

Network is the Platform for the Agile Enterprise - Part 2

Hi, this is Michael Astle, Manager of Content Strategy in Cisco's Executive Thought Leadership Group. And this is part two of a two-part podcast where we are speaking with three thought leaders - Charlie Feld and Mike Childress from EDS and Gary Moore from Cisco. They're discussing the network as the platform for the agile enterprise. In part one they provided an overview of EDS and the agile enterprise. In part two they'll discuss managed services and how the network is the platform.

ASTLE: So let's turn to another aspect a little bit. Let's talk about managed services. Mike, what are the advantages of managed services?

CHILDRESS: I believe the managed services aspect really has a few dimensions here and the first is the ability to bring best practices from around the world and across industries and apply them at the client level with greater efficiency and less risk. I believe a lot of work you've seen us do around airlines, manufacturing and a few of our other areas really has shown this to be a great benefit to our clients. There's a lot of work we've done in SOA specifically with our transportation clients, and we're able to demonstrate faster time to market, more innovation and more standardization and less risky implementations for that. I think there's another angle also which has to do with the infrastructure of those applications which is as we talked about in the airline example, when there's a thunderstorm at a major hub, everybody's hopping on the network, wanting to find out what's going on. That's tremendous pressure on the infrastructure with regards to surge capacity. And you need to have that ability to scale up, scale down in an efficient way. And managed services lets you do that.

ASTLE: So how does a service oriented architecture play into that?

CHILDRESS: I believe what you'll find in a service oriented architecture, at least the way it's defined and the way it's being implemented in the field is first of all, there's the always-on notion. As we talked about the surge capacity, there's got to be this notion of always on because if you're putting a service in production, you need to know who's calling it, who's accessing it and what used to be down time for you in a traditional system arena, there's no down time. You've got to be on. You don't now who's accessing your supply chain, you don't know when your clients are on or your employees or your suppliers or whoever. You've got to maintain that always-on mentality. And to do that, you've really got to have a notion around is this thing designed to run that way? Which has all the aspects of I've got to discover what services are available. Am I binding these services in a dynamic way at high speed, which I believe a lot of the network areas could really take advantage of. And then are my service levels being met? Am I able to dynamically configure additional service on the fly? I think the other areas that you find are the notion of predictive. There's a large area of applications where we're moving into predictive instead of reactive. And the SOA world is heading towards that type of application where we're not waiting for something to happen, we're analyzing the events flowing through the network and we're predicting what's going to happen to try to get ahead of the curve. As companies don't keep inventory and they don't wait for things to

happen -- it's more streamlined, it's kind of a seamless enterprise -- you need to be predictive and you need to know how to respond to something before it happens otherwise your supply chain could come to a standstill.

ASTLE: And Gary, what role does Cisco play in this? And why don't you talk a little bit about Cisco Advanced Services in particular?

MOORE: Yeah. I think the fact that Cisco is 21-years old or so is lost on a lot of people. But the fact that although that's young for a lot of companies in this space, Cisco started as a routing company and then moved into switching. So we have a great deal of experience and expertise in helping organizations prepare and plan and design from an architectural point of view to actually building out these large secure converged network infrastructures. And then on top of that, we can add network services and incorporate advanced technologies like unified communications, wireless, etc. So Cisco is in a very unique position from that point of view. In terms of Advanced Services, Advanced Services is really an organization that's made up of advanced engineering type services as well as professional services and it's a global organization just like EDS. And then in many of the parts of the world, we partner very closely with EDS in delivering solutions to the customers, to their customers. It's around helping those customers develop the strategy and the roadmap specific to their organization. Like I was saying before, whether it's an airline or a manufacturer or another industry, different organizations need different things. So Advanced Services has some of those same vertical expertise that allow us to consider the business strategies, the processes, and the individual goals of those companies to actually help all of this integrate together. So we follow like most consulting organizations, a simple methodology to ensure that the organization strategy and roadmap incorporates what we refer to as the network lifecycle of services, which has six different elements, all the way from prepare plan design through implementation operation and then the ongoing optimization of the network. And that's really been the cornerstone of the services that Advanced Services offers. I think at the end of the day we want to ensure that the network platform has a good balance of openness, extensibility and availability, high availability and security. The platform is really the corner of this agile system that Charlie mentioned and if we can help integrate business strategies and processes with the company's goals and provide these organizations with this competitive advantage they need to succeed, then everybody's happy.

ASTLE: And Charlie, what role does EDS play in this? In other words, what do EDS clients, how do they benefit from this network?

FELD: Well, I think what I've seen, I've spent most of my career as a CIO. I think one of the more complicated expensive and less understood part of a CIO's portfolio is the network. And the network has gotten more and more complex over time and particularly as you get into a global network, it becomes critical that data cannot be moved from central Europe, Germany, France, anywhere outside the country because of privacy laws. If you're dealing with government agencies, particularly the military or anything that has to do with healthcare, it's got to have separate compartments to run in so that you can assure that the information is not being breached in any way. It's become so complex that people really can't even comprehend and even if they could, it's very expensive. And even if they can afford it, you can't find enough good engineers to design that

kind of complex network. So working with Cisco we've built a network that is capable of dealing with all those kinds of issues and it provides a platform for our clients to be able to ride on and spend most of their time dealing with things that will add value to their business.

ASTLE: So this question is for both of you. Tell us about the strategic relationship between EDS and Cisco and how the two companies are working together and how that benefits your end users.

FELD: This is Charlie. I believe that in terms of our own agility, in terms of our own ability to compete in the 21st century, we've got to be able to work with partners and we've got to be able to have an ecosystem around us that can bring innovation, product engineering, and ideas to us. And I think that if you look at hardware and software suppliers, they need to have real problems to get their mind into because you can't just do R&D work in a world like this. It's got to be fairly targeted towards solving a problem. And there certainly are enough problems to solve here. So when we sat down to talk about an alliance, it really is, how do we help each other be successful in the 21st century? And the way you help each other be successful is you serve your clients better. And we have a lot of joint clients that have benefited from this alliance.

ASTLE: Gary?

MOORE: This is Gary. I'm not sure what I can add to that. Cisco was thrilled when EDS started to build the Agility Alliance, to be part of that founding group of companies. And the facts are, as Charlie pointed out, the EDS and Cisco alliance has resulted in a number of major customer successes that I think individually neither company would have had the amount of success that we've had working together in these. And they spanned not only the globe, but also the spectrum of financial clients to manufacturing to the different industries that we serve. So I think Charlie and I have been part of that from the very beginning and I think from the very beginning it's also important to point out that the two companies shared a really common vision on how customers could transform their business and how we could continue to help point the way to the future in terms of business communication and using the network as the platform. And I think EDS has been extremely successful at leveraging their platform which is a global, secure network to really give them a competitive advantage and Cisco's been really happy to play a small part in that.

ASTLE: Well this has been great. I think this gives us a great idea of what an agile enterprise is and how the network is the platform that makes that possible. And I'd especially like to thank our guests, Charlie Feld and Mike Childress from EDS and Gary Moore from Cisco.

MOORE: Thank you all very much, Charlie, Mike. My thanks as well, we really appreciate you taking the time to be with us today.

FELD: Enjoyed it.

CHILDRESS: A pleasure.

MOORE: Okay.



ASTLE: Thanks.

MOORE: Have a good one.



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