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ROUNDTABLE PODCAST SERIES – EPISODE TWO

SPECIAL REPORT

How Can AI Innovation Ecosystems Be Effectively Translated into Scalable Enterprise Deployment?

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VIEWS YOU CAN USE

Anil Kumar P N
SVP – Service Offering Head, Infosys

From Pilots to Scalable Enterprise AI

Artificial intelligence is now moving decisively beyond pilot phases into full-scale enterprise deployment. After a period dominated by proofs of concept, organizations are beginning to implement AI across core business functions, driven by the convergence of generative and agentic AI capabilities. This shift marks a critical inflection point, where AI is no longer just about insights, but about enabling actionable outcomes and real-time decision-making.

A key enabler of this transition is context-driven AI. By embedding enterprise knowledge into AI systems, organizations can accelerate implementation and improve decision accuracy across operations. This is particularly evident in legacy modernization, where AI is significantly reducing timelines and costs associated with transforming outdated systems.

Building for Flexibility and Measurable Value

To sustain this momentum, enterprises must build flexible AI architectures. Avoiding dependency on specific models or platforms is essential, as the pace of innovation continues to accelerate. Organizations should adopt abstraction layers and scalable infrastructure to remain adaptable in a rapidly evolving environment.

Equally important is the ability to measure value. Traditional metrics such as productivity gains, cost savings, and revenue impact remain central, but must be supported by consistent benchmarking and performance tracking. Without this, organizations risk failing to demonstrate tangible returns.

Ultimately, successful AI deployment requires a balance between innovation and discipline. Enterprises that combine scalable infrastructure, responsible AI governance, and clear value measurement will be best positioned to translate AI investment into long-term competitive advantage. ■

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TOP 9 TAKEAWAYS

SCALING AI FROM PILOT TO ENTERPRISE

Anil Kumar P N
SVP – Service Offering Head, Infosys

1. AI is no longer about efficiency alone; it is becoming a core driver of diversification, enabling new industries, accelerating innovation, and supporting Saudi Arabia's transition toward a sustainable, knowledge-based economy.

2. The shift to agentic AI is enabling actionable outcomes, transforming AI from insight generation into execution and accelerating enterprise-wide adoption.

3. Context-driven AI is unlocking value by enabling systems to understand enterprise knowledge, improving decision-making speed and accuracy

4. Legacy modernization is a key driver of AI adoption, significantly reducing time, cost, and complexity in transforming outdated systems.

5. AI value is measured through productivity gains, cost savings, revenue growth, and improved customer outcomes, aligning with traditional business metrics.

6. Organizations must remain model-agnostic, building flexible architectures that allow switching between AI models as technology evolves.

7. Scalable deployment requires adaptable infrastructure, ensuring AI systems are not tied to specific platforms or runtime environments.

8. Responsible AI frameworks and governance must be embedded early to ensure trust, compliance, and long-term sustainability.

9. Benchmarking current performance is essential to demonstrate AI value, enabling organizations to track improvements and justify investment.

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"Saudi Arabia's AI research is now comparable to the US, with the next phase driven by stronger collaboration between academia and startup ecosystems."

Anil Kumar P N
SVP – Service Offering Head, Infosys

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SOUNDINGS

"The power of AI to transform businesses is enormous, and we are now seeing enterprises move beyond pilots into real applications across industries, delivering meaningful value at scale."

Anil Kumar P N
SVP – Service Offering Head, Infosys

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Dr. Chris Cooper
Board Director & Advisor, AI & Technology Companies

Aligning AI with Business Value

Artificial intelligence must be grounded in business reality. While investment in AI has surged, organizations must ensure that deployment is aligned with clear business challenges and measurable outcomes. Without this alignment, AI risks becoming an expensive exercise with limited impact.

Leadership plays a central role in this process. Successful AI adoption requires a top-down approach, where leaders set direction, drive accountability, and ensure that AI initiatives are integrated into broader business strategies. This includes addressing workforce concerns and fostering a culture that embraces technological change.

Governance, Accountability, and Scalable Deployment

As AI systems become more complex, governance and accountability become increasingly important. Organizations must establish clear frameworks to manage data, ensure compliance, and mitigate risks associated with AI deployment.

At the same time, cost structures are evolving. The rise of agentic AI introduces ongoing operational expenses, requiring organizations to carefully manage resources and ensure sustainable investment.

Education and workforce engagement are also critical. By equipping employees with the knowledge and tools to leverage AI effectively, organizations can accelerate adoption and maximize value.

Ultimately, the regions that succeed will be those that combine strong leadership, clear governance, and strategic alignment. In this context, the Middle East is well positioned to lead, with integrated ecosystems and a clear focus on innovation-driven growth. ■

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TOP 9 TAKEAWAYS

ALIGNING AI WITH BUSINESS VALUE AND EXECUTION

Dr. Chris Cooper
Board Director & Advisor, AI & Technology Companies

1. AI must be aligned with clear business challenges, ensuring deployment focuses on solving real problems and delivering measurable value.

2. Leadership plays a critical role in driving AI adoption, setting direction and ensuring organizational alignment.

3. AI adoption requires a mindset shift, with organizations embracing new ways of working and decision-making.

4. Measuring ROI is essential, with AI investments needing to demonstrate clear impact on business performance.

5. The cost of AI is evolving, particularly with agentic systems requiring continuous resources and operational investment.

6. Education and workforce engagement are key to successful deployment, enabling teams to understand and utilize AI effectively.

7. Governance, accountability, and compliance are critical to managing risks associated with AI and data usage.

8. Strong collaboration between academia and industry accelerates AI deployment and enhances innovation outcomes.

9. The Middle East is well positioned to lead in AI adoption, supported by strong leadership, investment, and integrated ecosystems.


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"Governance and accountability are essential to managing risks and ensuring responsible AI deployment."
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Board Director & Advisor,
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Microsoft
GI Publishing Intelligence Consultancy
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SOUNDINGS
"Governance, accountability, and compliance are critical, as organizations must manage risks associated with data usage and ensure responsible deployment of AI technologies."
Dr. Chris Cooper
Board Director & Advisor, AI & Technology Companies

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Dr. Morgan Eldred
Founder, Digital Energy

From Complexity to Clarity in AI Adoption

Artificial intelligence is following a familiar trajectory, with high expectations accompanied by significant failure rates. As with previous technology cycles, up to 70% of large-scale projects struggle to move beyond initial stages. The challenge lies not in the technology itself, but in translating complex capabilities into practical, understandable applications.

The tipping point for AI adoption occurs when solutions become simple and tangible. When executives and frontline workers can clearly see how AI improves their work—through intuitive, real-world use cases—adoption accelerates rapidly. This shift from abstract potential to practical value is critical in bridging the gap between experimentation and deployment.

Infrastructure, Communication, and Standardization

Structural factors also play a defining role. Legacy infrastructure continues to limit AI scalability in mature markets, while regions such as the Middle East benefit from modern systems that enable faster deployment. This creates a significant competitive advantage in adopting next-generation technologies.

However, technology alone is not enough. Effective communication and market positioning are essential to drive adoption. AI must be clearly articulated and understood across organizations to unlock investment and engagement.

Looking ahead, standardization will become increasingly important. As AI systems scale, common frameworks and governance structures will be required to ensure trust, interoperability, and consistent performance across industries. ■

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TOP 9 TAKEAWAYS

FROM HYPE TO PRACTICAL AI DEPLOYMENT

Dr. Morgan Eldred
Founder, Digital Energy

1. AI adoption follows historical technology cycles, with a high failure rate as organizations struggle to move from experimentation to scalable deployment.

2. Simple, tangible use cases are critical to driving adoption, enabling executives and frontline workers to clearly understand AI's value.

3. The tipping point for AI comes when solutions become accessible, practical, and directly applicable to real-world business challenges.

4. User understanding is essential, as widespread adoption depends on translating complex AI concepts into clear, actionable outcomes.

5. The gap between academia and industry remains a major barrier, with many innovations failing to transition into practical applications.

6. Legacy infrastructure continues to limit AI scalability, particularly in mature markets with outdated systems and complex integration challenges.

7. The Middle East holds a structural advantage, with modern infrastructure enabling faster and more efficient AI deployment.

8. Effective communication and marketing are essential to drive AI adoption, ensuring stakeholders understand and invest in its potential.

9. Standardization will be the next phase of AI evolution, creating common frameworks to support scalable and trusted deployment globally.

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"Standardization will be critical as AI scales, ensuring consistency, trust, and governance across industries."

Dr. Morgan Eldred
Founder, Digital Energy

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"The Middle East has a significant advantage with new infrastructure, allowing faster adoption of emerging technologies compared to regions burdened by legacy systems."

Dr. Morgan Eldred
Founder, Digital Energy

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VIEWS YOU CAN USE

Dr. Satyam Priyadarshy
Founder & CEO, Reignite Future, USA

From Proof of Concept to Proof of Value

The real challenge in AI adoption is not technological capability, but mindset. Organizations have spent years focusing on pilots and proofs of concept, often limiting their ability to scale. The focus must now shift to proof of value—solving real business problems and delivering measurable outcomes. AI should be seen as a tool for optimization, automation, and innovation. Rather than waiting for perfect data or ideal conditions, organizations must work with what they have and continuously improve their systems. This pragmatic approach is essential to unlocking value at scale.

A key differentiator in this process is the ability to break down silos. Countries such as Saudi Arabia have demonstrated the benefits of integrated strategies, investing in talent development and aligning efforts across sectors to accelerate adoption.

Talent, Innovation, and Long-Term Value Creation

Talent remains the most critical constraint. The pace of technological change is outstripping the ability of education and training systems to keep up. Upskilling must evolve rapidly, focusing not only on technical skills but also on model management and decision-making frameworks.

Importantly, organizations must move beyond traditional ROI metrics. AI investment should be evaluated based on return on innovation—its ability to create long-term value, new capabilities, and competitive advantage.

Ultimately, success in AI will depend on collaboration. Building ecosystems that connect academia, industry, and talent will be essential to scaling innovation and ensuring sustainable impact. ■

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TOP 9 TAKEAWAYS

FROM PROOF OF VALUE TO SCALABLE IMPACT

Dr. Satyam Priyadarshy
Founder & CEO, Reignite Future, USA

1. Organizations must move beyond pilots and focus on proof of value, ensuring AI initiatives are aligned with real business challenges.

2. AI is fundamentally about optimizing operations, automating processes, and enabling innovation across industries.

3. Data limitations should not delay AI adoption, as value can be generated by working with available data and improving it over time.

4. Saudi Arabia's integrated approach to AI development is accelerating adoption by aligning talent, infrastructure, and strategy.

5. Organizational silos limit AI effectiveness, requiring a more holistic and integrated approach to deployment.

6. Return on innovation is more important than traditional ROI, focusing on long-term value creation rather than short-term gains.

7. Talent shortages remain a critical constraint, with skills development struggling to keep pace with technological change.

8. Upskilling must evolve rapidly, preparing the workforce for emerging technologies such as agentic AI and robotics.

9. Collaboration between academia, industry, and talent is essential to build scalable AI ecosystems and accelerate innovation.

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"Saudi Arabia is ahead by breaking down silos and investing in large-scale talent development to accelerate AI adoption across industries."

Dr. Satyam Priyadarshy
Founder & CEO,
Reignite Future, USA

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SOUNDINGS

"One of the biggest challenges globally is that talent is not being trained at the pace required to keep up with rapid technological advancements in AI."

Dr. Satyam Priyadarshy
Founder & CEO, Reignite Future, USA

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