Elevate - Exploring the intersection of innovation and technology

A podcast series by the HCL Microsoft Ecosystem Unit

Episode 2 - Transcript

Speakers – Avtar Singh, Global Product Manager, HCL Hybrid Cloud Business Unit & Bernd Loehlein, Solution Area Specialist, Microsoft Corp.

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

Avtar: So by way of introduction, my name is Avtar and working as a Global Product Manager for Microsoft Azure offering, be it a public cloud hybrid cloud are different as your solutions. In the last one year, we all have witness disruption because of pandemic and has prompted organization to redefine their strategy and exploit digital transformation by a cloud adoption. In the last episode, we talked more about how AVS is helping enterprises to embrace digital transformation, a seamless approach. In this episode, we are going to talk about why technology leader like Microsoft and HCL are coming together and creating a synergy on abs. I'm really excited and delight that I'm sharing this platform with Bernd from Microsoft, who has specialized in AVS and other Microsoft solutions. So I'm just going to hand over to Bernd to just to introduce himself once you can go ahead and introduce yourself, please.

Bernd: Sure, thanks Avtar thanks for having me. So I'm Bernd Loehlein solution area specialist for advanced migration at Microsoft and our global blackbelt team. And our team is focusing on innovative technologies and services like Avtar mentioned, Azure VMware solution. And we're supporting our customers around the globe in adopting those technologies by working closely together besides the customers, also with our partners, and also with the product group and engineering in the backend to ensure this move adoption. And as we are seeing, like after mentioned the switch in the work experience, during the last months or maybe even years, we've also seen that there is a large shift towards the cloud. And maybe some customers are struggling with the adoption of the cloud. Their cloud journey was a bit interrupted, maybe. Could you maybe share after some details that you've witnessed there in the past?

Avtar: Oh, this is a very logical question and would say very good and appropriate version, right? Because when I came across about this product, the same question I had in my mind that why MS. And VMware collaborated though they were competitors, and how are they going to address market dynamic by AVS. But when I read about this product, I realize this product has been evolved after thorough research on dynamic of market, like customers what the customer is looking for. So that's why this product came into existence. Because nowadays, customers are looking for highly customized and unique product that can address and mitigate ground level challenges they have been facing. So I will take this question a little right. And I'm just going to rephrase another way that why customers should adopt AVS. So we all know that every customer wants to embrace cloud in some shape and form. But they can't codify everything from day one. In addition to this, there are a few challenges and facts like you know, they want to leverage their huge investment from day one. At the same time to compete and sustain. Every customer is looking for global coverage, lean cost scalable agile infra integration with

Cloud to avail cloud benefits and the most important, that's what I've, you know, got application moderation because every customer to whom I interact, they are looking for application moderation approach. So here AVS batch, because in AVS, you can seamlessly move your apps like from one platform to another. And the part that I like most is direct support from Microsoft, because in Microsoft Oreo, I would say no AVS solution, you have a unified support no matter if the problem is with your hardware stack, or you know, hardware stack, I mean to say compute storage or any network years, you know that you have an AVS or a software stack that comprises multiple components of VMware, like ESXi, vSphere, V San, and NSX die would be taken care of by MS. If you get any kind of problem, you just knock the door of the Microsoft, they'll come and they'll fix your issue. In addition to all this, Microsoft always also guarantees you the SLA of 99.9%. So it's a big thing. So, I'll say there are 1000s of benefits associated with AVS. And we should adopt this if we really want to embrace the cloud and you know, want to enter into a digital transformation journey. But besides this, I just want burnt also. So, what do you have some use cases in your mind that are very dominant that you you know, I would say by interacting with customer that you will come across that the customer is looking for?

Bernd: Sure. So, I think one of the most dominant use cases clearly is data center expansion based on demand, which not only covers the scalability of an individual data center, but like I already mentioned also the global coverage, so that you can extend your workloads wherever they are needed at that moment in time. And by keeping the VMware based virtual machine in place and non disruptively moving those workloads to the Azure VMware solution. I think this is a quite a good use case where our customers clearly benefit for the overall solution. And also when we are not looking at primary workloads, or production workloads, I think disaster recovery and business continuity is also quite important for our customers. And by having the same VMware based infrastructure stack hosted in Azure, I think it's also quite efficient for our customers to use that platform as a disaster recovery target for their business continuity. And also, if we look at the application modernization, we also see that customers sometimes struggle a bit with the timeline associated because the timeline might be a little bit too fast, that they need to move to the new workloads to new environments, and also there, the VMware based solution in the cloud could be a good middle step, maybe to give yourself a little bit of extra time to complete and validate the overall solution more closely and get out of this time struggle by migrating and maybe risking some, some downtimes or risky, your SLA that you have to provide internally. So that is definitely one of the most important use cases that we see. And what we also see quite often that customers have quite a large invest could be on the software side, the licenses also from the national side, where we also support by having the same stack by reutilizing, the same licenses, which is also part of our Azure hybrid benefit offering. Also the FreeSync extended security updates that we offer for workloads, for example, running in Azure VMware solution. But I think that clearly shows that we don't have that single use case, which is quite dominant. And I think to get a broader view on all of that, I think it's also good to hear Avtar how you could support your customers on the broader view, with your capabilities that HCL as a partner could offer on top of the solutions.

Avtar: Oh, that's a very good question. And to be honest, I always look for the platform where I can get a chance to speak about my organization. So we all know, and this has been proven fact that HCL is a next generation global technology company that are helping enterprise in their digital transformation across the globe, right. And if you look into HCL portfolio in the last 40 years, we have diversified and mature ourselves to cater all aspects of technology requirements. We have developed and mature our ecosystem with strong partnership, huge investments in latest and greatest technologies, labs, and most

importantly, our people. From technology perspective, we have gained excellence in all spectrum of technologies beat a public cloud hybrid cloud, automation, artificial intelligence and data analytics are also the core component in our technical portfolio. And I would say you know, we have also won a claim for our proven track record of successful highly complex delivery, customer satisfaction and innovative solution. And to complement this fact, HCL has also been recognized as a leader by analysts of the world like Gartner, IDC multiple times in a row. And looking into all this my view is this has been possible because of great vision and motivation, you know, that our leadership properly in our ecosystem. So sometimes it is critical to understand what additional value HCL brings on table for abs as we invest our time, energy and effort to modernize our client journey. So there are hundreds of reasons you know, I can talk about but I would like to start and stress about our most important assets, that is highly trained, motivated and polished workforce, working diligent, diligently and taking end to end ownership of transformation journey. And to complement this we have built process procedure framework, we keep our teams with mature and refined ecosystem to deliver end to end AVS transformation across all verticals in any geography, we are AVS notes are available.We have dedicated Center of Excellence team, who are there to validate and test multiple use cases, third party integration with AVS native solution, we do have highly certified VCD X people. And HCL is a VVD 3.0 certified also with lots of framework IPs tool stringent processes to accelerate digital transformation journey for the customers. And in addition to this all our strategic relationship, you know, we have jointly developed the ecosystem of 1.5 billion in the last three decades with Microsoft. And we have applauded by Microsoft several times for excellence and error free delivery to our joint customers. So let me talk about the numbers you know, that gives you insight where we are in terms of our maturity and expertise in Microsoft technologies. So we have been applauded with 18 Gold competency and 25 plus award for excellence across different Microsoft stream. We have 50,000, Microsoft consultant and 8500 plus certified Azure resources to make sure that light remains on for our customer 24 into seven with 200 regional and global delivery centers. We have. So if you look into all this, I believe we have left no stone unturned. So, Bernard, I'm, I just want to ask one thing out here, right? Because I know that the AVS solutions is doing a great, and you guys are doing Innovation Day and night and you're you're investing a lot. But still, I want to hear from you that what kind of future roadmap to have so that we can also communicate to our customer and to you know, to make them to make them excited about this AVS solution?

Bernd: Yes, sure. So, like you already told her we are working closely together. And also you're quite integrated into the whole service development. So I think it's not that big news for you. But let me explain for our listeners out there. So what we have seen or what we have brought to the service in the recent time, was mainly an adoption improvement when it comes to large scale migrations. So we recently introduced the the HCX enterprise add on to general availability for the service, which especially targets to large scale migrations by having that replication assisted B motion to have a faster and more dense migration speeds that we can offer there. And also improved networking features like the mobility optimized networking to simplify the overall migration for our customers. And, like we've also discussed earlier, we see a high use case or benefit in the disaster recovery area. And also there we are constantly working with disaster recovery partners integrating into Azure VMware solution. So we can now fully support and directly integrate with VMware Site Recovery Manager, so tour and chat stream, for example. So those were some of the recent announcements and upcoming changes to the service to have that direct integration. And also, as we see a wider variants of services and workloads migrated to abs, we also found that we may need to provide some additional storage services. So that's also definitely a point where we will see some improvements in the future. So we are seeing two new

offerings there, one being based on our Azure managed disk and integrating that disk storage into the Azure VMware solution by the utilization of the so called this pool service. So that's one way. And on the other side, we also see a large portion of our customers already utilizing Azure NetApp files for their most critical workloads. So that's also one other option that we want to provide to our customers to have that Azure NetApp files performance that they are known to that they may be already utilized to have that natively integrated into the Azure VMware solution, and to offer additional data stores, for your clusters for your private clouds based on that superfast technology. And, like already discussed with the pandemic, and yeah, extending your workloads all across the globe, I think it's also quite important for our customers to have a global coverage. So that's also one point where we are constantly trying to improve the global coverage all across the globe. So we are looking at Americas EMEA, and APAC and some regions where we are recently expanded to we are close to expand to this, for example, East Asia, we are planning to do the expansion to Brazil, France, Germany, and also Japan. Those are our near term expansion areas or some may already have happened to depending on when you listen to this podcast. And what oftentimes is also aligned to those local expansion is definitely the Local Security and Compliance Certification associated with specific markets. And one example for that where we recently achieved a certification is the FedRAMP High authorization, which is quite important across a wide range of public sector industries, also our enterprise use cases. So that's what we'll see in the near-term future. And I hope that's what what you expect you're what you get from a feedback from your customers what they are looking to.

Avtar: So I agree with you, I can see that you are doing a fantastic job and you are on the right roadmap and you know, the customer you know knows what they are looking for. In the end, I would say this is fantastic session. I believe our session today offers our listeners some insight how things are shaping up and help them evolve the strategic thought process and partnership for the digital transformation journey in their ecosystem. And we'll start conversation, and you know, your strategy towards this product. It is now safe for us to say AVS is evolving in a pragmatic and certainly going to help per customer looking to break away from perimeter infra. So, I would like to request to Bernd that if you want to say something and you know, just to put more highlights on this.

Bernd: Yeah, so So I think it's definitely quite important to highlight how closely our organizations HCL and Microsoft work together, not only on the the broad range of already existing Azure services, but also on those kind of innovative technologies I mentioned in the, in the beginning, that our global like Bell teams are covering and it's also quite, quite good to see how your organization scales all across the globe, and also adopts really fast to those kinds of innovative workloads. And like you already mentioned, we are looking back at closely to three decades of working combinely together on those kinds of services. So always a pleasure to have working with you together on those services. And also thanks again for having me in this podcast.

Avtar: Ohh thanks a lot, Bernd, I would really appreciate and we thankful to you that you take your time out and share this podium with us and advocate our you know, the I would say the audience that are listening this podcast. Thank you so much.

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.