



COFFEE WITH
CLOUDWERX
EPISODE 4: **DARREN MOWRY | GOOGLE CLOUD**

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Betsy Reed

Darren, it's so great to be with you today. You are actually our first non-customer interviewee for Coffee with Cloudwerx! Very honored to have you here. I'm going to kick us off and then send it over to you two to get the 10,000 foot view. Then we're going to dive in and learn a little bit more about specifically what led you to this place.

I have a bunch of juicy questions for you here today. But before we get started - my name is Betsy Reed. I am the CEO and co-founder of Cloudwerx. We are a Google exclusive GCP and workspace reseller service partner. That means we're 100% percent committed to Google and supporting customers in their cloud journey today and as they evolve in the future.

For our listeners, I'm here with Darren Mowry and thrilled to have him on today. So, Darren, tell us a little about you. What are you doing today and what has gotten you excited about being a part of the Google team?

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Darren Mowry

Yeah, perfect. Betsy, it's great to be here and I'm honored to be the first non-customer. That's a big deal. I've had the opportunity to be on some really great adventures from a career perspective; from the early days of Microsoft - having the chance to be a part of Microsoft's early mission to show that what we were building at that time was enterprise ready. That insurgency and mission was really fueling for me in the early days.

then had the chance, after ten years at Microsoft, to transition over to AWS. Again, what an incredible opportunity to help the world completely think differently about IT and computing. I had the chance to join a very small team to build AWS' very first field sales organization. I spent some time doing that in North America, moved to Sweden and opened up an LED and kind of northern Europe for a while. Then I moved to London and had a number of different roles, including leading the UK and then leading AMEA overall before departing AWS after ten years.

I had a little bit of a stint in the actual startup marketplace, and, then returned to the cloud. Seems that I just can't stay away from the cloud. I decided to come over here and join the mission at Google." My wife always teases me that I need to go work at the Apple Store next! Joking aside, I think I'll have a long, exciting career ahead of Google Cloud.

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Wonderful. So you've seen a lot of transformation in your career, correct? What do you think is one of the next big things coming up? What are you most excited about right now? Referring to technology and transformation that we're going to see in the next 6 to 12 months?

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Darren Mowry

It's a great question. I think it's actually more profound today than it may have even been five months ago, frankly, because there's two things I think that I'm seeing and experiencing every single day. On one hand, the nature of the cloud is different than what it was, at least in the early days for me. In the early days, we were convincing the world that infrastructure as a service was something that could be trusted. It was highly performant, it was secure, it was cost effective. While there's still a lot of chatter and focus from a lot of companies on infrastructure like compute and storage, I feel like we've really moved past those days

One of the driving factors of Google Cloud and a lot of the work we're doing together as partners is the higher value added outcome-based opportunities for customers. That means data and analytics. That means open computing. That means security and collaboration. All with a sustainable back end. So the fact that I haven't spoken to a customer in almost a year and a half about [a compute instance] is a pretty big shift from prior experience. I think that's the leading indicator that customers don't want to talk about compute, they want to talk about outcomes. Outcomes come from the application of the really cool technology we can build together.

The other thing that I think is even more timely is this whole artificial intelligence thing. And, you know, one of the things that's becoming abundantly clear is that AI is truly transformational. This is not a passing fad. This is not something that just happens to catch the headlines. This is probably as transformational as the cloud itself. I just met with a founder who said this beautifully, " AI is not the thing, it's the outcomes that AI drives is the thing."

I think that brings us back to the partnerships that we're building to helping customers in a controlled and understandable way. To process some of these complex topics, and convert those topics to things that actually make a difference for their business. So in my opinion, Google Cloud has a position as a challenger in the space, but also is one of the main sources of innovation specifically in AI.

It's a fascinating time to be here. I believe we haven't even begun to see how big this is going to be.

05:06:04

Betsy Reed

Absolutely. When we talk about solutions and specifically AI, these are living, breathing organisms. These are not finite products or widgets that we're selling. They evolve as the customer's needs evolve. So to that point, every solution or new technology transformation truly needs to be malleable. So it's developing and growing in value every day.

I love that we obviously share a passion for the startup community and it was so fun to have you at that event in February. It's great to have your finger on the pulse for the movers and shakers and the people that are innovating every single day.

So you've had a number of leadership roles at some of the top companies. Now you're bringing that leadership to bear at Google Cloud. I have the opportunity to work with your directors and managers and your reps in your organization. Could you share some of your ethos? What are the foundational pillars that you use in your day to day as a leader to really achieve the outcomes? Share a little bit about your leadership philosophy.

06:36:17

Darren Mowry

Philosophy? That's a big question. I'll do my best to unpack it in a few specific ways. I think all of us are on a journey. I am far from being the leader that I aspire to be, and every day I'm trying to wake up understanding that.

That means that sometimes I'm going to nail it. I'm absolutely going to be crushing it. But a lot of times I'm not going to show up the way I need to. I'm so thankful to be a part of a team and a broader organization that's helping me individually and allowing me to contribute back as well. There's a few things that anyone that works with me knows are my ethos, good or bad. One is speed. What I mean by speed is speed in every way. I love fast cars. I love being on a track. I believe that speed matters in technology. Particularly with this next wave of cloud. As a leader I like to operate at a very fast pace. I like to surround myself with people that also want to move fast and break things. So I believe that speed and momentum matter. I also believe that, although I'm not a physicist, if there's more force behind an object than there is in front of it, the object will move forward. That applies to businesses, to deals, to teams, and to individuals. I spend a lot of time asking our teams, "what are the headwinds that are keeping us from making progress on this, whether it be an individual opportunity or a macro strategy?" It's really these resisting forces and what we do to control and influence those forces to reduce the impact so that ideally all the energy we're putting into these things allows us to move it forward.

That's a leadership ethos that I use personally and that I very much embed in the way that I'm working with folks. Also, if you spend any time with me at all, you'll know that I'm an optimist. What I mean by that is I still choose to wake up in the morning and identify the opportunities that we have to make a difference with customers, to make a difference with partners and to make a difference with each other.

I really try to bring that energy to the organization. We get to work at Google Cloud in an incredibly transformational time! And while there's a lot of headwinds and a lot of chaos, it's still a pretty amazing place to be. It's so important to remind yourself of those things I think are powerful.

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Betsy Reed

I got chills a couple of times! I can attest to your demonstration of the speed component just from our interactions. I move super fast as well! And I can definitely see how that ethos has been shared among your team. I'm sure it's part of why you created the team that you did.

So some changes have happened this year at Google Cloud. I want to hear from you about some of the changes relative to the flex agreements and some of the changes to what we're offering to customers. Also some of the solutions that we're bringing to bear that Google has invested in providing.

What has you excited? If you're sitting in the shoes of a business owner starting a business, whether born in the cloud or one of the more traditional with a multi or hybrid cloud, why choose Google Cloud?

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Darren Mowry

I think you talk about two things there that I think are important. One is, as I said, I'm just under a year and a half. The Google cloud I'm currently a part of is not the Google Cloud I joined, in a very positive way. There's so much forward momentum coming from Thomas Kurian and our leadership team in thinking about what the customers need from us and how we pivot the organization really quickly to show up and meet the customer. That is a theme that we're constantly discussing and that's showing up in a few ways. As you said, flex agreements and our contractual structures are flexing and bending themselves to make sure that we're reaching the customer where they are. Startups, specifically, are resistant to get into committed agreements with any technology company. The fact that we can give them the flexibility of on demand utility computing but also make interesting and attractive pricing concessions, discount investment alongside keeping the flexibility for the customer. That's really powerful. In fact, we've done some of these deals and opportunities with customers together and the early signals are incredibly powerful that customers love what we're doing there organizationally.

We're making a lot of great positive changes. This is all about specialization. It's all about making sure that we're bringing the right vertical industry approach. We understand what customers need and how they want to buy and consume. Our teams are purpose built to be able to be malleable and flexible in those situations.

Those changes are natural for a company like ours going through a maturity curve. A lot of those organizational shifts have allowed us to show up very, very well, specifically in the startup space. We're really doubling down on what we see is just the beginning of another whole wave of growth. That doesn't mean we're just offering a credit program. We will obviously offer credits to startups, but to all of us, you know, credits are table stakes. What we want to do is to provide access to mentors, coaches, and super advanced technology. We want to make sure that we're talking to startups about the cloud, but also about partnerships.

So what does their end customer want from them and how can we unleash the power of Alphabet and Google overall to help these companies do amazing things? That's a pretty compelling and interesting value proposition for us to bring to startups of all sizes. For one, our focus on outcomes. It is different from what people are experiencing elsewhere. Rather than offering a bunch of building blocks and products. Instead we want to talk. Partners like CloudWerx help us ask them, "What are you trying to achieve? Let's focus on the outcome and not get lost in the building blocks."

You also mentioned multi and hybrid cloud. We live in a world where few customers of any size will choose just one cloud. I have yet to meet a single startup, much less an enterprise that has said, "we're only using one provider's set of technology." The fact that we can be open to multi-cloud and work in a hybrid model is giving us an incredible amount of tailwind that customers are telling us they appreciate. You know, we also consider open not just a hybrid and multi-cloud. We contribute massive amounts of our innovations back into the startup community and into the open source community and that is bringing a very interesting intimacy between the developer community and Google Cloud. There's some amazing knowledge sharing going on.

And the last thing that I'll say. More and more, the focus on sustainability and actual actions that we're taking as an organization to reduce our own carbon footprint, and also to partner with customers to reduce theirs, is converting something that sounds great in a Harvard Business Review article to an actual agenda item that customers are acting on.

14:35:10

Betsy Reed

What you share is encouraging in a multitude of fashions. As a partner, it is really refreshing working with a manufacturer who is so customer obsessed. We're a partner that's reselling and servicing customers using Google Cloud to be able to offer the Flex agreements and to be able to offer these really solution oriented offerings.

.To know that you're thinking about customers takes the friction out of the things where there shouldn't be friction and allows us to just work together toward that shared outcome for the customer. It's just wonderful. We couldn't be more thrilled with the changes and the continued commitment to be customer focused.

In terms of partners in general, you've probably worked with a number of them. What are some of the pillars or the key elements of a partnership that you're looking for when you think through who to align your teams with and how to achieve joint successes?

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Darren Mowry

Obviously, this is the crux of the relationship that we've just started. Frankly, I don't even think we've begun to see all of the outcomes we're going to be able to deliver for customers. I'm going to also talk about CloudWerx specifically here, if that's all right. You're what I think of as a next generation partner.

As we're evolving, what does that next generation of partnership look like? I see a few things daily in what you, Jason and the team are building. One is deep specialization in the technologies that matter. What I really appreciate about you and the partner ecosystem overall is it's very rare for an organization to be able to be deep specialists on every single thing that exists in the cloud. I think partnership is knowing what you're great at and doubling down in those areas. That's something that I've seen you and the team do consistently - pick your swim lanes and be truly world class at those things. That's what customers expect from Google - that we're going to bring in the best.

There's also a sense of speed, as we talked about, not only from a leadership perspective, but the market that is moving at insane rates. So if we can have a relationship that operates with that same pace and that same velocity, that's a wonderful thing. It means we can touch more customers, we can engage more quickly, and we can experiment with things differently.

So CloudWerx has been a great testament to speed and velocity as we move forward. For me, in the business that I lead for Google Cloud, scale also significantly matters. So in addition to being able to go deep from a specialization perspective, we want to run things programmatically. This means we identify problems that hundreds or thousands of customers may face, and go and approach customers and cohorts and industries in a way where we're speaking to many people at once versus always focusing on a single buyer. That, from a partnership perspective, is a really powerful element as well.

Then, I'll say it for the third time in our time today: partners that want to talk about outcomes are key. The transaction is not the outcome. What is the outcome? Our services and really bright people from Google Cloud and CloudWerx partnering with the really bright people who are our customers to create something different that they didn't have before.

That something reduces their costs, helps them acquire more customers and expand globally. But that's not necessarily the case across the board. And so focusing on outcome and providing the right services to accelerate results is a game changer for us. That's what we're hearing from our customers as well.

18:15:02

Betsy Reed

Well we will continue down that path and make sure to pivot wherever necessary, but we're definitely aligned on all of those elements. So thank you. I know we're coming up on time, but my last line of questioning here, Darren, is when you're not flying all over the country and or world and sending emails all hours of the night from United Way Fi, what do you like to do to unwind and have fun? Tell me a little bit about Darren behind the Google Cloud logo.

18:45:14

Darren Mowry

So there actually is a Darren behind the Google Cloud logo, no matter what people may think! I'm at a really interesting phase of my life where my two daughters, who I still picture in my mind's eye as being little girls, are now young women. They're 20 and 19 years old, sophomore in college and a freshman in college.

One is studying biomedical engineering and is studying abroad in Sydney, Australia at the moment will be returning back to Boston where she goes to school soon. We miss her but she's absolutely changing the world. Thankfully I think gets her intellect from my wife, not from me. My other daughter is studying film and television in New York and she is bringing really just an incredible view to me as to the arts and the creation of content and a whole new world. She is living her best life on the streets of Manhattan as well. That's very much the core of how I spend my time. I thankfully am able to travel and see my daughters quite a bit.

Also, I love trying to stay active. In a world where we're all working quite a bit, I've taken my own personal health to a top priority over the last year and a half. Quite a bit more so than in the recent past. That means getting great sleep, enjoying a great diet, and getting great exercise. It's helping me be a better leader, a better employee, a better husband, and a better father. The focus on wellness and being healthy in the midst of a lot of stress and work is something that I'd encourage all of us to be doing.

Outside of that and responding to all of your emails, Betsy, that's about all I've got the time to do!

20:20:16

Betsy Reed

I love it! I appreciate how much time you've given me in this session. It was a joy to see you and spend a little bit more time talking together, as it always is.

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Darren Mowry

Sounds great, Betsy. So appreciative of what you and the CloudWerx team are doing. As I said, we're just at the beginning. We're going to have a lot of fun together and dazzle a ton of customers. Let's go do it!

20:40:14

Betsy Reed

Let's do it! Thank you.

20:42:18

Darren Mowry

Thank you! Bye bye.