Meeting Summary Output

**Raw Meeting Transcript Text:**

Raw Text: It's good when you, it makes you want to be there a little bit more. Yeah. Yeah. Can one of you guys text Austin? Yeah. Oh, here he is. Hey, Austin. I was just going to say, hey, I'm sorry about that. No problem. No problem. So Dennis. Dennis Austin. Austin Dennis. Nice to meet you, Dennis. You too. I hear you and Mark go way back. A little bit. We do. The good old and the bad old days. Yeah. We do. It's all good. All good. Okay. So Dennis, I'm going to just introduce the team very quickly. I'll just kind of reiterate what I had sent you earlier in my message. But Jess runs our partnership with AWS. So that is her sole focus professionally. She has a life outside of VR, but that is her sole focus at VR. So I thought, you know, depending on the conversation of where we go, it would be good to have her be a part of this, depending on if there's anything specific to AWS that we want to dig into. Brian Jackovich, Brian runs our AWS practice in totality. And Austin is one of our solution partners responsible for SRE and resiliency. So the right people for the conversation. I did debrief them on our conversation yesterday. So I think the topics, at least at a high level, are understood and the things that you're interested in. Our goal is, most importantly, to introduce you. We're going to treat it as if you don't know us, right? And we want to introduce you to the firm and the way that we go to market. And then we'll take you through some of our solution accelerators that we have that may be of interest or just make sure that you understand the types of investments we make in pre-built solutions that are code-based. And then we have some case studies. So the idea for us is get you comfortable or at least get you a base understanding. And then hopefully we can talk a little bit more about the work that you mentioned yesterday that you need to get done. Great. Do you want to do a quick intro? Would you mind doing a quick intro just to give them some background? Thank you. Yeah. So Dennis Mayer, I'm a senior director here at FanDuel. I started in March. Prior to that, I was at Capital One for five years. And before that, some of the adventures that Mark has talked about earlier that I worked on was working at KnowledgeInt and BusinessEdge and some of the other companies that you all might have heard the names of. My focus here is to build out our new data platform. So that includes Databricks along with a bunch of other data in and data out type tools from the Lakehouse. We are an AWS shop, of course. And with building a new platform, that runs pretty expensive. We also need to make sure that we have two things. One is FinOps in place. And then second is the site reliability. Today, we are halfway through that journey. We were on AWS Redshift prior to this and it's still operating. But we are moving everything over to the Databricks platform. And so the reliability and the FinOps and site reliability and FinOps is not really all there yet. So we need that to happen. The goal is to get completely on Databricks with all the new stuff by the end of the year. So we're halfway done. And now is the right time to think about how do we make the platform resilient and cost efficient. So I'll stop there. Hopefully that helps. Okay. Before we get in, Austin, do you have any questions? Do you want to lead off here? I mean, yeah. So it's kind of like I have so many questions, right? So I can start with 100 questions now. Or if we want to go through a little bit more of our practice and have the questions at the end. Dennis, do you kind of have a preference on if I dive into the technical details now about kind of what you're doing there? Or would you like to see a little bit more first? Either one's fine. I mean, I've talked to Mark. I've talked to Hema. I've talked to Bob over the years. I know a little bit about the company. Yeah.   
   
Actually a couple times I was thinking about joining and I didn't do it, but like, so I understand like, you know, your focus, you're a partner for AWS, so you don't really have to go too much into that, but like, more of the, if you can kind of give me an orientation around the problem areas that I'm talking about, that would be helpful. Sure, so we definitely have some of that. Yeah, go ahead, Brian, then. I got my questions here. I'll save them for the end. We'll go through this quickly and then love to ask a little bit more technical about what's going on. Sure, okay. Yeah, so Dennis, I'll give an overview of the firm, ask me any questions along the way. I'll keep the sales pitch to a minimum, right? So, as a firm, business technology consulting firm, and really our focus is on regulated industries, right? Areas where we have compliance requirements, regulatory requirements, dealing with auditors, right? Those particular areas, things that, there's criticality. To getting it right, it's probably the best way of looking at it. So, the way that we look to approach it is really that domain expertise in the particular, particular verticals, right? From a business perspective, and then from a technology perspective, building the technology solutions to solve those particular problems. So, it's really the best of both worlds for a couple of things, but there's a lot of stuff we don't do. So, in that area, we only do AWS, right? There's a lot of clouds, but we only do AWS, and that really the intention is to have that real deep expertise in that particular area and be able to provide those intricate, you know, details around why things work and why they don't work in AWS. The way that we have, so 20 years of domain expertise over 10 years of AWS expertise, I think we're probably pushing 15 at this point, really have a long, long tenure working with AWS. We break our AWS practice into seven different competencies. I'll go in more detail on the next slide, but the intention is really to meet you where you're at, but then provide a path forward as you want to get to, let's say, different levels of maturity on AWS. So, it's, we have a prescriptive approach, right? We don't walk in and say, hey, change XYZ to what we're doing, right? But we have a vision of what we've seen success in all the other customers we've worked with and why we believe that. So, we look to build that capability as we look at problems. We're a premier tier partner. We have a variety of different competencies. Probably the one that's most important for this is going to be the migration and modernization competency. This allows us to do what you have experience with working with AWS structure at CapOne and FanDuel, but we have migration funding. They call it MAP. So, we have access to a lot of the funding mechanics that AWS provides that we can use as part of projects that we work with our customers. We also have access to different beta programs and beta services, which we get incentive programs that we can offer to you as well. So, there's a lot that goes into the fact that we're a premier tier partner that we've kind of built all this in. But really the takeaway from us is that AWS expertise, industry domain expertise, and then we have what we call reusable accelerators, RSAs, which I'm sure you know the term from the business edge days, but effectively these are assets that we have that are very, very much real, right? These are code-based assets that we bring to the project, reduce the time, the cost, and the risk. But I really want to stress these are not paperweight activities. This is code. They have GitHub repositories. They have what you call product cycles, right? Roadmaps and such, but they're built off of customers we've worked with and seen multiple of similar type of problems that we want to solve so we don't have to recreate the wheel every single time. So, these are no cost to our customers. We bring them for free. There's no licensing. There's, you know, it's accelerating consulting projects is the way I think of them. So, I have more of an in-depth on the competencies next, but do you have any questions here? No, no. Sounds good. Okay, so as I mentioned, right, we slice up the AWS practice into competencies, which all of our consultants align to, right, to have that particular expertise in the technical area. One thing I'll mention is every single consultant we have is hands-on. Everyone writes code, writes infrastructure as code. So, think of us very, very deep from a technical perspective, but then we have opinions from, let's say, technical philosophical perspective. Bottom level here, enterprise program governance and PMO. This would be very large programs putting in the structure. A lot of times, you know, a customer   
   
are doing big migration or business-changing structures. So we'll come in, put the structure in place, right? How do you work with, from executive all the way down, think PMO program structure. The next up, this is really the tech piece, which is DevOps, security, and SRE. The idea here is how do you build a self-service, we call it platform, that you can provide all these capabilities that can be consumed as self-service as you look at scale across one app team, a data team, or 1,000   
into account, not just one user flow or data type, but like lots of different kinds of business units using this and how they used it. And, you know, making sure that we were hitting the requirements of both the most strict, but the most lenient while trying to be cost effective. So I hope that that kind of resonates a little bit as I know that you're doing this for lots of different people, but you know, part of it is looking at all the different kinds of users and data flows and making sure you're getting the appropriate selection for it in the end. Yeah. Any questions about that? Yeah. I mean, so like one thing I didn't really talk too much but we're pretty much, we're real time with these data pipelines. We're not batch, which kind of pushes you a little bit more towards the active side of things. But yeah, like, so it's like really, like, for example, if like we're using Kafka to populate the warehouse and if Kafka, you know, it's got a bit of ability to hold any of the messages. So if something goes down downstream, you can replay. But it does not hold forever. So like that has to be thought through as well. Like, how do you replicate that? We're using Confluent, we're moving over to Confluent Enterprise. So there'll be a little bit more features there because we were running Confluent prior by ourselves. And so like we're in the middle of that migration. So that may make it a little more complicated with the real time, but I just want to make sure that like, cause in my last place, we did more batch than real time. In this case, we're doing the opposite. We're doing almost all real time. Yeah. No, and the real time, you're right. It does tend to want to push you towards more of an active active. Usually what I find in that case, though, if you're trying to keep costs low, is you go for an active pilot, right? So you keep on the piece that's replicating the data and that's always going, but then all the other services are off and then you are able to pile out your weight on, right? So something like that. Actually, again, kind of getting some kind of split. Yeah. So. So I'm sorry, Austin, real quick. So Dennis, one of the things you mentioned yesterday is in terms of the way you're thinking about potentially getting help here is maybe being driven by open requirements that you have. So are you, is it the right assumption that you're looking for help based, meaning we'll provide you with two people that are really strong and you'll kind of direct them or are you looking for something more formal? Yeah, I think, so my approach, my fallback plan is that we're gonna hire two people. It could either do it like three months, six months from now, or right now I'm gonna have to kind of steal people from other projects that come onto this. So I'm looking for something that I can get two people who can hit the ground pretty quickly and who are familiar with the space, so that way I can hit that September timeline. Because worst case, I mean, worst case, I don't wanna change that timeline, but I could go back and say to KPMG, like, hey, we're just not gonna make it and then reset the date, but I'd rather not do that. And we're just spinning up the team now. And we can also, we can also limp our way through it. Like we could say the plan is, here's plan version A and it's kind of very basic. And then plan B and C would be next. But like, I gotta just show progress by September. But like, I just, yeah. I mean, typically hiring takes like two months. So like, I just probably don't know if we would be able to do that with an FTE here. So that's why I'm looking for outside help, potentially that could speed it along, or I'm just gonna have to steal somebody from other projects and put them on here for now. But that's gonna impact another major piece of my program. Okay. Yeah, I think we can definitely help. And I think we can move quickly. Maybe you and I should just connect separately about the mechanics of that. Yeah. There's a lot of like papering that may need to get done, but I know here, they move pretty quickly. Yeah, you mentioned that, that's great. Yeah. So, okay. So I guess let's connect separately. And Dennis, is it a safe assumption that if you have the open recs that the funding is the funding? Yeah, like I talked to my manager and I said, hey, like I'm going with, if I go with the consultant here, are you okay with that? And he said, sure. So I got at least two headcount either way, AFTE or contract or wherever I wanna go on this. Awesome, okay. Okay, so let's connect separately. And then in the meantime, would it be helpful to you to send you some profiles for people that you can take a look at? Yeah. Yeah, that'd be helpful. Okay. Okay. All right, so we'll debrief as a team and we'll get back to you, I guess tomorrow. You're not in tomorrow, right? For the holiday? No, I'm taking off. Okay, so we'll follow up on Friday either way. And then you and I can set up some time as well. Okay, sounds good. Great.   
   
Any other questions guys or are we good? All good. I think if you know like once you guys kind of like think through this a bit like I would probably think I don't know if how you want to do time materials or whatever deliverables but like it feels like we probably have to have more conversations around that before you guys can come back with something a little bit more concrete but uh glad to set up some time next week or uh early next week if possible so. Okay yeah that's what I was trying that's maybe I wasn't clear enough that's what I was actually trying to ask yeah and the other thing like the other thing I gotta just figure out is like the whole like MSA thing right like that that that's separate but just as as much work right so yeah probably right we probably need an NDA or you probably you need an NDA and an MSA so I don't know if there's like a formal procurement function or not but yeah so I have a partner in supply management to help us with that um but like I also like I want to get to a proposal because then the proposal will jumpstart that a little bit more versus like I'm having conversations they might just take their time then so yeah I got you okay so something more formal than just here some some good some good resources is what you're interested in yeah like I like I'm assuming like a start in July wrapping up in September October like what would that look like perfect would and then you know we um just one last clarifying piece on that we you know obviously we can help design and build the plan and things like that but also very much hands-on as as a capability would there be like a uh would you be interested in also kind of seeing what it would take to build out the plan or at least a you know an MVP of the plan like you know beyond beyond beyond building the plan and actually building the resources and everything underlying it uh what because it sounds like we're sorry just to make sure make sure I want to try understand September is more of like I don't want to say a paper exercise but it's more of like here's the roadmap right and then end of year is like I have it all created and now I'm actually functionally working in India is that right yeah like I just need to show that I've got a plan by September 30th and so it's really doing a lot of discovery work yeah putting together the components of what that plan looks like with activities like okay this is how we're going to do it over the next three to six months like I I'm going to do like I want to do like multi versions of it like I don't want to like try to get the whole thing done by December I want to get like the most critical pieces done and then work our way down and then because um like I want to be able to like we have incidents quite a bit so like I want to be able to start like by say September October sorry October November being able to use components of the plan already and then keep getting better at that because for true BCP DR to work well like it needs to be tested in almost like every six months and so uh I'm lucky if we can do one test right now yeah okay cool thanks yeah that was my last question of the day okay no these are all good questions no worries so all right so Dennis we'll come back we'll we'll be ready at some point next week to go through something more formal that lays out how we think we would approach it understanding what that you're you're thinking of a team of two and we'll we'll kind of yeah within yeah and we understand the timeline yeah and the two people would work with a manager and then we would have like many other teams within our so it's gonna be like like almost doing the discovery piece for like eight weeks or so whatever it may be and and yeah okay perfect cool thank you very much all right sounds good all right we'll talk to you soon thanks thanks