



# PRASAD SANKARAN, ACCENTURE | IBM THINK 2020

## VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

00:00

>> Narrator: From theCUBE studios in Palo Alto in Boston,

00:03

it's theCUBE,

00:05

covering IBM Think, brought to you by IBM.

00:11

>> Hi, everybody, this is Dave Vellante.

00:12

You're watching theCUBE

00:13

and our multi day coverage of

00:16

the IBM Think Digital 2020 Experience,

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the Event Experience, wall to wall coverage.

00:22

Prasad Sankaran is here.

00:24

He's the senior managing director at Accenture Technology.

00:29

Great to see you, thanks for coming on Prasad.

00:31

>> Thank you for having me, Dave, it's a pleasure to be on.

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>> You are very welcome.

00:34

So I'm looking at your bio here,

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you're responsible for the relationship with IBM Red Hat

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so I'm interested in that

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and you're driving the Accenture Intelligent Cloud

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and engineering practice

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So we got a lot to talk about here.

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Let's start with Red Hat,

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obviously, it's probably the most important new,



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at least new part of IBM

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so here, you're in the right spot.

00:57

What's going on with Red Hat these days

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in your practice there?

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>> Oh, yeah, so you know,

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Red Hat is a extremely important part of our practice.

01:06

I am very much focused on what Accenture does

01:09

within the hybrid cloud space for our clients.

01:12

And Red Hat with OpenShift is, you know,

01:15

the most powerful platform that there is out there today,

01:19

in helping our clients both innovate in the new

01:22

as they expand in what they're doing digitally,

01:24

as well as move and modernize some of the equipment

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they have, you know, from existing estate.

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>> You know, when the Red Hat deal was completed,

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I did a little breaking analysis,

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my sort of weekly editorial segment and I said,

01:37

"You know, this Red Hat acquisition

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OpenShift is the linchpin."

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And I went right there, right where you just went,

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it was all about application modernization and hybrid cloud,

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bringing that cloud experience to on-prem or across clouds.

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And so that was always my take.

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You know, there was a lot of, you know,

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marketing around cloud generally

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but more specifically, it's, to me,

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it was always about that application modernization

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so I'm curious as to how your clients

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have responded to that.

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And you know, whether or not

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I'm sort of on the right track there.

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>> Yeah, I think there are multiple factors.



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I mean, if you look at just broadly the areas,

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I think there are three areas.

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The first, as you correctly said, Dave,

02:20

is application modernization.

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So our clients are looking at the amount of technical debt

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that they have in their legacy systems, they're looking to,

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you know, modernize the right parts of their legacy estate,

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you know, while looking at the trade off

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around the cost as well as the performance.

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So, Red Hat and OpenShift really gives them the platform

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that allows them to do that

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and make, take their journey forward

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from an app mode perspective onto the clouds, you know,

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the various public clouds.

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The second area is actually in greenfield development.

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So as clients are building new applications,

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they want to be able to, you know,

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build applications that they can run across, you know,

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multiple platforms,

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whether it's private cloud or public cloud,

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and particularly in areas like Europe,

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I think this is particularly significant

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and we can talk about that in some more detail.

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And then the third area, which is emerging, as you know, is,

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is the whole area of edge and IoT,

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which is going to actually move a lot of the compute away

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from the central clouds into the, into the edge

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and, you know, obviously OpenShift is going to

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play a big part there as well, bringing all the three parts

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of the enterprise as it were, you know,

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the edge, the cloud, as well as all of the legacy



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and private estates that exists today.

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>> So to talk more about Europe, what's going on there?

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Is that a GDPR related thing?

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Country, you know, in country, may keep the data in country,

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what is the issue there?

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>> Yeah, it's a little bit of both.

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You know, if you look at particularly financial services,

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but certainly other industries as well.

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The regulators are extremely focused on making sure

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that, you know, the right balance is being struck.

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Even if you're using public clouds, you know,

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they are going to talk about

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the amount of public cloud usage

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that can be for every application,

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the various applications that have to be

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actually running on a private cloud estate.

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So, in a scenario like that,

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you will really want to be able to build applications

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that you can run across, you know,

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multiple different platforms.

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And, you know, OpenShift gives you the answer

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to be able to do that, to be able to, you know,

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have a policy based approach

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to where in a certain workloads

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can be working on your private cloud

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and certainly you can move it out to, you know,

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public cloud when the need arises.

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>> Prasad, explain the edge angle,

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is that about bringing programmability or the cloud model

04:45

to the data at the edge?

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Maybe you can explain that in more detail.

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>> Sure, sure.



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And, you know, the edge and IoT, and the Internet of Things,

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impacts different industries differently.

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You know, I can talk about, you know,

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since we mentioned financial services,

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let me bring up insurance, for example,

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if you look at autonomous,

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you know, cars and, you know self-driven vehicles and so on

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as they're going to change daily life,

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what happens in those cases

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is that you want a lot of that data to be processed

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at the vehicle level.

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So at the edge, rather than a lot of processing

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happening across the network, you know,

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up at the central cloud, and then coming back down

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to the vehicle.

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Because the latency just doesn't allow these,

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these sorts of applications to happen.

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You look at multiple industries

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that are really being impacted by the edge.

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And so as that starts to become more prevalent,

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and about 50 to 60%, of a lot of this compute moves off

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of the central cloud to various edge applications.

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What you really want to have is like the versions of

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these platforms running on those particular devices,

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and the rest of it running either on your private

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or your central cloud

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so you have to be able to use

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and move a lot of these applications

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which are container base, you know, across the platform.

06:04

>> You know, Ginni Rometty, now often talked about

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how only 20% of the workloads have moved to the cloud.



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It's really difficult to move workloads

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that are sort of the next, next wave.

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How do you see that evolving from Accenture's perspective?

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I think, I think you have, I mean,

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you get, you're a technology agnostic, right?

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I mean, you really, you know,

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you're not a purveyor of hardware or software.

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And so how do you see as a kind of a quasi independent here,

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how do you see that hybrid cloud,

06:37

that cloud journey playing out?

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>> Yeah, I think, you know, the,

06:42

we have the same number, by the way.

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I mean, we see about, when we talk to our clients,

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and we've surveyed several CEOs and CIOs.

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The number we arrive at is at about 20%

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I think of workloads having moved to the cloud.

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Now a lot of that has been SaaS based, you know,

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they've taken a lot of functions

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that could really be SaaSified, so to speak.

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Now comes the part around really taking portions of

07:06

your legacy estate that you need to move to the cloud,

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whether you're willing to do it as a PaaS or an IaaS

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you know, doesn't really matter.

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And then, you know, we even to that

07:16

the requirements around data privacy,

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around compliance, around high performance, et cetera,

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which might either take you

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to a private cloud type of orientation

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or take it to various public clouds.

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So there's a lot of that work be done.

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So what we are doing with many of our clients



07:33  
is really working with them.

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Taking a lot of our tools,

07:37  
we have a tool that that we use called myNav,

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which allows you to really assess a client's  
legacy estate

07:45  
and figure out you know, what part of it

07:47  
that really we should be modernizing

07:49  
and which of the partners really that we need

07:51  
to be working with, to be able to modernize that  
aspect.

07:54  
In concurrence with that is all of the new  
development

07:57  
that's happening, all the cloud native  
development

08:00  
which is naturally going into, you know,

08:03  
a lot of these public as well as private cloud.

08:05  
So a lot of that work, the next, you know,

08:09  
let's say 30 to 40%, over the next few years

08:12  
is going to be a lot of work that happens

08:13  
and that's going to be heavier lifting as

compared to,

08:16  
you know, the initial 20% that is up already.

08:20  
>> Well, heavy, heavy lifting is kind of

08:22  
your area of expertise.

08:25  
I mean, think about Accenture, deep industry  
expertise,

08:28  
global presence,

08:29  
I mean, as does IBM, I'm curious as to,

08:32  
your relationship with IBM, what,

08:35  
what's the partnership like?

08:37  
Maybe you could describe sort of

08:38  
where you guys complement each other,

08:40  
I know, you compete in certain segments,

08:42  
but where do you complement each other?

08:46  
>> You know, like you pointed out earlier, Dave,  
you know,

08:48  
we are very much technology agnostic.

08:51  
We have been on a public cloud journey

08:54  
for the last several years and really build our  
skills



08:57  
and you know, support around what the hyperscale

09:00  
has been doing in the market,

09:03  
as hybrid cloud has evolved over the last, you know,

09:06  
couple of years especially,

09:07  
we see that OpenShift and Red Hat and IBM, you know,

09:10  
play a big part in, you know,

09:11  
in this part of the journey, as well as IBM public cloud,

09:14  
we see, you know, the use of IBM public cloud continue

09:17  
to increase in the market.

09:18  
So all of these, you know, companies,

09:21  
I think, play a very important role

09:23  
in what our clients want to do to take their journeys

09:26  
to the cloud forward.

09:28  
So, you know, we're trying to piece all of that together

09:30  
to have the right, you know, solutions to our clients,

09:34  
and really brings together I think, three aspects, one is,

09:38  
you know, country specific requirements.

09:40  
The second is the specific industry

09:42  
that you're talking about.

09:44  
And, you know, third is technology

09:45  
so really, it's a, it's the intersection of region,

09:48  
technology, as well as industry.

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It's something that, you know, we're naturally good at.

09:53  
We have several clients where we do a lot of, you know,

09:56  
like, we have deep existing relationships

09:58  
and we certainly partner with IBM very closely.

10:02  
We're the largest system integrator of

10:05  
all of IBM software products globally,

10:08  
outside of IBM themselves

10:11  
and we've been that, maintaining that status for many years.

10:14  
We've been doing the same on the Red Hat side





10:16  
so as IBM and Red Hat come together,

10:18  
I think at many of our clients

10:20  
were very natural consultants

10:22  
and systems integrator for IBM Red Hat.

10:26  
>> We haven't talked much about multicloud this week.

10:29  
I know, Stu Miniman, my colleague

10:32  
has been hosting the Red Hat Summit

10:34  
and they're talking a lot about it

10:35  
but again, I want to tap you're sort of, you know,

10:39  
your agnostic brain.

10:41  
You look at the landscape,

10:42  
and you've got different suppliers

10:44  
coming at it from different angles, right?

10:46  
AWS won't use the term.

10:49  
You know, Microsoft obviously has a good story there,

10:52  
you know, Google with Anthos, et cetera.

10:55  
VMware wants its piece of the pie.

10:58  
IBM is kind of, to me,

11:00  
one of the most interesting with Red Hat, of course,

11:03  
because not only does it have its own cloud,

11:07  
but it's very aggressive around supporting multiple clouds.

11:12  
It's, it seems to be, you know,

11:14  
intent on doing whatever the client wants.

11:17  
Clearly, that's your business.

11:19  
So I wonder what you could share with us

11:21  
about your thoughts on multicloud specifically?

11:25  
>> Yeah, absolutely. I think, you know,

11:26  
multicloud is certainly where a lot of our clients are at.

11:31  
They have started the multicloud journey, you know,

11:33  
you know, a few years ago, they have gone with more than,

11:37  
you know, maybe one hyperscale although they have had,



11:39  
you know, just few workloads perhaps in multiple of them

11:43  
and really focused on one of them.

11:45  
But as they start increasing the percentage of work

11:49  
that they're doing within the, within the clouds,

11:52  
they start looking at a lot of these clouds

11:54  
for a very specific reason.

11:56  
And most of our clients end up using

11:58  
two to three be public clouds

11:59  
and when I look at the public cloud, certainly,

12:01  
you mentioned all of them, AWS, Microsoft Azure, Google,

12:06  
you know, with the GCP product, as well as, you know,

12:10  
IBM with IBM's public cloud.

12:13  
And then with OpenShift, really being able

12:15  
to run across all of these public clouds, allow you,

12:18  
allows you to actually design, you know,

12:20  
Microsoft based applications that are containerized

12:23  
and you can, you know, pretty much run them across

12:25  
whichever cloud you want.

12:27  
And this is where we really, you know, work with our clients

12:29  
to really understand their need, and to help them with,

12:33  
you know, the specific clouds that we won't be working with,

12:36  
and which applications really should reside where,

12:40  
makes sense for them.

12:41  
And like I said, from a Europe perspective, you know,

12:44  
with GDPR, et cetera

12:45  
I think that journey is a little bit,

12:48  
you know, further advanced than it is perhaps,

12:50  
in other places, other parts of the world,

12:52  
but we're seeing, you know, much more use of multicloud



12:54  
in addition to of course, SaaS

12:56  
and the increased use of it.

12:58  
>> To protect your role as global,

13:00  
obviously, not just-- >> Yes

13:00  
>> Not just US, right?

13:02  
PAN, PAN the world

13:05  
or is it US and Europe or?

13:07  
>> No, it is, it's global

13:08  
so it's US, Europe, as well as

13:10  
what we call the broad market.

13:13  
>> So, it includes China then, is that correct or?

13:16  
>> That's right, yes.

13:18  
>> Yeah, so okay, so now you got Alibaba,

13:20  
you know, >> Yeah.

13:21  
>> Hopefully you're playing there.

13:22  
So that's yet another cloud.

13:23  
>> Absolutely.

13:24  
>> And so, and one of the roles that you play

13:27  
as a systems integrator and somebody who's, you know,

13:29  
trying to trust, that is,

13:30  
you help customers pick the right workload for the right,

13:34  
you know, infrastructure and make it work, obviously,

13:36  
and to help them de-risk.

13:38  
One of the things we've noted is, you know,

13:40  
going back to the 80, 20,

13:42  
or 20 has moved to 80, hasn't,

13:45  
it's the hard stuff,

13:46  
that a lot of that mission critical stuff

13:48  
hasn't moved and may, may never move,

13:50  
but some of it will.

13:52  
It just seems to us that, you know,

13:54  
moving the mission critical workloads is very risky.

13:58  
And so what you want to do is make sure that



14:00  
you de-risk that, maybe keep it on, you know,

14:03  
if it's an IBM mission critical workload,

14:05  
maybe IBM has got ways to keep it safe in the IBM Cloud and,

14:09  
you know, cross connect them, et cetera.

14:12  
I wonder what your thoughts are on moving?

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What has heretofore been hard to move workloads?

14:19  
Does it make sense to put them in the cloud?

14:20  
Or does it make sense to put a brick wall around them

14:22  
and leave them on-prem?

14:24  
I know, it depends but maybe you could frame that for us.

14:28  
>> Sure, absolutely.

14:29  
So we have, you know, a concept

14:31  
that we call digital decoupling.

14:33  
And what that really entails is,

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is to take a look at these monolithic applications

14:38  
that are running, you know, on the back end,

14:41  
and then to look at certain feature extraction

14:45  
that you know, you can, you can perform,

14:47  
take those features out, especially things

14:50  
that will give you access to digital channels, you know,

14:53  
rewrite those applications, containerize them

14:55  
and then be able to run them on multiple clouds

14:58  
and we've been doing that with, you know, many clients,

15:02  
for example, you know, large hotel chains,

15:06  
where we've taken a lot of that functionality,

15:08  
containerized it, run it on public clouds

15:10  
and it's only the final commit,

15:12  
after you go through the process of figuring out, you know,

15:15  
what kind of room do you want,

15:17  
picking out the various features,

15:18  
it's not till the final commit that

15:20  
that happens on the mainframe side.



15:23

So feature extraction through digital decoupling,

15:26

I think offers you tremendous offloading of

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a lot of those features, as well as processing

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onto the public cloud.

15:33

Certainly, IBM is also looking at many,

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many ways in which they can move some of these

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core functions as well onto their public cloud.

15:41

So I think the journey continues, like you said, you know,

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it may not be ever that you have 100% of the processing

15:49

that happens on the public cloud.

15:50

And again, we have to take a look at the amount of work

15:53

that there is, the risk reward, the cost that it will take

15:56

and you know, with the enormous amount of functionality

15:59

that has Place.

16:01

This is where we have to advise our clients on, you know,

16:03

the journey as well as the order in which we achieve this.

16:08

>> Well, the landscape, we talked earlier about edge,

16:10

you're talking about multiple clouds, you've got on-prem,

16:12

you've got mission critical workloads.

16:14

And you mentioned, you know, containers.

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People want portability, of course,

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containers are a necessary ingredient of that portability

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but it's insufficient

16:23

and so you just see complexity increasing as we,

16:27

as we proceed down this cloud journey,

16:29

you got to secure those,

16:30

those containers and microservices

16:33

sometimes aren't so micro, and you,

16:36

you've got to make them work across cloud.

16:38

So it seems to me that you guys and your,

16:42

your clients got a lot of work to do,



16:44  
which is a good thing as long as they make the business case

16:47  
and it's adding value to the organization.

16:51  
>> Yeah, absolutely.

16:51  
And then this is where you know, you take certain functions

16:54  
I think you have a lot of SaaS options,

16:57  
particularly around certain things that you are doing

17:00  
that tend to be you know, commoditize, so to speak.

17:02  
Certain other functions where you don't need perhaps

17:05  
the elasticity that cloud offers

17:07  
so you can have, you know, past solutions

17:09  
that you can build more quickly.

17:10  
But then you want other solutions that need

17:13  
to be more mission critical, more resilient,

17:16  
and certainly more elastic

17:17  
and that's where, you know, you look at, you know,

17:19  
producing microservices, containerized applications

17:23  
that you can really burst across, you know, multiple clouds,

17:26  
and so on.

17:27  
So these are all part of the architectures

17:30  
that were building, designing and implementing at our firm.

17:35  
>> Prasad, where can I go to get more info

17:37  
on this whole topic?

17:40  
>> From, you know, a hybrid cloud perspective,

17:42  
as well as our public cloud perspective,

17:44  
we go to [accenture.com](https://www.accenture.com) and you go to the cloud section,

17:48  
there's a lot of information as well as credentials

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and white papers that you'll be able to access

17:54  
and also it gives you access

17:55  
to specific people that you can,

17:58  
you know, reach out to and contact

18:00  
and get further information on what we've been able to do.



18:04  
>> Very interesting conversation Prasad,

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I mean, it's great to see you guys

18:07  
working very closely with IBM.

18:10  
I love it, two global companies,

18:12  
deep industry expertise, solving hard problems

18:15  
so thanks so much for coming on theCUBE.

18:17  
>> Not at all, thank you so much for doing this,  
Dave.

18:20  
>> You're very welcome

18:21  
and thank you for watching everybody.

18:22  
This is Dave Vellante

18:24  
and it's a wall to wall coverage

18:25  
of the IBM Digital Event Experience around  
Think 2020,

18:30  
we're right back right at the short break,

18:32  
you're watching theCUBE.

18:33  
(gentle music)

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