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SESSION 4

RECOMMENDATIONS on How the Data Economy and Digital Infrastructure Drive Global Competitiveness in the AI Era

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SOUNDINGS

“Successful AI transformation should progress in phases, creating value, learning governance, standardizing data, and scaling infrastructure only after organizations demonstrate measurable business impact.”

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



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Commercialize Data Before Scaling AI

Dr. Satyam Priyadarshy
Founder & CEO, Reignite Future

The conversation around artificial intelligence often begins with infrastructure—larger data centres, more computing power and increasingly sophisticated AI models. Yet organizations risk making costly investments if they fail to answer one fundamental question first: how will AI create business value? Before expanding infrastructure, organizations should focus on commercializing their data. AI should enable new products, improve operations and unlock measurable growth rather than simply increasing technology expenditure. Infrastructure without a clear strategy for value creation can become a sunk cost rather than a competitive advantage.

Success requires shifting the conversation from return on investment to return on innovation. Organizations should adopt AI in phases, proving value through targeted use cases before scaling infrastructure and governance. This incremental approach allows businesses to learn, refine governance frameworks and develop standards as AI capabilities continue to evolve.

Every industry will follow a different path. Manufacturing, energy, healthcare and financial services each have unique operational challenges and data environments. Rather than applying one-size-fits-all solutions, organizations should build sector-specific approaches that reflect their commercial priorities while sharing lessons across industries.

The future of AI will belong to organizations that create value before they scale technology. Infrastructure remains essential, but it should follow innovation—not precede it. By commercializing data first and expanding AI capabilities in measured stages, businesses can achieve sustainable growth while building governance, trust and competitiveness alongside technological progress. ■

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“AI competitiveness begins with strong digital infrastructure. Without secure connectivity, scalable cloud environments, cybersecurity, and modern data platforms, organizations cannot successfully scale beyond pilot projects.”

Shayma Kurz
CEO & Founder, Digital Advice Consulting



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Build AI on Strong Digital Infrastructure

Shayma Kurz
CEO & Founder, Digital Advice Consulting

Artificial intelligence cannot deliver enterprise-wide value without the right digital foundations. While many organizations are eager to deploy AI tools, they often overlook the infrastructure required to support them at scale. Secure connectivity, scalable cloud environments, modern data platforms and robust cybersecurity are no longer optional technology investments—they are prerequisites for successful AI adoption.

Too many organizations attempt to implement AI before establishing the underlying architecture needed to support intelligent systems. This frequently results in pilot projects that fail to progress into enterprise-wide deployment. Infrastructure remains one of the strongest predictors of AI success because it enables organizations to securely process data, scale computing resources and integrate AI into everyday operations.

Cloud transformation is a critical part of this journey. Although migrating from on-premise systems requires significant upfront investment, the long-term benefits include greater flexibility, resilience and operational efficiency. As organizations mature, these investments create a platform capable of supporting continuous innovation while reducing long-term costs.

Infrastructure alone, however, is not enough. Once strong digital foundations are established, organizations must also create trusted data-sharing ecosystems that provide access to high-quality, secure and standardized information across business functions. AI can only generate reliable insights when it is powered by trusted data.

The organizations that will lead the AI economy will not simply adopt the latest AI models—they will first invest in the resilient digital infrastructure that allows innovation to scale with confidence, security and measurable business value. ■

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“Countries become globally competitive by combining innovation, creativity, trusted data, and high-performance digital ecosystems that enable organizations to consistently deliver better business outcomes.”

James McCallum
Executive Chairman of Xergy,
Professor of Energy, Strathclyde University



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Open Standards will Accelerate the AI Economy

James McCallum
Executive Chairman of Xergy,
Professor of Energy at Strathclyde University

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Saima Tariq Khan
Founder, OrionsFlow & Senior AI Advisor, Assessed Intelligence

“The Gulf is rapidly strengthening AI governance through modern privacy legislation and regulatory frameworks, creating greater confidence for organizations developing trusted digital ecosystems.”



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Trust Must Become AI's Foundation
Saima Tariq Khan
Founder, OrionsFlow & Senior AI Advisor, Assessed Intelligence

Artificial intelligence is often discussed in terms of computing power, infrastructure and algorithms. Yet its long-term success depends on something far less technical but far more important: trust. Without trust, organizations cannot build the collaborative data ecosystems needed to unlock AI's full potential. Trusted data-sharing is not simply a technology challenge—it is a governance challenge. Organizations must establish clear rules around consent, transparency, accountability and responsible data use so that individuals and institutions feel confident participating in AI-powered ecosystems. Data ecosystems are ultimately social ecosystems, built on the willingness of people to share information responsibly.

Governance should therefore be viewed as an essential part of digital infrastructure rather than a compliance exercise introduced after deployment. Just as highways require traffic rules to operate safely, digital infrastructure requires governance frameworks that define how data is collected, shared and protected. Without these foundations, even the most advanced AI systems risk undermining public confidence.

Governments, regulators and industry all have important roles to play in creating consistent frameworks that encourage innovation while protecting individuals. Encouragingly, countries across the Gulf are strengthening privacy regulations and AI governance, creating an environment where trusted innovation can flourish.

As AI adoption accelerates, organizations that embed transparency, accountability and trust into every stage of implementation will build stronger relationships with customers, employees and regulators. In the AI economy, trust is not simply an ethical principle—it is a strategic advantage that enables sustainable innovation and long-term competitiveness. ■

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RECOMMENDATIONS: How Can the Data Economy and Digital Infrastructure Drive Global Competitiveness in the AI Era?



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