

## Transcript of Shaan Mulchandani, Accenture & Mamadou Bah, Anthem Accenture Executive Summit AWS re:Invent 2019, 12/4/19

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**Narrator:** Live from Las Vegas, it's theCUBE! covering AWS Executive Summit. Brought to you by Accenture.

**Rebecca Knight:** Welcome back everyone to theCUBE's live coverage of the Accenture Executive Summit, here in Las Vegas, part of AWS re:Invent. I'm your host Rebecca Knight. We're joined by two guests for this segment, we have Mamadou Bah he is the Senior Director of Cloud Technology at Anthem. Thanks so much for coming on the show, Mamadou.

**Mamadou Bah:** Thanks for having me. And Shaan Mulchandani. He is AWS security lead at Accenture. Thank you so much Shaan.

**Shaan Mulchandani:** Thank you for having us, Rebecca, glad to be with you.

**Rebecca:** So let's start with you Mamadou. Tell our viewers a little bit about Anthem, the business.

**Mamadou:** Sure. So Anthem is a healthcare company. We're serving around 40 million members and we're committed to simplifying healthcare and make it more accessible and affordable, for people.

**Rebecca:** So committed to simplifying health care, which is, I'm imagining the driving force for your cloud journey, but what were some of the other factors, that led you to the cloud?

**Mamadou:** Really, we want to make healthcare more accessible for people, and more affordable, we want to meet our consumers where they are, and meet them using mediums that they want us to use. So it's going through all the data we have,

we are 40 million members, we're serving today, looking at the data and find the ways to build, customized and personalized experiences to meet them where they are and how they want to be met, and also improve the health care, for them.

**Rebecca:** So what kinds of personalized customized experiences are you talking about, and what does the cloud enable?

**Mamadou:** So really, we have a variety of members, young children to adults and people on Medicare and Medicaid, they have various needs. When you look at people's medical needs, you look at our financial needs or social needs. What works for me might not work for you or might not work for him. So it's, understanding the person as a whole. And meeting them where they want to be met, really.

**Rebecca:** So Shaan, how does this Accenture, what does Accenture bring to this partnership? How are you helping Anthem realize its goals?

**Shaan:** Sure. So I mean, I would say this happens under the guise of cloud and Anthem broadly as well, right? So Accenture Anthem, has Accenture as one of its largest partners, we're proud to be one of, have Anthem as one of our largest clients, of course. And all the way from a lot of the outsourcing operations from the business operations side, providing cost effective business operations for addressing all those millions of subscribers that they have to, of course, helping them innovate both within cloud within a lot of their other technology needs on premise, from a lot of like transformations in technology. That's, I would say that covers the gamut. Specifically within cloud, I'd say we're We're helping both strategically and operationally.

On a strategic front; this includes mapping some of the business needs, to how, to various cloud technologies, where it's a multi cloud and hybrid cloud approach, but also specifically on AWS, and also about how we can help empower Anthem to realize its cloud journey and potential there, with their workforce with their cloud technology organization, and how we empower that movement going forward. There are a number of other drivers on the operational side. And that includes, of course, minimizing any future technical debt. And that's, that's a big journey, of course, or that's a big pattern, I would say that that is prevalent across multiple clients, but also realizing comprehensive monitoring, save preventive guardrails for services that then allows developers to have the freedom to experiment to enable rapid prototyping and and also, of course, transparent operations from a cost perspective. So these would be a couple of ways.

**Rebecca:** So Mamadou, talk about the ways in which you are innovating in this cloud space. What are what are some of the most exciting projects that you're working on right now?

**Mamadou:** Sure, so we have a large number of projects, but Anthem as a whole, since we're serving 40 plus million members, we have thousands of applications, petabytes of data. So some of the projects we're working on today, we have a landing zone on AWS and we have some applications in AWS. But we need to meet our application teams, also, internally, we need to help them focus on the business drivers, focus on healthcare. So we're working on providing them a nimble platform. So they're not worried about day to day IT, and providing them self service catalog. And we understand that there's a lot of complexity in healthcare or when you have all this data, you need to make sure it's secured. There's a lot of regulatory challenges. So we don't want our application teams to have to deal with all those things.

So it's really putting together, identifying the services, ai services, Machine Learning Services container and server list, and building a framework for them to have access to all those services that are pre approved, and make those self service for application teams. So that's our service catalog project, and allow them to use all that in an AWS account where they're self sufficient. So we were working closely for

Accenture on there. And what we found was, while the technology is very valuable, the people and process aspect of it it's, we have to get alignment across all the internal divisions working closely and bringing our security teams on the table our data teams, our operation teams, and working together to say, "How can we empower developers, internally "to focus on business, deliverables?" So building that catalog, providing a reference architecture, reference implementation, identifying our skills gaps and recognizing them, working with HR to, and to hire new talent, and rescale our existing talent, but also leveraging our partners to bring in that talent and give us various ways of looking at the same problem.

**Rebecca:** So, I saw you, Shaan, nodding along with what a lot of Mamadou was talking about in terms of the alignment. Can you talk about that challenge and how you work with clients to make sure that, you are bringing people along? Because the people and the processes are the most important part, but they're often the hardest part too,

**Shaan:** They're definitely the hardest part. And of course, we I mean, behind every great success story, there's so many challenges, right? And one of the things we do, of course, is not just try to bring our best people that are technically sharp for Anthem, but that understand the client that understand the business needs. For example, it's not just about technology, but it's also about how it's applied to support certain business operations like mergers and acquisitions or as a strategy grows from one cloud to multi-cloud. So it's about bringing those folks that help align or understand those goals organizationally, and how they are realized technically. In addition to that, I would say it's also bonding a very very, very closely with leadership with architects, with operations personnel, and the developers and engineers at Anthem to work side by side in realizing many of these goals or many of our shared goals and Anthem's overall vision.

**Mamadou:** And the good thing there is really the cloud is aligned with the corporate strategy. So there's a lot of leadership alignment, when what we found is really trying to find that balance between autonomy and alignment we want the teams to be autonomous, we're providing them with self service, we want them

to innovate and get to market quickly, but we also want them to be aligned with the company and enterprise best practices and regulatory standards. So it's a fine balance, but I think we're making great progress with our partners, the processes are being reevaluated every process. We're saying, "Because we've done it this way "for all these years, and we were successful at doing it, doesn't mean that that's the way forward." We want to bring everyone together, and think of a process holistically. Not, "This is my team, "I'm doing this and passing it to the next team." It's, "Bring your best people. and let's solve the problems together."

**Shaan:** Right. At the same time, I would say it's not siloed again, between say architecture, operations and security, either before or after, it's about bringing, I would say these these three legs, of that stool together throughout the process. And I think that's something we've done as well. One of the things we've done is establish Tiger team essentially, right? To power through some of our challenges. As we build out a new landing zone, as we move towards implementing some of the self service capabilities and plan for migration of I would say hundreds, or potentially thousands of applications to the cloud, just about getting security to shape policy getting buy in from there as well, ensuring that when design decisions are made from an architecture perspective, we take into consideration not just the operational side of Anthem, but the operational arm of Accenture that supports and enables some of that work as well.

And how we can make their lives easier. And how we can minimize any risk of the business, any disruptions, outages, etc. By way of good design. And by getting thereby, and making sure that every internal stakeholder is heard.

**Mamadou:** Yeah, really our emphasis is on quality by design by bringing the right stakeholders help architected properly, and then have some process control and monitoring in place and having some key metrics that we look at. How long is it taking a developer to get an AWS account? How long does it take them to get access to a service that they need to meet that business function letters and AI service, or server-less the application that they're trying to build, evaluating doors and then trying to improve our process.

**Rebecca:** And by keeping everyone in the loop I mean, it's this dynamic process that I'm sure is very complicated, but with everyone on the same page, they then feel more engaged in the process and that they matter more, which also drives productivity.

**Mamadou:** Yes. And sometimes whenever you have a lot of people, sometimes there's no agreement on the decision. But you have to have, be at a point where, when you come to an agreement, you might not have hundred percent consensus all the time, but if 70 or 80% agree, the other people still feel included. Their needs have been heard, their concerns will be addressed, one way or the other. And they're willing to move forward of the group, it's not because I didn't get my way, I'm not supporting the business. They understand that, and there's some trade offs that go in.

**Rebecca:** So I want to switch gears here, and talk a little bit about security, because health Health care data, represents some of the biggest security breaches of industry data. So how does cloud infrastructure and your security processes and practices, help counteract that?

**Mamadou:** Sure, so before you even get an account, the account is designed to meet all our Anthem, security best practices, and are based on our AWS agreement, those best practices listed on there, and working with our partners to make sure that by the time you get an account, it's secure. You only have access to services we gave you. And for each of those services, we do a full analysis on it, look at the various attack patterns, for instance, do an encryption and just ensure that the developers have a safe environment to experiment and develop. But that's why we're building the Self Service Catalog. It's a self service, but we put the services in there, after we evaluated them, we feel comfortable with them, some services, let's say some HEPA eligible services, we want to ensure if your application is a HEPA eligible application, you're using those services. So having the controls and processes in place before you even get to account, once you get it, and we have detective and preventive controls in place to alert us, in case of any anyone trying to use a service they're not supposed to use.

**Rebecca:** Shaan, I want to ask you about some research that Accenture did in 2017. The healthcare industry will be one of the top two industries to face the most digital disruption, in the next three years. This is part of the technology vision survey. How do you even begin to talk to clients through this, hold their hands through this enormously disruptive period in the healthcare industry? What what's your advice? And what do you think about the role, of big data and analytics going forward?

**Shaan:** Right, absolutely, I think so, there's definitely a tremendous amount of disruption and then it's where a number of large, some of our largest clients enterprises, really have to go through, their own transformational process, their own disruption process for the better, right? As you have a number of different startups, as you have a number of different new entrance into the field. And one of the things, say, cloud technologies do, is oftentimes, it's not necessarily a first mover advantage, but it's, it's actually the lowest common denominator that if you're not using some of the services, whether it's the predictive capabilities, for example, or some of the other analytics capabilities, that are offered, so whether it's predict whether Sage maker etc, within AWS and other capabilities, these are really the new foundation, and so many companies, no matter of size, are actually leveraging these, to build for a better experience.

And one of the things we're looking at, is how we can work with our clients to actually get them there, as soon as possible. And or use that again as the lowest common denominator, and build their own differentiators. Bring to bear some of their experience throughout, I would say years, potentially decades, of invaluable experience products of services, and and actually turbocharge them for lack of a better word.

**Rebecca:** So, Mamadou, large scale cloud transformation, innovation. This is a monumental challenge. But it's also a balancing act. How do you make sure that you are balancing the needs in adjacent areas like applications and onboarding and DevOps, how do you think about those things?

**Mamadou:** So, it's, it's really having that alignment and everyone understanding that this is a part of our corporate mission. We're trying to improve healthcare and reduce the cost, make it more affordable, improve people's lives. So all the teams' leaders are coming together. Like you mentioned, we have a cloud Tiger team and saying, for my business unit, or my application teams, these are the capabilities I need to support an AWS, "can the enterprise build a platform for me, "so I can focus on my business?" So it's bringing people together understanding where they are, Some application teams are more mature than others, finding really ways to understand our internal customers also, because we have many application teams and business divisions, and having a process while working with, you can have application migration, we can help you migrate to the cloud.

But that's not the goal. We want to help you understand the services you're using. It's enabling the application teams and providing them with a reference architecture or sometimes a reference implementation. We have a cloud enablement team, for instance, where it's an internal consulting group where you go in and say, "this is my application, "help me find the best way to move this application "to cloud and the best way to improve it over time." So it's bringing everyone together and working closely with HR, the training teams, the vendor management teams, it's almost everyone has to come together to scale this. If it's one team, it's easy to do it but when you want to make it enterprise wide, you have to really scale it and have the leaders aligned, everyone contributing to it.

**Rebecca:** It is all about alignment Shaan?

**Mamadou:** Yes.

**Shaan:** It is, it definitely is

**Rebecca:** Great.

**Shaan:** Yeah, I just wanted to comment earlier about the piece on security as well, right? So we talked about, of course, he talked about, Mamadou's talked about the service catalog, service introduction. So one of the things we do is, as part of that alignment, getting everybody's thoughts in terms of how we see this working, looking at that picture holistically. Also looking at what is the, what is the consumer experience? What's the desired experience? How do we secure that? How do we make sure that it's frictionless? And internally, how does that translate into giving the developers freedom but still having some guardrails in place, as well as some comprehensive visibility and monitoring? There are about a good dozen services, if not more, that provide different points of data metrics, alarms, within AWS.

But how do we do all of this at scale, at Anthem scale? And then back to the Self Service perspective, not just enable security and a part of the organization to monitor but how every part of the organization is accountable for ensuring security, be it an application team, be a part of the Dev psych ops process, be at the networking teams, infrastructure teams, et cetera. So how is everybody informed? And how do we bring that level of self service, not just from an application onboarding or migration perspective, but also from a security perspective.

**Mamadou:** Yeah, yeah. And it's all about really enabling the application teams also. Because we can tell you, you need to do these five things before you go to production. But if you don't know how to do them, you will not get to production. Instead of doing that providing you some references, providing you with people you can talk to that can help you go through that. And everyone collaborating as, "Let's help this application team get to production." Instead of, "We need to do these things "before we approve you."

**Rebecca:** Great.

**Shaan:** And there from an alignment perspective. Again, we've got folks from cloud strategy, operating model and governance, architecture, operations, the actual network team, parts of security Yeah, database, of course, database data warehouses etc. And then different parts of security. Be it all the way from encryption key management, the preventive side of things to more the operational side as well. And how all of these folks come together, with if I may add some fantastic executive support on the end and front, across the board to make things a reality, and I think it's been great so far.

**Mamadou:** We didn't start with that model. We did that model out of necessity.

**Shaan:** I know, yeah.

**Mamadou:** Because when we started with our cloud journey, we did have multiple teams, taking care of their area. They did their job properly, but then there were some tickets waiting in queues. And it was when you look at the end to end process, it was slowing down the application team. So we said, "How do we help accelerate this stuff? "Let's bring everyone together." Not, "I did my work and I'm giving it to the next team." But let's collaborate and make sure we're doing the work as one team.

**Rebecca:** Well, Mamadou, Shaan, thank you so much. A really fascinating conversation about re-imagining healthcare and how the cloud helps us do that.

**Mamadou:** Thank you.

**Shaan:** Right, thanks so much for having us.

**Rebecca:** Stay tuned for more of theCUBE's live coverage of the Accenture Executive Summit coming up in just a little bit.

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