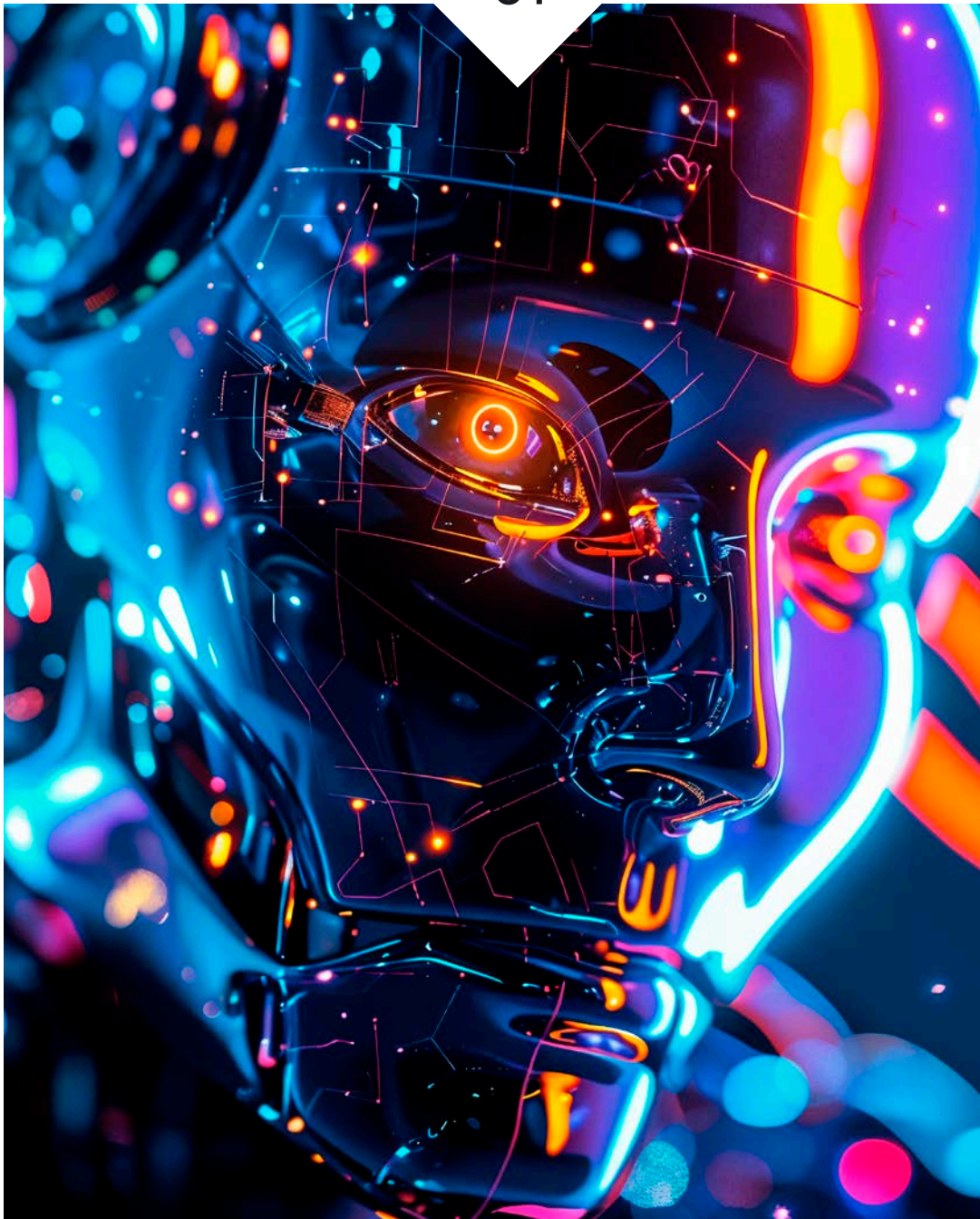# Fortified | Quarterly

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP IN THE AGE OF GENAI:
UNLOCKING BUSINESS POTENTIAL

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Welcome to the first issue of Fortified Quarterly!

We built Fortified Quarterly for leaders like you who are looking to strengthen your insights and knowledge in the ever-changing landscape of technology-enabled business transformation.

In our inaugural issue, we explore the Age of GenAI and how leaders can navigate the pitfalls and challenges of AI to start driving real impact for their organizations.
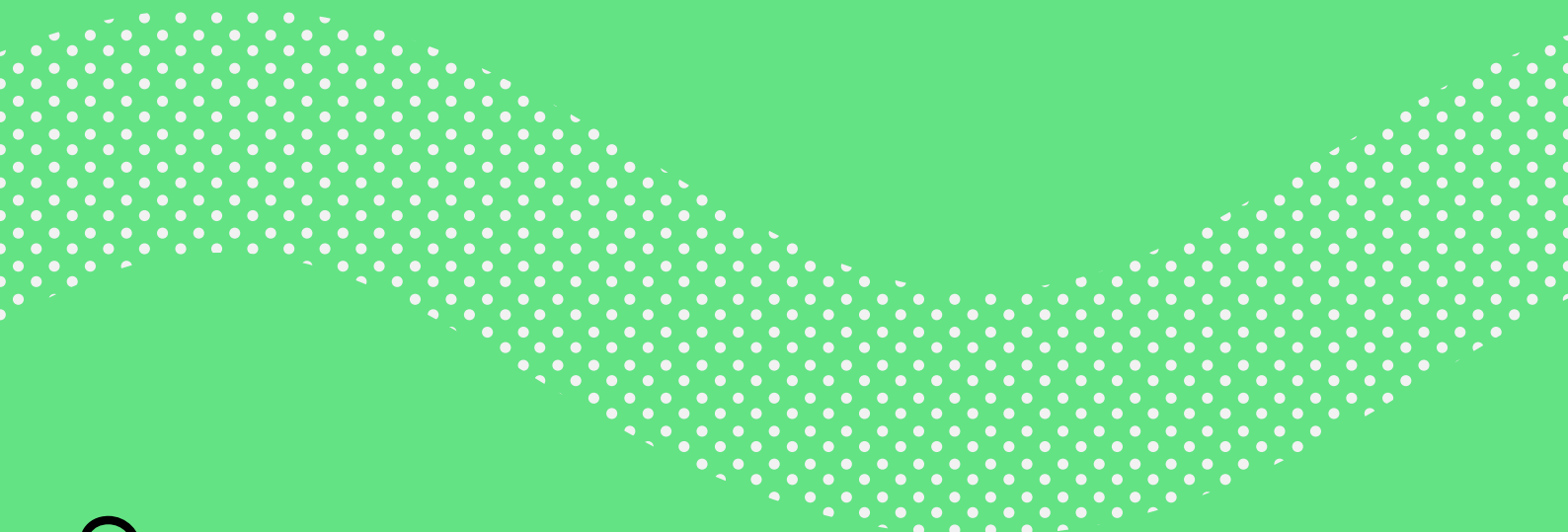
We would love to hear from you on whether you found this publication useful and any requests you have for future topics.

Thank you!

Stephanie Otto

Global Director Strategy & Innovation
Ondaro

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COVER STORY

The C-Suite's Guide to GenAI: Driving Innovation, Agility, and Growth

By Stephanie Otto, Global Director Strategy & Innovation, Ondaro

The imperative is clear. Generative AI has arrived, ushering in a transformative era for business leaders who must act decisively to harness its potential. The question is not whether to adopt GenAI, but how to strategically position your organization to lead in this new landscape.

McKinsey estimates GenAI will add between $2.6 trillion to $4.4 trillion annually to the global economy, underscoring the unprecedented economic opportunities at stake.

As GenAI accelerates digital transformation across industries, including government, nonprofit, healthcare, financial services, manufacturing, and more, forward-thinking executives are recognizing the strategic advantage of GenAI, not as a technology or standalone tool, but as a catalyst for innovation and as a core business strategy.

In 2024, we saw companies transition from experimentation with GenAI to full-scale implementation; we expect 2025 to be the year AI at work gets very real.

According to a global survey of executives conducted by Oxford Economics and ServiceNow, more than one-third of executives (38%) say they uncovered automation opportunities and are working to link AI objectives to their enterprise goals; 32% are operationalizing AI to drive business objectives; and 18% are leveraging the full transformational power of AI.

WHILE AI IS STILL IN ITS EARLY STAGES, THIS SHIFT FROM THEORY TO REALITY HAS SPARKED A NEW WAVE OF EXECUTIVE-LEVEL QUESTIONS:

1 How can we direct GenAI's potential to solve critical business challenges and unlock new opportunities for our company, our customers and our employees?

2 How do we connect disparate systems with data and automation to ensure maximum impact?

3 And most importantly, how do we get started?

There's no better time to dive in than now. GenAI has already shown its ability to increase back-office efficiency, improve customer experience and accelerate innovation. With so much still in progress, nothing is more important than executive leadership to ensure you don't fall behind.

IDENTIFYING YOUR ORGANIZATION'S CURRENT STATE CAN HELP GUIDE DECISION-MAKING:

Lagging   You have not started leveraging GenAI yet; while we are still in early stages, you will need to follow fast.

Middle   You are experimenting with incremental improvements on what you are currently doing, but perhaps not investing the time and effort to imagine new possibilities.

Pacesetting   You are demonstrating the path forward by leveraging GenAI as a catalyst for business transformation and are pulling away from the pack by reimagining the possibilities.

According to the Oxford ServiceNow survey, "Pacesetters are much more likely to have invented workflows across business functions where human and AI collaboration make work more efficient (54% vs. 12% others). They have made significant progress toward connecting data and removing operational silos (60% vs. 41%)—a key step toward their stated goal of accelerating innovation (55% vs. 31% others). Unlocking the predictive power of AI puts Pacesetters on a path to realizing business value.

81% *of respondents say the C-suite is actively engaged in AI efforts.*

Source: Impact AI: Enterprise AI Maturity Index (2024)
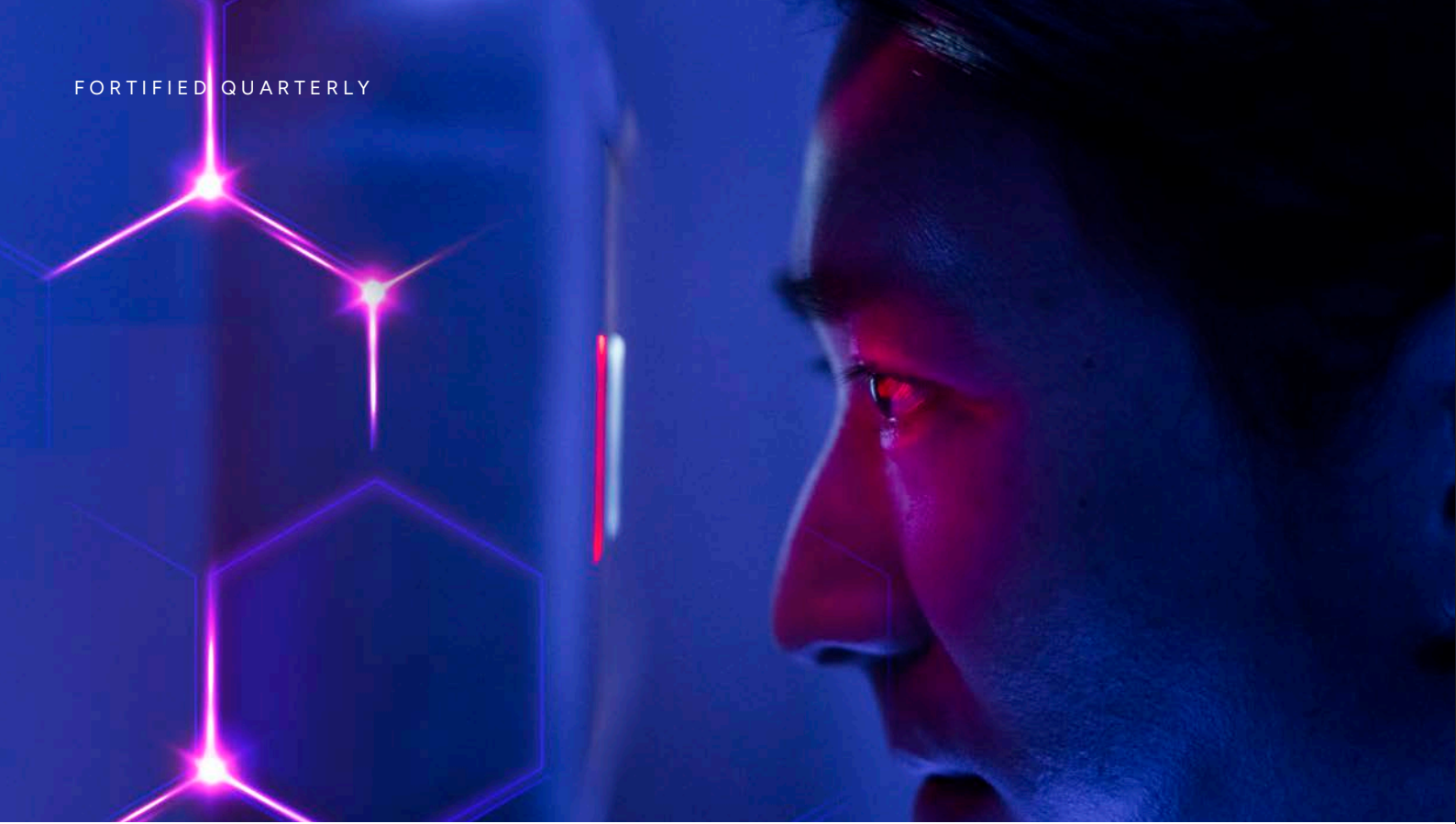
Clarify your vision and digital maturity

The role of the C-suite is to take the lead in integrating GenAI and guide adoption through a highly transparent and purpose-driven, strategic approach. This requires a clear vision that leverages your organization's unique capabilities, while addressing its specific challenges.

The vision must be top down, inspire an enterprise-wide commitment, and focus on solving business challenges that are aligned around shared objectives.

Executives must also evaluate their organization's digital maturity to connect GenAI initiatives to broader transformation efforts. This includes assessing the current state of your data, level of automation, intelligent workflows, investment in AI, and governance to identify gaps that may hinder progress.

Some companies may need to close gaps by investing in foundational infrastructure or end-to-end automation,

improving data quality, and/or breaking down organizational silos in order to unlock GenAI's potential. For others, establishing robust governance frameworks to ensure transparency, ethical use, and regulatory compliance may be necessary. Each decision should reflect your company's unique readiness, ambition, and maturity level in the GenAI era.

In addition, it's important to properly plan and research use cases across the organization, and identify the personas that will be impacted; otherwise, your GenAI efforts may be wasted. That is why as decision-makers, your role is to establish a business-led roadmap that is sequenced in a way to provide the most meaningful impact to get you the outcomes you need, while accelerating innovation and safeguarding the organization's long-term interests.

Develop a holistic plan

Executives must resist the temptation to deploy GenAI without a comprehensive strategy. Treating GenAI as a plug-and-play solution risks underutilization, inefficiencies, and potential misalignment with organizational goals. A successful approach demands accountability, engagement, and governance at every level, beginning with the C-suite.

Leadership must ensure that GenAI initiatives are integrated across people, processes, and technology to drive sustainable value and end-to-end business transformation.

People

Put people first so they are at the center of everything you do. Digital Transformation is about people more than anything else and you need to ensure you have the right talent with the right skills to future-proof your organization. That is why it's critical to upskill and reskill employees to unlock their potential, ensure that they are capable of contributing to your organizational goals, and thrive in this highly dynamic environment.

Processes

Put experiences at the heart of change; it's about making lives easier. The more you automate and modernize manual, legacy processes and integrate external systems, the more value you will receive.

Technology

Take a holistic view at what you can achieve with technology to supercharge everything you do and get the results you need.

GenAI is creating a once-in-a-generation opportunity to completely reimagine the future of work! It will materially impact every industry and every aspect of organizations. It also provides an unprecedented opportunity to completely reimagine business processes, enhance organizational agility, and drive long-term growth. Today, you can innovate faster and deliver exceptional products, services, and experiences far beyond what was ever

47% *of executives cite "an unclear roadmap and investment priorities" as a reason for ambivalence or dissatisfaction with their organization's progress on AI and GenAI.*

Source: BCG, From Potential to Profit with GenAI (Jan. 2024)

KEY CONSIDERATIONS OF A HOLISTIC PLAN INCLUDE:

Key Considerations	Approach
Strategy, Vision & Roadmap	True transformation with GenAI demands a clear strategy and a comprehensive business-led roadmap that integrates GenAI, automation, data, and governance to completely reimagine the way you achieve business outcomes and define what's possible in the future.
Leadership Commitment	End-to-end business transformation requires leaders to have vision, courage, knowledge, and an unwavering commitment to align the organization for success, while engaging and empowering people at every level.
Strong Governance	In order to be effective and ensure continuous improvement, GenAI, data, automation, and the ServiceNow platform need to be managed responsibly, effectively, and securely. Transparency and accountability should be high priorities.
Innovation Mindset	Embracing an innovation-first and AI-first mindset are essential for driving business transformation. You need to think bigger, bolder, and broader than ever before. Seek out individuals with unique perspectives who can envision the art of the possible, as maintaining the status quo will prohibit success.
Human Oversight	During times of significant change, it's important to emphasize the symbiotic relationship between humans and machines and put people in the center of everything you do. GenAI innovation needs to be a human-led process to ensure the accuracy and quality of content, while guiding development and creativity. Human skills like innovation, creativity, critical thinking, and empathy are essential to realizing AI's full potential.
Organizational Change Management	Successful GenAI adoption requires education, training, enablement, and communications to ensure the right people have the necessary skills to contribute to the organizational goals and thrive in this highly dynamic environment. It's also important to create a narrative that communicates what the future of work means for your workforce, so they feel empowered and not threatened.
Automation & Agility	Most organizations still rely heavily on legacy, manual processes that prohibit forward progression and limit your ability to achieve results. You need the right foundation in place to enable automation — and make continuous, incremental improvements so you don't fall behind.

The Time is Now!

GenAI has accelerated the need for change and is enabling world-class organizations a unique opportunity to reinvent, reimagine, and reprioritize everything they do in order to achieve unimaginable growth, productivity, and agility.

Commitment from the top down

We have entered the Intelligent Age, where AI (specifically GenAI) is growing at an unprecedented rate; it is not a passing trend, but a fundamental shift in how businesses will operate. GenAI will reshape the future of business, advance human civilization, and impact our personal lives.

Modernizing your organization for the era of Generative AI requires bold, large-scale investments—not just in technology, but in organizational strategy and cultural alignment. The executive team must take a unified and accountable stance, ensuring the GenAI strategy is seamlessly integrated with the company's broader transformation agenda. Early buy-in from leadership is non-negotiable; it sets the tone for the enterprise, aligns expectations, and directly influences the success of these initiatives as it sets in motion a flywheel of digital change.
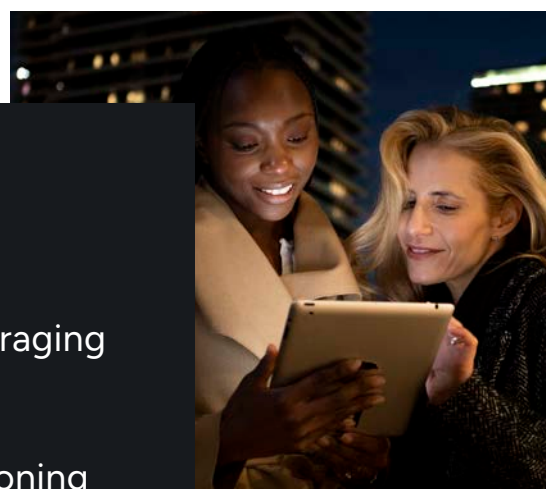
How is GenAI impacting the direction of organizations?

72% of senior business leaders are leveraging GenAI in decision-making

52% say it's shaping competitive positioning

47% cite new revenue opportunities opening up

True transformation extends beyond technological change—it requires a cultural evolution. Executive leaders must champion this shift by articulating the strategic vision, fostering trust, and providing the resources needed to succeed. This includes prioritizing employee engagement, upskilling programs, and clear communications about the goals and benefits of digital initiatives.

The opportunity is immense. A well-executed, long-term GenAI strategy can catalyze innovation, unlock new growth potential, and position your organization as a leader in an increasingly competitive landscape. Now is the time to lead decisively and set your enterprise on the path to lasting success.

10 key areas where GenAI can drive transformative change

Increase Workforce Productivity

GenAI excels in automating both routine and complex tasks, generating documents, developing applications, and improving experiences. Reducing the manual workload enables employees to pivot towards high-impact, strategic projects that drive innovation and customer engagement.

Deliver Hyper-Personalized Experiences

GenAI's ability to interpret context, sentiment, and intent allows for deeply personalized and meaningful customer interactions. These highly tailored experiences foster loyalty, improve employee and customer satisfaction, and lead to competitive

Accelerate Innovation Across Industries

GenAI is accelerating research, development, and automation across industries, from Healthcare and Finance to Education and Manufacturing. The result is faster breakthroughs and transformative advancements that are fueling growth, and empowering organizations to outpace competitors.

Revolutionize Data & Analytics

GenAI's ability to process and analyze massive datasets in real-time equips executives with actionable insights to make faster, data-driven decisions. This enables more agile and strategic responses to dynamic market conditions.

Augment the workforce

GenAI enhances cross-functional productivity by enabling employees to generate content, business processes, development code, and to ideate faster. This creates a more agile and innovative workforce capable of responding to emerging opportunities.

Reduce costs

GenAI delivers operational efficiencies that directly impact the bottom line. By streamlining workflows, augmenting human experiences, and reducing dependency on large support teams, organizations can achieve significant cost savings.

Strengthen Security & Risk Management

GenAI enhances cybersecurity by detecting, analyzing, and responding to threats in real-time. This proactive approach helps safeguard critical assets, minimize disruptions, and maintain trust in an increasingly complex digital environment.

Advance Sustainability Practices

GenAI supports corporate sustainability by analyzing environmental data, optimizing energy usage, and identifying operational efficiencies. These capabilities help organizations meet carbon reduction targets, while driving business

Democratize Low Code Development

 GenAI empowers non-technical employees to create, manage, and deploy business applications using low-code and no-code platforms. While it won't replace complex use cases requiring advanced coding, high security, and/or integrations with critical systems, it significantly accelerates automation.

Unlock New Levels of Creativity

GenAI redefines and enhances new levels of creativity by generating compelling content, designs, campaigns, and media. This capability will reshape how organizations connect with audiences, approach creativity, and differentiate their brand.

According to a McKinsey survey, 65 % of organizations are regularly using GenAI, and many businesses are already seeing material benefits from it.

Your top 5 GenAI concerns from the C-Suite answered

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C-Suite executives often have specific concerns about GenAI that center on risk, strategy, and long-term value. While GenAI offers transformative potential, it also introduces complex challenges that demand a strategic and measured approach. Here are some of the top concerns voiced by senior executives—and strategies for addressing them effectively:

1
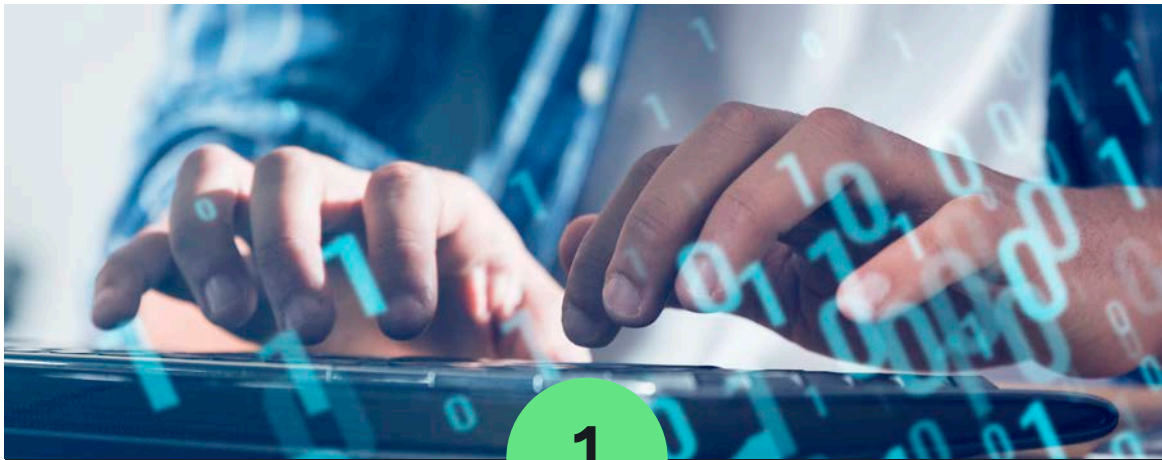
"It's unclear how GenAI will provide ROI and drive strategic outcomes."

For executives, the challenge is to strategically align GenAI with the organization's vision, ensuring that its transformative potential delivers measurable business impact. Many executives grapple with measuring the tangible and intangible value GenAI can deliver. Beyond traditional metrics like cost savings, productivity, and efficiency gains, leaders must define strategic Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that capture broader, long-term value, such as innovation velocity, customer engagement, and competitive differentiation. By prioritizing its deployment in these areas, leaders can position their organizations to capitalize on GenAI's full promise, driving sustainable growth and a competitive advantage. Without a defined vision and measurable benchmarks, organizations risk falling behind in a rapidly evolving market. For the C-Suite, the imperative is clear: lead decisively in GenAI adoption or risk irrelevance.

2

"Employees at my organization fear GenAI will take their jobs."

A prevailing fear among employees is that GenAI will replace jobs, creating uncertainty and resistance. Executives must reframe the narrative—GenAI is about augmentation, not replacement. While some roles will evolve, others will emerge, and the focus must be on equipping the workforce to thrive in this new era.

Technology is constantly evolving, and to stay ahead, organizations must embrace change, adapt, and keep humans at the center. Executives play a critical role in this by fostering a culture of adaptability, prioritizing transparency, and investing in reskilling and upskilling. While generative AI offers transformative potential, it cannot create value on its own. Leaders must harness employees' passion and take a holistic approach to integrating GenAI into how the entire organization operates, paving the way for significant breakthroughs and industry-wide transformation.

3

"We've had failed digital transformations before, so we're unsure if we should invest in GenAI."

Many leaders are hesitant about GenAI due to prior challenges with digital transformation initiatives. These failures are often attributed to several common factors.

1. LACK OF ALIGNMENT WITH OVERALL STRATEGY

2. MYOPIC FOCUS

3. FAILURE TO SECURE EXECUTIVE BUY-IN

4. LACK OF STRUCTURED GOVERNANCE OR ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT

5. NARROW GOALS TO SIMPLY "LIFT AND SHIFT" EXISTING PROCESSES

Leaders must adopt a comprehensive approach to GenAI and shift their mindset from just digital transformation to end-to-end business transformation. Modernization and innovation are an ongoing journey of continuous improvement that should evolve alongside technology.

4

"Technology is constantly changing and my organization can't keep up."

Humanity's ability to keep pace with the exponential adoption and advancement of GenAI are making it difficult for organizations to keep up. Equitable access and ethical usage of GenAI in today's highly automated world are pivotal to ensuring your organization leverages technology responsibly. To effectively manage change, executives must create a strategic roadmap that delivers quick wins, while building towards a long-term transformational vision.

Starting small and scaling up allows organizations to test, learn, and adapt at a manageable pace. This approach ensures agility while maintaining a clear vision for broader enterprisewide integration.

Leaders should focus on fostering organizational resilience to keep pace with the ever-accelerating innovation cycle.

5

"We just don't have the data and governance policies in place to handle GenAI."

GenAI success hinges on the availability of high-quality, well-governed data. Yet many organizations face significant gaps in data infrastructure, accessibility, and compliance readiness. Executives must adopt a data-first and AI-first mindset across the organization as an investment in the future of the company. Key actions to take include:

1. ESTABLISH A UNIFIED DATA GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

2. PRIORITIZE DATA ACCESSIBILITY AND QUALITY

3. TREAT DATA AS AN ENTERPRISEWIDE ASSET

4. ENSURE ALIGNMENT WITH PRIVACY, SECURITY AND REGULATORY STANDARDS

While GenAI brings transformative capabilities to the table, it is not a magic solution that guarantees success. The effectiveness of GenAI depends heavily on the quality and availability of data, automation, and maturity across the business.

Becoming an AI organization at scale happens when leaders embrace an operating model that leverages the strengths of humans and machines; is rooted in agility, flexibility, continuous learning; and is supported by strong data and analytics.
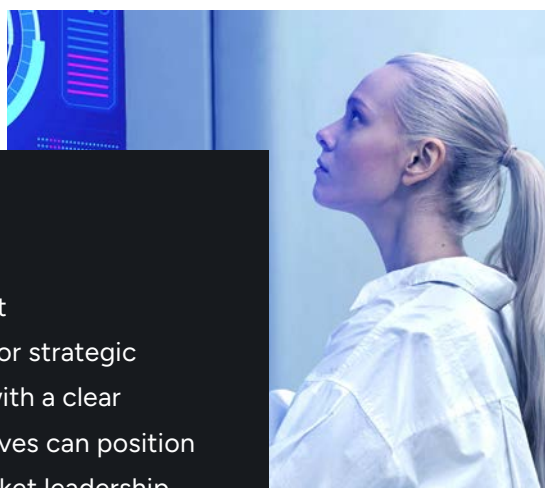
The Path Forward

While the concerns surrounding GenAI are valid, they are not insurmountable. The key lies in viewing GenAI as a catalyst for strategic transformation. By addressing these challenges head-on—with a clear vision, robust governance, and an adaptive culture—executives can position their organizations for long-term growth, resilience, and market leadership.

The next era of enterprise transformation is here.

The question is: Will your organization lead or lag behind?

SERVICENOW SPOTLIGHT

Innovating with GenAI on ServiceNow

ServiceNow continues to lead the charge for end-to-end business transformation and workflow automation, positioning itself as the premier platform for enterprises seeking to streamline operations and drive innovation.

By integrating cutting-edge technologies including AI, machine learning, predictive intelligence, low-code/no-code development, and cloud computing across their platform, ServiceNow empowers organizations to achieve scalable, efficient, and streamlined workflows with currently over 1 million business processes and 40 billion workflows.

Many executives are now asking: How can we leverage these advanced AI capabilities to maximize outcomes on the ServiceNow platform?

WHAT KIND OF OUTCOMES IS GENAI GENERATING ON SERVICENOW?

Most organizations are in the early stages of implementing GenAI and still monitoring outcomes. Three of the most common ways that companies use GenAI out of the gate on the ServiceNow platform are to empower self-service, boost agent productivity, and enhance developer activity. Similarly, Harvard Business Review found that nearly 50% of the most common use cases for GenAI are around troubleshooting and technical assistance, professional and personal support, and education and learning.

Results gathered by ServiceNow from a few early adopters show promising signs of the potential of GenAI to boost productivity and improve efficiencies, including auto generating knowledge articles, connecting the right people to the right information at the right time, and deflecting calls:

Mears is one of the largest housing solution providers in the U.K. They deployed GenAI via Now Assist to improve customer satisfaction and save time and money by leveraging case summarization and resolution notes. The result: Every request is completed at least 10 minutes faster, 83% of calls have been deflected, and there has been an increase of nearly 10% in self services in just the first few months of launch.

Kainos is a Belfast-based service provider that helps businesses maximize their digital investments, such as the Workday application. They wanted to train junior consultants to be more self-sufficient early in their career. By leveraging GenAI via Now Assist in their employee portal, they can connect junior consultants to the right information faster. Now Assist created more than 600 knowledge articles from their solutioning data for the portal.

USI is a New York-based insurance company that uses Now Assist to improve their service delivery experience. Service delivery at USI required end users to submit general incidents into a vast catalog that lacked automation, which made it tedious and time consuming for agents. By implementing Now Assist for ITSM, they reduced 52 hours of work in a single month using incident summarization and realized 37 hours of savings per month with resolution note generation. This led to higher quality experiences and better adherence to best practices.

TRIMEDX is a US healthcare provider that wanted to use GenAI to support their growing business needs and drive efficiencies. By deploying Now Assist for Creator, they increased developer productivity by 22%. Today, 50% of their developers are leveraging Now Assist and they expanded their pool of citizen developers on ServiceNow.

Coursera is an American global online course provider. They wanted to optimize service management by using GenAI to make improvements in three key areas: reduce the number of incidents escalated to an expert, shorten mean time to resolve (MTTR), and increase employee satisfaction. By implementing Now Assist, they reduced escalations by 18%, decreased MTTR by 14% and reached 98% employee satisfaction.

Core AI Capabilities

ServiceNow provides a robust suite of traditional AI-powered solutions designed to complement GenAI:

- **Machine Learning (ML)** for predictive modeling and data-driven insights.

- **Natural Language Understanding (NLU)** to enhance conversational AI and process automation.

- **Predictive Intelligence** for proactive issue resolution and trend forecasting.

- **Document and Task Intelligence** to digitize manual processes and streamline operations.

ServiceNow Plus SKU

To unlock advanced AI-driven functionality across workflows, ServiceNow offers the Plus SKU, available in Pro Plus and Enterprise Plus tiers. Key benefits include:

- Seamless integration of Now Assist across Technology, Customer, Industry, Employee and Creator Workflows

- Specific Now Assist capabilities for IT Service Management (ITSM), IT Operation Management (ITOM), Security Operations (SecOps), Customer Service Management (CSM), Facilities Service Management (FSM), Human Resource Service Delivery (HRSD), and Creator Workflows

- Enterprise-grade scalability for organizations seeking large-scale GenAI adoption

For enterprises aiming to scale GenAI, the Plus SKU bridges the gap between foundational AI and transformative automation.

Now Assist

As the centerpiece of ServiceNow's GenAI capabilities, Now Assist is the embedded GenAI toolset that helps drive automation and efficiency across different modules. You can use domain-specific models to improve your organization's productivity and efficiency, deliver better self-service, recommend actions and provide answers, and make searches more effective. Just a few use cases that span personas for employees and customers, agents, and developers are as follows:

- **Summarization:** Now Assist delivers measurable business value by enhancing productivity, reducing manual intervention, and enabling teams to focus on strategic initiatives.

- **Conversational exchanges:** Apply GenAI skills in the form of chatbots and virtual agents. Now Assist uses large language models (LLMs) designed for successful self-service workflows.

- **Content creation:** Help your HR, IT, and customer service agents create and edit written content, such as emails and chat replies.

- **Code and flow generation:** Use AI for code generation to build flows and code with Now Assist. Boost productivity with easy-to-use text prompts that let creators generate and edit quickly.

- **Custom skills development:** Create and deploy custom GenAI skills that are unique to your business workflows and processes.

- **AI search:** Give your users more meaningful search results. Our LLM answers search questions with actionable and relevant AI-generated summaries.

ServiceNow's GenAI solutions, including Now Assist, help organizations transform key business processes by enhancing efficiencies, automation, and decision-making across departments to drive transformation, while enabling employees to focus on the work that really matters.

Bill McDermott, CEO of ServiceNow, has spoken extensively about the transformative potential of GenAI. He emphasizes that GenAI represents "the biggest enterprise software market opportunity in a generation" and noted that businesses are increasingly leveraging it as a deflationary force to boost productivity. McDermott highlighted that "every business workflow in every enterprise will be engineered with GenAI at its core," positioning ServiceNow as a leader in enabling end-to-end digital transformation through AI.

He also described GenAI as "a once-in-a-generation move" that fundamentally changes how companies operate by simplifying their tech stacks and integrating siloed processes. This approach allows businesses to eliminate inefficiencies, improve customer experiences, and empower employees to focus on meaningful work.

SOURCE:
CRN, ServiceNow CEO Bill McDermott: AI, GenAI 'On A Tear' (April 25, 2024)

**JASON ROSENFELD,
CEO OF ONDARO**

Executive Insights

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How do you envision GenAI impacting the technology consulting services industry?

"By the end of 2025, I expect more than 50-80% of our workforce will be leveraging GenAI to accelerate outcomes for our customers and improve internal productivity. For the majority of our workforce, the focus will shift from creating tailored configurations to refining solutions from the 60% completion mark to 100%, emphasizing quality assurance and value added insights.

Everyone is in a race right now to leverage GenAI, and while there are parallels to the cloud shift of the early 2000s, the pace of change with GenAI is much faster because of its ease of implementation. In the short term, organizations are focusing on low-risk applications, such as automating back-office tasks. Over the next 12 months, we'll see GenAI increasingly applied in innovative ways to uncover insights and opportunities we haven't yet imagined."

MARK MAGELSSEN, SENIOR MANAGER
PARTNER ACCELERATION, SERVICENOW

The ServiceNow Perspective

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"Having worked on enterprise application development and AI modeling, I'm not surprised that customers want practical, positive ROI connected to AI solutions for their businesses.

It has become a race among vendors to provide significant AI results within each respective enterprise platform. It's not only about the functionality; it's how well the user of the platform can embrace the developed features. I believe vendors who integrate AI into business processes within their domain will succeed over those who extend away from core competencies to include AI capabilities. It's critical that the AI adoption, or lack thereof, doesn't overshadow the impact.

Like many in the tech community, I'm amazed at how quickly ServiceNow has rolled out its AI features and optimistic about the outcomes our customers will achieve by increasing intuitive AI automation in their core processes."

Ondaro

ABOUT ONDARO

Ondaro is the leading Elite, pure-play ServiceNow partner in the Americas. We have helped thousands of clients achieve their transformation goals leveraging ServiceNow, the AI platform for business transformation.

Through strategy, implementation, transformation and operational services, we help our clients transform the complex landscape of business operations into streamlined, secure, automated processes.

Whether you need help getting started fast with ServiceNow product capabilities or going big with transformational impact, Ondaro can help you navigate what's next for you.