

Responding to crisis: IBM's Jim Whitehurst draws from open-source lessons to address a rapidly changing world

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IBM reported its earnings on Monday, one of the first companies to do so in the current reporting period. Included in the company's report were a number of stories associated with helping its customers, including support for one major U.S. insurance firm as it transitioned to a remote work model when none existed before.

IBM indicated that 95% of its own workforce of 350,000 employees was working remotely as well. This was a major driver for sourcing input and issuing expectations around working in the current environment.

"A lot of it is to recognize that it's hard to know the stress that people are under or what they need to do to be effective," Whitehurst said. "So, it's the perfect time to back up and say: "Hey, you have to figure some of this out and tell us what you need to be successful.?"

In addition to making adjustments for its own employees as a result of COVID-19, IBM has also been working within its family of companies to develop new tools and resources for the global community to use during the pandemic.

One such tool was developed by the Weather Co. to map and analyze the spread of confirmed cases. It's part of what Whitehurst views as part of the community coming together in a time of significant crisis without needing orders from him or IBM Chief Executive Officer Arvind Krishna.

“Within a matter of days, the Weather Channel app, which is an IBM app, had a COVID button on it so you could see down to your county level the number of people infected,” Whitehurst explained. “That bubbled up that wasn't a top down with Arvind and me saying “let's go do that.” Having people broadly inside of corporations decide what role to play in society is a really helpful thing.”

[3]

Also: [Responding to crisis: IBM's Jim Whitehurst plans to open-source lessons learned from pandemic](#) [4] [Ed: Same text, not the same headline]

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