

**EPISODE 90**

**[00:00:11] ANNOUNCER:** Welcome to this week's episode of Coffee with a Journalist, brought to you by OnePitch. The guests on our summer show includes some of the most notable journalists from the top US-based publications who cover topics including technology, lifestyle and culture, health, science, consumer products, and business news. We discussed their role, the types of stories they cover, what their inbox looks like, and how they connect with sources.

Today, we're joined by Becca Szkutak, a venture capital reporter at Forbes. Becca covers micro VCs, startups and fundraising. She's also the co-author of the Midas Touch newsletter. Prior to joining Forbes, she was a reporter for venture capital journal and private debt investor. During the episode, Becca talks about reading and responding to pitches, the range of stories she enjoys diving into, her favorite quarantine activity and more. Let's hear from Becca now.

[INTERVIEW]

**[00:01:15] BB:** Welcome everyone. This is Coffee with a Journalist. We often are not drinking coffee on this show. But that's okay. We're always drinking some lovely beverage of some sort, chatting with a wonderful journalist like we are today. You all just heard that Jarrod introduced wonderful Becca. Also a fellow Rebecca, I might, Szkutak from Forbes. She covers all the venture capital industry for Forbes. And we're going to hear a lot more on what that entails.

But just real quick for everyone listening, I'm Beck Bamberger, and I run BAM, which is an agency working with all venture-backed technology companies. And then also of course OnePitch, where I found it along with Jarrod, this platform, so that publicists could get better in touch with journalists. That is why we are here.

But for today, we're going to chat with Becca and hear how her inbox is, hear what shows you're working on, or watching, or whatever, all the things that we always talk about, what journalism is going to do for the future. Welcome, Becca, and thank you for being here.

**[00:02:16] BS:** No. No. Thank you for having me.

**[00:02:18] BB:** And taking time amid this crazy funding climate we're in. We were talking about that before this all started. So Becca, why don't we start with just your inbox? How do you manage it and how crazy is it?

**[00:02:30] BS:** Okay. The first thing I'd say with how I manage it, probably going to sound crazy for saying this, but I actually don't have my email notifications on. I know. I know.

**[00:02:41] BB:** You're a purist.

**[00:02:42] BS:** And it's funny because it was an accident. My Outlook app crashed on my computer. And when I re-downloaded it, I couldn't get the notifications to come back even though I tried to turn them back on. But I quickly realized that that actually was like a blessing in disguise because then I can – I mean, I'm checking my email constantly. So I'm not missing anything. But if I'm on a call or doing an interview, I don't have like an urgent or a distressing like notification popping up, which I found is really helpful. Especially like just mentioned with getting such high-pitch volume today and just such a crazy environment, I've found that that's actually been really helpful because I can set aside time to do email. Like, "Oh, it's five. I'm wrapping up. I'm going to go through my inbox now," which makes it I don't want to say more intentional because I don't like how that sounds necessarily, but it definitely helps keep stuff separate, which makes it a little more manageable.

**[00:03:37] BB:** Well, it sounds like you have boundaries.

**[00:03:39] BS:** Right, accidental boundaries.

**[00:03:42] BB:** Accidental boundaries. I love it. Oh, that is so great. And then once you're in there – Okay, so like it's five o'clock. You're in Brooklyn. You're like, "Oh, okay, wrapping up the day." Are you flagging, labeling, mass deleting? How are you going from there?

**[00:03:57] BS:** I really do try to read everything and try to respond as soon as I can if that's possible. Sometimes it's just not. But usually I almost never pay attention to the headline of the email. I've learned that those can be pretty misleading.

**[00:04:13] BB:** The subject line.

**[00:04:14] BS:** Oh, yeah. So I'll always at least dive in to the content. And then if it seems like, I mean, we do get spam emails sometimes or just stuff that's way off beat. I'll generally put that to the side. But otherwise, yeah, just start plugging through. If things seem interesting, I try to reply right then and there so I don't lose it just to see if I can get more information. Or I'll make notes in my agenda to follow up with people if stuff sounds interesting, and maybe not right now, or things I want to take more time to go through if someone sends me say like a report or something a little more lengthy and I'll be like, "Okay, I'm going to keep this as unread till tomorrow," because I do clear the whole inbox every night.

**[00:04:50] BB:** Oh, I see. Oh, is see. I see. Oh, wow!

**[00:04:55] BS:** Yeah.

**[00:04:56] BB:** You're one of maybe two people in my entire time of talking on this show that actually is that. You mean zero.

**[00:05:03] BS:** Zero unread. I don't delete emails. I know people who will like clear stuff out of their inbox once they're like done with that. And I would lose my mind, but yeah. So if something's unread and it's from the day before, if I log on the next day I know it was purposely left that way. So I can check back maybe with like a fresher mind or just better time essentially.

**[00:05:21] BB:** Clarity of mind. So real quick, you mentioned I don't go by the subject line. I don't go by that first opening line. And that's a technique. So you just open everything to review it real quickly. Why is that? You said it's misleading. And so what are in the subject

lines that you're just like, "Pfft. It's totally not the topic." Is it just like funding announcement and that's like the subject line?

**[00:05:50] BS:** Well, sometimes people who I've worked with before or have at least had like intro calls with will be like this is perfect for you. And I'll open it and be like this is nothing we would cover. Or on the flip side of that, sometimes people will pitch you something and the headline won't make it seem interesting. And then halfway through the pitch you're like, "Wait a minute. This is actually really cool. They're burying their own lead. Like why was this not the headline."

So I've definitely found both ways, because it's happened to me before where I've like completely ignored an email being like, "That's not relevant to me at all. That's not even within my beat." And then the person follows back up with me the next day with more information and I'm like, "Wait a second. This is actually really interesting. Why was this not more upfront the first time around or in the headlines?" So yeah, I've kind of moved away from looking at that specifically.

**[00:06:43] BB:** It's so distinct, because so often, at least on this show, we hear people saying if it's not the subject line, I don't get it in two seconds, forget it. And I wonder how many things are missed for what you're saying with that technique of management of email, because of course we have all got to figure it out in our own way, shape and form. But interesting insight there.

**[00:07:02] BS:** Because I know definitely gotten some interesting email headlines that don't really represent the pitch very well on both sides of the board, both in a good way and in a bad way. I mean, sometimes if it's really in a bind, I can't say I'm like reading the whole email. But definitely trying to kind of always look beyond that because I have learned that that isn't always the best marker.

**[00:07:27] BB:** What is the pitch ideal length you like most?

**[00:07:31] BS:** I don't know, because sometimes some people will just send the whole release to begin with, which can be helpful. But as far as just like a pitch maybe with like a

company or a firm I'm not familiar with or haven't worked with in a while, generally pretty short is good, but not too short that I don't actually know what it's about. Because I definitely have gotten, "Hey, series b rounds in the fintech space next week, August 20<sup>th</sup>," or say from last month, "does that work?" And I'm like, "I have no idea what you're talking about."

**[00:08:01] BB:** What is it? Yeah, oh god. Yeah.

**[00:08:04] BS:** Because you can really – Like even like a paragraph, three, four bullets, you can really push a lot of what would be interesting across, because I don't need to know the whole story of why the company's interesting. Like I'm hoping to kind of find that out as I go through. But if it's just like this is what happened, this is why I personally think it's interesting, these are maybe data or numbers they'd be willing to share. That's usually like all the information I'm looking for.

**[00:08:29] BB:** I mean, I personally am a fan of like three bullet points. That's just me, because I just want to go, "Oh one, two, three. Great. Got it. Got it. That's why. Okay."

**[00:08:38] BS:** The PowerPoint rules.

**[00:08:39] BB:** Oh, the PowerPoint rules, exactly. Although, god, I have seen some horrific PowerPoints lately with 1900 words crammed onto a slide that is I don't even know what's happening in that world. So we talked about pitching preferences. Anything you love? Particularly, anything more on the pitching preferences? Like you kind of sound you can go with the whole release in there. You can kind of go with short and sweet bullet points. But is there anything you were like, "Oh, I love that."

**[00:09:03] BS:** I don't know. I think this is like not necessarily related to what's in the message. But I really like when people are really upfront about the timing, because if you say next week but you really mean you want next Tuesday, like that's a big difference. Because like Tuesday, Thursday is like different halves of the work week. I'll probably write it this week if it's for next Tuesday. I'll probably write it next week if it's for Thursday. So I get people wanting to be flexible, and I totally appreciate that. But if people were like, "Oh, I'd

like to pitch for this date specifically, but we can be flexible,” that's something that always stands out to me as it just makes things much more clear on my end pretty quickly if I'm going to be able to take it just for timing purposes even regardless of whether it's a story I'd love to dive into or not.

**[00:09:50] BB:** When you're thinking of the stories you're going to do, Becca, and there're quite a variety that you do do, because sometimes it's the fun, sometimes it's funding announcements, sometimes you're doing the newsletter kind of roundup and you have something – Like here's one on Carrot of fertility benefit. Sometimes it's on a sleep-focused super moon raising money, the night to market as it's called. It does vary, although I think we understand the niche. Is there a way in which you think of how you do or come up with a story?

**[00:10:21] BS:** When thinking of different stories, I'm definitely trying to not necessarily write something that's already out there. But I think some people sort of take that to the extreme. Like when I'm thinking of a story or if something seems interesting like the super moon story, for example, the sleep-focused, I'm not super tapped into sort of healthcare and funds focus on wellness and things like that. But it like felt like an opportunity to sort of contribute in an interesting way to a broader conversation that expands beyond VC, which is always kind of fun. Like I know I cover diversity a lot, because that's really important to me sort of beyond the industry. So that's always a good setup for me looking for stories where I can kind of contribute to areas I'm interested in or give me an opportunity to learn about something interesting that I don't know anything about. Like the fertility startup. I'm not super familiar with that, but that was a great chance to be like, “Let's dive into something new, something interesting, something I'm not hearing about all the time,” but at the same point knowing it's a big issue and knowing we can kind of contribute to that broader discourse around that topic without necessarily being repetitive or acting like an expert or things like that.

**[00:11:29] BB:** Would you say, and this answer varies widely from person to person, that your stories, a lot of them, a portion of them, any percentage of them, get generated or at least sparked by pitches?

**[00:11:43] BS:** Yeah. No. Definitely I would say I always tell PR people if they reach out to me and they're like, "Oh, are there any areas or specific things you like to cover?" And they're definitely things I prefer to cover more than others. But I always tell people if they find it interesting to send it to me anyway even if maybe it's too small for me to cover or we can't run it exclusively or things like that, because you guys end up seeing trends and companies raising money before we do.

So it's like even if it's not something I'm going to cover, it's like I've definitely done stories before that were sparked with, "Hey, I haven't heard anything about this category in a while and I got pitched four companies in it in the last two weeks." And it's like I didn't cover any of those stories specifically, but like that definitely tips me off that like there's something here to dive into.

**[00:12:31] BB:** I've heard that with other reporters where the signaling from pitches lets you know if there's a trend, if there's something erupting or kind of bubbling up and you go, "Wait a second, why did I get those six pitches? What's going on in that something niche thing?" You're like, "I didn't hear anything about that before." But then it indicates to you.

I've never thought of it as like in a way each publicist is doing an aggregate pitching strategy amongst ourselves not knowing of course. But when it's all landing in someone's inbox, a reporter, it might help your pitching success, because then the reporter goes, "Oh, wait a second. Five people sent me this. Okay, let me think about this." Kind of interesting, because you'd never know it will connect the dots, but it's so funny.

**[00:13:12] BS:** Oh, definitely. Because the stuff I see maybe like one or two pitches from the same sector or even like a location. Like I saw I got a pitch from a company in Vermont and then I was going back through the great deal roundups that they do in Parata and term sheet and discovered that there was like a couple other Vermont companies in there recently. And I was like, "Wow! You never hear about venture capital in Vermont. I'm going to get the data on that. And ended up finding that it's been more has been invested in that market so far this year than the last 10 years combined. And it just ended up being really interesting.

**[00:13:46] BB:** Really? Vermont?

**[00:13:46] BS:** Yeah. No. It's still small potatoes compared to a lot of other markets, but I wouldn't have really dove into that unless I had received like a pitch about that, or someone had sort of flagged that for me even though I didn't end up actually covering what was pitched to me directly.

[BREAK]

**[00:14:03] ANNOUNCER:** Today's interview will continue after this brief message brought to you by OnePitch. Are you curious to see the unique ways one pitch helps PR professionals and marketers pitch journalists? Head to [onepitch.co](https://onepitch.co) learn about our new OnePitch score and see how easy it is to find the right journalists to pitch your news to. Sign up for your free account today. Now, back to today's episode.

[INTERVIEW]

**[00:14:28] BB:** Well, Becca, we have a fill in the blank section. So so I'll give you the phrase, the prompt, and you could fill it in from here. Let's do it. First one, my favorite sources always –

**[00:14:40] BS:** Always text me when they find something interesting or hear something.

**[00:14:44] BB:** Text you? People have your cell phone number?

**[00:14:47] BS:** Very, very few, but –

**[00:14:48] BB:** Keep it. Don't say anything more. Yeah. Some people have disclosed their number on here. I'm like, "What are you doing? What are you doing? Reel that in? Reel that in."

**[00:14:56] BS:** I will not do that.

[00:14:57] **BB:** Anyway, there you go. Okay. The most annoying source is always –

[00:15:02] **BS:** Always assume you'll cover something because you just covered something almost identical or very similar.

[00:15:08] **BB:** You'll get a response from me if –

[00:15:10] **BS:** If you pitch something and you tell me it's interesting even if it's in a crowded category, like fintech. Tell me why it's different but without saying it's the first, it's the best, it's the only – Just tell me why it's interesting.

[00:15:26] **BB:** I did a LinkedIn post about that. Like you can't be leading first ever market dominating. It's like, “No. That means nothing.” You can follow up with me if –

[00:15:36] **BS:** If I don't get back to you within a couple of days. I'm always happy to get follow-ups, but I do need time to respond to the original. Reach out.

[00:15:45] **BB:** Yeah, not two hours. Do you, by the way, have a cap on follow-up number? Some people are like I'm a strict two follow-ups max. Do not hit me up again.

[00:15:56] **BS:** I wouldn't say I have a strict cap, but definitely I did ask someone to not follow up with me again on the fifth follow-up earlier today. So I definitely would say it hits a point, but no hard number.

[00:16:07] **BB:** Oh, that's bad. It would be a huge help if sources –

[00:16:12] **BS:** Were willing to disclose more of their metrics. 300% year-on-year revenue growth means nothing if I don't know what it is.

[00:16:21] **BB:** I can't stand percentages. Oh, I should write a post about that. Yeah, it's not helpful, because you go from one to two customers. Wow! 200%. I really don't – Yeah. Are there any more specifics numbers that you want to hear about especially in the VC landscape?

**[00:16:39] BS:** I don't know, because sometimes I've had instances with like interesting business models where they didn't provide revenue, but they provided like how many people – Like the Carrot Fertility one was interesting, because she could say how many customers they worked with. But then connect that to how many – Like it was b2b. So how many actual people that impacted? And I thought that was a pretty interesting metric, because her being like we have about a hundred customers is like, “Okay, that's pretty good.” But being like which translates to like 1.3 million. I'm not going to fill you on that number, but like over a million people potentially touched by it. Like those kind of metric can be really interesting, because I get some companies really don't want to share revenue. But even just like projections are awesome, like, “Oh we hope in the next two years to hit this.” And you could be a million away from that. You could be 100 million away from that. I'm not going to know, but that is still helpful.

**[00:17:35] BB:** What a great thing. I know you're speaking about Tammy. Full disclosure we used to work with Carrot. So that was one thing we talked about. So I'm glad to hear that. That's good. And a good little trick for I think enterprise folks is, okay, well can you drill it into the number of people impact at the end of the day? If you don't want to say, “Oh, I work with the six top auto manufacturers.” Well, okay. Well, how many drivers, let's say, does that trickle down to or something like that?

**[00:17:59] BS:** Definitely, or like what percentages of your customers are paying or things like that? Obviously, we're not going to be able to calculate exact numbers from that, but it definitely gives a better idea of sort of the background.

**[00:18:10] BB:** The best compliment I received about my work was.

**[00:18:13] BS:** That it was thorough.

**[00:18:14] BB:** Did you post that? Did you like cut it out somewhere and put it on your desk or something?

**[00:18:20] BS:** I should have. People say that on the phone sometimes. They're like very thorough questions. I'm like, "Thank you. I'm glad."

**[00:18:27] BB:** I would hope so too as a journalist, but that's a great absolute compliment. My favorite stories to write about are –

**[00:18:33] BS:** Oh, founders looking to tackle problems that are personal to them who come to the VC market because of those problems. So people who are from outside finance, outside traditional sort of paths that lead to venture who got interested because they really just had a problem they wanted to solve or a problem they were passionate about.

I once spoke to a company called Otter, which helps connect stay-at-home parents to do child care for other parents. I just thought that was so interesting. She was not doing anything even remotely related to finance, and she was just so passionate about this issue that she started the company and because of a known need that she realized in herself. And that was a great conversation. She was a great person to talk to.

**[00:19:19] BB:** I always love the founder who's got like – And I mean it's in a good way, like the chip on the shoulder. Like this didn't exist. This was a pain in the ass. I need to solve something with it. And they will get it solved, because there's real drive typically with that. I love that.

**[00:19:34] BS:** And some people think that translates to lots of consumer things and lots of really just like trying to solve like everyday life problems, but I covered a software company where the founders, one was from Belarus, one was from Poland, and Poland by way of Australia. And they discovered working together in California that both of their moms were bookkeepers halfway across the world from each other and had the exact same problem. And so they created a way to fix it. And I was like that is so interesting. So it's like it can be like enterprise SaaS and stuff like that can really still have like those really like rich backstories.

**[00:20:12] BB:** My favorite hobby is –

[00:20:14] **BS:** Ooh, cooking.

[00:20:15] **BB:** Ooh, have you made something good lately? That's usually one of my other questions? What did you last ate that you loved?

[00:20:21] **BS:** Hmm. I'm trying to think if I had anything lately. I got a puppy recently. So I haven't been doing as much big cooking projects. But I do love to cook. I've been getting into making birria tacos, which are really good. So I'm trying to make those as best as I can.

[00:20:39] **BB:** The last song I listened to was.

[00:20:43] **BS:** Oh, probably something off the Funeral by Arcade Fire. Probably like Crown of Love. Oh no, In the Backseat. That's the last song I listened to, In the Backseat.

[00:20:51] **BB:** In the Backseat. Okay, I got to look that up. Okay. My favorite fall recipe or food is –

[00:20:59] **BS:** Oh, butternut squash mac and cheese. So good.

[00:21:02] **BB:** Yes! The butternut squash is underrated, I feel.

[00:21:06] **BS:** I agree completely.

[00:21:07] **BB:** It needs to have a moment like kale, I think. Anyway, that's my bet on the next gourd coming to the markets all around. Okay. My perfect Sunday is –

[00:21:18] **BS:** Perfect Sunday would be going to the farmer's market by my house, which I try to go to every Sunday if I can, and then kind of relaxing. Maybe doing some meal prep for the week, or if it's in um the right season, hopefully one of my sports teams is playing so I can make some game food and watch a game at home.

[00:21:39] **BB:** Now, what type of sports? Hockey, football, baseball?

[00:21:41] **BS:** I always joke I'm like an indoor sports person because I only watch basketball and hockey.

[00:21:48] **BB:** Hey, it's contained. I'm a fan. I'm a fan of that. Me too. Okay. Okay. So you got a couple there. Got it. What if it's like contained in a big huge like dome, like the stadiums that put the – Or just it happens to be like indoors only like permanently.

[00:22:05] **BS:** Or it just happens to be. Yeah.

[00:22:06] **BB:** Okay. Okay. Got it. Just wanted to clarify. Quarantine has taught me –

[00:22:12] **BS:** Quarantine has taught me that I think that I've got a lot more creative passions than I realized. I tried like a couple different hobbies over the course of the pandemic. Not really sure if I would actually like them or not. And I think I've kept pretty much all of them.

[00:22:28] **BB:** Ooh, such as?

[00:22:30] **BS:** I got really into knitting. Very fun, like instantly gratifying activity. So that's a good one.

[00:22:40] **BB:** And then it's cozy. Then you can wear it maybe. It has a lot of utility. Now, Becca, we want to talk about what you're watching, what you're listening to, read. I mean, we'll take anything frankly. Any stories you're consuming, whatsoever. Tell us what you got.

[00:22:54] **BS:** I've been really closely following the Theranos trial right now.

[00:23:01] **BB:** Oh god! I have not at all been. How is it?

[00:23:05] **BS:** It's crazy. It's one of those trials. I watch a lot of not true crime documentaries, but a lot of like white-collar crime documentaries. And it really is interesting. It's one of those cases where I read John Caraway's book. I saw the documentary.

**[00:23:20] BB:** Yes, which is a masterpiece. Yes.

**[00:23:21] BS:** Oh, it definitely was. And I felt like I really had an opinion on it. And I think the opinion is not different, but reading some of the coverage on the defense opening statements, I'm like, "Wow! That's an interesting angle to go from." I'm not saying it's flipping my opinion, because it's not. But I'm like if I was a juror who really didn't understand this market and really wasn't familiar with it, I'm like – I don't know. They took an approach that – I don't know. Could get them somewhere.

**[00:23:53] BB:** Oh really? Ooh, do describe. I'm fascinated. And this is where I get all my intel on all things happening in the world basically doing this show. So do tell me.

**[00:24:03] BS:** So I think their biggest defense is that they think that the fraud claims are coming out of the fact that the company failed. But their biggest defense is that failure is not a crime. And that Elizabeth Holmes did not walk away say a billionaire and the investors walked away with nothing. It was like they kept employees on the payroll the entire time. Like no one other than the investors lost money, which is such a common thing in venture still. So that's kind of the defense of like how is this fraud if technically this company ended better than others? And it just failed. And failure isn't a crime, which is not changing my opinion on it based on some of the other facts that I've read, but definitely a compelling argument. I'll give them that.

**[00:24:50] BB:** Wow! Wow! That's bold, because, yeah, failure isn't a crime, but lying is. That's the problem. I think they're maybe confusing the two. Oh, fascinating. Okay. Anything else, listening, watching, reading?

**[00:25:06] BS:** I just started last night. So I've only watched part of the first episode, but I'm really excited about. It's a documentary series on that clothing multi-level marketing scheme LuLaRoe.

**[00:25:19] BB:** Oh! What's it called? What's it called? I'm always looking for good docu-series.

**[00:25:22] BS:** It's called Lula Rich. It's on Amazon Prime.

**[00:25:25] BB:** Okay. Rich? Okay. Lula Rich. Oh, here it is. Oh! Oh my! Oh god! Ooh, ninety-six percent like this TV show. Okay, I got to put it down. We'll mark it down.

**[00:25:37] BS:** No. It's really good, because I love reading about – I've read a million like deep dives into it and how the company is kind of internally a disaster and things like that. And I'm just so fascinated by how these things kind of like keep crawling along. Like I sell on Poshmark. That stuff is everywhere. So everywhere.

**[00:25:57] BB:** Yes. It's number one in the US right now as of this recording. Wow! It's a four-part docu-series. That chronicle is the unraveling of Lulu Roe. Oh my gosh! Known for their buttery soft leggings, the infamous multi-level marketing company went viral promising young mothers a work from home salvation. Wow! Ooh! I can't wait. I can't wait. See? This is why I love doing the show. I learn all these things that are just rich. Ugh! I can't wait.

**[00:26:26] BS:** Yeah, I literally saw a tweet about it yesterday and I was like, "Yeah, I'm going to watch that today. That sounds amazing."

**[00:26:32] BB:** I love it. Oh, that's a good one. Thank you for that gem. Okay. Transitioning just a little bit, Becca. You have any thoughts on the future of journalism especially because you are rather new to journalism yourself?

**[00:26:47] BS:** If you'd asked me maybe a year ago I would say like newsletters and independent sort of spin-off, which a bunch of people have been doing over the last year, maybe the future. But I don't know. In the last year, I don't know if it was because of the pandemic or because of just things all kind of falling into place at the same time, but I've just seen so many media companies just get really innovative over the last year. And like the Defector is super fun to watch. Like their whole grassroots project after all quitting because they didn't like what the new management wanted them to do. And it just feels like there's a lot of life in the industry right now. So I'm pretty optimistic about the future that there's a bunch of people who are just passionate about what they're writing about and are

both either spinning off and creating their own publications in like a business model and a structure that really works for them as well as people who are trying to innovate from within their larger organizations. It just seems it's not stale. And I think maybe five years ago when I first started maybe interning in places, definitely, the industry felt a little stale. But I don't feel that way anymore.

**[00:27:53] BB:** I agree with that. And there's nothing like that turning point. And I don't know where it is. And I'm in a Ph.D. program so I'm thinking about like, "Where is this on the change curve of innovation?" I don't know, but haven't gotten to that. But where you go from like fear and panicking and, "Oh, doomsday," which I kind of feel is like the climate change thing. To shifting to like, "Okay. Let's try some things out. Let's figure things out. Let's work together. And throw some things on the wall. See what is working." There're so many outlets now. I'm thinking of like protocol, for example, that you wouldn't even think would be flourishing and doing well in its form and function. It's amazing.

**[00:28:29] BS:** No. That's how I feel about the Defector. It's like I don't even think they have any investors. And they've just like built it. They have subscribers. They knew they would get the following if they kept writing the content they were and they just have continuously pulled it out. And then their content, especially their sports content, it's unmatched. It's awesome. It's funny. It's fresh. And it's still like what you're looking for from like sports coverage.

**[00:28:52] BB:** Okay, Ms. Becca, we have now our mad lib, which is so fun. All right, Becca. First thing that we have, an emotion.

**[00:29:02] BS:** Frustrated.

**[00:29:03] BB:** Okay. Frustrated. An adjective.

**[00:29:07] BS:** Purple.

**[00:29:08] BB:** Purple. Great. Another adjective.

[00:29:12] **BS:** Lively.

[00:29:14] **BB:** Lively. A greeting or any sort.

[00:29:21] **BS:** Top of the morning. Why not?

[00:29:24] **BB:** Top of the morning. Has anyone actually sent that you in a pitch?

[00:29:28] **BS:** Um, yeah, I think so. I don't hate.

[00:29:31] **BB:** It's jovial. I like it. I might use that myself. What about a verb?

[00:29:38] **BS:** Jumping.

[00:29:40] **BB:** Jumping. A noun.

[00:29:44] **BS:** School.

[00:29:45] **BB:** School. An adjective.

[00:29:50] **BS:** It's weird, I can't think of something. Nice.

[00:29:54] **BB:** Nice. A cringe-worthy PR term or phrase, like just following up for the fifth time.

[00:30:01] **BS:** E-meet you.

[00:30:03] **BB:** Oh, e-meet you. Although I think I kind of said – What did I say? I was like, “Oh, it's nice to audio meet you.” I don't know what I even used. We'll just keep going. Part of a pitch.

[00:30:17] **BS:** Oh, the part where they say the company is the first, the best, the only.

[00:30:21] **BB:** Okay. The best, the first, the biggest, the most disruptive. Don't forget disruptive. Length of time.

[00:30:33] **BS:** Two hours.

[00:30:35] **BB:** Two hours. The name of a real person.

[00:30:38] **BS:** Bethenny Frankel.

[00:30:40] **BB:** Bethenny Frankel Are you a fan?

[00:30:41] **BS:** Oh, yes.

[00:30:43] **BB:** Oh, yes. Okay. Is she's still in New York? Where does she live these days?

[00:30:46] **BS:** I think so. Yeah, I've been watching old episodes of Real Housewives this week. So it's on my mind.

[00:30:53] **BB:** You know, I will watch really any show that has New York scenes just so I can live my New York life, which was happening pre-pandemic. And I just miss now a lot. So I get it. I totally get it. Okay. And then an emotion.

[00:31:10] **BS:** Sad.

[00:31:10] **BB:** Sad. All right, here we are Becca. Are you ready? When I think of the future of journalism, I feel frustrated. The pitches I receive have gone from purple to lively. If I receive a pitch that starts with top of the morning, I jump on it. When I write stories on schools, I get very nice. My favorite pitches include e-meet you and say the first best most disruptive, etc. I normally take around two hours to respond to my emails, but if it's Bethenny Frankel, I will respond immediately. If you do get a response back from me, you should know that I'm very sad for you.

Thank you for this. I feel that that was somewhat accurate. How do you feel?

[00:31:49] **BS:** That's definitely accurate. I would respond to Bethenny Frankel right away. So, very accurate.

[00:31:54] **BB:** Yes. I love it. Ah! Well, thank you so much, Becca, for all the insights and playing with us and giving me a really good docu-series to watch. I cannot wait. I'm going to start probably tonight.

[00:32:05] **BS:** Oh perfect.

[00:32:07] **BB:** Oh my gosh.

[00:32:07] **BS:** My pleasure.

[00:32:07] **BB:** Oh, I can't wait. Thanks again.

[00:32:10] **BS:** Oh, thank you.

[OUTRO]

[00:32:13] **ANNOUNCER:** Thanks for joining us on this week's episode of Coffee with a Journalist, featuring Alex Knapp from Forbes. If you enjoy listening to our show, make sure to subscribe on iTunes, Spotify, Google Podcasts, and anywhere else you listen to podcasts. And if you have a moment, please leave us a review to share your thoughts about the show and today's guests. To learn more about the latest tools on OnePitch, and to subscribe to our weekly podcast newsletter, head to our website at [onepitch.co](http://onepitch.co). We'll see you all next week with a brand new guest and even more insights about the journalists you want to learn more about. Until then, start great stories.

[END]