03032021 Ignite Judson Althoff

Judson Althoff: Microsoft Ignite 2021
March 3, 2021

JUDSON ALTHOFF: Good morning, good afternoon and good evening, depending on where you are in the world.

At Microsoft, you hear us talk a lot about our mission, a lot about how we strive to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more. And we really do keep that top of mind and in our hearts every day when we come to work, even in terms of how we build our products and do our research and development here at the company.

We go to market by industry and through what we call solution areas. Solution areas are less about our product pillars and more about how customers like you see leveraging our technology to further their business goals.

Today, I want to talk to you about the progress we're making in each solution area, and more importantly, how our customers are taking those solution areas and composing them by industry to drive world-leading digital outcomes.

Simply stated, Microsoft is at its best when we marry up our portfolio of intellectual property with the customer's business needs, and that's what this concept of taking our solution areas and driving digital outcomes is really all about.

Through a little bit of green screen magic, I'm going to take you on a tour around the world to visit five different customers across different industries and geographies and learn about how they're leveraging our solution areas to drive digital outcomes.

First, let's visit Chennai, India.

(Begin video segment.)

ARVIND SIVARAMAKHRISHNAN (CIO, Apollo Hospitals): Apollo Hospitals is a family of about 80,000 very committed healthcare workers making a difference.

Digital is a fabric that brings people and process together, enabling health care as a complete ecosystem.

And Microsoft is a trusted partner, helping us in our mission for touching lives.

So when you look at building an organization to be digital ready, you've got to learn as the investments in the infrastructure, then applications and solutions that ride on that infrastructure, ensuring the 360-degree of care is available at every point of encounter.

We've got 35 years of patients' data. So now we'll bring in IoT, data analytics and AI, then that full layer of change management.

I love my job. As a technologist at heart, it gives me the ability to see technology being used for a real service.

(End video segment.)

JUDSON ALTHOFF: I am here with Dr. Sangita Reddy at the Apollo Hospitals' headquarters in Chennai, India, through a little bit of green screen virtual magic.

Look, I want to start, Sangita, by thanking you and the entire Apollo family for everything you've been doing on the front lines, battling the pandemic.

I'd love to start off by getting your view on how Microsoft 365 is really enabling your workforce during these times.

SANGITA REDDY (Joint Managing Director, Apollo Hospitals Group): In health care, the communication network is really critical and crucial to enable our people. Having this background of a secure platform, of seamless, easy communication and integration was really at the heart of what I believe has been a very successful fight. During the pandemic, what we had done really put together a framework that can be used across the country in very different care settings.

So we termed it the Red Book. We collaborated from immunologists to infectious disease, to cardiologists. They collaborated. They communicated daily. And of course, it was your platforms that helped them come together and kept evolving the framework. They documented that these frameworks and then they shared it across our own ecosystem and then with public at large.

I'm really happy to say that our teams have not just done a fantastic job; their tremendous skill have achieved some outstanding outcomes.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: So as you look at us exiting the pandemic and look towards the future, I'm wondering if you could talk firsthand about how you think technology will evolve in the workforce.

SANGITA REDDY: It's important for us to realize that while we hopefully see the light at the end of the tunnel, the pandemic was made worse by the underlying epidemic of non-communicable disease, which is heart disease and cancer and neurology and nephrology problems. Many of them give us early warning signals.

And so what we worked with Microsoft earlier in developing a cardiac risk score to pick up these signals and really work with their patients towards lifestyle modification and keeping people healthier.

I think there are many other such algorithms that we should continue to work and build so that we can make health care safer for everyone.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: It's such an awesome story, Sangita. Here at our Ignite conference, we announced a lot of new capabilities. I know we gave you a bit of a sneak peek on some of the announcements we're making and wondering if you just have any thoughts about how you might leverage some of the future capabilities we'll have here.

SANGITA REDDY: So we're looking forward to this evolving environment that you've begun to showcase to us. In this pursuit of a safer world and a better environment, the use of technology, the ability to combine, to collaborate is going to become more and more powerful.

Care is definitely evolving to be this ubiquitous 24x7 available platform that we at Apollo are really striving to enable. I'm very excited about the fact that many of these are now coming together in a single pane and we will be able to seamlessly move across many of these platforms.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: It's really been a fantastic collaboration, Sangita, and we're super proud to continue to invest in this area, everything from our Microsoft Cloud for Health Care through to the new capabilities we're putting into Teams that hopefully enrich that doctor-patient engagement through virtual care, as well as some of the broad scale webinar capabilities that really help promote proactive wellness.

I'm super proud and pleased to be a partner to you here at Microsoft and look forward to our continued work together.

(Begin video segment.)

RENE WIES (VP IT for Sales & Marketing, BMW): BMW is the most successful premium automotive brand, with a consistent track record of more than a hundred years.

We invest heavily in digitalization. We truly believe that IT and business need to work hand-in-hand to achieve our goals, focusing on our passion for our customers' experience and the continuous optimization of the value chain and sustainability.

We need to bring the digital experience together with the emotional experience of driving a car, to take this experience outside the car, to create a unique relationship with our customers at all touchpoints.

Built on a set of shared values and beliefs, that relationship with Microsoft will continue to propel us in the future.

(End video segment.)

JUDSON ALTHOFF: Hey, Sylvia, thanks for joining me here in our virtual BMW dealership.

Listen, Sylvia, I have to start off with a fun little story. When I was much, much younger and got my first job, I saved just about every penny I could find to buy a 1983 BMW 320is, and I was convinced at the time that it was, in fact, the ultimate driving machine.

But things have changed quite a bit since then. Today, most of your customers spend two-thirds of their time thinking about their purchase decisions online. Yet 85% of them do, in fact, come to the dealership.

I'm wondering if you could maybe start off by sharing with us how you've empowered those people on the front lines to deliver on that omnichannel experience.

SYLVIA NEUBAUER (VP, Corporate Strategy, BMW Group): Judson, so you're a real fan, and that's obviously great to hear.

To us, it is key to bring a seamless customer journey to life. And in order to do so, we need to harmonize processes and also to have an integrated system landscape on wholesale and on retail level.

Imagine if a potential customer, a sports car enthusiast like you, was on Instagram finding the perfect M5 competition, then visiting the BMW website. Or an existing customer was interested in buying a new car with a third child in the family. We want to forward this information to our dealer partners straightaway.

And this is exactly where Microsoft Dynamics 365 kicks in. It's our system to take the lead and bring it from wholesale level in real time to the retail level, so that our dealer partners can take over.

And in addition, we can also start to use Power Apps, which allows us to customize solutions around the edge. This gives us more flexibility to adapt to local needs, either on NSC or on dealer level.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: That's awesome. We always say Power Apps is the perfect solution when there's no app for that, and when you're building out localized solutions for dealers, that's an awesome application.

I'm wondering if you might share, Sylvia, just a little bit more detail on how you're actually connecting the dealerships for this more holistic engagement.

SYLVIA NEUBAUER: Well, this transformation will only be feasible if we do it together with our independent dealer partners, based on mutual trust. A holistic customer view will only be possible if we collect information across all sales channels and across all touch points. So we have to bring down the barrier between online and offline sales.

And we need to follow one common sales process with clear roles and responsibilities along the entire customer journey.

And from a corporate perspective, we are using the performance monitoring capabilities within Microsoft Dynamics in order to see whether our dealer partners have worked on the lead.

We are supporting our partners to optimize and harmonize processes to create not only a seamless customer journey, but also to reduce cost at the same time.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: That super cool, Sylvia.

I know we were able to share with you some of the announcements we were making here at our Ignite conference and I'm wondering if there was anything that caught your eye or that you found to be interesting.

SYLVIA NEUBAUER: As we integrate analytics or intelligence information into the retail front end, I really think the customer voice solution is super interesting to capture feedback and analyze it so that we have a 360-degree view on anything from all of the customer touch points to give the next best offer or next best activity recommendation to our sales representatives.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: That's awesome, Sylvia. Well, listen, I can't thank you enough again for everything we're doing together. I really appreciate you joining me here and I look forward to our continued work together. Thanks so much.

(Begin video segment.)

MADS NIPPER (CEO, Orsted): The single biggest challenge humanity is facing is climate change.

Our deep and profound passion is to create a world that wants entirely a green energy. We create renewable energy through wind farms and we believe technology is vital for the transition of the world's energy systems in terms of the intelligence that can optimize the performance of the individual wind turbine or the total energy system, including the transmission and the effectiveness of the entire system. But it's also for the ability for us to foster teamwork and bring out the ingenuity of employees and partners all over the world.

I believe that Orsted and Microsoft are great partners because we both have a vision to change the world. The ingenuity of companies, together with the determination of leaders, will make us land with a planet that we are proud to hand over to the future generations.

(End video segment.)

JUDSON ALTHOFF: I'm here with Michael in Anholt, Denmark, and we have been superimposed here virtually on one of the world's largest wind farms.

Before we get started, Michael, I just have to congratulate you and the entire Orsted team. You've been ranked the world's Most Sustainable Energy Company in the Global 100 Index three times in a row now. And I'm really excited that we're able to partner with you here at Microsoft. I'd love it if you could start off by talking about how cloud is empowering your goals.

MICHAEL JUDEN (Head of Digital Strategy, Orsted): Orsted's growth is still ahead of us. So a lot of incredible stuff we'll build in the next 10 years to come, but in parts of the world, with seas and winds and technologies that we barely know yet.

That requires that we do lots of simulations based on data. So with the transition to parallel compute and utilization of the cloud, we've been able to speed up these simulations quite a lot, so you get usable results in just a short time of maybe four hours. In the old days, it took days, weeks, even months.

When these wind farms then go into operations, we've gone past the milestone of 1,500 turbines out there. So they produce huge amounts of data every second, every minute, every hour, every day.

Data is not just an asset. You need to sort through it. You need to clean it. You need to store it properly. You need to rationalize it to actually make it usable for the things that we're trying to accomplish.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: That's awesome, Michael, and it's super clear that Orsted has become really a fantastic powerhouse for clean energy. But you've also become quite an impressive technology company in your own right and you have many elite developers that work on the technology landscape that empowers Orsted. So I'd like to switch gears a little bit to that end and talk about how you're actually empowering that developer core.

MICHAEL JUDEN: We are all-in on Azure DevOps. So all developers, they draw on the same set of tooling to make sure that our data estate is used to the best of our ability.

And once the lockdown hit us in March 2020, we made a jump to Teams quite seamlessly and very quickly, making it just that little bit easier to cooperate across the globe, but also just with your next door neighbor that you cannot see at your workplace anymore. It's facilitating daily scrums and even the big PI planning sessions for the next sprints to come. Teams and the Azure DevOps, it will be utilized in the years to come.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: That's awesome. I often say that none of us is as smart as all of us, right, and if you can create the collaborative fabric where you can bring great minds together and aggregate their thoughts, there's no question that you can produce better results.

We've kind of let you in on many of the announcements that we've been making here at Ignite and I'm wondering if through that disclosure process there was anything that really caught your eye.

MICHAEL JUDEN: The one that excites me the most personally, I think, which is the possibility of incorporating machine learning. I strongly believe that in the next few years to come, we will actually see the large scale adoption of machine learning for a lot of things that we do and it will play a crucial part in the further advancement of everything that we do and make us even more competitive and of course, turn the world into a place that runs entirely on green energy. You know, augmenting human intelligence and ingenuity with machines is something that will really be crucial.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: That's fantastic, Michael. Well, listen, thank you so much for spending some time with me. Certainly over this last year, the pandemic has really taken center stage in terms of the biggest challenge the world is working on collectively. But shortly thereafter, I think we will return to really, truly the planet's No. 1 problem, and that is sustainability, and you are all leading in that regard and we can't thank you enough for your efforts.

(Begin video segment.)

RAJESH SUBRAMANIAM (President and COO, FedEx): Our core purpose is to really connect people and possibilities. Last year, we have moved more than 60 kilotons of PPE, almost 10,000 relief shipments, 2 billion masks and millions of vaccine doses. A challenge of this magnitude requires a network of our size, but we need the technology to go with it.

And with Microsoft, we are reimagining our future at the intersection of the physical and the digital, as we know that bringing those together brings real value to our customers.

The true heroes are almost 600,000 frontline workers who have really gone above and beyond the call of duty.

There's a sense of mission about it at FedEx. This is who we are and what we do. So at the end of the day, we are proud of what we are doing across the world.

(End video segment.)

JUDSON ALTHOFF: I'm delighted to be here with Rob Carter and we've both been superimposed on top of the FedEx World Hub.

Rob, you all have been focused on the expedient delivery of packages around the world and been very focused on the notion that the data about the package is as important about the package itself.

The pandemic has elevated the intensity and really put FedEx on the world stage for vaccine distribution. And I'd love it if you could start off with just this notion of the importance of data and intelligence and the role that it plays in FedEx's business.

ROB CARTER (CIO & EVP, FedEx Corporation): Absolutely. Data has been so important to FedEx. It used to just be kind of the exhaust from our applications and we always collected it and managed it well, but I'm not sure we activated it anywhere near to the level that we are today. With 15 million-plus packages a day going around the world, it provides amazing insights.

I mean, this incredible environment that we've created together between Azure Synapse and FedEx Surround is really giving data a new place in our infrastructure. It's elevating it to the highest order citizen that we have.

And that includes the vaccines where we're using IoT devices to track each and every vaccine shipment, ingesting that through data bricks and some of the technology in your stack into our Surround environment and it's providing intense visibility and predictive capabilities around these most critical shipments.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: So you all invested in FedEx Surround ahead of the pandemic, and it was really meant to be a world-class, next generation, AI-empowered way of supporting logistics and advance supply chain solutions for your customers around the world, but it has been put to work. I would love it if you would give folks a flavor in how you intend to scale Surround investments across your enterprise.

ROB CARTER: We have this real high sense of purpose at FedEx. We believe that we connect people and possibilities around the world and that businesses prosper and communities thrive and really people flourish in that kind of environment where they're connected to the world. And that's been important during the pandemic, too, from the top of the stack, with the incredible ingestion of vaccine data, all the way down to dog food being delivered.

We're ingesting massive amounts of data into the Azure environment that is Surround. Along with our data, we're also ingesting things like traffic data and weather data. When big storms hit the Eastern Seaboard, it's critical that we have visibility to those dimensions as well, as we're using data science and machine learning and AI to make sure that we're able to work our way around congestion points and critical delivery obstacles.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: Well, you're a super important partner to us, Rob, and you're pretty close to all of our engineering strategies and roadmaps. I would love it if you could maybe share some of your feedback as to the announcements that we're making here at Ignite.

ROB CARTER: Yeah, you know, the reality of what we're trying to manage is this world of more than 700 aircraft and 180,000 vehicles and millions of shipments. And so, the data that that produces needs to be managed in modern ways.

And so, things like Synapse and what we're doing with Cassandra data structures right now to really be able to lean into modern technology, eventually consistent technologies that work hard to manage multi-instance availability zones for our business, because, frankly, the technology at FedEx is the central nervous system of the company. Planes don't fly, trucks don't roll, customers can't ship, customers don't have the visibility into their shipments that they need without that technology being rock solid.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: Completely. So, Rob, listen, I can't thank you enough for being here with me today, but more importantly, for the partnership and for the 600,000 FedEx employees that are on the front lines today helping us all get through this pandemic together.

(Video segment transition.)

JUDSON ALTHOFF: I've been dropped into a Coca-Cola bottling facility with the help of a little bit of virtual magic with Barry Simpson.

So, Barry, you personally have really had an impact on a lot of our strategy and thinking. And I'll never forget when you came to our Senior Leadership Team meeting a couple of years ago and said, "Hey, listen, the first thing you all have to get right is security as a foundation." And I have to say it stimulated so much of our investment in the area and we'll always be thankful to you for that. But I would love for you to unpack that security journey.

BARRY SIMPSON (SVP & Chief Platform Services Officer, Coca-Cola): Sure. Judson.

Well, we started, like most companies, with a lot of fragmented systems, a lot of application systems, and probably spending more time bringing data together and wiring these things together than really analyzing the signals. And when you look at the cyber-landscape outside of us, the threat landscape is getting bigger and it's moving faster.

On the security side, we embraced the Microsoft security suite. On our application side, we cut our applications in half and moved them to Azure because we believed the public cloud was inherently safer through its segmentation.

And so, bringing those things together, it lets us bring more and more signals together to the one place and lets us run the AI engines over the top of that, so that we can see the patterns faster and we can act on the threats more holistically.

So it's like everything else, it's in the detail. You got to do the hard work. You've got to simplify. And you see in the pandemic, for example, our whole untrusted network

structure really came to the fore. Our applications were easy to get at because they were hosted in the cloud. Our networks were untrusted, which means that when we identify you as a person, we need to know it's you. We need to know it's your device and we need to know you're authorized to the application or the data that you're going for. So all of those things come together and allow us to give our people a frictionless security experience.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: Look, you've got hundreds of brands across a couple hundred countries, large-scale bottling system. Can you tell us a little bit more about how you're securing that estate?

BARRY SIMPSON: And I think we'd probably start from a pretty good place in that our bottling partners are just as committed to the growth, the love of our brands and securing them as we are.

I just think the world is a place where platforms lead the way and you can innovate on these platforms together. It gives us a scale and it gives us the speed to roll out capability across a much larger system at the price points that we can afford.

So if we had 80-plus security solutions just at the Coca-Cola Company itself, you can imagine what it was like across the whole system. And so for us, you know, we've narrowed that landscape. We're below 20 security systems. And we believe with the announcements that we're seeing from Microsoft, we'll be able to reduce that further.

JASON MOORE: Super progress. And you mentioned the announcements. Wondering if you could just comment on things that in particular may have caught your eye as being valuable to you and your strategy.

BARRY SIMPSON: To me, some of them are simple. It's like passwordless security, just making it easier for people and taking friction away from security. That's a big deal.

The Data Loss Prevention is a big deal for us, and getting once again more of those signals in the same real estate so that we can analyze and stitch together events that we may not have seen before is really positive for us.

And as I said earlier, we are in a public cloud environment so that the way that you can connect and tag data across multiple cloud platforms and manage it as one, that's pretty exciting for us.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: Well, listen, I can't thank you enough for just the partnership we've had across the board and the journey that we're on together.

BARRY SIMPSON: We value the partnership very much. Once again, we're looking forward to exploiting these features that you're giving us and to learn by doing, so thank you.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: So I'd like to summarize a lot of what we've just seen across these five customer examples.

So many of you have engaged with us and asked us how to get started on like endeavors. Many of you come with a sense of urgency and say, "Hey, look, I just want to get to the cloud. I want to digitize my business."

It's important, though, to actually slow down and recognize that these are two different things. Frankly, if all we did for you was lift and shift your assets to the cloud, we would be doing you a disservice.

If you think about it, through these examples, we've really made sure that technology is the servant of the business outcomes. In the Apollo hospitals, you heard from Dr. Sangita Reddy just how important it was to get their Red Book, how they run their business embedded into Teams as a part of the collaborative fabric. Again, it wasn't about necessarily getting to the cloud. It was about empowering their people on the front lines to solve for the challenges of the pandemic.

In the BMW scenario, look, it wasn't about any application they had and trying to digitize it or lift it to the cloud. It was about taking a look at the Dynamics assets that we had across our sales and services modules and our low code/no code capabilities and getting to fast business results by leveraging a SaaS offering and leveraging the power of Power Apps.

In the Orsted example, it was about IoT and connecting sensors on the front lines to their mass scale clean energy wind farms and leveraging the digital twin concept to drive better outcomes and more effective efficiencies across their business.

For FedEx, it's about leveraging data and AI to deliver mass scale vaccine distribution and make sure that they continue to evolve as the needs of the world rely upon them for remote deliveries and servicing their personal needs and the needs of their business.

And finally, the Coca-Cola story. If there's one vulnerability in this notion of becoming digital, it's that digital businesses are more susceptible to cybercrime. So for Barry and the Coca-Cola team, it was all about building that cybersecurity foundation and making sure that from there, they could do all kinds of fantastic digital projects to optimize Coca-Cola's business.

So being thoughtful about how technology empowers business transformation is really what it's all about. I always say digital transformation is about business transformation, empowered by technology, and in that order.

We're eager to work with you on your business outcomes and hope to partner with you in the future.

Have a great Ignite.

END