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Who is Sword?

Greg Anderson, Sword CTO has worked in the technology industry for over 15 years. He is responsible for Sword's technical strategy and assuring data and digital solution design across all their industry verticals. As the North Sea's largest provider of digital services, Sword focuses on building solutions to the industry's most critical business technology challenges by enabling our clients to capture, manage, and utilise data to make informed decisions. This is supported by technology adoption and people engagement, together with modern ways of working to give confidence that the right decision is made every time.



Greg Anderson, Sword CTO

AN INTERVIEW WITH A DATA-DRIVEN CTO

Tell us about your current role and how you have seen the adoption of digital over recent years.

I have always been passionate about how technology can improve business outcomes and am fortunate to apply this in my role as Chief Technology Officer for Sword Group UK. I have the opportunity to work with some exceptionally talented colleagues, delivering innovative and forward-thinking solutions across multiple industry verticals such as energy, public sector, retail, and financial services.

We have seen a significant acceleration in our energy customers embracing digital and data-driven solutions over the last 18 months. By sharing the knowledge and expertise we have gained from other sectors that are further along in their digital adoption journey and benefitting from our collective lessons learned, I'm excited to see how the energy sector evolves throughout 2022.

How do digital and data challenges in other industries differ from those of the energy industry?

Other sectors have similar challenges to energy when it comes to digital adoption and becoming data-driven.

However, in energy, we typically encounter much more diverse data sources, higher data velocity, and greater data veracity than we do in other sectors. We have seen other sectors embrace cloud computing, from a platform and infrastructure perspective, quicker than energy. Typically, this has led to faster innovation than on-premises-centric environments as cloud platforms can enable more rapid delivery of data-driven solutions.

Levelling up the industry in this space is less daunting now due to the advancement of Modern Data Platforms and Azure Synapse analytics which we deploy using our data-centric "Tillit" framework. This focuses on establishing confidence, faith, and trust in data, enabling the business to make trusted data-driven decisions.

Can you tell us about Sword's strategic direction, how you help position this for your customers, and its impact on the industry?

We are focused on doing the right thing for our customers, ensuring we deliver the services and support we have become known for in the energy sector over the last 20 years.

Throughout our organisation, from IT services and information management to digital solutions, we are ultimately focused on placing the right data in the right hands at the right time.

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We know that digital in all its guises is a key enabler, not only for business growth but for ensuring sustainability. Over the past five years, we have listened intently and refined our services in response to emerging technology and lessons learned from our project and service delivery teams.

As a result, our strategic direction is focused on how we support our customers by starting at the foundations, and our significant investment in skills and experience across our Sword practices enable us to support our energy customers on every step of their data-driven journey.

How does Sword stay on top of horizon scanning with the pace at which technology moves?

We understand the importance of staying up to date with emerging technology and approaches, as many of our customers look to us to help bridge that gap in their knowledge. It can be a full-time job to keep up with changes in platforms such as Microsoft's cloud-based PowerPlatform or Azure Synapse Analytics, so it comes down to focusing on what is fit for purpose for our customers.

As one of a select group of fully managed Microsoft partners in the UK, we invest heavily in maintaining close alignment with our Microsoft counterparts responsible for technology platforms. We regularly hold knowledge sharing sessions both internally and externally to ensure our solution practices remain ahead of our industry's needs.

This investment allows us to maintain relevancy and enables us to help our customers compare and contrast the benefits that digital solutions will bring, whilst also understanding any gaps in supporting technology.

What is Sword's focus in 2022?

Today's technology landscape is complex and diverse. Sword recognises the importance of having the right skillsets across data, platforms, security, development, and change to deliver the types of solutions our customers need.

2022 is going to be all about building on strong data foundations and truly embedding digital into the business.

Organisations are starting to understand what digital transformation specifically means to them. It's going to be fascinating to see how they choose to mature their data-driven roadmaps and build on the digital solutions momentum driven by the COVID-19 pandemic.

