

VOL 09 ♦ ISSUE 27 ♦ SEPTEMBER 2025

TRADEFLOCK

STORY OF
THE MONTH
**GEN Z
UPRISING
ROCKS
NEPAL**

**BALAJI
SIVAKUMAR**

FOUNDER
STRATOGRID.AI

X
SPOTLIGHT
PRESENCE OVER
PROMOTION
BEYOND THE
ALGORITHM

MOST VISIONARY
**TECH
LEADERS**
2025



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Editor Note



THE BUILDERS OF WHAT'S NEXT

Technology is now the common language of progress. Whether it's reshaping how we work, redefining how we move, or reimagining how we care for our planet, the driving force behind it all is leadership. Not leadership in the traditional sense, but vision—the kind that looks beyond quarterly results and sees possibilities for decades to come. This edition is dedicated to the world's visionary tech leaders who are building the foundations of our future.

What unites these leaders is not geography, sector, or even scale. It's the mindset. They are the ones who ask, "What if?" and then have the courage to follow through. From artificial intelligence and biotech to clean energy and digital finance, they are solving problems that cross borders and impact billions.

And yet, what makes their stories most compelling is how grounded they are. Visionary leadership is not about perfection—it's about persistence. It's about late nights, tough calls, and the humility to adapt when the world shifts under your feet. These journeys remind

us that behind every breakthrough are people who chose to believe in an idea long before it became obvious.

Looking ahead, the role of these leaders has never been more critical. The next decade will be defined by choices that affect not just industries but societies and generations. Their work shows us that technology is not just a tool—it's a responsibility.

For anyone leading teams, building businesses, or simply curious about the future, these stories are a glimpse into how vision becomes reality and how bold ideas today will shape the world we live in tomorrow.

Here's to the leaders who predict the future and build it.

Happy reading!!!


Anamika Sahu
Consulting Editor-in-Chief
✉ anamika@tradeflock.com

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Asia's 40 Under
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40 Under 40
2026

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Research Team	Karan Sharma Nishant Trapti Satyam
Subscription & Circulation	Indu Koli Abhishek
Editorial Queries	editors@tradeflock.com
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MOST VISIONARY
TECH LEADERS 2025

NAME	DESIGNATION	COMPANY
Balaji Sivakumar	Founder	Stratogrid.ai
Chris Hutchins	Founder & CEO	Hutchins Data Strategy Consulting
Diego Edgardo Martin Camacho	CTO	Plataforma10
Eduardo Martínez García	Co-Founder & CEO	TOQIO
Erik Ekudden	CTO	Ericsson
Mahesh Devalla	CTO	PlayersHealth
Mohammed Sibgathullah Khan	Director of Information Technology	National Petrochemical Industrial Company
Priyanshu Sharma	Co-Founder & CEO	ByteBrain
Shina Chung	CEO	Kakao Corp
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MOST VISIONARY TECH LEADERS 2025

Building AI Brains For Global Businesses

BALAJI SIVAKUMAR

Founder, **Stratogrid.ai**

It's a quiet Sunday morning in the fall of 2024 in Columbus, Ohio. Balaji Sivakumar, founder of Stratogrid.ai, sits by the window, reflecting on a question that has defined his career: why do leaders, surrounded by oceans of data, still struggle to see what's really happening in their organisations?

The spark came years earlier, in his work on data spatialisation — building maps of complex information to make the invisible visible. Over time, he observed how this problem unfolded across large enterprises: boardrooms filled with executives leaning over dashboards that promised clarity but delivered only noise. Decisions worth millions hung unresolved, buried under conflicting reports. That frustration, paired with his expertise in turning data into living maps, became the foundation for Stratogrid.ai.

Started his career with Oracle ERP, Balaji Sivakumar quickly moved from writing code to

solving the larger puzzle of enterprise systems. Over two decades, he worked across finance, manufacturing, consulting, and technology—leading integrations that reduced costs by more than 50%, modernising IT, and preparing companies for IPOs under strict compliance standards. At every step, his focus was the same: turning complexity into strategic advantage.

Today, he brings all this experience to Stratogrid.ai, a generative AI platform that provides executives with a living, real-time map of their enterprise. The platform detects strategy drift, uncovers hidden risks, and pairs insights with AI copilots capable of taking action, while embedding SEC, FINRA, and GDPR compliance from the start.

In this exclusive conversation with TradeFlock, Balaji shares the lessons that have shaped him, the breakthroughs behind Stratogrid.ai, and his bold vision for enterprises that embrace real-time intelligence.



Stratogrid is evolving from a product into a platform—the nervous system and execution engine for global business



Q How has your journey been so far, and what key milestones have shaped you as a leader?

Honestly, my journey has been shaped by a mix of frustration and curiosity. For two decades, I've worked in enterprise technology across finance, manufacturing, and high-tech, and I have consistently noticed the same thing: leaders drowning in dashboards and reports, yet still blind to what was really happening.

The turning points weren't promotions or fancy titles—they were moments where I realised something had to change. I vividly remember seeing billion-dollar companies making critical decisions based on yesterday's data and thinking, "Someone has to fix this." That feeling stuck with me and eventually led to Stratogrid.ai.

The milestones that shaped me weren't titles. They were moments.

One moment that stands out was when our neural map processed four million enterprise signals in under three hours—uncovering risks that previously took consulting firms months to identify. That was when I knew Stratogrid wasn't just a tool; it could actually change how big companies make decisions.

“Two decades taught me that clarity, speed, and trust are the pillars of effective leadership.”

What inspired you to start Stratogrid.ai, and what major problems in the market are you aiming to solve with it?

I started Stratogrid because I kept seeing a huge blind spot in enterprise decision-making. Leaders were making multi-million-dollar bets without really seeing what was happening on the ground. Data was scattered, signals got missed, compliance risks were everywhere, and strategies just drifted unnoticed.

I like to think of Stratogrid as a brain scan for a company. It spots patterns and risks that most teams don't even realise exist. The problems we tackle are serious: enterprises struggle with real-time visibility, data silos, and compliance challenges that can be costly and detrimental.

The platform uses advanced AI, but what's important is that it converts all that raw data into actionable insights. It's about helping leaders make smarter, faster decisions—not just giving them more dashboards.

What are the biggest roadblocks businesses face today, and how does Stratogrid help?

The biggest roadblocks aren't about the tools themselves. It comes down to three things: clarity, trust, and execution. Companies swim in dashboards but still miss when strategies drift or risks repeat. Trust is tricky because AI that mishandles data or fails compliance won't be adopted. And execution? That's where most solutions fall short—they give insights but leave leaders stuck.

Stratogrid solves all three. It builds a real-time neural map of the enterprise, instantly identifying risks and duplication, and keeps compliance embedded at data capture. Additionally, it pairs issues with AI copilots that can act autonomously. What used to take months of consulting now happens in minutes. In other words, it's not just a dashboard—it's the nervous system of the business.

Looking back at the last two decades, what have been your biggest learnings, and how have they influenced your entrepreneurial journey?

The most important lesson I've learned is that dashboards don't equal truth. I've seen enterprises fly blind because reports failed to reveal silos or execution drift until it was too late. Speed is equally critical. By the time insights reach the top of the chain of command, the market has already shifted, which is why traditional consulting models struggle to keep pace with the evolving market. Compliance is non-negotiable; a single SEC or GDPR miss can cost millions and destroy trust.



These lessons form the DNA of Stratogrid. Our neural map surfaces, silos, and risks are updated in real time. It ensures compliance from the moment data is captured and even scores clusters for Agentic AI readiness, signaling which processes can be automated or delegated to copilots. Two decades of experience taught me that clarity, speed, and trust are the pillars of effective leadership, and Stratogrid is my way of embedding those principles into software.

What opportunities in your industry excite you most over the next five years, and what are your plans to make the most of them?

We're finally moving past static dashboards. I envision a future where AI copilots actively detect risks, suggest solutions, and even take action independently. That's the real promise of Agentic AI.

Our plan is simple: scale the neural map so that every Fortune 500 company can see drift, silos, and blind spots in real-time. Turn AI readiness into plug-and-play copilots so leaders don't just see problems—they can act immediately. Compliance will always be foundational; if it doesn't meet regulatory standards, no one will adopt it.

The opportunity here is transformative. Stratogrid is positioned to become the operating layer for enterprise AI, a platform that augments consulting and provides leaders with clarity and actionable insights in real-time.

As you look back, what leadership qualities have you had to unlearn or adapt to grow into your current role?

I had to let go of thinking that a leader needs to have all the answers. True leadership is about building systems that reveal the truth and enable others to act.

Perfectionism was another habit I had to shed. In enterprise architecture, the norm is to deliver 100 percent correct solutions. However, as a founder, I have learned that launching 80 percent complete systems today often has a far greater impact than waiting for perfection months later.

Finally, I had to rethink the hierarchy. Relying on chains of command slows everything down in a real-time environment. By collapsing silos and enabling faster communication, signals move quickly, and action follows naturally. These shifts transformed me from a controller to a leader who prioritises clarity, speed, and empowerment—values that are embedded in Stratogrid's design.

I thought leadership was about having all the answers. Now I know it's about surfacing the truth.

In the coming years, how do you see your own role evolving as a leader, and what are your plans to grow and expand your company?

When we started, I was hands-on—coding pipelines, training models, and testing the neural map. Today, my role is more about building a category. I want enterprise neural maps to be as common as MRIs in hospitals. My focus is on evangelising the vision and building the ecosystem to support it.

For Stratogrid, the plan is straightforward: expand globally into industries where drift, silos, and compliance are most costly—finance, manufacturing, and high tech. Make Agentic AI readiness plug-and-play so that leaders can act instantly. And work closely with cloud providers, consultants, and regulators to ensure Stratogrid becomes the trusted AI operating layer worldwide.

Stratogrid is evolving from a product into a platform—the nervous system and execution engine for global business. ♦

NEBULA

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Editor's Pick

TRADEFLOCC™
JOURNEY OF LEADERS

WHEN SMART DEVICES TURN INTO RISKY LIABILITIES

THE IOT SECURITY CRISIS

In the rush to digitise operations, businesses have embedded Internet of Things (IoT) devices deep into their infrastructure controlling everything from climate systems to production lines. But while these devices drive efficiency, they're often deployed without oversight, leaving gaping holes in enterprise security. These unmanaged endpoints aren't just blind spots, they're active vulnerabilities, quietly accumulating risk until they detonate as full-blown breaches.

Growth Outpacing Governance

The IoT market is expanding at an aggressive pace, with connected devices projected to soar from 13.1 billion in 2022 to 30.9 billion by 2025, a 136% jump in just three years (Statista). While this fuels digital transformation, it also opens the door to escalating cyber risk.

In 2023, over one-third of all cyberattacks targeted IoT devices (Palo Alto Networks). Alarming, nearly 50% of compromised devices were unmanaged, untracked, unpatched, and unprotected. Often dismissed as low-risk because they're not traditional endpoints, these devices have become the most vulnerable layer of enterprise infrastructure.

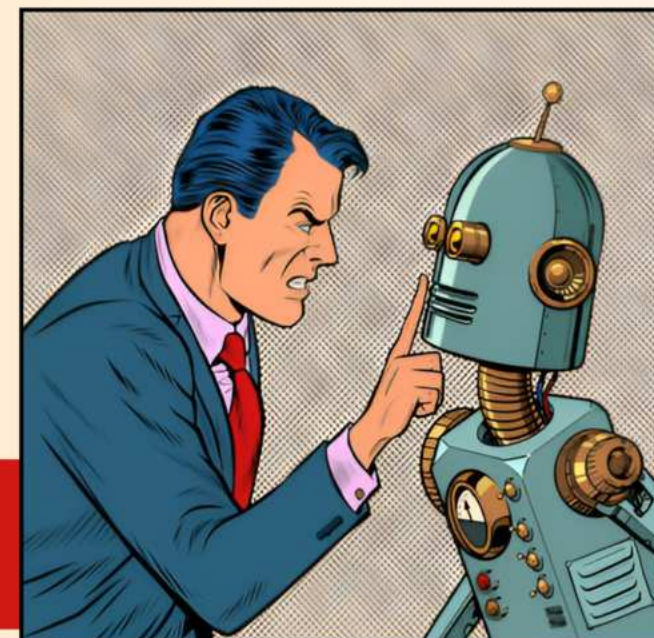
Unsecured Endpoint

Unsecured connected devices carry a high cost. IBM's 2024 Cost of a Data Breach report shows IoT-related breaches average \$5.81 million 25% more than typical incidents driven by downtime, fines, reputational loss, and customer churn.

The 2016 Mirai botnet attack, which exploited insecure devices to disrupt sites like Twitter and Netflix, was an early warning. Today, threats are more advanced, yet many organisations still lack visibility and control over their connected infrastructure.

Aligning Cybersecurity with Business Goals

IoT security demands more than tactical fixes; it requires a strategic, enterprise-wide risk posture. CIOs and CISOs must treat it as a core business resilience issue, not just an IT concern. Gaining real-time visibility into all connected assets, including unmanaged and headless devices, is critical. Adopting Zero Trust for Things (ZT4T) ensures continuous verification and least-privilege access. Security must also be embedded in procurement, with strict vendor standards for encryption, updates, and lifecycle management. Finally, risk ownership must extend beyond IT when all departments are aligned on the business impact, security becomes a shared imperative. ♦



TURNING THE TIDE

Why Morale is a Workplace's Hidden Advantage in a Turnaround

The same side of the coin can never be the things with the businesses and organisations. Tables and aspects do turn upside down within the organisation. The utmost critical threat isn't always on the spreadsheet, it revolves within the organisation.

During tough times, Profitability may slide, competitive edge may dull, and investor confidence may falter. Yet the most unstable variable is often the workforce mindset. This is where the leadership game is either validated or exposed.

Fixing a struggling business takes more than just changing operations. It requires quick, confident decisions, a reset of company culture, and a clear new direction. Even the best recovery plan will fail if the team isn't motivated and committed. In tough times, a leader's job goes beyond fixing numbers, it's about rebuilding belief and conviction.

Direct the Storyline

In a turnaround, how people see the situation really matters. Employees don't leave just because the company is struggling; they leave when they stop believing it can get better or that it's worth saving. Leaders need to take charge of the story right away and be honest about what's going on.



This means being open about the problems and clearly explaining the plan to fix them. Empty promises won't help; only honest, clear communication backed by facts will.

People are more likely to accept a hard truth than a comforting lie. When a leader says, "We lost 30% of our market share and have six months to turn things around. Here's our plan to win back our position," it builds trust. And trust keeps morale strong.

Transparency is Indispensable

In tough times, leaders need to be visible, not just in

meetings, but out where the work happens, in chats, and in one-on-one talks. When people feel ignored or like they don't matter, their motivation drops. Being visible shows that leaders care and take responsibility. It's not about showing off, it's about making sure everyone knows they are important. When leaders are around, people feel more motivated; when leaders are missing, fear, self doubt, ignorance and doubt take over.

Uphold Your Cultural Essence

Turnarounds often mean making tough choices like layoffs and restructuring.

But the best leaders keep morale strong by protecting the company's core values instead of breaking them down. This doesn't mean ignoring problems or avoiding change, but focusing on ground human values which the company truly stands for like honesty, respect, quality, and innovation.

In a turnaround, big wins don't happen often, so it's important for leaders to celebrate small successes.

These values give employees a sense of purpose and stability even when things are uncertain, a strong culture helps the

workforce stay motivated beyond just paychecks.

Amplify Minor Wins Relentlessly

In a turnaround, big wins don't happen often, so it's important for leaders to celebrate small successes. Whether it's landing a new client, meeting a tough deadline, or launching an update under pressure, these moments should be noticed and appreciated. Recognising small wins helps keep the team motivated and changes their mindset from just getting through to moving ahead with confidence.

Bring Purpose to the Vision

When things feel uncertain, employees need something steady to hold onto real purpose. Not just a catchy phrase, but a strong reason to keep going. Leaders have to help their teams remember why the turnaround matters and what they're working for.

When people believe they're saving more than just a company like jobs, communities, and industries they become truly committed. Purpose doesn't make the pressure go away, but it helps people see it differently. A paycheck gets them to work, but purpose gets them excited to be there.

Ensure Consistent Information Flow

Silence is the biggest destruction of the workforce. When leaders don't share enough information, employees imagine the worst. Good leaders communicate often and clearly. In a turnaround, it's important

to keep repeating your plan, vision, and confidence through emails, meetings, videos, and town halls to keep spirits up. This isn't just talking, it's smart leadership. Clear communication helps people feel safe, builds trust, and keeps morale strong.

Be Firm, Not Frantic

Nothing hurts team confidence more than a leader who can't make up their mind. When things are uncertain, people don't expect perfect answers, they want leaders who take clear action. Halfway efforts, too much discussion, and trying to please everyone only cause doubt.

Making strong, clear decisions, even hard ones earns respect. Employees don't have to agree with everything, but they need to trust their leader's direction. Hesitating shows weakness; desperation signals trouble. Being decisive builds respect, and respect keeps morale high.

During a turnaround, it's easy to focus only on the numbers but those numbers depend on how people perform, and that depends on morale. The companies that come out stronger aren't just the ones with the best plans or most money, they're the ones whose teams truly believe in the plan, the mission, and their leaders.

Leading a turnaround isn't about controlling everything; it's about building strong belief that motivates people to push through tough times. Morale isn't just a nice-to-have, it's a powerful advantage used by confident leaders. ♦

Empowering Leaders To Unlock Better Care

CHRIS HUTCHINS

Founder & CEO,
Hutchins Data Strategy Consulting

In every generation, there are leaders who remind us that progress is not only about technology, but about the humanity that guides it. Healthcare, perhaps more than any other field, needs those rare voices who can bridge the world of data with the heartbeat of patient care.

Chris Hutchins learned early that healthcare is about more than procedures or technology — it is about the moment a professional meets a patient with compassion. That simple truth, first glimpsed as a teenager carrying X-ray films through Dartmouth Hitchcock, became the thread running through a career that would help shape some of the largest health systems in America. At Mass General, Northwell Health, and Lifepoint Health, he proved that data can be more than numbers: in the right hands, at the right time, it can save lives. During the chaos of COVID-19 in New York, his team turned information into action, providing doctors with what they needed in real time. Today, as Founder and CEO of Hutchins Data Strategy Consulting, Chris helps health systems modernise for AI while keeping humanity at the center.

In this exclusive conversation with TradeFlock, he shares his journey, the lessons that defined him, and his vision for the future.

Q Could you share your journey and the milestones that shaped your career?

My earliest memories of healthcare stem from my mother's work in radiology at Dartmouth Hitchcock. As a teenager, I carried heavy x-ray

films down hospital corridors and saw how people changed when they entered a patient's room. It felt like more than a profession; it was a mission.

I started with billing and claims, then moved into IT as technology advanced. That curiosity took me to Mass General, where inspiring clinicians showed me how medicine and leadership could coexist. Later, at Northwell Health, I witnessed the power of data during the pandemic. Hospitals were overflowing, yet people from every department came together. My proudest moment was seeing real-time data give frontline teams the information they needed under impossible conditions.



Q What inspired you to start Hutchins Data Strategy?

Launching my own firm was not on my immediate plan, but as I wrote about healthcare data challenges, leaders began reaching out. Within weeks, I was speaking with CEOs and founders who all faced the same struggles: fragmented systems, inconsistent documentation, and costly integration.

I had lived those challenges firsthand. At Northwell, every new system meant months of work to normalise data. Even within the same specialty, clinicians documented differently, making it nearly impossible to measure quality or automate workflows. Across the industry, organisations were buried under technical debt because flashy applications could not fix messy foundations. That is why I started Hutchins Data Strategy. My mission is to help organisations step back, assess their readiness, and create practical paths to efficiency.

"Clean data is not just a technical requirement; it is the foundation of trust, efficiency, and innovation."

Q Which technology developments do you find most promising?

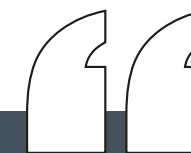
I am most excited about technologies that give time back to clinicians. Electronic health records have placed a heavy burden on physicians, and tools like ambient listening can capture conversations in the exam room, allowing doctors to spend less time typing and more time connecting with patients. Autonomous coding is another promising development, making billing faster and more accurate. Imaging AI is also advancing rapidly, enabling quicker detection of anomalies.

Technology can also transform access to care. Smarter scheduling systems reduce wait times, while real-time availability tools in rural areas ensure patients are not transferred to hospitals without capacity. These are not just efficiencies; they are breakthroughs that can change lives.

Q What should technology leaders focus on in the coming year?

The focus must be on enabling people. There is fear that AI will replace jobs, but in healthcare, the real challenge is scarcity, not surplus. Technology should support the staff we have, especially those on the front lines. That means reducing administrative burdens and restoring the patient-provider connection. Leaders must also involve frontline staff early, because they understand the

pain points better than anyone. Solving even one broken workflow with AI can transform morale and spark innovation across the organisation. The leaders who succeed will be those who see AI not as a threat but as a catalyst for better care.



TECHNOLOGY IS POWERFUL, BUT WITHOUT HUMAN WISDOM IT CAN LEAD US ASTRAY. THE FUTURE DEPENDS ON LEADERS WHO BALANCE INNOVATION WITH HUMILITY.



Q What risks or blind spots should leaders watch for, and how do you define success?

The greatest blind spot is failing to see what is missing. AI only works with the data it receives, and it does not ask what it does not know. That can lead to confident but wrong answers. The danger is our human tendency to trust these systems too quickly. During COVID, early models treated it as a familiar illness, and if we had relied solely on them, the outcome could have been disastrous. That is why oversight, guardrails, and human judgment are essential.

As for success, I do not define it by titles or awards. For me, success means enabling others — identifying talent, empowering teams, and creating conditions where people can thrive. During the pandemic, I saw people from every department step up to serve patients, regardless of title. That collective spirit is what success looks like. It is not a finish line but an ongoing measure of how many people you empower and how far your team's impact reaches. ♦

LEADERSHIP LESSONS

Sridhar Vembu, Founder & CEO, Zoho Corporation

Sridhar Vembu, the founder and CEO of Zoho Corporation, has built one of India's most remarkable technology success stories without copying the Silicon Valley playbook. Vembu advocates for self-reliance, rural development, and sustainable growth, unlike many other tech entrepreneurs who rely on venture capital and focus on urban centers. This approach has helped him develop a global SaaS powerhouse from humble beginnings. His story is not just about how a business was built but about how a community can be empowered through technology and how leadership can be redefined.

Breaking Away from Conventional Paths

When Vembu helped start what is now Zoho in 1996, hyper-growth and venture financing were the buzzwords of the technology world. Instead, he preferred to keep Zoho bootstrapped, profitable, and independent. This allowed the company to remain independent of outside influences and invest for the long term rather than the short term.

It usually involves going against trends to do what is right and what one believes in.

Championing Rural Development in a Global Industry

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of Vembu as a leader is his commitment to developing rural areas. He has established Zoho rural offices in a small village in Tamil Nadu, demonstrating that it is possible to create world-class products even in the most remote locations, outside of metropolitan technology hubs. His Zoho Schools of Learning program empowers young people in rural areas with practical skills and offers them opportunities, without requiring them to earn elite degrees.

The best leaders not only develop businesses but also ecosystems that enable marginalised groups.

Creating a Culture of Self-Reliance.

Vembu built Zoho as a self-sufficient company during a time when most startups aim for

external validation and attracting foreign investors. The company has avoided external capital and has instead grown sustainably based on customer revenues. This culture of independence has enabled Zoho to innovate freely, reinvest in research and development, and navigate challenging times.

Take a stand to be innovative; become resilient by building on your personal strengths.

Democratising Technology for Businesses

With Vembu leading the way, Zoho has become a global SaaS leader with over 55 applications across CRM, HR, and finance. Zoho has helped millions of small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) compete with larger organisations by offering its products at affordable prices and gaining popularity worldwide.



This mission is based on Vembu's belief that technology is a tool for empowerment, not exclusion.

Opening the tools will make a positive impression and foster customer loyalty.

A Vision Beyond Profits

Vembu always emphasises that profit isn't the sole goal of a company. In his view, businesses should also create social value, develop their employees, and invest in community welfare. He envisions a form of moral capitalism where profit is aligned with national development and human well-being.

Leadership is concerned with achieving business objectives in line with societal development.

Leading with Humility and Simplicity

Vembu leads a humble life despite his worldwide fame; he commutes to work, lives in a small town, and avoids the luxuries of corporate living. This modesty endears him to us, making him seem genuine and credible. His behavior teaches an important lesson: leadership isn't about showing power, but about staying grounded.

Humility not only builds credibility but also fosters loyalty.

Creating Leaders, Not Followers

Zoho Schools and in-house mentorship have enabled



Vembu to develop an in-house production of leaders. He has set a culture of meritocracy that rewards initiative and problem-solving by prioritising skills over credentials. Most Zoho managers and innovators are not traditional, which demonstrates that leadership can exist in environments with a more equal distribution of opportunities.

The real legacy of a leader is not the number of people who follow them, but the future leaders they inspire.

The Sridhar Vembu Blueprint for Leadership

The legacy of Sridhar Vembu extends beyond Zoho's global success. He has demonstrated that tech companies can thrive while upholding strong values, supporting rural communities,

and resisting external validation. His leadership is marked by resilience, humility, and vision—a rare combination that challenges traditional notions of what it takes to be a successful international CEO.

His story imparts timeless lessons to aspiring leaders: don't conform, stay true to your beliefs, build ecosystems rather than just companies, prioritise independence over dependence, democratise access to opportunities, and stay grounded. Vembu has, in essence, founded more than just a company; he has initiated a movement that blends entrepreneurship, nation-building, rural empowerment, and moral guidance. As his example shows, true legacy isn't just measured by valuation or scale but by the lives changed and the systems transformed to benefit future generations. ♦

A Technologist Who Builds More Than Systems — People

DIEGO EDGARDO MARTIN CAMACHO

CTO, Plataforma10

Every great journey begins with a single step, but the most remarkable ones are defined by the willingness to keep moving forward, no matter how the road twists. For Diego Edgardo Martin Camacho, technology has always been that journey — a path of discovery, challenge, and transformation that has carried him from local development teams in Buenos Aires to global leadership in travel tech.

Diego's career began with hands-on coding and problem-solving at companies like TMF Group, Algoliq, and Buxis. These early years gave him the foundations of technical mastery and the curiosity to push boundaries. As he advanced to roles at Globant, Hexacta, and InAllMedia, he learned to balance architecture with user-centred design, laying the groundwork for his leadership style.



His trajectory expanded internationally through leadership roles at Mobile I Business, Making Sense, Best Day Travel, Salesforce, The Climate Corporation, and SOCi. Along the way, he became known not only for his technical depth but for building high-performing teams that embraced innovation in AI, cloud, and DevOps.

Today, as CTO of Plataforma10, part of Travelier, he is helping redefine intercity travel by harnessing AI to create seamless, user-first experiences. In this exclusive interview with TradeFlock, Diego shares his challenges, achievements, and vision for the future of technology and travel.

What lessons from your past roles have shaped you as a leader?

When I think back, three lessons stand out. One is the importance of technical depth and curiosity. Staying hands-on and asking questions has kept me learning and helped me make decisions that go beyond the surface.

Another comes from working in very different industries and cultures. I've had a front-row seat to big wins and painful failures, and both have shaped how I approach challenges. And maybe the most defining lesson has come from watching other leaders. I've borrowed what felt authentic, avoided what didn't, and along the way I've come to value emotional intelligence and clear communication as the real foundation of strong leadership.

What excites me most are the projects that create value across the entire group.

What's been the toughest challenge in scaling Plataforma10, and how did you overcome it?

The biggest challenge was getting the company technologically ready to scale. That meant modernising our tech stack, making the platform far more robust, and most importantly, building testing environments that could handle everything — from day-to-day operations to complex scenarios like purchases and payment processing.

It took deep technical work, persistence, and a strong sense of teamwork. But because the entire tech team pulled together, we now get to see and enjoy the very real benefits of what we built.

Which ongoing project excites you the most, and why?

As part of Travelier, a global leader in non-air transportation, Plataforma10 works with both local goals and broader group-wide objectives. Finding the right balance is always a challenge.

They are technically demanding, but just as importantly, they call for strong coordination, cross-cultural collaboration, and thoughtful human leadership. Leading these efforts lets me contribute beyond the local level while shaping initiatives with real global impact.

What key skills should Latin American engineers focus on to succeed globally?

I believe we need to shift the narrative. AI is not an adversary; it is our new professor, our quiet mentor. Very soon, companies will not only be hiring coders, but professionals who can think across languages and layers, working side by side with AI as both a creative and technical amplifier.

Success will be less about syntax and more about learning how to collaborate with intelligence itself.

Which travel tech trends are overhyped, and which do you believe will truly reshape intercity travel?

One trend that feels overhyped is the push to add chat interfaces into existing user flows under the promise of simplicity. In practice, layering conversational UI on top of legacy experiences often creates more noise than clarity.

At Plataforma10, we put the user at the centre—not just as the recipient of features, but as the starting point for innovation. Our goal is not to stack on more functions, but to reimagine the entire journey. That's why we are investing in AI as a way to unlock new interactions, deeper personalisation, and real value that goes beyond today's paradigms.

The real transformation in intercity travel will not come from doing more, but from designing less—and doing it better. ♦



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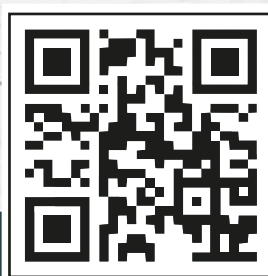
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THE DIGITAL DIVIDE IN SOCIETY

From Exclusion to Empowerment

Technology is more than machines and networks; it is the language of opportunity in our time. At its best, it draws people closer, amplifies unheard voices, and creates spaces where every individual can contribute their ideas and talents. When we speak of the digital divide, we should resist viewing it only as a wall; it can just as powerfully be seen as an invitation to build bridges of inclusion and empowerment.

For underserved communities, families with limited resources, and people living with disabilities, technology is not a luxury; it is a lifeline. Access can mean a child unlocking new ways to learn, a job-seeker stepping into possibilities once closed, or a person with disabilities experiencing independence through thoughtful design. These are not abstract ideals. They are real, human transformations, and they remind us that bridging the digital divide is not about closing gaps, but about opening doors. Consider this: approximately 2.6 billion people worldwide remain offline, and among them, access to digital tools is particularly limited for women, rural populations, and people with disabilities. This is more than a statistic; it is a call to action. It reminds us that:

“Technology's true potential is realized not when it connects the already connected but when it reaches the disconnected, bringing them into the fold of opportunity.”



The path forward is clear and achievable. Universal, affordable internet access must be treated as a cornerstone of modern society. Community-led programs should provide not only devices but also the skills to use them with confidence and creativity. Businesses and innovators have the responsibility to make inclusivity a standard by designing tools and platforms that welcome all users, not just the easiest to reach.

Equally powerful is the idea of digital mentorship: people helping people. When neighbors, elders, and youth pass on knowledge to one another, digital literacy grows into a shared strength. Communities thrive when no one is left behind, and the benefits ripple outward, enriching everyone.

The opportunity before us is profound: by committing to access, literacy, and inclusive design, we can transform technology from a dividing line into common ground. In doing so, every

person, regardless of background or ability, can have a place, a voice, and a future worth shaping.

ASSAF EMERGUI
CIO

SHEKEL (Israeli NPO for Inclusion of People with Disabilities)

BEYOND THE ALGORITHM

Keeping Humanity at the Core of AI

Artificial Intelligence is no longer just a dream. Algorithms are replacing human experts in boardroom meetings, hospital rounds, and more. The transformative power of AI is everywhere. In 2023, a McKinsey report claimed that generative AI alone has the potential to contribute between 2.6 trillion and 4.4 trillion to the global economy annually. However, beneath these impressive statistics, there is a crucial fact: algorithms can

process vast amounts of data, but it is human judgment that will keep the technology in check on behalf of society and ensure it is used responsibly.

The Scale of AI's Economic Promise and Its Boundaries

AI has the potential to transform entire industries. According to McKinsey estimates, sectors such as banking, retail, and healthcare could see productivity increases in double digits. However, technology alone cannot achieve these gains. Such improvements will remain out of reach unless people redesign workflows, establish governance, and interpret AI outputs within real-world contexts. To summarise, AI can streamline processes, but only humans can steer it towards meaningful outcomes.

Adoption is Accelerating, but Governance Trails Behind

The AI rush is in full swing. According to a 2025 IBM study, 51 per cent of CEOs already are incorporating generative AI into their daily routines. However, only 3 per cent of companies believe they are mature AI adopters. That disjuncture indicates a significant issue: as businesses adopt the new tools, few have established the governance frameworks, control systems, and human-in-the-loop solutions needed to deploy AI responsibly. Such a deficiency exposes companies to risks of ethical lapses and regulatory repercussions.

Human Judgment as the Guardrail Against Bias

One of the biggest challenges of AI is bias. Algorithms can

actually contribute to the same inequalities when they are not properly regulated. A survey commissioned by PwC in 2024 revealed that 76% of executives placed responsible AI at the top of their priorities, focusing on transparency and human oversight. This suggests a growing awareness that ethical decisions cannot be delegated solely to machines. People still need to decide what is fair, inclusive, and accountable. While AI can process data rapidly, it can never grasp moral subtleties. It is ultimately up to humans to recognise when a prediction is not only accurate but also just.

Workforces Will Be Enhanced and not Replaced

The idea that AI will eliminate millions of jobs is widely discussed, but the study argues it is more complex. The 2023 Future of Jobs Report by the World Economic Forum stated that AI will be involved in almost half of all work activities. Still, only a small portion of jobs will be entirely eradicated. Instead, most roles will evolve rather than disappear completely. It will be us performing the creative, empathetic, and judgement-heavy tasks, while machines handle the repetitive and routine work. Artificial intelligence is the technology that increases our efficiency, not our unemployment.

Healthcare: The Ultimate Test of Synergy

Healthcare is an area where AI has significant potential and presents both constraints and opportunities. A 2024 survey of AI diagnostic systems shows they can perform as well as,

or even better than, non-expert clinicians on certain imaging tasks. However, AI still lags behind experts when situations become complex, and balancing various factors will be necessary. Experts also worry that over-reliance on AI by physicians might gradually diminish their skills, potentially impairing their ability to handle novel or unusual cases. The compassion, reassurance, and moral judgment that only a human can provide are also valued by patients. This demonstrates that AI can

in control to maintain trust and prevent AI from deviating. Best practices include human-in-the-loop models, leadership oversight by senior leaders and boards, and explainability to make models understandable and open to questioning. Upskilling programs are essential to educate employees on responsibly using AI. It's also vital to assess AI's impact on fairness, sustainability, and community well-being, ensuring AI remains beneficial rather than a blind-faith crutch.

"A survey commissioned by PwC in 2024 revealed that 76% of executives placed responsible AI at the top of their priorities, focusing on transparency and human oversight."

assist but cannot replace the human element in high-stakes environments.

The Creative and Intuitive Edge

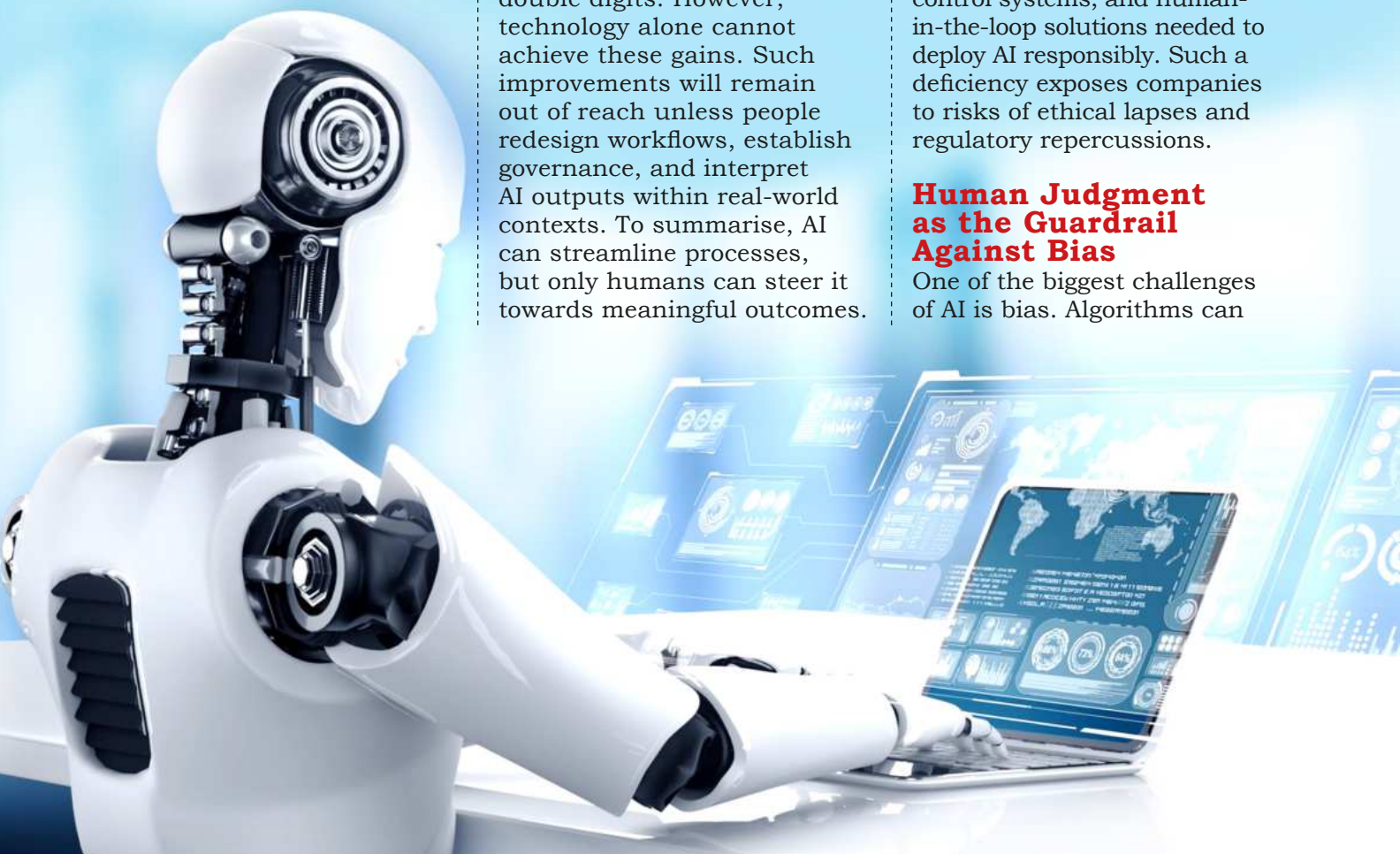
Although AI is quite effective at recognising patterns and rearranging old ideas, it is not yet capable of genuine creativity. Those instincts that connect seemingly unrelated things? That's still a human trait. Companies that harness AI for scaling while allowing humans to brainstorm disruptive ideas often create real game-changers. Good leadership and progress rely on creativity, intuition, and the ability to navigate the unknown.

Designing Systems That Preserve Human Oversight

Firms must establish mechanisms to keep humans

Harnessing AI with Human Values

Trust, accountability, and human connection differentiate strong leadership from algorithms. Technology helps spot problems and predict, but humans must answer, apologise, and act rightly, anchoring institutions with emotion, trust, and accountability, essential for confidence and social cohesion. AI prompts us to rethink work, leadership, and innovation, emphasising collaboration over competition. Effective AI use demands strong governance and human oversight, with wisdom- contextualising, empathising, and upholding values- being our most valuable asset in this partnership, making it fair, trustworthy, and powerful. ♦



**MOST VISIONARY
TECH LEADERS
2025**

The Architect of Embedded Fintech

EDUARDO MARTINEZ GARCIA

Co-Founder & CEO, TOQIO

Navigating the evolving world of fintech requires vision, pragmatism, and dedication towards the field, and very few people come even close to encapsulating all of it. One such person is Eduardo Martinez Garcia. As co-founder and CEO of TOQIO, he is building tools that enable businesses to embed financial services into their platforms with ease and agility. His story is one of entrepreneurial grit, global ambition, and a focus on purposeful innovation.

Early Career: Seeds of Innovation

Eduardo's professional journey began far from the start-up boardrooms of London. After earning an M.Sc. in Engineering from Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, he moved into management consulting with Accenture in 2001. These formative years honed his skills in complex project delivery, corporate transformation, and strategic thinking. He later bolstered his expertise with an Executive MBA from IE Business School, along with specialist certifications in Machine Learning and Design Thinking—tools that would prove invaluable in the fast-changing fintech arena.



By 2009, Eduardo's entrepreneurial instincts were impossible to ignore. He co-founded Olivo, a company aimed at helping businesses achieve their digital ambitions. It was here that he began to experiment with the fusion of technology and customer experience, a combination that would become central to his later ventures.

Five years later, he launched GENIAC, a platform that provided SMEs with an integrated solution for managing everything from HR to compliance. GENIAC's model was built on efficiency and accessibility—principles that Eduardo would carry forward into his next and most influential chapter.

TOQIO: Enabling Embedded Finance

In 2018, Eduardo launched TOQIO, a cloud-based embedded finance platform that empowers corporates to build branded financial services, be it payments, lending, or business accounts, with minimal time and infrastructure. Based in London and serving clients worldwide, TOQIO simplifies the complexity of financial integration into pragmatic digital offerings. Eduardo shared, "Embedded finance is making its way into the corporate ecosystem and is set to reshape the financial landscape completely." He sees a \$3.7 trillion opportunity over five years and believes the shift to embedded finance is not just transformational, but inevitable.

Teaching and Thought Leadership

Beyond enterprise building, Eduardo shares his expertise as an Associate Professor of Digital Transformation and Entrepreneurship at IE University, imparting lessons to the next generation of innovators. He is also an alumnus of IE Business School, holding an Executive MBA, and previously earned an M.Sc. in Engineering from Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, from where his analytical and technical instincts originated. Additionally, he holds certifications in Machine Learning and Design Thinking.

A Voice on Tech and Purpose

Eduardo doesn't just build products, he builds narratives. In a 2024 interview, he praised generative AI as a force for efficiency, particularly in health tech, sharing:

"We have already implemented some solutions in our company which are helping us to drive efficiency... I believe that data and generative AI will be crucial in advancing surgical and medical progress." He emphasises empathy and

imagination as drivers of technology, not just for innovation's sake, but for human good.

When asked about his dream partnership, he said he would love to work with Mahou San Miguel to help bars and restaurants embed finance into their operations. It's a vivid example of how he fuses personal connection with professional aspiration

Leadership Style and Vision

Eduardo's leadership blends ambition with humility. As he put it on LinkedIn following a recent London summit: "What makes these events valuable is the clarity and honesty that happens when experienced people sit down and speak plainly... the future of financial services is not just bank-led or fintech-led, but ecosystem-led."

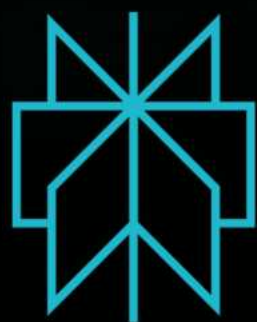
This captures his conviction that collaboration—not competition—is the cornerstone of progress. With so many new companies fighting for their share in the market, sitting together to come up with solutions to the most important challenges is the key to ensure innovation and technological improvement in the industry.

Changing Fintech, Not With Competition, But Collaborations

With TOQIO continuing to expand its reach, Eduardo remains committed to building tools that empower businesses rather than overwhelm them. He envisions a future where financial services are so seamlessly integrated into everyday interactions that they are almost invisible, yet profoundly enabling in tackling the day-to-day operations.

From his engineering roots in Spain to his current role at the helm of one of Europe's most forward-thinking fintech platforms, Eduardo Martinez Garcia embodies the blend of technical precision and human empathy that modern leadership demands. As embedded finance continues to redefine how we transact, save, and invest, his work is shaping not just the industry's trajectory, but the very experience of financial life itself.

Eduardo's journey is a reminder that innovation is not simply about technology. It is about creating ecosystems where people, ideas, and opportunities intersect, and where the tools of finance serve not just markets, but the broader needs of society. To do this, competition is not the only way forward, the collaboration between companies will open new doors previously undreamt of. ♦



perplexity

Redefining Search in the Age of Misinformation

The quest to find relevant and contextual information is becoming more complex in the ever-expanding digital world. Search engines, which serve as gateways to the vast world of knowledge, are under increasing pressure to meet changing user demands. Perplexity AI is now recognised as one of the most disruptive players in the artificial intelligence and search landscape as part of this shift. Arguably transforming how we find, read, and trust information, Perplexity AI was launched in 2022 as an alternative to traditional search by combining conversational AI, generative intelligence, and verified sources into a seamless experience.

From Curiosity to Innovation

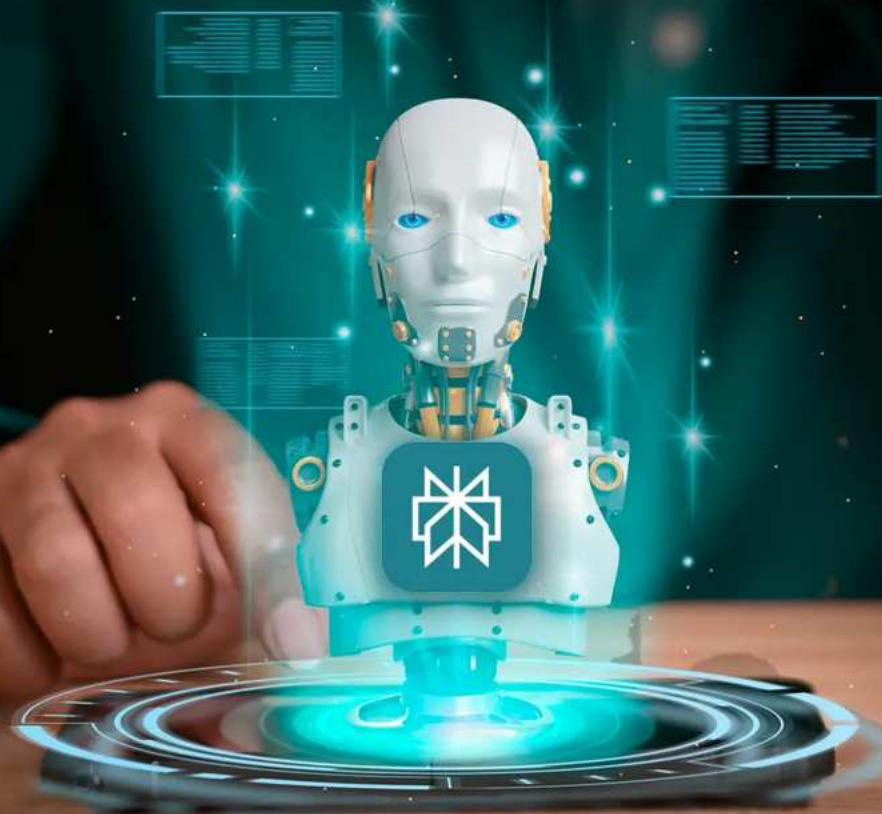
A simple yet powerful vision led to the creation of Perplexity AI: to make knowledge access more intuitive, trustworthy, and human-centric. Its founders, including former staff from OpenAI, Meta, and Quora, recognised that the world needed a new way to search the web, one that provided clear, evidence-based answers instead of just a long list of links.

The company quickly gained momentum, securing significant venture capital funding and drawing attention as a challenger to Google's search dominance. A strong focus on user experience, transparency, and advanced AI models for question-answering has driven its rapid growth.

The Perplexity Experience

Compared to traditional search engines, Perplexity AI eliminates the need for

users to browse through different websites and web pages to search for information. Instead, it offers concise, conversational responses supported by quoted references. This is especially important in the era of misinformation, where trust in online content can quickly erode. When a user asks Perplexity a question, whether it's about a scientific study, breaking news, or a niche topic, the answer is delivered in a clear, well-



organised format with clickable links. It combines the depth of a research assistant with the ease of a chatbot, making knowledge both immediate and verifiable.

AI at the Core

The core of Perplexity AI is its own natural language processing (NLP) technology, which is based on large language models and retrieval-augmented generation. This combination is designed so that the answers are not only created but also based on current, factual information. Perplexity, unlike standalone chatbots that can hallucinate or create facts, is directly connected to trustworthy sources, which minimises the risk of false information.

Additionally, it features a conversational interface that enables users to explore queries further, ask follow-up questions, and refine their search in real-time, much like engaging with a knowledgeable human researcher.

Growth and Adoption

Soon after its launch, Perplexity gained millions of active users worldwide. It gained popularity in 2023-2024 when people, including students, journalists, and professionals, sought more trusted alternatives to traditional search engines and generic AI assistants. The platform's appeal lies in its simplicity and accuracy, two qualities that most mainstream search experiences lack. In addition to being free, Perplexity also introduced a Pro version, which offers additional features, including the ability to utilise multiple

LLMs, advanced reasoning capabilities, and API integrations for enterprise clients. This dual approach, catering to both casual users and professionals, has made Perplexity more than just a consumer tool; it has also become a business solution.

Perplexity vs. Traditional Search

The emergence of Perplexity AI represents a paradigm shift in how we conceptualise information retrieval. Although Google remains the top search engine in the industry, its system is primarily a link-based engine where ads are

"Compared to traditional search engines, Perplexity AI eliminates the need for users to browse through different websites and web pages to search for information."

its main revenue source. Conversely, Perplexity is ad-free, conversation-based, and evidence-supported, offering a better experience that is cleaner and more reliable.

This does not mean that Perplexity is out to replace Google. Rather, it is a different route, one that prioritises quality (accuracy, usability, and credibility) over quantity. The design of this site reflects a fundamental truth: in a world overwhelmed with information, quality matters more than quantity.

Challenges and Ethical Considerations

Perplexity faces several challenges despite its rapid growth. Like all AI-based platforms, it must address biases in training data by utilising diverse and representative sources to prevent skewed responses. Additionally, regulatory scrutiny is increasing worldwide, with governments closely monitoring AI tools, particularly regarding the use of information and the dissemination of misinformation. Scalability remains a critical issue as demand for higher speed, accuracy, and transparency continues to grow. Moreover, Perplexity needs to continually strengthen its trust proposition, which sets it apart from others. If its sources or citations are ever questioned, the platform risks losing its exclusive advantage.

A Brand Built on Trust and Clarity

The story of Perplexity AI celebrates how technology can change the way we access knowledge. It has carved out its own niche in a crowded AI market by prioritising clarity over clutter, evidence over assumptions, and conversation over links. Perplexity sets a new standard for information that is easily accessible, transparent, and verifiable, particularly for students seeking quick answers, journalists searching for credible sources, or businesses requiring accurate information. In an era where AI offers potential and misinformation causes deception, Perplexity AI hints at what the future of intelligent search should be: curious, trustworthy, and friendly. ♦

ERIK EKUDDEN

CTO, Ericsson

With increasingly connected world, the networking and telecommunications industry grapples with monumental challenges, including the relentless demand for ultra-fast 5G connectivity amid spectrum shortages, the integration of AI to manage exploding data volumes from billions of IoT devices, and the push for sustainable networks that don't drain the planet's resources, leaders who can steer through the turbulence are rare gems. Enter Erik Ekudden, the unassuming Swedish visionary who's been at the helm of Ericsson's technological ship since 2017. As Group Chief Technology Officer (CTO), Ekudden has weathered these storms and charted new courses, blending AI with mobile networks to create smarter, greener systems that power everything from autonomous factories to virtual reality experiences. His approach? Collaborative innovation, drawing on decades of hands-on research to turn industry pain points into opportunities, ensuring telecom connects us and propels society forward.

The Roots of a Tech Pioneer

Born in 1968 in Sweden, Ekudden's journey into the world of technology began with a spark of curiosity about how signals could

He champions "innovator's heaven," as he calls it in analyst events, encouraging experimentation in AI-powered 5G and mission-critical networks.

bridge distances. Growing up in a country renowned for its engineering prowess, he pursued a Master of Science in Electrical Engineering at the KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm. Graduating in the early 1990s, he entered a telecom landscape on the cusp of revolution, the shift from analogue to digital mobile systems. It was a time when mobile phones were bulky novelties, and the internet was still in its infancy.

Ekudden joined Ericsson in 1993 as a researcher in mobile systems, diving headfirst into the nitty-gritty of signal processing and network architecture. Those early days weren't glamorous; they involved long hours in labs, tinkering with prototypes and simulating network behaviours. But for Ekudden, it was exhilarating, a chance to build the invisible highways that would soon carry voices, data, and dreams across the globe.

Innovations that Redefined Connectivity

His early career at Ericsson was marked by a steady climb through roles that honed his expertise in research and strategy. Starting as a mobile systems researcher, he quickly rose to become a research area director, where he

led teams exploring cutting-edge multimedia functionalities. Imagine the thrill of pioneering features that would become staples in today's smartphones: high-quality video calls, seamless streaming, and even early experiments in virtual and augmented reality for mobile devices.

Ekudden's work in the 1990s and early 2000s laid foundational stones for these technologies, collaborating closely with global partners to standardise them. By the mid-2000s, he was appointed Vice President of Standardisation, a role that thrust him into the international arena, negotiating with industry giants to shape the standards for 3G and 4G networks. These weren't abstract exercises; they directly influenced how billions access information today, making mobile internet reliable and ubiquitous.

Ekudden joined Ericsson in 1993 as a researcher in mobile systems, diving headfirst into the nitty-gritty of signal processing and network architecture. Those early days weren't glamorous; they involved long hours in labs, tinkering with prototypes and simulating network behaviours.

Ekudden's contributions to Ericsson have been profound, transforming the company from a hardware-focused player into a leader in software-defined, AI-enhanced networks. During his tenure as Head of Standardisation and Industry, he spearheaded initiatives that accelerated the adoption of 5G, working hand-in-hand with customers to deploy systems capable of handling massive data loads with minimal latency. His teams' innovations in distributed cloud and IoT have enabled industries like manufacturing and healthcare to operate more efficiently, think remote surgeries powered by ultra-reliable connections or smart grids that optimise energy use.

Relocating to Santa Clara, California, in 2010 as CTO Americas, Ekudden immersed himself in Silicon Valley's innovation ecosystem, forging partnerships that infused Ericsson with fresh ideas on AI and machine learning. Upon

returning to Kista, Sweden, in 2017 as Group CTO and Head of Technology and Architecture, he unified these insights into Ericsson's global strategy, emphasising sustainable tech that reduces carbon footprints while boosting performance. His vision has driven investments in 6G research, positioning Ericsson at the forefront of next-gen connectivity. Under his guidance, Ericsson's networks now support AI-driven optimisations, like predictive maintenance that prevents outages, saving operators millions and enhancing user experiences worldwide.

Recognition for a Quiet Revolutioniser

While Ekudden shies away from the spotlight, his impact hasn't gone unrecognised. He's a member and vice chair of the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences (IVA), a prestigious body that advises on tech policy. Since 2020, he's contributed to the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development, advocating for inclusive digital access to bridge global divides. In 2024, he joined the TM Forum board, influencing open digital frameworks for the industry. Though not laden with flashy awards, these roles underscore his stature as a thought leader, peers often cite his interviews and sessions at events like MWC, where he demystifies complex topics like AI-5G integration. His relocation stories and collaborative ethos humanise him; colleagues describe him as approachable, always ready with a coffee and a whiteboard sketch to solve problems.

The Human Heart of High-Tech

As a leader, Ekudden embodies quiet determination blended with global perspective. His seven years in the US taught him the value of diverse teams, fostering an inclusive culture at Ericsson where ideas flow freely across borders. He champions "innovator's heaven," as he calls it in analyst events, encouraging experimentation in AI-powered 5G and mission-critical networks. Ekudden's style is human-centred: he prioritises ethical AI, ensuring tech serves people, not the other way around. In interviews, he speaks passionately about connectivity's role in sustainable development, drawing from personal experiences like witnessing VR's potential in education. This blend of technical acumen and empathy has inspired generations of engineers, making Ericsson a beacon for talent. ♦

29 SEPTEMBER 1923

—PINNACLE OF EXPANSION—

September 29, 1923, marks a significant moment in history as the British Empire reached its maximum geographical extent. On this day, the Union Jack flew not only over government buildings but also across banking halls, trade records, and global supply chains.

This empire represented more than mere territorial control; it was a vast business enterprise operating on a global scale. The British Empire peaked at 13.71 million square miles, encompassing nearly a quarter of the world's land and governing one in every five people on Earth. However, behind the maps adorned in red lay a complex system of resource extraction, market dominance, and military power. While celebrations erupted in Britain, the global economy responded with a mix of admiration and rising tension.

The Rise of an Imperial Superstructure

The British Empire reached its peak in 1923 after three centuries of strategic expansion and commercial dominance. It started with the East India Company in 1600, transforming trade into territorial control. By the 18th century, military victories secured vital colonies like India and Canada, establishing a global footprint.



The 19th century marked rapid growth fueled by the Industrial Revolution and maintained by the Royal Navy's Pax Britannica, a period of peace that kept markets accessible. After World War I, Britain acquired new territories through League of Nations mandates. By September 1923, the Empire was the largest in history, controlling resources, routes, and a fifth of the world's population.

The Imperial Playmakers

The British Empire functioned similarly to a large multinational corporation, with King George V serving as its symbolic figurehead, akin to

a corporate chairman. Actual decision-making authority rested with Parliament and the Colonial Office, which shaped imperial policies and prioritised profit. At the core was the East India Company, originally a trading entity that evolved into a dominant economic and military power, combining commerce with conquest and transforming global trade into a tool for territorial growth, laying the foundation for Britain's international influence.

Supporting this extensive system was a network of specialised agents: civil servants acted as administrative managers ensuring effective governance;

missionaries served as cultural consultants to influence local identities in line with imperial aims; and merchants, functioning as financial managers, sustained the economy by managing trade and capital. Together, they kept the empire's machinery operational, ensuring Britain's global enterprise was both credible and prosperous.

Economic Footprint of Empire

The British Empire extended beyond political authority; it functioned as a global business network centered around resource extraction, financial influence, and cultural reach. Colonies provided raw materials such as cotton, rubber, gold, and sugar, which Britain processed and resold, creating a self-sustaining economy primarily focused on British profits.

The pound sterling was the dominant currency for trade within the empire, with London establishing itself as a leading global financial center. Soft power through language,

education, and customs helped sustain control, making English a means of social mobility. Infrastructure projects like railways and ports mainly supported resource extraction rather than local development; for example, in India, 90% of railway profits were sent back to Britain.

However, widespread inequality caused famines, land seizures, and economic dependence, leading to resistance movements ranging from Gandhi's nonviolent protests to the Mau Mau uprising. The empire's expansion was fueled by exploitation and was not hindered by it.

Governance-Driven Socio-Economic Realignment

On 29 September 1923, the beginning of British and French mandates marked a key change in colonial governance with significant socio-economic effects. In Palestine, British officials acted as policy planners, encouraging more Jewish

immigration, which upset the local social balance.

Simultaneously, infrastructure projects like railways and ports were mainly aimed at supporting imperial logistics and trade. In Syria and Lebanon, the French mandate functioned like a cultural franchise, revamping public institutions and promoting French language and values to create a loyal managerial class, while also shifting agricultural and industrial output to fit the economic supply chains of the homeland.

At the same time, Mussolini's move to refund 10 million lire to Greece served as both a reputation boost and a liquidity boost, providing social capital by helping refugees and stimulating local economies amid instability.

Looking Beyond the Surface

The events of September 29, 1923, show how post-World War I mandates and reparations acted as strategic tools, reshaping political borders, reorganising societal structures, and recalibrating regional economies to serve European imperial goals.

These colonial governance systems created economic dependence and reinforced social hierarchies, while also fostering the development of national identities and grassroots resistance. This complex legacy not only changed the geopolitical landscape but also laid the groundwork for long-lasting socio-economic divisions and political instability, which continued to influence history, Middle Eastern market trends, and governance issues for years to come. ♦



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The British Empire peaked at 13.71 million square miles, encompassing nearly a quarter of the world's land and governing one in every five people on Earth.

**MOST VISIONARY
TECH LEADERS
2025**

Turning Complex AI Into Ethical Business Impact

MAHESH DEVALLA

Chief Technology Officer,
PlayersHealth



Artificial intelligence has moved from hype to hard reality, transforming how businesses innovate, scale, and compete. The technology is no longer just about automating tasks; it is about reimagining entire industries and creating new sources of value. Redefining the possibilities with AI is Mahesh Devalla, Chief Technology Officer of PlayersHealth. He is recognised as CTO of the Year and ranked among the Top AI 100 Leaders and a Dartmouth alumnus.

Over the past decade, he has helped architect enterprise-scale AI platforms at organisations such as Citi, Bank of America, American Water, and Hexagon, consistently turning complex visions into business impact. His career blends engineering precision with strategic foresight, enabling billion-dollar enterprises to adopt AI responsibly and at scale. Today, as Chief Technology Officer of Players Health, he is pioneering technologies that safeguard athletes while driving growth. In an exclusive conversation with TradeFlock, he reflects on the future of AI, leadership, and responsible innovation.

Q You call yourself someone who turns complex AI visions into billion-dollar realities. What was the turning point?

The true inflection point in my journey came when I was leading an AI initiative for a large-scale transformation. Many believed the problem was too complex and the timelines far too ambitious. I chose not to retreat but to anchor myself in clarity of vision, disciplined execution, and the collective strength of diverse perspectives. What was once dismissed as unrealistic became a working solution that fundamentally reshaped how the business operated. That experience affirmed for me that bold ideas, when pursued with courage and precision, can be transformed into billion-dollar realities.

On a personal level, that moment also tested my resilience. There were nights when doubt felt heavier than vision, yet I learned that leadership is not about having all the answers but about showing up with conviction even in uncertainty. From then on, I no

longer viewed AI as a collection of algorithms. I began to see it as a force capable of reimagining industries and unlocking human potential. That realisation continues to guide how I innovate and lead today.

Q When did your vision challenge convention and create a breakthrough?

One example that stands out was when I proposed using AI not as a tool to optimise existing workflows but as the foundation technology to reimagine them entirely. At first, there was resistance because it meant abandoning long-held assumptions about how the business should operate. I pushed forward with conviction, demonstrating that technology could be more than an incremental improvement. The solution we delivered not only outperformed expectations but also changed the narrative within the organisation, proving that disruption is often the path to lasting value.

That experience reinforced my belief that true leadership lies in the courage to challenge norms, even when the easier path is to conform.

Q What's the biggest gap in India's AI ecosystem, and how can it be fixed?

The greatest gap I see is not in talent or ambition but in the ability to scale. Many startups build remarkable prototypes, yet they struggle to transition into sustainable businesses that can compete globally. What is often missing is the bridge between innovation and disciplined execution.

This very theme is central to my book *The AI Dilemma: Why Businesses Fail to Embrace AI*, where I share insights on why businesses struggle with adoption and what it takes to turn ideas into lasting impact. I continue expanding on these ideas through my platforms ai-brief.com and maheshdevalla.com, which serve as spaces to connect with innovators, leaders, and visionaries across the globe. I believe this gap can be closed by fostering stronger mentorship, creating ecosystems that encourage collaboration over isolation, and ensuring access to capital that rewards long-term vision rather than short-term gains.

My mission is to help the next generation of innovators think globally from day one, so their impact is not confined to a local market but felt across industries worldwide.

Q What was your toughest decision as CTO on responsible adoption?

The most challenging decisions are often the ones where speed collides with responsibility. I once had the option to accelerate an AI deployment that could have created immediate business value, but I recognised the potential risks in fairness and transparency. Choosing to delay was unpopular in the short term, yet it was the right decision for the long term.

That moment taught me that leadership is not about choosing what is convenient but about safeguarding trust. Responsible adoption requires us to balance innovation with ethics, ensuring that the pursuit of progress never comes at the cost of integrity.

Q How do you stay ahead of fast-moving tech while staying ethical?

I stay at the forefront by combining two practices: constant learning and conscious reflection. I immerse myself in emerging technologies, research, and global dialogues, but I also step back to ask how each breakthrough aligns with human values. That balance ensures that I am not just adopting new tools, but shaping them in ways that serve society responsibly. I balance this with deliberate reflection, asking not only whether a technology can be built but whether it should be built. That discipline helps me approach innovation with both excitement and restraint.

Writing my book, *The AI Dilemma: Why Businesses Fail to Embrace AI*, was a deeply personal part of this journey. It gave me the space to reflect on my own experiences and articulate why responsibility must travel alongside progress. I continue that dialogue through ai-brief.com and maheshdevalla.com, not as abstract ideas but as lived practices that shape how I lead and how I encourage others to adopt technology. For me, innovation without ethics is incomplete, and progress without humanity is never true progress. ♦

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INNOVATE OR IMITATE?

Why Smart Leaders Know When to Invent and When to Adapt

Innovation has been celebrated as the lifeblood of the technology industry, but the reality is more complex. While giants of Silicon Valley such as Apple and Google are praised as leaders of innovation, much of the tech world operates on the edge of innovation and imitation. Replication or strategic adaptation has allowed companies to surpass their competitors, localise global products, and grow rapidly. The true leadership challenge in tech isn't about whether to innovate or imitate, but about knowing when to do which.

The Dual Engines of Tech Progress

Technology ecosystems operate through two main engines: innovation and imitation. Innovation involves creating new products, business models, or technologies from scratch. Meanwhile, imitation entails borrowing, modifying, and replicating successful ideas, often improving upon them in the process. This dynamic is evident in the smartphone industry. For example, the iPhone was the first to adopt the smartphone-as-platform concept in 2007. Over the following years, companies like Samsung, Huawei, and Xiaomi introduced their own versions, innovating

in areas such as pricing, hardware design, and regional customisation. Today, this interplay of innovation and imitation has led to a more diverse and thriving market, demonstrating how both strategies mutually reinforce each other.

When Innovation Is Non-Negotiable.

Companies must innovate to succeed, particularly during periods of platform shifts and industry changes. Microsoft's shift to the cloud with Azure focuses on innovative hybrid solutions, rather than merely copying

AWS. Meanwhile, Apple has improved the user experience with features like the App Store and Face ID, setting new industry standards. Frontier technologies, such as quantum computing, AI, and autonomous vehicles, require pioneering efforts from leaders like Google and IBM, who invest heavily in R&D. Innovation helps secure first-mover advantages, patents, and brand leadership.

When Imitation Wins

Imitation often gets a bad rap, but in technology, it can be a smart move when done carefully rather than recklessly. For example, Chinese companies like Xiaomi and Oppo built their businesses by copying Apple and Samsung, then focusing on affordability and local needs. They didn't invent smartphones, but made them more accessible in developing markets. Similarly, Grab and Gojek in Southeast Asia were basically Uber clones that adapted to local conditions, such as cash economies, motorbikes for first-mile logistics, and regional commuting habits, which made them more successful than the original in their markets. For startups, imitation helps lower R&D risks and capital costs, letting them concentrate on scaling, distribution, and acquiring

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customers. When used strategically, imitation can create ecosystems that benefit more consumers and speed up industry growth.

The Blended Approach: Innovating on Top of Imitation

Successful tech competitors often blend imitation with innovation, mimicking core ideas but innovating how they deliver them. Facebook/Meta expanded Snapchat Stories across Instagram and WhatsApp, reaching billions of users. Tesla, while not the first electric car maker, excelled with advanced batteries, seamless software, and direct sales, making EVs mainstream. TikTok popularised short videos, thanks to its innovative AI recommendation engine, and gained global fame. This imitate-then-innovate approach proves more sustainable than relying solely on imitation or innovation.

The Risks of Over-Innovation

Innovation without market awareness can lead to

mistakes. Google Glass was innovative but unsuccessful because people were not ready to adopt the wearable AR. The danger of over-innovation is that it can harm users, waste money, and result in unsold technology. A study by McKinsey on digital disruption found that only 10-15 percent of radical innovations succeed commercially, while incremental improvements, often based on imitation, offer more predictable returns. For most tech firms, it is safest to be innovative in select areas and copy what is already tested and proven.

The Dangers of Pure Imitation

On the other hand, companies that just imitate without differentiating face the risk of becoming commoditised. The issue with Smartphone manufacturers that copy and fail to innovate in terms of functionality is that they ultimately engage in price wars with very thin margins. The Amazon marketplace is similar: it is also flooded with copycat products, but only brands that introduce

something new in the customer experience or a niche value succeed in the long run. Imitation is unsustainable because it erodes brand equity and keeps companies stuck in a perpetual cycle of trying to catch up.

Innovation and Imitation as Complements

The technology world does not thrive on the false duality of innovation and imitation, but on their combination. Breakthroughs are driven by innovation, while mass adoption, accessibility, and iterative improvements are fueled by imitation. Future leaders will not be those who always innovate or always imitate, but those who recognise when to do each. They will be trained to know when and where to lead in new frontiers, when to adopt best practices, and when to merge the two into scalable, sustainable strategies. In technology, being first is not always crucial; knowing when to be first and when to follow can often determine the winner in the final race. ♦





MOST VISIONARY TECH LEADERS 2025

An Innovative Leader of Lasting Change

MOHAMMED SIBGATHULLAH KHAN

**Director of Information Technology,
National Petrochemical Industrial Company**

Tech is evolving fast. So fast that it keeps senior leaders on their toes to stay ahead and future-ready. In an era of what feels like permanent upheaval, where businesses cannot afford to dwell on issues or hesitate over decisions, leaders like Mohammed Sibgathullah Khan, Director of Information Technology at National Petrochemical Industrial Company, are defining the path forward.

With over 17 years at NATPET, he has risen from Network & Security Administrator to IT Director, leading major digital transformation initiatives, SAP ERP rollouts, AI-driven analytics & security solutions, and cloud migrations. His track record spans building ICT infrastructure from the ground up, steering cybersecurity strategies, and ensuring business continuity in a mission-critical industry. Recognised for uniting technical mastery with strategic vision, he has made technology a true enabler of resilience & innovation and is currently managing & leading five entities.

In an exclusive conversation with TradeFlock, Sibgathullah opens up about his journey, the hidden challenges of petrochemical IT, and the bold vision driving his next chapter.

You began as a Network & Security Administrator and is now Director of IT. What has this journey taught you about growth, resilience, and reinvention?

It's been a transformative climb—from hands-



on network work to leading IT strategy. Growth, I've learned, isn't just about promotions; it's about expanding perspective, taking responsibility, and helping others rise.

Resilience came from navigating constant change, unexpected issues, and evolving cyber threats—staying calm under pressure and keeping long-term goals in sight. Reinvention meant shifting from technical problem-solving to big-picture leadership—unlearning habits, embracing new tools, and aligning tech with business impact. Today, I value people as much as systems and see technology as a force for meaningful change.

What IT challenges in petrochemical manufacturing do outsiders rarely understand, and how do you tackle them?

One of the most complex issues is the convergence of IT and OT.

Petrochemical plants rely on legacy control systems that run nonstop and were never built with cybersecurity in mind. Connecting them to IT networks boosts data visibility but also raises serious risks. Equally challenging are strict regulatory and safety requirements. Every solution must meet business goals while complying with environmental, health, and safety standards, as well as national cybersecurity frameworks like Saudi Arabia's NCA standards. Mistakes can have serious operational and safety consequences.

Cybersecurity here is high stakes — a breach could halt production or cause hazardous incidents. In petrochemical manufacturing, IT and OT must work together without risking security. My approach is to design secure IT/OT integration, segment networks, use continuous risk assessments and AI-driven monitoring, work closely with operations teams, and build a strong cybersecurity culture through training and simulations. I also invest in redundancy and disaster recovery to keep systems running no matter what.

What was the most difficult digital transformation project you've led, and how did you navigate it?

Migrating from a legacy on-prem ERP to SAP

S/4HANA in the cloud was the toughest. It touched every part of the business—finance, supply chain, operations, compliance—while demanding tight timelines, minimal downtime, and strict regulatory adherence, including ZATCA e-invoicing and national cybersecurity standards.

We formed a cross-functional steering committee, kept communication constant, ran multiple mock cutovers, and trained users thoroughly. In projects of this scale, success depends as much on people as on technology. The result was a smooth go-live, streamlined processes, and real-time insights that brought the entire operation closer together.

What's the most misunderstood aspect of being an IT Director in a mission-critical, round-the-clock industry like petrochemicals?

People think it is just about keeping systems running, but in petrochemicals, IT is protecting operations, safety, and continuity. A cyber incident or downtime can halt production, breach compliance, and even create safety risks. The job means real-time decisions, constant coordination with OT teams, and relentless vigilance. Here, IT is not a back-office function—it is the heartbeat of the operation.

Looking back at your career and ahead to the future, what legacy do you hope to leave as a tech leader and as a human being?

My journey has taken me from fixing systems to shaping strategies that drive resilience and innovation. As a tech leader, I want to be remembered for building secure, future-ready systems that empower people to work smarter, safer, and more efficiently—making technology a true enabler of progress.

As a person, I hope my legacy is about mentoring others, leading with integrity, and valuing the people behind the systems. Success is not just what you build, but how you bring people along with you. In the end, I want to leave a balance of technical excellence and human connection, because in leadership, both matter equally. ♦

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GEN Z UPRISING ROCKS NEPAL

From Social Media Ban to Political Crisis

The year 2025 turned out to be the scene of an unprecedented youth rebellion in Nepal. Jolted by government policies that are viewed by many as excessive, most notably a ban on large social media providers, the Gen Z protests have quickly transformed into a mass movement that is demanding an end to corruption, accountability in governance, and economic opportunity. The political terrain of Nepal is changing, and these effects are being experienced at all levels of society, as tensions are rising.

The Trigger: Social Media Ban and Online Outrage

On September 4, 2025, the Nepal government ordered 26 social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, X (formerly Twitter), and Snapchat, to register under stricter terms or face blocking. The platforms missed the deadline, leading to a ban aimed at curbing misinformation and abuse. Many young people saw it as censorship, not effective control.

Online outrage grew with hashtags like #NepoBabyNepal and #GenZNepal condemning nepotism, political elites' privileges, and disparities between elites and the poor. This cyber rage spilt into the streets in Kathmandu, Pokhara, Biratnagar, and other towns, with thousands, mainly students, protesting with banners like 'Youth

against corruption' and 'Bring back social media'.

From Screen to Street: Protests Escalate

Initially, protests were peaceful in places like Maitighar in Kathmandu, led by youth groups such as Hami Nepal. Organisers used social media, even banned ones, to arrange meetings. However, when protesters entered Parliament and broke police lines, violence erupted. The government responded with tear gas, water cannons, rubber bullets, and live fire in some areas. At least 19 deaths and hundreds of injuries were reported during clashes, confirmed by officials.

Curfews were imposed across towns, Kathmandu, and Pokhara, with military guarding streets, shutting stores and offices, turning some districts into chaos. As images and videos of bloodied protesters circulated globally,

the government lost control of the narrative, increasing internal and external pressure.

Political Consequences: Quitting and Organisational Crisis.

The administration of Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, which was increasingly becoming scrutinised, became the target. Coupled with the calls to resign, the opposition side demanded the dissolution of Parliament, the prosecution of officials, and the release of protesters held in custody.

After the turmoil, Oli and several ministers resigned, though there is still no political stability. The movement of protests has also raised the debate about the interim leadership, which would be headed by people such as the former Chief Justice, Sushila Karki. Gen Z leaders are said to have held talks with the military.

Underlying Causes: Corruption, Economic Anxiety, and Generational Divide

Though the social media ban sparked protests, underlying dissatisfaction was growing. Nepali youth are frustrated with high unemployment, limited opportunities, and corruption among elites and political nepotism. The 'nepo baby' trend highlighted children of powerful politicians flaunting wealth, while services and jobs remain scarce for ordinary people. Many protesters

Social Media, Messaging and Mobilisation.

It took ingenuity to organise the protests. Despite prohibitions and online censorship, Gen Z protesters resorted to alternative methods such as live streams, VPNs, and offline networks to coordinate themselves. These activists had been digitalising for years, but this was the moment when the keyboard was truly put to use. Protest safety, crowd behaviour, and route planning were managed by groups like Gen.Z Nepal and Hami Nepal.

The Cost: Lives, Liberty, and Policy Change

The human cost has been high. Estimates show that at least 30 people died (including protesters and police), and there were more than 1,000 arrests. Different buildings, such as Parliament and government offices, were attacked. Ordinary life was disrupted by curfews. Air travel and air traffic were suspended.

This social media ban was later lifted when most of the pressure had built up and the government realised it had underestimated the people's anger. The questions still concern accountability. Activists are seeking investigations into the use of force; some demand the resignation of officials, reparation for the victims, and broader reforms. The fact remains that people may forget the government's promises if they shift their attention elsewhere.

Gen Z's Moment in Nepal

In 2025, Gen Z protests go beyond street demonstrations, marking a break-even point: they oppose censorship, government control, and traditional elitism. Sparked by digital platform policies, Nepalese youth mobilise against corruption, demanding accountability and opportunity, disrupting politics.

Nepal is at a crossroads; current efforts, crackdowns, dialogue, and reform will determine if protests lead to lasting change or political stagnation. For Gen Z, Nepal is their country; they seek a government that not only tolerates but inspires trust. ♦



wonder why the government prioritises censoring speech over improving living standards.

Economic pressures are urgent; rising inflation has worsened living conditions, making education and housing unaffordable for many. Some depend on remittances abroad, but this balance may shift. The protests reflect a generation demanding real justice, not just online symbols.

Uniforms, books, and school schedules became symbols. Supported by celebrities and political figures in opposition, their role was more about showing solidarity than providing leadership. The movement emphasised independence from political parties and aimed to maintain credibility by remaining youth-led.

AI IN
HR

From Buzzword to
Business Backbone

Anam Irfan

Chief People Officer
byteSpark.ai

Walk into any meeting today and the conversation will eventually land on two letters: AI. For some, it's a futuristic buzzword. For others, it's already reshaping how they attract, engage, and retain talent. In truth, artificial intelligence has quietly woven itself into every stage of the employee lifecycle, sometimes as an invisible assistant, sometimes as a bold disruptor. The real question is no longer "Is AI ready for HR?" but rather "Are we ready to use it wisely?"

From Sourcing to Success: The Frontline of AI in Recruitment

Recruitment is where AI's promise becomes most visible. Intelligent algorithms can scan thousands of CVs in seconds, removing biased language and predicting a candidate's likelihood of success. In pilot programs, gender bias in

shortlisting has dropped by 40%, while quality of hire has improved by over 20%.

At byteSpark.ai, we've seen mid-sized companies slash their time-to-short list by 50%, reduce interviewer hours by 35%, and boost candidate satisfaction simply by automating the painful bottlenecks. No more CV black holes, just faster, fairer, and more human hiring.

And let's be honest: if AI can take away the late-night CV sifting, I'll happily trade that time for a coffee chat with my team. After all, Excel sheets never say thank you, but people do!!

Beyond Day One: Smarter Onboarding & Employee Services

The first 90 days often determine whether a new hire stays or strays. AI-powered assistants now automate up to 65% of paperwork, answer FAQs around the clock, and track new-hire sentiment with 71% accuracy, flagging risks early.

Imagine joining a company where your forms are pre-filled, your chatbot answers policy questions at midnight, and your HRBP has time to take you for coffee instead of chasing signatures. That's not just efficiency; it's empathy with Wi-Fi.

Learning Reimagined: From Courses to Curated Journeys

Traditional training often feels like a one-size-fits-none exercise. AI changes that by analysing an employee's role, performance, and aspirations to build personalised learning paths.

Completion rates rise by nearly 50%, while adaptive learning cuts training time by 30%.

For leaders, this means moving from "mandatory modules" to meaningful, continuous learning ecosystems. Platforms like Degreed, LinkedIn Learning, and EdCast aren't just delivering courses, they're delivering confidence, at scale.

As someone who once sat through a three-hour "Excel Basics" course even though I'd been living in spreadsheets for a decade, I can confirm: one-size learning fits no one. AI finally makes learning feel like Netflix for careers: recommended just for you.



Fairer, Faster, Smarter Performance Management

Few topics are as dreaded as performance reviews. But AI is shifting them from annual stress tests to continuous growth systems. Natural Language Processing (NLP) tools detect biased language in reviews, cutting gender-biased phrasing by 35%. Machine learning models flag struggling employees early, while surfacing high-potential talent before they're overlooked.

Done well, AI in performance is less about surveillance and more about spotlighting strengths, closing equity gaps, and ensuring feedback truly fuels growth.

Rewards, Recognition, and the Equity Equation

Pay transparency is no longer optional, it's demanded. AI-driven compensation benchmarking now aligns salaries with the market at 92% accuracy, while organisations using AI tools have reduced unexplained pay gaps by 41% in two years.

Recognition is where data meets dignity. AI might suggest the "right" gift card, but the magic still happens in the moment you look someone in the eye and say, "You mattered." Tech can amplify that, but it should never replace it.

Listening at Scale: Engagement & Culture

The "employee voice" is no longer captured in annual surveys alone. AI processes unstructured feedback, from Slack threads to exit interviews, detecting early signs of disengagement or attrition.

With 79% accuracy, AI models can predict flight risks up to nine months in advance.

Think of it as HR's sixth sense, without the horror movie vibe. Instead of "I see dead people," it's "I see disengaged employees." The good news? You can act before it's too late.

Offboarding, Alumni, and the Long Tail of Talent

Even goodbyes matter. AI tools now analyse exit interviews, distinguishing between what's said and what's meant. Alumni engagement platforms keep connections alive, turning former employees into "boomerang hires." Companies using AI-powered alumni systems report rehiring top performers at 2.5x the normal rate.

In a world where talent is scarce, nurturing alumni isn't sentimental, it's strategic.

Guardrails: Ethics, Empathy, and HR's Role

Of course, AI isn't magic. It amplifies whatever data and processes you feed it. If your HR data is messy, AI won't fix it, it will simply make the mess faster. That's why leaders must pair AI adoption with strong ethical guardrails: bias audits, transparency, and a relentless focus on trust.

HR's role, then, is twofold:

>> The Translator: turning business problems into AI solutions with clear KPIs and ROI.

>> The Conscience: ensuring every AI tool serves both the business and the people.

If it doesn't check both boxes, it doesn't go live.

My rule of thumb? If the chatbot ever approves a salary

increase for the office coffee machine, we've gone too far.

The Human + Machine Future

Here's the truth: AI won't replace HR. But HR leaders who embrace AI will replace those who don't. The future isn't HR vs AI, it's HR with AI.

To thrive, HR professionals must become AI-literate, not as coders but as translators,

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able to test workflows, question outputs, and connect data to dignity.

At byteSpark.ai, I've seen the skepticism melt into excitement the moment leaders witness AI solving real problems. Because when AI takes away the repetitive, what's left is what we do best: building culture, coaching leaders, and shaping experiences.

After all, machines might calculate faster, **but only humans can care deeper.** ♦

MOST VISIONARY
TECH LEADERS
2025

*Engineering Trustworthy AI for
Real-World Systems*

PRIYANSHU SHARMA

**Co-Founder & CEO,
ByteBrain**

Artificial intelligence is no longer just about innovation; it's about intention. As industries race to integrate AI into everything from healthcare to compliance, the real challenge lies in transforming cutting-edge research into systems that are ethical, reliable, and designed for real-world impact.

Amid this landscape, Priyanshu has emerged as a thoughtful builder and leader. As Co-Founder and CEO of ByteBrain, he leads with a rare blend of research depth and executional clarity. His journey, from building NLP systems in large enterprises to launching MEDRAIL, an AI solution for healthcare compliance, reflects a deep commitment to solving complex, meaningful problems. But what sets him apart isn't just the tech; it's the mindset.

“ We don't chase hype. We chase usefulness. At ByteBrain, that philosophy drives every decision, from prototyping to deployment. ”

TradeFlock interviewed Priyanshu to explore his leadership journey, the questions he asks before building, and how he's defining a more responsible AI future.



Q How has your mindset shifted from being a problem-solver to leading a startup?

Moving from builder to founder felt like rewiring my thought process. I used to live in the details, writing code, fine-tuning models, and solving what was right in front of me. The satisfaction was immediate and tangible. But becoming a founder meant stepping back. Suddenly, it wasn't about having all the answers. It was about setting the vision, asking better questions, and giving others room to lead. That shift wasn't easy. Letting go of control is never.

In our research-heavy consultancy, I still roll up my sleeves when needed. However, I now also spend time thinking about market fit, client trust, and where we want to be in five years. It's a constant balancing act—staying grounded in the work while keeping an eye on the horizon.

Leadership isn't about being an expert. It's about creating an environment where the best ideas flourish, without needing to be shouted.

Q What sparked Bytebrain's journey, and how did you navigate early challenges?

ByteBrain began when my wife and I saw a gap where AI was either confined to academia or used for demonstration purposes. We wanted a research lab that built real, usable solutions.

The biggest challenge was striking a balance between in-depth research and client needs. As a two-person team, we've had to move fast without losing depth. Having my wife as co-founder has been key. Her operational focus keeps our work grounded and ensures our ideas don't just stay on paper but make it to the real world.

Q How do you ensure your AI research delivers real-world impact at scale?

Real impact starts with real problems. Every idea we work on is tested in the field, directly with clients facing complex challenges. That's how MEDRAIL moved from academic research to solving healthcare compliance issues on the ground.

We treat each project as both a product and a proof of concept. "If a solution doesn't work in the real world, it's not ready." That mindset keeps us honest. We build quickly, iterate frequently, and remain grounded in scientific rigor. Innovation means nothing if it can't survive real-world pressure and that's exactly where we want our ideas to live.

Q What does tech leadership mean to you beyond roadmaps and stacks?

Good tech leadership starts with asking why, not just what. It's not enough to know what we can build—I need to be clear on what we should build.

In our research-driven environment, I view leadership as striking a balance between preserving space for in-depth thinking and delivering tangible results. That means standing by ethical choices, especially in AI, and creating a culture where ideas matter more than titles. "We keep academic rigor at the core, but never lose sight of real-world impact." That's the line I walk every day.

Q What gap do young tech leaders in India still need to bridge and are you working on it?

India has no shortage of talent, but turning great research into real, scalable products remains a significant hurdle. Too many promising ideas stall after the prototype is developed. What's missing is the connective tissue linking labs to markets, engineers to designers and startups to regulators.

I'm deeply committed to bridging that gap. At ByteBrain, we're building infrastructure that helps researchers and early-stage teams move faster, especially in high-stakes areas like healthcare. We work closely with clients to develop IP that benefits the broader ecosystem. The goal is simple: move ideas beyond the lab and into the world where they can truly matter.

Q You often mention 'solving meaningful problems'. How do you define what's meaningful in today's hype-driven tech world?

Not every shiny new tool deserves our time, and I believe that meaningful work is the kind that makes a tangible impact on health, safety, knowledge, or access to resources. If it helps reduce clinical trial delays or improves how teams make decisions, that's a real impact.

"Don't chase hype, chase usefulness." That's been our north star at ByteBrain. The most meaningful problems are rarely glamorous. They're slow, complex, and rooted in real-world constraints. But solving them is where the satisfaction lies. It's easy to build demos. It's much harder, yet far more rewarding, to build something that actually matters. ♦

MARY GREGORY

CONTROVERSY ROCKS POWERLIFTING

A Turning Point in the Gender & Sport Debate

A powerlifting competition in Virginia in 2019, organised by the 100% Raw Powerlifting Federation, became the focus of an international scandal. Mary Gregory, a transgender athlete, broke several female world records only to have them taken away a few days later. The incident reignited debates about gender identity, biology, and fairness in sport, and these discussions now extend well beyond powerlifting.

Breaking Records, Shattering Headlines.

However, on 27 April 2019, Mary Gregory participated in 100% Raw, where she was registered in the female category. Her results were impressive: she surpassed the record in squat, bench press, deadlift, and the total for her age and weight category. Gregory was nearly 44 years old and had been on hormone replacement therapy (HRT) for almost a year.

During the immediate aftermath, Gregory celebrated openly, expressed her thanks, and felt welcomed as just another female lifter. This remarkable performance caused a stir until the federation suddenly reversed the decision.

From Glory to Disqualification

A few days later, the RAW Powerlifting Federation disqualified Gregory's records and barred her from competing in the female division. According to federation president Paul Bossi, their regulations classify competitors based on physiological sex, not gender identity. Under their understanding, Gregory did not meet the criteria for the female category.

Some people were shocked by this decision, while others approved of it. In the case of RAW, the concern was about maintaining the fairness of competition. To Gregory and her supporters, it seemed as though her identity was being dismissed, along with the records she had worked so hard to achieve.

Identity vs. Biology: The Core Conflict

The scandal highlighted one of the most challenging issues in sports: how to balance gender identity with fair athletic competition. Supporters of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) argue that a year of hormone treatment significantly reduces testosterone levels and muscle mass, bringing transgender women closer to cisgender physiological norms.

However, critics contend that despite HRT, biological factors such as bone structure, lung capacity, and muscle memory may still provide advantages in strength-related sports. This

ongoing conflict reflects the core of the debate: whether gender categories should be based on identity, hormone levels, or strict biological definitions.

Divided Reactions: Applause and Outrage

The decision sparked a furious reaction on social media and within the sporting community. Advocates of the ban argued that it was necessary to protect the integrity of women's sports, expressing concern that allowing transgender women to compete without stricter guidelines would create an unfair playing field.

Conversely, supporters of inclusion viewed the ruling as discriminatory, emphasising that transgender athletes deserve recognition and that sports should evolve to embrace diverse identities. Gregory, feeling deeply disappointed, stated that the disqualification felt like a denial of her identity, both as a person and as an athlete.

A Catalyst for Change in Sports Governance

The Gregory case reached a

boiling point across federations worldwide. It exposed the lack of universal standards for transgender participation. Sports organisations operate under various criteria, such as testosterone thresholds, medical transitional periods, or physiological classification like RAW.

The case sparked important debates about sports regulations and athlete welfare. It underscored the need for federations to establish consistent, scientifically grounded guidelines to ensure fairness and transparency. Moreover, it highlighted the importance of educating athletes and officials about how medical transition affects athletic performance. Ultimately, the discussion pointed to the difficulty of balancing inclusion and fairness, making sure neither the integrity nor the dignity of the athletes is undermined.

Towards New Solutions: A Separate Category?

As a response to the scandal, RAW hinted that it might consider creating a new category for transgender

athletes. While this could promote inclusion, critics worry it might isolate the athletes or lead to token events with fewer competitors.

Other supporters favour a performance-based classification ranking athletes according to strength measurements or hormone levels rather than gender. Although this approach is more objective, it remains complex and open to dispute.

Beyond Powerlifting: A Global Debate

Gregory's case is not an isolated incident. Similar scandals have occurred in track and field, cycling, and swimming. The key question is: How can sports inclusion be protected while ensuring fairness?

The impact of transition on athletic ability remains under scientific investigation, and there is no consensus yet. For now, governing bodies must navigate a complex landscape of ongoing research, legal considerations, and public opinion.

Sport at a Crossroads

Records of Mary Gregory can no longer stand, and the debate they incited still resonates. Her example pushes the sporting community to ask practical questions about identity, fairness, and the future of competition.

The next developments will likely influence policy not only in powerlifting but across the entire sport. Through new regulations, including different divisions or even advancements in science, the issue is clearly understood: to create a system that makes sport fair, inclusive, and true to the spirit of competition. ♦

“I did my business while somebody watched me sitting on the toilet”

*The Architect of Agile ERP
for the Midmarket*

SHINA CHUNG

**CEO & Managing Partner,
Kakao Corp**

In South Korea's fast-evolving startup ecosystem, many investors have traditionally chased quick wins and predictable returns. Yet, truly groundbreaking ideas often carry uncertainty — and in such an environment, they can struggle to find the support they need to grow. Recognising this gap, Shina Chung set out to redefine what venture capital could stand for.

As the driving force behind Kakao Ventures, she has championed a mission-driven investment approach that looks beyond profitability, focusing instead on nurturing early-stage startups with the potential to create lasting, transformative impact. By spotting unconventional ideas early and backing founders willing to take bold risks, she has created a space where innovation can thrive despite market challenges.

The Market Gap Converted into Opportunities

Risk-averse funding structures and a tendency to invest in well-established industries have often hampered South Korea's startup ecosystem. This limited the development of groundbreaking ideas that lacked proven profitability. Shina Chung recognised this flaw and chose to address it through concrete action by guiding Kakao Ventures to make investments where the value of innovation potential outweighed short-term financial gains. Her strategy has helped innovative technologies find solutions in artificial intelligence, financial services, and health technology,

among other areas, by bridging the gap between entrepreneurial vision and practical application.

Analyst to Industry Leader

Strategic thinking and flexibility become the core principles that define how Shina becomes one of the most successful people in the South Korean VC ecosystem. Early in her career, she developed her analytical finance and investment values by immersing herself in the lives of startup founders, aiming to understand their financial needs as well as their creative motivation. Her ability to blend financial rigor with entrepreneurial empathy earned her a place in a highly competitive market.

A Tenure of Big Betting

Under her tenure as the head of Kakao Ventures, Shina Chung has been leading investments in some of South Korea's fastest-growing tech companies. Her leadership is marked by a willingness to support promising ventures early in their development, even before they reach the mainstream. She has an eye for spotting potential ahead of others. This proactive, visionary approach has made Kakao Ventures a market leader and the partner of choice for ambitious founders.



Strategic thinking and flexibility become the core principles that define how Shina becomes one of the most successful people in the South Korean VC ecosystem

Beyond the Boardroom

Shina Chung also has extensive experience working at other investment and financial institutions before joining Kakao Ventures, where she enhanced her ability to assess business potential and risk. This broad experience equipped her to look beyond superficial measures that most investors rely on. Her previous background provided her with a unique combination of financial discipline and foresight, which were crucial to the success of Kakao Ventures under her leadership.

Feeding The Next Generation of Innovators

With Shina at the helm, Kakao Ventures has invested in a wide range of startups, with many

of these companies later becoming leaders in their own industries. The company has acquired firms specialising in artificial intelligence, gaming, blockchain, and digital healthcare, areas where the growth of the new economy in South Korea and around the world is evident. The philosophy of long-term value creation has not only resulted in financial gains but also inspired a new generation of founders to think globally while acting locally.

Obstacles Faced With Courage

Venture capital is not a game to be taken lightly, but models are changing more rapidly in a world that is as fast-paced and ever-changing as economic cycles, geopolitical shifts, and technological disruptions. Shina Chung has also faced the challenge of making high-risk investments while maintaining a stable portfolio. Her diversification and significant involvement of the founders have helped mitigate market downturns without losing sight of keeping innovation at the core of the business. She also expressed concerns about how the South Korean startup ecosystem can attract international investors to strengthen global networks for the benefit of the local economy.

Award and Honors

Shina's influence was not in vain. She has been named one of the most powerful women in venture capital in Asia and is a regular speaker at tech and investment conferences worldwide. Honors and awards recognising her as a leader and strategist highlight her role as an innovator in the VC sector. Her career demonstrates how strategic risk-taking with a focus on leadership can lead to significant, transformative changes in what venture capital can achieve.

Leading on Purpose in a Changing Industry

The story of Shina Chung is innovative, resilient, and visionary. She has shown that venture capital is not just a game of numbers but can also be a tool for societal change. She is not only building companies but also shaping the future of entire industries by going beyond simply providing funds to founders with transformative ideas and offering them the resources, mentorship, and strategic advice they need. With global connectivity and the globalisation of startups, Chung and other key players in the field will remain essential in the process of turning bold ideas into reality and ensuring they have the opportunity to succeed. ♦

PRESENCE OVER PROMOTION

How Confidence, Clarity, and Credibility Fuel Leadership Growth

The concept of executive presence is said to be invisible yet dictates who reaches the top. It's not just competence or charisma, but also projecting confidence, credibility, and composure in a way that builds trust and encourages individuals to take on leadership roles. The Center for Talent Innovation (CTI) reports that 26% of executives see executive presence as a prerequisite for promotion, and 60 percent of those surveyed believe it's a key factor in advancing. For aspiring leaders aiming for senior positions, executive presence is no longer optional; it's a career booster.

Defining Executive Presence

Work by CTI divides executive presence into three dimensions: gravitas,

communication, and appearance. Gravitas, which accounts for nearly two-thirds of the impression, includes characteristics such as decisiveness, emotional intelligence, and the ability to remain calm under pressure. Communication, comprising about one-quarter of the impression, reflects clarity, conciseness, and influence in messaging. Appearance, while playing a smaller role, helps reinforce perceptions of credibility and professionalism. Together, these factors shape how peers, teams, and boards perceive a person's readiness to assume a leadership position.

Why Building It Early Matters

Deloitte's report on Global Human Capital Trends

emphasises that organisations now value potential just as much as past performance when identifying future leaders. Executive presence serves as a key indicator of that potential, signaling readiness for advanced roles. Leaders who demonstrate presence tend to gain greater visibility, making them more likely to be considered for promotions and challenging assignments. They also develop trust more quickly from teams and mentors, and are better prepared when transitioning into new positions, embodying the expected behaviors. Furthermore, the 2023 McKinsey Leadership Report reveals that organisations promoting individuals with high executive presence experience 20-25% faster role assimilation compared to those that do not.

Gravitas: Calm Under Pressure

Executive presence is fundamentally rooted in gravitas. Leaders who maintain calmness and decisiveness under pressure are often entrusted with greater responsibilities. According to Harvard Business Review studies, exhibiting a composed demeanor during high-stakes situations enhances perceptions of credibility and long-term leadership potential. Demonstrating ownership of results, even in the face of failure, reflects maturity and respect. Strategic thinking, on the other hand, involves aligning a team's work with organisational goals, indicating a higher level of leadership. An example of this is Indra Nooyi, who, upon becoming CEO of PepsiCo, earned a reputation for remaining calm when discussing complex issues, further strengthening her leadership image even before officially assuming the role.

Communication: The Leadership Language

According to the Deloitte Women @ Work Study, 47% of women see communication clarity as their key leadership skill for career advancement. Communication is about influence, not just speaking well. McKinsey finds leaders who articulate ideas clearly are 30% more effective. Leaders combining analytics and storytelling are trusted with strategic decisions. Listening and empathy boost team engagement by 62%, as Harvard Business Review reports. Satya Nadella at Microsoft exemplifies this, using storytelling and empathy to reshape the company's culture and global position.

Appearance and Presence Signals

Although often overlooked, appearance and body language serve as non-verbal cues of credibility. Research by CTI indicates that 76 percent of leaders believe that appearance influences perceptions of executive presence, even if it isn't the highest priority. Dressing appropriately for the occasion, not just adhering to formality, is important, especially since industries like banking differ

ACCORDING TO THE
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from startups. Nonverbal cues, such as posture, eye contact, and gestures, contribute to projecting confidence without appearing arrogant. Sometimes, maintaining a consistent and refined appearance can be more valuable than making dramatic gestures. Leaders like Mary Barra of GM and Sheryl Sandberg of Facebook exemplify this approach; their professional simplicity enhances their gravitas rather than diminishing it.

Mentorship, Feedback, and Blind Spots

Structured feedback is a key way to build executive presence. The Women in Leadership Report by KPMG highlights that mentors and sponsors help identify blind spots,

such as speaking too quickly, avoiding confrontation, and not asserting authority in meetings. Sheryl Sandberg has credited her mentors at Google and Facebook for helping her establish a presence in male-dominated settings. Coaching shifted her focus from technical skills to a commanding, cooperative style.

Gender and Cultural Nuances

Studies from EY reveal that women and minority leaders frequently face heightened scrutiny regarding their communication and appearance. Building presence requires striking a balance between authenticity and adaptability. It's not about acting stereotypically; leaders like Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and Mary Dillon demonstrate that you can be highly visible without conforming to stereotypes by projecting authority credibly and navigating cultural norms effectively.

Presence Before Promotion

Executive presence is not about a title but rather behavior. Both the studies discussed in this paper, as well as studies by Deloitte, McKinsey, EY, and CTI, all show that leaders who develop gravitas, communication skills, and credibility deliberately before being promoted not only advance more quickly but also perform better in their new roles. During turbulent times, organisations are not just looking for smart managers but for leaders who inspire trust, reflect confidence, and demonstrate readiness. Individuals investing in developing presence today are already signaling that they are prepared to lead tomorrow. ♦





MOST VISIONARY TECH LEADERS 2025

Empowering People Through
Purposeful Innovation

SILVIA LORENA DIOSES FARFÁN

Director of Business
Management Systems,
ISA Energía Perú

Technology means little if it doesn't serve people. It can drive efficiency and scale, but its true power lies in creating opportunity, reducing inequalities, and shaping a more sustainable future. For Silvia Lorena Dioses Farfán, technology is not just about systems or efficiency — it is about people, purpose, and progress. That belief has defined a career of more than two decades across banking, government, industry, and especially energy, where she has become one of Peru's most influential leaders in digital transformation and innovation.

ISA is a multi-Latin company within the Ecopetrol Group, and Silvia has been part of ISA Energía Perú since 2008. She has led multiple strategic fronts, including quality and risk management, and even assumed the challenge of leading transmission line maintenance management. Today, as Director of Business Management Systems, she oversees strategy and technology management, digital transformation, and innovation—driving the company's evolution toward a data-driven and sustainable energy future, in alignment with the ISA 2040 strategy: 'the energy that gives life to the transition'

Beyond her executive role, Silvia is also a professor, an advocate for women in technology and energy, and a strong promoter of digitalisation

as a driver of economic development and well-being for both people and the planet. In this exclusive conversation with TradeFlock, she shares her vision and the responsibility she embraces as a tech leader in today's world.

Q What challenges do tech leaders face today, and how do you navigate them?

The hardest part isn't keeping up with technology; it is ensuring that it truly creates value. That means preparing people — giving them the skills and confidence to thrive in a digital world.

We closely tie our digital efforts to our strategic goals, focusing on becoming data-driven, utilising AI responsibly, maintaining resilience, and protecting against cyber threats. But no company can do it alone. I collaborate with academia, suppliers, government, and civil society to drive innovation forward. I also take part in cross-industry forums where leaders share insights and shape the future together.



At the end of the day, tech leadership is really about people and partnerships, not just tools.



Q What should be at the core of a tech leader's agenda in the next ten years?

In the decade ahead, tech leadership has to move beyond pure innovation and become human-centric, strategic, and sustainable. Technology will continue to advance at an incredible pace, but the real test is whether we can empower people to adapt, lead, and thrive in a digital world.

The agenda begins with a sharp strategic vision that strengthens competitiveness, prioritising people by investing in their skills and fostering digital fluency across every level of the organisation. It also means making smart investments, scaling proven solutions into daily operations, and staying globally aware through continuous learning and strong networks. This is the kind of leadership the future demands—where technology serves purpose, people, and lasting progress.



Q What is the true purpose of technology in society today?

"Technology's true purpose is to amplify human potential and drive sustainable progress. It's not about efficiency alone—it's about transforming lives, reducing inequalities, and creating value with purpose."

From the wheel to the internet, every breakthrough has reshaped the way we live. Its purpose has always been the same: to help us live better. But today, with technology everywhere, its risks are greater too—inequality, manipulation, and new ethical challenges, especially with AI.

As tech leaders, we must ensure technology stays ethical, accessible, and sustainable, while helping people understand the long-term impact of their digital choices.



Q How can tech leaders ensure their work benefits people and communities, rather than just markets?

Strong financial results are essential for a company's sustainability, but they're no longer enough. Today's context demands impact that benefits both society and the environment.

As tech leaders, we have a unique opportunity to make a meaningful contribution. We've



implemented an AI solution that detects unsafe behaviours in real time, helping supervisors protect workers proactively. We also launched Desafío Qhipa, engaging more than 200 students aged 12 to 15 in learning programming and designing sustainable cities in Minecraft, bringing technology and purpose closer to the community through play.

Technology must serve people and all forms of life. This means raising awareness about how individuals share their data, empowering them to act responsibly, and taking on the responsibility to drive change not only for today but also for the future.



Q Is Big Tech taking on roles meant for democratic institutions, and how do you respond?

We can't afford to just worry—it's time we must act. Big Tech now influences policymaking, infrastructure, and even public trust. In today's hyperconnected world, our economies rely heavily on these platforms, so the challenge is not to ignore them but to manage their impact responsibly.

In Peru, ranking 63rd in the IMD Digital Competitiveness Index of 2024 is a wake-up call. While governments work to modernise and promote digital inclusion, leaders must also step in. My focus is on building digital capabilities, deploying ethical AI and data governance, and helping people understand how they share their information.

As tech leaders, we must raise awareness of digital behaviour and its consequences. Citizens also need to elect digitally competent leaders. I take seriously the responsibility to use technology for meaningful, ethical, and inclusive change. ♦

OPERATIONAL BACKBONE

How Equipment Uptime Powers the Semiconductor Value Chain

Semiconductors fuel the global economy, found in everything from AI chips to electric cars. The true backbone of this \$600+ billion industry isn't just advanced chip design or massive fabrication plants; it's the accuracy, dependability, and consistency of maintenance operations. Maintenance has shifted from being a mere support role to a strategic tool, leveraging predictive analytics, quick-response engineering, and uptime maximisation. These factors directly influence yield, throughput, and profitability in high-investment, high-stakes fabs. In this sector, even a few seconds of downtime can have significant consequences, potentially resulting in seven-figure losses.

When Uptime Isn't Optional

In semiconductor manufacturing, downtime isn't a setback; it's a direct financial and strategic hit. With equipment investments surpassing \$106.3 billion in 2023 (SEMI), tools like ASML's photolithography systems are high-value, precision assets. A single failure at a facility like TSMC's Fab 18, which outputs over 100,000 advanced-node wafers monthly, can choke critical supply lines to tech leaders such as Apple, NVIDIA, and Qualcomm, triggering costly production delays and contractual risks.

McKinsey reports that predictive maintenance can reduce costs by up to 20% and extend equipment lifespan by 25%.

From Overhead to Advantage: Maintenance Reimagined

Maintenance has shifted from just being a cost expense to a strategic asset. Top fabrication plants use AI-powered predictive maintenance, relying on sensor data and analytics to move from fixing issues after they occur to preventing them beforehand. For example, GlobalFoundries' partnership with Siemens has led to a 30% decrease in unplanned downtime and improved yield stability, crucial for complex manufacturing. McKinsey reports that predictive maintenance can reduce costs by up to 20% and extend equipment lifespan by 25%.

Manufacturers and Outsourced

Experts Transitioning to Unified Maintenance Solutions

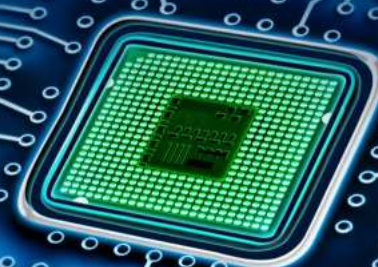
The semiconductor maintenance industry is changing rapidly. OEMs like Applied Materials once dominated service contracts, but rising equipment complexity and fab expansion into markets like India and Southeast Asia have created opportunities for specialised third-party providers and hybrid support models.

Regional firms now offer SLA-backed, cost-effective services with quicker turnaround times. For example, Tata Electronics combines OEM expertise with local partners to create a hybrid maintenance model that balances cost and reliability. Performance-based contracts, which tie payments to uptime or output, are increasingly common, aligning vendor incentives with fab performance and raising service standards.

Human Capital and Skills Impact

The semiconductor sector faces a talent crunch, with SEMI Foundation predicting nearly 1 million skilled workers will be short by 2030, especially maintenance technicians, field engineers, and reliability specialists.

Countries like the U.S., Japan, and Germany are increasing vocational training, and firms are creating in-house academies. Intel launched a 1,500-hour technician program in Arizona focused on skills like equipment diagnostics, vacuum technology, and contamination control to maintain fab productivity. ♦



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