

Microsoft Ignite 2021 Judson Althoff Keynote Transcript

[NOTE: Below is a compilation of the various interviews Judson Althoff conducted that were presented throughout the first day of Microsoft Ignite 2021.]

JUDSON ALTHOFF: The Microsoft Cloud is the most trusted and comprehensive cloud in the industry. We don't say that boastfully. We actually say that with a sense of accountability because we believe in our mission. We believe that our aim is to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more.

And so, when we build the Microsoft Cloud as the most trusted and comprehensive one in the industry, we actually believe that it calls us to action to go and serve, to serve all of you as customers by industry from left to right. It's about empowering you to achieve your business outcomes.

What I want to do today is some context setting for how we're doing that and how we're doing that by industry and how that parlays into the four themes of Ignite. So throughout today's keynotes, I will host conversations about the Microsoft Cloud with thought leaders from around the world in an effort to bring these themes to life.

But first, I'd love to jump into a topic that Satya touched on upfront, sustainability and how the Microsoft Cloud is empowering a carbon neutral future for the planet.

If the pandemic has taught us anything, it's that no business is 100% resilient, but those businesses that are fortified with digital capability are more resilient than those that are not. We've seen that investing in digital capabilities for supply chain resiliency and for autonomous factories has helped companies endure these challenging times. And the beauty of all of this is that not only has this tech helped our customers survive the pandemic and the challenges of global constraints, but it is also going to help them thrive in the future.

Let's get started.

For my first conversation, I spoke with Juan Jose Pajon, senior vice president of global infrastructure applications and cloud operations at Grupo Bimbo. The global prepared foods company operates 196 bakery plants across 30 countries. And because they have to ship these baked goods to so many locations, they have a distribution network with over 57,000 routes worldwide.

Given their massive operating footprint, the company's sustainability ambitions are noteworthy and the way they are leveraging technology to make progress is truly impressive.

Hi, Juan. Thanks so much for being with me today.

JUAN JOSE PAJON: Hey, Judson, it's an honor.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: So tell us a little bit about Grupo Bimbo's sustainability ambitions and how in your mind technology has a role in addressing those.

JUAN JOSE PAJON: We are a purpose-driven company. We want to truly become a net zero carbon emission company. And as part of that, for instance, 80% of our electricity is coming from renewable sources today, and by 2025, we plan to be a hundred percent renewable.

We want to use technology to grow our business and also to make better decisions, and for that, having a complete visibility on our value chain, this is from the moment our raw materials enter our bakeries to the moment we deliver the product, the final product to our customers.

So our Industrial Internet of Things initiative is very important for us creating digital twins. We are working really hard, connecting all these bakeries, production lines, our logistics, our transportation to provide visibility, to provide traceability, and to have timely information to take those decisions. Then we will have a very clear idea where are the things where we need to adjust, correct, what are the inefficiencies, how we can be more efficient in the use of water, in the use of energy, from waste on every bakery.

So we want to have a connected value chain as a first phase. Then at the same time, we are moving to have a predictive one. And our ambition, our goal is to have a cognitive one in the near future.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: Yeah, look, for me this is a multifaceted payoff. Of course, you can drive greater efficiencies in the business, and so there's economic yield, but in addition to those business benefits, you also get the benefit of a reduced carbon footprint, reduce water utilization.

So just a few weeks ago, as you well know, Juan, we announced the public preview for Microsoft's Cloud for Sustainability, which you all have graciously been piloting for the last couple of months. Can you talk about how this fits into the strategy?

JUAN JOSE PAJON: So we are building this platform, implementing it as we speak. Our ambition is not only to work on Scope one and Scope two, which is actually aimed at specifically impacting our value chain, but also in the future, even go to a Scope three, which is the more indirect aspect of how we are doing in the carbon emissions. So this is going to help us to be more laser focused on initiatives and actions. It's a game changer for us.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: We're proud to be a technology partner to you all in this ambition, and I think it's just fantastic how you're set out to make a real difference in the world here. So thanks so much for being with us today, Juan.

JUAN JOSE PAJON: No, thank you very much for the opportunity. The future is bright and it's even brighter when we collaborate. What we can produce and give to the world and other industries and other companies is going to be great.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: Awesome. Thanks so much, Juan.

[NEXT INTERVIEW]

JUDSON ALTHOFF: I'm thrilled to have Leena Nair, chief human resources officer at Unilever, join me for my next conversation. Leena, thanks so much for being here.

Let's start from the beginning. Why don't you tell me a little bit about Unilever all up as a company?

LEENA NAIR: We are Unilever, a truly global company, an FMCG that makes the most essential products the world needs today, and our mission is to make sustainable living commonplace.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: So, Lena, since the dawn of the pandemic, as you well know, companies around the world have scrambled to embrace a remote work philosophy. I know you've been on this journey for years at Unilever, and it's a critically important part of your strategy. Tell us a little bit more about that.

LEENA NAIR: One of the things we learned very early in the pandemic is one size doesn't fit all. We're all in the same storm. We're not in the same boat.

We've invested quite a bit in digital technology, whether it was Teams for collaboration, Power BI platform for our organization, digital twin factories, or Una, our chatbot in HR that handles about 7 million transactions a year.

What was truly heartening for me to see is in our recent Una Voice survey, our people. Ninety-three percent of all people felt that they were really well supported during COVID with the equipment, the technology that allowed them to be productive. So I was so glad we partnered with Microsoft and had made all those investments early.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: So from the last session here at Ignite, we just got finished hearing a lot about Microsoft Viva. You all at Unilever have been one of the early customers for Microsoft Viva, and I wondered if you'd share with us a bit about how you've been using the technology and how it's been a benefit to you and your people.

LEENA NAIR: We've been, you know, using Viva Topics to get the right curated topics to our people. We've been using Viva Connections to make sure our people get the content, the information, the content that they are seeking. We've been using Viva to understand more insights about the way our people are working, how is their wellbeing, how is their productivity, how is the engagement?

And let me give you a few examples. People in our organization that were working 60 and 70 hour weeks without taking any breaks at all had a greater risk to their wellbeing. We saw that women, particularly those working in emerging markets in Asia and Africa, were struggling a lot, particularly those between the ages of 30 to 39, because all the care and responsibilities were on their shoulders, as per the social norms of the places they operated in. We started intervening to put support systems in place to ensure that undue work burden and work responsibility was not felt.

We have 150,000 people in 190 countries and one size doesn't fit all. And the beauty of Viva is it gives you the right action, right place, right time, leading to better engagement, better productivity, better wellbeing.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: I'm so glad to hear how you're using these insights, Leena. It's pretty fantastic. I'm excited about the new Viva Manager Insights capabilities that customers will be able to leverage to make data-driven decisions about the overall wellbeing of employees.

As Unilever contemplates this notion of return to the physical workplace, how are you thinking about your hybrid work strategy?

LEENA NAIR: You know, firstly, I think this is such a moment to reimagine and reinvent. In fact, I'm going to ban the use of things like return to the workplace, back to work, because there is no return, there's no back. We're going forward to a new world that combines the best of what we knew earlier to what we've learned in almost the last two years.

One of the things I believe in is the power of offices. Offices are important. It's a place where people get together to collaborate, to celebrate, to commiserate. It's a place where culture is built. But we also believe that you can marry that with flexibility and choice, and create focused places at the workplace or beyond where people can work differently.

So, for example, we're experimenting with a four-day working week in New Zealand. We're experimenting with something called UWork in the U.K., where our people, those who don't want to work 12 months a year but want to look at six weeks to six months, can do so while getting the security of an employment contract with Unilever. Tremendous flexibility.

We have a program called URenew, where people can invest money in the company, invest money, and they can go on sabbaticals to learn some new skills.

We can't do all of this just for our office staff. We have 90,000 people who work in our factories who are creating essential products like soaps and sanitizers for the world. We have to bear in mind that we've got to create that flexibility and choice for our manufacturing staff.

And underpinning that flexibility and choice and empowerment we want to give people has to be technology and tools. There is no question we have to do this in a modern, progressive, technology-enabled way.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: I love that, Leena, and I love your charge on looking forward and not looking back. At Microsoft, we certainly share your passion for the importance of physical spaces, which is why we're so excited about the meeting room capabilities that Jared announced in his Ignite keynote just a few moments ago.

Overall, we couldn't be more grateful, Leena, for the partnership at Unilever. You are really a fantastic example of just the importance of embracing employee wellbeing and leveraging technology to help have a better employee experience. So, thanks so much for the leadership, Leena.

[NEXT INTERVIEW]

JUDSON ALTHOFF: Walgreens Boots Alliance is the largest retail pharmacy, health and daily living destination across the United States and Europe. They have been on a journey to master digital capability, to have increasing engagement with their customers in a direct capacity, while at the same time mastering and nurturing their data estate, and treating their data as their most strategic asset. To do this, they need personalization, automation and a customer journey orchestration capability like no other.

I connected with Francesco Tinto, CIO at WBA, to discuss the critical role data plays in enabling a personalized consumer experience, and the importance of protecting that data with a trusted technology partner.

Hi, Francesco. Thanks so much for being with me here today.

FRANCESCO TINTO: Hi, Judson. Thanks for having me.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: We just finished hearing Alysa Taylor talk about Microsoft's new customer experience platform. I know that WBA has been deeply invested in this notion of digital autonomy. Tell me why personalization is so critical to your success.

FRANCESCO TINTO: Absolutely, Judson. So really, the customer is at the center of every interaction, and this really allow us to leave our partners more joyful life through better health.

Their intent to deliver personalized services, personalized solution, and at the end, really to build long-lasting relation with our customer.

So the way we really are working is understanding their needs, starting personalizing solution offering, bringing our patient along in the health journey and wellness journey, and in this way, we are informing also the way we are operating internally.

The understanding of the customer is bringing new innovation in our product delivery, is bringing as well and informing the solution that we are delivering in the digital and the physical environment.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: So data is obviously at the core of everything that you're doing here. And with the challenges around amassing data these days, the demise of the third-party cookie and really some closed ecosystems out there in terms of how data is being managed, how is WBA amassing all of this data to drive personalization for your patients and customers?

FRANCESCO TINTO: Through the loyalty program that we have in Walgreen, the My Walgreen, and the Advantage loyalty program that we have in Boots, we own more than 100 million first data around our consumer. That is really informing us the purchase history, the behavior, and of our patient and our customer, and is giving us the possibility really to build those kind of innovative solution.

The biggest challenge for us is start really creating a single data, a single view of the customer across all these feeds that we receive from our environment because we are touching our customer through so many channels. So bringing everything together in one single customer identity and to have the possibility of understanding the different behavior is crucial for us on the mass personalization.

Everything that we do, of course, is always in our mind that we need to protect information from a privacy and security point of view because we have a major responsibility in the way we manage the information of our customer and our patients.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: So you obviously have to harness all of these assets, leverage them for personalization, engage with digital marketing services out there in the global ecosystem, but at the same time, protect that as a core asset for WBA. How are you doing that?

FRANCESCO TINTO: We are also managing the health care of the person and it's a big responsibility because we own the information about the patient on their health situation, on their prescriptions.

Protecting the data is really paramount. Security and privacy are by design. When we think about the solution, when we are developing a system or we are building a customer journey, the privacy and the security component embedded from the right beginning. Encryption is key. The

way we protect our information is key. The number of possible access as well is mandatory in the way we operate.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: So trust then is at the core really. I think at the end of the day, if you're using data to improve the health impact and the wellness of your patients, it's obviously a trust contract that's well served. But how do you think about that deeper data governance and the classification and how you manage the same?

FRANCESCO TINTO: We are truly governing all through policies very deeply the way we access the data. There is a major difference for us between the data related to the retail space versus the data when we touch pharmacy and healthcare, very strong firewall and guard line that are really separating those kind of information.

The same way in which also we are regulated by all the different organizations, we need to be compliance for PCI, compliance for EPA, really managing all the HITRUST certification as well. So the policy and the way we operate are extremely important.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: It's truly impressive how you are leveraging data, continuing that contract of trust with your customers and patients, and at the same time, really harnessing digital autonomy to better market and personalize that journey with creating better wellness outcomes and better lives. So fantastic work and thanks so much for sharing it with us.

[NEXT INTERVIEW]

JUDSON ALTHOFF: So for my next conversation, I'm thrilled to introduce Christina Kramer, CIBC's senior executive vice president for technology, infrastructure, and innovation, and Richard Jardim, the executive vice president and chief information officer. Thank you both so much for being here.

RICHARD JARDIM: Good to be here.

CHRISTINA KRAMER: Thank you for having us.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: So, Christina, let's start with you. You have a cloud-first strategy. Tell us how you got to that strategy and why it's so important to you.

CHRISTINA KRAMER: So CIBC's growth strategy we believe is dependent on our cloud-first approach that enables us to simplify, to modernize, enables us to become more efficient, to accelerate innovation and respond faster. And also, we can build in security, so secure by design, compliant by design and resilient by design.

And we're already seeing lots of benefits of it. We're enabling new collaboration opportunities with partners in our ecosystem, as well as outside of our ecosystem. We are bringing to bear

new market-leading capabilities for our clients. We believe it'll help our overall growth strategy, focused on our purpose, to enable our clients to achieve their ambitions.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: That's awesome and a tremendous amount of complexity to navigate, especially in a highly regulated industry. I applaud being so bold and leading forward with all of it.

Richard, maybe you could talk a little bit about how you manage all of it.

RICHARD JARDIM: So if I step back a little bit, the hybrid cloud strategy for CIBC has been in the works for a few years, and now we're doubling down with the big agreement with Microsoft on going sort of public cloud at scale with Azure. And so, we have a multi-cloud construct.

And also that's mixed in, as you can appreciate, with a bank with all our legacy infrastructure like mainframe technology, which isn't going anywhere, but we look at it as a whole portfolio where we can actually manage all the components and pieces under one umbrella. So even our risk control framework is on top of all of that infrastructure, whether it's cloud or non-cloud.

The second bit is when you look at our actual cloud footprint, we actually look at the profile of those applications and we actually pinpoint which ones are suitable to private cloud, which ones will we push more to a SaaS ASP model, depending on the business functionality required, or which ones go to public cloud and Azure. So it's big.

The last thing, too, is we want to have that single pane of glass for our engineers, our support folks, our infrastructure folks. And that's where we see new tools like Microsoft Arc that could help reduce our risk around managing these highly complex environments.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: Yeah, that's great. So maybe we'll build on this multi-cloud thread just a little bit by talking about the data because harnessing the data estate, leveraging it to make sure that you're driving some efficiencies around what would otherwise be manual processes, also a big boost for you all. Can you talk a little bit more about that?

RICHARD JARDIM: One thing we really look at with our data footprint at the bank is, again, multiple systems where there's vendor applications, proprietary applications. Data is everywhere.

And so, we've made some very conscious decisions at the bank to simplify how we approach data. Real-time data is becoming increasingly important, as you can appreciate. So cloud plays a key role in that ability to consume the data easier and to make it real-time available for things like client insight.

So we've spent quite a lot of investment over the last couple of years on improving our client insights, using AI, accessing the data we have at our fingertips, and then be able to provide that advice back to clients.

One of the other things we look at as well is, if you think about the multiple environments we have, there's again this complexity of being able to have that single view of managing all that data. Some of the analytical tools, Synapse, for example, is super helpful.

The main thing here is innovation is going to be driven off how well we monetize our data and how quickly we can use that data to the benefit of our clients.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: That's exactly why we've built the Microsoft data strategy and our cloud data services the way that you describe, so that you can harness the power of your relational estate through your SQL and Azure SQL Server assets, you can harness your unstructured data through Cosmos, and then your cloud scale analytics with Synapse, and then bring it all together with Synapse Link. Combining that with the power of Azure Arc is a fantastic way to think about threading the needle on maintaining a hybrid cloud strategy and harnessing really the full power of a true data estate.

Maybe we switch gears a little bit, because one of the other big challenges in this pursuit to becoming a digital company is the talent gap. Christina, why don't you talk a little bit about this?

CHRISTINA KRAMER: Well, I mentioned earlier a bunch of benefits that we saw with being cloud-first, and talent is one of those benefits. It gives us an opportunity to really invest in our teams and invest in capability development and provide the ability for them to take different courses.

And since July, we've had over 2,000 courses completed by our team members and we've done that with Microsoft and with the Azure experts to transfer some of the learnings and transfer some of the capabilities, so we can build them in-house and build that capability across the organization.

And that speaks to democratizing, you know, the learning and the capability development. So whether it's skill building within our development shops or citizen development, cloud-first is about developing our enterprise capabilities and cloud and skill development.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: Oh, that's fantastic. Honestly, that's sort of the best of both worlds. You can provide fantastic tools to elite developers and pro developers and then the right kind of tools for citizen devs, and then bring the two together in a collaborative format.

Look, we couldn't be more proud to be your technology partner, and we're really thankful for the investment of time and effort and energy you've put into the partnership. Thank you both for being with me.

RICHARD JARDIM: Thank you very much.

CHRISTINA KRAMER: Thank you again. Thanks, you guys.

[NEXT INTERVIEW]

JUDSON ALTHOFF: For my final conversation, I sat down with Jason Barnett, chief information security officer of HCA Health Care. We talked about the realities that digital businesses across all industries have greater vulnerabilities, and at the same time, bad actors have not slowed down.

With almost 200 hospitals and over 2,000 sites of care, HCA is a world-leading healthcare organization committed to patient care and the improvement of human life. I think we can all learn a lot from Jason and his team, who have been bullish that security is foundational.

Hey, Jason, thanks for being with me here today.

JASON BARNETT: It's great to be here. Thanks for having me.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: So you sit across so much of a protected set of data assets and empower a whole bunch of people across a vast network of hospitals to take care of patients and do so securely. Maybe you could talk a little bit about your security strategy and how you thought about it over the last 18 months.

JASON BARNETT: We're an organization that's fiercely dedicated to making sure that that patient care experience is excellent. That's at the center of all of the decisions that we make.

Talking about a strategy as a whole, Zero Trust is top of mind for us. It's a foundational component of everything that we do. And as the landscape has changed in our world, we've got great support from our leadership. We're brought in early. I'm super thankful for that, and it gives us an opportunity to try to innovate and design our security approach, along with the new solutions that the company is deploying to our hospitals.

Specifically around the pandemic, I think we were in a pretty good place because it was a big priority for us, and being able to secure our endpoints in a way that if they weren't on-prem, we still felt good about our security posture.

We're fortunate enough that we've got a solid enough infrastructure for people that needed to work from home, work remotely, but at the same time, we still had a lot of healthcare heroes that were going into the hospitals every day to focus on what they do best.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: And we've been really privileged to partner with you across an identity strategy, an endpoint strategy, an event and incident management strategy. You're a big user of Microsoft Defender, and Vasu shared with the audience earlier about some of the enhancements we're making to Defender. We now support many different heterogeneous environments that, of course, our customers have trusted us to protect the Microsoft estate for many, many years. But we're really pushing into a space where customers like HCA can depend on Defender across the board.

Share, from your perspective, the value of all of those integration points.

JASON BARNETT: We want to operate in a best-integrated type of environment. It's difficult to manage a lot of different technologies and systems when they don't integrate well. We want to decrease complexity by getting rid of old technology.

Our experience with Defender has been great. The way that it integrates across the rest of the Microsoft security stack that we're still implementing, everything is available through one console through this mythical single pane of glass that a lot of operators have longed for over the years. It's allowed us to resolve problems more quickly. It's allowed us to make our SOC analysts, our Security Operations Centers analysts, a little more comfortable with how they respond to an event.

It's also put us in a position where we don't have to rely on technology resources out in our facilities or divisions to try to help us solve problems. We can do that from one location.

And I'll also say the speed of deployment, we rolled out nearly 300,000 endpoints in less than a quarter, and typically that's unheard of at that kind of scale.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: No, it's awesome to hear, and again, we appreciate the opportunity to be able to partner with you so closely, and we've learned a lot from you and the experience as well.

Look, you mentioned the complexity of HCA several times, and I'd just sort of maybe pull on that thread a little bit, over 2,000 sites, nearly 300,000 colleagues. How do you balance the need to make sure they all have the information and the access they need when they need it, and at the same time securing the estate across all of those different entities?

JASON BARNETT: You're right, it is a challenge. While it's my primary focus and our team's primary focus, it's still a function of everybody in the organization. It's a shared responsibility by everyone and we're constantly trying to reinforce what it means to be a good steward of our information assets and what they can do to protect them. So there's always a people element in the security space.

From a technology perspective, we always try to build in layers and, you know, from the network all the way up to the devices that the users are interfacing with on a regular basis. My goal is really to try to make that invisible, allowing our caregivers to continue to be productive without being burdened by some kind of a security control or a pop up. You know, it's something that we need to be able to do as an information security team for HCA Health Care.

JUDSON ALTHOFF: I love the way you said that. I mean, we talk about the Microsoft Cloud being the most trusted and comprehensive cloud in the industry and security is the foundation of all of that.

Thank you, Jason, really for being with us here today to share your experiences.

JASON BARNETT: Thanks for having me.

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