

# What Price Privacy?

Insights on free speech, privacy, and security with CyberWire's Dave Bittner

**Michelle Dennedy:** Security and privacy. In an increasingly insecure world: These concepts are sometimes at odds. We're often willing to sacrifice our personal privacy just to feel safe and secure. Or are we? Hmm. But it shouldn't be that way. In fact, data shows that privacy policies and programs actually enhance cybersecurity, and smart companies know security and data privacy teams working hand in hand reduce risk, help accountability, and even profitability.

Cybersecurity, data protection, privacy. You like to stay ahead of the curve and listen to experts who are leading the way in deriving greater value from data with a more organized approach to data privacy. You're like us, just a few deviations past the norm. You are a Privacy Sigma Rider.

Hi, everyone. Michelle Dennedy again, Chief Privacy Officer at Cisco. They say you can't have privacy without security, but they also have said that the reverse is true: that you can't have security without privacy. You also can't have a podcast episode dedicated to the topic of security without mentioning CyberWire, the world's top-ranked podcast devoted to cybersecurity. We are in the meta, meta, meta, my friends. Podcast on podcast. Because we're Sigma Riders, we've done one better and now we have the producer and host of CyberWire podcast, Mr. David Bittner with me on the line. Welcome, David.

**Dave Bittner:** Hello. It's podcasts all the way down, right?

**Michelle Dennedy:** It is. We just did one on David's CyberWire podcast, so this is going to be one of these Law & Order sometimes does crossover shows and—

**Dave Bittner:** That's right. Right.

**Michelle Dennedy:** What was the Baltimore one?

**Dave Bittner:** Yeah, I know what you're talking about. I was thinking about the time that Charlie's Angels went on the Love Boat, but that shows where my mind is.

**Michelle Dennedy:** Now you're in my era. I always wanted to be Jaclyn Smith. I thought she was the best one. I know Farrah had the bikini picture, but Jaclyn was the smart one.

**Dave Bittner:** There you go. There you go.

**Michelle Dennedy:** Tell us a little bit about your background and how you got to CyberWire. I know you and I have talked in the past at the WiCyS [Women in Cybersecurity] meeting was where I first met you in person.

**Dave Bittner:** Right, yeah.

Michelle Dennedy: I'm curious, how did you get there and how did you get your following and get this going? Because I think it's so great.

Dave Bittner: Well, thank you. CyberWire, we're a daily cybersecurity podcast. Our goal is to bring you everything you need to know about cybersecurity in about 20 minutes every day. We have the daily podcast. We also have a daily news brief that you can get via email.

I came to it in kind of a roundabout way. When I got out of college I was among... I actually came out of college having studied broadcasting...was one of those pioneers who rode that first wave of desktop digital video, saw an opportunity.

Michelle Dennedy: I love it.

Dave Bittner: Yeah, saw an opportunity there where it used to take a half-million dollars to build a video editing suite. Now we can do it with \$50,000, which still was a lot of money back in the early '90s, and so that's what we did. My wife and I started the company together and we ran that company for about 20 years. One of my clients came to me one day and it was actually someone that I'd gone to high school with who said, "Hey, I work at a cybersecurity company and we're going to be hiring someone this year who does what you do. If you want the job it's yours." I said, "Well, I have a job." He said, "I know, but let's talk. The benefits in cybersecurity are really, really good," so he and I got together.

Michelle Dennedy: That sounds good.

Dave Bittner: Yeah, we spoke and my wife and I decided it was a good time to get all of our eggs out of the same basket. We were seeing some contraction on the video side of things, which was really my focus. As everyone was carrying around a 4K camera in their pocket, the big jobs were getting fewer and farther between, so I joined a company called CyberPoint. It's a Baltimore cybersecurity company. They were already doing the CyberWire daily news brief and I suggested we should do a podcast, and they said, "That's terrific. What's a podcast?"

Michelle Dennedy: What's that?

Dave Bittner: So, about two and a half years ago we started with some test episodes and decided to make a go of it. In the meantime, we got spun off from CyberPoint, so CyberWire is its own company now; its own thing. We've just had a slow, steady building where the word has gotten out. We've done very little advertising, just a lot of grassroots stuff, and these days we get hundreds of thousands of people download our podcast every month, and we get lots of good feedback. The people are enjoying what we're giving them, so it's been really gratifying. I feel like we're doing our small part to try to help make everybody a little bit safer.

Michelle Dennedy: I love it. It is one of my favorite shows, and it's one of these things where I think... This is one of the things that really motivated Susan and David, our producers, and myself to get this started is I think it's so hard to sit down to your laptop and not be just *discraped*. Discraped? I think that was a Freudian slip. There's a lot of crap. You don't want to be discraped.

Dave Bittner: Yeah.

- Michelle Dennedy: You don't want to be distracted on... When you're sitting down for a different purpose, even to get webinars in there, I mean it has to be very focused and scheduled, but for me the daily podcast, I can listen to the latest trends or discussions on the latest breaches, and from various voices while I'm driving into work, while I'm sitting in the doctor's office, so it's sort of filling my brain with things I need and want to know rather than just whiling away the time with Angry Birds.
- Dave Bittner: That's right. We hear that a lot. We hear CISOs listen to us on the way in so when they have their daily staff meeting they're not surprised by anything. They at least are aware of what's going on and what they need to know. Yeah, that's what we try to fill in people's lives. That opportunity for multitasking is there.
- Michelle Dennedy: Yeah, and I think also if you're in the field, and we hope some of our listeners are field people, one of the coolest things as you're making a call on customer, especially if you're in our space, in technology infrastructure or security, trust, privacy, to walk in and say, "Hey, I just heard about this new thing that's just happened." That's an interesting, timely, up-to-date conversation, and so for those guys, it really serves that need of if you're going to show up don't waste my time and don't tell me what yesterday's news is. I can't tell you how many spam emails I got saying to me, "Hey, I hear you're the chief privacy officer. Have you heard about this law called GDPR?" It becomes kind of an insult as like, "How dumb do you think I am?"
- Dave Bittner: Right.
- Michelle Dennedy: And don't answer that question.
- Dave Bittner: Right. Yeah, don't waste my time. Yup.
- Michelle Dennedy: Yeah. I like that, and I like the meta that we're talking about. The utility of a pod on a pod, so I hope people are listening to our podcast about how much we like podcasts. But I do think it shows you yet another communicative media that we were just talking, you and I, on your show, that everyone should go back and listen to, about the purpose of privacy and security for me is about connected communication rather than clicking and hiding. You talked to cyber guys and gals all the time. What are they saying about privacy? What do you think the big trends are that privacy teams should do to really sort of mesh and support the market that you educate every day?
- Dave Bittner: Well, I think, certainly, as you mentioned, GDPR was a big wake-up call for people all over the world. We were talking about that for many months leading up to it going into effect, so I think that's shone a light on privacy that hadn't been shone on it before. But I think there's still a lot of fuzziness with it. I think a lot of people on the tech side of the house look at privacy as being something that's handled by the legal team, that that comes out of corporate counsel's office. They sort of do what they're told. There might be some back and forth as to who has dominion over our company's privacy policy.
- As you and I talked about, every company says, "Your privacy is important to us." I think a lot of consumers and B2B people are kind of at the point where they're saying, "Well, prove it to me," and they're not sure how it can be proved to them.

Michelle Dennedy: Yeah, I think that's right. I certainly have my own sort of functional definition of privacy, but it feels like I'm still going back to that very basic thing. I don't think many security people are still saying, "Well, it's about confidentiality, integrity, and availability." I don't hear people saying, "What is security?" I think more people are cynically saying, "I don't believe that you can provide it anymore based on the proliferation of breaches." But for privacy, I'm not even sure if people really understand what it is, so what—

Dave Bittner: Yeah. I think that's right.

Michelle Dennedy: What do you think?

Dave Bittner: Well, but I think there're also some side issues that are important issues, but I think provide shiny object distraction on this. For example, the encryption debate. When you have law enforcement, when they talk about privacy they're talking about the implications to national security and physical security. If we provide you with absolute privacy that's going to get in the way of us protecting our nation from a terrorist or hunting down a murderer, or something like that. So, I think that becomes a very loud, shiny symbol of privacy in a lot of people's minds where they think of encryption versus law enforcement. While that is important, that's only a small sliver of what we're talking about here. That's my take on it. What do you think of that?

Michelle Dennedy: Well, I love that you're calling it a symbol of privacy because that's exactly what it is. It's just a symbol. The symbol, I think, is where the real debate gets in of ... I think it's very easy when you're faced with do you or don't you want bad pedophiles who are destroying the lives of thousands of children to be able to freely distribute their disgusting wares? Of course, what ... Unless you are a child pornographer, you're going to say, "Yes, of course. Of course, I want that to stop." If you then say, "Okay, good. Then we're going to spend your tax dollars to read every one of your texts and emails, and listen to your phone calls, and check out every website for content, and we're going to say yes or no before any communication can be made," well, immediately, even in that horrifying example people are like, "Whoa, whoa, whoa."

Dave Bittner: Right.

Michelle Dennedy: "This sounds like a real infringement of my ability to communicate how, and when, and where I want to." All free speech is great until someone says something that you don't like, and that's where the friction starts to break in, so I do think that there's a symbolic need and then there's an actual need. I think governmental privacy is a good thing to discuss because there's been, particularly recently, this kind of handwaving about backdoors in technology. "I have to have a back door."

And Cisco's been very, very clear and way predating my time here at Cisco, which made it easy for me to join, quite honestly, that we're not going to build back doors. There're a couple of good reasons. One is we're good people and we like to think we're filled with integrity and joy and light, but there's a better and more practical motivation than we're just good guys over here is that A, there're enough holes in our secure world out here to drive trucks through. We don't need another one. Two, if anyone has unlimited access that anyone is not going to be limited to the white shining light. That's access for all and people will find their way in the back door, and it's kind of antithetical to security.

I think the final thing is when you look at privacy as the authorized processing of information according to moral, legal, and ethical principles, a government should have the right to prosecute crime, but we have rights in almost every nation. And there are vast exceptions that are pretty loud these days, but most people would expect that if they are accused of a crime the government has the responsibility and the burden to come forth with the evidence to show that they have a reasonable suspicion and beyond a reasonable doubt to take away your liberties and put you in jail or fine you and take away your property, or harm your reputation without clean evidence that has a clear provenance.

That is what we know in the law corridors as the fruit of the poisonous tree. There're tons and tons of cop and robber episodes of cops that didn't wait for the subpoena or didn't wait for the warrant and suddenly they could not put somebody in jail even though there was clear evidence because they broke in and they didn't have a right to get the evidence yet. I think that the balance, and the discussion, and the technological inroads of what information is the virtual cop on the beat versus what should we expect as individuals? Should I be able to send fart jokes to my daughter with impunity without people going, "Oh, my god. Look at this idiot. Look at the limits of depth of Michelle's sophomoric humor"? There are not that many limits. I'm not going to say, Dave.

Dave Bittner: Yeah. Well, I was having a conversation a couple months ago with a security professional who he made what I thought was a provocative point. He said when our nation is involved in armed conflict and the planes come back and the caskets come out of the planes that have flags draped over them that we have a tendency to say that is the price of freedom. Right?

Michelle Dennedy: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Dave Bittner: That some people, they make the ultimate sacrifice. They fight on behalf of our country and that is the price of freedom. This person said, "I don't want to minimize that or discount that or take away any of the appropriate amount of respect for that," he said, "but what I wonder is, is the actual price of freedom that sometimes there are going to be things that you're not going to be able to search?"

Michelle Dennedy: Right.

Dave Bittner: There's certain things we don't do. We say as a nation we don't torture people, right? There are norms and certainly, we could go back and forth politically about how norms have changed and shifted over time, but there are norms that we try to hold ourselves to at a high level. Could it be that one of those norms is that the price of our freedom is that... the price of our liberty is that sometimes there are going to be digital files that we can't get into? We just need—

Michelle Dennedy: Yup.

Dave Bittner: That's a tradeoff we have to make, or at least it's a discussion we have to have over whether or not that's a tradeoff we're willing to make.

Michelle Dennedy: Yeah. I love how elegantly that's put because there's always a winner and a loser. When it's your child that's kidnapped and it's a live action thing you're like, "Why won't these phone companies break the encryption?"

Dave Bittner: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Michelle Dennedy: At a meta scale, do we have enough evidence to prosecute these criminals and use the tools that we have already? I think torture's a good example where you have a live suspect. Should you be able to just torture that person? Is it better to torture that one person who you "know" is a criminal? Know in air quotes, of course, because they've not been tried.

Dave Bittner: Right, right, and you've got a ticking time bomb.

Michelle Dennedy: And you've got a ticking time bomb, so given those two, do you break the encryption of everyone else's data integrity, including financial integrity and potentially even our financial investment systems by doing so to track down that person or then do you resort to physical violence and torture? We've gone very dark and heavy here on the podcast, but those are the things of... At some level we have to choose and at least have an informed debate and say some of these decisions will kick the can down the road until things get really real up in here and other things I think you do consider because part of this comes back to our originating thought of, what do you really do as a privacy and a security professional to move forward with integrity and with innovation and into the next generation? Because you and I had an interesting discussion before about the next generation, and what are your thoughts? What are you seeing with the new generation of kiddos coming up?

Dave Bittner: Well, that's an interesting question because I think the reflexive answer to that is these kids today don't care about privacy and they're doomed to having everything out in the open, and there's going to come a point where everybody's going to be able to google pictures of everybody in their underwear. That's the future that we're headed towards. I think there is a natural evolution. First of all, I think that's a little bit of a breathless description of the way things are. I think it lacks nuance.

But I think back to probably about 15 years ago, you probably remember, when Google first made it possible to put in someone's phone number and have a map pop up with directions to their house. People freaked out about that, and it was particularly older people, my parents' generation. None of this was information that wasn't previously available. It was just information that was connected in a very easy to use and fast way. This was all stuff you could've gone to your local library and pulled out a phone book and a map and you would've been able to find your way to someone's house, but people tend to think towards the worst possible outcome of something like this and they freak out.

Will the next generation have a different view towards privacy than we will? I think so. I think they have to because they're growing up in a different environment than we did. They are digital natives for all this sort of thing. All this sharing is just reflexive to them and it's not to us necessarily. I hesitate to say things are necessarily good or bad. They're different.

One of the things that concerns me is that because I think policy always lags behind and I think as the rate of change accelerates in a digital world, if you will, but I don't think policy changes are accelerating at nearly the same rate, so does that mean we end up with our policymakers, our lawmakers, our judges, our leaders from a generation who doesn't really feel the needs of the next generation behind them when it comes to understanding how they feel about privacy, how they feel about data protection and all those sorts of things? Does that make any sense?

Michelle Dennedy: Yeah, it makes a ton of sense, and I think the other interesting nuance here is... Well, there's a couple things. One is, so I've got two teenage daughters, which I have a moment of silence. I have two teenage daughters. I think one of the interesting things is A, I can never recognize any of their friends in person because they are so heavily filtered. Although I see pictures of them every 10 seconds, they're filtered. They have bunny ears. They're always in perfect lighting and making weird faces, so when I just see a normal child standing in front of me I'm like, "And you are?" One of the Brandys. I'm like, "Oh, okay."

Dave Bittner: Right, right, right.

Michelle Dennedy: When their pictures are revealed in their underwear they look a lot nicer than any of my 1970s nonretouched photos.

Dave Bittner: Sure. It was a different time. You were young and you needed the money.

Michelle Dennedy: God. Can you imagine? They would've given me money to put my pants on.

Dave Bittner: Right, yes.

Michelle Dennedy: I was a very geeky child.

Dave Bittner: Yes, I can relate to this.

Michelle Dennedy: I think that thing number one is that there is a proliferation of imagery certainly, but I think what that also shows, and especially now that my senior is trying to get in... If there're any listeners on the admissions committee for Smith College, please take me out of my misery. Anyone who wants to finance her, I will do whatever I need to do.

Dave Bittner: Right. Set you up with a brand spanking new Cisco router.

Michelle Dennedy: Yeah. Hook me up. Hook me up.

Dave Bittner: That's right.

Michelle Dennedy: And she's curating herself for her admissions process, all of this, including my 12-year-old taking filtered pictures and everybody's got acne, everyone's got body odor, but nobody does. That is a form of sort of single-digit encryption. Right? They don't get on certain platforms because they know that's where I hang out with my friends and they don't ... They all have Facebook accounts, but they're not on there for anything other than when they get an award as an Eagle Scout. They're curating. They're separating. They're using the metadata of reputation to figure out how to navigate this world.

They're also being imbued with ideas that are global. I'm not sure that they have the judgment to understand that things are not always black and white and people do lie, and even people who are nice to you do horrifying things sometimes. It's not like parental judgment isn't a part of this for all of us because we may not be able to catch up with their technology segmentation and Congress never will, but I think the wisdom of humanity is relatively stable. Right and wrong and morality and ethics, they change and certainly things like modesty have changed. The

famous right to privacy article spent several paragraphs about god forbid a Kodak catches an inadvertent glimpse at a woman's ankle. Now we can't get Kim Kardashian to put her pants on.

Dave Bittner: Right. Sure.

Michelle Dennedy: Modesty has changed, but I think the when and where and what of disclosure, the desire to curate and put yourself forward in different contexts in the way that you choose to do it, that's where I think they are far more versed in privacy, although they don't call it that. You can call it personal branding or personal integrity, or Gucci, whatever. That's Gucci is like good now I just learned yesterday.

Dave Bittner: Really? All right.

Michelle Dennedy: They're Gucci. Yeah, we Gucci, Dave.

Dave Bittner: Okay. I'm with you. If you say so.

Michelle Dennedy: Yeah. I have it on authority of three giggling teens.

Dave Bittner: All right. I'll put my Benetton sweater back in the closet.

Michelle Dennedy: Yes. Oh, my god. After I've cut the neck off it and pulled it off of one shoulder.

Dave Bittner: Right, right. Exactly. Yeah. Well, let me ask you this because there's an interesting thing. It's swinging all the way back around to podcasting. There's an interesting discussion going on in the podcasting world, which is there's a fear that podcasting is going to be "ruined," and I put ruined in air quotes, the same way that online ... Basically, the web experience was ruined by tracking. By online advertising and tracking.

I don't know about you, but at the outset of all this, I was completely onboard with the notion of getting targeted ads delivered to me. I thought, well, if I'm going to have to see ads and I agree that advertising is a good way to pay for content... If I'm going to see ads, well, it makes sense that I would want to see ads that have to do with things I'm interested in. I don't need to see ads for women's shoes or things...

Michelle Dennedy: You do.

Dave Bittner: All right. Well, maybe I do, but—

Michelle Dennedy: Birthdays.

Dave Bittner: Oh, right, right. Yes, yes, birthdays for my wife. Yes, yes, that's right.

Michelle Dennedy: Exactly.

Dave Bittner: That's right. But I was onboard with that, but I don't think any of us anticipated the creepiness that has made its way in where god forbid I look at a pair of women's shoes and now that pair of shoes is following me all over the internet, right?

Michelle Dennedy: Yes.

Dave Bittner: And so—

Michelle Dennedy: And after you've bought them in many cases.

Dave Bittner: Right, right. There should be a button that says, "Back off. I've made the purchase. Here's my receipt. Leave me alone."

Michelle Dennedy: I give. I give.

Dave Bittner: Right, right. But I think it's interesting that... So now we have this emergent medium of podcasting, which is still growing very, very quickly and still being discovered. There're still a lot of people who just don't know about it, and the people who are in it are trying to protect it and say, "No. Please don't do to this what you did to that." I'm curious what your take is on that notion.

Michelle Dennedy: Yeah, it's an interesting one, especially from a privacy point of view because I do talk with AI leaders in things like voice, and so even the tonality of our discussion, is this an entertainment? Is this a pop thing? Are there punctuated swear words coming out a lot? That kind of tracking of listeners and broadcasters has yet to come but is very much possible. I think it's interesting too because, by gosh, I tell you what, there are certain podcasts I like just for learning, I guess. Like *Stuff You Missed in History Class*, my favorite podcast. I have bought all the things, and I purposely, when I'm online, I'm actually the worst kind of advertising target because when you show me an ad a lot I now don't like it. I have that rebellious nature in me of like, "Don't tell me what to do."

Dave Bittner: Right, right.

Michelle Dennedy: Yet when I'm hearing the people that I kind of come to know and love during my daily jog are telling me that they love this type of underwear, I've got to go check it out. I think it's an interesting medium that could work really well if we did it right this time and said, "I'm someone who cares a lot about the information industry," and so if there was something related to the lifestyles of people who travel all the time ... Like if you told me that some new product that made your voice sound dulcet and lovely because you do this every day, I'd be much more inclined to say, "Oh, my gosh. That throat lozenge is the bee's knees, man." But if it's just another one of these assumptive kind of pushes it is going to be the same dreck that we've got on TV.

Interesting that my... Back to the, I don't even know what they are. The next wave of millennials. My 12-year-old only ... I cut cable because it was ridiculously expensive, and the content quality has just diminished in my mind. She misses the commercials. She doesn't even like to watch the shows.

Dave Bittner: Interesting.

- Michelle Dennedy: She likes 30 seconds of glitzy imaging and she just likes it when she's in the room to kind of keep her company and keep those voices going. I just was like, "Doesn't that drive you crazy?" She's like, "No, that's the part I like. I don't watch the show." I thought, "Okay."
- Dave Bittner: Yeah, what an interesting insight, and to our earlier point. Not necessarily good or bad, but different.
- Michelle Dennedy: Yeah, and she doesn't have a penny to spend on cars, but ...
- Dave Bittner: Right, right.
- Michelle Dennedy: So, I think that we're going to see a different attention span that what is a show, you know. And podcasting as it's evolved, I think the trend is in longer format podcasting.
- Dave Bittner: Yeah, there's a lot of it.
- Michelle Dennedy: When you actually have something to discuss people are interested in that medium as well. Final question. You and I met at an inclusion meeting at WiCyS, which is a great organization bringing women and other diverse populations into cybersecurity.
- Dave Bittner: Right.
- Michelle Dennedy: How is that effort going? Are you seeing an acceleration in that process?
- Dave Bittner: I think so. What I keep hearing is that things are definitely improving in the workplace, and I think women and underrepresented groups, minorities, people of color are feeling like things are getting better. There are more opportunities. There's more outreach to them, but at the same time, then I hear the other side that the conferences and the trade shows are still a hot mess.
- Michelle Dennedy: Yeah, they still have all the manels.
- Dave Bittner: Yeah, yeah, and so I think... Are we making progress? Yes. Do we still have a long way to go? Yes. I think for those of us for whom it's important, we still need to get those voices out there and fight the hard fight, and lead the way, and speak up, and shut down the bad voices when we can, and it's not always easy to do, but we need to do it. We have an event coming up in October at the Spy Museum in Washington DC, and it's a women in cybersecurity reception. We'll have about 300 women gathering to just celebrate women in the biz, so—
- Michelle Dennedy: I love it.
- Dave Bittner: Part of what's great about that is we get support from the industry to sponsor an event like that to say, "Yes, this is important," and we are demonstrating our support of this by helping to fund it and make it happen. I think the word is out there. There's plenty of work to do, so we've all just got to keep at it.
- Michelle Dennedy: Yeah. I love that, and I think that's a good wrap on this whole thing because it's the partners and the enablers like you, David, that make it happen because women have been telling other

women this for over 100 years now. Next year is our 100th anniversary of suffrage here in the US for women and we're not where we need to be. It's not just women aren't in the room, our ideas are not in the room yet, and it's our ideas and the way we manage our budgets at work, and at home, and at play. We need these diverse thinkers so that we can conquer all of the complex issues that we talked ... The cross-generational issues and desires, requirements in building systems, the ethical systems, the law, and podcasting. How we're going to share our ideas in the future, I think that's a very inclusive and risky thing, so just I'll wrap it up and thank you, Dave, for this opportunity. This has been really, really fun, as always.

**Dave Bittner:** No, I enjoyed it very much, and you're always welcome back on the CyberWire any time, and let's just agree to continue the conversation, and thanks for having me.

**Michelle Dennedy:** You've been listening to Privacy Sigma Riders brought to you by the Cisco Security and Trust Organization. Special thanks to Kory Westerhold for our original theme music. Our producers are Susan Borton and David Ball. You can find all our episodes at [www.cisco.com/go/riders](http://www.cisco.com/go/riders) or subscribe wherever you listen to podcasts. Then please take a moment to review and rate us on iTunes. To stay ahead of the curve between episodes, consider following us on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. You can find me, Michelle Dennedy on Twitter, @mdennedy. Until next time.