Bobby Harper

Email: *bharper85@gmail.com* **LinkedIn***: linkedin.com/in/bharp85* **Phone:** *(541) 221-4134*

Network Engineer | Systems Architect | Cybersecurity Analyst

Informational Interview

CS 206: Co-Op Education: CIT Seminar W26

Professor Gerald Meenaghan

Reflections on Informational Interview with Ransom Briggs, owner of 2nd Chance PC.

2/19/2026

My informational interview was with Ransom Briggs, the owner of 2nd Chance PC in Creswell Oregon. 2nd Chance PC is a managed service provider that focuses on business-to-business services but also has a store front office where they handle other customers and aid in things like phone restoration, computer services and other I.T. related services. After some time of correspondence via e-mail with Ransom, we were able to meet up on February 2nd, 2026, at 5:30pm at their Creswell location. He was very polite, pleasant, energetic and helpful with the interview and we spent about 30 minutes discussing his role in the company and the company's role in the business space.

Ransom was able to shed some light on his role as the co-owner and operator, along with his wife Kelly Briggs, of the company. He explained that this was his second MSP as he had previously owned his own company in California and said that is where the name '2nd Chance PC' came from. With a love of music and computers, he shared his experiences of entering the technology market with me; explaining how he had spent some time in corporate roles honing his clear natural love and talent for all things computer related. During the interview, I must admit that I forgot that I was there for school at one point because the interaction was so pleasant. Ransom shared several of his current passion projects with me and explained some of the things that he was working on and how the day-to-day operations worked to an extent. He shared a lot about his background, how he came to own an MSP in Creswell, his love and talent in music and insights about how the industry is growing.

When asked about the challenges that a small MSP faces today, he was very upfront and direct. One of the largest hurdles he currently faces is finding reliable, passionate people in the technology industry to help and aid in his vision and planned growth for the company. Another thing he mentioned was something I feel may be the bane of all small businesses, accounting and the woes that come with it.

One of the topics that interested me the most, focusing on the networking side, was what are some of the most common network issues that his clients face. He shared that a lot of their issues were basic connectivity problems that focused on Wi-Fi and printers. While questions about endpoint detection and remediation or vendor support and help desk did not specifically get asked, through his conversation he was able to convey to me some of the process.

When it comes to questions about a career path and skills that would aid a new technician or someone entering the field, Ransom was extremely insightful. In outlining his own journey to get to the successful position he is in now, it helped me see that there is no straightforward, set in stone path and each person's journey is different. When asked about certifications he would recommend, he was refreshingly blunt and honest sharing that he

was the wrong person to ask as he did not go down the path of chasing the alphabet soup that people new to the industry are often told they need to be successful. This statement was further enlightened by Kelly when she offered the advice that those certificates don't necessarily translate to real world experience or skills --- something that I, personally, agree with. It was very clear to me during this informational interview that Ransom and Company valued drive, determination, organization, the ability to learn and grow and passion above certificates.

To wrap up the questions, I asked what other professionals would be helpful to reach out to help with my growth and development in the field. He shared much insight into forming connections and networking by giving suggestions like attending chamber of commerce events and said that doing things like this informational interview is a great starting point. On this topic, one thing that he shared that I did not necessarily think of is that forming networking connections should not be limited to just the industry as members and leaders of other industries could present opportunities that would not be available if you just focused on technology connections.

This informational interview was very rewarding and highly interesting. It was very invigorating to see Ransom's love and passion for what he does daily. It is clear to me why he has formed such great bonds with the community and why everyone I have discussed with him, or his company, has had such positive feedback. He is clearly knowledgeable about the industry and the company's overwhelming growth shows that he is trusted to get the job done by individuals and companies that just need it done without jumping through hoops.

In conclusion, my greatest take away from our informational interview is that drive and determination with a desire to learn will help you enter a new field greatly. While education and certifications can help you get into the door, or help you get an interview with a company, if you are not passionate about it or don't have a desire to grow in the field, they will not ensure that you are successful. I hope that this informational interview helps to form a connection with Ransom as his passion is contagious and honestly, I think I could have spent hours picking his brain for insight into the field.

To prepare for my informational interview, I drafted a list of topics and questions to cover. I focused on a wide array of topics and questions not knowing what to exactly expect. I did not ask them all as, to my pleasant surprise, the interview flowed fluidly and naturally and many of the topics and questions were covered to some extent in just natural conversation. For thoroughness, I have included the full list of questions I had prepared and boldened the ones I asked directly, though I feel like most of the list was covered in some form or another.

Questions About the Business

Understanding the Company

- **What inspired you to start this MSP, and how has the business evolved over time?**

- What types of clients do you primarily serve, and what are their biggest IT challenges?

- How do you differentiate your services from other MSPs in the area?

- What does a typical day look like for you as the owner?

Business Operations

- Which services are most in demand right now—network administration, EDR, vendor support, or help desk?

- How do you decide which tools, platforms, or security solutions to adopt for your clients?

- What trends in the MSP industry are you paying the most attention to?

- **What's the biggest challenge of running a small MSP today?**

Questions About Technical Work

Domain & Network Administration

- **What are the most common network issues your clients face?**

- How do you approach designing or improving a client's network?

- What tools or platforms do you rely on for monitoring and management?

Endpoint Detection & Remediation (EDR)

- What EDR solutions do you prefer, and why?

- How often do you encounter real security incidents versus false positives?

- What does your incident response process look like?

Vendor Support & Help Desk

- What kinds of vendor-related issues come up most often?

- How do you balance quick fixes with long-term solutions for recurring problems?

- What skills make someone especially effective on the help desk?

Questions About Careers & Skills

Career Path

- What skills or certifications would you recommend for someone entering the MSP field?

- What qualities do you look for when hiring new technicians?

- **How did you get started in IT, and what would you do differently if you were starting today?**

Learning & Growth

- What technologies or areas of IT do you think students should focus on right now?

- How do you stay current with new tools, threats, and best practices?

- Are there opportunities for internships, shadowing, or part-time work in this field?

Questions About Client Relationships

- How do you build trust with clients who may not understand the technical side of what you do?

- What's the most challenging client situation you've had to handle?

- How do you communicate the value of proactive IT management to clients who only think about IT when something breaks?

Wrap-Up Questions

- What advice would you give to someone considering a career in IT support or cybersecurity?

- Is there anything you wish more people understood about MSP work?

- Are there other professionals you recommend I talk to as part of my research?