

Podcast Transcript

Risk Never Sleeps

Episode 44

Janice Reese

Ed Gaudet: Welcome to the Risk Never Sleeps Podcast, in which we discuss the people that are on the front lines, protecting patient safety and delivering patient care. I'm Ed Gaudet, the host of the program, and I am so pleased to be joined today by my good friend Janice Reese. Janice, you are the Director of partnerships for Healthcare and Life Sciences at SoftServe.

Janice Reese: That is correct.

Ed Gaudet: Worked with SoftServe in the past, it's a great organization. I'd love to get an update on what's happening. Given everything that's happening in the Ukraine, I assume most folks are moved outside or in maybe adjacent countries at this point.

Janice Reese: Yeah, the company was very direct when the war started to move a very good number of individuals out of Ukraine to safety in Poland, Eastern Europe, and, in some cases, other parts of the world.

Ed Gaudet: That's great, yeah. Yeah, I remember way back when, during one of the first engagements, we had to actually work with another group, basically as a contingency, while SoftServe was dealing with this, this was years ago, dealing with the aggression from Russia.



Ed Gaudet (cont'd): So our best to those folks that are still out there dealing with that and those families, obviously it's awful, and it's, war is terrible. We don't want, as John Lennon would say, give peace a chance, right?

Janice Reese: Exactly, exactly. We're very hopeful that peace will be on the horizon sooner than later, but thank you for your thoughts.

Ed Gaudet: All right. So let's get into your background. So tell us a little bit about your role and the organization.

Janice Reese: Yeah, I lead strategic partnerships across our healthcare and life sciences sector. And it's really in helping understand some of the partnerships and opportunities that we can work with at the cloud vendors that layer into solutions and opportunities to solve real world business problems for our healthcare and life sciences clients. And I think that's layered across opportunities with data, and we do a lot in helping organizations understand an intelligent data approach. We've got a good framework approach to work across that, that looks at, again, the foundation of governance, security, privacy, but also how do you maximize intelligent data and information, because you can't do cool things with an AI or a lot of these other aspects of ways to drive better outcomes in healthcare and even new drug discovery and life sciences, unless you actually start to connect a lot of silos of data. And in all my history of working with organizations, even from my Adobe days, I was amazed at how siloed data is across both government as well as industry, inside and outside organizations.

Ed Gaudet: That's right, that's right. And so, what are some of the things that you're doing to work with those customers to manage the security risks?

Janice Reese: Yeah, and looking at the security risk, it's also understanding where do they have legacy data. So I think what our team has done is created a framework that has all of the buckets of context around data inside an organization, data categories, things that you need to understand about protecting data.

Janice Reese (cont'd): Is it PHI data, where does the data need to go and flow, and how much of it goes in and out of the organization? And then understanding that from a framework allows you to think, oh, are there API management opportunities we can bring in with partners that could connect data more effectively, but more importantly, how do you actually minimize legacy data? Can you move that and look at that process to do better things with that information in the cloud as opposed to on-prem? And then, is it really out of date, and what data in there is valuable? So we have an advisory consulting group with the gentleman that leads that has a lot of knowledge about data and its data monetization, kind of understanding the fair market value of data. And what value does that data bring both to an organization? And then obviously, with the ecosystem becoming connected to the industry as a whole and how they might do, again, a better job of drug discovery, interaction with other organizations where we start to drive more, better outcomes, better capabilities for both patients and consumers as well as organizations in healthcare.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah, and given that, I assume AI is top of the list of those things that your organization is working with or helping providers work through, and payers work through, and drug discovery manufacturers work through. When you think about AI, what are some of the areas that you help those organizations actually think through as it relates to security, as it relates to privacy?

Janice Reese: Yeah, I think the biggest thing is that we've identified a gen AI workshop where we can come in and understand from an organization, bring them together in many cases, and understand and identify use cases. And the use cases then layer in, to your point, what level of security does that data need to have? Again, is it going to be shared for research to be able to drive better opportunities for drug discovery? As an example, is it going to be integrated for clinical trials in a way that needs to be managed for the people from a personal privacy perspective of their data inside of that environment? And so it really comes down to workshops that we've created around these different initiatives that organizations are looking at so that we can identify specific use cases. And then that allows us to dig into what's their governance, what's their security layer, what cloud partners are they working with? How many? Because there's a hybrid opportunity to look at security across that. And then where does it go, and how does it need to be utilized across their partner channel customer interaction to know all of the things that we need to be able to be obviously certain about in regards to security, privacy?

Ed Gaudet: No, that's really smart. And how's the reception been?

Janice Reese: It's been phenomenal. Both with our cloud partners are very excited because we have those opportunities in Amazon's marketplace, with Google, specifically with some of the things they're doing, and obviously Microsoft. So it's, we have things specific to cloud partners that they can offer, and then we have more of a general approach from a gen AI and ... knowledge to say, what is it? Again, a lot of companies, because this brings together the silos of data that these companies have, they need to have their own internal team come together to figure out what those use cases are. And the use cases are really what help drive the conversation and also help drive the metrics and the investment. Because if you're going to look at setting up large language learning models, what is it you want to accomplish?

Ed Gaudet: Yeah, no, that makes a lot of sense. So if you look over the next 12, 24 months, what are your top three strategic priorities?

Janice Reese: I think the strategic priorities are helping our customers. Right now, we have an uncertain economic approach. We have an uncertain global, I would say, seesaw approach in the world. And it's really helping them in more of a fast track, 90-day model of how do we take our workshops, help them come together as a company, really hone in on what the use cases are, and then layer that in a way that we can help them with a architecture of how to move forward, not in boiling the ocean, but in identifying what are the biggest priorities and helping them identify what priorities are going to bring them the most value of the data they have, of what they want to be able to do with AI, and of how to protect that AI, in regards to both patient security, privacy, but also ethical, and all the other aspects of things that surround, you know, in and of itself.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah. No, I love that. And that you're the extension to those, the teams, and those organizations. So in many ways, you're helping them shape their priorities over the next 12 to 24 months. What keeps you up at night?

Janice Reese: I think what keeps me up at night are things like, we're obviously on the brink of a possible government shutdown, and that opens up the potential for the bad guys to take advantage of us. So I think, to your point, cybersecurity and AI are great capabilities on the one side, but they also open up a whole lot more of the bag of tricks for the bad guys. And as a society, we have to be able to understand that and appropriately come together, whatever our differences are, to say, hey, here's our approach, and let's start to identify how we, to your point earlier, how do we drive peace? How do we drive more of the need of what we need to do globally because we're all connected? When we look at climate change and other aspects of things that are happening in our society.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah, the technology is going to make those attacks more sophisticated. It's going to expand the surface. And obviously, really those vectors are very dynamic, and keeping up with those becomes a real challenge for your customers, for our customers, and for the industry as a whole. What, the last couple of years been rough on a lot of people. Pandemic was rough. I know I certainly went through my own personal journey. What are you most proud of personally or professionally over the last couple of years?

Janice Reese: I think during the pandemic, I've worked remote for most of my career, so that part wasn't a big change, but what was changed was how everyone else interacted. And so I'm excited to see, I guess, pleased to see that we all understood that we could work from wherever, and that organizations at the top realized that employees had the resilience to be able to jump in and kind of manage that work-life balance when you start to work from home and you've never done it before. It's like you got to figure out schedules and so forth. And then I have to say, I'm proud that I was able to help a number of individuals locally because, as you know, we have a beach volleyball complex, and we stayed open during COVID. My husband had a telehealth visit in the spring of 2020 and walked around outside. And it's like the doctor said, outside sunshine courts are far apart enough. I think you guys will be fine.

Ed Gaudet: Oh, that's great, yeah.



Janice Reese: So being able to have people come out and have the ability to play and interact with others in an environment that was safe, secure, outside, we changed a lot of people's lives, I think, during COVID because, to your point, many people were kind of sequestered and didn't have any interaction. And for me, every weekend, I had 100 or more people at my house enjoying themselves. So it was a good feeling to be able to contribute that back.

Ed Gaudet: And so did you create the Nashville Beach community from the pandemic? Is that when you started it or?

Janice Reese: No, we started it in 1990. So this is our 33rd year of doing beach volleyball.

Ed Gaudet: That's when I got married, Janice. So that's.

Janice Reese: Oh, no!

Ed Gaudet: I'm 33 years of my anniversary. Wow, that's crazy. When did you do it? When did you start it? In the summer, I assume, or?

Janice Reese: We actually, yeah, we started it in the spring of 1990. Digging one court, courts are not inexpensive, and we're an inland. I live in Nashville, happen to live on ten acres in the woods, so there's a big plateau. But the reality is my husband and I played and we met playing indoor volleyball, got excited about the beach, and there was no place to play. And we couldn't convince a city to give us land to do anything, and we just happened to have the land. So we started with one court and then it evolved over the years to four.

Ed Gaudet: Four courts, wow.

Janice Reese: Tiki huts and pools and lots of things around.

Ed Gaudet: And more than just volleyball, then.

Janice Reese: More than just volleyball. It created a community and I think we need more of community in our day-to-day lives, and we definitely need more play.

Ed Gaudet: That's terrific. I love that, I love that, yeah. I tried to do a lot, a little bit of outdoor things during the pandemic as well because I think you're right, bringing people together, as long as they were sufficiently apart, right? meant a lot for people and helped us get through it, I know personally. So I think I already know the answer to this, I'm sure there's other things too, but when you're not doing your day job, what are you most passionate about?

Janice Reese: I think I'm passionate about two things. I'm very active and involved in the Women in Cybersecurity Initiative for both the state of Tennessee, and then we've created a BISO, Business Information Security Officer, affiliate with ... I mentor a small group of women, through the ... program and do some of that work. And then, obviously, you're right, beach volleyball and the fact that every weekend starting in April until the end of October, I have people come out, and I'm responsible for doing social media. I previously played, but now I'm busy, so I help with the photos. I take photographs of all of the players and put them up on our social media, Instagram and Facebook, and then just interact. There's lots to do to be a host of a tournament.

Ed Gaudet: That's really cool. With all that acreage, any pets or other animals?

Janice Reese: I do have a wonderful dog named Romeo, who has an appropriate name. We did not name him. They named their puppies Romeo and Juliet, and we happened to want a male dog, so we got Romeo. He is a chow chow, and chow chows. he's a black with a purple tongue, and chow chows are not known to be friendly, but Romeo grew up in the community. So we got him in February, and by the spring of 2019, he'll be five coming up this year, he was carried around and got to meet a lot of individuals, and we also have a lot of dogs. I would say that's the other thing that happened with COVID. Before COVID, we had some people that had dogs that they came out with from COVID-19. Everybody seemed to have a dog that they would want to bring out. So there are some weekends we have 8 to 10 dogs. They all have to be on their leashes and obviously take care of their personal hygiene, but people bring their pets out.



Janice Reese (cont'd): And so Romeo is very socialized because he not only got to meet a lot of individuals, but he also got to meet a lot of friends with other pets.

Ed Gaudet: Those dogs can get pretty big, can't they?

Janice Reese: Yeah, he's pretty big. He's about 70 pounds.

Ed Gaudet: Oh my gosh.

Janice Reese: Yeah.

Ed Gaudet: That's a big dog, yeah.

Janice Reese: He's a big dog. He's a pretty dog. I'm a little partial, but he's a beautiful dog.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah, no, yeah, my, I have four dogs at any one time at the house. So we have our dog, our mini schnauzer Grayson, who's, he's a tough beast, little, little guy, but he's tough. And then we have a dachshund poodle mix, which is really cute, Charlie Brown, and he's a little shorter, but small. And then we have two large dogs, Wheaten Terrier, poodle mix, which is big, like a little bit of a horse, and then a Akita Husky mix. Beautiful dog.

Janice Reese: Beautiful, yeah.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah, that one in particular has got the brindle coat and the steel blue killer eyes. I mean, he looks through you, but he's the most of the four. He's the gentlest. I can actually feed him by hand without getting losing a finger with the other ones. The smaller ones are the worst.

Janice Reese: If they came out to our place for the weekend, Romeo shares a chicken ball treat with all of his friends that come out. So the dogs actually know when their owners are driving them up the driveway, that they're coming to their play place.

Ed Gaudet: I love that, yeah, they must cook. Yeah, that's so funny. That's cool. So let's see what other questions we have. We have a lot left here. We diverted onto this road of the animals. If you could go back in time, tell us about what you would tell your 20-year-old self.

Janice Reese: I had to think about this a lot, but I think the biggest thing I would tell my 20-year-old self is trust your intuition and don't undervalue your self-worth because I think it's always hard, both females in general, and just to growing up over those years and times and even now in particular, with all the social media that individuals have and see it's you have to have a center. And I think intuitively, you can learn and rely on the fact that your gut, and your intuition, and your heart helps guide you in what's the best thing to do, what's other aspects of things that you might need to think about? But that's what I would really focus on with my 20-year-old self, is that trust yourself, trust your intuition, and be confident in who you are and what you can provide in your unique way to whatever, to your career, to your community, to others.

Ed Gaudet: Very thoughtful advice and great advice for folks. So if you're listening and you're 20 years old, you know what to tell yourself right now.

Janice Reese: You might need to tell yourself that if you're older, too.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah, that's well, that is true actually, more so. All right. So we've got some time. So let's, we mentioned John Lennon in the top of the hour here. What are the top five albums you would bring to a desert island? I'm sure you've played this game before. You're on a plane, plane is going down, you can grab five albums.

Janice Reese: Five albums.

Ed Gaudet: No greatest hits, Janice, either. No greatest hits.

Janice Reese: No, no greatest hits. I have to say I like Leonard Cohen's Hallelujah. Hallelujah. I like especially the version that K.D. Lang sings, and it's a spiritual song, it always brings tears to my eyes, so I would have to have that.

Janice Reese (cont'd): I like world music. And before music became internet-related, when we first started our beach volleyball complex, my husband would go to Tower Records and all those places and buy CDs, so we brought a lot of Putumayo music.

Ed Gaudet: Oh yeah.

Janice Reese: There's a Putumayo World Reggae CD. One of my favorite songs on there is an Indian chant called Om Namah Shivaya. Again, it's spiritual because if you're going to be on a desert island.

Ed Gaudet: You're going to need that.

Janice Reese: Got to think about that.

Ed Gaudet: It's good.

Janice Reese: In regards to things. Of course, you can't go on a desert island without Jimmy Buffett.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah, there you go. That's great.

Janice Reese: So I like his song Take the Weather With You.

Ed Gaudet: Oh, nice. Yeah.

Janice Reese: A lot of people Ed Gaudet: Yeah, yeah.
think that at the top song, but I really think it's applicable, especially if you are on an island.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah, yeah.

Janice Reese: And you have a sailor background.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah. No, absolutely. And the thing about Jimmy Buffett is you can go really deep with him because you're right, most people only know Cheeseburger in Paradise and Margaritaville or whatever, right? But if you go deep, he has a lot of albums. He's been recording for a long time, and some of his early stuff is just fantastic.

Janice Reese: It really is. It really is. And he released a recently new album as well.

Ed Gaudet: I saw that.

Janice Reese: So very, very timely. And then I have to add, of course, because it's the Harvest Moon, we just had it, and.

Ed Gaudet: Neil Young.

Janice Reese: Neil Young, yes.

Ed Gaudet: Very good. That's a great album. Fantastic.

Janice Reese: And then one more that I think always fits right now, it became famous again with the Guardians of the Galaxy, Come and Get Your Love.

Ed Gaudet: Oh wait, don't say it because I love that song. Oh, okay. Who is it? Oh, no. Redbone, Redbone. Redbone, right?

Janice Reese: Yeah. Yes, Redbone.

Ed Gaudet: Yes. Great band. And that's a, I think that's American Indian.

Janice Reese: Yeah. I think it is ironic that a couple of my favorite songs are Indian. And then I like Enya, the May It Be. Yeah, because May It Be kind of fits again, you're on that island, kind of, but that's again a little bit.

Ed Gaudet: I want to be on your desert island. Those are good picks, thoughtful picks. All right, a couple last questions. Hardest lesson in your career?

Janice Reese: I think the hardest lesson in my career was how to interact with, especially growing up at the time I did and some of the circumstances I think all of us run into, let's say, male individuals that didn't really respect the female side of you. Very much an advocate with women in cybersecurity and trying to help change the trajectory there. But even today, people tell me that they have circumstances. I ran into my own circumstances over, several times in the course of my career. And so I think that's still a challenge, and I would hope that at some point in the future, it would change.

Ed Gaudet: I think we're getting better, but we still have a ways to go. And I have three daughters, and while I learned a lot, and I'm learning a lot, and there's so much that we take for granted, I think, and generally, again, if you just think about, treat them the way you want others to treat yourself as a credo, then I think a lot of that takes care of itself. Unless, of course, you're just an evil person and you don't care how you get treated, but I think generally most people do.

Janice Reese: And I think that would be helpful starting in middle school, because I think there are kids that get bullied early on. Again, different aspects or circumstances, but yeah, just treat others like you want to be treated. That's common sense.

Ed Gaudet: That's right. It's common sense, right? And yeah, if we could do away with those bullies, that would be good. I grew up in a time where you, were either a bully or a runner. You were either bullying people, or you were running away from the bullies, right? I was a runner.

Janice Reese: I was a runner, too.

Ed Gaudet: All right, cool. Last question. I'd be remiss if I didn't ask it because this is the Risk Never Sleeps Podcast. Janice, what's the riskiest thing you've ever done?

Janice Reese: I guess there's probably two parts. I'll say career-wise. It was probably when I jumped into cybersecurity in 2015, and I got the opportunity to get a job because I had knowledge on industry standards and software and technology and some of the momentum that was happening at that point in time from OMC and OCR to start to say, hey, healthcare industry, you need to make an effort here. But the way I got the job was to be able to do more of a competitive analysis about what was happening, because I was a female and all the people that worked there were male and had to break into that. And I think the other riskiest thing is creating for white sand volleyball courts in my front yard. Each of them take about 30, 25 to 30 dump trucks of sand. It's not inexpensive to create the right sand volleyball courts. Fortunately, my husband is an architect and designs courts for parks and schools and colleges, and so forth. But when we first created it, we didn't know if people would really want to come out and play, but we knew we wanted to play, and the only way we could play would be to create our place to play. And so it turned into, over the last 33 years, an amazing community with people coming in from around the world. Since we live on ten acres that are private in the woods, we were able to add over time, like I said, up to now, four courts. We also have a silo, we have a Triton, and a bus for people to camp and spend the night, and we cook on the weekends for people. We had to not cook the year of COVID, just to keep things straight. But my husband's good about cooking paella and low country boil and other pizza on the grill and other fun things. And it creates community, and I think that's the best return that I've been able to see from a contribution perspective. And some of the young kids that started playing here are now getting scholarships to Pepperdine and USC, and so it's exciting to see. Very risky to spend \$30,000 on building a court, not knowing if it was going to be worthwhile. And we really didn't expect it to be a big financial return, but it was a big investment, especially back in 1990.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah. Oh yeah. And how long do you run them during the year?

Janice Reese: Yeah, we start in April and go through, before COVID, we used to end around September, end of September. But when COVID hit, people didn't want to go back indoors, and so now we run them through, as long as the weather holds through the first or second week of November.



Ed Gaudet: Oh wow.

Janice Reese: October is our fun tournament, our dinosaur tournament, where you add the ages of players, and the players have to be a certain, like 70 for women total, 80 for men. And then oh,

Ed Gaudet: That's great.

Janice Reese: So it allows the older, younger players to play together. And obviously, we like to play, so we have dinosaur outfits.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah. That's so cool.

Janice Reese: Different things that people do. So it was a big investment at the time, but it's probably brought the most reward in regards to the return.

Ed Gaudet: And every weekend, I'm assuming.

Janice Reese: Every weekend, yeah. And in the summer we do Friday tournaments for juniors and kids.

Ed Gaudet: It sounds like a Grateful Dead show. Like you get campers, people camping, you're feeding people, you're playing volleyball.

Janice Reese: And we never know. This weekend we got somebody coming from Saint Louis to stay in the bus to play, so they come in from all over.

Ed Gaudet: Now, do you have fire pits at night and do people pull up the guitar and do you have any of that happening?

Janice Reese: We have had some fire pits and a few guitars and music. Obviously, in Nashville, we're going to have people that play music and have music.

Ed Gaudet: That's so cool. Yeah. Very good. So any last advice that you'd like to share with maybe folks that are just getting into healthcare or getting into the cybersecurity profession?

Janice Reese: I think I was going to mention the importance of working with industry standards, associations, and groups. I know you and I are active with the Health Sector Coordinating Council and 405(d), and I think I learned early in my career working with Adobe around industry standards, excuse me, on print-on-demand initiative, and some of the things happening with XML and automation for web to print, how important it was to be able to both understand what was happening, and then also contribute and bring companies and other people together in order to have transformation and technology and opportunities to go further, faster, and I think that's important. If you're getting into the industry, you can learn a lot by looking at the industry associations associated, and then how do they connect what's happening and get active and participate.

Ed Gaudet: Those relationships you build are lasting. They're priceless, and the collaboration is priceless. And you're right, you pick up things that you wouldn't otherwise have learned if you don't participate. So I think especially in healthcare, where there's a shared mission, the 405(d) and the HSCC, the Healthcare Sector Coordinating Council, and all the different task groups and working groups across those different organizations really enable you to get a broad view of what's happening in healthcare and give back at the same time, which is so, what a great thing, isn't it? I'm surprised more people don't participate in those organizations. I learned so much.

Janice Reese: I am too, and that's one of the things I would also tell my younger self. Be sure and look for those kinds of organizations as you are laying out your career strategy. I just happened into it when I was working at Adobe, because I was the one doing a lot of the standardization around Acrobat and PDF across both the graphic arts and healthcare, and got more into and facilitated with that. But with FHIR and all these industry capabilities with data, I wrote a white paper for Adobe in 2000 on a lot of the opportunities that could happen with integration and data and healthcare. I'm so excited to see all the things that the Health Sector Coordinating Council is doing in collaboration with the 405(d) and in collaboration with just the industry, and helping raise the bar in the level of opportunities for the industry to become more educated.



Ed Gaudet: Yeah, and what the ONC has done with the interoperability rule and all the great strides that they're making to share data, which again, is a, is one of the things that we have to do as an industry, right? For better outcomes, you need to make sure that data can be shared accordingly. And no, it's awesome to watch, and it's awesome to see people contribute and again, make a real difference.

Janice Reese: Absolutely agree. And I think as a young person, people are going to have access to all that data because all my young players have little Apple Watches, and I think one lady, she played in two tournaments in one day and she had 19,000 steps.

Ed Gaudet: Oh my gosh.

Janice Reese: That's a lot of steps.

Ed Gaudet: It's a lot of steps. Yeah, that's a lot of steps. I have my Apple Watch somewhere too, but I don't have it on, so I guess you have to wear it in order to.

Janice Reese: You do have to wear it in order to have those steps count.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah. All right. Well, great. Janice, thanks so much. This has been terrific. And for those of you on the front lines, protecting patient data and patient safety as well as delivering care, remember to stay vigilant because risk never sleeps.





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