DOING THE OPPOSITE

PROPTECH CONNECT

Jeff Dewing:
Hi and welcome to Doing the Opposite: Business Disruptors - the podcast where you get to meet leaders who have swum against the tide, thrown out the rule book and changed the way their sector does business for good. I'm Jeff Dewing and I'm founder and Chief Exec of Cloud, a business where we thrive on taking risks so our clients don't have to. This episode marks the start of a new mini-series of Doing the Opposite, in collaboration with PropTech Connect, Europe's Largest PropTech event, which hosts more than 6,000 global leaders across the real estate sector.

Today, you're going to meet JP Johnson, a Senior Energy Consultant at Symphony Energy, a company that provides innovative technology to decarbonise commercial buildings and optimise energy performance in the built environment. JP is committed to making offices, hotels, hospitals, universities into smarter, more sustainable and cost-effective spaces and driving positive change for the planet.

JP, welcome!

JP Johnson
Thanks very much, Jeff, delighted to be here!

Jeff Dewing:
And, of course, you're currently in Dublin, Ireland, one of my favourite places. I've got lots of friends in Dublin, good, and of course, we love a proper Guinness right? Especially when it's over there, because it's proper Guinness, not the pretend stuff!

So listen. Can you just tell me a bit about your journey into energy and sustainability? You know what? What drew you into this space?

JP Johnson:
So my background is an engineer, and the founders of the company are good friends of mine, and they ended up with a solution that was just so attractive that when the opportunity arose for me to come in with them, it was a no-brainer for me! My background actually is working in IT companies: 20 years between Microsoft and Oracle and the opportunity to come in with these guys. They are truly disruptive and the company has been finding ways of decarbonizing buildings that just are… they're actually hard to believe. It's been such amazing results.

Jeff Dewing:
Oh, that's fantastic. I did actually have a good old look around the website, so I've got some curious questions to go a bit further in.

What is the mission, would you say, behind Symphony Energy? How does it tie into the push for net zero?

JP Johnson:
So what Symphony Energy identified 20 years ago is that the performance gap in between how a building is designed and expected to perform for energy consumption, that performance gap, which is there in virtually every single building and surveys are saying it's up to three times more energy consumed in buildings than the design anticipates it's a real issue. That performance gap can be closed and the company's been closing it for 20 years, First of all in a way that wasn't that scalable, just using the know-how of the engineers in the company, and then in the last three years, we found a way of making it scalable and we also invented a few more really disruptive ways of reducing energy consumption and commercial buildings.

Jeff Dewing:
Great! Interesting.

I'm also an engineer. I have been since I left school and I love engineering, especially mechanical. But the piece that is a real issue for me, being in this industry for 40-odd years, is - what are some of the challenges that you've actually faced or the company has faced Symphony has faced, trying to innovate in a historically really slow-moving industry of real estate.

JP Johnson:
It is challenging and, again, coming from an IT background, you know in the IT companies they are, their area of risk is not being innovative, whereas in real estate, yeah, they're risk averse and new innovation. They really wait until the early adopters have smashed or succeeded. And so we're certainly on the lookout for early adopter type aggressive companies, and we found some, and so that's great for us.

So that's been the constant challenge. You know a new company coming out and saying 'we can do something that no one else can do' in a risk averse uh industry. Yeah, that's a challenge and you just have to be patient. You keep at it. You get case studies, you win awards, you meet people, they get to see that you're not a bullshitter, and you continually share your USP and if it's something that's attractive, great. If it not attractive, it'll be attractive some way down the road and let's just keep chatting.

Jeff Dewing:
That's music to my ears, because the reality is the sort of people we are and organizations we are. We have to search for early adopters, which, by default, narrows the market. And, of course, if you are claiming what appears to be magical figures, most people will say it sounds too good to be true, which means it probably isn't true, and I think that's that negative approach to life rather than the curiosity to understand 'well, how are you actually doing it' is frustrating, not just for us trying to help people, but for those people thinking why do you not want to be helped us? And it does get a bit crazy sometimes.

How do you see PropTech, the property technology environment reshaping the real estate sector, especially when it comes to driving sustainability?

JP Johnson:
well at this stage for commercial buildings, particularly offices and multi-use type of buildings, we actually already have the tech to achieve net-zero. Between really good lighting, great HVAC equipment, HVAC optimization that companies like ourselves can bring and then fabric that really aids a building be efficient and avoids just insulation and that type of thing. We're actually there!

So we need to pull it all together. We need a few case studies of buildings that are… not EPC. EPC promises so much and really what you've got is an impressive asset but you don't have net zero, so you've got to get net-zero examples to demonstrate that it's possible. And we're there.

So PropTech actually is there. There will be better improved PropTech as time goes on, but actually there's enough there if you tap into the right stuff.

Jeff Dewing:
Well, it's really interesting because I'm opening the event with a keynote on the Wednesday and the one thing I'm saying is almost exactly what you just said. 'Guys, it's already here. We just have to join the dots', right? No one's joining the dots, and that's the key now. If we can join the dots, then we will have the biggest transformation we've ever seen, and that's our biggest challenge.

Of all the things that you're doing, is there one thing within your innovation spectrum that is really exciting? Really getting like punching yeah. Is there something specific, that sort of gets you thinking 'my god, this is really game-changing'?

JP Johnson:
I guess the most exciting thing is taking buildings to 2050. So we've done that on offices, on the landlord side, the tenant side, of course, is another piece of the overall energy consumption, but we've actually got buildings to 2050. Short of a heat pump, so when they put in the heat pump, they'll cross that line. That's very exciting!

The other thing that's really exciting is we've always said we want to make this scalable, and so we've got an awful lot of IP in the heads of the founders, and so we've always known yeah, this is scalable, we will get this IP into new engineers and we'll be able to grow the company. But we've actually done it this year for the first time, we brought in some young engineers, taught them the steps, they applied the steps and we're nailing it now on a new project. So yeah - the proof of the pudding is in the eating. So here we are we've actually scaled, passed on the IP to young people who are, who are doing a really good job. So that's very exciting as well.

Jeff Dewing:
Brilliant.

So what about, where do you see the biggest opportunity if you ignore early adopters cause, that's a given. But where do you see the biggest opportunity for PropTech to sort of accelerate this transition to net zero buildings?

JP Johnson:
The biggest opportunity. You know that's the funniest thing. There are two sources of opportunity AI everybody knows AI, so you know you didn't even have to feed that to me. We all know that AI is presenting us with some extraordinary opportunities and for sure it's going to accelerate innovation, that is for sure. Whether AI itself delivers innovation, of course that remains to be seen and it's maybe Hollywood stuff if that happens. But for sure AI is a great opportunity for us to move things faster, cheaper and probably get better solutions quicker, so that's for sure. Another area of opportunity which I'm really, really impressed with you know it's a while since I got my university degree Back in the day. You know the MEC, ELEC, Chem, Civil engineering degrees were pretty, I guess looking at it in hindsight, pretty limited.

But now the number of sustainability energy engineers, all these great, great focused qualifications that young people can come out with. Third-level institutions are really agile and adjusting to the

need and delivering on the need and delivering latest thinking to young people coming out. So I see that as a huge opportunity as well. The other thing I see as an opportunity for our company is ESG has lost some of the honeymoon. It has to deliver return on investment. It's no longer just about idealistic hopes to save the planet. It's got to also deliver financially. And so for me I mean our approach, our business approach is we guarantee a return on investment. We don't actually have a price as such. We say 'whatever we save in a year, you're guaranteed a five-year payback because you just pay us five times what you actually save'.

So for us, the higher energy prices go, the more attractive that proposition is. There was a time when building and company owners would just say 'listen, HR costs are really really important for us. Marketing costs are really really important for us. Operational costs yeah, they're there, but they're not really important. But as time goes on and prices go up, that's an opportunity. So you know, even wars, horrible as they are, are focusing their mind on energy security, energy access and the need to find alternatives that are still a sensible price. But there's no avoiding energy prices are going to go up. That's an opportunity for companies that reduce consumption.

Jeff Dewing:
Of course, and I guess I mean our model is almost identical, because our model, our route to market is via energy, because that's where the biggest wastage takes place. So that's how we obviously get into the market in that regard. And then we offer loads of other facilities after that. But what's interesting is in the UK that's quite easy because energy costs are high. We've also got offices in Singapore and in Barcelona in Spain, and we've also got our kit in the Netherlands and in the US. Their energy costs are half our costs! So therefore ROI is so much more difficult. Um, so it's interesting how things are going to change, as you say. You know, war comes along, the world changes, right? And coming back to what you're saying before - I'm very passionate about ESG. I didn't used to be, but I am now because I understand it. But I also remember the EPC certificate, which used to be a valuable document. Now it's something that your kids write out for you. You stick it on the fridge and you then go and sell it for 20 quid when it used to be 1,000 pounds to do a proper energy performance. But now it's become a commodity and it has no value and you actually don't believe what it says.

And then you had the TM44s for air conditioning. And again the same thing. It used to be quite expensive to get a TM44 because it was a thorough, intrusive process. Now, give me 30 quid, I'll give you a TM44. So yeah, and we're on the same similar journey for for ESG, if we're not careful.

ESG should just be a, a business as usual process that we all do for, for moral reasons and for profitability reasons, because if you've got a great ESG policy, it is profit generating. You're reducing your carbon footprint, you're reducing your Scope 3. You're doing all sorts of stuff. So it's about embedding it as a normal, everyday business as usual. But it's interesting.

But anyway, listen. The next thing I want to talk to you about is you recently wrote about the latest real estate environment benchmark report and your frustration that the report outlined the very weak correlation between the model of energy performance of an office, based on its EPC, and its actual performance in use. Now, you touched on that a bit earlier. But you said you know, if we focused on the wrong deliverables, we're not going to get to net zero, which is a pretty obvious statement. But the reality is, I agree with you wholeheartedly because you know a architectural design or refit of a building has all of its principles in place to deliver. The reality is it always, always, never, meets those numbers. Because I'm an engineer, I've been involved in controls and BMSs all my life and you install a million pound BMS. It looks fantastic, you've got these great graphics and fans turning and all sorts of stuff. You go back four months later and everything's turned to hand. Yeah, it's just, it's a nonsense. And you think why are we getting this so wrong?

How do you think, based upon that sort of little diatribe, referring to your views on the report, how do you think we can flip the script on this?

JP Johnson:
Well so, the EPC being the thing that is important, the reality is, for real estate companies, tenants look to the EPC. Tenants pay rent for an A-rated building. They don't pay rent for a building that's got low carbon emissions, strictly speaking, they pay rent for a building that they're conditioned now to anticipate delivers low carbon emissions. So that's the reality of the market. Slowly but surely, that will change. And you see GRESB and you see CRREM, you see NABERS, you see these operational energy in-use metrics becoming more and more recognized, especially by investors. And so, over time, the EPC either will step up and start to match the reality or it will become, as you say, a commoditized irrelevance. But until then, we need to recognise that real estate companies need to make money and they're not going to make money if they don't have tenants, and they won't have tenants if they aren't delivering what tenants are looking for. So that's a challenge and there's a gradual, especially the UK, I have to say. You know, I'm in Ireland, I'm, I'm an EU observer, in a way, to what's going on in the UK. But the traction for for NABORS, the new, well previous know the UK GBC LETI Targets, now the new UK Low Carbon Building Standard they're all great trends, you know. I heartily applaud them, love to see them getting some traction beyond the British Isles. But so it's. There's definitely a move in the right direction.

JP Johnson:
Over time It'll probably be a bit late. There'll be a big panic for 2030, as people realize. ‘Gee, you know we've spent all this money on improved EPCs but we're just not getting national reduction in carbon emissions’.

So that's the reality. Of course, beat the drum, but from our own perspective and from so many other company perspectives, reduced carbon emissions reduces costs. It's a pretty attractive UPC. You know you're going to hit some good metrics in your cram and your grasp, but you're also going to cut your costs. Now your tenants probably don't care too much about the costs, but owner-occupiers, that's a really attractive UPC. For the landlord's tenant side of things, it's more of a cooperative conversation, but it's also an attractive conversation.

JP Johnson:
The other thing as well is if you can say to people “look, you don't have to rip out the tech in your building, that's right there. You can optimise it”. I mean, we're going in, we're going into buildings. We never get low hanging fruit, let me add, because if you're paid for savings, people go ‘OK, yeah, that sounds good, but first of all, we'll get the easy stuff ourselves. We're not handing you money, that's easy’. So we only go into good buildings. We've gone into a university building that was bang on the curve for its 2030 target. Bang on! And by optimizing its HVAC, we reduced total building consumption by 47%. Now that's attractive for owner-occupiers! 47% reduction in your utility bills per year! So that argument is persuasive. And the more case studies you have, the more word of mouth that you have. Of course, you're going to get momentum.

Jeff Dewing:
Of course you are. So, listen, one of the things that we're very much a data-driven organisation, but one of the frustrations I've got is the noise surrounding the use of data. The amount of times I've heard people say - very sensible and very intelligent people in debates and roundtables - they say we need more data points. I'm sitting there going, ‘no, we don't, we need less. What we need is insight’. Right? We all think that we need all this data so that we can go and do a pivot table on an Excel spreadsheet and do stuff ourselves. AI, machine learning, deep learning, large language... We now

don't need. What we need is insight. Tell me what I need to know. Don't make me go out and look for it, because after time we don't know what we're looking for. So one of the things that I'm interested in we need more insight. How do you feel about that?

JP Johnson:
Oh, totally Totally! When we go into a building I mean a recent project we did we had access to 9,000 data points. We only needed about 800 to control the building. You know really, really well, and so of course you need data and you can't go into a building and really do what we do. For sure! You can't do it without the data. But you need access to the data and you need it correctly labelled. I mean, the amount of times we've gone into projects and gone 'okay, there's data, that's what it says, but I have no idea what that means'. So there's an awful lot of sifting through data so that you're using the right data points and that it's actually what you think it is, but without the data you can't do the project you know. So it's a kind of a you know there's no way around it.

Jeff Dewing:
No, but I think the key for me is that you need to establish the flow of data, but then you need AI and you need the technologies to give me the insight on that data and not to have an army of people trying to work out and then come up with 17 different answers. So I see what you're saying, of course, when you talk about it, because you're in the same type of area as us - you go in a distribution board, you're trying to identify AHUs, Chillers, VRV units, whatever and you switch off the three-phase VRV unit to find the other unit goes off. You're up against it straight away and you think 'wait a minute, these guys have had their energy certificates issued, they've done their EIC ERCs to look at all of the. But yeah, it's still wrong and it's been wrong for years'.

But these are challenges that we face. As you say, there needs to be a lot of cleansing, if you like, before we actually get into the real thing.

JP Johnson:
And let me add, where we can take the human out of it. So you're always going to have turnover in your facilities team. So you know, you're always going to have turnover in your facilities team. Some will be quite expert, some won't be so expert and they'll do quick fixes and the like. Far better to have I mean in our case you know algorithms that are running 24-7, producing optimised control commands. Facilities teams don't have to worry about whether they know exactly how to manage a pump or whatever. They'll get still hot & cold calls, but they'll get way, way less and they'll find it easier to fix them. So, yeah, where you can automate and let facilities teams work on stuff that automation can't do, x

Jeff Dewing:
The second, that you are sending commands to instruct or to change or to move a state brings massive challenges for institutions on "you're not touching my equipment unless everything is within my own safe environment, because the risk of cybersecurity and people switching stuff on that shouldn't be switching stuff on. Blah, blah, blah". How have you overcome that?

JP Johnson:
Well, we basically work with the client in every case. So, obviously, well, we didn't specifically say it, but our solution is delivered on the cloud, so we need internet access in order to make changes, provide visualisations for the facilities team. So that's no small thing. We've gone into some companies that are hyper secure, conscious about and to have your HVAC system on your internal internet system. It's actually a bad idea, but it does happen in a number of companies, and so we would go in. We've even had a situation where we were issued equipment by the company so that

we ran everything on their equipment so that it's behind their firewall, but it's their equipment and we're authorized users of it. So we find ways. We absolutely know that's an issue.

And then the other issue, of course, is the facilities team. They go ‘sorry, we're responsible for this. We're the ones who get the phone call if something goes wrong, and yet you're taken over entirely?!’. For facilities managers. They have to have confidence that what you're doing isn't going to come around and bite them in the butt afterwards. They have to know that you're improving their situation, making life easier for them, and that everything's safe. Same with the IT people they don't want to get into serious trouble with their superiors because they let something in that they should have been very diligent about, and we know that, and so we work with them on both counts, and we've done it. We've got plenty of examples about how we follow protocols for both concerns, for both concerns.

Jeff Dewing:
It's interesting because we face the same challenges. Except I get really frustrated because we're saying to the FM teams exactly that and they're saying ‘no, yeah, we want it, we want it, don't worry, we'll pressure the IT team’. It then gets escalated to the C-suite who say ‘you do not override IT, they are not using our Wi-Fi network. If you want to get near it, you have to go into 4g routers, blah, blah, blah, blah’, where the IT team, despite what incredible opportunities it brings the client and the business and the FM teams, they're still shut down. One of one of our biggest clients is the probably the largest IT provider in the world with their head offices in Singapore. It took us nearly two years to get their IT team to…

So it's one of those things that says it's another barrier. It's another reason why things are moving so slowly.

So many sectors, or many people in our sector certainly, still see net zero as a cost right we've talked about, we've touched on this a little while ago rather than an investment. So how do we, how do we change the mindset? How do we get people to realize that, unless you're suggesting it's only through the benefit of return on investment?

JP Johnson:
That's the strongest argument. Return on investment, there's no doubt about it. There's more, of course - increase on asset value. You get your building CREM-aligned, I think is the term that's used. Now you get your building CREM-aligned, it becomes a much more valuable building. Now if you're not planning to sell, then you don't care about that. But a lot of real estate companies do want their assets to increase in value for maybe exiting down the road. So there's that.

The other one that's really quite big from our perspective is if you reduce the heating and cooling load on a HVAC system, then the life of that HVAC system is extended. The amount of maintenance is reduced, so maintenance costs and replacement costs are reduced. We don't price that into our fee, but there's financial advantages all over the place where you've got efficiencies and elimination of waste. So CFOs may well be making the decision for sustainability initiatives more than the CSO, because they'll want... “We need to cut our costs, we need to cut our operational costs”. In fact, it's the CFO who now has to do the sustainability reporting alongside the financial reporting. And so you're hitting good metrics, you're cutting costs and it makes sense for them.

But if it's not a three to five year payback just at the moment, three to five year payback. I've been told over over. That's kind of you know, the one that will get your attention! If you're saying eight to fifteen year payback, it's yeah, it's not back of the queue but it's not that immediate.

JP Johnson:
That's a risk profile. Yeah, that's not an opportunity.

I want to throw in a curveball here, all right now to jp, right um only because it's my own experience and because my background is I'm a refrigeration, air conditioner, HVAC engineer, all my life. So I understand the intricacies of all of it. So here's a curve ball.

So you go into a building and one of those building measurements are this is what I've been spending on energy for the last year two years and you go great. So we've got some form of benchmark. You go into optimize to find that 40% of their equipment is non-operational and they didn't know it. So the first thing you gotta do is get it operational. And once you get it operational, you've just increased consumption.

JP Johnson:
Yeah, yeah, we really know HVAC. So you know, if we're prepping for a project, I think we'd identify what's operational, what's not operational. We have been in situations where we're doing a project and we're saying you know, 'you've been delivering really bad air quality for a long time, you've not pumped in enough air into the building. Now, if we're going to come in and deliver you an optimized HVAC system, it's going to be one that is safe for your employees. So sorry, you're going to have to pump more air in there' and we'll make that clear up front and we'll hopefully get that built into the benchmark as some kind of a manageable financial metric.

But you know what so far? So far, as I said before, we haven't been given any projects in shabby buildings because we get paid for savings and people don't want to give us easy savings. So so far, and also early adopters they're usually very good companies who've gone as far as they can go and they're going. We're not there yet. What else is out there? So I haven't faced that situation. But I'm pretty sure long before we would actually move forward in the project, we'd have well identified what's working and what's not working.

Jeff Dewing:
What do you think the elephant in the room is when it comes to PropTech? What aren't people talking about?

JP Johnson:
Well, the elephant in the room, as we've already talked about, for me is the EPC. It's really getting in the way of a good net zero journey. I mean it's important, it's a help. The better the asset, you know, the better the optimisation you can get from that asset. But you know, getting A-rated and thinking job done is like buying a Ferrari and thinking you'll get to work faster in rush hour. It's just, you know it's yeah, it's a great car, but you know there's more going on here. So that would be the elephant in the room for me. Everything else is just fairly common sales market challenges. There's a lot of nuance. It is a risk-averse industry. The margins are pretty small. Of course it's risk-averse. You make a mistake and you lose 2%. Well, you know you're in big trouble. You know 5% is nice, 3% isn't nice. So you need to be careful. You also don't want to be the idiot who did something that made things worse.

Jeff Dewing:
Well, I guess by the same token it's Einstein's theory that 'do you honestly think you can keep doing the same thing and expect a different result'? If you want a different result you've got to do something different, right? And we all just say, 'oh, there's no such thing as a free lunch', and the next morning we go 'where are we going for our free lunch'?

We just keep doing this. We're creatures of habit, aren't we? So if you could weigh a magic wand, if you had this beautiful Harry Potter wand right? And you could weigh this magic wand and just solve one of what you believe are the biggest challenges in the industry, what would it be?

JP Johnson:
Biggest challenge? Well, I've already said, you know, the tech is there. What pops into my head actually is public procurement is never good with innovation. Now, I realize this is pie in the sky, but if public procurement processes could tender in a way that innovation can be part of the tender definition, then you'd have a huge acceleration in the biggest clients on the planet.

So I guess if I could wave magic wand, that would be it. You know, I get the challenges that they have. Of course I do. You're far too polite, but if that's not a result, I mean. So, for example, public buildings have more aggressive targets than private buildings and yet they're less in their procurement processes, they're less able to achieve those targets because, absolutely, it does need innovation, it does need new, it does need different to be achieved. So that's the thing that pops into my head at the moment. And we don't even touch public at the moment because we'd be wasting our time.

Jeff Dewing:
It's banging your head against the wall, isn't it? And I think one of the things that every party has said in a political arena is that there are huge areas we need to learn from the private sector, but they create their own barriers, and that's the challenge, right?

So, looking ahead, what gives you the most optimism about the path to net zero? I mean, you're obviously excited about what you're doing, but what do you think gives you the most optimism on our journey? Where we are on that journey, the speed of the journey. Has the train even left the station?

JP Johnson:
I guess it's those two things I mentioned earlier that excite me AI, possibilities of ai for accelerating innovation, and the number of young people who are coming out with relevant qualification. You know really… I mean they don't have experience but they sure know stuff, and this has been a pretty rapid turnaround for an industry that's around for thousands of years, this whole sustainability focus.

So we need these new young quite motivated. I mean, it's their planet... So they're coming out with really good qualifications, really good motivation, guided by those ahead of them in the industry, to enable, to give access, to really help them hit the ground running. I think there's great opportunities there.

Jeff Dewing:
Good, I agree, and I think it's another love of saying. I love when you address any audience that are into tech and innovation, and of course you've got the youngsters coming through and of course you've got us oldies as well. And one of the biggest questions you hear from those people that are perhaps not familiar with I don't want to sound condescending, but not familiar with the power of AI and large language and they'll say will AI replace me? And I love to say ‘no, ai will never replace you, but somebody using AI will’. So you need to be on the journey right?

So, switching away from your speciality of energy optimization, I'm now going to ask you the final question as we wrap up, which is really going to hopefully jump into you as an individual what one piece of advice would you give um, an executive or an entrepreneur who sees a new way of

approaching their business or a new way of solving a problem, that is nervous about becoming a disruptor? What advice would you give?

JP Johnson:
They have an idea, it's because they're good at what they do. Of course, they're not going to know every single thing about starting a business or bringing a product to market or anything like that, but they have an idea and it's just a question of perseverance. Don't try and do it by yourself, but do persevere! Every, every challenge is an opportunity. Every setback is an opportunity. If you are finding setbacks, or others, and if you can handle those setbacks better than others, you're going to do well. But you have an idea. That means you know what you're about. You're smart, you're an opportunist, you're an entrepreneur. Give it a go.

Jeff Dewing:
Yeah, yeah, yeah, absolutely. I think somebody asked me that question a couple of years ago on a podcast. They said what one piece of advice would you give? I said go and buy a pair of Nike trainers. They said why is that? I said because the logo is Just Do it.

JP Johnson:
Yeah, yeah, that's it. Yeah, give it a go !

Jeff Dewing:
JP It's been fantastic talking to you. I can't please come and see us on our stand. We're on the ground floor, our product is mindset, so it'd be great to catch up on a stand and chew the fat and maybe have a beer, yeah, when it's appropriately timed to do so not 11 o'clock in, but yeah, it'd be great to catch up and meet face to face, and I really appreciate the time you've taken to to come and talk to me today so it's fantastic, thank you!

JP Johnson:
My pleasure, Jeff, thank you very much!

Jeff Dewing:
Oh, what a great conversation that was with JP and for taking the time to talk to me today. A couple of things I really I, I guess linked on to was something that I'm passionate about and he clearly was passionate about, and that is the validity of Energy Performance Certificates. Now, we all know we need them. We all know we're trying to give tenants A-ratings, but do we actually believe that it's an A rating and when do we actually understand that it delivered an A rating outcome, as opposed to us just living off the fact we got this certificate? And that's not to poo-poo EPCs as a principle, it's just to recognise that maybe we're getting some stuff wrong, maybe we need to focus more on output rather than input.

And, of course, the challenges that we face when we're trying to help industries improve and get better and get faster and innovate. Yet we still hit some of these incredible barriers about joining an organisation's network or using an organisation's network when all we're trying to do is give them information that will elevate what they're trying to do. But there seems to be all these what we would class as unnecessary barriers. So it is one of the challenges that innovators face, and certainly tech innovators, because we need the internet, we need the cloud. That's how we do our magic and we just got to get people to realise, organisations to realise that they need to facilitate that and work with us, as opposed to sometimes not everybody but sometimes against us.

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