GENERIS LEADERSHIP
SPOTLIGHT

AMERICAN CIO & IT SUMMIT

Bristol-Myers Squibb

AN INTERVIEW WITH

Krishna Cheriath
Chief Data Officer
Bristol-Myers Squibb

Krishna Cheriath is the Chief Data Officer for Bristol-Myers Squibb. He is responsible for advancing BMS' mission through data and associated technologies by ensuring that all data driven decisions and actions operate at the right balance of innovation, ethics and standards.

In May 2019, Krishna will join IT executives at the American CIO & IT Summit to discuss current trends, strategic insights and best practices in trending technology, cyber-security, risk management and managing talent. His presentation, Leading Digital Transformation in Your Organization Through Technology and People, will focus on capitalizing on digital and analytic disruptions; equipping your enterprise to operate with the right balance of innovation, ethics and standards; deploying cloud-first strategies to centralize, manage and protect data and information; and achieving the right balance between centralization and decentralization of data and analytics

We spoke with Krishna ahead of the American CIO & IT Summit to discuss his presentation and his role as a Chief Data Officer.

What led you to a career in IT and data management?

It became clear to me during my undergraduate years that my passion is in analyzing and solving problems by harnessing technology. That led to me a career in IT, starting with TCS to PWC to IBM. After working on many technology re-engineering and transformation projects, I became interested in business transformation and acceleration through technology. I did my MBA at NYU-Stern and then joined Bristol-Myers Squibb (BMS), which is where I found my mooring in health care data and technology. Working on several technology initiatives and operations and seeing up close the untapped power of analytics-driven decision making, I started to focus more on data and analytics – particularly driving business decisions with data and powering analytic acceleration using data and related technologies. This led me to stints in data strategy for analytics. It was clear to me that to fully capitalize on the potential of digital and analytics, we need to move data from being an impediment to analytic acceleration due to poor availability, quality, velocity and control, to it being an accelerant and an asset to power digital and analytic ambitions. In early 2017, I led an enterprise-wide information and data management organization that is now enabling our company's mission through data and related technologies. I was lucky that my passion and experiences intersected with the business need for a Chief Data Officer at BMS in December 2018.

How do technology, data, and life sciences connect at Bristol-Myers Squibb?

BMS is dedicated to discovering, developing and delivering innovative medicines that help patients prevail over serious diseases. I think of data and technology as fundamental enablers and accelerants of that mission. This is true in all aspects of our business execution – be it R&D, manufacturing, sales and marketing, or, enabling functions like HR, finance and procurement. As digital and analytics become pervasive, we continue to stay focused on our mission and strive to use data and technology judiciously and effectively to advance that mission.

How do you approach the issue of centralization vs decentralization in data and analytics?

I think each organization should approach the issue of centralization vs decentralization and arrive at an organizational model congruent with the maturity of data management and analytics in the organization. My approach is not to view this as an "either/or" and instead view this as an "and" equation. A certain level of centralization is crucial to enable faster capabilities and talent development to kick start better data management and analytics. The centralized team can be an incubator, promoter and cultivator of data and analytic capabilities in the various organizational units. At the same time, federated data and analytic teams in the business units can significantly advance the citizen capabilities and embed analytics-driven decision making, and better management of data at the business process level, which are crucial for the sustainability of an analytics and data driven culture. At BMS, we created a centralized analytics organization called Business Insights and Analytics (BIA). Through an effective collaboration between BIA and IT, we achieved significant acceleration in data driven decisions and effective use of analytics.

How important are cloud-first strategies when managing and analyzing data on a large scale?

A cloud first technology strategy capitalizing on innovations from providers like AWS, Azure and Google cloud, to name a few, can be a significant enabler and accelerant of unlocking value from the data at a pace and scale that meets the demands of the modern digitized business process. But this requires a carefully considered technology strategy that encompasses architecture, data management, consumption management, data protection, security and access controls and DevOps, among others. It also requires fundamental shifts in how data and analytic applications are built and run.

Such a cloud-first strategy becomes vitally important since traditional data capabilities (data integration tools, data warehouses and traditional analytic and visualization tools) struggle to keep up with the velocity and volume of data and analytics generated as enterprises advance their digitization and digitalization.

What does it mean to be a Chief Data Officer?

At BMS, the Chief Data Officer (CDO) is part data strategist and adviser, part steward for improving data quality, part evangelist for data sharing, and part technologist. In my opinion, the focus of a CDO should be to enable and accelerate the company's mission by simultaneously ensuring that high quality data is powering the right decisions across the company while making sure the access and use of data meets the appropriate legal, regulatory and ethical standards. This means the CDO should endeavor to advance the company mission by:

• Building an understanding of the business and data strategy

• Designing and implementing data strategies and systems

• Leading, motivating and managing large technical teams

• Overseeing the collection, storage, management, quality and protection of data

• Implementing data privacy policies and complying with data protection regulations

• Communicating the status, value, and importance of data

Join Krishna Cheriath at the American CIO & IT Summit! Learn more about his presentation by visiting the **event website** or checking out the **event program**.

The Generis American CIO and IT Summit sets the standard on how the industry should connect and exchange ideas.

The Generis American CIO and IT Summit is an event designed to provide IT executives with current trends, strategic insights and best practices in trending technology, cyber-security, risk management and managing talent. This unique summit brings together leaders from across all industry sectors – food and beverage, CPG, automotive, pharma, retail, aerospace and more – involved in the business of IT. Network with peers, connect with exhibitors and learn from the top industry influencers as we explore strategies to drive innovation, growth and profitability in an ever-evolving market.

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SUMMIT MAY 29-30, 2019
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