

Jason Lopez

The effects of the coronavirus on technology will be studied for years to come, and of course right now we lack the hindsight to understand it... we're in the middle of the storm. But there is interesting information to give us some insights on how people have responded and what new directions companies have set. COVID has forced an actual new normal. One type of tech company on the front lines of this shift to a new normal (having to embrace change and deliver it) is the IT service company. And one such firm is Wipro, a global company out of Bangalore, India. They provide IT services that touch more than a million users. When a million users need to suddenly work from home, Wipro makes that happen even though they're working from home.

Satish Yadavalli

So the biggest sense of change for many enterprises has been the concept of working from home itself.

Jason Lopez

Satish Yadavalli is the Vice President of Global Cloud and Infrastructure at Wipro

Satish Yadavalli

Every enterprise... ..cultural change for the industry.

Jason Lopez

In high school Satish got interested in radio engineering... in his teens designing radios, chipsets and satellite receivers. He studied electronics and communications in college and later landed a job doing IT in a steel plant running systems integration and automation. But from there moved on to Wipro, where he's been for the past 20 years.

Satish Yadavalli

I'm based out of Bangalore. Pretty much on the fly and spend close to 150 days for meeting customers across the globe, and post pandemic I think it's all virtual now. And we are aligned with the new normal. Our productivity has actually improved when we started working from home and effortlessly, we spent close to 15, 16 hours a day, which earlier used to be around 10 to 12 hours. And a lot of time is to actually get spent on commute and travel time, which used to actually be part of our lives.

Jason Lopez

One thing that must have helped get your teams up and running, so that you can get your clients up and running, is the ability to spin up virtual machines, change nodes, which would have been a pain in the past. And your engineers were able to do that from home.

Satish Yadavalli

Absolutely. So that's the power of software defined networks and hyperscaler IaaS the service availability in the industry today. And not only that, Jason, when we actually did this and spin off

the infrastructure on hyperscalers as well as private clouds of client application performance was a key because now employees started working from home and, uh, they had different types of networks to connect to the enterprises, uh, having a, a bird's eye view on the end user experience. And the application performance is vital. So one of our solution accelerators, which we had developed jointly with the Nutanix was on application delivery. I shouldn't say platform where we actually measure close to around 5,000 different variants of applications, uh, cutting across, uh, uh, different vertical segments called from BFSI to oil and gas, to healthcare, where we understand these applications and actually ran synthetic boards to actually measure the application throughputs, which were delivered from all the employees who are working from home. And we were able to quickly understand, uh, some of the challenges which our employees were facing and using our AI and ML based, uh, uh, uh, uh, analytics. We were able to predict, uh, most the issues and address them proactively. And, uh, and we ensure that the experience, what our employees were getting to deliver to our customers from, uh, ODC and arraignment was saying, uh, when they were delivering it from home and that these are some of the learnings which we had. And, uh, with our IP accelerators, we were able to, uh, do this seamlessly without impacting the business operations of ours, as well as our customers.

Jason Lopez

Before we did this interview I asked Satish to bring an example he could give of the good old Silicon Valley maxim, eat your own dogfood. And here's what he said.

Satish Yadavalli

One simple example I would like to share, which is internal was when this pandemic hit, we had our Q one results and because of the lockdown none of our finance folks were able to actually come to office. So what we had to deliver to them was access to all mission critical ERP and financial tools from home and within 12 hours, we were able to actually enable access to all these applications safely and securely to all our finance executives. And, uh, we actually, uh, announced our results as per schedule. And, uh, you just can understand when, when you are to generate an annual report or a quarterly report, uh, the amount of, uh, information and data access, which is required, which is very confidential, uh, is, is something, you know, uh, we were able to understand, and, uh, using a watcher, desktop IP platform, we were able to seamlessly enable the business to perform their roles.

Jason Lopez

As an IT services company, Wipro spends a lot of time and resources planning and deploying the backend stuff having to do with cloud, the data center, the stack itself. But when it comes to the user, working in their home office, Satish's thinking might surprise you.

Satish Yadavalli

So what we see in the industry is that there is a huge urgency. Imagine the workspace, because what employees experience in the personal world, uh, how simple and easy it is for them to onboard and consume a Netflix service or an Amazon shopping experience. Every employee, when they move to the corporate world, they expect an enterprise. It is to deliver same level of

user experience, which is easy and simple to onboard themselves and consume. And that's been a reality if our organizations are to attract and retain talent, the type of workspace and flexibility, uh, organizations can offer will determine the future. And you know, this is a holistic change and the solutions around it focus on user empowerment and freedom from it. What we see in this industry is that there is a huge urgency to reimagine the workspace.

Jason Lopez

I can guess that you were already thinking about the future workspace well before COVID. How did it accelerate your plans?

Satish Yadavalli

If you actually look at the industry reports from leading analysts like Gartner, Forrester, or Everest. Wipro had invested in building future digital workspace way back in 2015, and by partnering with Nutanix who is also a leader in the technology space and software defined stacks, we were able to actually call road and build a unique value proposition called Wipro virtual desk, which is actually the solution, which is valid received in the market. And in this pandemic times, this is one solution, which we are really seeing a lot of demand and able to actually solve a lot of customer problems.

Jason Lopez

It's something you can say about the tech industry, not that you couldn't say it before COVID, but especially in light of the urgency of supporting people working from home—it's the idea of catching the tech industry doing something right. The systems and innovations that you already had in place, proved to be robust enough. And you had a roadmap you were following of new hardware and software you had planned to deploy. COVID never really disrupted that, is that a fair thing to say?"

Satish Yadavalli

Yeah. It's fair. I think most of the enterprises were already adopted. It is still workspace strategy and hide. It is still, uh, really infrastructure. We're able to scale out pretty much more. Uh, if you take an example of our own infrastructure, uh, we have close to around 175,000 employees supporting our customers when the pandemic hit us first. Uh, we got in shell trends in China, but we were able to actually use our boundariless enterprise solution blueprints and actually bursted all the workloads onto cloud and created what our desktops on cloud and enabled all our employees to access customer business networks and Delaware services seamlessly. And of course, uh, when, when we build the solution, security was of paramount importance and our waterless platform delivers that high level of security and segmentation, which is bundled with Nutanix flow and other technology. So we have a well-prepared and, uh, customers who actually were, uh, running legacy and, uh, old infrastructures, high challenges, they could not scale out. So, uh, for them, uh, we actually had stepped in and created, uh, uh, a new solutions on hyperscalers, which can accommodate their, uh, uh, business demands and trying to get them out of the crisis and is a top priority for most of the executives.

Jason Lopez

What were the numbers of users relying on your services? What kind of impact are we talking about there?

Satish Yadavalli

Yeah. So, if you had to give you a metric writer, our, uh, we hired more than half a million users who were running our virtual desktop platform before the pandemic, but when the pandemic happened, most of the customers came back and asked us to, uh, double the infrastructure capacity, whatever it was available on prem, uh, whichever, whatever infrastructure was provision for a disaster recovery was converted to a production environment, but, uh, that was not all, many of them hired, uh, demands, but they didn't have infrastructure on prem available. So we had to actually create a solution reference architectures and, and build all the workloads on hyperscalers and integrate these two environments and provide a single pane of glass solutions. And that's what, uh, the power of VePro, uh, virtual desk, top IP, uh, was built for. And, uh, uh, this was the right fit solution. Uh, and fortunately we were able to quickly, uh, build environments and restored normalcy in most of our clients. Uh, and most of the industry verticals, which we are supporting.

Jason Lopez

One of the solid realizations Wipro has course corrected to, is that remote working has become a permanent strategy. Organizations are now looking at flexible working as a viable option. Many enterprises could not scale when the pandemic hit them. They were unable to deliver business continuity. Now, everybody is forced to build robust, resilient, secure-by-design, remote working solutions. COVID hit at a very interesting moment, when VR, AI and 5G are poised to revolutionize computing perhaps as profoundly as the internet itself.

Satish Vadavalli

I completely agree with you and mobility cloud and IOT technologies are actually going to dominate in the future of workspace as we mentioned earlier, right? Mobility and cloud have become the defacto options now for any businesses. And all these technologies are going to unlock many exciting opportunities since this will help connect with people and things.

Jason Lopez

Are you one of those tech people who's seeing the thread from consumer to enterprise? I mean, Tesla is one of the technologies that seems to be emblematic of these things coming together.

Satish Vadavalli

Absolutely, absolutely agree today. You don't even need to worry about looking at your maintenance manual maintenance schedules, a book here, this thing, uh, the way, uh, Tesla has changed the world, uh, is really amazing. And that's what we all have experienced. Yes. And right today in our personal worlds, uh, everything is available on click of a button and onboarding onto these, uh, services is so easy, right? Even kids at home can create their own persona and consume any services beat on YouTube or Netflix and anything. And everything

that gets streamed is based on the persona and the age profile, right. And all the restrictions which are required are automatically enforced. And not only that, the power of AI and ML, uh, actually understands the consumption patterns of every consumer. And the minute you actually log in for the second time, if there are any new releases, it automatically pops up and tells you, Hey, look, something has come up, uh, which is aligned to your taste. Would you mind to have a look at it? And it's all power of digital, uh, platforms and the world is really disrupted. And, uh, and the user experience, uh, what employees get today, uh, in an enterprise. It, if it doesn't change, uh, enterprises, our CIO is, are going to have tough time and all the mini-lessons who actually joined workforce today, if, uh, if the CIS don't have a solution, they will actually, um, come back and tell you guys, look, you have to look at the world that our new solutions, which are available, why don't you embrace this technology and solution, which can make our life easy and make enterprise it delivered the same experiences, what they get in the personal world. It's very interesting times. Uh, yes. And, and, uh, I think, uh, the pandemic has also accelerated the digital adoption. I'm telling you what, what used to generally happen, uh, or two years timeframe is happened in the last two or three months when it comes to a distal adoption or adoption of digital workspaces to enable business continuities to customers.

Jason Lopez

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He spoke with us from his home in Bangalore, India. This is the Tech Barometer podcast, I'm Jason Lopez. Tech Barometer is produced by the Forecast, where you can listen to or read more stories on technology. It's at the forecastbynutanix.com.