



Digital Innovation Insights Summit

Boston, 3 - 4 March 2025

Insight Report from the Main Stage

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Digital Innovation Insights 2025

Leading with Innovation in a Hyperconnected World.

Our first Digital Innovation Summit of 2025 in Boston welcomed leaders from across the tech industry to discuss how they continue to innovate in this digital age. Attendees were given deeper insights into the challenges they face and opportunities available to them.

We were treated to in-depth knowledge of adaptive platforms and how to navigate digital ecosystems.

If you were unable to join us or want a reminder of the topics covered over the two days, our Insight Report has got you covered.



Building and Keeping Great Teams in a World of Accelerating Change

Speaker



Ann Dunkin

Former Chief Information Officer, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)

Summary

During her Keynote speech, Anne homed in on the need to constantly adapt in order to stay ahead of the curve. One of her strongest arguments was that this world is now digital first, and how people engage with technology is more important than relying on technology as a cure all.

Key Takeaways

The world is digital first and this shows no signs of slowing down

This requires organizations to be prepared to provide a great experience for both customers and employees to be successful.

Technology is a non-negotiable

In the hybrid working world, and organizations need to invest in making it work to keep associates engaged. However, technology is not the sole solution; how people engage with technology is more important.

Organizations should avoid the fallacy that new challenges require completely new solutions

Instead focus on doing what they already know works, but with more intention and ensuring it's not stale.



The adoption curves just continue to accelerate. Change is coming at you, your teams and your customers faster than ever.

Ann Dunkin

Former Chief Information Officer, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)

Descriptive to Predictive

Speakers



Alisha Outridge
Chief Technology & Product
Officer, Byte & Chord



Russell Hanson
Chief Innovation Officer,
Sama Therapeutics

Summary

As organizations accumulate more data, the shift from descriptive to predictive analytics is inevitable. But are businesses ready to leverage this transition? Gartner predicts that by 2025, 90% of BI initiatives will incorporate predictive analytics capabilities.

This panel examined the evolving role of business intelligence and explore best practices for leveraging predictive insights – allowing for more-informed decision-making.

Key Takeaways

Understanding the shift

Explore the differences between descriptive and predictive analytics, and how businesses can use predictive insights to transition from reactive to proactive decision-making.

Practical strategies for success

Discover strategies for overcoming common predictive analytics challenges, as well as how to effectively scale its use across the organization.



I've actually found that the most junior people on my team have such amazing insights to figure out things in this new ecosystem.

Alisha Outridge

Chief Technology & Product Officer, Byte & Chord



Boundless

Business Success in an AI-First Economy

Speaker



Vala Afshar

Chief Digital Evangelist,
Salesforce

Summary

Boundless is a transformative approach for businesses to succeed in the AI age, outlining seven core principles to breakdown organizational silos. By mapping these principles to emerging technologies, businesses can create a resilient, adaptive and autonomous organizations.

Key Takeaways

Focus on customer value

The ultimate goal of adopting an anti-silo mindset, according to Afshar, is to become a “customer company”. This requires deliberate connections, integration (choreography over orchestration), and distribution, principles that are hampered by silos.

Shift from “cook” to “chef” mentality

Overcoming silos encourages a shift from operating like a “cook” who follows recipes to a “chef” who understands first principles and can adapt to new situations.

Increased data utilization

An anti-silo mindset ensures that data is accessible, clean, and affordable, like water, which is essential for leveraging the AI revolution.



Without knowledge, you can't reach wisdom, and without wisdom, you can't have positive impact.

Vala Afshar

Chief Digital Evangelist, Salesforce



Sparking Innovation Within Your Organization

Speaker



Ramon Baez

Vice President AI Innovation, Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits

Summary

Ramon made quite the impression when discussing ways companies can innovate its core by embracing new technologies and using AI-driven data to assist with critical thinking.

Ramon said that AI will help drive continuous learning within an organization, as well as collaboration.

Key Takeaways

Pave the way for innovation

Innovation involves creating new ideas, products, or methods to improve and solve problems.

Upskill your team to prepare them for AI

Preparing for an AI-driven future requires developing new skills like prompt engineering and critical thinking.

Be open to cultural shifts

Embracing AI necessitates a cultural shift towards openness, continuous learning, and collaboration.

Make strategic bets

Organizations should focus on strategic bets like business process reinvention and partnership strategies.



The human is always important to be in the loop, always. We are not trying to remove anyone or automate it. Actually, we are doing the opposite with all this. We are ensuring that the right people are present at key points as gate phases, phase gates, even during the process.

Ramon Baez

Vice President AI Innovation, Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits

From Data to Dialogue

How Responsible AI Applications Drive Organizational Innovation

Speaker



Bobby Bahov

AI Capability Lead,
Tietoevry

Summary

Bobby unpacked how organizations can harness AI to drive innovation responsibly, even when ethical risks are hard to spot. He then looked at real-world instances of biases, privacy issues, and other pitfalls in AI development, illustrating why unethical and unsafe practices often go unnoticed—even by seasoned professionals. Bobby also explored new ways for managing AI projects ensuring compliance with regulations and ethical practices.

Key Takeaways

AI enhances, not replaces

It should support human creativity rather than take over decision-making.

Define the problem first

Successful AI adoption starts with identifying clear business goals.

Process readiness is critical

AI won't fix inefficient workflows—companies must have strong foundations first.

Test & scale gradually

Small AI-driven improvements (e.g. content automation, translations) pave the way for larger initiatives.



We define responsible AI as ethical, safe, secure, and compliant with regulation.

Bobby Bahov

AI Capability Lead, Tietoevry

How to Revolutionize End User Expectation and Stay Competitive



Speaker



Dr. Denise Turley

AI Strategist, Educator
& Advocate for Human-Centered Innovation

Summary

While acknowledging the potential benefits of AI, such as enhanced accessibility and efficiency, Dr Turley's presentation also highlighted the significant challenges in implementing and scaling AI, including data collection, privacy concerns, transparency, bias, and the need for organizational readiness. Ultimately, Dr Turley urged businesses to recognize the urgency of this transformation and to start taking concrete steps to adapt to the future of customer engagement.

Key Takeaways

Hyper-personalization is the future of customer engagement

Customers are no longer satisfied with generic offerings and expect businesses to anticipate their specific needs and preferences. This shift, driven by increasing convenience and technological advancements, means organizations must move beyond basic personalization to deliver truly hyper-personalized interactions or risk falling behind.

Generative AI is a powerful tool for enabling hyper-personalization

AI, and particularly generative AI, offers the potential to analyze vast amounts of data and deliver highly customized experiences at scale. However, the successful adoption of AI for hyper-personalization is not straightforward.

Proactive adaptation and a willingness to challenge existing business models are crucial for survival

Organizations must recognize that their current strengths and business models may become liabilities if they fail to innovate and adapt to the changing landscape of customer expectations and AI capabilities.



I really think that as we start getting more used to convenience, more and more used to speed, more and more used to personalization and customization, I think we're going to start demanding it really quickly.

Dr. Denise Turley

AI Strategist, Educator & Advocate for Human-Centered Innovation



Building an Innovation Culture

Is Your Organization Ready for Change?

Speakers



Lucas Hendrich

Chief Technology Officer,
Forte Group



Kara Chiles

SVP, Media Product, Gannett
| USA TODAY NETWORK



Tope Sadiku

Global Director Organization
Effectiveness Design,
McDonald's

Key Takeaways

Leadership's role in driving change

Leaders champion innovation, embed it into the company's values, and create an environment that strives for continuous improvement.

Understanding cultural alignment

It's of utmost importance that companies prioritize aligning organizational culture with innovation goals, and foster a supportive culture which drives growth and success.

Overcoming resistance to change

Discover effective change management strategies to address cultural resistance and ensure successful adoption of new processes and technologies.

Summary

The three panelists engaged in a thought-provoking discussion about what it really means to foster an innovative environment within your organization. It's understood that CEOs recognize innovation as they key to growth, so management strategies, embracing a proactive culture, and bridging the gap between ambition and execution were all under the spotlight.



Having a multidisciplinary outlook where you're mixing from different domains is going to enable a lot of growth and innovation with technology.

Lucas Hendrich

Chief Technology Officer, Forte Group



Fostering Adaptability and Growth with GenAI

Speaker

Attending Executive

Summary

From redefining processes to enabling breakthrough advancements, this discussion highlighted practical approaches to harnessing AI's potential. The conversation also focused on how organizations can cultivate a culture of innovation that supports sustainable growth, fosters adaptability, and ensures successful integration of AI-driven solutions.

Key Takeaways

The future of AI in healthcare holds promise for significant advancements in areas like drug discovery and personalized medicine

Personalized learning recommendations for employees based on AI analysis of their skills and training progress also demonstrate potential applications beyond direct patient care.

Generative AI is being applied to enhance efficiency and creativity across various sectors, including healthcare and supply chain

In supply chain, generative AI can proactively identify potential adverse events and financial risks across multiple tiers of suppliers, enabling timely intervention.

Fostering a culture of innovation for generative AI requires dedicated structures, budgets, and a focus on use case prioritization

Organizations can establish global and regional innovation teams with separate budgets to drive initiatives.



In generative AI, what we are doing is any company which gets onboarded, we vet them very carefully.

Attending Executive



Adaptive by Design

Creating Multi-Device Experiences That Flow

Speaker



Tony Figola

Principal Product Strategist,
Very Good Ventures

Summary

Tony used his workshop to explore how to rapidly design and prototype AI-powered experiences that seamlessly connect customers and employees across multiple devices and physical environments. He continued to dive into the biggest challenges teams face in delivering these cross-device experiences—such as fragmentation, inconsistent interactions, and scalability—and highlight the most effective strategies and emerging best practices that are driving real value.

Key Takeaways

Adopting cross-platform development frameworks and leveraging generative AI are crucial for overcoming the challenges of multi-device development

Cross-platform frameworks offer the potential for a single codebase deployable across multiple devices, reducing redundancy and complexity, accelerating development through tools like hot reload, and ultimately leading to faster time to market and easier scaling of features.

A fundamental shift towards user journey-centric teams and unified backend systems is necessary to deliver truly seamless multi-device experiences

Creating a unified design system and slimming down marketing tech stacks and customer data are also important steps in enabling effective multi-device experiences and data-driven personalization.

The multi-device world is here and requires a paradigm shift in how products are developed

The ability of product teams to deliver seamless experiences has lagged behind the proliferation of devices, making it a problem for product teams to fix, not consumers.



Organizational complexity is a drag on your business. It's a drag on your ability to move quickly and respond to market conditions.

Tony Figola

Principal Product Strategist, Very Good Ventures



The Importance of Small Actions and Enabling Success Through Authenticity

Speaker



Marty van Zwietering

SVP Business Banking Technology, M&T Bank

Summary

Marty's presentation emphasized practical strategies and methodologies for improving business operations, centered around key tenants like customer experience, learning and development, and understanding different facets of success. Marty argued that companies should identify their core strengths and differentiate in those areas, rather than trying to excel at everything.

Key Takeaways

Identify and focus on key facets for differentiation

Companies should candidly assess their strengths and weaknesses across various operational facets (e.g., customer experience, product innovation) and concentrate their energy and resources on the areas where they can truly excel and differentiate themselves.

Strategically decide between building and buying

Operational innovation involves making informed decisions about whether to build proprietary solutions for differentiation or to license/outsourcing existing solutions to achieve acceptable levels of functionality.

Embrace iteration for continuous improvement and risk management

A key to successful operational innovation is an iterative approach, where value is delivered in stages, allowing for continuous feedback and improvement.



Empowering our customers is important, and by empowering them, we allow them to make better choices. In doing so, we gain authority and trust.

Marty van Zwietering

SVP Business Banking Technology, M&T Bank

The Digital Innovation Insight Summit has given leaders a headstart for the coming year.

Our community explored the innovative ways AI, multi-device experiences, and adaptability can transform your organization. By strategically reshaping your priorities and approach towards your consumer base, you'll be able to push the envelope and continue to carve a path in the digital future laid ahead.

But there's more where that came from. Our [insights](#), taking the form of blogs, infographics, and virtual roundtables, open up a world of

educational possibilities for our community of industry leaders. Insight is a beautiful thing!

Don't worry, this certainly won't be our last Digital Innovation Summit. In fact, if you want to reap the benefits of our network of industry leaders, register your interest for our upcoming summit.

[Register your interest here](#)

See you next time!