



## For Cloud Professionals, part of the On Cloud Podcast

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**Title:** Google Cloud Next 2020: Accelerate digital transformation to thrive amid chaos

**Description:** The chaos of the past half year has irrevocably changed the business environment for most organizations. To successfully navigate these changes, it's essential for companies to have a cogent strategy to leverage cloud and digital transformation. In this episode of the podcast, David Linthicum and Mike Kavis, with their guests, Google's Victor Morales and Deloitte's Kashif Rahamatullah, discuss the latest announcements from Google Cloud Next OnAir 2020 and how Google is helping companies transform digitally to lower their costs, improve their operations and processes, and wring more value out of their business. The upshot? Companies that use technology as a strategic enabler to accelerate their transformation will have a better chance at building value long term and thriving amid the chaos.

**Duration:** 00:30:38

**Operator:**

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**David Linthicum:**

Welcome back to the On Cloud Podcast, your one place to find out how to make cloud computing work for your enterprise. This is an objective discussion with industry thought leaders who provide their own unique perspective around the pragmatic use of cloud-based technology. Today on the show we have Victor Morales, managing director of GSI partnerships at Google Cloud, and Kashif who's a principle at Deloitte and Google Cloud Practice and Alliance Leader – boy, that's a lot to say. How are you doing, guys? So, Victor, let's go to you first. You know, kind of give us the bio, what you do at Google, and what's a typical day like, and where you came from, what you've been doing for the last five years? The audience wants to know.

**Victor Morales:**

Yeah, hi, David. Thank you very much. It's a real pleasure to be here with you and Kashif today. As you noted in the introduction, I have responsibility for Google Cloud's GSI partner program, and, as such, in that role, we work deeply with a very curated list of global systems integrators and advisory partners to help us achieve differentiated outcomes on Google Cloud with our joint customer set. And we're really pleased with the partnership that we have with Deloitte and really look forward to the conversation that we're going to have here today.

**David Linthicum:**

Yeah, and Kashif, I noticed that the relationship, the momentum behind the partnership with Google has been accelerating tremendously in the last two years. I guess you've had a part of that. So, tell us what you do at Deloitte and how you play a key role in kind of making that happen?

**Kashif Rahamatullah:**

Yeah, David, thanks a lot for having me and Victor; great to be on this with you. So, Kashif Rahamatullah, as David said. I'm a principal in our cloud engineering business and I also lead our relationship with Google from a Deloitte perspective. What that means is I work closely with Victor and his team across the Google leadership in basically going to market, developing solutions around Google Cloud, and essentially evangelizing Google within the Deloitte partnership. And, so, in that, we have a pretty healthy practice that we run with Google cloud, and we've been the leading partner, number one systems integrator with Google for the last three years. It's been a great partnership and relationship and we continue to grow it together. As Google continues to grow, so do we, and I look forward to this conversation today about how that continues on as this partnership matures over time.

**David Linthicum:**

Yeah, I've been hearing more about Google in the last few years than I have in my entire career, especially in the cloud computing space. The momentum is definitely gathering there. And, also, I have my good friend Mike Kavis. Mike is also host of the On Cloud Podcast. So, Mike, tell us a bit about yourself for people who haven't heard the podcast yet.

**Mike Kavis:**

Yeah, so I'm chief cloud architect over here at Deloitte. I grew up on architecture application side, and then somehow wound up on the operational side and focus on things like SRE and operations. Big fan of Google Cloud. I was fortunate enough here at Deloitte to work on a project building a healthcare platform with machine learning AI on it, so pretty cool stuff.

**David Linthicum:**

Yeah, I remember back in 2009, we built one of the first cloud applications that I ever worked on with a Google platform-as-a-service environment at the time. So, people don't realize how long Google has been in the cloud computing business. People think they just entered a few years ago; that is not the case. They've been in the cloud computing business since the very start. So, we're talking about the key announcements from Thomas Kurian's keynote for this year at Google Cloud Platform On Air 2020, which I guess is basically, as everything else, going to be an online-based system these days. And we talked a bit about what the most important announcements were prior to the show, and one of the things we're looking at is digital transformation and flexibility as kind of a core key enablement technology out there, which is kind of a general term. And I'd like to kind of get, Victor, your view on this and why it's such an important aspect, important concept right now.

**Victor Morales:**

Yeah, sure, David. Thank you for that. When we take a look at this, we tend to think about what are the capabilities that we need to bring to market in order for our customers to modernize their applications, their ability to process information, to do analytics, apply machine learning, and do this all at scale? And what's important behind this, David, is it's not just lifting on-prem work to the cloud, but rather transforming your business processes to capture more business value. That might be improved customer retention. It might be improved supply chain optimization. It might be in taking costs out to improve your bottom line. So, we're super focused on this digital transformation platform and we're investing very heavily in the engineering work to bring to life these cloud-based services that enable that.

**David Linthicum:**

So, Kashif, how do we bring this to our clients going forward? It's one thing to have a great platform and having great services is another thing to kind of translate it into solutions that we can deploy at key clients out there going forward. So, as you're basically working within the partnership, how do you see this taking place?

**Kashif Rahamatullah:**

Yeah, David. I mean, our focus on addressing specific industry issues is really key here, right? So, with Google's amazing technology and the scale that it brings, our ability to then address the specific industry issues that the industry is dealing with, be it a reduction in processing time, be it in the healthcare space reducing the number of times a claim has to get reprocessed and reducing that cost of labor and the time it takes to get the physician paid or the claim completely handled, those types of industry issues, right, are – understanding those industry issues, first of all, which we have a very good understanding across a variety of different industries that we work with. And then matching that up with the scale of the technology that Google brings to bear makes it a really amazing combination, right? And that's how we take it to the market with working with Google and their focus on industry vertical solutions as well. That's how we've been approaching all the digitization and transformation or digital transformation opportunities with our clients.

**David Linthicum:**

So, Victor, is digital transformation and flexibility really about filling in the last mile, the ability to kind of get things fully digitally enabled? In other words, I've been in the business for a long time and we've been focusing on automating things going forward, but we're not necessarily at a point where everything has a real-time understanding of each other. The ability to have systems interacting one to another, have core meta-processes on top of it, and the ability to get to the final wave of automation to kind of close the gap between where we are now in terms of digital enablement and where we need to be – so is this that?

**Victor Morales:**

It can be that. And it also depends on where the customers are or aren't in their journey towards digital transformation. I think if you extend the thinking to say, "What does this look like in the fully-fledged form?" It really is a system of digitally interconnected feedback loops that basically provide the context for the systems of record, the systems of information, the customer feedback. You can take a look at this holistically. And that would look at it in kind of its

most manifest form. However, you can actually take a look at individual pillars and actually optimize the digital processes within each pillar and still achieve value.

Some of the bigger ways that we're seeing right now with Google Cloud are those customers that are totally reimagining what their business needs to look like in a fully digitized world. And they're placing a lot of trust and confidence in Google's technology, our capability, and the partnerships that we bring together to help them realize that vision. So, when we start seeing some of these big wins that come out in the press. Those customers are in fact saying that we need to transform our business, not just transform IT but transform all our business processes, and they're placing big bets with Google and our strategic partners to help them achieve that outcome for their business.

**David Linthicum:**

So, coming back to you, Victor, on the second topic I think was talked about at the keynote, distributed infrastructure as a service. The ability to have distributed systems, the ability to leverage multi-cloud and these very complex arrangements and actually abstracting the complexity of these systems kind of behind the scenes to leverage distributed systems in much more direct ways: edge computing, IoT computing things like that. What is distributed infrastructure as a service, and why is it important to Google?

**Victor Morales:**

Yeah – no, it's super important for our customers and it's obviously an area where we invest in heavily. So, take, for example – we have to provide to the customers, on a worldwide basis, a global infrastructure platform at scale. It needs to be cost-effective and it needs to be secure and safe for the processing of their information and the data and the various regulations regarding data privacy throughout the world. We find a lot of multinational customers want to distribute their computing, not only in their headquarter location, but also in the various theaters of operation that they're working in. So, in order to do that today, we currently have like 24 regions and 73 zones, serving customers in over 200 countries on a global basis.

That basically provides them the ability to do the computing where they need to do it and take advantage of Google's network and interconnectivity along the way. We invest very heavily in terms of the data, the network, the firewalls and the security to achieve that, and then we're also providing really bespoke solutions which meet the customers where they are in their IT journey. So, for example, a lot of our customers rely upon SAP to do a lot of critical business processing, and, so, we have large SAP environments that go up to 24 terabytes. We have the ability to run IBM Workloads, Oracle, Unix, and Windows all in our distributed infrastructure-as-a-service. And, so, that's what we're doing and it's a key investment area for us to make sure that we have the foundation to enable digital transformation, which is predicated on our infrastructure.

**David Linthicum:**

So, Kashif, again the same sort of question. You know, how do we translate this into customer solutions and how do we bring this to solutions within the Global 2000?

**Kashif Rahamatullah:**

Yeah. I mean, I think the way we engage with our clients is really to evaluate their existing landscape, what their vision is, what this transformation journey would look like, and sort of really paint a roadmap that allows them to see kind of the steps that they would have to take through this journey to get to that end roadmap, right? And in that case, we could be talking about multi-cloud, it could be their own datacenters, it could be edge, it could be other technologies and SaaS in play.

And, so, looking at sort of the end-to-end, holistic picture in helping our clients go through that sort of exercise and sort of the what-if analysis, as well as laying out a very specific step-by-step roadmap of their journey, helps them really see the vision, and then also how they get value of that each step of the way. That's typically how we've engaged with our clients around this, and Google's ability to kind of bring that scalability, that secure environment that is available across the globe really makes it an easy conversation to have, right? And that's how, really, we've approached much of these large client opportunities where they're looking at end-to-end transformation.

**David Linthicum:**

So, Victor, obviously you get down to something that's going to be the enabling technology to do this, and, so, we have this notion of a digital transformation platform that was mentioned in the keynote. Why is this enabling technology that the Global 2000 should be interested in? And how does it translate into solutions here at Deloitte?

**Victor Morales:**

Yeah, so just like on the technology front, maybe just to build on what Kashif had mentioned, for example, we brought in our commitment to Anthos, and what does Anthos do for our customer? It basically lets them run their datacenter either on-prem and have access to Google cloud, and it permits them to have hybrid computing or hybrid cloud, and it also gives them access to AWS and we're preview with Azure. Also, we just announced like a BigQuery capability where customers are able to take advantage of Google's leading BigQuery technology platform to analyze data wherever that data might be, for example on either AWS or Azure, without having then to move their data onto Google Cloud. So, we're doing a lot of work in terms of technology that underpins the digital transformation platform.

And as far as it goes for like some of the things that we're doing jointly with Deloitte in this regard, Deloitte's been very helpful in working with us and in terms of providing a natural interface language query into BigQuery, so that you can basically query the data using natural language. And then they're also working with us very closely on data, analytics and data warehouse modernization and, really, just doing a lot of great work there across the technology stacks that underpin that. And what's unique about Deloitte in this regard is that they're able to use this technology and apply it to what I would call one of Deloitte's core strengths, which is about how does this technology help the customers achieve a business outcome? For example, an optimized supply chain, for example a better know-your-customer in retail banking – these are all areas that we're collaborating on together, and there's a high degree of resonance with the customers that we are going after and working with together.

**Mike Kavis:**

You know, one thing I'd like to add to that is Google's building a lot of what I call business-processes servers. You have like healthcare APIs. You have like recommendation engines. I came out of the loyalty marketing space. I had a team of ten people working on recommendation software for years, and now

it's just an API, right? So, those types of things, a lot of people go to cloud and they think of it as infrastructure. It's much more than that, and the acceleration you can get within an industry using those industry-specific APIs is quite outstanding.

**David Linthicum:**

So, Kashif, how do we change organizations to accept this technology and leverage this technology as a force multiplier? So, that really – and Mike may want to chime into this as well because he's been studying that area and changing operational models and things like that. It's one thing to present very sophisticated technology to the Fortune 500 or the Global 2000—the bigger companies in the world. It's another thing to allow them to leverage the technology as a force multiplier effectively, and that's where I see people seem to fall by the wayside. What are your recommendations there as you drive our partnership to our clients?

**Kashif Rahamatullah:**

Yeah, I mean, as they say, right, the proof is in the pudding, right? And, so, in a lot of ways proving out the value and, sort of the speed, the scale, and the security around the platform – the comment that Mike made around this is not just infrastructure; it's actually value-added services that allow you to unlock true benefits from data that you might have from data that you might have from knowledge about your customers that you might have, you know, supply chain, ecommerce. Those are all the areas that Google can bring, technologies that are ready to go. It's basically threading different pieces of solutions to deliver that value, and the way we do it is by demonstrating that, by proving those things out. We're working right now with a large healthcare company that's looking to reduce their cycle times to claims processing, where they're spending billions of dollars, right, to think about how about real-time processing where there's no claims essentially, right?

You come out of the doctor's office; your claim is processed in real-time, so you don't have to go through a process of claims getting submitted and then getting filed and then reviewed and processed. In today's world with the technology and the scale that Google Cloud brings, you can do that. The possibility is there. It's all about how far do you want to think about it, and how do you want to take those steps to kind of get to that vision? And, so, that's what we're doing with a lot of our clients, is spending time educating them about the capabilities beyond the infrastructure on the application side, specifically in and around data, analytics, AI, and ML, and actually applying and developing those models to show that this is possible. And once people start seeing it, then they become really truly believers, and that's how the journey starts.

**David Linthicum:**

So, Mike, I follow your work pretty closely in terms of changing operational standards and operational models going forward. What's your insights into how the ops models need to change to leverage digital transformation platforms as a force multiplier?

**Mike Kavis:**

Yeah, so, the legacy operating model was built around infrastructure, mainframes, releasing software in monoliths twice a year. And the cloud kind of enabled us to do push button deployments and move real rapidly. So, I just got out of a meeting where we were talking with a client and they have this very long process and we did an analysis of it and, like, 90 percent of it was low-value, because there were all these stop gates and review gates because there's no trust in the system. And now we move to these highly-automated systems – I mentioned like the healthcare API, right? We used to have to build everything that that healthcare API does.

Now it's a service that auto-scales. So, we need to rethink what operations means, what our deployment processes, what incident management processes are because we're in a different era now, right? It's the shared responsibility model. Like, a lot of stuff has been – our cloud providers take care of now, and we should be focused more on the applications and the customer service on top of it. So, it's a big mind shift, and a lot of times we get enough people to figure out the tech, but the processes and organizational structures don't change, so we're kind of slow because we're having to go through the same old processes as yesterday.

**David Linthicum:**

So, Kashif, this is something that's been bantered about for a long period of time, the industry-specific digital transformations and the ability to leverage this technology as a force multiplier for flexibility. One of the things I've found in the past as we've gotten into verticalization of technology, we have a tendency to kind of make it too vertically specific and not necessarily get into the meta-patterns, the meta-architectures, the archetypes, these sorts of things which are more general in nature but certainly apply to a particular sector, and our ability to extend those archetypes or extend those patterns into something that's usable within the particular company that's going to have certain customization things that are going to be requirements for them. So, in other words, they can't accept everything as a service, but they need to accept the larger, generalized abstractions of what these services are and the ability to kind of extend them into a solution. So, is this what we're seeing now with the industry-specific digital transformation, which was part of the keynote, this flexibility? Or are we seeing something that's a bit more specific to an industry?

**Kashif Rahamatullah:**

I think it's a mix of both. I mean, internally within Deloitte we've developed solutions on top of Google Cloud such as our solution that look at research and development, and it was initially developed for life sciences, but it's certainly something that could be applied across a variety of industries. CognitiveSpend, another AI/ML solution that looks at your spend categorization, and while we developed it for one particular industry, it's applicable across a slew of industries, everywhere there's spend, enterprise spend, you could apply that. Control Tower is another solution that we've developed to look at supply chain and was built in and around the COVID challenges that we've faced and looking at intelligence and smart supply chain, and now it's being looked at as part of recovery and thrive, as companies kind of look at how they're going to move forward and how do they become smarter around their supply chain, because it took them by surprise when COVID hit and all the supply chains got impacted. So, there are solutions that definitely have patterns that can apply across a variety of industries.

Then there are very specific solutions that are limited to – you know, because of the regulatory nature of, let's say, life sciences or healthcare with PII, PHI and other things, right? Banking where your privacy is extremely important. And, so, there we have specific industry solutions that would be very relevant to banking or insurance or life science and healthcare. So, I think we see a combination of both industry specific as well as broad patterns that could be applied across a variety of industries.

**David Linthicum:**

Got it. I think I get it now but, Victor, I would love to hear your take on this. What's new here? Why should we pay attention to this?

**Victor Morales:**

Yeah I think the challenges that we're seeing really depend on the industry. And one of the things that we're doing for these industry customers is we look at it in terms of three lenses. How can we help them monetize? How can we help them transform? And how can we help them modernize? So, take for example – kind of piggybacking off of what Kashif said earlier, if you go to healthcare and life sciences, I mean, we're working with some of the leading ACLS providers in their R&D labs to use AI to identify new pharmaceuticals faster. There are a lot of electronic health records that we're working with certain customers to kind of put structure and order to. We're working with telehealth to help provide them better patient care, even better collaboration amongst hospital staff. What's really unique about this is the assembling of Google Cloud technology and services, and then to see Deloitte add their unique IP on top of that, Opioid360. These are just examples of where Deloitte is taking advantage of the Google Cloud technology stack, applying their own IP, and then solving specific customer needs. And, also, as Kashif said, I mean, even within this COVID era, it was good to see the applicability and the extensibility of some of these prebuilt solutions that we're hunting in one industry actually have applicability to others. And, so, just it's really good to see what's happening out there.

**David Linthicum:**

So, Victor, I'm going to go back to you. Let's kind of address the COVID stuff. And, so, in other words, we're in the middle of a pandemic. People are kind of shifting their consumption of technology a bit. Most are increasing, some are leveraging it differently, and some are leveraging technology as a strategic enabler to kind of take their businesses to the next level and even do much better in terms of their place in the market and their role within society, leveraging technology as something that can be weaponized for good, I guess, for lack of a better word. So, what part of the keynote really kind of led to the fact that we're moving towards solving some of the core issues of the pandemic? And how are we working together with Google and Deloitte to make sure we're addressing the needs of the clients that we're starting to see?

**Victor Morales:**

Yeah again, it would depend on the industry. So, for example, there are industries that are under stress or distress. You can think of travel and transportation. Obviously, on a global basis travel is down as much as 75 to 90 percent depending upon the company. And in those instances, we're actually providing the opportunity to work with our customers in cost abatement and cost takeout. And, so, we're getting creative on how we work, and we're working with Deloitte on a number of these opportunities together. How can we address just the survivability of these customers for the short term as we see our way through the pandemic? And in that regard, we've been great partners together for certain customers in certain industries that are under stress.

**David Linthicum:**

So, Kashif, moving forward what are some of the lessons learned that we've learned in the last four or five months as the pandemic has been around and working with our clients? And obviously we're leveraging technology a bit differently, not completely differently, but we're also reprioritizing the way in which we're putting emphasis on certain technologies digital transformation for example, the ability to leverage that for research organizations, to automate the last mile and our ability to do the analytics and tie them into AI/ML platforms, and predictive analytics, and all these sorts of things that are aiding into people stepping up and building a solution to the pandemic. So, out of what you're seeing with the relationship with Google and Deloitte what seems to be the most impactful things that are going out there to basically work against the problem?

**Kashif Rahamatullah:**

Yeah. I mean, as you know, right, we kind of approach this pandemic with sort of a respond, recover, thrive mantra if you will, right? And I think the key elements that I've observed is change is constant, and those companies and clients that are able to address that in a faster fashion, a nimble fashion have really succeeded, at least being able to respond very effectively, and are actually maybe skipping recovery and thriving already. You know, we've seen the future of work, to be fully digital, right? There's a significant amount of acceleration. And Google's ability to kind of be able to respond to that with G Suite and Google Meet, right, the meeting collaboration platform has been critical, right, across education, across organizations, enterprises, everywhere—every industry, if you will, that was impacted. The ability to be flexible, right – you don't have to be sort of at your desk. You can work everywhere and being able to do that is something that CFOs across the industries are looking at how that's going to have a lasting impact, and Google's ability to address some of those areas with solutions that they have ready to go was key in their ability to respond.

And, lastly, I would say the notion that Victor kind of talked about where clients are looking at cost abatement and cost takeout, in certain industries that conversation – and I would say not even in certain industries. All industries, CFOs, CIOs, and CEOs are looking at how do we get more nimble? Do we really need to own our own datacenters? Do we really need to be spending the money that we're spending in real estate to kind of maintain some of that? So, I think those conversations have accelerated as a result of the pandemic, as a result of their ability, or lack thereof, to respond to the pandemic. And I think a lot of that is being seen in how Google is also seeing the traction in the marketplace around Google Cloud and the associated technologies like G Suite and Google Meet to come together. So, yeah, I would say overall acceleration around this shift to cloud is something that I've noticed the most impact around.

**David Linthicum:**

So, Mike, last word from you. What sort of organizational changes are going to occur around experiences through the pandemic from the rank and file companies out there in terms of leveraging technology in different ways?

**Mike Kavis:**

Well, I think they're going to shift more towards building cloud solutions and less towards thinking about infrastructure, right, being more product-focused rather than domain expertise-focused, right? So, you're going to see more product teams with full stack teams, you build it, you run it on top of cloud platforms, where you have SREs and those types of people managing the platforms. But the one thing I wanted to add to the last point is adopting new technologies or methods, whether it's cloud or digital, a lot of companies move slowly on that unless there's a compelling event, and I think this is the compelling event.

So, what's happening is that a lot of companies have a lot of initiatives, and then this event hit, and it caused them to really rethink their whole portfolio. And I think coming out of this a lot of companies are highly prioritizing to move to the cloud for the reasons we talked about, highly prioritizing digital because of the more remote workforce and all those things. And I think those are – the importance of these projects moved up, a lot of other projects went

to the wayside and I think that-- it's a big event and those events really drive adoption. So, I think if anything good comes out of what we're going through I think its focused on digital and cloud.

**David Linthicum:**

Well said. So, if you enjoyed this podcast, make sure to like and subscribe on iTunes or wherever you get your podcasts. Also check out our past podcasts including the On Cloud Podcast hosted by Mike Kavis and his show Architecting the Cloud. And if you'd like to learn more about Deloitte's cloud capabilities, check out [DeloitteCloudPodcast.com](http://DeloitteCloudPodcast.com). And if you'd like to contact me directly, you can reach me at [DLinthicum@Deloitte.com](mailto:DLinthicum@Deloitte.com), D-L-I-N-T-H-I-C-U-M. So, until next time, best of luck with your cloud projects. We'll talk again real soon. You guys stay safe. Bye-bye.

**Operator:**

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