AI LEADERS PODCAST- WHY DATA & ANALYTICS NEEDS A MULTI-SPEED APPROACH

AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

Jeff Kaminski [00:00:00] And then the business is clamoring for more because it's giving them what they need the decisions to run their business in a smarter way.

Lee Barrett [00:00:12] Hello, everyone, welcome to our AI Leaders Podcast. My name is Lee Barrett. I'm a managing director within Accenture. I lead our applied intelligence practice in the Northeast. And today I am very fortunate to have with us Jeff Kaminsky. Jeff, would you like to do a quick intro?

Jeff Kaminski [00:00:28] Hi Lee, thanks for having me. Jeff Kaminsky I'm a managing director and Accenture's Applied Intelligence Practice and I lead strategy in our Northeast market.

Lee Barrett [00:00:36] Great. And today we're going to be talking about why data and analytics needs a multi speed approach to implementation. Obviously, data analytics are fundamental to the enterprises as they continue to pursue their growth initiatives, and cloud is a very big important part of that as cloud providers are heavily investing in machine learning capabilities, next gen AI capabilities that are plug and play. We're seeing two approaches, primarily a top down and bottom up approach. Jeff, can you talk a little bit about the advantages, disadvantages of top down, bottom up?

Jeff Kaminski [00:01:11] So thanks, Lee. So yes, we do see top down and bottoms up going across our clients, across industries. And with that, there's upsides to both. And there's a couple challenges along the way that we see with each. So when you think about top down organization wide play with data and analytics, think of it as where the CEO, the C-suite has firm commitment, organization, wide institutionalization, long term vision, and then clear operating model, clear accountability. How we're going to drive big numbers, big results, large investments. And so a lot of outcomes come from that because the organization has significantly rallied around that. And really goodness. With that, though there are things that become bottlenecks along the way. Sometimes it may take a little bit longer. Sometimes funding may be become an issue. So there's a lot of things that our clients have to navigate as they go through when they to top down with bottoms up similar, some upside, there's speed, there's some quickness, there's agility, it's organic at times. And so that's a good, good bunch of good points there. But then what we see on some of the constraining factors, maybe there's a scalability, maybe there's a lack of holistic funding across the organization or business buy in. Maybe the business leaders aren't fully bought in yet because they don't know whether this is real or not. Is it just a point, a proof of concept? So these are some of the things that we have to think about when we when we look at both top down and bottom up and some of the pros and cons of each way.

Lee Barrett [00:02:34] Yeah, I would agree with that. I think especially when you're thinking about the top down, it's really important to have, you know, sometimes we refer to it tone from the top, that C level commitment that you mentioned to make sure that everybody understands that it's a priority and it's something that they should also prioritize and focus on as well. On the bottoms up side, I often see organizations trying to piecemeal programs together in what you refer to as those POCs and what's interesting is how do you then start to tie those together? And I think that's kind of the third approach that you and I have talked about in the past about this multi-speed or dual velocity. So as you think about the balance between top down and bottom up, how do you see some organizations using this dual velocity or multi-speed strategy to align business priorities with the organization to drive the execution or the lines of business?

Jeff Kaminski [00:03:35] So our top performing data and analytics are clients going across industries. They do balance that multi speed approach and it really does bring the best of both worlds because if if you focus too small, so what happens is it actually may cost more money over time because you keep on POC seeing things and just lack of knowledge and scalability. But when the multi speed comes in and it really allows the best of both worlds where you're able to deliver quick wins, rapid insights to the business to show that there's something there of substance. And then that allows you for when you get those quick wins to figure out where you want to focus and double down and then start to go towards scale. So it really allows for the best of both worlds, quick and safe sort of business. The business is not waiting. They need to make decisions. They need to either grow topline or pull costs out of the bottom line. And you need to do it fast. They need something that shows them and gives them hope that data and analytics could power some of these business decisions that are made. So multi speed again allows the best of both worlds to balance that long term and short term play, which is again what we see most of our high performing clients do. And they do it seem they seem to do it very well.

Lee Barrett [00:04:41] Yeah. And it really does help to to test that value, as you're mentioning in the business context and more or less de-risk some of the initiatives. I guess as you think about the audiences in that dual velocity model, how do you make sure that the end users understand? What's coming. How to drive decisions off of those insights and ultimately a data literate culture.

Jeff Kaminski [00:05:06] Well, the culture part of it is a big thing, Lee, because what we see is in many of our clients, this concept of tribal knowledge and tribal knowledge is good in some instances because it's permeating through the organization. But tribal knowledge at times is a little dangerous because it sits in pockets. And what we find with the concept of change management and culture, with these these rapid insights that we spin up through multi-speed, we're finding that there's a lot of great results that the business can see. They could they could see the the the the actual results. They do not have to spend a lot of time and a lot of money. And the other thing, too, is that it's just it's a little bit more focused and agile in regards to how they actually need to operate their business. The other thing that interesting thing that we find with our clients in the space with the multi-speed, is that especially for our data and analytics clients, many times it feels like they're pushing and trying to sell their data and analytics to the business. They get the business side folks on board. Well, what we find with the concept, these multi speed and rapid insight labs is that when they start to see these quick wins and quick insights, things that used to take months at times for the data and analytics works to get the data together and analyze it and come back with some of the analysis. Now those months are turning into weeks and days, and then inherently the business starts to want more insights and more insights and more insights. And so these rapid insights, when you bring them multi-speed, really start to become a destination. And then the

business is clamoring for more because it's giving them what they need the decisions to run their business in a smarter way.

Lee Barrett [00:06:46] That's a great point, Jeff and I imagine a lot of organizations are thinking about these rapid teams as they start to test pockets of value and do POCs. What are some of the pitfalls or watch outs as you start to think about standing up these teams?

Jeff Kaminski [00:07:03] Yeah, that's another great question, Lee, for what we see with the rapid. One of the key things is we have to protect the rapid team. And let me tell you what I mean by that. So for rapid teams, what's happening is that we see a lot of the great insights being delivered to the business, whether it's in research and development, developing new insights of how to maybe accelerate clinical trial and life sciences, or how to identify risk factors quicker in insurance and banking. So now when those insights happen, the business and the organization gets very excited, naturally. To be expected, right? The key here is we have to keep the rapid team continuously focused on rapid. And when those insights happen and the businesses are getting excited and they're looking for scale, which they should be, we need to have a different mechanism to mobilize the scalability. So usually we have other teams set up and ready to go that they have a pipeline of what they're going to work on scale so that the rapid teams could stay focused and stay true to rapid because otherwise they're no longer rapid insight lab. They're a pretty slow, lively.

Lee Barrett [00:08:07] Very good point. That makes sense. So now let's assume that they're bought in and they agree that they're going to take this to a velocity, multi-speed approach. How do they get started? What do they need to do as they go down this journey?

Jeff Kaminski [00:08:20] Sure. And most clients have some kind of footprint, Lee. As we all know in data and analytics, the question is, where are you on that maturity curve? What are some of the things that you have outfitted pretty nicely?

So to do multi-speed and to do rapid, you first need access to data. So as your data siloed in many different spots. So if you start this multi-speed approach, you're frankly going to be starting on aggregating and consolidating data, maybe cleaning data. It's it's can be in many different spots. Even though you may have aspirations for predictive analytics and artificial intelligence machine learning, you just may not be there yet. And that's okay. We see a lot of clients start here where that's the part of the journey they're on, and that in itself is still a big win. So it's really understanding where you are in that maturity curve and then figuring out reasonable and smart ways to go about this approach as opposed to saying and promising. This is where we see some challenges with our clients. They may over promise and deliver. You just really have to assess where you are. Be honest for yourself, take a good assessment and then put a logic plan in place that will deliver quick wins. And some of them may not be super sexy in the beginning, and that's okay. As long as the businesses that was a lot faster that you start to get that data to take me six weeks now. It took me a few days and that in itself is a win. So just being very conscious of where you are and where you're going to be and do not overcommit to the end users.

Lee Barrett [00:09:49] And sometimes I see organizations starting off and you mentioned it earlier with those POCs but without the plan to scale and that's really,missing that second speed or that second component of the dual velocity. So as you think about the need to scale. I'm often asked do you need to be on the cloud to operate in this multi-speed model? And I want to get your take on that.

Jeff Kaminski [00:10:16] The cloud is a massive enabler for speed. And with speed comes the opportunity to scale. The question is, I usually find with our clients across industries, you may have the capabilities, you may have all the tools, all the technology, all the cloud. But then is the culture ready? So there's a component of do you have the cloud enabled? Are you there yet? And then there's the once you once you

have the tools built, is the organization set up in a way to operate? The other thing that we see that's super important is not just cloud enablement and cloud readiness is the talent mix for these multi-speed approaches. What we find with data and analytics are again, the highest performing clients that we see. They haven't really nice blend of talent and what we would call say, let's say, an analytics part of of talent. So they bring the best of data engineering, they bring the best out of the analytics folks. But the thing that the really the secret sauce to many of these rapid programs that we find is we need some business savvy folks into it. So while we need our technical engineers, while we need our technical data science people, we also need what we call a business translator. And so these these folks are able to sit with the business in plain English, understand what they're trying to do, whether it's grow revenue in the European market, or maybe it's take out $50 million of cost, whatever it may be, it's somebody who understands that he can then go back to the rest of the rapid team and say, okay, here's the job to be done, translated into the data engineering and analytics speak and then take action upon that. So those are a couple of things that are really important. Cloud availability, the type of talent, and then also the culture or the willingness and or is the organization ready to scale, Lee.

Lee Barrett [00:11:57] Yeah. And you hit a couple key points there. And earlier on you even mentioned siloed data sets. So I think it's really important to understand where is the data that you're going to be accessing. And many times you may have a hybrid architecture model where something may be on prem, something may be involved, you may have a multi-cloud environment. It really depends on what your organization has already stood up and you talked about the talent, what the preferences are within your organization and the talent that you're using. As we think about the plug and play components within these platforms and how they're quickly evolving the analytics capabilities that are readily accessible to these teams, what are some of the critical things you need to get right in those first steps as you start down this process?

Jeff Kaminski [00:12:44] So a great question, Lee. For multi-speed one of the biggest things we see our clients is be realistic with what you have. And so what I mean by that is a lot of our clients have aspirations for full cloud machine learning all day, things like that, which is great that that's part of the roadmap, part of journey. But again, what we find is you have to be practical and leverage where you have get started with what you have. So as opposed to saying, well, you know what I'm going to do, I really need to get this all set up correctly and go on this year long journey. We'll just literally start with what you have. We've had clients who are still in this day and age still in spreadsheets. Well, if you're in that, we can quickly mobilize things and get a clean. But you start with what you have. Be simple, be practical and get going as opposed to trying to architect the grand vision, taking more time as the clock spins. So just being smart with what you have. And then the other thing is make sure you're going to be enabling flexibility and agility. And so what I mean by that is the concept of your multi speed rather teams. What they need to do is they need to be able to flex up and flex down. And that's a special type of skill set at times, special talent for for folks, because some people could have that flexibility in their work day and a they are ok and they perform well. Some people may not be able to adapt. They need they need to have a very clear understanding of what they're doing the next couple of weeks, whatever the case may be. And that's fine. Like both of those types of talent are very much needed nowadays, but this rapid team has to be able to flex up and down based on wherever the business goes. And that's where the true value comes. Because when a business could go knock on your door and say, Hello, folks, I need some insights today about X, Y and Z for my Asia market or whatever it may be doing, you have to be able to respond. So having that flexible design and operating model is key if you're going to be successful in this multi speed approach, Lee.

Lee Barrett [00:14:34] Yeah, and I would say one of the major benefits I've seen as organizations have gone down this rapid and

multi speed, dual velocity, whatever we call it, is they've moved away from these big bang and monolithic cloud migration programs, and they start to do this iterative value realization where they're taking the prioritize use cases and they're pumping them through the rapid data labs, as you described it, to test value and then having that plan to scale versus that, if we build the foundation and get all the data right, then we can figure out what type of use cases and how we're going to drive value off of it. So I really love that pivot and I really appreciate the perspectives that you've brought here today. So I know where we're at time. I really want to thank you for joining us today, Jeff, and sharing your insights and look forward to having you join us in future discussions. Thanks, everybody. Look forward to seeing you on the next next series.

Jeff Kaminski [00:15:33] Thanks for having me, Lee.