Michael Raney - Think Outside the RMS

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, identify 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 a law enforcement analysis profession.

One episode ahead 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 14 years of law enforcement analysis, experience, all in California. He spent time in Anaheim, conquered San Jose, and now Antioch. He's the former president of the Bay Area Criminal and Intelligence Analyst Association, and he's here to talk about solo analysis versus team analysis.

Please welcome Michael Rainey. Michael, how we doing?

Michael: Thank you Jason. It's great to be here. I'm glad to finally do this. I've listened to this podcast for, , a couple years now, and so I'm glad to be on the show finally.

Jason: All right. [00:01:00] Well, thank you for listening and now it's your opportunity to share your perspective and contributions to the law enforcement analysis profession.

I look forward to it.

. So how did you discover the law enforcement analysis

Michael: profession? Well, we're gonna go back to my junior college days. I was, , messing around and trying to figure out what I wanted to do with my life. I spent six years in junior college. You know, most people, you know, don't take that long.

But I finally got a purpose of criminal justice. So I finished junior college and went to San Diego State. Got a bachelor's of science in criminal justice, and then kind of knew I wanted to go into law enforcement, just didn't know what I wanted to do. And My fiance at the time now wife found a program at her

college at Cal State Fulton, a certificate program for criminal intelligence and analysis.

So I'm like, oh, I'll try that. Why not? So I went to there got taught by some people in the field Bryant Gray. Some others taught me all the classes.[00:02:00] Part of that program also was a 400 plus hour internship. I did my internship at Huntington Beach, California police department. It allowed me to work ungodly amount of hours.

So basically I was working full-time at Long's Drugs at the time, but I was also doing my internship. So I'd start my internship at like four 30 in the morning and then sometimes work. At Longs drugs until nine o'clock or 10 o'clock at night just to get the hours in. Yeah, once at Huntington Beach I was finishing up my internship hours and the opportunity.

Opened up at the Anaheim Police Department. I go, went ahead and applied. My interview didn't go very well, but because of my portfolio that I presented it it kind of, you know, won me over the top for the supervisor there. I worked for Anaheim police department from 2007 until 2013.

And then I went on to Concord pd basically because I'm a Bay Area boy Ra born and raised, and [00:03:00] Southern California was pretty far away from my family. So therefore I kind of just was kind of pushed and nudged by my supervisor to just apply up in the Bay Area since I was making weekend trips every weekend to the Bay Area to see family.

So I applied for Concord, got the Concord job, was there for about three and a half years. And then that was on a contract position, but then they had an interview, they chose another analyst. So I was kind of out of the analytical world for. A bit, I'm trying to find jobs somewhere else. I ended up wa working at Safeway as a food clerk for about a year until I found a job at San Jose pd.

Now I still lived in Concord and for those that don't know, Concord and San Jose are roughly about 50 miles away from each other. Oh wow. So I made the commute every day for about a year and a half from Concord to San Jose. Luckily I had a, a great supervisor Janet fan who allowed me to work adjusted hours.

So I would get [00:04:00] in at roughly 6:00 AM and leave at two, but still leaving at two. There was still a two and a half hour commute home every day. So that was a little draining on everything. And so I kept doing it cuz you know,

I loved the profession, I loved the aspect of working for San Jose p d. But then the job at Antioch opened up and as soon as the.

Posting went up for a second analyst at Antioch. My actual supervisor and all the people that I worked with in San Jose actually told me about it because they knew it was a lot closer to Concord and they knew immediately that I would be applying for that job so that it would bring me closer to my house and not have to drive like four hours a day.

So I applied for Antioch when I was on the interview panel because I'd been in the field for so long, I literally knew everyone in the, in the room on the interview panel personally, except for the HR lady from Antioch. That's the only person that I did not know in the interview panel. So that made things comfortable for the interview panel.

[00:05:00] And I've been working at Antioch for about three and a half years now.

Jason: Right. Well, our last segment to the show is Words of the World. No, I'm kidding. No. A lot to unpack there. Thank you. So let's go back to, You getting the certification and Yes. Because we've had a couple guests on the show talk about the certification.

You mentioned Brian Gray as an instructor. We've had him on the show. This program that you went through to get your certificate, looking back on it now and all the different spots , you've held as an analyst in these different police departments, how did that certificate influence or help you in these different spots?

Michael: It helped me a lot. It helped me get kind of focused on, I mean, I've always been good with somewhat excel and numbers and everything like that, but this program kind of focused it as far as. Crime goes. Crime trends, crime patterns just kind of helped me hone my skills a little bit. [00:06:00] And interesting enough in Anaheim, after I'd been there for a couple years I had talked to my supervisor about how I got hired.

And so she basically broke it down to, she had a pile of applicants that had no degree and no certificate, a pile of certificate and no degree, and a pile of certificate and degree. And she focused basically on the pile that had a degree and certificate. And her opinion, basically that was an indicator that whoever was in this pile was in it for the long haul.

They were looking for a crime analysis career, not just a stepping stone to some other position. So having that certificate kind of solidified. My position in the field to say, Hey, I'm a serious guy. I'm taking a degree, but I've also taken the certificate program that hones in on a specific skill in law enforcement.

Jason: Is there a particular class or project that you worked on that you [00:07:00] really like?

Michael: Particular project? Not really. I mean, to be honest with you, I, I, I don't. That's alright. Remember the specific projects that, that I worked on there? It's been so long. How about a class? The F B I profiling class was kind of interesting.

So it was very intriguing to read about F B I profiling and how they profile people using the behavioral analysis unit. But to be honest, I've never used that in my career, but it was very interesting at the time. Yeah. For, for the certificate program.

Jason: Yeah. And one of the things I really like about the certificate program is the required 400 hours that you mentioned and getting that experience in the field.

And for you did it via internship at Anaheim. And so what kind of things did you do as an intern in

Michael: Anaheim? Actually I was an intern in Huntington Beach. Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Yes, that's okay. At Huntington Beach. So basically I was in charge of reading [00:08:00] the reports creating spreadsheets and also doing some mapping for crimes and looking for patterns and crime.

And also creating bulletins if I did fight a pattern to put out to patrol or to put out to other agencies. And then I also attended regional meetings with the analyst there, Julie Romano. So that's kind of how I got into the field of. Introducing myself to the world of Orange County Crime Analysis Association.

Right. They kind of knew who I was, knew who, what I could do, and that's where I kind of benefited from When I told you I had a bad interview at Anaheim. I, you know, was very stuttery and everything like that, but she, she knew that I had products behind me that I could actually do the job and do the work and everything like that once I got past the speaking part.

Yeah, I gotcha.

Jason: So, and I love the. The hard work tenacity and that you have right now, because as you mentioned, you [00:09:00] interning, you're starting at four 30, so you can work till late at night to make ends meet. And that those days, as I look back, I was like, oh, like those 70 or 80 hour work weeks when you're 20 something.

And you know, I certainly wouldn't wanna do them now, but, but I envy, envy they have that energy that, that we did when we were in our twenties.

Michael: Yes, yes. Those were lengthy days, but I mean, as you said, we were, we were in our twenties, so we had the endless energy to do that. Burn candles at, you know, the candle at both ends as they say.

Jason: Yeah. And then, and I'm sure you at four 30, you can get a lot done before everybody else gets in the office.

Michael: Yeah. Yeah. So

Jason: then, and you, you did mention the struggles that, do you feel that the struggles that , you obviously knew you were stuttering, but sometimes we're harder on ourselves than what we really, that others [00:10:00] really feel.

So in hindsight, do you really think you struggled that much or do you think it maybe was something that you were just being hard on yourself?

Michael: It could be a little bit of both. Mm-hmm. To be honest, it was my first interview in the field. Mm-hmm. So I think it was a little bit of that, that I didn't have the experience obviously, that I have now to bring to an interview.

Mm-hmm. But yeah, I was a little bit of hard on myself cuz I mean, Most interviews I go to, I think I rocked it, and then they're like, oh, sorry, you know, I, we're gonna go a different direction. And I'm like, oh man. Like, you know, like, I thought I rocked it. You know, like, like, or, or I'll walk away from an interview and I'll go, man, I should have mentioned that.

And that. Like just, yeah. Second guess what I actually said out in the interview. Yeah.

Jason: Yeah. And if Sean Bair listening to this, he's smiling cuz you mentioned portfolio. Yes. And that, that is his number one tip for [00:11:00] anybody going into a law enforcement, a analysis interview, is to have that portfolio to be able to show what you can

Michael: do.

Yes, the portfolio has saved me many times on interviews. Yeah,

Jason: and it's funny, I just thought of this right now. One of the first interviews that I ever had, the panel, one of the panel members asked me what current book I was reading, and if you're a regular listener to this show, you know, that I hate to read and I do not read.

And so I probably should have, in hindsight, should have made up a book to say that I was reading, maybe lied and it would've helped. But I said, I don't read. I just think that I don't, I don't read. And, and it just like, kind of was probably pretty short about it and, and whatnot. And I didn't get the job.

That's probably not the only reason in hindsight. I, I was didn't, didn't probably answer

Michael: the, the question as best as I could. [00:12:00] Yeah. Well it was interesting on, I was on the other side of the panel on one. Police department and there was an analyst that was interviewing that fresh out of the certificate program, so no actual analysis experience to bring to the table.

She brought a portfolio and it was basically a timeline of the chief of police's career that she was interviewing for. Mm-hmm. So basically like, you know, she had read articles about the chief of police for that department and basically track like how he went to college and then he went to this police department and then was a captain here, and then was a, you know, a chief eventually there.

I'm like, huh. That was very interesting, like perspective, like you don't have any work to show, but you've shown. This is your portfolio. So yeah. Could you

Jason: imagine if she said, you know, and then when I was analyzing his trash, I found

and I followed him [00:13:00] here. And, but no, that's, that's good. I think what you're the hiring manager said before that you're in it for the long haul if you're willing to take those extra steps and do the little things that not a lot of other people will do, so I'm sure.

Did you end up Hi. Did they end up hiring her?

Michael: No. They did not. Oh. They went with someone with, they went with someone with more experienced.

Jason: You should have fought harder for it. Or what'd you, what are you doing?

All right. So so then you, get to Anaheim what kind of things are you dealing with? What kind of issues are you trying

Michael: to solve? So when I first started, I was given the task of, at that time our agency didn't really have a direct connection to our r m s, so we were basically like reading every case and filling out the MO of every case.

Just to kind of build a. Rapport of spreadsheets and whatnot to find the crime trends and patterns. And at the time I was originally doing [00:14:00] property crime, but then eventually moved to person crimes. But I was cross trained in both so that when I worked on Fridays by myself I could handle all requests that came into the crime analysis unit.

So we had a team, we had a supervisor, Danielle Martel and then we had a, another analyst was me De ArcHa. And then eventually she retired and we had another analyst join us with Veronica and Mommy. And so we kind of joined it. Created a team. And we just kind of had our own responsibilities, but we always talked about what we were doing so that we could kind of just keep abreast if anyone asked and somebody was off, we were able to kind of fill in for them when we needed to.

Jason: Are you all stationed in the same area?

Michael: Yes. We were in like a bullpen type mm-hmm. Office. No, I mean, we ki kind of changed offices a couple times while, while I was there, they kept moving the crime analysis office, I think three times in the seven years I was there. They moved us from next to patrol to in [00:15:00] inside investigations to inside the Intel unit. So we kind of just bounced around, but for the most part we were always within like hearing distance of each other. Yeah. You

Jason: know, I personally, I prefer an office. Right. I do not enjoy working in a cubicle, but I think in terms of the purpose of the work, there is a huge advantage to working on a team and working in a cubicle cuz folks overhear things.

It's just naturally happens, but, and, but it can be beneficial. So if I'm on the phone talking with somebody and I'm having an issue, there's been times when a coworker's come, come over and said, I heard. Heard what you're saying. This was already decided on earlier this morning. Right. Stuff like, I mean, there's stuff that other people know that you don't, that they overhear and they can kind of nip issues in the bud right

Michael: away.

Yeah. Yeah. I agree with that. Yeah, I mean, the cubicle I found out through [00:16:00] my career that just overhearing conversations, you get a lot of information that's never gonna find any other source. Mm-hmm. Like, it's never gonna be in a report, it's never gonna be documented anywhere, but you're just gonna overhear chatter of things and that's, you know, one source of valuable information in the field.

Yeah. So what's a

Jason: difficult, you mentioned reading the reports and establishing the mo and that seems like a pretty daunting task to do.

Michael: Yeah, it was quite, quite daunting to have to read every single report. And at one point, right before I was about to leave, I think we were planning on, or we did train the officers to try to do the mo.

But we made it kind of a heavily suggested item for the officers to do while they're doing their reports, since they're on scene. But because we didn't make it required, the officers kind of just never did it. So therefore it fell on us because we needed that information to do our. [00:17:00] Trends, tracking and pattern tracking to see what kind of patterns were out there with the MO specifically.

Jason: You said you worked both property crime and violent crime. Did you prefer one or the

Michael: other? Actually I, I mean, I kind of like both for different aspects. I mean, property crime at the time was kind of through the roof and there was a lot of commercial burglaries going on at the time.

So it was fun tracking those and keeping those under wraps. And then the person crimes is always kind of the quote, sexy crimes that everyone goes after because, you know, it's violent crime. People are getting shot, people are getting robbed, people are getting, you know, ev. Killed and everything like that.

So it's kind of like the sexy crimes of, of law enforcement that people want to go after and it actually has suspect information. So that's the majority of the time, it has good suspect information. So it's easy, kind of almost easier to work. Sometimes the person crimes with property crimes, you know, you have like 50 burglaries and you're like, okay, I have no suspect information.

No, [00:18:00] literally entering information except they just smashed it and grabbed and took a cash register. All right, just put it on the list, you know, just keep, keep going.

Jason: Yeah. What are you talking about? They have those security cameras, you know, they're gonna be a little pixely, but come on, you can make something out of that ghost,

Michael: can't you?

Oh, yes. The, the mass, the mass subject looks like, you know, chupacabra, like a bigfoot going across the, across the woods. Yeah. Yeah. All

Jason: right, so 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 an analyst works.

And for you today we have two and the first one, It's 2010 and you are working a restaurant robbery series.

Michael: Yeah, so we started noticing a trend between track flyers and our own crimes that we were seeing quite a few fast food restaurant robberies occurring early in the morning just before [00:19:00] the businesses would open probably about 5:00 AM.

As the workers were getting there to set up for the day we had two suspects would go in. They would point a handgun and take any cash from the register and then just flee. We didn't really have any vehicles at the time, where we started tracking it. So I kind of took lead on it and created a spreadsheet with all the pertinent details of like, when, where what types of businesses kind of ma mapped it out as well, and then kept track of like all the suspect descriptions just to kind of.

Verify that we're having the same exact people going in and start linking them. It started to spread from Anaheim to various cities around us, including into LA County. So as the number increased above 20 the, they decided to have like a

regional task force set up between the detectives. And so they invited me to the meeting since I had all the pertinent detail in the spreadsheet.

And so we had meetings about [00:20:00] what cases belong, what cases didn't belong. The detectives usually stuck to ones that had, as you mentioned before, the surveillance cameras. They mentioned, oh, we only have this many because, you know, we could verify that they were there. And I'm like, okay, well that's good, but I have exact same suspect descriptions and vehicle descriptions and these ones that we don't have cameras for, but it fits their pattern to like a hundred percent.

So I kind of just kept that list almost at one point. I think I had two lists going. One, that, that was like the official list that the detectives would. You know, kind of blessed. And then one that I had off to the side that had an additional like 10 robberies that they weren't originally were willing to accept.

So comes down to it, we end up arresting the two suspects. Fast forward to the trial and they looked to my spreadsheet and see just as I submit the whole entire spreadsheet to the lead [00:21:00] detective. And then case goes on and they end up getting convicted on I think a total of 35 robberies. And that was the exact number that I had on my spreadsheet.

So, Nice. I was told, I was told by the detective that yes, we had so many robberies attributed to them. But the DA and the judge kind of looked at my spreadsheet and basically said, oh, what about these other, like 10 or so robberies, you know, could we throw them on there too?

So they ended up throwing those on there and Inc increasing the charges onto the two suspects. All right. So

Jason: what did they end up, do you remember how much time they got?

Michael: I think the main suspect was, I believe 30 years to life. Okay. Because it was his third strike. Okay. And I, I think the other one, one got like 15 years cuz.

I think they cooperated a little bit with the, DA's office. All

Jason: right. So h and then how much on average would they get [00:22:00] in per

Michael: robbery? Mo majority of the time it was only a couple hundred dollars. Mm-hmm. I think there were a couple of, ones, a little bit over a thousand. But for the most part, yeah, two to $300 a robbery based on the amount given by the restaurants.

Jason: Are these franchises? Are these like, McDonald's and whatnot, or what kind of restaurants are we talking about

Michael: here? Yeah, it was a, it was kind of a mix. Mm-hmm. It was kind of a mix of like fast foods that we know, like Burger King and Jack in the Box and McDonald's, but also small mon pop, pop, like local fast food places as well.

Jason: Hmm. So were you able to establish a, a pattern in terms of maybe when or where they would

Michael: hit? As far as when, yeah. It kind of started to develop a pattern, as I said, around 5:00 AM. Mm-hmm. And then as far as where it wasn't as easy because I mean they started locally in Anaheim and then they kind of just spread their [00:23:00] wings.

Mm-hmm. So once they started spreading out, it was a little more difficult to protect whether they were gonna hit LA County or Orange County. It was kind of, Wide geographic area that they were hitting. So it kind of, it kind of spread out the pattern a little bit. So

Jason: Yeah. Yeah. People like their fast food breakfast, so I was just thinking like that is there is a lot of places that would be potential targets for this, so and then how did you end up catching em?

Michael: I think they they ended up developing a plate off of one of the car, one of the robberies. And then they went from there to find a relative that was using the car and it kind of spun off from there as far as getting the two suspects identified.

Jason: . So then did either of them have a history of working in fast food? Because I'm just kind of curious why this particular mo, I mean obviously it seems to me, I would guess at five [00:24:00] o'clock in the morning there when the restaurants first opening up, you know, the workers are busy setting up, so they might not be as vigilant as they would be if they're just don't have anything else to do.

And then obviously there's probably not very many witnesses. Around at five o'clock either. But just kind of curious how this mo developed, did they have any kind of history with restaurants?

Michael: Not that I'm aware of. As, as you said, it's, I think it was just more of a criminal opportunity of they know that the businesses would have cash on hand at the beginning of the day.

And also there would be little no witnesses, cuz it was still dark at the time when they were committing these robberies. So even if they were to ca get captured on camera, it would be hard to see the car sometimes because of the lighting effects of the, you know, the sunlight. Okay.

Jason: All right. Good.

All right. Well then as you mentioned, it's at this time you're going to Anaheim and [00:25:00] you're is 50 miles away and so you, you know, take the job at. Concord. And so I understand why you would make that leap from to Concord. So what are you, what are you doing at, at Concord when you get there?

Michael: So I was hired on, and they hadn't had an analyst for about nine and a half years.

But they decided that they needed an analyst. And in fact, the lieutenant that hired me had put himself through the, the certificate program Nice to, to fully understand what a crime analyst does and can contribute to the law enforcement community. So I thought that was kind of interesting and cool.

So, yeah, I got hired on there and they didn't really know what to do with me because as I said, they hadn't had an analyst for nine and a half years. So I kind of started to slow. I would see like emails come out about, you know, be on the lookout for stuff. And I'm [00:26:00] like, Hey, you guys can make that a bulletin and be a lot easier to read and you can print it out and put it up everywhere.

And so, like, I created a bulletin one time out of an email and they're like, huh, this guy's gonna be kind of cool to work with. Like, he makes things easier. And then there I had a very antiquated rms that was basically a homegrown RMS that was developed by some officer years before that had some IT skills.

And so there was literally no way to extract a lot of information from it, if any information. So I had to have two volunteers that I worked with that kind of had

been sort of doing data work before I got there. Mm-hmm. And basically they would be my people that would literally manually enter.

Like read every case and manually enter every single detail about the case that I was trying to track. So they would read every single burglar case, every single homicide, every single robbery, every single, you know, whatever crime it [00:27:00] was. And re literally fill out like date, time, location business name, you know, suspect information.

Like I had basically an access database that, you know, you would kind of fill out, like checkbox everything and create a spreadsheet out of that.

Jason: Is it safe to say that Concord is, is smaller at than Anaheim? So this process of establishing and doing the data entry of the MO is, is a little easier because it's a smaller jurisdiction and there's not as much

Michael: crime.

Yeah, a little bit. But at least with Anaheim, it was in an rms and you can extract the information. Mm-hmm. But this is like, you literally have to pull everything from the report as opposed to just Anaheim. There was the MO factors that you really had to fill out, but with Concord, you literally had to fill, just basically almost rewrite the crime report to get all the information outta there, plus write a summary of what the report stated [00:28:00] got.

So it made analysis a little difficult to, to say the least, but I mean, the fact that I had the two volunteers helping me out on a weekly basis, and then I got a couple interns in there too to help me out as far as data analysis for those purposes.

Carlena: Hi, this is Dr. Carlina Orosco from the Tempe Police Department, Arizona State University, and my public service announcement is that correlation does not equal causation. If you find that certain things are occurring that may be contributing to a decrease or an increase in crime, for example, that gives an opportunity to investigate it a little bit further to see if possibly there are things contributing.

But it does not mean that one thing caused the decline or the increase, it just means that there's an opportunity to explore it a little bit further.

Adrienne: Hi, this is Adrienne [00:29:00] Galbrecht have you ever received an email on a giant listserv and started to hit reply all instead of just reply? If so, you're not the only one.

And just always pause and double check before you hit send.

Jason: So this brings us to your second badge story, which is 2015. And you work a federal

Michael: gun case? Yes. So when I originally started a Concord, I'm like, Hey, who's your gang expert? And they put me to Detective Sam Figueroa. They're like, he's our expert. He has everything, all his knowledge is in his head.

He knows these gangs from like birth to like now. So I kind of just worked with him on establishing. Basically a network of the gangs that our agency and surrounding agencies were dealing with. And he was very happy to share all his knowledge in his head, and he instantly realized that I was [00:30:00] very technically, logically advanced over him.

So he, he basically, we basically took all the knowledge in his head and made an organizational chart of all the gangs in our area. So at the time we were, majority of the gangs were sorano gangs. So eventually some of the higher ups in the gang got involved in weapons trafficking and gun running and all that stuff.

So ATF focused on one individual that was part of a, the SSL gang in Concord and ssl. Yeah. What does that stay for? God, I'm blanking on it right now. I can't remember right now. Okay, sorry. No, it's okay. And so they focused on one individual and they were familiar with him. And so they would be making purchases.

They would be. You know, purchases of guns from him and giving him a bunch of cash. South

Jason: Side Loco. So that's what it's, sorry. There you go.

Michael: That was, that was bothering me, so sorry. Yes. I have so much gang knowledge in [00:31:00] my head. I can't remember 'em all the time. Yeah. And so so they were purchasing guns from him and giving him like a wa of cash.

And then I was using the undercover account, the undercover social media accounts that the detective had given me access to, to kind of track him. And

every time he would make a gun by, he would basically post that he got like a wa of cash, you know, he just put it all over his Instagram, like, Hey, look, I just got, you know, this water cash.

And so it was kind of just tracking the, like he was definitely the person that was buying the guns or selling the guns. And so, but they kept seeing all these people that would come with him to the purchase, you know, to the purchase. And they had no institutional knowledge of who was coming to These meets with him.

And so based on the chart that I had developed in I two analyst notebook on the Detective Fogger was like knowledge I had created the network of, you know, the south side logos. And so they, he [00:32:00] showed it to the ATF agents and they looked at it and like, oh, okay, well here's our target. And so then they started looking at the pictures and the names, and they're like, oh, we saw him, we saw him, we saw him.

And so it gave them. Knowledge, like in institutional knowledge of who these people were that were also showing up to the, to meet. So they kind of could keep track of them as well, but without the charts, they, you know, it, they would've had to do their own research. They would've had to dig deep and try to find out who these contacts are.

But they immediately had it because of the chart that they had created. Organizational chart I had created using iTune analyst notebook.

Jason: All right. Good. So , where did the case go from there?

Michael: So eventually he, the target got arrested for his federal crimes and then he went to prison for probably like nine or 10 years in federal prison.

Mm-hmm. And I think he got released on federal probation probably last year, maybe 2021. I think he just got out out of federal prison. [00:33:00] Oh, okay. Hmm.

Jason: And then I just how do you like I two? Right? Is that something that you normally use or is that something you

Michael: like to use? So when I went to Concord since they didn't have an analyst, they, they basically gave me a blank checkbook and said what do you need to do your job?

And so I had dabbled in an I two analyst notebook and before, and it was kind of interesting to me and it was a very powerful tool. So that was one of the things I put on my shopping list. And so they got it for me at Concord. And then that's the only time I've used it, is at Concord pd. Mm-hmm. And it was pretty valuable in the aspects.

And recently in my current position at Antioch I've inquired about purchasing it again for my unit so that we could track gangsters and everything like that again. So, They're currently pondering the idea of buying it for me. All

Jason: right, good. And well, let's talk about [00:34:00] Antioch then.

And so you as you mentioned there, the, the Concord gig was a contract position, correct. So it, it eventually expired and you were outside of law enforcement there for a little bit. Yeah. And so then, What are you doing as you have that little break there coming back into the field what are you doing for Antioch now?

Michael: So for Antioch, when I was originally hired they had previous analyst in

Marker

Michael: Virginia Johnson. She had been an analyst at Antioch for 14 years. But she had primarily been. Like an administrative analyst. So she literally just did stats all day long. She did the UCR reporting for the agency and then they hired me on as just a secondary analyst just to kind of, they wanted to expand the crime analysis unit.

So they hired me on as a second analyst. And when I started they realized quickly that [00:35:00] I was much more than just an administrative analyst, that I had a lot of intelligence skills that they could utilize for cases and case work and stuff like that. And then in 2020, the pandemic hit and Virginia retired and then they hired on a second analyst behind, you know, behind me named Lisa Rinke.

And so we were two analysts and we were kind of just establishing what the unit could be as a, you know, full fledged crime analysis unit doing pretty much. Everything, you know, every aspect of carbon analysis, intel, you know, administration, tactical. And so we were just, just about to establish our, our thing.

And then in last year, around the time the Chicago conference, and Lisa got a job as an administrative analyst, so basically the chief secretary. Mm-hmm. So left me alone to do basically the whole entire crime analysis unit by myself since August of last year. Mm-hmm. [00:36:00] So now I'm in charge of stats.

I'm in charge of Intel. I do cell phone investigations for the Investigations Bureau. I extract cell phones using Cellebrite and Gray Key. I also do workups on suspects. I do camera extraction from our city cameras. Jack of all trades. Yes. I, I basically yeah. And then. It felt to me that when we switched from UCR R to nis, I was the only person in the department that took the training on ibers.

So I'm literally the nibu person for the agency. So I correct all the reports for nibu errors I submitted to do oj. We also do what's called rippa, which is the Racial Profiling Act. Mm-hmm. Our officers need to like document how they do stops and mm-hmm. You know, all the aspects of what. Why they stopped him and what occurred during the stop, and they have to document on that.

So I'm in charge of that to DOJ as well. I'm also in charge of[00:37:00] ShotSpotter. We just literally just got ShotSpotter last month, so I'm in charge of doing analytics for that as well. How do you, how do you like that

Jason: just, I know it's just a month, but what is your first impressions of

Michael: ShotSpotter?

It's very interesting, and I mean, we brought it because our city is pretty violent. Mm-hmm. We've been dubbed like the mini Oakland and everyone knows usually nationally that Oakland's pretty violent. So we've been dubbed to many Oakland with all our, many Oakland, with all our shootings and not so much homicides.

I mean, our homicides are, you know, typically in the double digit sometimes. Mm-hmm. In the low teens. But But we do have a lot of shootings and we didn't realize how many shootings we had until we got Shot Spotter, and now we're literally averaging probably like five to six activations a day of Wow.

Like, of just shootings. Like, you know, from like your one shot fired to like, I think last night we had one that it was like [00:38:00] 35 shots fired. So, but it, it, it is kind of interesting to see that aspect.

Jason: Now. Have you found so far, again, it's a pretty small data set, I realize of how many false positives

Michael: you get.

Yeah. I mean, as I said, it's tougher, especially with the, the one shots. I mean mm-hmm. The officers go out there and they literally find nothing. I mean, it's more when you have the, the multiple gunshots that you'll actually find. Something out there, but it's, I think those shots are being fired. It's just a matter of finding evidence to support it, I think is where it's kinda lacking.

Yeah.

Jason: So wait a minute. It's, it's kind of interesting though, if you have not a lot of homicides, but a lot of shootings you must have either a really great hospital system or maybe an underground hospital system going on

Michael: somewhere. Yeah. I mean, I would say our hospitals are actually pretty good.

We have a lot of people that show up from, you know, that get shot in other cities that show up to our hospitals. And [00:39:00] unfortunately they just say, I have no idea where I got shot. They're very uncooperative and unfortunately we have to take that crime that. Because it could have happened in our city.

So but yeah, I mean the hospitals are pretty good, but yeah, so I mean, I do, I do a lot.

Jason: Then how, how about the records management system is, or are you still working on access?

Michael: So that's another interesting aspect of Antioch that we've run into. So when I first started, we had Data 9 1 1, and it's like a, I think a Canadian company that's, I don't think is in business anymore.

So basically they had that for several years, like 15, 20 years. And then when there was rumors that everybody was switching to snipers, The RMS company said, oh, we don't have the bandwidth to deal with that, so you're gonna have to switch. So we switched to Mark 43 in December of 2021 when we switched to NIS and we basically switched RMSs and switched reporting systems all on all at once.

So that was [00:40:00] fun statistically wise. And so we've had Mark 43 since then, but now we're having issues with Mark 43 for a various number of reasons, and now we're going to be switching to Sun Ridge rims by the end of this year. Oh, so in my three and a half years I'll have worked with three different RMSs in the same agency, so I'm sure you could see that as quite the nightmare as far as pulling stats.

For periods of time. Yeah. , through the years. Yeah. We're

Jason: gonna talk sports later. You're like a quarterback with three different coaches Right. In consecutive years. So, man. All right. Well, so let's, let's get into, as I mentioned in your, in intro, we wanna talk about being the solo analyst at a police department versus being on a team.

And certainly if you can be part of a team, that's great. The more the merrier. Type situation. But we also know that there's a lot of police departments out there with [00:41:00] limited resources that can't ha hire multiple analysts. So just wanted from your perspective, given the fact that you started out with a team and now you're solo, wanted to get your perspective on just both situations.

Michael: Sure. So yeah, I'll just kind of give pros and cons of each as I've experienced it. Let's start out with the team since I started as a team. In Antioch. Or in Anaheim, sorry. I mean, the pros is like you have the support of. Your other analysts you have somebody in the police department that kind of understands what your job is and what you're trying to do and your kind of goal of how you're gonna support the police department.

And also kind of works for achievement as well. So like when you achieve things, when you, like, you find that suspect or when you You know, get all those dots on the map and it, you know, the, the system doesn't crash. You know, you can celebrate and you have people around you that kind of understand like [00:42:00] the struggle that you're going through that made that happen.

And then just the comradery, I mean, like, it becomes like almost like a family. Every team everywhere. I've worked in a team. So Anaheim in San Jose, it kind of became a family. They, they get to know you. They, they get to know like when things aren't going right, you know, they kind of just talk you up, talk you through, and just kind of understand you as a person too.

And then just a cohesive unit and a flow of like work, I think. The best aspect of it was in San Jose. We had I think a total of like eight analysts. Cuz I mean, it's such a large department, but I think their flow in San Jose was great. They had a established system for the team, so basically everything flowed through supervisor Zita Mendoza.

And so all requests came to her and then she would kind of dole it out based on like activity level of what each person was working on. So I think that made it very easy and very. Workable so that you, no one got overburdened if someone was already [00:43:00] working on a big thing. She would give like all the small things to somebody else just cuz it, you know, she knew that you know, we didn't want to get overburdened.

I mean, and then the cons obviously is, you know, meshing styles. So sometimes, you know, you don't have the, the same vision or the same goal as somebody else, or if you don't, you you think it's one way we should do things one way and you know, the other way. And so it's sometimes clashing and then, Also work ethic.

You know, with anyone in law enforcement, you know, you have your hard chargers, your, you have your ones that are just gonna go, go, go. Like, and the other ones are like, all right, I'm clocking in. I'm told to do this today and I'm done. Mm-hmm. Like, they will just like stay in their lane. They will stay in a box and just never, you know, go out.

 And so kind of bringing those styles and work ethics together. Some, you know, sometimes clashes a little bit being a solo analyst as I've been in Concord in Antioch now, well, Antioch since August is [00:44:00] last year. But the pros are kind of freedom. You kind of are able to work on whatever you want.

I mean, whatever you kind of want to focus, I mean, obviously your police department's gonna give you some sort of focus, but at the same time you can go down rabbit holes and not worry about it cuz you know, you don't have to check in with anybody. They just kind of let you do your thing. And then, you know, you know, you have full control.

You kind of become, you know, a jack of all trades. It's like I am at Antioch. Like, you just do everything, a little bit of everything and kind of touch everything. Cons though, as I'm starting to realize a little bit in Antioch is being overwhelmed. And there's no like true focus. It's just kind of just hitting whatever, you know, pops up next.

You know, you don't really have time to kind of hone in on, on certain skills. Like, you know, in Antioch they want me to learn Power bi, but I'm like, I got no time. I'm busy with this like 20 [00:45:00] other tasks. I don't have time to just sit down and like learn a whole new program that will benefit me at some point.

But right now I just need to put out all the fires that are in front of me. So that's kind of like a solo versus team aspect that I've experienced throughout my career.

Jason: Yeah, and it sounds like too, when you're the solo analyst, you're really getting into a lot of different stuff that you may not like, right?

When you mentioned neighbors and. Doing all the official counting of crimes and whatnot, that's not something that I necessarily would be excited to do. Right. To me, when you said Power bi, I was like, I'd rather do that, learn a new program for Power BI than to sit there and make sure that you know, all these crimes are counted in a certain way.

I mean, certainly you, you might have it automated. This might not be as much work as it initially was, but there is some tasks as a solo analyst, so you're like, man, I, that's just not really my

Michael: cup of [00:46:00] tea. Yeah. Yeah. And as the analyst too, like, especially with our staffing crisis that we're in currently a lot of tasks that.

Aren't normally in the wheelhouse of a crime analyst that are getting tasked to me because I have some familiarity with it. So they're like, oh, he knows what he's doing, so just give that task to him. Yeah. Yeah.

Jason: And there's, and there really isn't any way to become necessarily a subject matter expert, right?

You're, you're spread so thin that you know, will probably bec and you're a jack of all trades, so you know a little bit about a lot of things.

Michael: Correct. That would be a hundred percent accurate.

Jason: Yeah. And so it, but it comes down to it when the, when the need arises, what the department really needs is a subject matter expert.

Right? Yes. When you, you mentioned this when you went to Concord and you asked about who is the gang expert and. So there's points in time where [00:47:00] it's, it's beneficial to be a subject matter expert on a particular topic.

And it's really, really hard to do that as a solo analyst

Michael: at a police department. Yes, I would agree with that. Yeah.

Jason: And so, and I, and I did it the, probably the other way that you did it. I really started out ma as a solo analyst, or maybe it was, I guess it was me and two other people. But it did seem like we were more on our own, .

And then once I got to a place where I worked for a big, larger team, I really did enjoy working with the larger team. Even though there are some struggles with personalities and trying to standardize stuff is, is always a challenge cuz one person wants to do it one way and the other person wants to do it the other way.

But just the idea that I could. Talk things through and use other analysts, even if it's just a sound board to, as the [00:48:00] problem that I am trying to work on. Talking that out has helped me over and over and over again over the years. So I, I do, I enjoy the team aspect as opposed to being the jack of all trades.

But , this kind of leads us into my next question, which is return on investment. Right. I think when you're a solo analyst and maybe you're looking to become a subject matter expert on a particular topic, and even if it's something that you have to study on your own time, right?

 Whatever you pick to be the subject matter expert in is. This is really something you have to be particular on what you pick to make sure that you get the most out of your this endeavor. And so that's one of the things I like to ask about the return on investment is like, what can an [00:49:00] analyst study today?

Because five years from now it's going to be important.

Michael: Yeah, I mean, I think anything that's going to make your job kind of like automated, basically, you know, automate your reports. So as I mentioned, power bi, I mean, you can run your reports through there and you can just refresh it pretty much weekly or daily or monthly.

So it takes a lot of the work out of it as far as like having to run reports and doing everything like that. Anything. And then on that, on the Intel side also is

the social network analysis, kind of like what I did and conquered. I think network, like creating networks of criminals is important because I've, you know, through my years in.

In law enforcement, I've realized that there are subject mattered experts at departments, but once those subject manner experts leave, their knowledge leaves with them. Mm-hmm. And so doing a social network analysis, you can kind of [00:50:00] establish that and so you can see who's connected to who and how they're connected.

And then when that person leaves, The knowledge doesn't leave with them. You've already established a network of all your criminals and all your gangsters or whatever you're tracking so that you can kind of see and just build off of that as opposed to like having one person have all that knowledge.

You can, everyone can have access to that information. Yeah.

Jason: Yeah. You can't go wrong with knowing who all the problem children are in, in your city. Yes. Right. I, I always would recommend to analysts know as much as you can about information. That you can't find in an rms. And, and I'll admit to anybody that I did not do a good job of this when I was an analyst, but it's something that I wish I would've spent more time just understanding the more about the city, more about [00:51:00] the, the particular problem areas, more about the people that are in those areas and have a better understanding of, of how the, the city operates as a whole.

And, and taking that bit of information in combination with what I can get from an RMS or police department data. That to me, I think I would've been a better analyst if I would've done that. And I do, I think any analyst would be, Really. So and so I, that would be, you know, you never go wrong with trying to better understand the, the people the targets that you're going to analyze.

Michael: Yeah. And in addition to like think outside the box for resources. So like, one resource I use a lot in Antioch and I've used previously is the water billing. So I have access to the water billing system for the city of Antioch. And I've found a lot of valuable [00:52:00] information out of there. Like, you know, who owns the house and phone numbers and dates of birth and who, who's paying the bill kind of thing that has helped out on some situations when people are barricading the house and looking for a phone number and they're, you know, the go-to for most dispatchers is, oh, let's check in our mess.

Like, well, let's check outside of our mess. Let's check out, you know, public databases. Let's find a phone number somewhere else that, you know, most people wouldn't think of. So that would be another piece of advice as well. Yeah. Agreed.

Jason: All right. As I mentioned in your intro, you were former president of the Bay Area criminal and Intelligence Analysis associate.

That is a ridiculous name. Who came up with that name first?

Michael: That I don't know. Oh my goodness. Oh, one point though. I was the vice president, not vice president, but Oh, I'm sorry. Yeah, that's

Jason: okay. Yeah, I pro I promoted you.

Michael: All right, thank you. I, I got, I got promoted a lot of times. Like I get called detective, officer Volunt untold, right?

Yeah, exactly. But [00:53:00] yeah, no, I have no idea where they came out with. I guess just because every other crime analysis association is basically in, in the same boat as in Cal, at least in California, it's the crime and intelligence analysis. You know, analysis association. Yeah. And so they just tacked on, you know, bay Area.

So like, all the ones in California are like Inland Empire or California Crime analysis, you know, like, so everything's, yeah. Crime analysis association. So

Jason: does it have a, like a one word description? Does like, people call it baia or

Michael: something? Baca. Baca. Yeah. They call it Bacca. See, they should

Jason: have added, like, chewed in the beginning.

They could have been

Michael: Chewbacca. Yes. There you go. I would, I would've loved that with my Star Wars love. So there, yeah,

Jason: well see there now there's, here you go. You can become president and then change the name, read the

Michael: organization and then it'll beat

Jason: Chewbacca and you can re theme and rebrand it, the whole thing.

Right. All right. So then when you were vice [00:54:00] president then what are some of the things you got into? What were the, some

Michael: of the things you accomplished? So basically I supported the president. So you know, when. The president was out I would kind of just take over as president, but also I was in charge of training, so I was I would reach out to the members in a survey format to kind of just get an idea at the beginning of the year to say, Hey, you know, it's an, we had some awesome training last year.

What kind of topics would you like to see this year? And so kind of just get an idea of what topics to kind of focus on for that year. And then I would reach out to. Numerous contacts to try to hone in on either cell phone training or mapping training or geographic profiling, training or whatever training that they've kind of wanted.

So I would create probably like two to three trainings per year for the whole entire association. And then, so over the two years we had probably like four or five trainings on various topics that were, you know, developed [00:55:00] by the members of the association that wanted to see the training. It was just my job to go find experts in these fields to come to us and train us for either a day, couple hours, two days.

And so that was basically my main task. And then also since the board's only like five or six members, you kind of just. Supported each other in every task, in every aspect. And luckily I had just missed being a part of the conference planning. So I know that's quite the endeavor. But then when I came to Antioch I did volunteer to be part of the conference committee for them.

So I basically set up the, the app that they used at the conference for I think it was like two years ago, no, last year or two years ago. Yeah. So, so is this an

Jason: entire California group there or is this , a conference just for the Bay Area?

Michael: The conference was for the whole state of California.

Okay. Yeah, that's what, that's

Jason: what I thought. Okay. Yeah. So, so when you're doing the training for the Bay [00:56:00] Area, then, how, how many members does this typically

Michael: have? I think our membership runs probably in like the one 20 to one 50 range. Yeah. As far as members throughout the whole, yeah. Throughout the Bay Area.

So, I mean, obviously some are mm-hmm. More than others, depending on your size of your agency, but, A lot of 'em are solo analysts that, you know, join and it's pretty nice as far as networking goes to kind of have those people to reach out to when you need something from their city.

Jason: , is it easier to, because you have a smaller, more concentrated group, coming up with these training events can be a lot easier because, You're getting direct feedback from them and you're setting it up and you know, most people don't have to travel that far to get to you.

Michael: Yeah. And then another aspect of that too that we kind of worked in [00:57:00] was moving the trainings around as far as locations. So I mean, the Bay is quite large as far as like a geographical area. I mean, it travels from like, you know, all the way, you know, San Francisco all the way down to San Jose. So I mean, there's quite the distance of different things.

So there's different areas of North Bay, south Bay, central East Bay inside this association. So we would. Ma also make sure to move the trainings around so that, you know, some people, as you mentioned, you know, some people didn't have to travel very far to the trainings if it was in their, you know, general area.

But some people did have to travel a little farther sometimes. But we worked that all out with the association.

Jason: Well, let's move on to personal interest then. And so between being a, a sports fan yourself and having two kids in sports, you know that that fills up your free time a lot,

Michael: right?

Yeah. So my passionate love for the Giants, the Warriors and [00:58:00] the Niners kind of just fills up my sports needs and mm-hmm. I've kind of passed it on to my children. They've, they've become my daughter Viviana and San Francisco have basically become rad sports fans is. Myself, my daughter goes to

Giants games with me a lot of times, and they have yet to lose when she goes to a game.

So very, she, she has convinced herself that she's the one reason why they're winning all these games. So maybe, maybe I should take her to every single game that they play the win win 'em all. I don't know. Yeah. And then I've got my son who, who's more focused on football. My love for football. He likes to rub it in.

My father-in-law's face. My, my in-laws are all Raider fans. And so, you know, my wife marrying a Niner fan, kind of, you know, that was a little, little contentious at the beginning of the, the relationship, but it, it's been smooth over obviously now now that we've been married for 17 years, so [00:59:00] yeah. But yeah, I've got him going around the house, go, you know, yelling, banging, bang, niner gang.

And, and he goes into, you know, his grandfather's house and he yells, bang, bang, niner gang grandpa. And he's like okay. I'll take it cuz you're cute and you're six.

Jason: Yeah. And I think you're also, you know, man, you're setting up their expectations cuz you, you know, you're picking the, the, you know, the Giants and the Niners and the Warriors.

I mean, this is all in that cycle in which they're all playoff teams. They're all doing well at the moment. Right. And that's

Michael: yeah. Obviously

Jason: not always the, the case, right? So they're growing up in this, this nice arc of

Michael: these really successful teams. Yeah. Hopefully, hopefully they don't get too enamored with the fact that they're always in the champ.

Always in the World Series and always in the this and, yeah. Yeah. Oh yeah. There's actually videos of me at various stages [01:00:00] with the three World Series titles that the Giants have. My wife recorded my reaction to them winning each time. And so I think my, do I think Yeah, my daughter's in one and she's like just standing there crying and I'm just like, celebrating.

And she, she wants to be picked up and I'm like, she's like, you're gonna have to get used to dad celebrating. It's not, it's not gonna have time for childcare right now. Yeah. Oh man.

Jason: Well, our last second to the show, it's Words to the World, and this is where I give the guest the last word.

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

Michael: I've mentioned it numerous times. But networking is the foundation of our job, I believe. I'll take it back to my days as an internship with Huntington Beach, Julie Romano. I was going to Anaheim and I said, oh my God, now it's for real.

I, they're gonna depend on me to know everything. And she said, no, don't, you don't need to know everything. You need to know where to get everything. And so I think that's [01:01:00] the aspect of networking, is you need to know where things are coming from or where to get things so that you make yourself a valuable resource to your department.

Jason: Very good. Why I leave every guest with, you've given me just enough to talk bad about you later.

But I do appreciate you being on the show. Mike, thank you so much. And

Michael: you bbc, that was a joy.

Mindy: Thank you. 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.leapodcasts.com. If you have a topic you would like us to cover or have a suggestion for our next guest, please send us an email@leapodcasts@gmail.com.

Michael: Till next time, analysts, keep talking.