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Broadridge Signs With IBM For Greater Cloud Capabilities

BY TOM GROENFELDT
CONTRIBUTOR
ENTERPRISE TECH

Broadridge, a \$4 billion provider of back office technology for financial services firms, announced it is working with IBM to offer cloud-based services to its clients through a private cloud powered by IBM.

“This rounds out our hybrid cloud strategy,” said Mark Schlesinger, CIO at Broadridge. “We have been driving innovation around public cloud initiatives; now we are aligning with a private cloud initiative with IBM that will drive additional velocity and innovation for our clients.”

Casual investors may know Broadridge as the company that used to send those proxy envelopes with various cut-out windows so shareholders could make some appropriate marks and mail them back.

That’s been a long time ago, Schlesinger said.

“The voting side of proxy has been on the internet and on our cloud for well over 20 years.” Shareholders can go to www.proxyvote.com as a shareholder to vote their shares, he explained.

Broadridge is a giant in the field of securities processing.

“Firms rely on us to process, on average, more than U.S. \$7 trillion in fixed income and equity securities trades per day,” it says on its web site. “More than 5,000 brands entrust us to deliver essential communications to their clients, creating richer customer experiences.”

The company has grown both organically and through acquisitions. Last week,

for example, it announced that it has entered into an agreement to acquire FundsLibrary, a leader in fund document and data dissemination in the European market, from its parent company Hargreaves Lansdown.

The company said that the hybrid cloud model will enable Broadridge to further deliver next-generation SaaS solutions. Benefits include increased flexibility through IBM’s open source capabilities and better workload management through the Red Hat OpenShift platform.

Red Hat, which IBM acquired in 2018 is the most pervasive container solution on the planet today, said Schlesinger.

“It allows us to containerize our apps and then allows us to run them on any cloud unchanged, whether our private cloud, Azure, AWS or IBM.”

Broadridge clients run a full variety of technology, from hosted data centers to public cloud, he added. Broadridge is moving toward more cloud-like infrastructure in terms of scale, resilience and automation.

“Most organizations have a hybrid multi-cloud strategy so we can support any type hosting required.”

Although Broadridge issued a press release about the new agreement with IBM, the two companies have been working together for years, he said, and Broadridge has been a Red Hat user as well.

“IBM has been a big partner of ours for the last 10-plus years. This is an expansion of that partnership beyond some

of the infrastructure they manage into Windows and Unix.”

Moving more functionality to the cloud will be an opportunity to rationalize the technology, he added. Like many other large financial enterprises that have grown through both internal development and acquisitions, Broadridge probably has one of just about every type of hardware and software. Moving to the cloud makes it possible to eliminate some one-off applications, said Schlesinger.

But moving to the cloud isn’t just a matter of taking an existing app and finding it a new home.

“In moving it, you are going to refactor that app to use cloud-native services so you can eliminate as much of the tech debt as you can and have a much more modern app,” explained Schlesinger. “You can eliminate the legacy, third products that are typically used to support an app and use cloud-native solutions that a Microsoft, Amazon or IBM might provide.”

This will let staff move from manually configuring the environment to more automation through software, he added.

“We are looking at how the infrastructure team operates and moving to software management. Software creation is where the industry is trending now, so we can provide product in a much different way to our clients.”

Tom Groenfeldt

Enterprise Tech

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