AI summary

# AI Everywhere – Now What? Scaling Intelligence with Responsibility and ROI

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**AI Everywhere – Now What? Scaling Intelligence with Responsibility and ROI**

Wednesday, 20 May 2026

# Participants

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# Summary

The session explored the scaling of AI across industries, balancing innovation with responsibility, ROI, and governance. Speakers highlighted practical use cases, starting with code generation tools like GitHub Copilot, which enhanced developer productivity and reduced repetitive tasks. Horizontal applications like enterprise search and retrieval-augmented generation (RAG) were also discussed. Financial services were a key focus, with AI being applied to Know Your Customer (KYC), fraud detection, trade surveillance, and wealth management tasks. Multimodal models were noted for their ability to handle diverse data types, enabling tasks previously unachievable with traditional machine learning approaches.

The panellists debated measuring AI ROI, emphasising the challenge of assessing productivity gains beyond financial metrics. One speaker advocated for tracking operational efficiency, cost savings, and business uplift to prioritise resource allocation. Examples like fraud detection and intelligent document processing highlighted measurable impacts, but the speakers acknowledged intangible benefits like improved job satisfaction from automation. They argued that realising AI's value required rethinking operating models and processes, not merely focusing on isolated efficiency gains. Echoing past technological adoptions, they saw AI's potential to reshape work, though visibility into long-term outcomes remained limited.

Agentic AI, where language models operate autonomously with tools and data, emerged as a critical theme. The speakers acknowledged the risks of stochastic behaviour, inconsistent outputs, and governance challenges. They shared experiences of internal demand for agentic workflows, highlighting the excitement but also the risks of poorly regulated deployment. Governance mechanisms, such as tiered agent classifications and continuous evaluation systems, were proposed to ensure accountability and control. Panellists stressed the importance of human oversight, kill switches, and orchestration strategies to manage agentic systems effectively, while cautioning that governance frameworks were still evolving alongside AI capabilities.

Governance emerged as a pivotal topic, with speakers stressing the need for controls from design to production. They likened AI oversight to managing interns, requiring structured evaluations and role-based access. Examples included three lines of defence mechanisms, rigorous testing, and continuous monitoring to mitigate risks like data drift and hallucination. Some argued for smaller, task-specific models to reduce costs and hallucination risks. Regulatory compliance was another challenge, with companies adopting jurisdiction-specific frameworks or choosing the strictest global standards to harmonise practices. The concept of sovereign AI, ensuring control over AI supply chains and infrastructure, was emphasised as a future-proofing strategy.

Speakers reflected on production deployment challenges, including the need for robust strategies, data governance, and cross-market scalability. They noted early experimentation often remained siloed, with limited pathways to production. To scale AI effectively, organisations needed enterprise-wide frameworks and investments to align innovation with business goals. The need to democratise AI while respecting privacy and regulatory constraints was underscored. They also discussed tokenomics, emphasising cost-efficient processing of AI models. Panellists acknowledged that while existing IT infrastructures provided a foundation, AI demanded new operational models to achieve consistent and sustainable outcomes.

Looking ahead, the panellists anticipated significant transformations across industries, driven by agentic AI. They predicted a redesign of workflows and organisational structures around autonomous agents, enabling more personalised and efficient services. In insurance, for example, AI applications extended from health operations to personalised underwriting and customer care. The speakers viewed agents as central to closing the gap between AI's potential and its real-world impact, with broader implications for workforce adaptation and governance. They concluded with a call to embrace AI's potential responsibly, ensuring innovation aligned with ethical and operational standards.

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# Takeaways

## Balancing Innovation with Governance in AI Adoption

Participants underscored the critical importance of embedding governance and risk management into AI initiatives from the outset. They highlighted challenges such as regulatory compliance, model drift, and the need for continuous monitoring, noting that robust governance frameworks are essential for scaling AI responsibly.

## Agentic AI and Its Transformative Potential

The discussion explored the rise of agentic AI, where tools are given autonomy to make decisions, and its potential to reshape workflows and entire organisations. However, the speakers cautioned about risks such as lack of governance, unchecked autonomy, and ensuring human oversight in complex orchestration scenarios.

## Strategic Approaches to Scaling AI

Scaling AI successfully requires both a clear organisational strategy and alignment on business objectives. Speakers shared insights on transitioning from experimentation to production, addressing challenges like token costs, data governance, and ensuring AI delivers measurable ROI.

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