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TEKSYSTEMS CLOUD ISSUE | SEPTEMBER 2020

LOOKING UP

Why Businesses Are Turning to the Cloud to Build Resiliency

Realize Resiliency with the Cloud

To Succeed in the Digital Economy, Think Cloud First

The poet Robert Burns wrote, in 1786, that "...the best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry," and "leave us naught but grief and pain for promised joy." Best-laid plans going awry; trading joy for grief and pain? Sure sounds like 2020 to me!

In this issue of *Version Next, Now*, we explore the promises of the cloud—agility, access, scalability, cost—as well as examine how closely those promised benefits match up with reality. The "promised joy" of the cloud is truly being tested in 2020, as the global pandemic forced worldwide business closures and organizations were forced to turn the potential applications and capabilities of modern technology into reality overnight.

This forced acceleration of digital transformation has reshaped how organizations think about and use cloud technologies. It also dropped the scales from the eyes of those who maintained that "We've always done it this way" was a solid reason to avoid embracing cloud technologies. The need to pivot to SaaS, IaaS and PaaS to deliver value to customers, despite challenges, has highlighted just how mission critical cloud has become, and how much grief and pain the technology can alleviate. It has also made clear the differences between organizations that thrive and those that might not survive. Many of 2020's more successful organizations already leveraged cloud tech to focus on delivering a top-notch customer experience, and continually looked to push the boundaries of cloud's use cases and utility.

Thus far, cloud technology has risen to meet 2020's numerous challenges: enabling remote work, virtual learning and telehealth on an unprecedented scale, and proving without a doubt that with cloud technology, the sky is the limit.

Sharon Florentine
Contributing Editor

THE CHANGE AGENT

Bold organizations understand that speed, collaboration and innovation are enabled at scale by the cloud. They're migrating applications and deploying platforms to sustain operations, solidify resiliency and improve customer experience.

01

When You Need to Predict the Unpredictable

The COVID-19 pandemic upended the global economy, but business didn't stop—it adapted. Many organizations rewrote recovery and business continuity plans. Some companies reprioritized projects to optimize costs, while others created new business models and ways of working. Regardless of which path they took, the pandemic forced digital transformation upon businesses that weren't necessarily ready for it. For years, companies struggled with accumulating technical debt, stalled or ineffective digital transformation projects, and siloed mindsets and behaviors. Those obstacles were magnified as COVID-19 accelerated the scope and scale of the digital economy. Speed is more essential than ever. Agility is an imperative. Organizations are recalibrating technology roadmaps. They're pivoting and prioritizing the "big rocks" crucial to creating a resilient enterprise in a new digital economy.

Bold organizations understand that speed, collaboration, agility, supply chain insights and innovation are enabled at scale by the cloud. They're migrating applications and deploying new platforms to sustain operations, solidify resiliency and improve customer experience. Cloud technology offers a critical solution, not just for growth but for survival: Fear is a real catalyst for digital transformation. No one knows where the bottom is or how the pandemic will fundamentally change industries and customer behaviors. Organizations must hone their survival instincts and take action to deliver products and services more quickly than their competition, leveraging the power of cloud-based platforms.

After years of growth, the pandemic triggered an economic recession—the first global recession in the era of the cloud. Core cloud benefits of agility, access, elasticity and scale are now put to the test. Organizations must determine how to best deliver those benefits through SaaS, PaaS, IaaS and other as-a-service models. Business leaders must make an honest, holistic assessment of their strategy and determine where they are on their digital journey. And, above all, keep it simple. The essence of digital transformation, after all, is purposely using technology to deliver specific business outcomes.

Intentional Innovation: Fueled by Technology

- » Improve customer experience
- » Create new revenue streams
- » Lower total cost of ownership (TCO)
- » Better manage risk
- » Improve employee productivity
- » Increase speed, agility and resiliency

What impact will a global pandemic have on the cloud? The cloud is the greatest enabler for both business and delivery agility, but transformation requires bold leadership. Organizations must take action; implement a purpose–driven plan, then execute—with agile partners—at speed. The bold will not only survive, but thrive, in the digital economy.

40%

*of IT decision-makers report they are **looking to cloud to jump-start innovation as a digital platform** and to gain access to a more leading-edge ecosystem.[1]*

35%

*of organizations identify the cloud as the technology with the **biggest increase in demand** as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.[2]*

MARKET PERSPECTIVE

AWS Worldwide SA Lead Sam Coker shares his point of view on how organizations can build resiliency and plan for the future with the cloud.

02

Creating Sustainable Resiliency
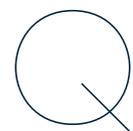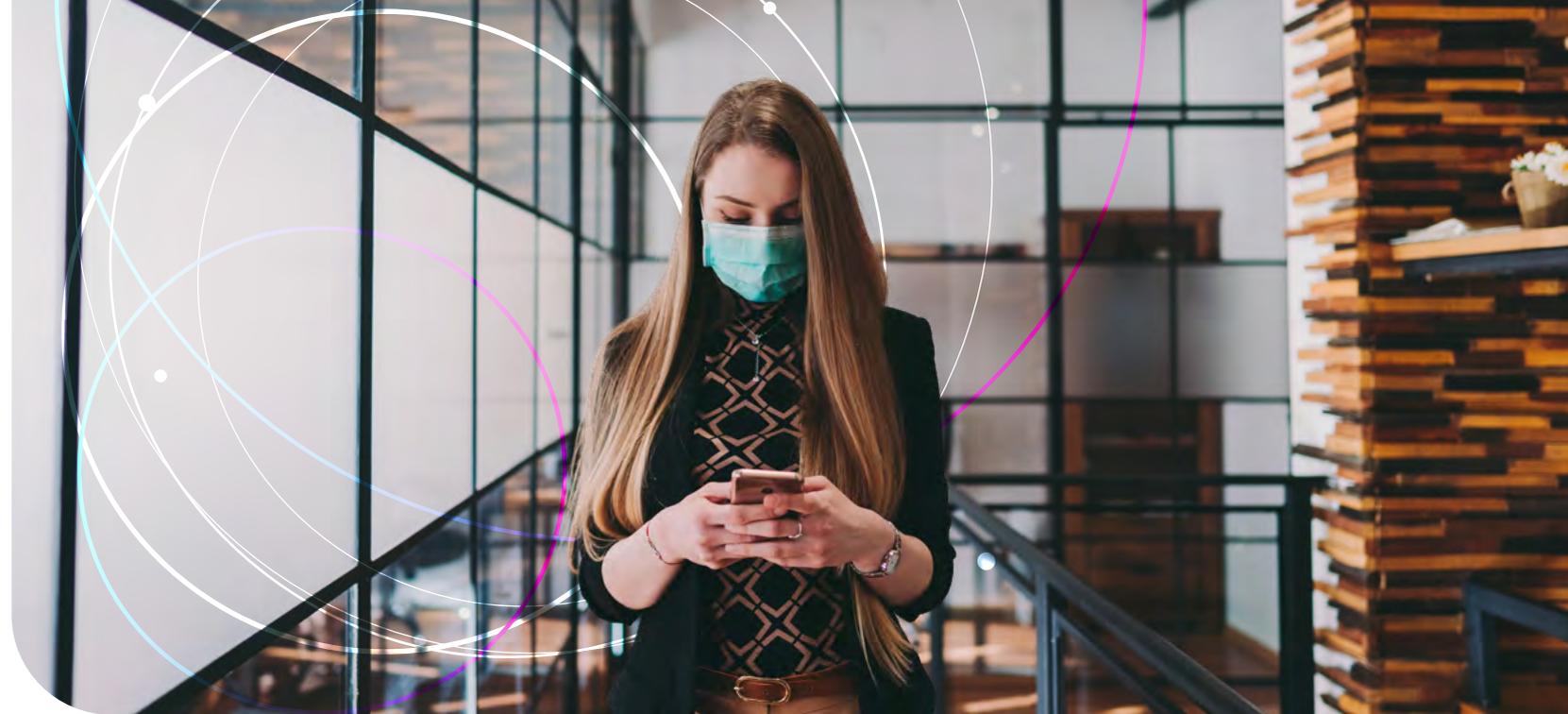
Q How has the COVID-19 pandemic reshaped how organizations think about and use the benefits of cloud technologies? Or how has it accelerated active plans to harness those benefits?

+ A *Sanford "Sam" Coker:* While COVID-19 is still active, and especially as we prep for a vaccine, there are still a lot of unknowns. What we have seen so far is falling into multiple categories.

» **Remote and flexible expansion options:** This is going to cover all the telehealth, outreach to our patients/members but also will support remote workers. For example, we saw greater growth in our Workspaces services (VDI as a Service) in the first 18 weeks of COVID-19 than the previous 18 months.

» **Rapid expansion in data lake and analytics to provide real-world results:** This is both from the development and expansion of systems for COVID-19 status and contact tracking of possible infections. But this can also be shrunk down to the systems level. One way is to set up interfaces between the ERP, EHR and third-party resources to track PPE equipment and to predictively order supplies based upon availability.

» **Cost containment:** This has unfortunately hit the entire industry in ways that we never thought about pre-COVID-19. Many of my conversations are now around how can we do more with less money and resources.

Q What are some of the challenges organizations face with cloud migrations?

+ A » *SC (AWS):* The biggest challenge I see is the operational changes that the organization faces. This is especially important with getting the current staff transitioned to working in the cloud. At the end of the day, it is not the tech, it is getting professionals up to speed on how to do their daily tasks on the cloud. Education is the best gap closer, as well as a good partner to help
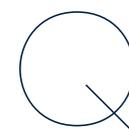
Q How can the cloud accelerate growth as organizations move beyond the pandemic?

+ A » *SC (AWS):* The accepting and adoption of cloud seems to be the new normal. Where in the past you heard a lot of "if I move" and "we can do it better on-prem," my conversations now are more around how do I move and how do I safely integrate this into my existing practices. This is not only a customer perception change but also a reflection of the strides the industry has made to mature its offerings. Once again, this transition comes back to education and having good partners to help you with the adoption and change.

*"At the end of the day, it is not the tech, it is **getting professionals up to speed** on how to do their daily tasks on the cloud. Education is the best gap closer, as well as a good partner to help."*

Sanford "Sam" Coker
Worldwide SA Lead Healthcare at Amazon Web Services
AWS

Q

What tips or best practices do you have for organizations to consider on their cloud journey?

A »

SC (AWS): Find a partner you trust and then work with them to help your organization transition to cloud practices. Our organizations are filled with talent and experience; they have handled many changes. The partnership helps in providing the experience and advice on how to transition and, more importantly, what the pitfalls and roadblocks are that you need to be aware of. The other key factor is having the backing and buy-in of internal champions to help the organization change. I think the general theme throughout this is that the tech we know and understand—it is the people and process that make the difference.

Q

For organizations with a mature cloud roadmap, what should they be prioritizing now for future benefits? For organizations in the early stages of cloud, what should they be prioritizing to catch up, and to move beyond survival mode?

A »

SC (AWS): Leverage and understand how the virtuous cycle of cloud adoption can be used to help you. Meaning as you adopt to the cloud, use the strength and advantages it provides to feed back into your organization to drive innovation. See this as a journey where new skills and new technology drive down cost and improve outcomes. Focus on segmentation and microservices as much as possible; plan for failure and fail fast. Finally, be comfortable and focus on knowing what decisions are easily reversed with new knowledge and which ones are committing you to a path that is not easily changed.

OUR PERSPECTIVE

TEKsystems leaders Leslie Deutsch and Ricardo Madan, along with 1Strategy's Jen Doyle, share their points of view on how organizations can leverage the cloud and empower their business to thrive and create sustainable resiliency.

03

Empower Business with the Cloud

Smart companies keep it simple. They don't fall in love with rhetoric or the latest buzzwords. "Business leaders intentionally leverage technology to deliver results faster than their competition," explains TEKsystems Vice President of Technology Products & Services Ricardo Madan. But they didn't suddenly discover cloud computing, and the cloud doesn't exactly represent emerging technology. So what do they do differently? Typically, they view the cloud from a unique perspective. Strategic decisions revolve around a customer-first mindset. They identify and prove specific use cases, and then scale those across the enterprise. They recognize the real value in cloud technologies is as an enabler to modernize the enterprise, rather than simply a way to increase cost savings.

"The specific technology, or the promise the technology is expected to deliver on, often gets the most focus, but it's the people, culture and the mindset for change that is critical for success," says TEKsystems Director of Learning Solutions Leslie Deutsch. Driving user adoption is one aspect of the change management equation, but it's also about the employees who are delivering the work. Employees also could experience a sense of trepidation, particularly in cases of a large-scale cloud migration, especially if or when the impacts to their workflows and responsibilities are ambiguous. "People may resist because they fear their role will become obsolete or their skill set redundant due

to automation capabilities delivered by the new cloud platform. The impact on the workforce and on morale is a very real concern that keeps CEOs up at night," says 1Strategy Vice President of Operations Jen Doyle. Senior leaders must clearly articulate their vision, equip and empower middle management with the tools and ability to rally employees, and create a sense of urgency around cloud initiatives. In other words, create a common cause employees can embrace to drive the business forward.

> *"It's all about connectivity— how we collaborate, connect with customers and solve problems in a virtual environment."*

> **Leslie Deutsch**
> *Director of Learning Solutions*
> *TEKsystems*

Your **modernization** journey needs a plan—a framework that will advance sustainable and innovative value streams to ultimately deliver value to your end customer. Modernization means you must be willing to disrupt your current business to increase the value you're delivering to your customer base. Once you know where you're driving your products and services, then a change—such as application modernization via the cloud—will simply become a means to that end.

"Companies that successfully modernize the enterprise with cloud-based solutions draw a straight line (or value stream) between technology and better business outcomes," says Madan.

Industry Use Cases at Scale

» *Migrating to a modern, cloud-based infrastructure benefits* **financial services** *organizations with reduced operating risk, increased business agility and faster time to market for technology deliverables.*

» *The intersection of medicine and cloud technologies is enabling applications that connect healthcare providers with* **real-time medication recommendations** *based on a patient's symptoms and health record.*

» *The benefits of cloud scalability and flexibility help* **retailers** *address demand spikes, avoid e-commerce site crashes or outages, and ensure customers receive the best experience.*

» *Brick-and-mortar* **colleges and universities** *must improve the virtual learning environment and show value to students who might be hesitant to pay full tuition for an online learning experience.*

Whether you go big or focus on quick wins, decisiveness is key. Be precise about what you're trying to achieve. For example, if the goal is to reduce the total cost of ownership (TCO), start by thinking about how to optimize the value stream. Look for opportunities that offer quick wins like targeting development and testing workload improvements— changes that won't break the business overnight. Next, you need to test. Determine if you really are **reducing TCO** in those environments. Now you have a bit of an ROI tailwind and a clear path to a minimum viable product (MVP) that proves value to the organization and draws a straight line to your value streams. Use that as your launching pad to migrate more workloads to the cloud and transform the enterprise at scale.

But how do organizations modernize the business and navigate what AWS calls the big stall?[3] There are a multitude of challenges that arise, and the organizations that get stuck often have a few things in common.

> "Companies that **successfully modernize the enterprise with cloud-based solutions** draw a straight line (or value stream) between technology and better business outcomes."

Ricardo Madan
Vice President of Technology Products & Services
TEKsystems

TEKsystems Value Stream Delivery focuses on the people, processes and technology alignment that creates the direct path for delivering value to your customer. Value Streams help customers quickly respond to changing market conditions, customer needs and emerging technologies. Powered by best-in-class accelerators used at various Fortune 1000 clients, we can do it faster, smarter and quicker.
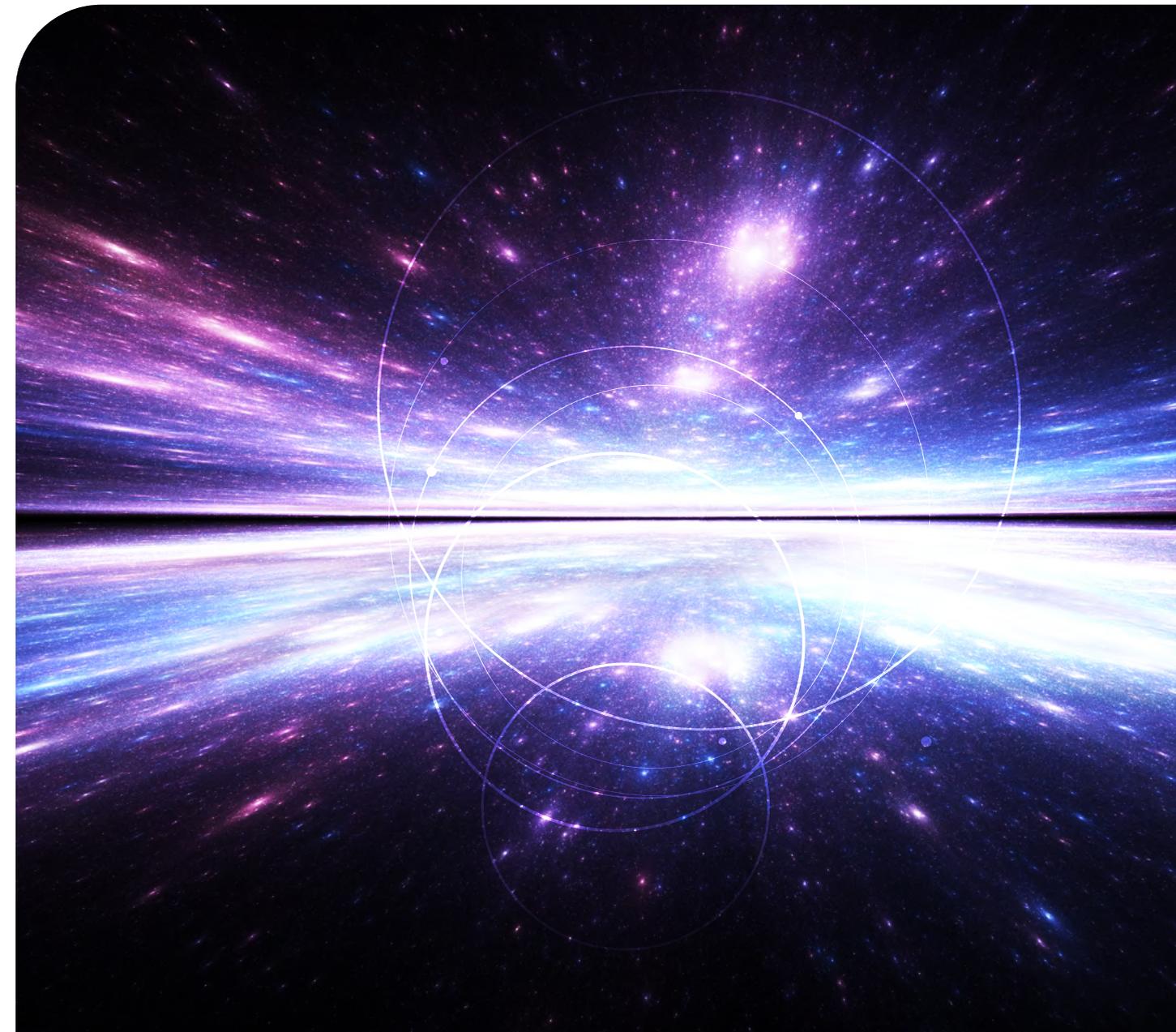
Common Cloud Pitfalls

» **Lack of leadership resolve:** Failed transformation efforts can almost always be traced back to leaders who were unable to communicate a clear vision, or who otherwise failed to set and drive aggressive top-down goals and expectations.

» **Failed technology adoption:** Organizations often focus on the features of the technology, but it's the people and the mindset for change that drive adoption and deliver value.

» **Minimize the impact of remote work:** Organizations may overlook how digital workspaces impact employee moral long-term—forcing workflows and interactions that thrive in a physical environment, into a virtual one.

» **Shortage of talent and expertise:** Two in five companies don't believe they have the expertise needed to succeed with their digital transformation initiatives.[2]

» **Competitive distractions:** Slow moving, outmoded vendors that don't keep the customer at the center of the effort will grind migrations to a halt.

When you "think big" and embrace the art of possible, you can develop a vision for modernization that not only disrupts your industry, but also creates a value-focused path to your business future. Organizations that intentionally leverage the cloud to build foundational technology platforms will empower their business to thrive and create sustainable resiliency.

> *"Do it right the first time—think **cloud first** and in the end you'll move faster."*

Jennifer Doyle
Vice President of Operations
1Strategy
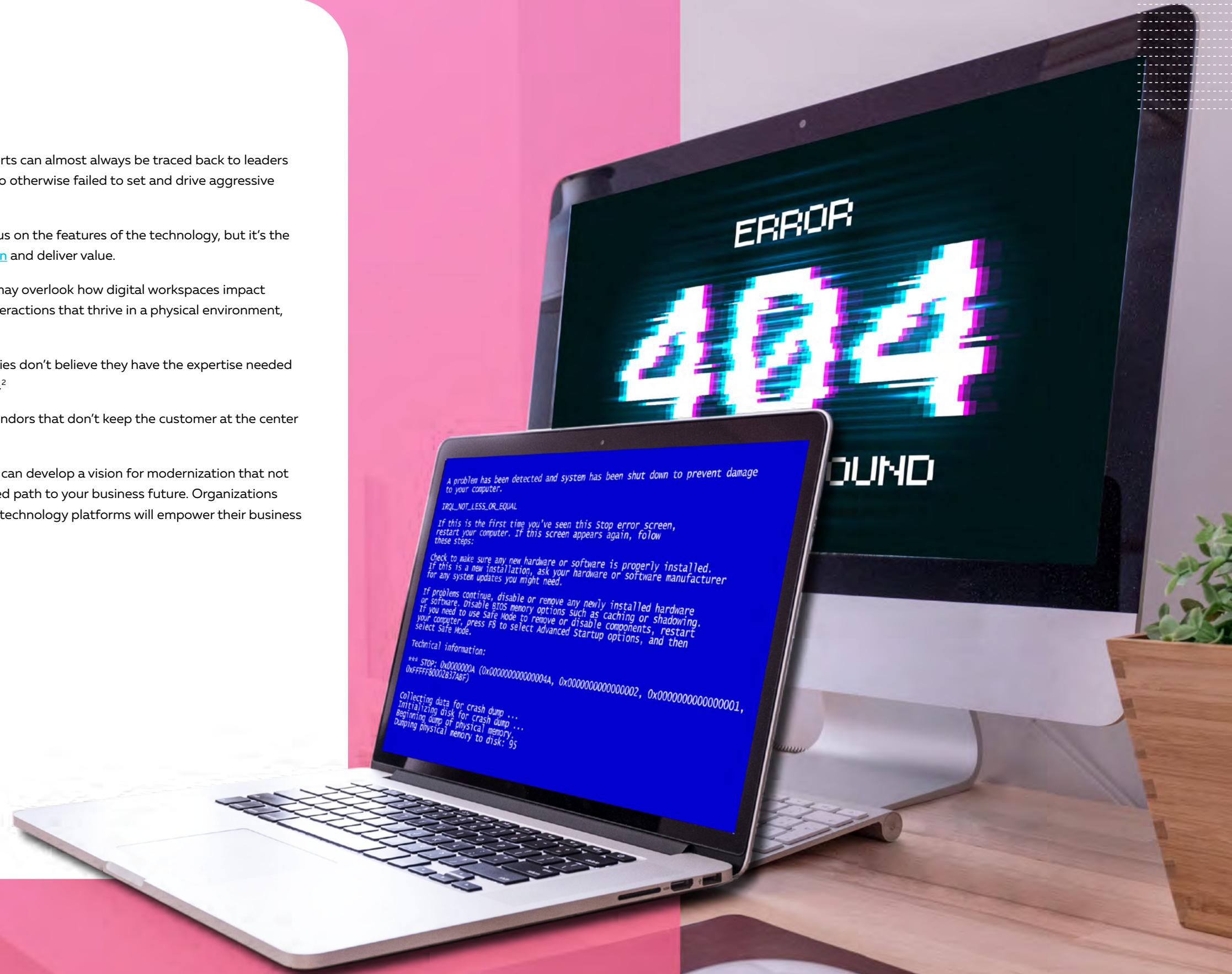
TEKsystems' Tips

Cultivate leaders for a virtual world. Create toolkits and resources for your people managers to **lead virtual teams**. Your leaders driving change are critical to your success.

Start with quick wins. Look for the MVP you can optimize to get a proof of concept, fast. Then, use that win to gain confidence and demonstrate value.

Keep mental well-being top of mind. Employees are juggling professional careers and personal lives—largely in a virtual world. Maintain an agile work culture grounded in **empathy and flexibility**.

Hold on to the business value as your North Star. Focusing on the **value stream** to your customers holistically and modernizing that value stream is the best way to future-proof your investment.
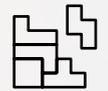
Forge remarkable partnerships. Choose the **right partner**. The skills required to drive cloud transformations don't exist in the wild—they must be nurtured and cultivated. Identify partners with the ability and expertise to meet your current needs, while elastic enough to grow alongside you.
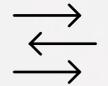
Create bandwidth for knowledge workers. Create more lead time for employees so you can invest more deeply in the CX they're delivering.

Optimize the organization for speed. Embrace technology and enable experimentation. Cultivate a culture that embraces change, **agility and speed**.

Empower employees to control their future. The pandemic has shaken our sense of control. Emphasize virtual career development opportunities and take the opportunity to help employees close their **skill gaps**.
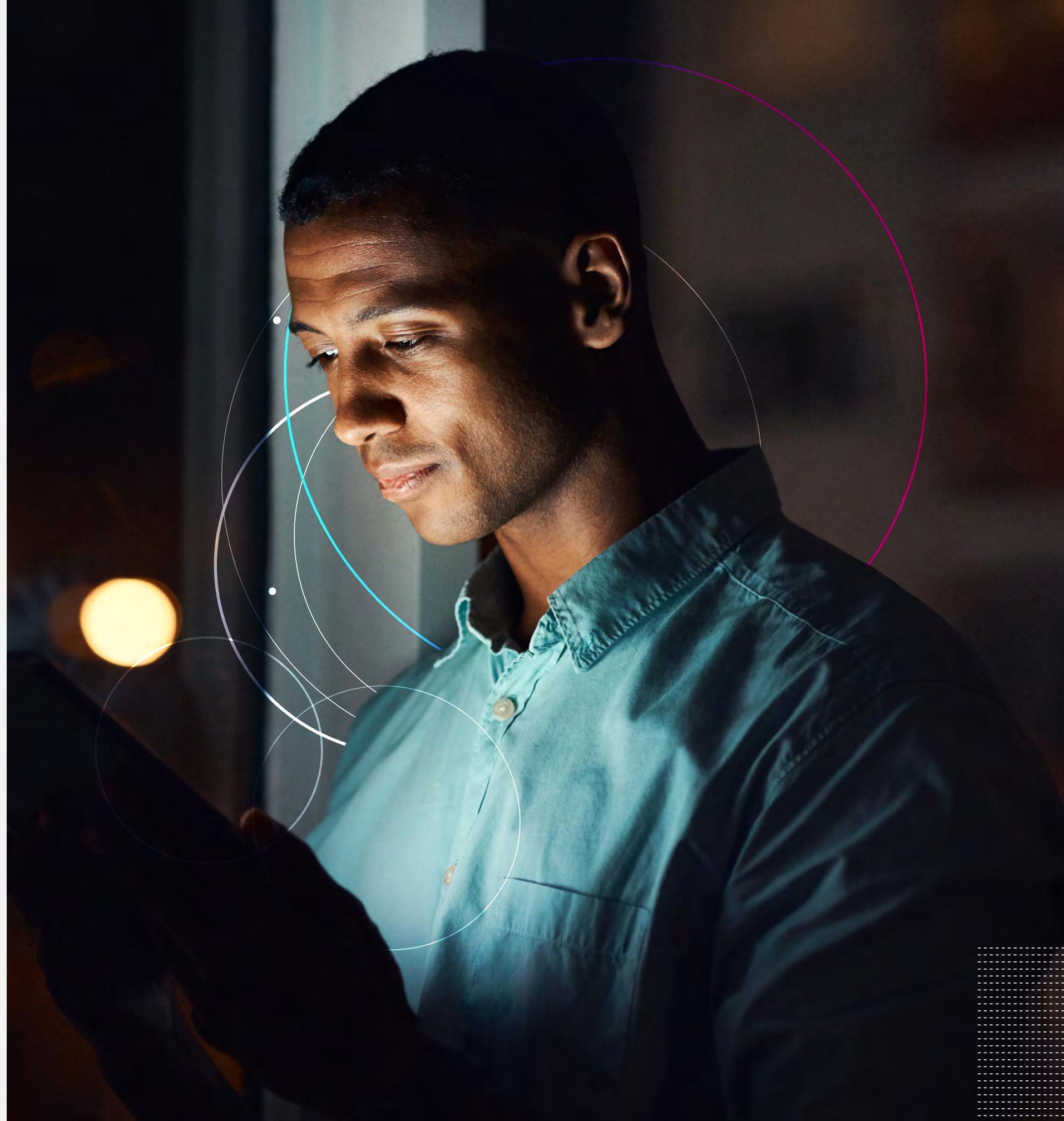
Real-World Application: Philips

Founded in the Netherlands in 1891 at the advent of electricity, Philips first developed cost-effective, reliable incandescent light bulbs before expanding to early medical X-ray imaging, personal care electronics, and eventually the invention of the CD and DVD. More recently, Philips has sharpened its focus on creating innovative technological solutions for health and well-being, including its HealthSuite Digital Platform built in the cloud.

The COVID-19 pandemic increased the share of Americans participating in telehealth from 11% in 2019 to 46% today, with healthcare systems reporting a 50- to 175-fold increase in telehealth volume compared to pre-pandemic levels. In the face of COVID-19, many healthcare providers turned to telehealth, including remote patient monitoring and virtual visits, to care for vulnerable patients while minimizing risk of virus transmission and reducing the strain on scarce hospital resources.

In response to the pandemic, Philips has been working with customers around the world to rapidly develop and deploy scalable telehealth solutions to support front-line care professionals and their patients. The Philips Virtual Connected Care Ecosystem comprises people, processes and technology. At the core of the platform are three Philips FDA-cleared, vendor-agnostic solutions that provide remote critical care to patients in the hospital and at home, including:

» FDA-cleared Tele-ICU software (eCare Manager) with AI-enabled decision support algorithms to allow critical care clinicians to virtually coordinate with on-site clinical staff and provide care to COVID-19 patients from the hospital into the home

» Cloud-based software platform (IntelliSpace Corsium) that provides real-time patient monitoring and tracking during patient transport

» Patient-centered apps (eCare Coordinator for providers/ eCare Companion for patients) deployed in a home environment using mobile IoT devices allow healthcare providers to monitor physiologic survey data and communicate directly with their patients[4]

Philips is leveraging cloud technology to enable telehealth solutions so providers can deliver healthcare to their patients' doorsteps.

Philips is not a TEKsystems customer. All information shared herein was accessed from public sources as indicated.

TEKsystems Cloud Portfolio

We help businesses scale, flex and compete through sound cloud enablement solutions.

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Hundreds of thousands of cloud infrastructure assets deployed to AWS, Azure and GCP

500+ successful cloud enablement, DevOps and application modernization projects completed

Thousands of on-premise workloads migrated to—and optimized in—hybrid and public cloud platforms

$10B+ of customers' revenue generated off next-gen, cloud-based apps we've delivered

AWS Advanced Consulting Partner with superpowers spanning DevOps, modernization, machine learning migrations, well-architected reviews, data and analytics, and training—all woven across unparalleled scale

Google Cloud Premier Partner, with machine learning specialization, supporting the full spectrum of Google Cloud initiatives

As a **Snowflake Elite Partner**, we help you leverage the Snowflake Cloud Data Platform and achieve data-driven results

We'll help you with everything Microsoft Azure, from automation to integration to optimization— while keeping security front and center, as a **Microsoft Gold-Certified Partner**

As a **Red Hat Apex Partner**, we provide qualified technical leadership, open-source expertise and scale to help you get the most out of your Red Hat product

In good company

Transformational technologies demand equally transformative partnerships. TEKsystems is proud to deliver cloud solutions across the leading provider platforms to enable organizations' competitive advantage.

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The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of TEKsystems, Inc. or its related entities..

Meet Our Contributors

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Director of Learning Solutions
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As the director of Learning Solutions at TEKsystems, Leslie oversees a team that drives learning and adoption services within our client organizations. These programs focus on building a future workforce with tomorrow's skills, upskilling and reskilling current teams, or changing behavior needed to impact productivity

Jennifer Doyle

Vice President of Operations
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Jen Doyle is the Vice President of Operations for 1Strategy[5] and oversees 1Strategy's business and strategic planning— focusing on business development, partnerships, sales, and marketing. 1Strategy focuses exclusively on Amazon Web Services (AWS) consulting services as one of AWS's Premier Consulting Partners.

Ricardo Madan

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Ricardo Madan is an executive leader of TEKsystems Global Services with 20 years' experience developing people, serving customers, designing and building technology services/products, and driving a seismic array of growth venues all with the goal of significantly improving the lives and circumstances of his team, customers and community.

Sanford Coker

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Sanford "Sam" Coker is the Sr. SA for Bristol-Myers Squibb and Epic Systems. Sam has a long and varied background in research computing and hospital operations. Beginning at the University of Kansas, he designed/built the earliest HPC clusters. He moved to NYC to continue work in molecular modelling at Schrodinger LLC and The Rockefeller University. Wanting to consume any free time he transitioned to hospital operations at Weill Cornell Medical College. Here he did early work with LIMS, PACS/VNAs and Epic and became head of engineering for clinical systems at NYU Langone Medical Center.

About TEKsystems®

We're partners in transformation. We help clients activate ideas and solutions to take advantage of a new world of opportunity. We are a team of 80,000 strong, working with over 6,000 clients, including 80% of the Fortune 500 across North America, Europe and Asia. As an industry leader in Full-Stack Technology Services, Talent Services and real-world application, we work with progressive leaders to drive change. That's the power of true partnership. TEKsystems is an Allegis Group company.

TEKsystems.com

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Sharon Florentine is the contributing editor for *Version Next, Now*, TEKsystems' quarterly publication. She is an award-winning independent writer and editor with more than 20 years of experience in the tech industry. Her work has appeared in Computerworld, PC Magazine, CRN and eWEEK, among others, and she is a passionate advocate for equity, diversity and inclusion in tech and beyond. Most recently, Sharon was a senior writer for CIO.com, where she covered software development, Agile, IT careers, learning and development, and DE&I. She lives near Philadelphia.

Listen Now

Don't miss Leslie Deutsch, Jen Doyle and Ricardo Madan, on The Agile World podcast. In a three-part series, host, author and business expert, Greg Kihlström sits down with Leslie, Jen and Ricardo to discuss how organizations must take action to not only survive, but also thrive, in the digital economy.

Be in the Know

Check out previous issues and know what's next Version Next, Now

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Sources

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