

# LIVING SYSTEMS - ENABLING THE ELASTIC DIGITAL WORKPLACE

## AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

**Penelope** [00:00:00] Hi, everyone. It's Penelope Prett Accenture's Chief Information Officer. And I'm really glad to be here today with Jason Warnke, who is leading our digital experience team within our global IT organization. The global IT team is driving technology powered business transformation in support of all of Accenture's, businesses and 500,000 employees. And today we're going to be talking about the elastic digital workplace and how we're bringing that to life at Accenture. Jason, let's dive in.

**Jason** [00:00:29] Great. Thanks for having me. This is a topic I'm super passionate about, so I look forward to the discussion.

**Penelope** [00:00:34] Excellence.

**Penelope** [00:00:35] Can you just talk to us a bit, Jason, about where Accenture is on our journey to having an elastic digital workplace? What does it mean for our people? How are we enabling them to work seamlessly, especially in this age of Covid? And right now, most of them are remote.

**Jason** [00:00:51] Sure. You know, I think we have we and many others have, you know, all kinds of names for this new approach. But when you think about it, Accenture's really been working in this and operating in this this approach for quite some time with a very distributed workforce where although we've got several very large centers and campuses, we

don't really have all of our people predominately in one place. We've been working on this journey for decades, ensuring that our people have what they need in terms of capabilities and tools to connect with and collaborate with their counterparts - many times on the other side of the planet and with our our clients that are in all kinds of different locations. So rarely do we have a team nowadays that has been typically all in one location. Even when we're landing at a client site, we're doing so with a distributed team that will include people from other client offices and other Accenture offices.

**Jason** [00:01:51] So we really have been laying the groundwork for the platforms and capabilities that are so critically needed in a time and circumstance like right now.

**Jason** [00:02:03] And I think our, as we now call it, elastic digital workplace, is all around how we are able to keep people connected, but also how we're not just keeping them connected, but augmenting the way that we work together. I imagine a time when we're back together physically, where we'll still use a lot of the techniques, if not all of the techniques in effectively engaging people that all can't be in that one room to really bring forward their ideas and take whatever transformation or thing we're working on for our client to the next level.

**Penelope** [00:03:14] It's been amazing, Jason, to watch you since I joined the group in



November and to see where we're taking the elastic digital workforce journey. And one of the things that has struck me is that we have 500,000 employees and they're all different people, right. They come from all walks of life, all backgrounds and all generational groups. How are you seeing different generational groups respond to working more in Microsoft Teams and more of these remote supporting technologies and tools?

**Jason** [00:03:44] Yeah. So, you know, our half a million people, it is amazing every time we say that. But the vast majority of that population are millennials are. Now, I think, as it's termed, digital natives, those that grew up, you know, very comfortable with and using in their personal lives, in their their schooling, the sorts of tools that we're using now pervasively at a at a company they grew up. And that was is second nature. There's a lot of our organization that didn't grow up with those tools and it's a whole new thing. And so you really have to when when you're using new tools and you're adapting new work styles, you have to think about those populations that might not just naturally take advantage of all of the the great hidden features of these sorts of tools. And so you have to think about how you're adapting to a learning style of those individuals that this is going to be a new thing. And we've done a lot of incremental change in adoption work, focused on, you know, take the use case of, hey, how do you run a design thinking session or a brainstorming session in a way that you don't have everyone in the same room. The way that you teach folks how to do that and make them comfortable with that is varied by the population you're you're training to do that and get comfortable. So we're very focused on thinking about the mechanisms and channels by which we reach those different populations to help them understand those features and how to get comfortable with running those various things. And we've had to do that in a full, remote way. So normally we've what brought people into a classroom and gotten them comfortable with that training session on a training session to get hands on. But now we're having to say, hey, you know, what are those channels where those different populations are spending time and focusing our learning opportunities and our best practice documents

and things like this snackable video in ways that all that the population can take advantage of them.

**Penelope** [00:05:55] And as we reference, right, it's been a time of exponential learning about our people and what they need.

**Penelope** [00:06:01] Number one thing we learned was it one size does not fit all. What else have we learned, Jason?

**Jason** [00:06:07] Well, you know, there are there are new behaviors when you go into the capabilities that are now available to us. And so what we talk about a lot is not training on features. We're talking about training new behaviors. An example would be, you know, working cloud first instead of the days where we would do what you and I learn to do growing up in this company, you would work on everything on your local machine. You get it to a point where you felt comfortable sharing it. Then you might share it to a SharePoint site so that the rest of your team could see it. If you were really comfortable and you really thought it was valuable in terms of a learning practice or a best practice, that you would then upload that to the Knowledge Exchange. So we we definitely have now been shifting our focus training behaviors to say work cloud first from the start. The term that is common out there, working out loud, the concept of being comfortable that, you know, you're going to shape whatever you're working on, you're going to collaborate with others from the start. It's going to be very raw to start and then it's going to get better and better and more refined as you go. The other practice or, you know, behavior that we're really, you know, helping people get more comfortable with is working mobile first. So, you know, you would have never thought that you would be collaborating on an Excel document, let's say, from a from a mobile phone or taking a quick review of a deliverable on your iPad before it goes to the client. And so getting them getting our people very comfortable with those new behaviors of working cloud first working mobile first, you know, picking up where you left off on another device from where you started it. You know, Teams is a great example of where that persistence of that chat in that context goes



across devices. So if I started I'm sitting in front of my computer now and I start a conversation. We're collaborating on a document. I'm on the go. I'm on the train out to my client's site. I can pick up where I left off on that mobile and I don't lose where I left off. And I think, you know, that is paired with the idea that not one size fits all. There will be people that will just always want to work in the document on their on their P.C. and then share when they're ready. But more and more, we're wanting people to be thinking about how do they start that document in the cloud sharing by default from the start with their teams and then doing more and more of that via mobile device. So making sure that we're making it a comfortable transition no matter where you start from, so that people are really taking advantage of all those great features and all those collaboration techniques and approaches that are available with our platforms.

**Penelope** [00:08:58] So, Jason, obviously you're having an impact, right? We we've talked a number of times about how audio of which we do about a billion minutes in Teams enables basic collaboration in remote world. And video, which we had a sixfold growth over the last few months, kind of enriches that experience.

**Penelope** [00:09:17] Can you talk a little bit about what's next for Accenture to continue the enrichment of that experience? And if you're seeing anything interesting in the market with our clients, could you share that, too?

**Jason** [00:09:28] Absolutely. So as you stated that the growth in our audio, but probably more interestingly, the growth in video now that people are fully remote is truly extraordinary. And I actually think it's allowing us to be as effective. If not, this seems crazy, even more effective than when we were together. Just a simple example of that or how I think that comes to life. When you're in our normal mode of operating, we've got people in a in a conference room and then some people remote. If you were not very extremely vocal, if you weren't, you know, one of the very outspoken individuals in that conference room, just that conference room alone, you might not feel as comfortable to speak up and share an idea. Even worse, if you were one of those people that wasn't lucky enough to be in that

room and you were remote, you certainly weren't feeling as comfortable speaking up. And so when you think about what we've now been able to do with the power of a platform like Microsoft Teams and the power of video, it now levels the playing field in terms of, you know, being able to jump in and contribute because everyone has the same environment, if you will. You might not feel as comfortable just jumping in right from the start with your video on. And you know, what a question. But now with tools like Raise Your Hand, that new feature, Microsoft Teams, which allows you to say like, hey, I know the conversation is is is flowing. I don't mean to jump in, but I've got - When we get an opportunity, I've got something to share. And then also the side chat. Even when we've got teams in in a single location, there were teams that were getting really good at the flow that was happening in the room. But the flow in the side chat alongside that allows this next level of, hey, it's not worthy of breaking the conversation. But I am just going to contribute a thought here on the side or even, you know, having a little bit of fun to lighten the mood with a we did it on a call Penelope and I were on earlier today, just, you know, Gify picture on the side or a sticker or a meme that just lightens the mood or, you know, gives someone a high five.

**Jason** [00:11:50] If a team did something, that that was really cool. So I think it definitely does allow us to connect at a whole other level. And I'm excited about even more things like even more alive video, seven by seven view and some other things that are coming. It's going to always be enhancing the circumstance at the given time. Even when we're back physically, we're gonna take advantage of these new practices in the tool sets. And then I think where we go next, the next horizon really is extended reality.

**Jason** [00:12:25] So the idea that you could go into, you know, if you've got a headset and they'll become more pervasive and available to people to get cheaper and cheaper, just like cell phones did, where, you know, when cell phones first came out, it was, you know, is just a portion of the population now. Most everyone has a mobile device, if not several, that they bring into the workplace. The same will happen with headsets that will allow us to experience, you



know, collaboration to a whole other level. So I'm looking forward to seeing where, you know, the current platforms go. But then in the next, where things like augmented and virtual reality take us.

**Penelope** [00:13:06] It's an exciting journey, Jason. I'm glad to be taking it with you. So if we do another one of these a year from now and we're talking to people about what we've accomplished over the next year, what's it going to be? What's on your plate?

**Jason** [00:13:18] Yeah. So the thing that I'm most excited about next in our in our Team's journey in particular is this concept that we really understood right from the start.

**Jason** [00:13:30] Right, right as this was getting launched and we understood that, you know, this was going to be a whole lot more than just a replacement for that unified communications tool we had prior, whether it was, you know what, we were coming immediately from Skype for business or before that link and other things, we really viewed just like the, you know, the team at Microsoft, that this was going to be a conversation platform and something that would allow us to finally, for the first time, bring together context, collaboration, document sharing and integrations into other things to where we could finally pivot what we've been doing for years from telling our people, hey, we're going to give you all the you know, the capabilities and tools you need there just in all these different endpoints, all these different destinations, all these different Web sites you need to go to to get your job done.

**Jason** [00:14:24] And that was separated away from the collaboration and the discussion you were having with your team.

**Jason** [00:14:29] So you would go over here to do your task and then you would pivot over here to do your collaboration and they would be separated, and you would lose context every time you did that pivot. Finally, we can bring those together in the conversation platform of Microsoft Teams bringing integrations, tools and extensions to where the teams engaging. And that's really exciting. So we're working on a number of things that will allow us to bring a

service, to make a quick approval or to get a quick technology or HR question answered or a transaction completed right inside. A team's helping bring insights to a client account lead right where they're gathered with their team instead of in all these different places, and then trying to bring that back to collaboration. And then the really exciting thing I know that you're excited about, as well as where we're getting into citizen developer sort of capabilities, the idea that we can put in that in the hands of our end users, really exciting tools that will allow them to take it to their next level. We can't always predict an IT and serve the needs of a half million people. And those accounts that are serving our clients every day, we have to give them some level of autonomy and some level of customization and extension on that great set of tools that we're providing so that they can meet their clients where they need to meet them with tools like the power platform, power B.I, power apps, flow. All of these things that are now at the forefront will be part of our next journey here in our collaboration world at Accenture.

**Penelope** [00:16:10] Jason, thanks for sharing today.

**Penelope** [00:16:12] Spent a lot of fun working on this agenda with you so far. I look forward being more in the future. And a year from now, we will come back and share the adventures of the next 12 months.

**Jason** [00:16:23] Thanks. I really appreciate it. And like I said, this is the topic we love to be at the forefront of and we love to talk about. Thank you.

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