



FRictionless BUSINESS: BUILT TO PARTNER AT SCALE—A DISCUSSION WITH DOMINIC DELMOLINO & SARA ABIUSIE

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

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Dominic Delmolino, Chief Technology Officer, Accenture Federal Services
Sara Abiusi, Civilian Technology Lead

Dominic Delmolino: Sara, today we're talking about 'frictionless business' – one of the Accenture Technology Vision trends for 2018. And when I think of that term, I think of the old B2B and service-oriented architecture. Maybe this kind of, exchanging information between the businesses about when the package is going to arrive; when inventory is going to arrive on the

loading dock. But, this trend seems like it's much more than that. It sounds like businesses are really reaching into other businesses' systems and forming this stronger, symbiotic relationship about information sharing and package tracking, or inventory demand, or much more integrated and tightly knit ecosystem of business-to-business communication. Are you seeing that with our clients and any ways that you've seen that being moved in government as well?

Sara Abiusi: I see two main areas of frictionless business taking off in sort of a technology aspect. So first, microservices where people, companies and government agencies are exposing individual services to not only government agencies but also private government too. And then the second thing is blockchain. So, the idea of being able to share data very broadly and with different security aspects, through maybe internally within their own government agency, and also outside and with other government agencies.

DD: So, the idea that businesses and organizations, agencies can talk to each other at more granular level with microservices, you



were talking about, or maybe have a trusted data relationship through something like a blockchain. Are there some use cases or examples where you're actually seeing that playing out?

SA: Actually, postal service has done some of this for a really long time, it's not actually microservices but, they have an API layer that they call 'Web Tools' that they've exposed over the years to anybody. So, actually government agencies use it, private citizens use it, as well as companies use it. So, they do all kinds of different things.

First, you can track a package for it, so you're a company and you need to see where your parcels are going, and you want to make sure that you have a very collaborative relationship with your help desk or your customer care - you can use that. They have a way to actually validate that addresses are correct. Address cleansing is an age-old problem, right?

And so, you can basically put in an address and it'll do a compare to say, 'Yes, it's a good one' or 'Here's recommendations.' Actually, about 56,000 users use this a year and they do billions of transactions through it.

DD: So, when you say 56,000 users, you're actually talking about organizations, right? So, that's a huge broad array of people that are integrated with that capability.

SA: You know it's funny, another client recently talking about doing something for a permitting system. And one of the requirements was to essentially do some address cleansing and they said, 'Yeah, we're going to use the USPS API.'

DD: Oh, that so makes sense.

SA: So that was really great.

DD: So, do they also have other ways to talk to other agencies and organizations to talk to their APIs? So, like to give visibility into maybe package demand or to get ahead of the curve to get ready for a big season.

SA: They do. I'll give you an example of one thing in the logistics area. So, when you think about logistics processing, postal services has a

huge amount of plants, they have a lot of docks, but they also have smaller ones too, but they have to manage the flow of trucks coming in; the trailers and the parcels. And actually, they talk back and forth through web services and APIs to actually say, 'Hey, I'm coming in here - do you have space for this?' And so, it actually allows their transportation logistics systems on the customer side speak so the postal services side can actually see what they're doing.

DD: It's almost like an end-to-end ability to understand demand flow and work flow and transaction flow. Do you think there's some lessons that other agencies can learn from that? Or, what if I'm a small agency or someone that hasn't done this before, how do I get started? What are some things I should consider?

SA: I think it's just thinking about the small things and the small unique transactions that you can do. And maybe you're building internally-minded, but that you can actually make available externally, and that having something good internally that can be used external is not a hard step. You're going to have to do some authentications, security stuff but making sure you have those good, grounded use cases of what type of thing is in small pieces that you can break apart and are really important. I think that is really the big first step.

DD: Great. As you consider this trend, do you have any questions that you're interested in exploring or that you have clients asking about?

SA: I think it's just sort of, 'How do you make this bigger? How do you really find other government agencies that are interested in doing the same thing you are?' Or, when you break apart something saying, 'Okay, how can we make this work really great together?' are the really big questions obviously.

DD: So, we have things like data.gov, code.gov. Do you see a place for api.gov maybe emerging?

SA: I think that's definitely a really good idea.

DD: That would be interesting. Alright so if there was one take-away, one unique thing that an agency or organization should learn about from



this trend, what would it be from your perspective?

SA: Start small but think about how you can use those things broadly. Whether it becomes citizen services or inter-government services. Think about how those can be used broadly.

DD: Thank you so much.

SA: Great.