



MICROSOFT TEAMS

PODCAST

TONY LERARIS: And the question really isn't is organizations going to use Teams. The question is going to be when for many organizations.

JASON WARNKE: I'm Jason Warnke, part of the Accenture Internal IT organization. I'm glad to be here today with Tony Leraris, a leader in our IT organization at Accenture, who owns Digital Worker. And Andrew Sniderman from Microsoft. He's the Director of Microsoft Teams Customer Engineering. Thanks for joining me today both of you.

ANDREW SNIDERMAN: Thanks, Jason, it is really good to be here with you.

TONY LERARIS: Thanks, Jason, always good to talk with you.

JASON WARNKE: Excellent. So we're going to have a great fun discussion about one of my favorite, if not my favorite topics, Microsoft Teams. So I'm going to start first with you, Andrew, at Microsoft. Is Microsoft Teams a new tool or an entirely new way of working?

ANDREW SNIDERMAN: So, Jason, whether we like it or not, we've been at the bleeding-edge with Teams for going on three years now. So in my head, it's the way of working and it's hard for me to roll back. It's hard for me to roll back candidly to think about days when I'd spend most of my time in email or in SharePoint sites. But that said, looking back, is definitely a kind of intentional transition from one work style to another. And I definitely say it's not a tool, it is a framework, kind of a different way to get the stuff done that you used to do.

JASON WARNKE: Interesting. And, Tony, bringing it to the Accenture context, how would you answer that same question? Is it a new tool or a new way of working?

TONY LERARIS: From my perspective, it's a new way of working. So I think some people of Accenture will think of Teams as replacing Skype because it's what they're going to use for their audio conferencing. And other people might think about it as replacing Instant Messenger because it's – you know, they're going to use that instead of Skype for Instant Messaging, but it's so much more than that.

You're going to see a decrease in the use of SharePoint because you're going to store your documents in Teams. You're going to see bringing in other applications that you can integrate in there like Planner. And so, to me, it's a completely different way of working that lends itself to things like online collaboration, sharing of documents, a lot less emailing between people and I mean the capabilities are huge. But it's definitely a different way of working because it's going to replace so many of the tools that we use in the enterprise today.

JASON WARNKE: So then just carrying on from that point, that's an excellent one, what then sort of behavior changes need to be learned and adapted to, to realize that full potential? So it is a new way of working, but what are those behaviors that really will help people start moving to that new way of working?

TONY LERARIS: Well, I think today, when you think about it, people have a number of behaviors for how they handle certain kinds of tasks. And there's certain things that they do over Skype with Instant Messages. And there's other things they do with email and there's other things that they're used to just putting in SharePoint or sharing them in OneDrive. I think the kind of – the most important behavior change in order to work in a modern way is to start to be very intentional in using Teams and to ask yourself, you know, why not start with



Teams? Why not Teams first? And I found myself doing that.

So, for example, if I get some sort of memo that I think I need to cascade down through my organization, I don't send it out in email anymore. I have a channel with my leadership team called Announcements and I announce it in the channel. And people could see it there and they don't have to go back and find it later and then if there are questions, we just have a dialogue there. We don't have a bunch of emails going back and forth. So it's that sort of change where you have to ask yourself, why not Teams? And be very intentional to start working that way, to start realizing the benefits because, honestly, changing behaviors is hard.

JASON WARNKE: Right. And, Andrew at Microsoft, you guys are now fully rolled out across all of Microsoft's global employees. Teams is the only unified communications tool or new working tool, if you will, new way to work tool. I don't know how we'd describe it that is rolled out everywhere. So you have seen some of these behavior changes, you've experienced them yourself. What would you add to what Tony was just describing there?

ANDREW SNIDERMAN: Yeah, we announced, I think, in the spring that we'd managed to get the entire company over onto Teams and it was a big undertaking and there's a couple of interesting dynamics to point out. The first one is Teams is not very good if you're the only one in it. So by definition, we're talking about this collaboration engine and you got to do a little bit of kind of arm twisting and cultural norms change. This is, as Tony was referring to, to force the kind of muscle memory away from firing off an email and thinking about doing things in a different way and every org handles that differently. But one of the things we talked about internally a fair bit when we were first going big on Teams is this notion of filers versus pilers.

JASON WARNKE: Interesting.

ANDREW SNIDERMAN: So this was kind of a label that we put on folks mainly in the email days. Either you can deal with a sense of a degree of chaos in an unmanaged inbox, inbox was the analogy. You know, take messages as they come or you're a very structured person and you create this elaborate file structure to file your stuff in, in tags and colors and whatnot. And typically, folks have gotten to a point where they're comfortable, for example, and they feel like they're on top of their email. Now you move to Teams and all those habits and kind of norms of how you used to do things are turned on their head a bit. So you have to acknowledge that and recognize that there's ways you can do all these same things in Teams, but it's different. And a lot of times we hear and we heard this resoundingly at Microsoft, how do I separate the signal from the noise? How do I make sure I don't miss things? How do I make sure Tony sees something I send him or it's discoverable by Jason and it doesn't get lost?

So it's important to take the time to get people to a similar comfort level as they were when using traditional tools like email. And a lot of times that does take a commitment, 'cause most folks when we're doing our – we're technologists, so we're going to adapt this stuff a little quicker, but most folks just want to get their job done. So it does need to be a forcing function and so, we definitely have had some communications from on high, so to speak, to say, hey, make sure for the next month, we're going to get our work done in teams and let's figure out how to do it, but keep away from email, keep away from SharePoint.

JASON WARNKE: Yeah, you both made mention of that you're both leaders in your respective organizations, that you had to start creating that change and setting that direction and your team members then saw, oh, Tony's



not sending that announcement in an email anymore. Andrew's not doing that in email, he's doing it right inside the channel inside of Teams. And when you start that and they start to mimic that behavior is when you really see it take off. It's always something like that. So that's really interesting.

I want to go back a little bit. You mentioned the three-year journey. Accenture was with you very early in that process. I'd love to have you talk a little bit, Andrew, about the collaboration between Microsoft and Accenture right at the start.

ANDREW SNIDERMAN: Yeah, the partnership here is deep and goes back a long way. And it was actually really seminal in terms of you guys taking a look at the code almost earlier than many other customers had seen it, day to day, as I think we're going back two and half years, maybe even close to three years now, giving us some feedback on kind of our initial thinking, figuring out what are the right capabilities we have in our initial release which I think was two years ago this March. And the partnerships continued since then. And you guys really leaned in, right. And so, we really appreciated that commitment. And so, we've leveraged your ability to go bigger with us and similarly, we can kind of look at your feedback in a much more prioritized way because you've got a ton of folks using it.

So I think the partnership continues today and we've taken these step functions and now the next one is transitioning fully off of Skype Meetings and Skype Calling onto Teams and that's a big undertaking. So we're listening very closely to potential things that will get in the way of you getting that done.

JASON WARNKE: That's awesome, we definitely appreciate that partnership and feel like based on some of our feedback and direction, the product is really working well for these massive scaled organizations, which is the

prompt for the next question for my friend, Tony, as he and his team prepare for Accenture's full rollout. We've got close to 360,000 active users today, but that's not all the functions, everything moved over to Teams. So, Tony, as you think about a half million employees preparing for that eventual rollout later this year, as the primary communication and collaboration platform, how are you preparing for that rollout, what's going into the process here?

TONY LERARIS: Well, our initial thinking, Jason, as you know, we can give you a bunch of Microsoft Team stickers and have you give them out to as many people as possible. But as successful as that was, we thought we had to go a little bit more – with a little bit more serious program. Although, Andrew, we appreciate all the stickers you guys gave to Jason.

We, in all seriousness, we fully recognize that, like I said, Teams is not a replacement for just one product. It is really the replacement for many different products. And we also realize, within Accenture, nearly 500,000 employees, that there isn't a one size fits all approach for how to teach people, how to use Teams and how to help them adopt. So we took an approach early on of just making it available for everybody and having sort of a viral program for people that want to use it and there's a lot of people in our organization that are incredibly technically savvy. They don't need a lot of help from IT and our intention is to enable it and get out of the way.

But now, as we want to really drive adoption to Teams, we have a number of campaigns that we're getting ready to launch and there's postcards. We've got our technical support staff trained up and ready to help people anytime they come in. We're going to do a series of trainings and brown bags that people can watch. There'll be a number of videos and our campaign will build.

You know, initially, we needed to teach people



how to use Teams for Instant Messaging and for conferencing, 'cause it is a little different, but we're not going to stop there. We're going to continue to sort of promote and publish the new things that you can do in Teams and as each individual progresses along their own personal journey with Teams, they'll be information available to them to help them to continue to use the product in a better way, to work in a more modern way and, ultimately, to be more productive, which is what we're looking for.

JASON WARNKE: That's great. Anything you'd add in terms of the way that Microsoft prepared its users and before you answer that, I'll maybe ask you both just to leave the audience with maybe one thought of what key thing they can do to help prepare their organization for a new way of working with Microsoft Teams.

ANDREW SNIDERMAN: So two things, Jason, to add onto Tony's comments and I'm saying this not only in the context of Microsoft's transition, but in the thousands and thousands of customers that we're working with, we're really seeing this kind of C change begin to happen across them. There's two things in addition to all the goodness of adoption and change management that has to go along with the change is significant. Two things that I think are important. One is this notion of change agents or champions; we've seen this work time and time again. If you can – whether it's bribery by stickers or – but there's always a set of folks that are more apt to adopt newer technologies and it's not always the Millennials, but sometimes it is. But recruiting them, giving them a little special love and attention, I've seen other customers create like a team of champions where there's an FAQ and then you can kind of see these folks selectively in your deployment campaigns and they become a local source of truth and assistance.

And then the second thing, to Tony's point, there's a ton of stuff we're replacing in Teams. So there's Skype and there's SharePoint, but it's

really a superset. So if you can – once you get over the level 100 learning curve and you're comfortable with the tool, if you can then say, okay, what is my tribe? What does my team do? What's a project-based activity, an outcome? How could we do it better with Teams like, for example, could we leverage Planner? Could you add simple scenarios like working together to create a PowerPoint that you might share with a bunch of people? Some simple new things that you were not able to do in your prior tool set, that kind of jump starts people using the product.

JASON WARNKE: Right. Tony, what would your last words of wisdom be in terms of how you can – how the organizations can prepare for this?

TONY LERARIS: I'd think you have to acknowledge that this is where the world is going and it's better to get on the train when it's moving slow, so that as it starts to speed up, you're ready. So I think when I talk to companies that want to know how we did things at Accenture, the biggest mistake they made is they wait too long to get started. I would advise them to get started, get familiar with it, make it available and then find a way to drive adoption through their company. But the question is, right, and the question really isn't is organizations going to use Teams. The question is going to be when for many organizations and there's no reason to put off the when.

JASON WARNKE: Very well said. So with that, I want to thank everyone for tuning into this latest episode and thank you, Andrew and Tony, for being my guests today, very insightful. I'm not sure we could have asked two better people on this topic than the two of you. So thank you very much.

ANDREW SNIDERMAN: Thank you, Jason.

TONY LERARIS: Yeah, thank you, Jason, it was a pleasure.



JASON WARNKE: What we talked about today was how both Microsoft and Accenture have been moving over to Microsoft Teams, how this is a new way to work and how you need to drive adoption in your organizations by getting started early, employing the help of champions in your organization. I would be remiss if I didn't call out the Accenture champions that do this, our Team Stars, as we call them. There are over a thousand people globally that have raised their hand and said, we want to help on this journey and are doing such a fabulous job.

So we've learned a lot. We'll come back at some point and talk more about our journey through the course of the year, but we're really excited about what we're seeing with the change and the new of working with Microsoft Teams.

Make sure you subscribe and share the podcast with your friends and colleagues. I'm Jason Warnke, we Accenture Internal IT organization. Until next time, take care.

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