , for the database. So it's now self-checking, which is great. Only, I would say 10 cases a week. We have to double check and correct the data. Sure. So as I, as I mentioned [00:15:00] before, the quality of the statistics is 99 or more percent.

And it's a hundred percent after checking. This is what I, I, I have to mention. And, but we have a second database because as I, as I said before the statistics it's only. Good quality because they fill out the form after the end of the case. So when every, everything , is, has been sent to the court, we have also from our police reporting management system a daily important datas, I would say, no, let me correct that.

It's not only, it's not daily, it's it's in real time now. So if someone saves a case in the police reporting systems in the same second, this data , has, been sent to a

database, we call it Security monitor. So, This data has a quality of more than 80%, because sometimes these cases are not real.

For an example, someone comes to the police station and my car is, is stolen, but he only forgot where he parked the car after he was drunk. So [00:16:00] in, in, for the next three hours or four or five, it's in the database, but later , you cancel this case and it's kicked out. But this data is more than helpful for really, really short interventions.

And we have those data available for all over Austria. So if something happens on the very west side and you are working on the east side, you can see everything. What happened in whole Austria, it, it's, for example, it's helpful because we have lot of traveling offenders coming from Eastern European countries.

So , they show up in the very east in the early morning are going to supermarkets still stuff there breaking houses. And you can, if it, it's reported in, in a good time, you can follow their way, not only on the same day, but I would say for two or three days you can follow the way how they are traveling through Austria and committing crime.

So those, both databases are really, really good. One with [00:17:00] a close to hundred percent quality and the. With 80% quality. Well the last one is good for, for short tasks and the statistics for long, for intermediate. Yeah. And we are happy about this data quality because there are not so many countries in the world with the same quality as I know.

My experience is, for example, that Massachusetts, I was there at the state police to talk about their data quality. They still have around. 40% or less, which is good for working, but not as good as we have it in Australia.

Jason: So when you developed the form for the officers to fill out and to get that more automated is I assume, well, let me ask the question.

So is that countrywide or is that just in St. Hysteria? No.

Sam: because we work close together with the headquarter in, in Vienna. If we are developing something, [00:18:00] we, we are testing it. And when it's okay, it's for whole Austria. So for every police station who works on that stuff uses the same way to save data

Jason: So we, that's definitely some, some jealousy from the states because there's 17,000 police departments in the country. Yeah. And so there's all different ways to do stuff. Records management systems it's very convoluted. So the fact that you're dealing with one system there for the entire country, Is

Sam: phenomenal.

Yeah, we are really small country but comparing it to other, not not so big countries, we are on, in a, in a really let's say in a good situation with dealing with data. On the other hand, you know, it the privacy policy is very strong in Europe. And every time when I'm talking about this, in the states, when I, when I'm teaching classes there people are laughing [00:19:00] about our privacy policy on the o Every time when they start laughing about that and I talked about my two databases, and then they stop laughing, then they are jealous about those databases.

Jason: Yeah. , why are they

Sam: laughing? Because they say we don't have that same in, in the states. If we can collect data as much as we want without any restrictions or less restrictions, there is no privacy policy. If we, if we want to get data, we get, we, we, we can get it. . Mm-hmm.

Which is mostly the truth, isn't it? Are you talking

Jason: about over in the states or other countries in Europe?

Sam: No, no. Oh the United States because the,

Jason: now there's, there are several restrictions on data that you can collect over in the state here in the States, and it can vary.

From state to state. Mm-hmm. . So there is no nationwide model on, on collection. I'm, and I say that out loud and I'm sure there are, I mean, there is some [00:20:00] guidelines and, and restrictions . But then , some states have more restrictive data laws and other ones have more open data laws so citizens can get certain data in one state a lot easier than they can get in another state.

Sam: And, and but it's nowhere in the States as this is my experience, is it in a, in the same way so strong like we have it. So it's very, very difficult. And if you want to set up databases you have to ask many, many people who are

controlling. If you do it in a right way, otherwise you are not allowed running these databases mm-hmm.

Jason: to link all the data together, even in one state would be quite a challenge. Yeah.

Sam: So we are also not allowed to, to, to link databases. It's, it's completely against or, or law. Okay. But we are very innovative as I would say. We always find a way to combine data in a legal way. This is one of the [00:21:00] tasks a crime analyst has to do.

Otherwise, he wouldn't be successful in his daily work.

Jason: All right, well, let's get to your analyst badge story. And for those that may be new to the show, the analyst badge story is their career defining case or project that an analyst works. And for you, we got two of them we're gonna talk about. And first one is a murder case, and the other one deals with a G P S in the car.

So let's go over the, the murder case first. 2021. What's going on with this murder

Sam: case? So it was starting with a crazy discussion between wife and husband. At the end, she, she she, her body was, was there dead in the apartment. And the guy who was the suspect, her husband. Was about I would say 20 or 25 miles away from the crime scene and always talking about that.

He's ne he was never there, but at this time, , he know exactly that he didn't [00:22:00] use , his telephone. And so no one could, could find an information that he, he made some calls there in, in, in this area. And there was no one else who could see him there at the crime scene.

But we, we, we could feel that he was the guy who killed his own wife. And we tried to find other ways to find evidence that the guy was there and was the murderer. So we got approval from the court that we could dump his phone. And this guy was very, very Good. In working on, Facebook, Instagram, and all that stuff.

And at this time we were not really experienced with data coming from, from cell phone dump so we could learn from others, especially from people who are dealing with that for a longer time. And at the end, we found evidence in the

phone without using call detail [00:23:00] records that this guy was there on the crime scene.

Exactly. Two or three minutes before , the crime happened and. He didn't know that we were able to do that. So at the end, it was only a little bit difficult to explain it to the court why this is evidence. Mm-hmm. I'm, I'm not sure how to describe it a little bit better because the my English vocabulary runs out at this time.

Okay. But you know, you, you are always producing data, mm-hmm. with your phone and, and there is no need that you use it. Actively. Everyone knows that when you, when you use the phone, you have a let's say a time stamp also with your x y data. Mm-hmm. , but not using it and getting information is more difficult.

I can bring it to the point this guy was normally using. Wifi always when his phone was switched on. But at thi at this time he was [00:24:00] close to a restaurant where he is normally eating and it's, and it's about a hundred meters away from the crime scene. He didn't do anything in on the, on his internet connection, but we could find out that he was locked into this wifi.

Oh, okay. So he could only be locked in into this wifi when he was there. And as lucky as we are He signed his interview that he never put away his phone. So he was always what's the, what's the name for that? When he has always the phone with him? He

Jason: said he's, he's in possession of his phone.

Yeah,

Sam: yeah, yeah. So he signed that and Yeah, that, that was it at the end. So he, he was sent to jail for murdering his wife.

Jason: Interesting. So, hey, and I wanna give, you said that your English runs out, but you described it exactly how I would describe it. . So [00:25:00] just just to let you know that, that this is coming through.

Great. So no worries there. Thank

Sam: you. If, if I am understandable, I'm happy. But, you know, I learned, I I, I was just thinking about when I had my last English lesson. Oh. And it was in year 1976. Sorry, a long time ago. That's,

Jason: Not to make you feel old, but that's one year before I was born .

Sam: Yeah. But anyway, as long as I'm understandable, I'm happy with that.

Yeah,

Jason: no, you're good.

Barry: Hello, I'm Barry Fosberg, the senior analyst with Houston Police Department. I'm here to do a PSA for regional associations. If you're an I A C A or familiar with I A C A, get in, find out if you have a local association. And if for no other reason your crooks don't know you have borders, your borders typically have other crime analysts, [00:26:00] and this is a great way to know 'em by name.

Matt: Hi, this is Matthew Smith and I have

a public service announcement. When you're walking in a building and somebody is coming behind you, please hold the door for them. Give them that common courtesy. And at the same time as somebody who's holding the door for you, just say thank you. It just drives me crazy when people don't say thanks.

Sam: It's, it's one of my pet peeves and I think if we all just got along and, and said, please and thank you, we would get a lot further in this society. Thank

Jason: you very much.

All right. Well let's go on to the other badge story this deals with a car , dealing with g p s coordinates inside the car.

Sam: You know all these guys, especially I will talk about some, someone who was working on drug trafficking.

They are innovative. , they think about what, what to avoid. That's also police cannot follow their traces. And we had one guy, , we felt this one is the most important.[00:27:00] Cannabis dealer in, in our city. But there was no evidence he was using a big, big luxury car.

with a builtin GP p s system. So, so not, using his mobile phone for that. I think at this time Google Map was also not so good. But he never used his phone when he was out. Especially when we thought he, he was traveling to the Netherlands to buy the drugs and smuggle them to Austria.

He never used his phone. He never put any address in his car in his GP p s unit, sorry. He was only using the g p s unit to find out where are all this speed what's the name for that? How do you guys call that in the states? These, these little boxes. Who, who, who are checking if you're too fast or not?

Oh,

Jason: I see. I don't think we actually have devices, but the officers on the side of the highway, there's, there's ways that GPS will tell you that there's a speed trap ahead.

Sam: Okay. So we do have boxes on the [00:28:00] streets in Europe. They fixed, fixed buildin boxes. They, they are measuring your speed. Mm-hmm.

and if you're too fast, they take a picture from the license plate and then you. Get fined, whatever. And he, he tried to avoid those speed tickets. So this was the reason why he was always reaching on his G p s unit. So once we called him with a big bunch of cannabis in, in his trunk.

And he said, oh, I don't know who puts the drugs in my car? This has been done by someone else. He did, he didn't know that. And he, so we asked him, who, who else used your car? And he said, no one. No one. No one ever. Have you been out with your car? Out of Austria and he said never.

I, I never was out of, of Austria because he, he note he didn't use any address from anywhere else out out of Austria when he didn't put it in the GP p s device. On the other hand, if someone puts an address in the GP p s device, there is no evidence that. The [00:29:00] car or the GPS unit was already there.

But we thought we will find something At this time. We had the information that those type of devices are recording every single point where, where it was moved on the streets without telling the user that it is recording. And and most of, of the old g p s devices did it in a way like that.

We don't know why, but it as soon as you switched it on, it starts recording. So , we were more than hopeful that we can find something in the card, but then it, the next problem was that there was no way to connect to this device to get the

data extracted. So we, we found someone who is a specialist in building it out from the car and putting it on an electronic device so we could extract the stuff.

And then on the first few, while by using it was geo time, which is software where you can map or x y data. We, we could see that [00:30:00] this guy was in, in the Netherlands with his car. And he was traveling straight through Germany, straight to a city about a hundred miles north from Amsterdam.

He was staying there. Two days later, coming back by using a different road, a different way to come back over Belgium because he said to later we found it out, he said this is an easier way because there are not so many traffic controls. So they will not find that I have drugs in my trunk.

And then we put this information because it looks like only one journey to Netherlands. It looks like it should be more behind. So we, we turn this information into the third dimension. When you use geo time, you can do it with one mouse click, and you could see six or seven same travels to the Netherlands in the same way, in the same time, in the same speed.

And at the end the trial says, okay. This is evidence that he [00:31:00] used the car for drug smuggling at least six to seven times, and he was sent to jail for eight years. But he didn't expect that it was only the information from this little g p s device. And normally, normally you wouldn't get it if you don't work on that stuff to get this information out.

It was the beginning of, of always trying to get those informations out of the cars. Yeah.

Jason: So, and that goes beyond cars too. Anything that's smart these days is gonna have a computer in it and is going to be collecting data. Yes.

Yes. So your refrigerator at home, if you have a smart refrigerator, it is collecting data on you that, and that data can be extracted and analyzed. .

Sam: Yeah. And it's, it's the same also with, with other stuff, you know. Now in Europe , it's against the law if you don't have a built-in device in your car when you buy a new one for emergency systems.

So [00:32:00] when you have an accident, you push a button and, and the car calls the police. And if you're not able to push the button, the car calls itself after, after a couple of seconds. So, and this is also data what, what you can

collect many, many other databases. So we are at, I, I would say at the moment, now at the technical situation we have in the world everything is data.

You just have to find it.

Jason: All right. Well, good deal. I, I do wanna move on. We got a couple more topics to talk about. And so before we get into all the work you're doing for the new Crime Analysis Association, I do wanna spend some time on what you brought to the table and what you got out of going to the I C A conferences or symposiums or training.

And so for, for the listener, they, they, they may not know. I mean, he, Sam has come to many [00:33:00] conferences and I've heard him speak and he's ran for president a couple of times and and other board members. And so has really become a staple at the I A C A conference and has done a great job of just representing international Analyst as a whole within the I A C A.

So when you think back, you said you started what was it, 2011? Getting into the I A C A. So you've been a part of the association for 10 years. I guess what do you feel are some of your highlights, and then what do you feel that you got out of the

Sam: I A C A for? For me, the, the first highlight was when I joined them for the very first time in 2011 in Vancouver at the International Symposium that I was welcomed there with open arms.

No one know me at this time. They only know that I'm working on crime analysis in Europe, but they welcomed me [00:34:00] like an old friend and. , everyone was helpful because I mentioned at that time that I'm liking in, in training, I'm liking in, in tools and whatever, and everyone was more than helpful to help me developing myself and getting better.

And I would say especially one guy I have to mention , it's the president at that, at that time, and he is still an i c member as I know, and he is working also. On in different functions for, I say it was Christopher Bruce, so Christopher Bruce it was my, my hero at this time.

Because he is really confident and there is no question you you can ask him where he don't have an answer. Mm-hmm. . So I still love to meet him anywhere in the world. I mean, luck sometimes I can make it, sometimes not. And he, for me, he's still the guy who, who really helped me out that I could develop myself , in a way where I am now.

Hmm. All right. [00:35:00]

Jason: And then I guess any, anything else

Sam: beyond that? Yeah, and the opportunities all these conferences, symposiums , for extending my network. Unbelievable. You make always new friends. You are, Always getting more and more deeper , into this network of crime analysis all over the world.

And what I really love about that is that I am connected, I think to at least 90% of the countries in the world, in the western world. To be honest where I know someone personally and this could only happen because I, I am an I c a member and I'm on all of these conferences and symposiums, and if not, I wouldn't know so many people in person.

And I will add,

Jason: I will add that it's your personality as well. Cause you, you might be, you're the, you're the type of person that can be at a party . And within an hour, , everybody in [00:36:00] the room knows you type thing. , you have a way with people, you have a way of working with the room and you do a great job of mingling.

And I, I think that has certainly played a part in you , taken a advantage of the situation and building relationships with everybody that you've come in

Sam: contact with. Yeah. It my, it sometimes it's, yeah, it's my personality. You are right. But it could also sometimes go in the wrong direction, , because as you may imagine trying.

To be always in the middle of, of the room. It's not always helpful, . But that's my personality and I, there's no bad thinking behind that. Mm-hmm. , I just love those situation. Making new contacts, making new friends helping each other. I'm, oh, thank God, I'm now in a, in a position.

And also my knowledge is hopefully good enough that I'm also able to help others and I try to do it actively. So I'm, sometimes I'm not [00:37:00] waiting that someone asks me. I could see in their faces that they need help, and I ask them, do you need my help? And I, this is what I, what I learned , in the last now what do we have now?

I have more than 12 years. That's really important. Helping others brings back the, the help you need. So this is my experience and I I love that. And I'm really afraid about the day when. When I I will retire. But anyway, I prepared myself. I will talk about that if you want . So when, when they kick my ass out of the, of the police because I'm too old I, I'm prepared to do, to work on crime analysis also when I'm retired.

Yeah.

Jason: That way you can go do your own thing. Mm-hmm. . All right. So you ran for president twice for the I A C A? Yes. And did you run, I can't remember, did you run for another board position, an election, or was it just twice

Sam: for president? Twice for president, I think two or three times for one of the vice presidents.

And

Jason: so, it was one of [00:38:00] those things where, you know, election cycle would come up and unfortunately you fell short. But it was one of those things like, oh, is Sam running this year? Like, you, you just anticipated that , Sam was running. And of course, no one likes to lose and no one wants to lose.

But there is a certain level of tenacity there that you showed there by continuing to run for these positions and, and challenging the incumbent. I mean, we just had an I A C A conference this past fall. No one ran against the incumbents, both of them. God got reelected with no challenger. And to me I don't know if that's necessarily healthy for an association, but from your point of view, having somebody that ran four or five times, what did you take away from it or , what would your advice be for someone that's thinking about running?

Sam: I took away that if you are not running, you, you you are the loser. If you run and you [00:39:00] lose because someone else got more voices more votes worry about then you are not a loser. It's just someone more important for the people who are voting but not running is losing and gotcha.

Because it, it's an international association I always thought. Someone from out of the states has to be a board member. And this was the main thing which for forces me to run for an office. And , I'm pretty sure if I would win an office yeah, I would do my best to work on the goals for ica.

But I also know that if I'm not winning the world will not break down. So this, this is also why I, when there is an opportunity I'm running. But the last time I wasn't able to run, I was working on my new association and I thought I have to spend more time to do it in a good way than running for an office for ica.

But let's see what comes up in the future. [00:40:00] Maybe I'm running again.

Jason: I know. So just so there's no lost in translation there. I so there's a saying in the states that we have that you fail on every shot that you don't take. Yeah. And I think that was your message there.

And so, and I've said several times on this show how I feel about the international aspect of the I A C A I, I do feel that there should be a permanent position on executive board that is dedicated to non. Us person. Like I felt that the, the I O C what's the ioc? International Outreach Committee?

Yeah. That person, the person that's in charge of that should be an executive board position. Yeah, I totally agree. I, I feel that to ensure the international aspect of the association. Let's just get into you developing the [00:41:00] European Crime Analysis Association because, so, you know, I do wanna make the joke that I mentioned that you ran four or five times.

So now you said the hell with it, I'm just gonna create my own association,

Sam: You're right. You're, you're absolutely right, . No, no, that's awesome. I'm just kidding.

Jason: Yeah. So so as you're developing this association for all of Europe, which is quite an endeavor, just go through some of the, trials and tribulations that you.

Gone through just to get to this point, and then I will follow up with your goals on what to expect in the future. Yeah.

Sam: You, you, you know that I was also responsible for Isea a in developing European membership. Not really successful, but , it wasn't on my fault alone. It was also because when I asked people joining the ICA and they checked out the offers, what [00:42:00] ICA has to offer for Europe, they always talked to me and said they are more focused on, on US than on, on every other part of the world, especially not on the completely different law system in Europe.

Why don't we have a, a European association? And that that was always in, in my mind and in, in the back. And then I thought, now, I think it's time to set up a European association because so many people asked me about that, but , no one makes those the, the start. So it was, it was up to me to to, to start with it.

And yeah, now the association is established and waiting for the first executive part, which has to be set up in the next couple of weeks. And as you mentioned that before, I have to say now there is one position for someone from out of Europe, which sounds crazy when in the first moment, [00:43:00] but it has to be one guy from out because we need the connection to the other p rest of the world.

And this connection has to be a life connection. So it has to play a, a really important role in the association to be connected to other to other associations, to other parts of the world. And this has to be A task where someone special who is appointed to do that, has to do the job in the name of the executive board For

Jason: the I A C A?

Sam: No. For, no, no, no. For the European Association. We have maybe I, I, I, I didn't explain it as good as I wanted to explain. The European Association, as I mentioned it was, was built to, to cover the needs of the European crime analysts. Mm-hmm. . Mm-hmm. , but not forgetting about that there are analysts working in the same field all over the world.

Mm-hmm. . So [00:44:00] someone's duty has to be this playing a major role in connecting to other parts of the world for the European Association. And this has to be a position on the executive board, not only a, let's say committee or something. So in the, in the future executive part of the European Association is someone responsible for connecting to other crime analysis, analysis organizations or.

Single crime analysts all over the world.

Jason: Okay. I Alright, I say that, that I understand now. And will the home base be there in Austria?

Sam: At the moment, yes. Mm-hmm. , because I, as I set it up, I had to report it to the Austrian government that I'm setting up a nonprofit association.

Mm-hmm. . So it's built up on the Austrian law. Mm-hmm. But in this paper, you, what you have to use as a, as the first report to set an [00:45:00] association. There is also a, a, a part who, what describes the European way this organization will work in the future. And because the European law is.

Simply the same all over the European member countries. We are able to move the base into every other member country from the European union in, in, in seconds. If, if we want, we just have to report it to the Austrian government that we want to move it, for example, to Belgium. And then the colleague who will take it over from Belgium has to report it to his government, and that's it.

Okay.

Jason: So I guess in the, in the beginning here, as you're getting this all established, what has been the response. To all of Europe. Is all the different countries involved?

Sam: Yes. At first I, I had to think about how can I promote it when I, when I set up an [00:46:00] association and I also set up uh, let's say a, a simple website what do I have to do , to send it out to the crime analysis world in, in, in Europe.

So I used all my, my contacts in Europe asking them, becoming a member, asking them helping me, promoting it. To their network. And believe it or not, as I, as I was, was in the situation to publish the website, five days later, I had 460 members. So, which, which, which was really a great outcome. And, and, and now yeah, we have to work to keep it alive.

Jason: In terms of Europe specifically Yeah. What are some challenges or what are some goals that you have that are just specific to Europe? Maybe the way that crime analysis. The needs just in Europe or the way folks treat associations or , what are challenges that [00:47:00] you have there in Europe that you might not have here in the United

Sam: States?

Yeah. . And I think , the most important one is that crime analysis is only around 20 years old in, in Europe. Mm-hmm. and depending on different European countries it's still a baby there. Mm. And as always if, if you set up something new in old systems and yeah, especially the European way of policing is mostly old.

You, if you, if you don't work on, on promoting the way to make modern policy policing you will not be successful. And, and where you guys are now we, we, we still need at least I would say, more years to be yeah, to be used as, as a tool for policing in the same way, like in most of the parts in the United States.

Not, not always. I know also that crime analysts in some certain [00:48:00] agencies in the states, they. Yeah, they are sitting in the last office in any, anywhere in the, on the lowest floor or, or on the roof. And, and, and mo on some investigators say we didn't u need an an analyst the last 30 years, so we don't need them now.

It's the same in Austria, it's the same in other countries, but as long as we are working to find our cheerleaders, and this was the way like I did it and like many other units did it the same way in, in, in Europe. We are now on a really good way to make us more valuable for the decision makers.

It's, it's not really the same like in the states that you, the average investigator, the average decision maker, Uses products , from the crime analysis units. But we are on a good way that we get more involved than we, we, we were in the last 20 years. And especially the, the, the way like, like we [00:49:00] act is completely changing in the, in the, in the last years.

There's a massive rethinking around the job at the moment away from the old image of the evaluator as a tool specialized and visualizer. And it turns more into a new image of the analyst as a problem, problem solver, a thinker and a co communicator focused on on, on really on two main areas.

It's the product creation and it's the product communication. And this is where we are now and. At the end ne it, it should never happen that someone says, I don't need an analyst. Mm-hmm. .

Jason: All right. So how many, how many members do you have currently? Around

Sam: 500. Oh, okay. No, that's a,

Jason: that's a good science considering you just started.

And so, and, and I think as you mentioned in the, in the prep call right now, , the membership fee is free as you're just getting this established, correct?

Sam: Yes, that's right. It there [00:50:00] are no costs, not really costs at the moment. Mm-hmm. , because there is not a really big bunch of stuff I can't offer the people at right now, at the moment.

Mm-hmm. , but e, e, e except regularly webinars meet the Expert series where, where experienced analysts from all over the world. Share their experience in presentations. But because we have an official official education institute partnering with the European Association, it is, it's named the European Forensic Institute.

It's kind of a university based in, in mul at the island of Malta. Mm-hmm. . Together we are working on, on, on staff offering to not only to the members alone, also to students from the European Forensic Institute. Hopefully they will also become members because then they get this training cheaper.

So we will offer paid trainings in the, in the near future. Mm-hmm. , but at least one or two times a month, we will have people train our members [00:51:00] for free. Mm-hmm. that there will be a lot of stuff for free, but we will also offer them some paid stuff. Mm-hmm. in collaboration with a European forensic institute.

And the good thing is that I am now also responsible in this European forensic Institute for setting up a masters course. So I'm not, I'm not academic, but they ask me helping them out and become the director of this masters course because of my experience and because of my huge network.

So we will also offer through the association. To get a master's degree in crime analysis.

Jason: Nice. Nice. , now what do you do with the language barrier ? Does, is there a language that most folks are, are speaking or are you having many translators as you go through these different events and,

Sam: no, I, when I started I, I had to start in English, of course, because it's the most common [00:52:00] language all over the world.

But I promised my members that we will set up especially on the website, but also on the content later pages for at least two or three other languages. I'm thinking about German of of course unfortunately, Many of my German friends they have their issues with, with English. Mm-hmm. I have a lot of people from Italy, and I will set up with help of my Italian colleagues also and Italian part in, in the association.

And we uh, and maybe at the moment it doesn't look like that, but maybe we can also integrate Spanish mm-hmm. . But that's future music at the beginning. I, I, I, I'm glad that everything runs fine in English. Mm-hmm. , and let, let's see how it works in the future. After, after setting up all this functions what we need to run that, let's see what happens.

Jason: Yeah. Now, in terms of your membership, what have they told you is the biggest need for training?

Sam: I talked to, [00:53:00] from, from the, from the people, they are now members at least 20 or 30%. I know them in person.

And I talked to them and they said at first, I need a way to network with other colleagues in Europe. And second I would love to have best practice staff. Trainings doing by experts. So that's not the biggest goal. Getting, getting training. The, the bigger goal is that I can offer them a way to network.

I gotcha. So every, everyone when I talk to them and and those people, mostly of them are experienced analysts. They say, they say normally I know how to work, but if I'm running into issues, I would love to have some some people asking them how they deal with that stuff. And for, to do it in a way like that you need a network.

I

Jason: gotcha. All right. Good deal. Well yeah, so right now if somebody from the states are in the audience, non-European, Is is interested in joining or [00:54:00] are they able to join

Sam: Warmly welcome. I think I have about 20 members from the US at the moment. All right.

Jason: Good deal. You're eventually gonna have uh, as these associations go, you start with training, you start with meetings, and then you eventually get to a conference.

Is, is that in the near future?

Sam: It's not only that, it's also fixed. The date at the moment it will be held from October 23rd to the 24th. Mm-hmm. on the island of Marta. Oh nice. Yes. And it's. Co-hosted by the European Forensic Institute, of course, and also by the ministry of police in, in from Malta.

So they are assisting us and helping us out with their, with their local yeah, staffs like, like organizing transport from airport and, and whatever. So the, the, the Marta Police and the home Ministry is, is very happy about that, and they promised us that they will help, they will help us in any way, what we can do.[00:55:00]

So if there's anyone already working on his schedule for October. Save the date because you guys have to put your, your nice buddy in a plane and fly over to the island of Marta. Yeah.

Jason: Excellent. Very good. Well, I wish you the best of luck in this endeavor. I know I can only imagine what it would take to get this off the ground, but I am confident that you are the right person for the job.

So we will include the link to the association and additional information for those listeners that are interested in, in getting involved with your association. Sounds

Sam: great. Really appreciate that. Thank you Jason.

Jason: So let's finish up with personal interest. . And again, someone like you, it is fascinating what you get into on your free time.

You are a fourth degree black belt in Judo. Yes, that's right. So how did,

Sam: how did you get involved in that? Yeah, [00:56:00] I when I started working as a detective I had a boss who was running a judo club, so I started with judo as an adult. Mm-hmm. I, I was around 29 years old. But then it it became an addiction.

Mm-hmm. . So, yeah. I ended, I ended up as a national referee. Mm-hmm. , I'm, I'm still doing unfortunately I had to stop doing the trainings for Judah kids because of the pandemic. Mm-hmm. So, so most of the Judah clubs lost so many members, so they had to close. Same was with my club. Mm-hmm.

But I, I will start again with that staff, hopefully when I'm retired. Because I, I, I love to teach children, I still do the self-defense training also. But Judah is, is, is a part of my life and helping me to keep my body a little bit in shape. And it's also good for your brain because thinking about judo and staying on the, on the mat train with others makes you free from thinking to other problems.

You [00:57:00] are focused on that, and you can people who don't do that may not believe, but in, in having a, a good judo training fight, you may, you may relax more than sitting at home in, in on, on, on your couch. Watching TV is not the same. Judo helps you relaxing yourself and cleaning your, your brain.

Yep. It's therapeutic. Yeah. So of course that's, that's, that's the right word. Yeah. Yeah.

Jason: So then I guess from somebody that doesn't know judo, how do you describe judo to a non judo person?

Sam: It is a way to find. Who, who of us is better with the highest level of respect from each other. Mm-hmm.

So the this is what people learn from the very beginning. Respect your opponent, but try to be better. Mm-hmm. . And there is the abs. Absolutely. Red line is you never have to step over is [00:58:00] that you want to hurt someone. Mm-hmm. . So the, the, the highest target is win, but don't hurt someone. And if it happens, it it happens.

But it ha you have to take care about your opponent. You are responsible. And that's a good thing. It's not the same like boxing.

Jason: All right, . Well, our last segment to the show is Words to the World, and this is where I give the guest the last word.

Sam, you can promote any idea that you wish. What are your words to the world?

Sam: If I would talk to the whole world, there is only one sentence. I would say stop fighting and try to love each other. But I'm, I'm too poor for, for, and too small for doing that. So let me talk to the crime analysis world doing your continuous learning every day.

Try driving change to sharing your knowledge and grow your international network.

Jason: Very good. Well, I leave every guest with, you've given me just enough to talk bad about you [00:59:00] later, but I do appreciate you being on the show. Sam, thank you so much

Sam: and you be safe. Thank you so much, Jason, for giving me the opportunity once again.

Also, thank you for your friendship because I know you now for, for many years and hopefully we can meet up on one of the next conferences.

Mindy: Thank you for making it to the end of another episode of Analysts Talk with Jason Elder. You can show your support by sharing this in other episodes found on our website@www.lpodcasts.com.

Sam: If you have a topic you would like us to cover or have a suggestion for our next guest, please send us an email at ellioteightpodcast@gmail.com. Till next time analysts, keep talking.