



HUMAN AI IS HERE

Artificial intelligence (AI) has been embraced by a vast majority of business leaders as a powerful force for building value—in terms of business returns and social impact. The research at the heart of this report—a survey of 305 global executives across multiple industries conducted by Forbes Insights, in collaboration with Accenture, Avanade and Microsoft—unveils the thinking and actions already firmly rooted around data and AI, and the rewards companies leading the charge are already seeing.

The analysis of the survey data, combined with insights from conversations with top thinkers and executives, reveals an awareness of the potential benefits of AI as well as the complexity of the challenges associated with unlocking them. Executives realize that fulfilling this potential requires the courage to reimagine the business and calls for a new approach to management and decision making.

Harnessing the potential of AI requires a persevering and visionary leadership based on three foundations: the democratization of data and AI, and weaving them into the fabric of the whole organization; striking the right balance of power in machine-human collaboration; and creating a sound ethical framework for the AI-driven enterprise.

A select group of companies—the AI Leaders—are displaying the most courage and foresight when reimagining their businesses, and as a result, are growing significantly more than companies that lag behind in AI adoption. Below are additional key findings from the research.

KEY FINDINGS

- **AI TECHNOLOGIES ARE GAINING TRACTION IN BUSINESS.** Almost every executive (92%) recognizes and evangelizes the value of a comprehensive AI strategy, but only half have a complete grasp of the technologies and their practical applications.
- **COMPANIES ARE BUILDING THE MUSCLE TO SHAPE SUCCESSFUL AI PROGRAMS AND CULTURE.** Eighty-five percent believe that senior executives are courageous in their willingness to devote resources for transformational change. And almost all (87%) believe that AI technologies are important in achieving their overall business objectives, with 52% saying they are highly important.
- **COMPANIES EMBRACING ANALYTICS AND AI HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE GROWTH THAN THOSE WHO LAG IN ADOPTION.** Almost all companies identified as AI Leaders in the survey experienced more than 10% growth in the past year (81%), compared with 36% of laggards. And just over half (51%) of AI Leaders realized more than 20% growth, something only 13% of laggards accomplished.
- **COMPANIES ARE STRIVING TO CREATE ROBUST CULTURES AROUND DATA AND ANALYTICS.** Thirty-six percent of companies say their digitization of data and adoption of analytics is extensive—and 45% say it is almost at that level. Sixty percent report having a strong culture around accurate and relevant data.
- **COMPANIES ASPIRE TO USE DATA EFFECTIVELY BUT ARE FACING HURDLES.** Only 47% say they have a solid data management process. Among the challenges: 51% have trouble integrating multiple sources of data, 49% struggle with prioritizing data, and 48% are challenged by determining the right data to collect.
- **ESTABLISHING ETHICAL FRAMEWORKS TO ADDRESS ISSUES SUCH AS BIAS AND PRIVACY IS AN EMERGING PRIORITY.** Fifty-two percent say that companies need to make data and analytics transparent and comprehensible to consumers and non-scientists, but only 33% of companies have done so. Forty-seven percent believe that AI systems should be built around humans.
- **NEW JOBS ARE EMERGING TO BUILD AND MANAGE HUMAN-FOCUSED AI SYSTEMS.** Counter to the perception that the labor market will suffer under AI, 45% say transparency analysts and explainability strategists are now needed to judge algorithm outputs. Fifty-eight percent say algorithm training and analysis are also needed to reduce bias, and a quarter believe that companies should hire ethicists.