Understand API use in modern IT
A Conversation with
SHAD IMAM

Q&A

By using APIs as building blocks, governments can create ways to engage and to deliver new services and experiences. They can modernize their IT infrastructure, accelerate their clock-speed of innovation and make it easier to introduce experiences that are similar to what consumers expect from the private sector. To dig into the details, I sat down with Shad Imam, Director, Solution Engineering, Federal, MuleSoft.

RS: What does MuleSoft do and why is API reuse so important?

SI: MuleSoft is the #1 integration platform that allows you to unlock and integrate your data - wherever it resides - to create connected experiences. The average enterprise has over 900 systems and the ability to quickly access, transform and orchestrate data determines the success of projects across IT organization. By using a modern API-led approach, each integration becomes a reusable building block. This reuse which isn't possible with project-based custom code, enables organizations to accelerate IT delivery, increase organizational agility and deliver innovation at scale.

RS: What are some of the challenges facing the public sector today?

SI: Government entities are under increasing pressure to be more agile and innovate faster as they strive to keep pace with new technologies and experience expectations that are set by the private sector. And in many cases, government IT budgets are either stagnant or shrinking. Making things worse are growing information silos trapped in legacy systems that have traditionally relied on point-to-point custom integrations to connect data. As IT environments grew, this approach has created a brittle technology landscape that's difficult and expensive to maintain and scale.

RS: What is MuleSoft doing to help solve the problem?

SI: To combat the complexity, an increasing number of agencies are using APIs to easily connect any application, data source or device, regardless of format or source. APIs are quickly becoming core building blocks for digital transformation because they make systems easy to access and allow data to be decoupled from complex underlying systems. As a result, developers are free to code what customers want and innovate faster.

MuleSoft has been working with seven of the 15 cabinet-level departments as they leverage Anypoint Platform to improve government employee productivity and digitally engage constituents by unlocking the value of legacy back office systems. We've received a FedRAMP Authorization at the moderate impact level as of August 2019, further showing Mulesoft's commitment to our government customers while also validating Anypoint Platform's ability to connect any application, data source or device with APIs.

RS: What about the culture shift this changes in IT? What advice do you have for agency IT teams?

SI: Agency IT teams need to rethink their roles from experts in legacy software and realize their potential as business enablers. By implementing an API-led approach to integration, broader teams can reuse APIs instead of writing custom integration code with every project. This in turn facilitates greater collaboration within the agency and enables other agencies to tap into their resources and capabilities. This new approach to integration ensures that agency systems are robust and flexible enough to support customer demands, maximize the impact of IT budgets and accelerate innovation by driving collaboration across the organization.

RS: How can federal IT teams get started? What can they do to learn more?

SI: MuleSoft recently launched a pledge to arming 100,000 Integration Trailblazers with the tools to understand and realize the potential of APIs within their organization. We've created a Trailmix, including topics on API basics, API creation, API ROI and API ecosystems, available for free on Trailhead, Salesforce's online learning platform. Anyone can leverage the trainings at http://sfdc.co/integrationtrailblazer to better understand how they can use APIs in their existing projects and reuse those APIs to innovate faster than ever before. Additionally, Integration Trailblazers with object-oriented programming backgrounds (technical developers and architects) can become Integration Professionals. Check out training. mulesoft.com for technical product training and to find out how to become MuleSoft-certified.

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