Getting started with cloud transformation

Entering the cloud era, a leading global technology and software firm needed to transition from a desktop, licensing-based model to a cloud-based, subscription model. To enable this transformation, the organization partnered with BTS to co-create a strategic planning process and drive an organization-wide culture shift to adapt to new ways of working in the cloud.

At the beginning of the partnership, BTS designed a three-hour SaaS simulation for the organization's top 40 to 80 leaders to get a better feel for what a SaaS business model actually looks like. After experiencing the simulation, the organization's strategy team recognized the need to incorporate breakthrough thinking into their regional leadership teams' strategic planning meetings to help expand leaders' ambitions of the cloud company they could become. To begin the shift to a SaaS model, the organization needed a solution that would:

- Stimulate thinking around the direction of the industry, specifically the implications and possibilities of the shift to the cloud
- Provide tools for disruptive and customer-back thinking to help expand the leadership teams' context in setting their plans
- Help each regional leadership team decide on a three-year goal for their region

Initially, leaders at the company were adamant that all workshops be run face-to-face— however, given unprecedented circumstances that prevented teams from being physically co-located, all sessions were successfully converted and delivered in an engaging virtual format.

The solution

Partnering with the software organization's global strategic planning team, BTS created an engaging workshop that challenged each regional team's ways of thinking. It involved:

- A two-day face-to-face workshop that was converted into a virtual format within three days
- Putting the company's executives into the shoes of a disruptor to challenge their own business model by using future-back thinking, empathy mapping, and ideation

- Customer journey mapping of the customer experiences today versus a possible future, and how to bridge the gaps
- Three-year goal setting run by the organization's team, followed by BTS-led Risk Storming of the teams' plans and mitigation/minimization approaches
- Observations as to what great or not-yet-great SaaS language and behaviors individuals and teams were showing throughout the workshop

Results

To date, approximately 200 leaders comprising the leadership teams of each region have gone through the breakthrough thinking strategic planning sessions. By approaching strategic planning in a new way, each regional team has emerged with plans driven by future and customer-back thinking, and identified critical gaps that they must address to bring forward the strategic capabilities and successfully transition to the cloud.

Testimonials

- "Virtual sessions are the way forward!"
- "This was very efficient! No downside to the virtual element that I noticed and a big time/cost saver for us all."
- "Good to consider the future/end state without having all the answers/rationale up front. It highlights the importance of unconstrained thinking and we should do it more at various levels of the organization"