



INNOVATING FOR THE FUTURE

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

Speakers:

- Sara Alligood, Worldwide Leader of the Accenture AWS Business Group, AWS
- Andy Tay, Accenture AWS Business Group Lead, Senior Managing Director, Accenture

Overview:

Join Accenture AWS Business Group (AABG) leaders, Sara Alligood, Worldwide Public Sector Lead for AWS and Andy Tay, Accenture Senior Managing Director - Global Health and Public Services Lead as they share the latest innovations for Accenture and AWS. The AABG unflinching mission is to combine extraordinary new technologies with human ingenuity to meet clients' core business challenges and drive growth, taking you further, faster.

>> Well, you're watching theCUBE, and I knew that you knew that. I'm John Walls, we're here in Las Vegas. It's re:Invent 22, big show, AWS putting on the big show here late in 2022. That's going really well. We're at the executive summit right now, sponsored by Accenture, and we're going to talk about that relationship between Accenture and AWS, kind of where it is now and where it's going, you know, even bigger things down the road. To help us do that, two guests, Andy Tay, who's a Senior Managing Director and the Accenture AWS Business Group lead at Accenture. Andy, thanks for being with us.

>> John, thanks for having me.

>> And Sara, whose last name is one of my all-time favorites, all good, cause it is. It's all good, right?

>> That's right, it's all good.

>> Sara Alligood, worldwide leader of Accenture's AWS business group for AWS. And thank you both again for being here.

>> Thanks for having us.

>> So, let's talk about the relationship just in general. High level here, 30,000 feet. A lot of great things have been happening, we know a lot of great things are happening, but how's this all, you think, evolved? How did, how has this come about that you two are just inextricably linked almost here in the cloud space? Sara, why don't you jump on that?

>> Yeah, I'd love to. I think one of the strongest factors that causes that synergy for us is we both work backwards from our customer outcomes. And so just by consistently doing that, taking those customer signals, really obsessing over our customers success, we know what we're marching towards. And so then we kind of extract those themes and really work together to think about, okay, when we look at this holistically, how do we go bigger, better, faster, together, and accomplish and solve those customer problems?

>> Yeah. Andy?

>> Yeah, John, let me just maybe add, and you know, to amplify what Sara just touched on. We both have common to our culture this notion of working from the client's perspective first. So really delivering to the client's values or, you know, in AWS's parlance, it's customer. And so that's at the core, and when we keep that at the core, everything else becomes really easy. Where we invest, what we build, key clients we focus on, what our team structure is,



et cetera, et cetera. It's really easy. So that's sort of core pillar number one in terms of our sort of, you know, success factors. The second thing that I think really helps us is our sort of scale geographically. You know, certainly from an Accenture standpoint, as you know, John, we're north of 800,000 people globally.

>> John: That's right.

>> Couple that with AWS's strength, we really do have a field depth and breadth across the board that allows us to sort of see and feel what's happening in the market, and allows us really to see around the corners as we like to think and say. And that helps us be intentional on what we do. And then the third thing is really us, we might know what we do but we sort of need to then play to our strengths. And as you know, we're two very different companies, one focused on the technology side, the other, you know, focused on the technology services. Although we'll touch on, you know, some of the changes we're looking at as we go forward. But that sort of playing to strengths is key as well, for us, as a third pillar of success. And so, keeping those three things at the core really helps us move day to day and year by year. And that's what you see in this continued partnership.

>> So, what are you hearing from your customers these days? We've talked a lot already today and it's kind of the buzzword, you know, modernization, right? Everybody's talking about this transformation. I don't care if you're mainframe or where you are, everybody wants to modernize right now. You know, what are you hearing from customers in that regard? And I'm sure everybody's in a different state, different frame of mind. >>

>> You know, some are embracing, some are dragging. What's your take on the state of play right now?

>> Well, and I think like especially in these macroeconomic moments that we're in, time to value is critical for our customers, and then we have the talent shortage. But even with those, our customers still need us to solve for sustainability, and still focus on inclusion, diversity and equity. And so, we can't lower the

bar on anything that we've already been doing, we need to just keep doing more and building with them. And so, I think for us really getting to the meat of what our customers need. Modernization is a big one, but we're still seeing just so many of our customers look at basic transformation, right? How do I dip in? How do I start to move my environment, move my people, and get ready for what I need to do next for my business? And so that is a challenge, and like we said, with the markets as volatile as they are right now, I think a lot of customers are just trying to work with us to figure out how to do that in the most optimized and efficient way.

>> I think you just want to kind rub people on the head and say, "It's going to be all right", right?

>> Yeah.

>> It's going to be all right!

>> Great, I mean, it's so volatile, as you pointed out, Sara, right?

>> Yeah.

>> I mean the market, up and down, and we're worried about a recession, and companies and their plans, and they want to be forward thinking.

>> But they've got to, you know, keep their powder dry too, in some respects, and get ready for that rainy day.

>> You know, John, it's funny, because it, you would think, you know, you got the one hand, you know, rub that, it's going to be alright. And then on the other hand, you know, maybe clients should sort of hold temper and, you know, sort of just pause. But I think clients get it, they see it, they feel it. They understand the need to invest. And I think, you know, there's a recent study back in 2008, those clients, you know, Sara and I were reading the other day, those clients who didn't invest ahead of those major, if you remember, those macroeconomic



downturn times, they came out really on the bad side. And so, clients now are realizing that in these times, these are the moments to invest. And so, they get it, but they're faced with a couple of challenges. One is time, as Sara touched on, that you just don't have time. And the second is talent. So we're working in a very intentional way on what we can do to help them there. And as you'll hear later on from Chris Wegmann and Erik Farr, we're launching our Velocity platform which really helps to compress that time and get them faster, you know, time to value.

>> We're also being very intentional on talent, and how we help their talent so that, you know, rotate, so that we're not just taking the technology journey, but we're also having the people journey. And then the third thing Sara and I really focus on with our teams is figuring out new ways, new sources of value for our clients. And that's not just cost, that's value, the broader set. And so, we find that in moments like this, it's actually an opportunity for us to really bring the best of AWS and Accenture to our clients.

>> Well, you hit value, and I always find this one kind of tough because there is a big difference between cost and value. My cost is x, right? Whatever I write on my check, that's my cost.

>> So, but how do you help clients identify that value so that, because it's, you know, it can be a little nebulous, right, can it not? I mean it's, but you have to validate. You got to quantify at the end of the day, because that's what the CEO wants to see, it's what the CIO wants to see.

>> You've got to identify value. So, I mean, how do you do that?

>> Yeah, I mean we have many different ways, right? Velocity, which Andy kind of touched on, I think, is really, it's our foundational approach to help customers really kind of enter into their cloud journey, and focus on those key factors for success, right? So, we've got ISV solutions built in there, we've got talent and change built in. We've got kind of what we're calling the fabric, right? That foundational technology layer.

And in giving our customers all of that in a way that they can consume, in a way that they can control, and, you know, different modules essentially that they can leverage to move. It's going to be tangible, right? They're going to be able to see I've now got access to all these things that I need. I can move as I need to move, and I'm not constantly looking around, figuring out how to lock it all together. We've given them that picture and that roadmap on how to really leverage this, because we need to be able to point to tangible outcomes. And so that's critical.

>> Yeah, proof's got to be in the pudding-

>> Yeah.

>> It has to be.

>> It's got to be, and you know, to Sara's point, I think we're entering into this sort of new, dare I say new chapter of cloud, and in, you know, sort of the first chapter it was sort of those outcomes were around cost. You know, I've moved you into the cloud, you can shut down your data center. But now we've sort of got other sources of value beyond costs. There's new sources of revenue. How do I become a platform company on top of the AWS Cloud, and then, you know, eke out new revenue sources for myself? How do I drive new experiences for my customers?

>> Yeah.

>> How do I maybe tap into the sustainability angle of things? And how do I get greater innovation from my talent? How do I operate better? And as Sara said, how do I become more nimble, more agile, and more responsive to market demands? And so, all those areas, all those dynamics, all those outcomes are sources of value that we're sort of really laser focused on, and just ensuring that as a partnership we help our clients on that journey.

>> So, what do you do about talent? I mean, you've brought it up a couple of times, each of



you has. In terms of training, retaining, recruiting, all those key elements right now.

>> It's an ultra-competitive environment right now.

>> And there might be a little bit of talent gap. Yeah.

>> In terms of what we're producing. Right. Yeah.

>> So, you know, how do you, I guess, make the most out of that and make sure you keep the good people around?

>> Yeah, talent is an interesting one, John, and we were just touching on this before we got here. You know, sort of from an Accenture standpoint, we're obviously focused on growing our AWS talent. We've now got, I think it's north of 27,000 people in Accenture with AWS certifications, north of 34,000 certificates, which is absolutely fantastic. A small city.

>> A small thing, but we keep being-

>> Phenomenal.

>> Very intentional in building that as AWS rolls out new services. Adam touched on a whole bunch of them today. We're at the core of that and ramping and building our talent so that we can drive and get our clients quicker to their value. And then a second area of focus is what do we do to help our clients' talent? How do we train them? How do we enable them? How do we, you know, get them to be more agile? And, you know, being able to sort of operate in what we call that digital core? Operate in the cloud, how do we do that? And so, we're focused in capabilities. In fact, our Accenture head of talent and people and change, Christie Smith, John, is here this week just for that. And we're exploring ways in which we can get tighter and even more innovative around talent.

>> And so, I ultimately that bleeds over to where the partnership goes, right?

>> Yeah.

>> Because if you can enhance that side of it, then everybody wins on that. In terms of what you think, you know, where this is going, you know? It's already, you know, a pretty good setup. Things are working pretty well. But as the industry changes so rapidly and you have to meet those needs, how do you see the partnership evolving as well to meet those needs down the road?

>> We have a very fortunate position in that our CEOs are both very engaged in this partnership, and they push us. Think bigger, go faster, figure it out, let's ride. And there are definite pros and cons on some days in flying this close to the sun, but it's an absolute privilege to work with them the way that we get to. And so, we're always looking. I mean, Andy said it earlier, this is the relationship that helps us look around corners. We've raised the bar. And so, we're constantly pushing each other, pushing our teams, just innovating together, thinking it all through on where are we going. And like I said, reading those tea leaves, reading those themes from our customers, like, "Hey, we've just had five customers with the same, "similar feeling problem that we're trying to solve", or we ran into the same issue in the field, and how do we put that together and solve for it?

Because we know it's not just five, right? We know there are more out there. And so, I think, you know, it's leadership principles for us, right, at Amazon, that guiding think big, you know, insist on high standards. That'll always be core and central to who we are. And then, you know, fortunately Accenture has a similar ethos.

>> Yeah, your quick take on that, Andy?

>> Yeah, I think as we look out, you know, I think we're going to, we've already seen but we're going to see this continued blurring of industries. Of, you know, sort of clients moving into other industries and you know this sort of agitation, market agitation. And so I think

Disruption.



>> You know, disruption and we're being, you know, focused on what do we need to be to do in order to help our clients on those journeys and to continue to, you know, get them faster. Solutions is an area that we, you know, are really looking at. And these are solutions that are either industry solutions you'll hear a couple of them this week. You know, we've got our insurance solution that we've developed as an intelligent underwriting capability, leveraging AWS AI/ML to be intelligent and cognitive. You know, we've got other solutions around industries, energy and life sciences, but then also intelligent applications that might be touching, you know, areas. I think earlier today Adam talked about AWS supply chain and that's an area that we are focused on and proud to be a part of that. And we're working very, very closely with Amazon on that to help, you know, our clients move ahead. So, I think we're going to see this continued blurring and we're going to obviously, you know, keep addressing that and just keep iterating.

>> Well, it looks like a relationship of trust and expertise, right? And it's worked out extremely well. And if this is any indication where the interview went, even better things are ahead for the partnership. So, thank you both-

>> That's kind, thank you. >> Thank you.

>> For chiming in, I appreciate your perspectives.

>Yeah, thank you. >> Thanks, John.

>> It's been great. We continue our coverage here on theCUBE. We're at re:Invent 22, we're in Las Vegas, and you're watching theCUBE, the leader in technical coverage.