

Podcast Title: ACM Bytecast

Episode Title: Theo Schlossnagle

In this episode of ACM Bytecast, host Jessica Bell is joined by [Circonus](#) founder and CTO, Theo Schlossnagle to share his journey to and work in tech. Theo got into computer programming because of his love of puzzles and problem-solving. He was drawn in by the times things didn't work as expected. After finishing his school journey, his classmates would call him in to help find solutions to the problems they couldn't solve. This work led him to create his first company and provide solutions to some of the biggest internet businesses in the world. Now he's an entrepreneur working in architecting and scaling systems.

Theo has been solving coding problems since his early days at John Hopkins University. He explains that while the technology has changed, and code can be deployed with a couple of clicks, many of the problems he works on remain pretty similar to when he began his career. The biggest problem people face today is when you do hit a bug or unexplained error, the layers of abstraction are much more difficult to penetrate. The trade-off of accessibility in terms of writing your code quickly for once-click cloud programs, while situational, Theo believes are worth it the majority of the time.

Jessica asks Theo to share his advice to organizations that have passed the startup phase and are ready to scale up their business. Theo explains that code and organizational structure go hand in hand. He explains that strong organizational skills prevent you from pitfalls you can't get out of. There are a lot of technical challenges that require expertise, but engineers should be making unilateral decisions. There has to be control and leadership within the organization to create solid code. For young entrepreneurs, Theo emphasizes this can be a challenging and stressful endeavor, but an incredibly rewarding experience. He encourages young people to build a network of support around them to ensure they have people to turn to outside of their business. He explains he is most proud of the jobs he's created through his company, and the people he's been able to employ. For the future, he hopes to continue a focus on ethical computing and changing data volume to value.

Key Takeaways:

0:54 - Theo introduces himself.

4:40 - Theo explains how he became an entrepreneur.

5:45 - Jessica asks Theo if there's been a major change in the types of problems systems see now vs. when Theo began his career.

8:43 - Jessica asks Theo if cloud platform trade-offs are worth it.

9:41 - Theo's advice to companies just beyond the start-up phase.

16:27 - Theo explains the overlap between entrepreneurship and technology.

18:43 - Theo gives advice to young engineers who are interested in founding a business.

21:54 - Jessica asks Theo about what's ahead for him.

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