This is the HCL podcast network, and you are listening to the HCL podcast, the place where industry experts help us identify, understand and prepare for future technology trends.

Ankur Kashyap: Hello and welcome to Cloud Demystified, brought to you by HCL Google Ecosystem Business Unit, the dedicated business unit of HCL that helps enterprises use Google Cloud to fuel innovation and enable digital transformation for delivering superior customer experiences. In this podcast, industry thought leaders, innovative business leaders and cloud experts share their views and opinions on various topics relevant for today and tomorrow to unlock the benefits of cloud computing.

My name is Ankur Kashyap and I lead the alliance and go to market function for the Google Ecosystem Business Unit. I will be your host for this podcast. The podcast that we will be discussing today with our guest is **Rethinking Digital Transformation in the New Normal**. Our speaker today, our guest today is Sanjay Singh. Sanjay Singh is the senior vice president and head of HCL Google Cloud Ecosystem Business Unit. And Sanjay, glad to have you with me. Welcome to the podcast.

Sanjay Singh: Thank you for the very warm welcome. Excited to be here. And good morning to our listeners.

Ankur Kashyap: Sanjay, these are surely very, very interesting times that we live in, and I think it really brings into focus what you are hearing from executives and leaders of Fortune 500 companies on their digital transformation and the impact of the new normal on that digital transformation. So I really wanted your view on the impact of covid-19 on enterprises.

Sanjay Singh: Oh, boy, Ankur! I don't know where to start, but the impact of the new normal on enterprises is pretty holistic. I have seen customers who are struggling to get the most basics of operations stabilized, given the fact that there are no workers coming into the office and into factories. And even if they're coming into factories, how do they create their social distancing norms, how do they keep employees safe? That's one end of the spectrum. The second end of the spectrum on the factory floor is some customers are seeing demand explode, especially in the products like sanitisation, in napkins and even in certain consumables, and then aren't able to keep up with the demand in the new normal. So, how do you keep running factories and products and getting the supply chain humming? It's a big challenge, too, from a workforce perspective.

And I'm sure our listeners can relate to this, is that working from home and still being effectively connected, collaborating effectively, sharing content, developing solutions or talking to customers or even simple things like teaching, education online is a challenge. And customers have to rethink their entire IT strategy to support those kind of disruptions in our daily lives.

The other interesting thing that we are seeing is that the variable cost of fixed cost ratios for one from a CFO perspective is completely skewed and the demand has certainly fallen, not allowing enough time for corporates. So, how do they maintain their fixed cost to variable cost and their OpEx and CapEx investments so that their companies keep afloat and they are able to move things forward?

And lately we have been in this pandemic for a good almost 8-10 months. Now I'm seeing companies now beginning to plan how will they come out of the pandemic? How do they get to soft start until they get things working again, out of the way of thinking? How do we come back to the normal of delivering better experiences inside the store? Manufacturers are thinking how do I do supply chain planning and execution so that the demand can be met. And there's a funny story. I was talking to a CEO of a F500 company and he was telling me this is the first time in the history of our company's operation, in my memory, that I don't know where to put the strategy because the entire world is affected.

Ankur Kashyap: That's absolutely right. And it's amazing. You have your hands full, Sanjay. Looks like. And you know, certainly from what you tell me, covid-19 has accelerated the speed of digital transformation. And a lot of analysts point to that fact. But there is some interesting data out there which I wanted to check with you and get your thoughts on. So, one of the recent Forrester report states that many CEOs are under pressure to complete migrations quickly and 68 percent of the CEOs are seeking to migrate existing applications to the cloud. 75 percent of all enterprise workloads are not yet migrated to the cloud. We keep hearing that cloud is central to accelerating digital transformation, and especially in these covid times. What are your thoughts on this and what is the role that cloud will play in this new normal?

Sanjay Singh: If you look at enterprises across verticals, we work with customers in almost every vertical - Lifesciences health care, retail, CPG, manufacturing, the financials, etc..

Every customer sector of ours have come back and told us, can you help us migrate to the cloud faster? And pretty much in a lighter note, they are kicking themselves saying, why didn't I do this earlier? And the reason is very simple is that the demand patterns of their business volumes are very uncertain. Channels of business are shifting from physical to digital. Their supply chain outages and aren't being able to manage using the regular planning processes. They are unable to predict demand as to what type of products and services under which consumers will be able to meet.

Ankur Kashyap: Because, you know, another data point, right, because the data point, it says today's most organizations don't have a formal cloud strategy, although by 2022, 70 percent of the organizations will have one. So there is a lot of catch up that looks like that these organizations need to do. Do you have any recommendations as a practitioner on how does a CIO accelerate digital transformation? How do you think enterprises should plan for a workload based cloud strategy?

Sanjay Singh: In the last few months, we've seen increased offtake of this of the service request for sure. So I think it's a trend which is here to stay, as we lovingly call it. The faster you get out of the DC, the better you will be off in the cloud and you'll be able to innovate faster.

Ankur Kashyap: Are there any you know, when you talk about a plan for cloud adoption program. Right. Are there any insights or best practices that you would like to share on how to develop a successful cloud program?

Sanjay Singh: Certainly! It's a big change. So you have to run a proper change management process within the company because now your cost becomes an à la carte instead of 'all you can eat' kind of a model where you need fiscal discipline and executional discipline in managing what you put in the cloud, how you operate and how long you operate it, how you continuously optimize it. So one of the best practices that we have were devised for customers is to put together a Cloud center of excellence (CoE) within the enterprises and that CoE should at the minimum, have this three or four components. They should appoint an architecture and a standards body who defines various architecture, working with their different business counterparts within the organization, giving them the architecture and standards to deploy their applications and business models on the cloud. Second is that you certainly need to have your CISO to be a part of this group as well, where you define the security standards. How are the users going to access? How would you want to deploy or you want to monitor all of these important keys in the cloud?

Also, you need to have a training organization in CoE, because this group of individuals will have to train a lot of people on how to do new things like DevOps, agile, DevSecOps operating model. And if you operate on the Google cloud, there are a couple of other interesting things like site reliability engineering, platform reliability engineering concepts that you can learn.

And the fourth is your financial officer representation because you need to allocate budgets, you need to make sure that people understand how to use the workloads to shut it off when it's not being used, how to allocate budgets at a work group level so that you don't by accident, you don't pay more. You also need a continuous optimization strategy once you put the workloads on cloud. It's not a 'put it there and forget it' kind of model. You need to continuously optimize it, you need to move from compute storage to a serverless architecture. You need to look at how to containerize, micro services, how do you reduce the compute time etc. So it's a completely new discipline of doing things and then focus on creating rapid prototyping, rapid POCs, rapid innovation within the organization and then use the cloud to scale those out from a platform strategy. So, we'd certainly recommend that customers adopt this framework as it'll give you much more success and you'll be able to get more optimization out of your cloud spend.

Ankur Kashyap: Sanjay, thank you for sharing this with our listeners because I think it gives them a framework to think about digital transformation in the new normal.

Sanjay Singh: Sure, Ankur! Thank you, it's a pleasure.

Ankur Kashyap: So that's all for the first episode of *Cloud Demystified.* Please subscribe to the channel and stay tuned. Feel free to share this with people you think will find it valuable. Until next time, signing off; your host – Ankur Kashyap.