



MIHA KRALJ, ACCENTURE | MICROSOFT IGNITE 2018

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

(rhythmic music)

>> Live from Orlando, Florida. It's theCUBE covering Microsoft Ignite. Brought to you by Cohesity and theCUBE's ecosystem partners.

>> Welcome back everyone to theCUBE's live coverage of Microsoft Ignite here at the Orange County Convention Center. I'm your host, Rebecca Knight along with my cohost Stu Miniman. We're joined by Miha Kralj. He is the cloud native architecture lead at Accenture and marathon runner I should say, too.

>> That's true, yes.

>> Thank you so much for coming on theCUBE, Miha.

>> You're more than welcome.

>> So I want to start the conversation by talking about the difference between cloud immigrant and cloud native. There's a big distinction.

>> Yes, there is. Cloud became a new execution platform for a whole bunch of businesses and what we are going to see now is that lots of companies are using cloud in two different ways or two different forms. Even if you listen to analysts, they are talking about mode one, mode two so when we talk about cloud native we are mostly talking about both technologies and processes but also team organization that is very much inspired by cloud, that went through all of the transformations that we saw, for example, in companies like Netflix, like Uber, like very much

how Amazon is organized internally, how Microsoft is organized internally so we are talking about very new approach. How to architect applications, how to actually have a process to develop publications and push them over into production, how to actually run the complete automation, a set of tools, but of course it's completely new enabling platform on top of that or underneath that that allows us to run those cloud native style of applications.

>> An oversimplification I've heard is those born in the cloud companies will start out cloud native. The challenge you have for those that, the cloud immigrants, if you will, is there are so many different things that they need to change. Not just the way they architect things, the way that they run things. It's a real challenge and it's companies like yours I think, that help them do that immigration process, right?

>> You are actually bringing up the really good point 'cause one thing is if you start from nothing. If you are in a green field and you build, you can say I'm going to take the best automation, I will buy the best people and I'm going to go full-on cloud native. That totally works. You can also be in the old world and you can say let me build cloud native like a separate IT organization and you hire some people in the old IT and some in the new IT and so on and so on and lots of our clients do that. We kind of create a bimodal type of IT organizations with two sets of technology stacks, two approaches. The thing that is really hard to do is to actually



integrate those two into a very good hybrid cohesive schema so that you can have a system that one part of the system is traditional on-prem database that goes through its own rhythm of development and then you have systems that are cloud native, very rapidly developed, lots of the minimum viable products that are actually sourcing the data from the old world. So it goes from hard, harder, hardest.

>> So do you have a schemata of how to make the decision? What strategy is right for which client or is it really just so dependent on the client's unique set of circumstances? I will try to reframe your question because it is not old or new 'cause it is always that dilemma. If you're looking every decade we go through the same rhythm of refreshing. We get a refreshed wave of architecture. If you remember 30 years ago when I was still young we had a traditional monolithic architecture which were refreshed into client server and into a service oriented architecture now into microservices and in the future we already know that we are going into reactive and driven architectures. Whenever we have a new architectural style we always get also new set of processes. Historically with the waterfall development then we refreshed into rational unified processes you'll remember that from ages ago and then the traditional right now we are doing agile and we are going towards lean development and so on so everything refreshes. So your question is very much asking when is the right time that you stop using the previous generation of architecture, process, tools and platform and jump to the next generation 'cause you can be too late. Obviously we are talking about companies that they need to modernize but you can also be too early 'cause lots of the companies are right now wondering should they go serverless which is also cloud native style but it's way ahead of typical containers, simple for natives. So when is it time to go from VM based traditional SOA into microservice containers versus reactive, event driven on let's say, azure functions. Those decisions are not easy to do but I can tell you most of my clients have kind of a spectrum of everything. They still have a mainframe, they have a client server, they have SOA architecture, they have microservices and they're already thinking about event driven serverless.

>> Absolutely, and by the way, they can run that docker container on linux on the mainframe because everything in IT is always additive. So it's challenging. I've spent a lot of my career trying to help companies get out of their silos of infrastructure, of product group and in a multicloud world we feel like have we just created more silos? How are we making progress? What's good? How are you helping companies that maybe are stuck behind and are threatened of getting obsoleted from being able to move forward? What are some of the patterns and ways to get there?

>> Our approach is very much trying to find what's really behind, what's the business reason behind? 'Cause until I realize why somebody wants to modernize it's very hard to give the answer to how do you modernize. Not to oversimplify but we typically see that value formula coming. We want to reduce specific detriments and we want to increase specific benefits and that's why people need to go through those modernization waves. You can reduce cost and historically we were dramatically cutting costs just by automation, clonization, all of that. You can reduce risk. If you remember a few years ago everybody was talking that cloud is too risky, now everybody says oh, I'm reducing the risk and improving security by going to the cloud. You can increase speed and agility so you can suddenly do things much faster and enable more experiments. I personally find the number four most interesting which is you get better access to new software innovation. Here is the question. When is the last time that you remembered and a technology vendor would give you a DVD and say this is our latest software that you can use.

>> Yeah, probably a Microsoft disc but you know, back in the day.

>> Nobody is shipping software for on-premises anymore. Maybe, they do later in a cycle but all of the latest software innovation is cloud first or cloud only so it's only logical if we see the business that depends on business innovation, they need to start building their systems in a cloud native world 'cause they are going to source natural language processing, artificial intelligence recognition, all of the complex services, they have to source them from the cloud and therefore they want to build apps in the cloud native style.



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>> Yeah, it's an interesting challenge. Things are changing so fast. One of the things that I hear from certain companies is they, is that, well, I go and I make my strategy and then by the time I start implementing it I wonder if I made the wrong decision because some new tool is there. You mentioned Azure functions, wait, no, I was just getting on Kubernetes and getting comfortable with that as opposed to most companies, oh, I'm starting to look at that thing so these waves are coming faster and faster.

>> You just exposed that you are an architect. Let me explain why.

>> The technologist is charged, sorry.

>> When I hire people into architecture roles, one of the common interviewing questions will be first, explain one of your previous solutions and then the question comes if you would start again today, what would you do different? Every single architect that I know are always dissatisfied with their previous choices and decisions because there were new wave of technologies that came in during the engagement. What you are expressing, whenever I get a person that says no, I did everything perfectly and I would not change anything, I might have a different role for these people.

>> So I mentioned before that you are a marathon runner. I'm curious to hear how your job is similar to running a marathon because as Stu was just talking about, the pace of change, that is the one constant in this industry and to be a marathon runner, you got to keep a good pace. How do you sort of make sure that you are keeping your stamina up, keeping your eyes on the future to make sure you know what's coming ahead?

>> That's a very interesting analogy and I was

doing that comparison not that far back before. The first part is that in order to have a good time at the end of the race you need to have good nutrition, you need to have a good preparation, you need to have all those things so the moment when I compared it back to my regular work, nutrition, we usually compare it with how do I keep my skills up which usually, at least in my case, it is between four to six hours every day either reading I usually say to people I try to make something, teach something and learn something every single day and you have to do that four to six hours every single day just like preparing for marathon and there is a whole bunch of those other activities that all need to be aligned then once you actually start running with the client, when you start doing engagement with the client, that even when you hit the wall, even when you get tired, first you know the reason why you are doing it, you know what the end goal means, what the finish line looks like and you know that you are prepared, that this is the best that you can get. Is it easy? No, it's not. We are kind of used in the IT industry to do that and reinvent ourselves every second year.

>> When you look at the cloud native space what are some of the challenges and pitfalls? How do you manage that? What advice do you give at a high level? I understand there's a lot of diversity out there.

>> Oh, where are the challenges and lessons learned? How much time do we have? So I would say the most obvious one would be jumping into that pool of cloud computing without preparation, without guidance, without help, without mentoring, tutoring or somebody to guide you. Get less than perfect experience and declare that is not for me therefore it's not for any of us ever. Right? I see lots of those generalizations where although it's clear that the whole industry is going in that consumerization direction and we are charging by consumption and all of that that we have clients that started it either early, they didn't have a fantastic experience, they got into specific roadblock and then for several years they don't want even to have a discussion anymore. The other problem is not enough upscaling so simply not enough thinking how different that knowledge is. A discussion with a CIO that says that IT's the same for last 30 years, you know, a machine is a machine. Coding is coding is coding. Nothing really changed ever. It is really supportive way is a challenge on its own.



hard to have a discussion to say the devil is in the details. Yes, technically we do the same thing for 30 years which is we make dreams come true in IT. We create something that was never done before but how we do that, and tools of the trade, an approach is dramatically different. Every decade brings a dramatically different result. Trying to explain that in supportive way is a challenge on its own.

>> Miah, what about your team? How are you making sure that you have the right people in place to help execute these solutions? And this is they have the right skills, the right mindset, the right approach of the continual learning and the constant curiosity that you keep referencing?

>> Well, you are asking a consultant how does consultant know that he's successful? When the client is happy. I'm serious, very simple here, right? How do we make sure that the client is happy which is very much corollary to your question. We really first need to make sure that we are educating our clients all the way through. The times of delivering something without a massive knowledge transfer, those times are over. The easiest way to explain that is that what we are telling is that every business needs to become software business. It doesn't matter is it bank, insurance, health provider, they need to learn to actually make critical competitive advantage solutions in-house. So how do we actually teach engineering to companies that historically were not engineering companies? All of my team are half coaches and half engineers or architects or whatever they are. Being a coach and being a mentor and kind of allowing our clients to do things independently instead of just depend on us is one of those major changes that we see how we actually ramp up and train and support people.

>> Miha, we've seen and talked to Accenture at many cloud events. Accenture's got a very large presence. I've been watching the entire week. Activity in the booth, one of the four anchor booths here at the show. What's different about Microsoft, your view on Microsoft, what you're hearing from customers and also speak to how Accenture really lives in this Microsoft ecosystem.

>> I think that I understand the question. Are you asking me about how Accenture and Microsoft cooperates together in that new world?

>> Yeah, why does Accenture have such a large presence at a show like this? Accenture is at all the cloud events.

>> So Accenture has specific targeted, strategic alliances with large technology vendors. The size of the alliance, the importance of the alliance is always directly reflected both from, of course, the size of the market but also our belief in how successful a long-term specific technology stack is going to be. We have a very strong, firm belief that with Microsoft we actually have an amazingly good alliance. Actually we call it alliance of three. We forgot to mention Avanade as well, right? Which is dedicated to creative entity to make sure that Microsoft solutions are built, designed and then ran correctly. We jointly invest obscene amount of money to make sure that right solutions are covered with right Microsoft technologies and developed in the right manner.

>> Great, Miha, thank you so much for coming on theCUBE. It was a pleasure having you.

>> You're more than welcome, anytime.

>> I'm Rebecca Knight for Stu Miniman. That wraps up our coverage of Microsoft Ignite. We will see you next time on theCUBE.

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