



# ON THE PLATFORM EPISODE: (PART 4) WHAT'S NEXT FOR SMBS: GROWTH PERFORMANCE SOLUTIONS

## VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

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**Jacqueline:** Hello everyone and welcome to On the Platform. This is Jacqueline Morgan and today we're diving deeper into our human-machine model, Growth Performance Services, and the SMB market. So, welcome Danielle Moffat, our Offering Lead for GPS and Danielle, we've been working on the evolution of Growth Performance Services for a few months, and I think it's time to share! So please, give us the scoop.

**Danielle:** Great, thanks for having me on the show.

When we talk to clients today we hear about the tremendous pressure to drive revenue growth, especially through the SMB segment, by

optimizing the channel, and by growing and retaining existing customers. And they're validating the effects that they're feeling from the failing funnel – so leads that aren't quite good enough; insufficient ability to attract and retain talent; lack of automation and process optimization; and organizational barriers from siloes that prevents optimization.

So we launched Growth Performance Services to address the end-to-end needs as well as specific point solutions to help our clients transform to a customer-led and integrated model across marketing, sales and services to achieve the very best customer experiences on the planet. And to achieve sustainable growth at scale, clients need to transform the front office with digital at the core. So integrating marketing, sales, and service; and deliver hyper-relevant experiences across all touchpoints in over the entire customer lifecycle. Our services are especially suited to clients addressing the "long tail" of the SMB market segment, because our human-machine model eliminates the manual efforts needed to convert leads, which previously made the long tail a very unprofitable pursuit.



**Jacqueline:** You know I love the point you just made – I love all the points – but one in particular is around delivering consistent and hyper-relevant experiences across all touchpoints (or trust points) within the customer lifecycle. When we think about what our research tells us, it's really that SMBs are looking for persistent relevance. So what's the evidence that we're really headed in the right direction with GPS.

**Danielle:** Well we think we're headed in the right direction because of the types of conversations that we're having with clients, and how the message is really resonating with them. So you've been at several of these client meetings with me, and you hear it in their comments and how they interact with us in the room.

**Jacqueline:** Absolutely. And I'm a big fan of less PowerPoint and more conversations and drawing pictures. You know, when we both stand at the white board and we share our point of view and before you know it, our clients have picked up a marker, they start drawing pictures of how they envision their processes and technology reframed, they adapt our terminology and share their journey really thinking about it in a new way with sales, marketing and service really integrated. That's happiness right there.

**Danielle:** Yes, that is happiness right there. It has been very interesting and incredibly energizing to have different client conversations that are focused on growth, scalability, and capabilities rather than the themes a few years back when we were much more focused on cost reduction and driving operational excellence and gaining minimal productivity improvements. It's really refreshing to be talking about how to best serve their customers with best experiences rather than "get off the phone as fast as possible." That's just old school commoditized work that's moving to extinction.

**Jacqueline:** I love that we've moved away from the "hi can you hold please, hi can you hold please" and the rapid hand off from a marketing agent to a support agent, or from a support agent to a salesperson, to a much more robust "conversational" model that is driven by our human-machine capability of agents being informed across all these functions.

**Danielle:** You know we've had tremendous client uptake and expansion across all models – digital transformation, strategy and consulting and managed services. And we're co-investing with some of the most progressive clients as we continue to evolve this business. We've grown tremendously over the past three to four years and we estimate that the market opportunity in this space in just a few of our targeted industries is a trillion dollars of spend. So it's been a lot of work and it will continue to be a lot of work, but oh my gosh it has been so much fun!

**Jacqueline:** Fun, but I gotta tell you, that's a huge number. And I've only been here for a few years but, is a trillion dollars a big number inside Accenture?

**Danielle:** Oh absolutely and it certainly does get people's attention as well as energy and focus.

**Jacqueline:** I bet. Can you give our listeners an example that shows that we're kind of headed in the right direction? Just pick one, I know we have lots, but an example of this integrated sales, marketing and services human-machine model.

**Danielle:** Sure, I'll give you a very recent example. So one of our clients – a software and platform client – had a need to grow revenue – which was a directive from their board. And their platform was free for users, and it was very widely used globally, and so as a result they just had this incredible user base. So then they began selling advertising products and came to us for help to operate and optimize an inside sales function targeted at SMBs. As so as part of this, we set up what we called a Sales Intelligence Hub – which is a command center of sorts – that leverages machine learning, artificial intelligence, deep analytics, data from diverse services, web scrapers and automation to help enrich, score, and prioritize the leads that we receive. And once we've done this, we route the leads to the appropriate teams to follow up with the SMBs. And by setting up this human-machine model, we were able to drastically reduce the lead cycle time and significantly reduce the effort to qualify leads, as well as improving the lead conversion rate. And so in this manner, our team contributes to the



conversion of tens of million dollars in revenue annually, which is a huge impact. And of course we're providing services to the SMBs as they're onboarding to the platform and starting to sell advertising.

**Jacqueline:** What is it about what we've done with this client that makes them like us. I mean often times what we'll find is that they'll do it themselves, or we have a great idea and perhaps they partner with someone else.

**Danielle:** Our clients like us for many reasons. But, with this client in particular I think it was our ability to provide new and innovative capabilities, a broad range of services, and then to bring innovative talent sort of in a liquid model. And so specifically with this client, they also had an idea for where they wanted to go, and we worked collaboratively alongside them and co-created the vision in support of a human-machine model. We have a vast array of assets that we can deploy to make an immediate impact – and many clients just don't have that ability or perhaps the interest to build those types of assets on the scale that we do.

**Jacqueline:** Well tell me more about those assets. What does that mean?

**Danielle:** Well we certainly have many assets. One of the newer asset models we have is a "society of bots". And so the Sales Intelligence Hub that I was just describing actually has a society of bots within in – which is a variety of artificial intelligence working together on different functions to create an impactful outcome.

**Jacqueline:** I love the name ...Society of bots.... it makes me think of Medieval secret societies.

**Danielle:** Yeah and castles in Europe with dark hallways...it certainly does have that flavor. No but our BOTs are sunshiny and happy, they're not lurking around castles. They're working hand in hand with our team members to make their jobs easier and more interesting. So for example, we have web scrapers that can scan SMB sites for evidence of ecommerce, or the existence of

downloadable apps, or existing advertising, among other things – and these factors go into the lead enrichment model and get higher scores than SMB leads that don't have these capabilities. And we know from our experience that those attributes are often associated with SMBs needing and wanting the advertising products that our client is selling.

Another AI advisor in the Society is a content advisor and this recognizes and classifies images, again contributing to the lead scoring algorithm. And this advisor can recognize specific images that are either targeting a specific demographic, or it could be recognizing images that are deemed undesirable and therefore we don't want to continue pursuing a lead with that company.

And of course along with all of this data and applied intelligence comes the need to build, run, and maintain – which is creating new roles such as Knowledge Engineers, Data scientists, Business Advisors, etc...we spoke about those roles on our last podcast.

**Jacqueline:** That's right, that's right. So I'm going to ask you my favorite question. So what? So what's the impact on SMBs?

**Danielle:** So what? That's what. The human-machine model dramatically improves the probability of lead conversion – and our leads are much more rapidly qualified which enables our agents to have "conversations" with SMBs about what they need versus hard selling, or selling things that have no relevance to them. And so one of the benefits of importing our third party data sources is identifying the "signals" that SMBs are ready to buy so that we're no longer waiting until they're 70 percent through their buying decision before engaging them. And this make us and our clients a lot more relevant.

**Jacqueline:** That's a great example. It's a great example of our work in lead generation and lead enrichment but what else can you share about examples of other work we do, maybe in Customer Success around satisfaction and retention?



**Danielle:** Yeah perfect, I am glad you asked actually! So let me give you an example of some of the work we do in Customer Success. And what we mean when we talk about Customer Success includes activities like onboarding, support and advocacy. So one of our clients – a large software and platform client – approached us because they had poor adoption of their products among their SMB customer base. So, while they had decent conversions –so they had the purchases and subscriptions – they were experiencing less than desirable usage and very little deep engagement with their customers.

**Jacqueline:** Ok, so what does that really kind of look like?

**Danielle:** Well, perhaps they signed up and started using the product but not consistently or oftentimes, which is most common, they're using some of the products but not the entire product suite that they signed up for, so they had limited engagement and usage. And so we helped re-design an integrated onboarding and support experience – and our goal was to spend the time with each customer to A. resolve the issue that they were reaching us and then B. to ensure they understood how to use the product specific for their business. And this model worked really well. We ended up improving our first call resolution rates, we ended up having 90 percent 5-star ratings and it also enabled the customers to know that they had a support team that was available to help them as they grew.

**Jacqueline:** And I imagine that this really resulted in deeper engagement, longer term retention, improved customer satisfaction, all those good things, right.

**Danielle:** Absolutely.

**Jacqueline:** So essentially – if I think about your two examples – our human-machine model in the first example provides us the data insights and intelligence to deliver the right messages across the channel of the customer's choice, and in the second example it helps better inform our agents about where our customer's customers are struggling so we can intercede to better enable their decision to purchase or subscribe – which ultimately prevents churn.

**Danielle:** Absolutely, you're spot on.

**Jacqueline:** Excellent. Well Danielle, I appreciate you taking time to come On the Platform. Your examples really bring our success in serving the SMB market to life.

**Danielle:** Well thanks so much for having me on the show. I just love our discussions, and I think sadly I'm going to have to get out of this comfortable couch.

**Jacqueline:** Well folks, stay tuned for the next podcast in the SMBs Matter series On the Platform. We'll dive deeper into our Asia Pacific SMB research with James Kim, Industry MD in our Software & Platforms Asia Pac practice. James will share some interesting insights drawn from our recent SMB research in China, Indonesia and Japan.

We hope you all enjoyed this episode. Please help us get the word out and be sure to subscribe, share, rate and review our series – we'd love to hear from you and hope you tune in again for our next episode of On the Platform!

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