

Elevate - Exploring the intersection of innovation and technology

A podcast series by the HCL Microsoft Ecosystem Unit

Episode 1 - Transcript

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Intro: Welcome to Elevate, a podcast series by the HCL Microsoft Ecosystem Unit exploring the intersection of innovation and technology.

Andy: Good morning. Good afternoon. Good evening, wherever you are. And welcome to this podcast on accelerating cloud migrations. First of two podcasts, looking at some of the challenges and some of the possible options to get to value more quickly. My name is Andy, Andy Packham, I'm Chief Architect for the Microsoft business unit at HCL. The business unit has three core roles, to support innovation across the ecosystem, with customers with partners, and of course with Microsoft, to enable collaboration, discover value within the partnership, and to deliver sustainable inclusive digital transformational journeys to our customers. And I'm joined today by Bernd from Microsoft. So, Bernd would you like to kind of introduce yourself, give us a little bit of a background about your role.

Bernd: Thanks, Andy. So, I'm Bernd Loehlein working at Microsoft as a solution area specialist and our advanced migration team, being part of the global Black Belt organization at Microsoft, which is focusing on innovative technologies and services we're introducing and supporting our customers in adopting those technologies. And therefore, we are also working closely together besides our customers, also, with partners large, like HCL, and also in the backend, or product group and engineering to deliver also your valuable feedback to improve our services continuously.

Andy: Awesome, great, ain't cloud now is really well established. We're living in a cloud enabled world. By 2025, Gartner have predicted that 45% of the of IT spend is going to be on cloud technology. And that's up from about 20%. Today, that's a really, really big shift. And it's happening very, very quickly. And whether or not that's because of COVID, or concerns organizations have around structural resilience and agility, the need to address really critical sustainability concerns, infrastructure and data, cloud migration, modernization are really accelerating. And today, there are really very few companies that don't have some sort of cloud environment. And the majority of those I think about 97%, have got a mixture that's on premise and in the cloud, and it's going to be spanning more than one hyper scalar. So, we see a very complex environment, an environment that is that is changing very, very quickly. So, in terms of this fantastic, it's really accelerated change. What are you hearing from, from customers about the cloud migration? Gross?

Bernd: Yes, indeed. So, one of the main ask from our customers is definitely the demand that is there for accelerated growth, especially if we're looking back to the last year, months or maybe years, that clearly states that if you're not flexible enough with your infrastructure, and also adopting to new technologies, then there's definitely a risk associated to it to losing your business opportunities, and maybe not catch up with the market that you are in. So, there's definitely that high demand to being flexible and highly

demand highly dynamic infrastructure that could support those kinds of workloads. Besides that, we also see that there is a high need for being innovative having an innovation lead. So that means as we see our technologies moving faster and faster every year, that there is also a high demand for adopting those technologies. And this is really crucial to enable the customer business success. So being competitive in the market and keeping up with speed. So, one of our main missions is to make those innovations easily accessible for all of our customers, which is also clearly stated by our mission that is to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more. And when we go into the details, I think one of the best examples for this is definitely the area of artificial intelligence and machine learning, where we see that it's often challenging for our customers or organizations to build these technologies in house, or even if it's already enabled in house to maintain the environment and keeping it up to date with those fast evolving technologies. So that's definitely one of the bigger reasons why they are looking at moving to the cloud.

Andy: But isn't kind of moving to the cloud. I mean, there are lots of challenges you're wasting with customers where there's they're really got the they got the motivation. They got the executive sponsorship, they really got the desire, they understand the value. But they're finding it difficult to you know, especially when you get to the legacy applications, the legacy migrations It's still not as easy. What sort of challenges roadblocks do you see in that migration to valley? What sort of roadblocks are you seeing in your customers?

Bernd: Yeah, sure. So, the overall strategy that's often easily adopted and spelled out so that the road where the customers want to go, but the actual migration, especially if you look at its at large scale, that's often one of those road blockers making it complex and lengthy for our customers to enable that. And also, sometimes we see that customers are struggling when they want to take two steps, and one by doing the actual migration and also a modernization to adopt new technologies. And that in combination especially, is often too much and puts too much pressure on the business, which will then be one of the factors why such a migration effort may be failed on the first attempt, or is not to the full, full satisfaction of everyone involved. Also, what we see is that we have customers having large existing investments made in their infrastructure made in their software environments. So it's also often one of those options that the existing environment needs to be retained by financial reasons are similar, which makes it also quite hard to go to a new environment and maybe even start from scratch. Also, waterfalls in the same direction is the knowledge that has been built around the existing technology stack. And also, if we look not only around the underlying technology, but also around the business specific applications, those are have developed over the last years or maybe even decades, are quite complex, maybe you have a lack of of person supporting them, because those one initially building that up aren't still in the in the company. So that makes it oftentimes quite complex to migrate or move those applications not even talking about modernizing those. And as I've already mentioned, the existing skill set, as we are speaking and looking at cloud native environments, we definitely see also a high demand of cloud skills, which also need to be there, which is often the case at our customers, but maybe not in the right teams, because we often see that teams are quite separated, we have that existing environments operated by, by operational teams, and we have a separated, dedicated team focusing on Cloud skills and cloud native technologies. And it's one of the challenge is to get those all together on the same table.

Andy: Some of those issues can be solved, I think maybe we've, you know, maybe at least addressed we really good program, discipline. I mean, we saw, you know, sort of some of the same challenges when we migrated, you know, legacy data centers, moving applications has always been hard, but, you know, with

good executive support with risk management, and certainly working with the business to understand the, you know, the challenges and the needs from a business perspective. A cane, and, you know, point about training, I think this is really, really key, you know, you do you do you sometimes have these two separate teams that have an entirely different culture. And, you know, there's a lot of, there's a lot of legacy experience and knowledge that needs to be migrated in a different way. So, I definitely think, you know, it's important that around these projects, we do have a really strong governance, program discipline, that's not gonna solve all of the problem. There are tools or platforms that we need to bring to bear to help accelerate that. And can you talk a little bit about the tools, the platforms that you're saying help customers make that make that step, especially around the, you know, the skills challenge, the investment challenge, the cost challenge?

Bernd: Yes, sure. So especially when we look at the Azure VMware solution, which is one of our main offerings that we deliver as a Microsoft first party service but working closely together with our partner VMware on that, we see that this extremely helps our customers because they have robust knowledge and large teams operating their existing VMware environments, and bringing that new skill set to the new environment in the cloud. That definitely helps to easily adopt those new environments, giving some of the flexible flexibility of the cloud, and to really easily and broadly adopt to those new solutions. And also, as we have that same technology stack the known technology stack, closely in the cloud or closely to our native Azure Cloud. We can also easily adopt to our cloud native capabilities, especially around the areas around artificial intelligent machine learning and DevOps tool chains, for example. But also, we see that customers find it quite easy to have that seamless shift towards native storage offerings offered in the cloud by looking at, for example, object storage, which is not really known or used in on premise environments. But definitely having that existing technology stack closely to the new world makes it easier to adopt. And also, when it comes around, making that change easier. From a business side, we are often talking about the total cost of ownership or the return on investment in those solutions, and to what definitely helps our customers there is our various offerings like Azure hybrid benefit, which, for example, enables you to reuse your existing licenses for Microsoft server or SQL Server, for example. And reutilize, those same licenses in an Azure environment, which could be part of your Azure VMware solution, and therefore reducing the overall cost of ownership. And a second factor of that could also be what we offer as part of the service, the extended security upgrades, which gives you also some kind of safety net, by removing that time, time boundary maybe to having a certain deadline to achieve to migrate off the old infrastructure, because you can be fully assured that we will continuously deliver you with security fixes also for that environment, why you can take the the modernization as a second engagement or second project and put all your safety and precaution in that new modernization approaches. And having a new timeline not bound to the initial data center closure maybe. So that's how we how we see that Azure VMware solution makes it easier for our customers. But AVS is not only a cloud only offering, but we also see it as a kind of hybrid offering because we use the same technology stack. And that makes it really easy for our customers to move those workloads seamlessly to the cloud by basically extending your on premises environment to the cloud. So that's one of the bridges that we can build for our customers to make the migration and modernization as seamlessly as possible. But as we still have some kind of slight difference between the existing environments, and the Azure VMware solution. So I've heard there's definitely an offering from HCL called Cloud smart that would come into that piece I'm close to get for our customers further supporting them. So maybe Andy, could you talk us a bit about that HCL program? Maybe?

Andy: Yeah, absolutely. Um, that's my is about accelerating transformation, maximizing business value. And it comes from kind of aligning the industry needs organizational needs, and the unique, every customer has a unique set of needs. So, you need to be very pragmatic. You can't be you can't have a sort of a dogma. Over time, we've seen customers, I think, generally that they've got to be smart in the way they adopt cloud. Due to those inherent complexities. There are, you know, the real infrastructures, applications that have to stay on premise, there's, there's every every organization just has that complex nature. So, Cloud smart is about being responsible, responsible. So responsive, being scalable, and understanding that businesses need to be resilient, every organization is going to have hybrid, every organization is going to be in multi. So the cosmos works and understands that you've got to look at value from a holistic perspective. And that it's it's much more around creating the culture to operate cloud, even if that cloud actually happens to be on premise than it is just about looking at the the technology of technology itself. And quarter, that is really how we help customers modernize their digital core. And I think, you know, researchers like as your VMware, it's, it fits perfectly. It protects the investment, hugely important, it reduces risk and, and certainly business risk, which which is massively key, and speeds up that migration, it gets to that point where you can start doing exciting things in the cloud. So I think cloud smart brings together everything that a customer needs to see in terms of hybrid in terms of multi in terms of that understanding that venue is holistic, it doesn't come just from from infrastructure. So, but thank you, we've kind of wrap up this first part of that Podcast, I think we've touched on some really, really key themes around organizations not, you know, they're not transforming, they're not going to the cloud for a single reason. It's sometimes it's cost. For others, it's about business growth. For others, it's, you know, it's really important sustainability goals, reducing time to market, or getting to a seamless customer experience. And, you know, we discussed that, despite all of that, there are some very, very consistent challenges. And it's really good to see how, you know, the, the CEO of VMware solution helps organizations with that seamless migration. And then to extend and modernize their on premise on premise environments at the same time. You know, it's it cost savings, simplified migration, and protecting those critical investments, you know, all all really big and important thing for our customers. So, before we close in any any sort of final comments.

Bernd: Yeah, sure. Thanks, Andy. So, as you've already mentioned, we've talked about what technology our service offerings bring to our customers to support them in their ongoing cloud journey. But I think it's also quite important to mention and to be happy around how our long running partnership between our organizations HCL and Microsoft, which has been running since I think, 30 years or even more, to see how that is continuously evolving also around new services, new technologies, or even some technology areas that no one has ever thought about a few years ago. And yet to bridge the gap there and definitely help our customers jointly to achieve more. I think that's, that's one of the key facts that we should definitely point out here.

Andy: Thank you for that. And thank you for time. I mean, it's been a fantastic conversation. I'm looking forward to the second part of this where we get more into use cases and the benefits and how you know, together the HCL, Microsoft business unit, Microsoft, we can partnership together to really help organizations accelerate that cloud journey. Thank you.

Closing: Thank you for listening to Elevate, a podcast series on the intersection of innovation and technology by the HCL Microsoft Ecosystem Unit. We will be back with our next episode soon.