



Digital Distribution Strategies for Government, in Cloud

Brian Solis: Hello, I am Brian Solis. I am the Global Innovation Evangelist here at Salesforce. It's such a pleasure to be here with you. But more importantly, I have to say that I'm so excited to be here with Sandy Carter. Not only is Sandy Carter someone whose work I've followed for many, many years, she's also been a dear friend and someone whom I greatly miss and cannot wait to see once this world opens up. Sandy Carter, welcome.

Sandy Carter: Thank you, Brian. I feel the same way. It's great to be here, if only virtual, but I cannot wait until we can start traveling again. Thank you so much for the honor of being on the Salesforce show.

Brian Solis: Oh, of course. Of course. And I think we should probably kick off with some formality. So Sandy, please tell us about your role at AWS.

Sandy Carter: Sure, I'm happy to, Brian. So I think I've told you before that I have the best job at [inaudible], because I am the Vice-President for Public Sector Partners and Programs, which means, first of all, I get to do [inaudible] globally, which includes health care, space... I mean, who doesn't love space... government, education, not for profit. So it's a global business, and I get to work with our partners every day who are just doing some of the most amazing things, not just for profit, but for purpose. And that's really what I love is, the purposeful work that they do on an ongoing basis.

Brian Solis: Well, this I can attest to firsthand because the last time we worked together was specifically around digital transformation and helping partners accelerate digital transformation excellence, and then also to help accelerate that excellence among their public sector partners. And that was all just before the pandemic. We knew then that DX was mission critical. And we used to talk about disruption, not pandemic disruption, but disruption. And digital transformation was really about how organizations could continually respond to disruptive events, trends, technologies, beyond IT.

And I guess, now, we all can agree that this is an imperative more than ever, and the most effective partners in digital transformation journey, explore existing states, capabilities within. They benchmark

those results against industry best practices, or at least they should. But also with customer needs and apply those insights to a strategic digital transformation plan of their own. We certainly have learned some lessons.

So with all of that said, Sandy, what are some of the things that have notably changed since then and now, in this new normal, and what important lessons have we, you, everyone, learned that you can share?

Sandy Carter: Well, I would say, first, if you can say something good came out of COVID, one of the good things came up was that it sped up digital transformation by years. In fact, Trilio, one of our partners, did a survey and they found that from March of 2020 to March of 2021, digital transformation roadmaps were faster during that time period than over the last five and a half years. So I think that's a big notable change, which is the rate, and the pace, and the speed with which companies had to move. And public sector in particular, companies, the governments, agencies, cities, acted like start ups. They had to learn quickly, and fast, and scrappy to really get it done.

I think some of the lessons that we learned and they learned was that our partners are very resilient. We saw during COVID, our partners really step up, they offered free services to express empathy. And in the situation, they learned new skills. So Amazon Connect is a big one for Salesforce. We had partners like system integrators who learned about Amazon Connect because of the need that existed there. We also saw tremendous healthcare transformation, is one of the big lessons learned, and we've really stepped up what we're doing with our partners around healthcare.

And then the last one is data, data, data. Brian, before COVID, people would come into the EBC, our Executive Briefing Center, and they'd be, "I have to know about machine learning. Just talk to me about machine learning." And I'd always say, "Well, you've really got to figure out your data first. We have to have a data strategy." And they'd be like, "No, no, no. I want to talk about machine learning." Once COVID hit, we all learned the importance of data, because for all of these realtime decisions, how do we get food to the right place, vaccines to the right place, mask to the right place, all that requires data. And so the importance of data really was elevated as well.

Brian Solis: Wow, that's no short list, especially one to have accelerated so quickly. The only other thing that I would say that I've observed, and I'm sure you've seen it too, is that purpose really seemed to help focus what this opportunity was. I think before it was really about the digital and digital transformation. And now we got to see what does a transformed organization really look like, and how does that impact its ecosystem and its community. And so I'm excited to see what 2021 and beyond, what... We'll talk about next year, and looking back... And so with that said, we certainly can't go back to the way things are, and I don't know that we want to. What are some of the new challenges that you're seeing, and strategies for meeting those challenges as we go all in on digital? And how are you seeing that evolve this year?

Sandy Carter: Well, so I'm going to start with the last one I mentioned, data, data, data. One of the big strategies moving forward is, we are advising companies to have a data strategy. Where is your data? What's your source of your data? Do you have enough data? Do you have the right quality of data? And for us, that's really important. We're seeing this acceleration of IOT, as companies both look to gather more data that's real time, Brian, but also to ensure that they have data that was maybe collected by a sensor or a device versus a person. So we saw robots in hospitals gathering temperatures, or sensors being placed on things where humans may be used to track that data, but now it was too dangerous during COVID. And so we were seeing a lot of data coming in from that regard.

And I think maybe another big one that Salesforce and Amazon are seeing is, how do we scale the call center? Call centers have become more, more, and more important. And our integration with Salesforce and Amazon Connect has really turned out to be a game changer in 2021, also 2022, but just that the ability to scale that call center answering questions about COVID, or mask, or vaccines, or whatever it happened to be, was a true game changer as well. And I think, strategically, most states, and cities, and governments, countries around the world are looking to solve that challenge.

Brian Solis: And I'm only sure that we'll see new challenges as we start to essentially pursue new trajectories. I think the future is now on a different course. It isn't what it used to be, so to speak. And I think



that's a really good thing. And I'm excited that you're part of all of this.

I'm going to break this next question into two parts. We did have the opportunity to work together on the development of the Partner Transformation Playbook, and in your Partner Transformation Program, you have a digital transformation kit. And the program itself was really, really unique. I remember being very impressed by it. So can you explain the toolkit and the program? And then I'll go into the second part, which is talking about real-world examples.

Sandy Carter: Yeah, and it was great. We collaborated with Brian, so that Brian could really, from a third party perspective, explain what our PTP or Partner Transformation Program was. So first of all, what we found was that a lot of partners were looking for best practices around how to become a cloud business. And so we created a program that consisted of about a 100 steps, or a 100 day program, to really lay out what were the elements that you needed to embark upon, to really embrace cloud. So of course there was technology, governance, culture.

So basically, every element that you needed to think about, we shared our Amazon best practices. It was open to partners that, in some cases, were brand new to the cloud, and other cases had already started the journey, but really needed some best practices as they got going.

You mentioned right up front, Brian, about having a customized plan, like no two companies are the same. So the really, I think, valuable thing about PTP is that we create a customized plan for each partner. And one of the, I think, great business outcomes is that partners who have completed the program, realize a 25% higher revenue growth, compared to those partners who've not participated in the program themselves.

Brian Solis: Yeah. I remember too having the opportunity to interview partners, and they just sung the praises of the course, and how it really showed them. I think one of the most interesting quotes that I remember was, "We didn't know what we didn't know, and this really helped us accelerate not only our excellence, but understanding where we could add value to what our partners don't know that they don't

know." And so with that said, do you have a couple of real world examples that you could share who are really accelerating and excelling?

Sandy Carter:

Yeah. And the really cool thing, Brian, is I get emails all the time from partners. Once they go through the program, they'll email me and they'll say, "Oh my gosh, I was really skeptical, but here's what I loved about it." So some of those recent emails I got, one was from Flecha Roja, which is a partner down in Costa Rica, and they really raved about the culture, that we didn't just emphasize the technology, but the cultural change that occurs in finance and marketing, the way you do DevOps, everything changes. And so they really liked that element of the program. If we talked about strategic communications... Well, I'll say that three times fast... they talked a lot about the differentiation that came from looking at our best practices. So they didn't just take our best practices and say, "Okay, we're going to use that exactly as you've dictated." But they took that and they said, "Okay, let's find our differentiated view of that, and let's move that forward from how they're now going to talk about and market the cloud, to how they're going to leverage the cloud internally and externally."

And then IT2GO also said, "They love the 100 day plan. They were skeptical about it, but once they got into it, it really laid out what they needed to accomplish each day. And it gave them a goal to hit, and a really nice laid out way to get to the end goal." So those are just some of the partners. And again, I could go on and on, but I know we don't have a lot of time.

Brian Solis:

I appreciate it. And I can tell you that having been there, the number of excellent stories I'm sure you could share of transformation, are just all excellent in their own way. But what they do share is, how it added value to their organization and added value ultimately to the ecosystem. Certainly now, moving forward in this new normal and next normal, there are a lot of considerations, and as you said, complexities.

I mean, I hate to say this, it's also not the last disruption, I'm sure, we're going to face. Last time we were together, we talked about our friend, Jeremiah [inaudible], who had introduced the crisis cake. And this essentially was a visualization that introduced all of the different

considerations that we have to look at besides a pandemic, which include climate change, the economy, inequality, civil unrest, political uncertainty, and I think the other one was the infodemic, which we could solve one thing, I guess, would have to be all these things as quickly as possible. But we can only do what we can do.

I think, what is it? It's part of the stoic philosophy that you can't control the events that happen to you, but you can control how you respond. And I would love to hear from you how we can consider mitigating these risk factors and related considerations as we think about transformation in this new world?

Sandy Carter: Yeah. I always start first with my team, Brian, and I know that you're a really empathetic and caring person as well. The whole crisis cake, layer upon, layer upon, layer really took a toll. And so part of what we did to mitigate that, because our people are the most important asset that we have, so we did a lot of things. We did #takecareoftheteam. We did virtual wine tastings. We had, believe it or not, we had a farm animal expedition where someone had a Go camera on and we visited a farm. So all the little Amazonians came in as well.

And then moving to our partners... I used to travel a lot. I know you were actually a bigger road warrior than I was, but I traveled to countries and just to really listen to my partners, so one of the other things I did was, I did a 100 by 100 tour, which is a 100 partners in a 100 days. I did it all virtually of course, different time zones, and really listen to what the partners had to say so that I could still be there with them virtually, and I really dedicated effort.

Brian Solis: Wow.

Sandy Carter: And that gave me a lot of good insight. Amazon's about working backwards from the customer, and so it really helped me to figure out some of the things to mitigate the risks. So one of the things you mentioned earlier was about, how do you deal with purpose? So one of the things our partners said they wanted were some of these mission-based programs. So we introduced it just yesterday, a climate, a clean energy accelerator for startups. We also introduced one for space, and that was all in response to those 100 by 100 day tours where we're listening to what our customers need at this point

in time. We also introduced a program called Think Big for Small Business, which addressed that in a quality civil unrest, some of that, that you talked about.

And this is the first of a kind program for partners. And what it did was it helped us to identify those diversity partners, that government, cities, agencies, companies around the world were looking for, so female-owned businesses, black-owned businesses, brown-owned businesses, military-owned businesses, basically whatever the minority was in your country. And we gave them just a little extra boost, a little bit extra technical help, a little bit extra go-to-market help, so that when those governments, agencies, cities, companies come looking for the right diversity or a partner, that partner was changed.

And then we looked, overall, at some of the mission driven solutions that we had. So we really try to dissect the Jeremiah cake and address climate with our clean energy, address some of this other work on inequality with our Think Big for Small Business, and really help our partners with their transformation as they had all these things hitting them really squarely on the face, if you would.

Brian Solis: Wow, Sandy, and this is why you continue to inspire me. A 100 meetings with partners in 100 days, and literally becoming the voice of your partner internally to drive change and to help them thrive in an era of ongoing uncertainty, and lead the way forward. Just, it's so inspiring, Sandy.

And I guess that'll bring me to the last question, even though I don't want this to be the last question, what are some of the new solutions that you and your team are bringing to customers in partnership with companies like Salesforce? How does cloud readiness, for the lack thereof certainly before the pandemic, impact an organization and what business areas stand to improve as a result?

Sandy Carter: Yeah. I mean, I would say, Salesforce is one of our most strategic partners, and that is because of the value that you bring to customers every day. And so, as I think again about that crisis cake and listening to all those partners and customers, there are really four solutions that we bring together with you, as Salesforce. One is voice, this was a really big area, looking for voice controlled software and



applications. So we combined or integrated with you, with Amazon Connect and Service Cloud Voice.

We also know our customers were looking for connected platforms like Tableau... Thank you for the CEO, by the way... But having Tableau on AWS, we could visualize that data.

In the public sector space, we had a couple of very specific solutions as well. Of course, when you heard the video, you talked about FedRAMP, but we also have Salesforce Government Plus that's on AWS GovCloud, which really helps around that security, end-to-end security area. And then finally, CIM, or the Cloud Information Model where we collaborated with you, Genesys, and AWS. I think this is just really important as, together, we're bringing agility to business decisions, cost savings, faster innovation together. So we're really excited about the partnership. Not only is Salesforce a phenomenal company, but you have the same culture. You are about purpose for what you're doing with vaccines. You are about value to your customer. And we saw that in all of these joint solutions as well.

Brian Solis:

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. And then added to that, all of your work, especially with the new programs around sustainability, and so this is all... I mean, this is all just fantastic. And I could tell you that not only do we appreciate your partnership, but firstly, I'm excited that we get to continue to work together.

And so with that said, I do want to leave you with some parting words, maybe some advice for those watching along on how to thrive in 2021 and beyond. And then after that, I'll wrap up.

Sandy Carter:

Okay. Great. Well, thank you, Brian.

Well, first of all, thank you for the honor of being on the Salesforce. Talk with you, Brian, it's always such an honor and such a pleasure.

I guess my message for everybody would be, don't wait. Get going. A lot of people will analyze things, or analyze it too much. Part of innovation is about experimentation, and trying something out, and then going. And I think that's a philosophy that all of the solutions from Salesforce and AWS have in common, experiment, get started, and get going. Make sure you lead with empathy, which I know, if you



read your LinkedIn and your Facebook, I know that you're that leader as well. I think both are really important, making sure we add value and purpose.

Brian Solis: Well, Sandy, I'm going to give you a virtual high five, woohoo.

Sandy Carter: Woohoo.

Brian Solis: That was wonderful. Thank you so much, Sandy.

And thank you everyone for following along with us. Please make sure to follow Sandy in all of her work on social media. It's hard to keep up with everything, but she's certainly an inspiration to follow.

And we will see you next time. Thank you, everyone.

Sandy Carter: Thanks, Brian.

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