

PERFORMANCE ACHIEVEMENT



CIO 24/7 Podcast:

Technology helps Accenture people achieve their best performance

CIO 24/7 Podcast: Performance Achievement **Featuring managing directors Jason Warnke and Kush Jhawar**

Jason Warnke: Welcome to the CIO 24/7 Podcast bringing you the latest updates from Accenture's internal IT organization. I'm your host, Jason Warnke and today I have Accenture Managing Director Kush Jhawar with me to talk about how we are using technology to help our people achieve their best performance. Thanks for joining me today, Kush.

Kush Jhawar: Jason, thanks for having me. I am really happy to be here.

Jason Warnke: Great. So, Kush, Accenture is revolutionizing its approach to Performance Management putting our over 400,000 employees at the center of the experience and your team is responsible for developing and supporting the tools and technology that are helping us drive this cultural shift. So, tell us, how are we reimagining Performance Achievement and what technologies are we using to enable this movement?

Kush Jhawar: First, Jason, you're right, it is absolutely very exciting time at Accenture for our people and ultimately for our clients. You know for a long time, Accenture has had a Performance Management model in place focused on managing performance, looking backwards. We've turned that model on its head to focus on achieving performance. Putting people and their passions at the forefront. Helping them look to their future, not procedures, protocols and rankings, at the center of it all. For Accenture's internal IT organization, this cultural shift has opened the opportunity to develop a new, online performance tool on a digital platform, in the Cloud, replacing our existing Performance Management tool. Accenture Human Resources began designing Performance Achievement a short 12ish months ago. It was designed and developed in collaboration with Accenture IT, Fjord, which is a part of our Accenture Interactive business and early adopter groups, really working with our business and our employees to provide us feedback and thinking on how we wanted to bring Performance Achievement to life. HR and Fjord focused on applying human centered design to the concepts while IT partnered with HR in developing the functional and technical requirements.

Jason Warnke: Wow. So, did we go after an off the shelf solution for this or was it something that we developed ourselves?

Kush Jhawar: Great question. Largely custom with a big amount of support and help from the Cloud. Accenture IT built its own solution because there was nothing in the marketplace to meet our unique requirements. Our objectives were pretty simple. Stay on the leading edge architecturally aligning to the Cloud, to PaaS, creating an ability for us to deliver at speed with flexibility. To take in feedback from our employees to experiment and from an architecture standpoint, ensuring that we move towards the use of microservices and as I said Cloud first in everything that we are doing. From the back end, it is really important to think about how this came to life given the pace at which we moved. At the back end, the team leveraged Accenture's experience with Amazon Web Services to use a Platform-as-a-Service offering that was a perfect fit. This approach enabled moving away from a traditionally structured database and instead allowed us to move toward the use of unstructured databases. This leading-edge architecture supported microservices and the PaaS offering which enabled the IT team to maximize time spent in a meaningful way allowing people to have discussions about the program's focus and most importantly, what our people were telling us. It also allowed the teams to be fast and agile, helping them to meet the aggressive timelines set by leadership. In fact, our first release came to life a short two to three months after the initiation of the project with a series of releases that came alive every four to five weeks aligning to and meeting how

the business process came to life over the course of the last year. At this point, Performance Achievement is available to all our employees and it is unleashing the strengths and potential of our greatest asset, our people, to achieve higher performance for themselves, their teams and their clients.

Jason Warnke: Wow. It sounds like a tremendous teaming and collaboration to deploy such a fundamental shift to the way that we do Performance Achievement at Accenture. What are some of the successes that you've seen since we've gone live?

Kush Jhavar: So, first of all Jason, you are absolutely right. A tremendous collaboration, no doubt, across so many parts of our organization. HR, our practice, I talked about Fjord, our CIO organization, our partners like AWS. It certainly has been an amazing learning experience for myself, for our teams and then I think for all of our people. You know, some big things stick out to me. One, we really put our people first. A tremendous amount of research before we initiated and kicked off, not just technology research, but what were the principles that we wanted to adhere to as we looked at Performance Achievement. A lot of learnings on the technology front in terms of making sure up front, we were going to be able to perform and scale to meet Accenture's needs. So, think about things like over, or an average of about 70,000 visits per day. We needed to make sure, up front, that we were going to be able to scale to that level. Our team has deployed more than 12 major releases in the short eight months, over 20 microservices and as I said earlier, we deployed over 4,000 times all with zero downtime given that we were deploying in the Cloud and able to keep our services up so the experience our people had was no downtime.

Jason Warnke: Wow. That's spectacular. I mean, in only really made possible by the source of Cloud technologies that you are leveraging. That's a fascinating story. So, Kush, when you compare our previous Performance Management solution to what it is today, what do you see are the major differences?

Kush Jhavar: Jason, really good question. I've had this mantra from the beginning of the program that said that technology is an enabler of our services and the cultural shift. It is not necessarily leading the way and I think that's one of the biggest mindset shifts that we've had from a technology standpoint. It really comes to life as we look at a number of areas and a number of things that we used to do versus what we are doing now. For example, yesterday, we would have had technology supporting processes in the back office, today technology is supporting conversations. People interacting, thinking about their future. We previously built to support formal timelines, often on a quarterly or every six month or even at times, on a yearly basis. Today, we moved to a model where we are real-time on a very quick basis with flexibility delivering releases into production with zero downtime based on feedback from our people. Yesterday, we would have been thinking about how do we secure the data in a way that only you as the owner or individual that's created that data can look at it. Today, we're creating an environment through our technology where we want people to share. Share their priorities, where they want to, share their feedback. Really the shift is, one of moving away from back office, from supporting processes, from supporting the organization to one where we are really looking to support our employees and help them grow their careers.

Jason Warnke: That's great. It really is putting an emphasis as you said, right from the start, back on the people, not on the process, on the future, not on the past and really getting the focus to having the right sorts of conversations with people and that technology just supports that. So, that's fascinating. I love the stark differences you highlighted there between where we were and where we're headed. So, with all of that, then what's next?

Kush Jhavar: So, Jason, there is a lot in front of us. Both as it relates to Performance Achievement as we continue that journey and also in our broader HR transformation journey.

Performance Achievement really is just the starting point of a bigger and broader journey that we are taking on within Accenture. So, specifically for Performance Achievement, our journey, it continues. It is not a one year thing. We need to look at the cultural shift that we are driving, embedding how people work in this way over the next several years. Technology will certainly be a core component of supporting that. As we look at our broader journey, we need to relook at our technology foundation. Look at what that foundation does from a data standpoint, how we bring our data together. Look at the foundation from a HCM solution standpoint. What HCM solution will support us? Will allow us to deliver agilely, flexibly, at speed so many of the changes that our HR and business organizations are trying to drive across our people and most importantly, taking into account and allowing us to deliver to a very different employee experience a place where our employees are informing us and telling us what they need and how our technology needs to support them. So, a lot in front of us. Multiple years of work in front of us but very, very exciting time as we look and change in the HR space.

Jason Warnke: Well, thanks again Kush, for joining us today and thank you for joining another CIO 24/7 Podcast. I am Jason Warnke and with me today has been Accenture Managing Director Kush Jhawar to discuss the technology that's unleashing the strengths and potential of our people to achieve higher performance for themselves, their teams and most importantly, our clients. Be sure to check out previous episodes on Accenture.com.

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