

Designing Your AI-Ready Business

A blueprint for success



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Introduction

Technology has always been at the forefront of human creativity, ingenuity, and resilience. Numerous technological waves have swept our world, making a splash throughout history, creating new industries, defining new business models, and ultimately reshaping how we interact with the world around us.

An exciting technology wave is well underway and is about to crash against our Customer Experience (CX) shores with full force. The new age of artificial intelligence has arrived – a technology super-wave that comes with consequences that are far-reaching for the CX space and beyond.

AI is the long-awaited CX alchemist, conjuring up an entirely new world of possibilities of how technology and customer service can be melded together, and it is enabling the future of CX today.

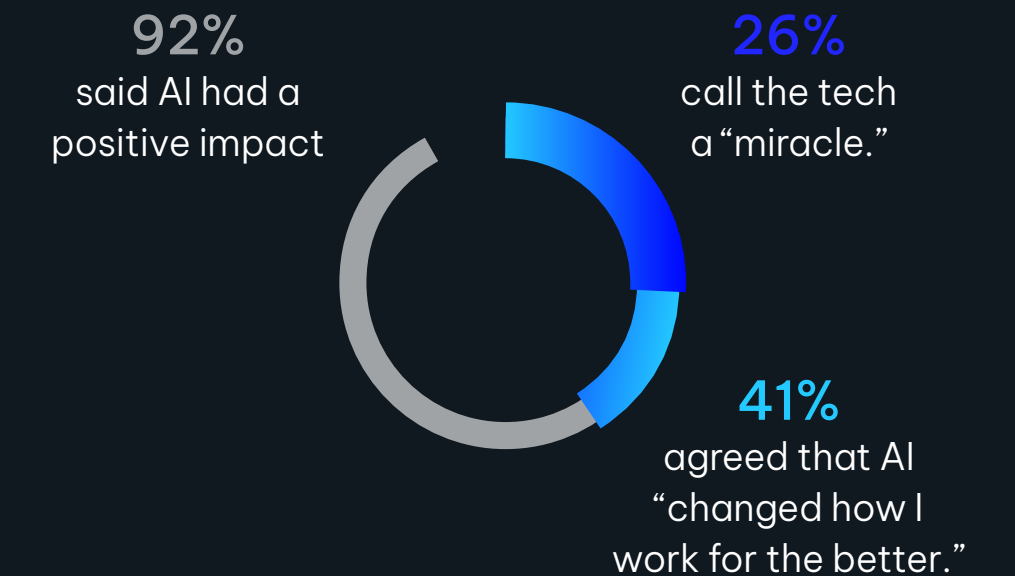
But how do you capitalize on this amazing new technology? What does it take to harness this limitless potential for your business?

Or, in other words, is your business AI ready?

This eBook will guide you through the steps necessary to determine where your business stands on your AI readiness journey, ensuring you capture the full potential of AI for CX and beyond.

What workers have to say about AI

92% of workers say AI tech has a positive impact. Nearly all workers surveyed say the artificial intelligence tools they have access to have a positive impact, according to Adobe – and **26%** went so far as to call the tech a “miracle.” Nearly half (**41%**) agreed that “AI has completely changed how I work for the better.”



The top reported productivity gains of AI include:

45% Reducing or eliminating tedious work

61% Helping employees work faster

67% Saving time

*Adobe: Digital Worker's Perception of AI technologies, 2023



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What does it mean to be AI ready?

For this eBook, we define AI readiness as: An organization's preparedness to effectively integrate, leverage, and maximize artificial intelligence (AI) within its business and customer experience (CX) operations. Three key elements are required for AI readiness.



Moving to the cloud

Complete your move to the cloud, but do it right. The transition is only complete when you feel a dramatic acceleration in your speed of innovation. That velocity can only be achieved once you fully replace your legacy technology stack with a consolidated and simplified cloud-native platform.



Evaluate your CX strategy

As deployed in the past decade, digital CX did not live up to its promise. To achieve fluent consumer journeys, there is no such thing as standalone CX digital transformation. It must be an inherent part of your overall CX strategy and a native part of a single platform.



Beware the Frankenstack

As you build a new AI infrastructure, you have a golden opportunity to get it right, avoiding past mistakes resulting in a siloed and complex 'Frankenstack.' Seamless, streamlined experiences can only materialize when part of a simple and robust platform that natively brings together all applications, data, and AI.

To achieve this, we have broken up AI readiness into three pillars, necessary for long-term success and maximizing your AI resources.



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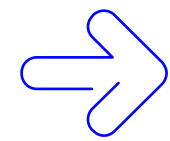
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What to expect in this chapter:

- The importance of cloud infrastructure for scalable and cost-effective AI operations
- The crucial role data plays in informing AI decisions and personalized customer experiences
- The need for a unified tech stack for successful digital transformation
- The significance of organizational buy-in ensuring successful AI integration and fostering a customer-centric culture

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Cloud infrastructure: The backbone of AI operations

In the realm of AI integration, scalability is paramount. The cloud, serving as the linchpin of AI operations, offers diverse options, including public, private, and hybrid clouds, tailored to align seamlessly with your AI ambitions. This flexibility extends to resource scaling, where the cloud's unmatched offerings allow effortless adjustments to computing resources, eliminating bottlenecks and accommodating the evolving demands of your AI initiatives.

The global cloud computing market grew from \$24.63 billion in 2010 to \$156.4 billion in 2020. That's a 635% jump.



Moreover, embracing pay-as-you-go pricing, the cloud model proves a prudent approach to AI investment, ensuring you only pay for the resources utilized. This is advantageous for agile development, prototyping, and experimentation, democratizing AI adoption by eliminating the need for substantial upfront investments in physical infrastructure.

The cloud's global reach is pivotal in AI's worldwide impact. With data centers scattered across the globe, cloud providers ensure proximity to data sources and international user bases, facilitating low-latency access to resources and data storage. This strategic advantage optimizes the performance of AI applications and broadens their reach. Additionally, the cloud relieves organizations of IT burdens as cloud providers take on infrastructure management, maintenance, and robust security measures. This frees organizations to focus on AI development and ensures data and AI models are safeguarded against potential threats, bolstering data privacy, access control, and AI model monitoring.

KEY TAKEAWAY



The cloud is essential for scalable and cost-effective AI operations, offering flexible options, pay-as-you-go pricing, and a global reach that optimizes AI performance and security while reducing IT burdens for organizations.

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Data knowledge: Harnessing the power of data

Data serves as the backbone of informed decisions and the lifeblood of AI-driven choices. Data quality, management, and effective collection strategies are paramount to establishing a robust AI foundation. Firstly, data plays a pivotal role in training AI models, enabling them to understand customer behavior accurately and make informed predictions. Customer interactions, purchase histories, and feedback contribute to the data-driven insights that AI leverages to create personalized experiences, offers, and responses. Additionally, data is the bedrock for AI's ability to automate routine tasks and streamline customer inquiries, enhancing efficiency and response times.

NICE Enlighten is trained on the largest CX dataset in the world, comprised of billions of interactions across all business disciplines.

Secondly, data empowers predictive analytics, enabling organizations to forecast and proactively engage with customer behavior. Sentiment analysis of customer feedback and reviews provides valuable insights, aiding companies in refining their CX strategies. Furthermore, data-driven segmentation allows for targeted marketing campaigns and personalized experiences tailored to different customer groups. Continuous learning ensures that AI remains adaptable to the dynamic CX landscape, aligning CX with evolving customer preferences and

trends. Effective data management ensures that AI-driven CX operations run efficiently and remain responsive to ever-changing customer needs.

Similarly, knowledge bases are crucial for establishing sustainable AI foundations, serving as centralized repositories of structured information, insights, and best practices. These knowledge hubs streamline data access, enabling efficient data utilization for AI-driven decision-making processes. By leveraging knowledge bases, organizations facilitate continuous learning and improvement of AI systems, allowing them to adapt and refine their capabilities over time. These repositories also promote consistency and accuracy in customer interactions, enabling AI to provide personalized and reliable experiences, vital for fostering long-term customer trust and loyalty. Effective knowledge management cultivates a strong foundation for AI initiatives, ensuring that AI technologies reach their full potential for sustained success and innovation in the ever-evolving business landscape.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Data forms the basis for informed AI decisions, enabling personalized experiences and streamlined customer interactions. Knowledge bases play a crucial role in facilitating continuous learning and ensuring consistent, reliable customer engagement for long-term trust and loyalty.

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Unified tech stack: Transformation through a digital-first mindset

Only a truly unified CX platform can maximize AI for your business. Much like past standalone digital CX transformations, attempting to initiate digital transformation independently falls short of expectations. Instead, digital transformation must be seamlessly interwoven into your overarching CX strategy, becoming an integral component of a unified platform. Integrating AI is a potent catalyst, elevating digital interactions and bridging the gap in the digital world. This alignment of AI with your broader digital endeavors holds the key to creating seamless consumer journeys and ensuring the success of your digital transformation.



Currently, just **31%** of businesses offer customer service via chat, yet **52%** of consumers prefer chat to other channels.



11% of businesses prioritize making self-service smarter, despite **36%** of consumers wanting this as a priority.

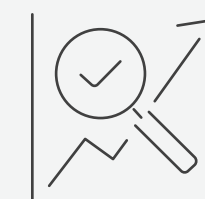


Regarding how consumers get support, **46%** of consumers say they go to Google search first, yet only **15%** of businesses consider it the first step for consumers.

As you design your AI infrastructure, thinking expansively and avoiding fragmenting solutions is imperative. This presents a unique opportunity to avoid past errors that result in disconnected and complex digital environments. To realize fluid experiences, a straightforward and robust platform is essential, one that seamlessly brings together all applications, data, and AI. In the specialized customer service domain, AI initiatives must be tailored to CX specifics and implemented at scale. By embracing a comprehensive and unified approach, you not only sidestep the pitfalls of fragmented solutions but also position your organization for AI-driven triumph in the digital age.

KEY TAKEAWAY

A unified CX platform is essential for successful AI integration and digital transformation, allowing for seamless consumer experiences and avoiding the pitfalls of fragmented solutions.



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Organizational buy-in: Gaining support from all stakeholders

Organizational buy-in is crucial for resource allocation, ensuring that the financial investments, skilled personnel, and time required for AI implementation are readily available. This foundation enables successful execution. Secondly, it encourages cross-functional collaboration among departments, fostering goal alignment and collaboration across IT, marketing, customer support, and data analytics teams, making AI integration more effective. Additionally, buy-in catalyzes cultural change, helping employees embrace AI as a valuable tool rather than a threat. It promotes data sharing and integration throughout the organization, ensuring that AI systems can access the data they need for optimal performance.

Gartner has estimated that 85% of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) projects fail to produce a return for the business.* The reasons often cited for the high failure rate include poor scope definition, bad training data, organizational inertia, lack of process change, mission creep, and insufficient experimentation.

85% fail to produce a return

Proper buy-in also aids in risk mitigation by proactively addressing concerns like data privacy and algorithmic biases. It aligns AI initiatives with the broader CX strategy, guided by organizational leaders who are responsible for coherence and practicality. Moreover, it facilitates change management, making it easier for employees to adapt to new workflows and processes. By establishing relevant metrics and KPIs, it measures the impact of AI on CX. It reinforces a customer-centric culture, where AI is prioritized for delivering superior customer experiences.

Long-term buy-in also sustains AI initiatives, guarding against premature abandonment and enabling ongoing improvements. Furthermore, it positions organizations for a competitive advantage, signaling a commitment to innovation and staying ahead in the CX market. Finally, it emphasizes ethical and responsible AI practices, building and maintaining customer trust—a cornerstone of lasting CX success.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Organizational buy-in is critical for successful AI implementation, fostering collaboration, mitigating risks, and promoting a customer-centric culture, while emphasizing ethical AI practices for lasting customer trust and success.



*Forbes: Achieving Next-Level Value from AI by Focusing on the Operational Side of Machine Learning, 2023

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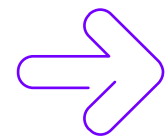
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What to expect in this chapter:

- The importance of developing a skilled workforce through training and strategic hiring for effective AI integration
- The role of knowledge management in ensuring consistent customer experiences and efficient problem-solving
- The significance of robust risk and compliance management, including cybersecurity, for maintaining ethical AI practices and data protection

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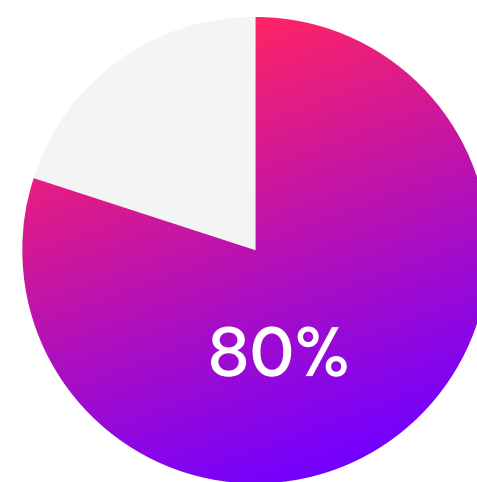
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Skilled workforce: Developing AI expertise

Cultivating a skilled workforce forms the bedrock of success. Building AI competency from within is vital to long-term success and growth. Upskilling your existing team is pivotal. Tailored training programs that cover AI fundamentals, coupled with practical, hands-on projects, are key. Additionally, fostering a culture of continuous learning is essential to equip your employees with the knowledge and skills necessary for successful AI integration.



Skills and financial constraints are the leading reported barriers, with about 80 percent of enterprises citing a lack of skills in their internal workforce.*

Hiring AI talent injects fresh perspectives and advanced knowledge into your AI initiatives. By defining clear roles and expectations, engaging with AI communities, and collaborating with educational institutions, you can strategically augment your team with AI experts, fortifying your organization's AI capabilities. Whether through upskilling or hiring, fostering a skilled workforce is the cornerstone of resilient AI integration, constructed one brick of knowledge at a time.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Developing a skilled workforce through upskilling and strategic hiring is crucial for successful AI integration and long-term growth.



*The White House: The impact of artificial intelligence on the future of workforces in the European union and the United States of America, 2022.

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Knowledge management: Efficiently storing and utilizing information

Knowledge management serves as an empowerment multiplier of AI integration, like a well-organized library where information is readily accessible to empower enhanced customer experiences.

First, it underscores the significance of knowledge management in upholding information consistency and accuracy across customer touchpoints. AI systems draw upon a centralized knowledge base, ensuring dependable and uniform responses to customer queries. This reduces the risk of misinformation and elevates customer satisfaction.

“Knowledge Management is not just about data or reservoirs of valuable information. It is connecting people to the right information, from the very first search. It is training AI to be an expert in the specified industry. Without knowledge, data, and a ‘why’ to manage that, all you have is ineffective and expensive AI software.”

– Elizabeth Tobey, Head of Digital and AI Marketing at NICE

Second, knowledge management equips AI with the agility for efficient problem resolution. AI-driven chatbots and virtual assistants access troubleshooting guides and product documentation to swiftly address common customer issues, offering real-time assistance without human intervention. Furthermore, knowledge management fosters scalability, allowing AI to seamlessly adapt to expanding customer interactions. It promotes a continuous learning cycle and improvement by refining AI algorithms through customer feedback. Lastly, it drives cost savings by automating routine tasks, freeing human agents to tackle complex inquiries.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Knowledge management is essential for ensuring consistent customer experiences, efficient problem-solving, and cost savings through task automation, ultimately enhancing customer satisfaction and operational efficiency.



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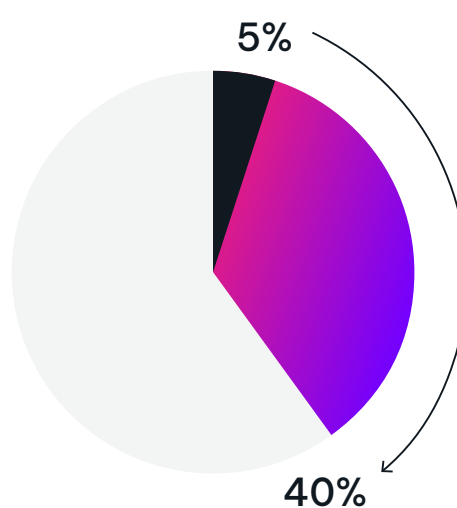
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Risk and compliance management: Navigating AI's legal landscape

Data protection laws like GDPR and HIPAA necessitate establishing robust compliance systems to ensure that AI initiatives comply with these regulations, mitigating the risk of costly fines and legal repercussions.

Moreover, it emphasizes the ethical considerations in AI decision-making, underlining the need for compliance and risk management frameworks to identify and address ethical risks such as algorithmic biases or privacy concerns, thereby ensuring responsible and ethical AI practices.



Over 40% of privacy compliance technology will rely on AI by 2023, up from 5% today, according to Gartner, Inc.*

Compliance systems enforce stringent measures such as access controls and encryption to protect customer data from unauthorized access or breaches. Furthermore, it advocates for transparency and accountability in AI systems, requiring organizations to explain AI decisions effectively. Compliance and risk

management systems establish practices to achieve transparency and accountability. They also allow for a clear audit trail to ensure protocol and guidelines are followed.

Part of this management system should include robust cybersecurity. This is vital in AI integration because it safeguards sensitive data, ensures regulatory compliance, preserves algorithmic integrity, addresses ethical concerns, maintains business continuity, fosters customer trust, and gains a competitive edge. AI relies on extensive datasets, some containing sensitive customer information, making cybersecurity measures essential.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Robust compliance systems and cybersecurity measures are essential for ensuring adherence to data protection laws, mitigating risks, and maintaining ethical AI practices, safeguarding sensitive data, and fostering customer trust for successful AI integration.



*Gartner: Privacy Compliance Technology, 2020.

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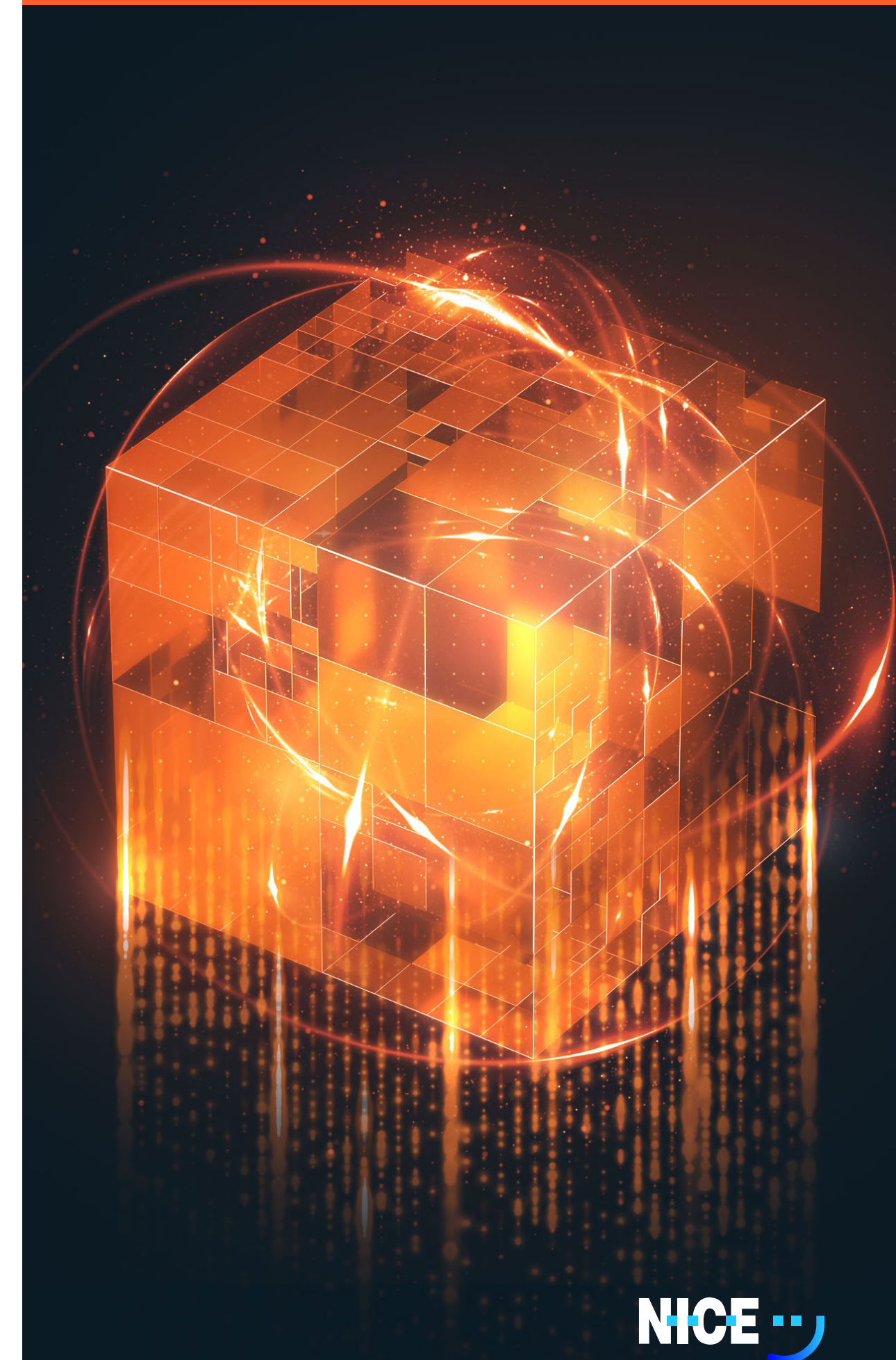


What to expect:

- Leveraging AI for business growth in sales and marketing
- The importance of stakeholder alignment for sustained success
- The benefits of automation, streamlining operations for increased efficiency and improved customer experiences

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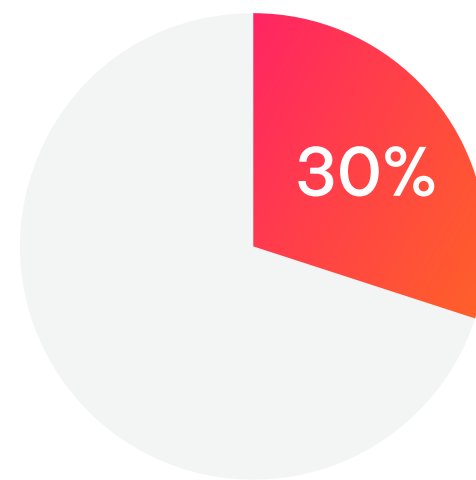
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Sales and marketing awareness: Leveraging AI for business growth

Sales and marketing awareness through AI is more than just a mere choice but a strategic imperative. It's the cornerstone for maximizing ROI and financial sustainability. By infusing AI into your sales and marketing efforts, you unlock the potential for accelerated revenue growth. Precise targeting, improved lead generation, and enhanced conversion rates become the norm. AI-driven strategies enable more accurate customer segmentation, personalized marketing, and real-time trend analysis.

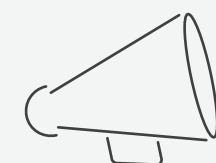


Gartner predicts 30% of outgoing marketing messages from large organizations will be generated by AI by 2025.*

AI in sales and marketing elevates the customer experience, fostering loyalty and satisfaction. Personalized recommendations and tailored marketing messages delight customers, while data-driven insights inform strategic decisions. Sustained AI use perpetuates these benefits, ensuring enduring customer relationships and agile, data-informed decision-making. Additionally, AI optimizes resource allocation and facilitates scalability, bolstering resource efficiency and future growth.

KEY TAKEAWAY

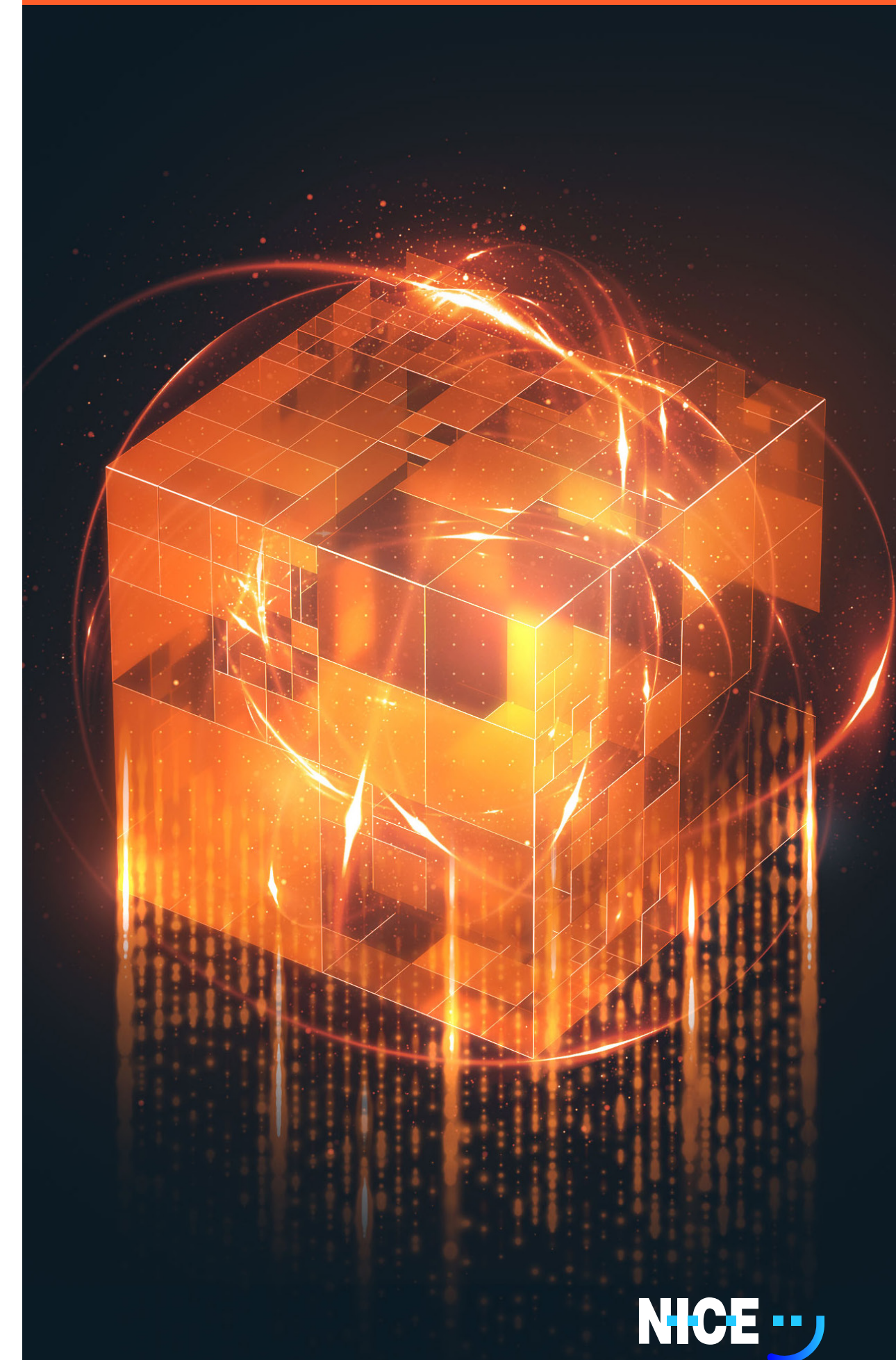
Incorporating AI into sales and marketing strategies is crucial for maximizing ROI and customer satisfaction through precise targeting, personalized experiences, and optimized resource allocation.



*Gartner: Generative AI: What Is It, Tools, Models, Applications and Use Cases. 2023

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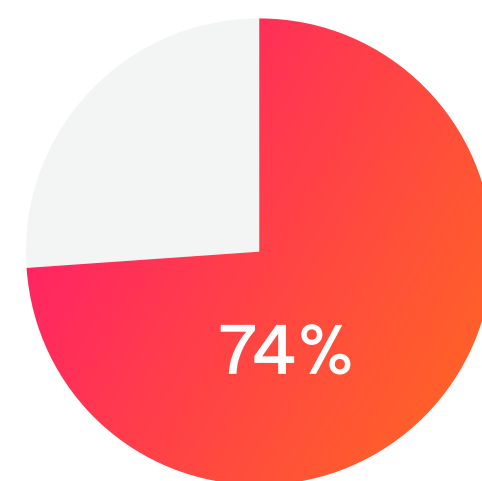
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Adaptation to key organizational stakeholders: Ensuring alignment with your business goals

Alignment with organizational stakeholders is crucial for sustained AI success. It ensures that AI initiatives are strategically congruent with the organization's broader goals: revenue growth, cost reduction, or improved customer experiences. This translates into a shared vision guiding AI implementation toward delivering tangible business outcomes.

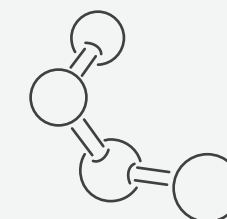


74% of Americans are likely to recommend a brand or company to friends/family if they provide a convenient customer experience.*

Moreover, gaining stakeholder buy-in empowers you to secure the essential resources and personnel required for AI initiatives. It facilitates smoother change management as AI often brings transformative shifts in workflows and processes. Additionally, it establishes a framework for measuring progress and effectively mitigating risks associated with AI adoption. In essence, aligning with key stakeholders is the compass steering your AI journey toward long-term prosperity, enabling your organization to harness the full potential of AI while remaining adaptable in an evolving landscape.

KEY TAKEAWAY

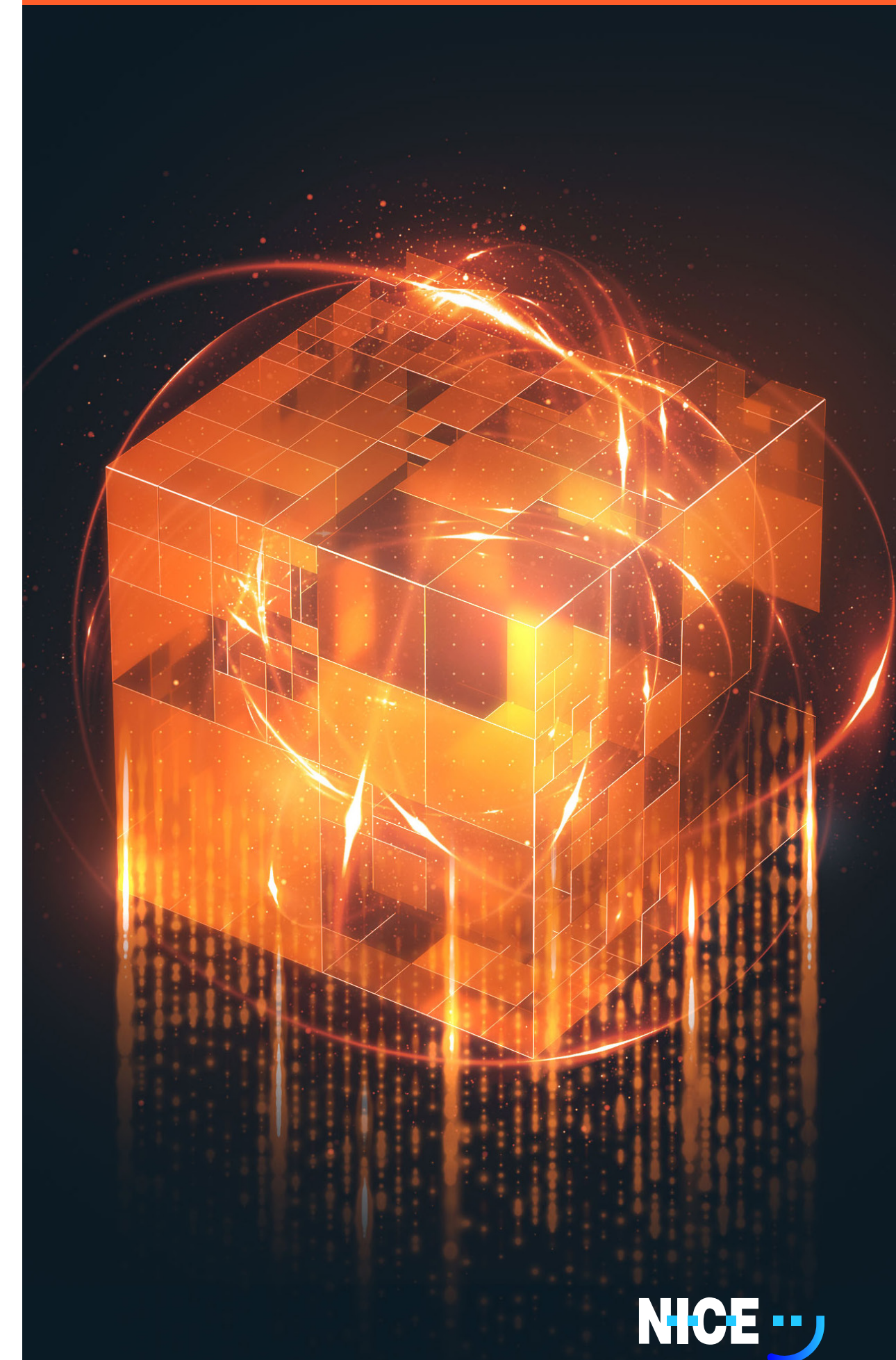
Organizational alignment is vital for successful AI implementation, enabling smoother change management and effective risk mitigation, guiding the organization towards long-term success and adaptability.



*Shep Hyken: The 2021 ACA Report, 2021

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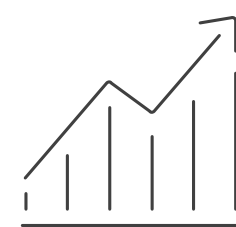
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Leveraging automation: Streamlining processes for maximum efficiency

Automation is the engine behind operational efficiency. It empowers organizations to optimize workflows, reduce manual tasks, and streamline operations. This enhances productivity and ensures that resources are allocated judiciously. By automating routine and repetitive tasks, businesses can free up their skilled workforce to focus on higher-value, strategic activities, thereby maximizing the potential of human expertise.

AI can deliver unwavering consistency and precision. Automated processes are not subject to the same human variability and errors, guaranteeing higher reliability. In customer-facing functions, this reliability is pivotal. Automation allows organizations to provide swift, personalized responses to customer queries, ultimately enriching the customer experience. This is crucial in today's competitive landscape, where exceptional customer experiences drive customer loyalty and long-term revenue growth.



Companies anticipating and communicating proactive service solutions have a 7% higher three-year revenue growth average.*

Beyond immediate gains, automation leads to substantial cost savings over time. It boosts productivity while requiring fewer resources, minimizes manual errors and rework, and optimizes resource allocation. These cost savings can be strategically reinvested in AI innovation and other high-impact initiatives, contributing to sustained AI success. Moreover, automated systems are adaptable and continuously improve. They learn from data and user interactions and an updated knowledge base, ensuring AI-driven processes remain relevant and effective in an ever-evolving landscape.

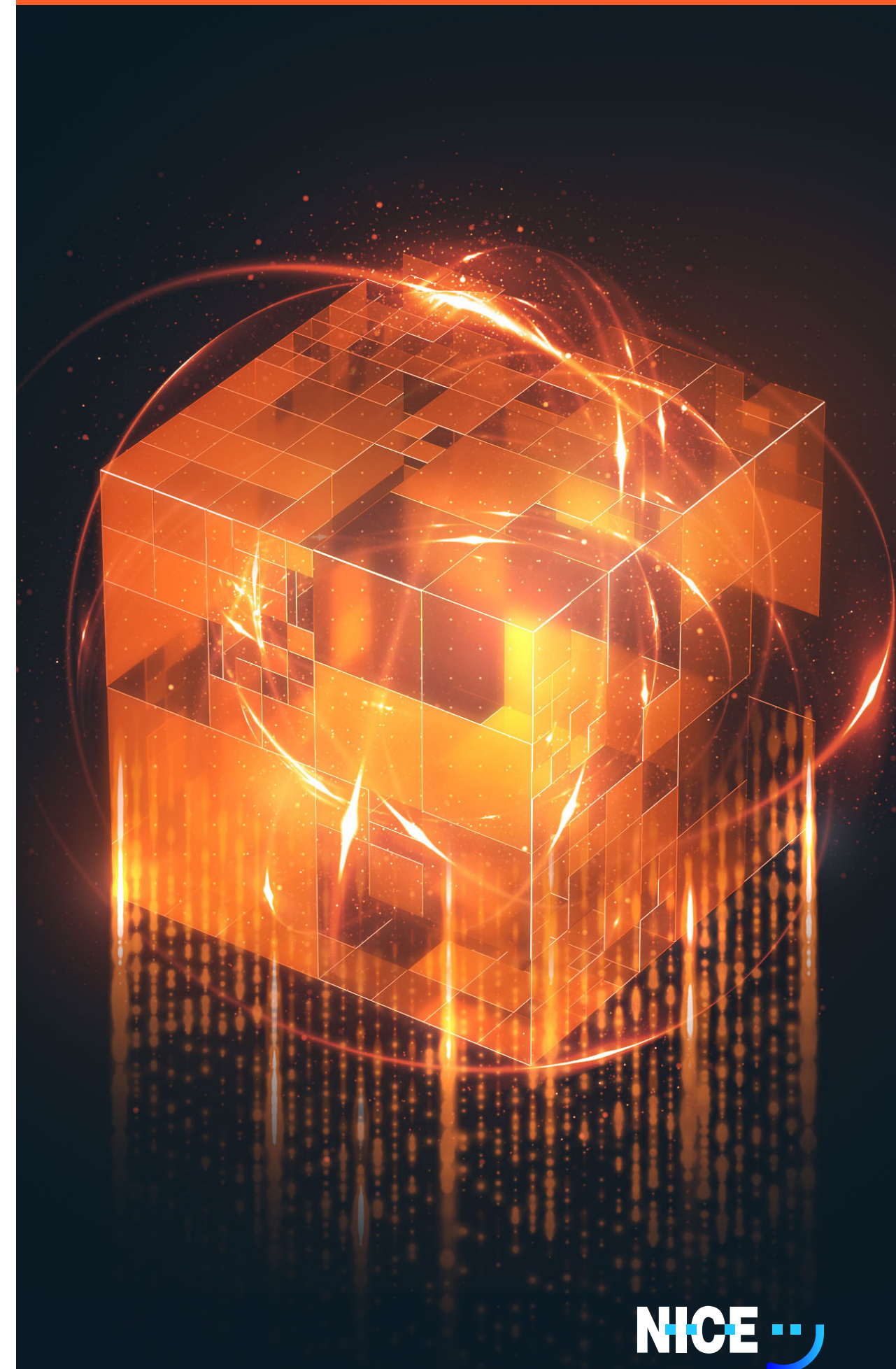
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Automation enhances operational efficiency, customer experiences, and cost savings over time, enabling organizations to focus on strategic tasks and drive sustained AI success.



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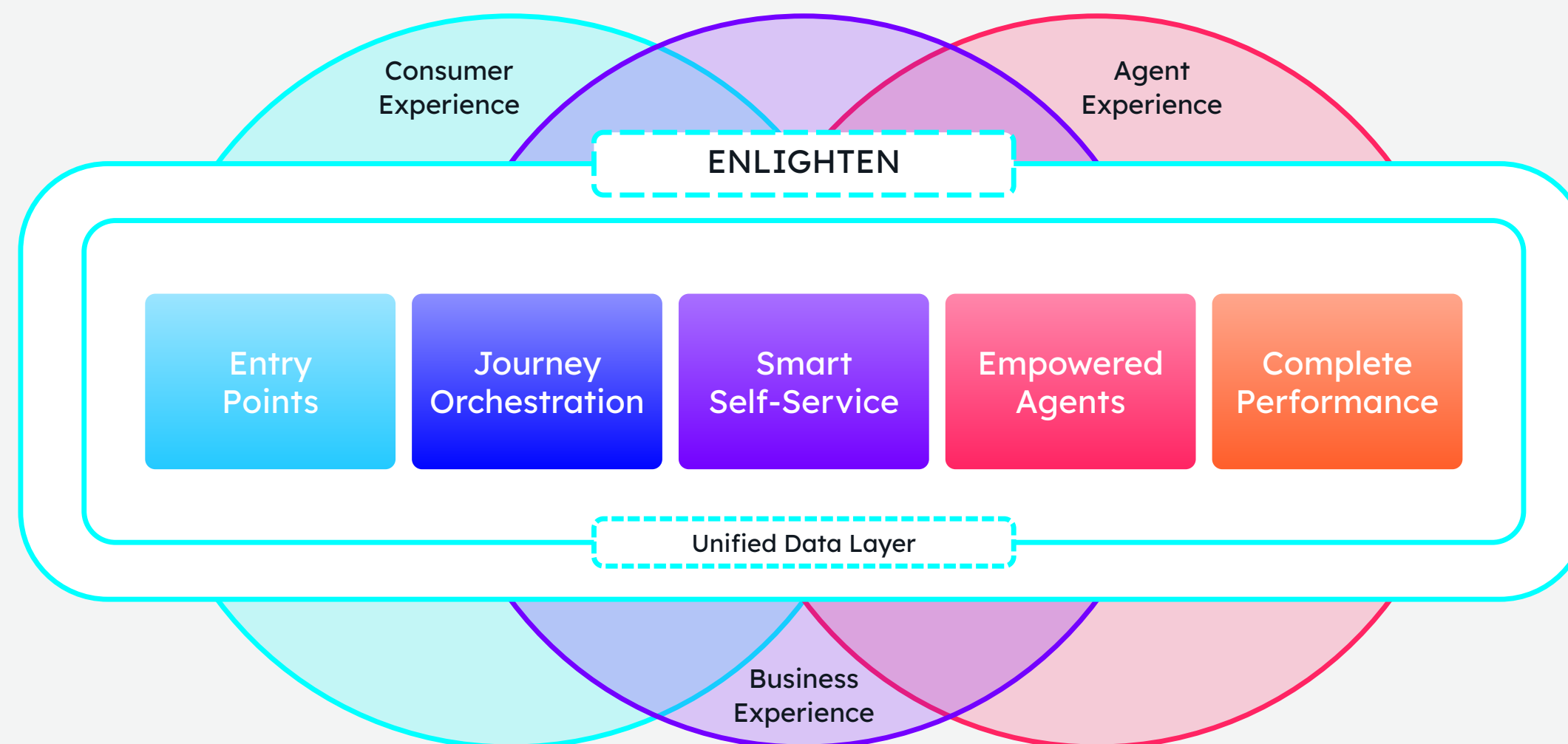
Why does this all matter? Because AI is and will continue to revolutionize the world as we know it. But what separates those who ride this new technology wave from the rest is the preparation of AI for their business.

Becoming AI ready will allow your business to reap the rewards that only come from proper planning and preparation.

NICE Enlighten, the trusted AI for business, is the pinnacle of excellence in purpose-built AI for CX. Enlighten brings together the latest generative AI technology and a vast array of CX data, derived from hundreds of billions of domain-specific interactions of all types, a suite of 45 essential CX applications on a single

platform across over 40 different channels, and NICE's unrivaled domain expertise. And it has the highest possible security guardrails, protecting your proprietary data while providing the advantages of generative AI.

When your consumers interact with Enlighten, it acts as your best and most trusted employee, creating fully personalized experiences while aligning each response with your brand and business goals. When your employees copilot with Enlighten, their symbiotic trust amplifies across-the-board power. And when you run your business with Enlighten Actions, your decision velocity increases 10-fold.



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Enlighten

Enlighten Copilot

Enlighten Copilot partners with service employees with a by-their-side conversational AI experience, acting as an empowerment multiplier to produce accurate, informed, and brand-specific conversational responses. Additionally, supervisors can benefit from smarter guided interactions, AI-driven coaching, and the ability to offload repetitive tasks to improve the overall agent and customer experience.

Customer service agents can leverage Enlighten Copilot to reduce repetitive tasks and provide quick access to knowledge and answers tailored to their needs. This allows them to dedicate more time to complex issues and provide thoughtful, empathic service when interactions are escalated. Supervisors receive more insightful information, which can aid in guiding and coaching employees while taking care of repetitive tasks. Automation opportunities are also suggested, allowing the focus to be placed on enhancing the employee experience.

Enlighten Autopilot

Enlighten Autopilot is designed to cater to the needs of consumers, using friendly, informed, AI-driven conversations to act as the company's most trusted and valued virtual service employee. Autopilot creates customized digital experiences when and where consumers need them. This new conversational AI approach uses trusted company knowledge to align every response with brand and business goals when consumers engage with self-service or AI-designed virtual agents.

As a consumer, you can benefit from smarter self-service options that use AI technology to provide fully conversational responses that understand your intent. This leads to faster and more effective service. For brands, this means fewer repetitive tasks requiring an employee to resolve, freeing more time to focus on higher-touch, more valuable, human-led experiences.

Enlighten Actions

Tailored for CX leaders, Enlighten Actions utilizes specialized AI models built for the CX industry and the latest generative AI models to proactively uncover areas for AI-driven optimization and carry out complex automation to accelerate execution for all CX leaders. By utilizing Enlighten Actions, business decision-making can improve business decision velocity tenfold. Additionally, it offers unique capabilities that enable organizations to gauge their level of service against industry benchmarks and develop actionable plans to achieve their business objectives quickly.

Executives can gain faster access to data and analysis to understand how your business goals are being met. They receive AI-triggered actionable insights on the best next steps to automate work to achieve key business objectives. Enlighten Actions, in conjunction with our comprehensive CX solution suite, will help you rapidly implement those recommendations without the onerous overhead of implementation and research.

Enlighten: The Trusted AI for Business Benefits



Leverage brand knowledge for instant answers.



Empower supervisors with AI-guided coaching.



Offloads and automates repetitive agent tasks.



Empathetic in the moment agent coaching.



Faster, effective self-service for consumers.



Accelerates business decisions through optimization.

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“Enlighten analyzes every interaction and provides additional intelligence on agent behaviors for more effective coaching conversations that improve the customer experience. Our goal is to be number one from a customer experience standpoint, and NICE is helping us climb the ladder in those rankings.”

—Kevin Anderson, Speech Analytics Program Manager Fifth Third Bank

CASE STUDY

Fifth Third Bank

Fifth Third Bank shifted from limited customer surveys to widespread use of NICE Nexidia Analytics and Enlighten AI, significantly improving customer sentiment assessment. The transition led to enhanced customer experiences, reduced costs, and increased productivity. With insights from every call, the bank targeted specific agent behaviors, such as active listening and acknowledging customer loyalty, for improved performance. Looking forward, they aim to use speech analytics for compliance and to embed customer sentiment in the organizational culture for sustained success.

Results achieved:

2300+
agent interactions analyzed

15.7 million
calls analyzed to understand customer intent

77%
of incoming calls automatically characterized by speech analytics

6 FTEs
repurposed from optimizations found through speech analytics

[View testimonial](#)

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In this ever-evolving landscape of technology, we find ourselves at the start of a monumental era – the rise of artificial intelligence. This paradigm shift of accessibility holds the potential to not only reshape business operations but also redefine customer engagement as we know it. The convergence of AI and customer service presents unparalleled opportunities where AI acts as a catalyst for creating more personalized, efficient, and gratifying customer experiences.

In this eBook, we've detailed the crucial aspects of AI readiness to help your business achieve its three main components:

- ✓ **Completing the move to the cloud**
- ✓ **Reevaluating your digital transformation**
- ✓ **Thinking big and avoiding siloed solutions**

Businesses must prepare diligently for the forthcoming AI revolution. We have delved into the core pillars of AI readiness, encompassing everything from establishing a robust foundation to embracing automation, aligning with critical stakeholders, safeguarding sensitive data, and adhering to compliance mandates.

In conclusion, the path to AI readiness is not merely a strategic choice but an imperative one for businesses seeking to flourish in the digital age. AI can elevate your organization's capabilities, foster innovation, and elevate customer satisfaction. By following the prescribed steps outlined in this eBook, you can position your business to unlock the boundless potential of AI, ensuring that you ride this technological wave with precision and purpose. Discover how we can help you become AI ready today.



About NICE

With NICE, it's never been easier for organizations around the globe to create extraordinary customer experiences, including the latest in digital self-service, all while meeting key business metrics. Take your CX and AI strategy to the next level with the powerful capabilities of NICE CXone, the most complete single-platform cloud CX solution, and NICE Enlighten, an advanced suite of AI tools for agents, supervisors, business leadership, and customers. Over 25,000 organizations of all sizes in 150 countries, including more than 85 of the Fortune 100 companies, partner with NICE to transform—and elevate—every customer interaction.

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