Public Sector Future podcast – Episode 13 – Inspire: Best.Projects

**Talent:**

**1.** **Olivia Neal [host]**

**2.** **Andre Correr [guest] \*Strong Brazilian accent**

[Music]

**OLIVIAL NEAL:**Hello and welcome to *Public Sector Future*. This is a show for anyone who cares about using digital approaches in the public sector to deliver better outcomes.

I’m your host Olivia Neal, and together we will explore stories from around the world, where public servants have been successful at driving change. And we meet the people behind them, their first-hand experiences, and lessons learned. Throughout the series we will discuss technology and trends, as well the cultural aspects of change.

Today, in the third of three special episodes we’re exploring the work of some of the people and teams instrumental in helping Public Sector organizations deliver. Three of Microsoft’s global network of partners who work with Public Sector organisations have been recognized as Microsoft Partners of the Year for their work with Education, Government, and Defence.

Today we’re going to be exploring the work of the Government partner winner, **Best.Projects**, who were recognized for their innovative work over the past year to deliver food to vulnerable communities in Sao Paulo during the global pandemic.

I’m joined today from Brazil by Andre Correr, one of the project leaders from Best.Projects.

Welcome to the show, and thank you Andre for joining me today.

**ANDRE CORRER:** Yeah.

**OLIVIA NEAL:**Okay, well, so, maybe we could just start off with a little bit about you and your role. I think that you used to work in the Sao Paulo government before you moved to Best.Projects. Did that help you understand and work with them?

**ANDRE CORRER:**Yeah. Best.Projects has a tradition to have collaborators come from government because we work with government, and we need this experience and this knowhow

**OLIVIA NEAL:**That makes a lot of sense, and I think that’s a great approach to have people who have worked in government to come into the company to help you meet their objectives. Looking at this project in particular working with the Secretariat for Social Development to offer free meals to homeless people, when the team at Best.Projects started to get involved with this, what was the challenge that the government were hoping to address? What was the problem that you were looking to solve?

**ANDRE CORRER:**So, there is many challenges. In this solution in particular, the pandemic context the need for additional transformation in the public sector has increased exponentially.

The social area~~?~~ was one of the most affected in countries like Brazil. This is true – the social area was too impacted. So, the project was born from this need and the lockdown caused by pandemic, homeless people had less food access and alternatives to (inaudible) meet their meals and receive support from population, ~~(~~ONGs~~?)~~ and assistance programs. It was a real big challenge in our country in this period.

**OLIVIA NEAL:**That pandemic context was really making people who were already in a vulnerable situation even more vulnerable in lots of ways.

**ANDRE CORRER:**Yeah.

**OLIVIA NEAL:**And the government were looking to make that situation better and help people who were being disadvantaged?

**ANDRE CORRER:**Exactly. Because of the pandemic, the Sao Paulo government had to create emergency actions to support this population. And this is how the project was born.

And then this project distributed three free meals daily to 25,000 people. This is a huge impact in their lives and in human rights.

**OLIVIA NEAL:**I think that the impact is amazing and something which had a real difference on people’s lives. What was the role that your team and that technology played in getting to these outcomes and making this happen?

**ANDRE CORRER:**To face this challenge, Microsoft Best.Projects and Sao Paulo government have joined forces in a partnership to implement solution. Microsoft give us support donation-wise and invest in solution and Best.Projects invested in development and support of this initiative

We could make the difference and implement this policy. We had to work several actors,

We need active in three ways. The first one, we need dedicate and registrate these homeless people. And government made partnerships with municipalities that identify the people registered and we use the PowerApps application to collect the basic data of these people.

The second way we need to develop a QR code card. Because we’re thinking in several modes to identify this population there are some difficulties involved in their identification. So, we develop QR code cards to access the restaurants

And the third way we provide permanent management informations using public resources we need to control the informations entered with the platform responsible for controlling QR code cards, people registered database, and managing meals distributed by restaurants.

So, it was several actors involved.

**OLIVIA NEAL:**Okay, fantastic. So, there were three elements of what you did. There was the identification of the people that needed the support and the registration of them. Then, you were working with the outreach officials to do that part. Then, the issuing of the QR codes, which individual people who were eligible for the support held, and then the management of the resources and understanding where those had gone and being able to track those.

So, it sounds like there were a lot of complex elements. I imagine this was in a very short time frame as well.

**ANDRE CORRER:**Yeah. But Microsoft technologies delivered to the project velocity, consistency, and organization. Tools such as PowerApps, Power Automate, and Dynamics 365 provided a fast and effective response to the need that required urgency in automation, integration, and process control.

So, we could have this velocity, delivering the solution in basically three weeks. So, really fast.

**OLIVIA NEAL:**Wow. In three weeks, that’s amazing. Congratulations. (Laughter.)

**ANDRE CORRER:**Thank you.

**OLIVIA NEAL:**And did you get any feedback from any of the people who were the end users of this either from the people in government who were doing the identification and the registration or from the homeless people who were being given the QR codes and accessing the free food? Was there any feedback that those people gave that helped you understand whether the project was going well, whether it was successful?

**ANDRE CORRER:**Yeah. The design of the solution was agile, and the solution was very useful and friendly with the people who need to apply this on streets. We received many feedbacks of users and leaders. So, all people demonstrated that the project was a success

The repercussion where the need in Brazil, it was so great, so this makes this success. And contribute to feed homeless people is a success by itself.

**OLIVIA NEAL:**Absolutely. I think that must be the biggest measure of success, this project that you supported, and you ran got food to how many thousand people did you say?

**ANDRE CORRER:**25,000 people.

**OLIVIA NEAL:**Wow.

**ANDRE CORRER:**Yeah, so, we estimated that they delivered 75,000 meals a day.

**OLIVIA NEAL:**That’s fantastic. I know that this is the type of challenge that people in other countries and other cities are also trying to address, both in the pandemic and then also after the pandemic as well,

Is there any advice that you would have for other people – any lessons for other people who are doing similar types of projects? Anything that they could learn from your experiences?

**ANDRE CORRER:**Yeah, the first thing that allowed the project to be possible. It’s professionals who have soft skills related to the challenge proposed in the public sector – work hard, deal with political questions, and resilience, be flexible with scope and at the same time guide the projects. Because the government sometimes doesn’t know what its real needs – the government sometimes doesn’t know. So, we need to guide the projects sometimes.

We need be aligned with all levels in government and the most important is the focus on citizens on improving public services, create public policies

**OLIVIA NEAL:** I really like those lessons that you’ve drawn out there, because I think for public servants in other countries listening to what you’ve said there, hearing how important it is for them when they’re working with companies like Best.Projects to think about the flexibility and the agility that they need to have in terms of governing projects like this. Because, exactly as you said, while you think you may know the need at the beginning of a project, sometimes what we learn as we go through them changes the outcomes that we’re looking for and that flexibility is really important.

I love that focus that you have on really driving forward what is  the focus on the citizens’ lives? What is the impact that any of these projects have on people? And how do you keep that activity focused on the user needs? So, I think those are really fantastic lessons.

**ANDRE CORRER:**Yes. We need to focus on citizens because they are our customer, in the end of the – the history. I think that know citizens and your needs (?)to support the government and its mission to guarantee citizenship rights to the populations is the most important thing.

When we work with passion, we can change our community, our reality, and consequently, the world.

**OLIVIA NEAL:**I think working with passion is a great note to finish it on. Thank you so much. Thank you for doing this. And thank you for doing it in English. I can only imagine how hard that is. I certainly wouldn’t want to be trying to do this in a second language, so thank you.

**ANDRE CORRER:**Thanks for the chance to participate on this podcast. I really appreciate this opportunity and sorry about the English, but we make it possible. ~~.~~(Laughter.)

[Music]

**OLIVIA NEAL:**Thank you to our guest, Andre Correr, and thank you for joining me today on *Public Sector Future*.

Our goal is for you to learn something new and be inspired to think differently about your journeys. If you enjoyed today’s episode and want to help others find it, please share, rate and review the show -- it *really does*help people find new shows like this one.

Check out our show page for links to all of what was discussed today and visit the Public Sector Center of Expertise at wwps.microsoft.com.

And please do reach out, send your questions and feedback. You can find me on Twitter at [@LivNeal] or on LinkedIn, or you can email us at ask-ps@microsoft.com

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