

Episode 2: Taking the first step

Guest: Troy O'Brien, DXC Technologies

10/5/2020

Speaker 1 00:00:04 I'm Danielle Royston and this is Telco in 20.

Speaker 1 00:00:18 Welcome to Telco in 20. I'm, Danielle Royston and you can call me DR. Welcome to our first in a three-part series. I'm calling Lift Off. This three-part series will help you telco execs out there. Start your movement to the public cloud. This episode is with someone I met while on one of my worldly travels. I guy by the name of Troy O'Brien, who is a global AWS practice leader at DXC technologies and a cloud evangelist. When I met him, I found out he knows a lot about helping large enterprises move their entire state, literally thousands of applications to the public cloud.

Our next episode is with Forrest Brazeal, who is a cloud Bard, who will tell us all about how lift and shift is a ticking time bomb. So, once you get your stuff into the public cloud, you've got to keep moving and changing and adapting, and last but not least, we're ending with the snarky cloud economist himself, Corey Quinn, who will talk about what a terrible, horrible, no good idea it is to pick multi-cloud and how to make sure you're optimizing your spend for maximum savings.

Speaker 1 00:01:20 So, let's get going. Are you ready? Let's take 20. Today. I have Troy O'Brien, who is a cloud evangelist and a global AWS practice leader for DXC technologies. So, I met Troy on a plane on a Delta airlines flight. And whenever I sit down, I'm always like, well, what do you do? And, um, Troy said, I'm a cloud evangelist. And I sorta think of myself as a cloud of Angela. So, I was like, Ooh, this would be super interesting. And so, I wanted to talk to you today about being a cloud evangelist and having you as a guest on my podcast. So, welcome to Telco in 20.

Speaker 0 00:02:04 Well, thank you. Thank you for having me. I'm super, super excited.

Speaker 1 00:02:07 This is going to be fun. So, I guess in your own words, what does being a cloud evangelist?

Speaker 0 00:02:13 So, a cloud evangelist to me is educating clients and to ensure that they understand one, the benefits of moving to public cloud and then helping them with that journey.

Speaker 1 00:02:26 Has it always been public cloud? Is it about private cloud? And then later it shifted to public cloud. Like when did that whole shift start to happen for you guys?

Speaker 0 00:02:37 When I first started talking to clients back in 2017, 2018, it really was, Hey, do you understand what the public cloud is? And do you have a, have a strategy to get there? Um, that has shifted, right? So, today I don't have that conversation anymore. The

conversation today is how do we tap in, how do we that value of the public cloud? So, big shift and in a small period of time, three years.

Speaker 1 00:03:03 Same thing sort of happened with me and telco where at first the conversation was like, are you crazy? We'll never put our super, our secret sauce or our valuable data or our mission critical applications. And then the next day everyone was like, okay, I need to do this right away. Yeah. I mean, you work with customers of all different industries going from, we can't, we won't to, I need to, and I need to do it now.

Speaker 0 00:03:32 Yeah. So, we're at re-invent um, this past early December, right? 2019. Yeah. Sitting down with one of our, uh, insurance clients and, um, the CIO and he's got 6,000 applications and he said, Troy, I don't care if you move 5,988 of those applications to the public cloud. In fact, let's, let's make a plan for that, but don't touch these 12 because they are super important, super critical. I'm like, all right, well, tell me about these 12 applications. They sit on the mainframe. There are 70% of my revenue. They are not going to be touched. We're talking with that client now on moving those applications.

Speaker 1 00:04:12 That's awesome. Is that pretty typical that when you guys go in and I guess number one is the percentage of applications that are super critical and special, a very small percentage of the total. And then number two, do they end up moving all of them later?

Speaker 0 00:04:29 What you highlighted is, is exactly what is happening, right? The migration to public cloud is a journey, as I said, and it starts small. You move a couple of applications, you start working, you move them to production, they see the benefits and then you move a couple more and they quickly will learn how beneficial public cloud is. And our enterprise clients are huge. They're massive, right? It's going to be a six-, 12-, 18-month process, but eventually we'll get to those crown jewels. So, yeah, it's a journey. One DFCS has demonstrated capability to, they have to learn and build that public cloud muscle, um, internally.

Speaker 1 00:05:12 Yup. I mean, all the press I read is like that. And I example, I love to use is JP Morgan chase. And Jamie Diamond has a big AWS customer now, but 10 or 12 years ago, he was like, never right. Banking is heavily regulated, or data is super important. Kind of like this, no way attitude. We're never going to go the public cloud. And then couple of years after that, he's quoted as saying, okay, well, some things we'll do, but not like the critical stuff. And then I think at that, um, at the end of last year, he's on stage with Andy Jassy saying whole-hog, we're doing everything. It's not only is it saving us tons of money and it's more secure, but we can build more software capability more quickly because of the capabilities the public cloud gives us. And So, just watching that journey. What I'm trying to do with telco is, hey guys, we're the last ones to move to public cloud. All the other industries have done it. Let's skip this dumb step in the middle where we do this, like hybrid some private, some public and just go straight to the public.

Speaker 0 00:06:21 Yeah. And it's, um, it's exciting times. And, uh, I know you've been doing a yeoman's job, um, in your industry trying to try and educate. So, it's, it's fun to watch.

Speaker 1 00:06:33 So, I think a lot of the people that listen to my podcast are telco executives. How do you guys start to work with clients? They made the decision. They're going to move. They're going to move as much as they can. How do you categorize the apps? And then start moving?

Speaker 0 00:06:51 The first thing we do is we sit down and evaluate, you know, the, the estate, where's the organization in its cloud journey. What are your strengths and weaknesses from a cloud readiness perspective and then develop an action plan. So, they can, they can migrate at scale without having to pause. Because as soon as we establish that single source of truth, then we can use our tools. Um, pick the technologies, find out which applications are going to die in the vine. Um, which ones we've got to just rehost or refactor. So, from there, then you develop, um, these, these plans start spinning up the teams and, and then, um, work it started, but it isn't a long process. I know a lot of customers are worried about, you know, this is gonna take me a long time. Um, this is going to take a lot of my resources. DXE has a team that specialized in this augmented with AWS resources to make it as painless as possible for clients.

Speaker 1 00:07:51 And So, you start moving apps and it's like, the applications are moving at a rate of like one per day or is it one per week?

Speaker 0 00:07:59 It really depends on that, that assessment for that application. Right? So, once you pick the technology, um, and, and the type of migration that's going to be, then you drop it into a schedule. We've got programs or we'd move 30 apps in 30 days.

Speaker 1 00:08:15 So, when it comes to moving to public cloud, I'm sure you encounter some enterprises that are still a little bit reticent to do it, or they're nervous. What are the two or three most common objections you hear about the public cloud? Even still ...

Speaker 0 00:08:30 There's always objections. Number, number one is there's too much risk to the business moving to the public cloud. Right? Um, the second one is the lack of skilled resources. It's an industry problem. You look at AWS, they have tens of thousands of open positions and they're not alone, right? Dixie has them. Azure has them. Accenture has them. So, it, it really is lack of skilled resources. And then the third one, probably the number one issue for me that I'm trying to solve today. And that is around the cultural and organizational changes that they need to make to be successful with public cloud. Right? And it takes a lot of stakeholders throughout the organization top to bottom to do it right. And if, if they're going to take their old structure and their old thinking of how they consume, um, resources, they will fail, right.

Speaker 1 00:09:33 When you're doing a project like this, where you're going to make a decision to move a significant number of applications to the public cloud. Number one, it has to

start at the top. Like this has to have full support from the literally the highest levels of the organization. There's not a random engineer in a company or a random manager's like, Hey, I just woke up today and decided to move all of our applications to the public cloud. This is a very big decision taken on by the, the biggest leaders at a particular company. Number two, I think they have to set goals around it. Cause then it doesn't happen. Like you have to set a goal that says we're going to move X percent of our applications by Y date and make it a priority in the organization. I think number three, you need to make sure your teams are ready.

Speaker 1 00:10:19 And there's this HR component about, um, getting your organization ready for the cultural impact you were saying about the thousands, literally thousands of job openings that exist at all these different companies and companies that surround the hyperscalers. But that's a real problem for telcos attracting top talent. The money in cloud for engineers is big money. And So, it's really hard for a telco with their kind of pay scale and expectations to attract the talent, to kind of rejigger their staff So, that they're ready for this. What happens afterwards is that organizationally ready to take on and manage AWS and, and do a good job.

Speaker 0 00:11:02 The people that are going to be part of your organization moving forward after you moved to the public cloud, have to understand what public cloud is, AWS and Azure. And I'm sure Google and DXE we have that as well. We'll put together training plans for our clients to get them certified, get them accredited, make them understand what public cloud is, the benefits and how they can use it. We also, work with the clients on ensuring that, you know, when we're done migrating, we're turning over the keys to ready staff.

Speaker 1 00:11:31 Let's say you finish this project, right. It's gotta be So, rewarding when customers go through that whole journey, they get to the other side. And they're just like, I did not know my life could be this. Awesome. Do people have that experience with you guys?

Speaker 0 00:11:45 Yeah, it really is on the business side and the developer side and the application owner side right there. They're like, my life is So, much easier and So, much better because I have all of these awesome tools that have been developed by AWS, you know, and, and Azure and Google, right. To, to, to make an impact on my business. I actually have a means to deploy functions that our clients have been asking for years with a snap of a finger, it's moving from a horse to a car. Right. I mean, you just don't go backwards.

Speaker 1 00:12:25 Oh, that's So, awesome. So, let's talk about life changing experiences. So, I was Delta diamond for like five minutes. And So, be 19, you're a longtime diamond person. Um, what's your best diamond story with Delta?

Speaker 0 00:12:42 Yeah, I've got a very easy one. So, my, my wife is Brazilian. I've got a global position. I've got a team everywhere, but let me, let me move down to Brazil. Cause I want to raise my kids down there. So, we packed up and decided to leave New Year's Day, 2010, the moving company packed my daughter's passport, her Brazilian passport and it was gone, and we didn't realize it until the day of we're pulling our hair out. How are we going to,

how are we gonna manage this? So, we came up with a plan. So, I'm going to stay with my daughter, Natalia, I'm going to call Delta and change our flights to delay it until I get the passport holiday time. So, I called them up and they were amazing. I explained my situation. I'm like, I'm a bit stressed out. They bumped me and my daughter to a different flight. We ended up getting upgraded. They didn't charge us any change fees. So, they did all that. And I told them, I said, you have a customer for life.

Speaker 1 00:13:44 Now, my crazy diamond story. I was going to Rome. I was in first class and we were just late pulling into the gate and I was landing at JFK and I needed to change terminals. So, um, the door opens and literally poof, like a Roadrunner, just taking off. And as I take off out of the door, I see a woman holding a sign with my name on it. And I'm like, and she's like, we've identified that you have very tight connection. And So, we would like to take you off of the jet bridge, down to the tarmac. There's a Porsche cayenne waiting for you. We'll put you in it. We're going to drive you on like airport tarmac, NES, over to your terminal and in the car, she's like, there's a bottle of water. She's like, would you like to go to the club or the gate? And I'm like, do I have time for the club? She's like you do. I'm like, ya'll go to the club. And So, door to door service. But I guess it's playing the plane service. Right. And I'm like, okay, I'm done am a customer for life. Awesome. Awesome. So, I think, I think that's our interview. I think that was really amazing.

Speaker 0 00:14:59 I really appreciated you bringing me on.

Speaker 1 00:15:01 Yeah, no, you were probably my most memorable seat mate.

Speaker 0 00:15:06 Thank you. Always pleasure. Danielle.

Speaker 1 00:15:08 Stick around because we're ending each podcast with a Telco in 20 takeaway. I have 20 seconds to tell you about something you need to know. Trey gave us a lot of awesome information. Guess what? There's even more great stuff on the DXE technologies website. Good. A dxc.technology. That's right. They're So, cool. They don't even need a.com at the end and check out the insight section. You'll find case studies surveys a bunch more stuff that drives home, the incredible transformational power of the public cloud. I'll be sure to put a link to the section in the show notes So, you can check it out. A huge thanks to Troy O'Brien and thank you to all of our listeners. Don't forget to hit that subscribe button, share our podcast with your colleagues and let's connect on LinkedIn and on Twitter at telco. Dr. Also, sign up for our email newsletter at telco dr. Com that's T E L C O D r.com. We've included that link in our episode resources, and you can text me too at nine to five telco dr. Later nerds.