

Revolutionizing Digital Operations

An Interview with Eric Johnson, Chief Information Officer, PagerDuty, Inc.

EDITORS' NOTE *Eric Johnson joined PagerDuty from SurveyMonkey where he served as CIO for the past four years. At SurveyMonkey, Johnson was responsible for establishing a culture of technical excellence and business impact, and was functionally responsible for business systems, collaboration infrastructure, enterprise data and security. Previous to this, Johnson served as CIO and senior vice president at both DocuSign and Talend. He spent 12 years at Informatica driving the vision and strategy for global offshore support and delivery, and architecting the support required for the company's migration to a SaaS platform.*



Eric Johnson

COMPANY BRIEF *PagerDuty, Inc. (pagerduty.com) is a global leader in digital operations management. The PagerDuty Operations Cloud revolutionizes how critical work gets done, and powers the agility that drives digital transformation. Customers rely on the PagerDuty Operations Cloud to compress costs, accelerate productivity, win revenue, sustain seamless digital experiences, and earn customer trust. More than half of the Fortune 500 and more than two thirds of the Fortune 100 trust PagerDuty including Cisco, Cox Automotive, DoorDash, Electronic Arts, Genentech, Shopify, Zoom, and more.*

What excited you about the opportunity to join PagerDuty and made you feel it was the right fit?

I was excited to join PagerDuty because of its people, platform, and visionary approach to

disrupting the industry. Having served as a Chief Information Officer at four other organizations, I've learned a lot about the impact technology leaders can make when a company is willing and eager to embrace innovation. PagerDuty is one of those companies that has always been forward-looking and ready to use data and new strategies like automation to continually improve the product and drive more value for customers. The desire to experiment, learn and improve that defines the company is also very much a part of my leadership ethos.

How do you describe PagerDuty's culture and values?

Our mission at PagerDuty is to revolutionize operations and build customer trust by anticipating the unexpected in an unpredictable world. To achieve this, we've cultivated a culture where our people can rely on one another, bring their authentic selves, and have the support to innovate and fail forward. I firmly believe an organization's success hinges on its culture, and PagerDuty's industry leadership is in no small part due to the fact that we stay obsessively focused on the people who build and use our platform. No matter how hard you push to develop a great product, it's hard to be successful as a company in the long-term without a healthy work environment based on support, accountability, and execution.

Will you provide an overview of PagerDuty's services and capabilities?

PagerDuty's Operations Cloud is essential infrastructure for revolutionizing digital operations. We help scaling startups and Fortune 500

enterprises compete and succeed as modern digital businesses. Our technology uses AI and automation to detect and diagnose high-impact events, and mobilize the right team members to respond – improving efficiency and reducing unnecessary toil – with automated response workflows teams that can resolve incidents quickly with minimal downtime and focus on more complex challenges. PagerDuty goes beyond incident response by offering proactive capabilities for preventing disruptions through analytics and reporting, which allows organizations to address underlying problems before they escalate.

With more than 700 integrations across the software ecosystem, we help our customers modernize the way they operate by not only addressing the technology debt in their own ecosystem, but by being able to handle and manage unstructured, time sensitive and mission critical work.

What have been the keys to PagerDuty's industry leadership?

Our people-centric approach defines our success in the industry. We're constantly learning from users and partners to ensure our technology directly addresses the fast-evolving needs of the digital operations space. By developing a holistic platform solution with the PagerDuty Operations Cloud, we learn from every area of the business to not only solve challenges in the moment but predict and prevent issues, helping our customer win the future since 2009. Through my career I've learned data is the most important asset a company has, and we're in a position to use massive amounts of information from every kind of use case to continuously improve our offerings.

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How do you define the role of the CIO and what are the keys to being effective in the role?

The role of the CIO has become more important today than it's ever been before. I've witnessed three phases in the evolution of the CIO's remit during my career. In the beginning, technology leaders were relegated to put out the fires and fix tech when it broke. Then, as digital transformation turned from a pipe dream to an imperative, CIOs were invited as experts into more and more business conversations. Today, CIOs have the opportunity to strategically move entire organizations forward because of technology's role giving any business a competitive edge.

The key to being effective in this position is helping other leaders ask the right questions about digital initiatives and how they connect to business goals. For example, “How can we use tools to better identify new customers?” and “How can we find opportunities to expand our market share with new cutting-edge offerings?” The CIO has a unique opportunity to both lead these conversations and implement resulting initiatives.

What are the key questions executives need to ask when approaching enterprise AI, and how important is it to get organizational buy-in to leverage AI?

I am constantly asking my team how any given initiative ladders back to our business goals. It's the same with implementing AI. Every organization must do the work to determine which workflows will drive the business forward most effectively – whether that's automating incident response, augmenting developer productivity, building on marketing or content capacity – and start there. We're still in

the early stages of enterprise-wide AI deployment, so I urge leaders to consider where they can experiment with low risk to gather insights and learn quickly.

As a next step, it's critical to get buy-in from leaders across the organization to make new technology initiatives successful. Without a shared vision it will be very difficult to pilot and adopt innovation that sticks around long enough to deliver ROI for the business. Impactful deployment of AI also depends upon alignment of multiple functions like data management, security, and governance to ensure you're using the technology in a way that doesn't incur risks to company information or brand reputation.

How critical is it for PagerDuty to build a diverse and inclusive workforce to bring diverse perspectives and experience to the table when addressing client needs?

Our team understands that the best ideas and innovations come from teams with diverse backgrounds and experiences. From the beginning, PagerDuty has prioritized building a diverse board, leadership team, and employee base to ensure we're taking into account a spectrum of perspectives, experiences, and problem-solving approaches.

As our CEO Jennifer Tejada says, diversity and inclusive leadership is a business imperative, not just an ethical imperative. Putting this into practice means developing a programmatic focus on inclusion, diversity, and equity with consistent funding and company-wide buy-in. This enables us not only to better engage and retain our employees and partners, but allows us to create more useful, user-friendly products and achieve a better understanding of the customer ecosystem we serve.

What do you see as the responsibility that leading companies have to being engaged in the communities they serve and to be a force for good in society?

Leading companies, particularly in the technology industry, have an opportunity to use innovative frameworks to solve the complex issues we face as a society. I'm proud to lead within a company that prioritizes positive systemic change through and beyond our everyday operations.

At PagerDuty that looks like applying a “levers of change” approach to serve all our stakeholders: our employees, customers, communities, investors, and the planet. The levers we've identified to affect change include our products, philanthropic funding, employee expertise, and responsible business practices. I think it's important to identify the ways any given organization can maximize its impact by serving the community in a way that aligns with the strengths of the business. For example, last year PagerDuty donated \$1.25 million in our two portfolio areas of Time-Critical Health and Climate Equity and established Impact Pricing on our platform to support the important work of nonprofits and B Corps.

What advice do you offer to young people beginning their careers?

Some of the best advice I've received in my career is to not just focus on the result, but how you get the results. Process is important. We spend a lot of time in the technology world finding ways to streamline and create efficiency, but there are some parts of work and life where you can't take shortcuts. Building relationships is a good example. Spending time getting to know your team and identifying mentors is a crucial investment for a fulfilling and successful professional journey. ●

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