CRLIVE 15

Microsoft Envision London: Unlock the potential of AI at scale with John Cairney, Scottish Water and Giles Walker, CTO Commercial & Retail, Microsoft & Steven Webb, CDIO UK, Capgemini

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[00:00:00] Welcome to Cloud Realities, a conversation show... This is so easy in my head!

Welcome to Cloud Realities, a conversation show exploring the practical and exciting alternate realities that can be unleashed through cloud driven transformation. I'm Dave Chapman. I'm Sjoukje Zaal. And we don't have Rob Kernahan with us today. He couldn't make this, uh... this quick little record where we're just going to put a top and tail around a live event that we did this week at London Microsoft Envision at the Excel Center.

It was a good conference, I think. Sjoukje, what was your, what was your perspective? It was a really good conference. Of course, it was all about AI. Right. Yeah. That was the, the, the, the biggest topic. [00:01:00] But also what I found very interesting is that you see that AI is really, uh, being integrated in all sorts of security features, lots of sessions around security and in a, and ai and of course Microsoft copilot, which will be general available from November 1st.

Yeah, I agree. AI was dominant again, uh, unsurprisingly, so I did think. To your point on security and a little bit broad, more broadly than that, that there was a good maturing of topics around it. So, you know, there were people talking about AI from an organizational perspective, talking about scaling AI.

In fact, the session we're about to introduce, we, we cover a couple of similar subjects to that. So it was, it was almost moving off first principles AI, I thought into. Into a fast maturation curve. Yeah, it's a, it's a bit out of the POC projects and now really getting into the business and that's, that's, that's very good.

Yeah, I agree. One phrase that was being used that stuck out to me was [00:02:00] AI transformation. So like, you know, the sort of almost like next, next full generation of cloud and digital transformation and then like, you know, potentially superseded by AI transformation, which I thought was quite interesting. And I think it's the first time I'd seen it being discussed at that scale.

Yeah, totally agree. Yeah. Very interesting. Really looking forward what the, uh, the nearby future will bring regarding AI. Yeah. Where are we now? In October 2023. In October 2022, we're barely even talking about this. Yeah. Yeah. Crazy. Yeah. It is absolutely insane. Um, the other big announcement, which I think is also November the 1st, but don't hold me to that, is, uh, Microsoft Fabric, which is like a data and analytics fabric.

Which can join, I think, multiple data sources together in a way that, um, that allows you to be a little bit more smaller, agile around bringing these things together. Which, of course, is super important to underpin AI. So, yeah, Microsoft Fabric really stuck out to me, too. Yeah, and that's going to be a huge game changer with, uh, large language models on [00:03:00] top of it.

Yeah. So let's get on to what we talked about. We were lucky enough to have three fantastic guests with us. We did a conversation on one of the main breakout areas. So we had John Cairney. He's head of digital strategy and architecture at Scottish Water. We had Giles Walker, the CTO for retail and CPG at Microsoft itself.

And then we had Steve Webb, the UK CTIO for Capgemini. So we talk about what good experimentation looks like to start with, but then how you scale that out, what the platform might look like, what some of the organizational implications are around it. And then, of course, the sorts of implications that might be had on the humans in organizations.

After that, we run through a number of case studies, which I think all illustrate what good experimentation looks like. And then we future gaze a little bit into when we might get to

AGI, what the implications are for big, sort of very deep systems like ERP. So it was a good conversation. We enjoyed it very much.

So here we all are with Rob and [00:04:00] our guests at Microsoft Envision, the tour London 2023.

I'm Dave Chapman. I'm the Chief Cloud Evangelist at Capgemini. I'm Sjoukje Zaal, I'm the Microsoft Cloud COE lead and NCE lead for cloud. And I'm Robert Kernahan, Chief Architect for cloud. So what we're going to do today is maybe something a little different. We're going to record this as a live podcast.

Um, we release this show on a weekly basis, and the idea is we have just general conversations about what's going on in technology at any one time, and try to be a little bit, uh, a little bit punchy with that, maybe a little bit light hearted. So, uh, we hope you enjoy the show today. So what we're going to talk about is we're going to talk about the potential of AI, of course.

You might have heard of it. It's absolutely everywhere here. It's been at absolutely every [00:05:00] conference that I've been to over the course of the last 12 months. And it's amazing to think about when you wind back just 12 months, it wasn't really in the discourse beyond some, you know, fairly maybe arcane machine learning chat.

So what we're going to do today is we're going to talk to a panel of guests who are going to give three different perspectives on both the potential of AI and the challenge of scaling AI. So there's a lot of chat at the moment about, uh, specific point solutions. That's good and interesting. And we'll have some case studies, but actually what do you do next and what could the next challenges be and actually where's AI itself going to go next?

So Rob, should we get the guests on? Yeah, absolutely. Three great guests today. So I'd like to welcome to the stage. John Cairney, head of digital strategy and architecture from Scottish water. We have Giles Walker from Microsoft global CTO for retail and CPG. And we have our very own Steve Webb, Capgemini UK's CTIO.

So welcome, we give everybody a warm welcome. Hello everyone. [00:06:00] Thank you.

Hello guys, good to see you. Thanks for taking the time to join us today. You're welcome. In a, you know, such a buzzy, such a buzzy exhibition hall. Um, John, let's come to you first. You just want to say hello and introduce yourself a little bit and just tell everyone a little bit about your day job and maybe Scottish water.

Yeah, sure. Hi, so I'm John Cairney. I head up a digital strategy and architecture. So what does that mean? We define technology strategy. Uh, we do architectural governance, et cetera, and a My job in a nutshell is to try and make sure that we embrace and use the right technologies And we do that an enterprise scale and we get the most out of them Which I think is getting harder and harder these days with the pace of change and just how much stuff is coming down not Just an AI but in other areas and trying to make sure that we don't build up too much technical debt in the process Look if I would say tucking into that So Giles Walker, I'm the global CTO at Microsoft.

I look after Unilever from a global perspective, helping them with their industry 4. 0 [00:07:00] transformation across their 300 factories from anything from Hellman's mayonnaise to Vaseline and shampoo. Welcome, Steve. Yeah. Hi, everybody. Steven Webb, I'm our chief technology Capgemini. I guess my focus is really that interception between innovation and technology.

How do we help our clients with it? And really, how do we focus on scaling, um, and

addressing client challenges in the market? And you're also full of cold. I am. Yes. Yeah. I'm doing my best here. Yeah. So well done for making it on stage. Thank you. Hope you stick with us for 45 minutes. Yeah, yeah. If I fall off the side of the stage, that's fine.

Yeah. Or just maybe just, I'll just give you a nudge if you, uh, yeah. Thank you. Fall asleep. Thanks for making it, man. So let's, let's get cracking then. Um, John, let's, let's, uh, come to you first. Now, obviously it is the, it is the subject of the day. Wherever you go at the moment, whatever magazine you pick up, you can't avoid it.

But AI is not brand new, and I know Scotch Water have been looking at it [00:08:00] for quite a while. So why don't you just take us a little bit through a, a. Your perspective as a practitioner, what have you, you know, what's your journey with AI been like from a Scottish Water perspective and Like for organizations that are maybe looking at it.

They've Experimented a little bit, but maybe not waded into it yet. What should they be doing? I mean AI is a As a disciplines been around for what? 70 80 years, I think. I mean, we've been exploiting a machine learning deep learning for about a decade now. So we've got about 100 algorithms, 100 models that we maintain on a regular basis, and we have been doing that, as I say, on and off for about a decade.

Um, we played around with natural language processing as well. We've got one of our models, um, focused on asset health. And we use, um, pre ChatGPT NLP in order to give people the ability to try and interact with the model using a language. Um, it's pretty basic. And, um, when a [00:09:00] large language model's reached that level of maturity that they did towards the end of last year and then hit the public consciousness at the start of this year, We spoke to Microsoft and said, look, we really like the look of copilot.

We think that's going to give us the ability to then take natural language processing to the next level. And then we embrace it. What I'm sure there's, I'm sure, I'm sure this type of audience, probably no. The idea of what co pilot is quite well, but maybe just say like, like a quick 30 seconds on what it is and then what you're doing with it.

So I think Microsoft have got co pilot across a number of different areas. The Microsoft 365 co pilot that we wanted to get onto their private preview and we're successful in doing that. That essentially gives you a natural language interface to all of the Microsoft products in your productivity suite.

Teams is probably the most the most useful one. I think also works in word also works in SharePoint, Excel, etcetera. The business chat function that we saw demoed in a few different sessions today allows you [00:10:00] then to span all of those products. Imagine having a conversation. Uh, with that chatbot saying, you know, tell me what meetings I've got coming up next week and show me the information that's already available so that I can prepare for it and condense it down to something I can read in five minutes, not five hours.

And it's been showing up okay in live? Sorry? Has it been showing up okay in live? It has. I mean, this, um, as with any private preview, it's kind of in beta, so there's been problems with it. Yeah. Um, but we've got 300 people using the product. I would say around about 170 of them. Have demonstrated clear productivity savings right using that product over the last three months.

Giles, what have you guys been seeing in terms of co pilot use? Very similar to what John was saying is the key piece here is not trying to deploy it at scale at the start. It's trial it and get used to it. As I said, it's in private preview. It still has bugs. It's still being checked. And the key bit as well is, is understanding across the different roles, whether it's ERP or HR or sales

or finance, uh, marketing is, it's going to act differently [00:11:00] depending on what team you're in and how they're going to use it.

Um, to us at Microsoft, it's really, it's, it's that learning phase at the beginning, really try and delve deep into how it's going to work, how it's going to change that business structure that's been going for 40, 50 years now with current technology is going to fundamentally shift. Well, we're going to come, we're going to come on to some, uh, organizational dynamics that change when you introduce technology like this into, into your environment, in the, in the wild at scale, but let's return to Scottish Water for now.

Sorry, interrupted you there, John, but let's get back to your story on where you're up to with Co Pilot and then what you're thinking next. So I think the. I mean, the copilot for Microsoft 365. Great. I think it's gonna we've already demonstrated we can get benefit from it. I guess the challenge of God now is quantifying that benefit and not not scaring people in the process.

So, you know, they will be shaving off. hours and hours of people's time during the day. Um, do they want to admit to that? Are they scared for the future of their [00:12:00] job if they do admit to it? And to be fair we've had a fantastic response. You know, people are quite happy to say, yes, it has shaved off hours of my job, but it means I can get more done rather than being worried about necessarily the risk it poses to their job.

Right, yes. I think in terms of where we go from now, I know it goes general availability in a few weeks. So I think we'll be looking at, can we scale the licensing up? Get it to more people? And then we'll get into the discussion about what does that then do for your business model? What does that do for the processes you've got and we'll be having a look at yes We need to prove the benefit, but also how far can we take this got it?

So Steve come to you just to get a different perspective on experimenting with gen AI at scale and and in the wild Yes, what what's your perspective and what are you and what are you seeing from your seat particularly from your? Innovation brief. Yeah, I mean, I totally agree with the points. Firstly, on just scaling and business case, certainly with things like copilots.

That's a Very regular conversation. I'm having [00:13:00] a moment around that. How do you quantify potential savings and benefits and what does that mean to scaling the business case? So that's quite a regular conversation. I think agree with the approach. Really, you know, you've got to kind of step it up and be able to quantify that for your business.

I think more generally with generally with Gen AI. Um, we're seeing Probably moving a little bit more from that experimental phase where people have been playing with the technology within their, their sandpits environments to start to think about actually, what does this mean organizationally now and how do we start to scale this across the organization and how do we really start to face into some of those, those business challenges rather than maybe the experimental sides, um, and how does that fit maybe more into the, uh, Every day of what we would normally do rather than it's something off of the side that you know, we see it happen far too often with innovation where it becomes a [00:14:00] thing where you experiment, but actually then how do you move it to scale?

Yeah. And I think that's, we're starting to see people realizing we could, we could make those same mistakes again that we've made with lots of different innovation POCs if we don't start to think about actually. Well, what are those value streams and what are those business processes and how are we going to start to think about incorporating it into what we do in the everyday rather than it ends up being something that we do on the side, but never scale

it back into the business.

Well, jazz, let's, let's pick up on that thread and, and. So I'll move into best practice experimentation then into scaling. So what, what best practices have you seen in terms of Gen AI experimentation that has then actually gone somewhere? So probably the biggest one is, is starting with, like I said, the test case, really trying to prove the value out.

But when it comes to proving the value, the big piece I personally have seen in this is, is that time savings is very hard to show on the P& L. So if you've still got the role sitting there doing the work. But now they suddenly have three hours saved because they [00:15:00] don't have to do any admin work. That means they're doing other work.

You don't actually see a P& L benefit because nothing's changed. But what you will see longer term is more innovation coming out, more thoughts of what could we be doing? How could we improve things? And you know, the ideas that I'm sure most of us have in the back of our head of I'd love it if I had time to do this.

I suddenly have that time now. And I think that's where from a scaling point is it's don't get too caught up on the costs necessarily in the early stages. It's look to see what starts to come out in terms of that innovative thought that you'll start getting from your teams because now they suddenly have the capacity to uh Actually do it.

I mean, there's a big impact there isn't around. If you think about that organizational impact on multiple layers, you've got the ability to deliver the technology at scale enterprise wide. Get that right. I think digital tortoise. We need to change the shape of organizations and how they operate. People are coming off that curve.

Now a eyes arriving and then you've got the human impact It's the end user where you were picking up about the productivity benefits. What's that mean for the individual, which is another impact. And then you've got the wider thinking differently about the business models that can then [00:16:00] generate. So there's a lot happening in the organization, and I often wonder, we talk about cognitive overload at those layers.

People, I think, can they cope? Is there too much in the system? I'd be interested in your views around the impacts, the multiple layers, what that's changing the organization shape and what that means for the future. And it's all getting rammed in and the pace is accelerating. So it's the can we cope question.

And what's the action on all those layers? I mean, as with any new technology, I think it It takes an awful long, in a fairly large business anyway, I think it takes a long time to work out how can you use this technology to reshape your business. There's also something for people, especially with generative AI about unlearning the old ways of doing things and then relearning to use a co pilot, um, I mean, it's a fantastic term, isn't it?

Co pilot. It's not. And again, this, this takes some of the fear away. It's not about replacing the person. It's about helping the max suit for the person. Absolutely. Yeah, that's how we try and pitch it. Fortunately, we've got a challenge that we need to try and invest [00:17:00] more, do more with less. So there's less of a kind of challenge on us to say, you know, head count, for example, and may much more of a focus on be more productive.

So that's how we're pitching it. And then, then you then you get into how do you How do you go after the processes that could benefit from this or even how do you work out which processes could be removed altogether because this technology takes us a leap beyond where we were before? I don't have the answers yet.

We're having a look at it just now in terms of how we use it, but there's also an element of

not getting carried away by the hype. This is a brilliant new technology, but it is a language model. It's about using language in a way we've never done before. Um, but it's not autonomous agents, you know, we haven't yet got to the stage where it's a RPA on steroids, for example, which is what I'm hoping we get to in due course, and I actually wouldn't mind just delving in a little bit into the organizational points you make that like the.

Management of expectations of people [00:18:00] in the organization must be quite tricky about this and the reason I say that is there will be some aspects of the organization, organizations, both leadership and the main body of practitioners that are like, you're going too slow. This is like, this is where we should be right now.

We should be, we should be doing more. I hear that organizations around the world are doing much more than we're doing and then you've probably got the other end of the spectrum, which is like. a little bit cautious, maybe a little bit personally concerned, but also maybe a bit concerned about stability or, you know, broader issues that will come on to shortly that we're all talking about around AI.

Have you been managing that? I think, um, one of the things we did at first when we, when we got the thumbs up, you know, you're on the private preview. Great. Before we kicked it off. Um, we made sure that we got executive sponsorship. So, at least one person at that level is saying, I'm prepared to put some money into this.

The private preview wasn't free, but, uh, but, uh, so we got some money into it. And, uh, we said, okay, give us a period of time, we'll prove the benefit. Um, so that [00:19:00] executive sponsorship, I think, is key, uh, just to make sure that, um, you're not, uh, a losing cause right from day one. Um, then the approach we took was we thought, well, we need to find champions.

This is not an IT led project. This is a Scottish water wide initiative. That's important. So we just built, we found the people that were interested. We've got volunteer. We've got a backlog actually of about 80 people who want to get onto the preview, but can't just now. So they're really delighted. It's going general availability next month.

And then what we do is we build a champion network in different parts of the business. So we get people who understand their own processes. Because they're the people who are going to make the change happen. And, and often when you build things like champion networks and you're trying to deploy new technology, Um, it can be an uphill struggle to get people excited about it.

Uh, I remember once deploying IP telephony. That wasn't, that wasn't an excitable group. Let's put it like that. There was, there was, there was only, there's only a certain level of excitement you can get into a different type of phone that looks [00:20:00] almost exactly the same. It was often not as stable, um, like the level of excitement in a champion group in your organization around Gen AI, I assume that that's a different conversation completely.

It said, I mean, it's all down to personalities, isn't it? So we've, we've, we've found a scrum master to lead this project who's quite got infectious personality, drives the project really fast. And he's got good contacts around the wider business. So she's managed to drum up interest. But what we've done is we've tapped into the success stories to the people who have used it to change the way they do things.

And then we've asked them to replay those success stories as kind of a things that we record, we video, we tell stories about them, put it on our intranet. Um, and that then gets some excitement elsewhere. I mean, maybe I'm making it sound more excitable than it actually is.

But it's a... No, no, keep going. To me it feels that way.

It feels that way in the company because... People want to tell their stories and when they tell their stories, other people go, Oh, I'm missing out here. I want to try this. So you really created a group of ambassadors to [00:21:00] bring it forward inside the to Steve's point that you get a lot of excitement in an organization, but it's how do you apply it effectively?

It goes back to the use case angle, isn't it? That you, it's good to create the outcome to tell a story that people can get excited about. Because seeing is believing with this sort of technology. I've not just read about it. I can see it impacting day to day there. And then that generates the flywheel effect.

And people start to think about what can this mean for our organization? And there's also tapping into the pain points. So, so, for example, we do investment appraisals for big, big construction projects. These investment appraisals might take three months to get from the idea of a concept all the way through to.

Yeah, that's fine, that stacks up, the benefits stack up, you've got the go ahead. If we can get that process of three months down to three weeks, or even less, by using GenAI to kickstart the process, to review things, check our benefits are right, then, you know, that's a massive incentive for people. You raise a good point though, it's one of the bits as well with that double edged sword with the GenAI, like you said, I've seen [00:22:00] examples where people have reduced three months worth into much shorter periods.

is the general way businesses operate is also that sort of outcome driven. Whereas suddenly you've now given everybody, you know, a hundred, uh, interns with photographic memories who can do all that work for you without question. Do we want to do 15 bits of output now? Well, before we used to do one in three months, now we can do 15 in three months.

Can the business handle it? I think that's another key bit of it is understanding, yes, we can do all this improvement and optimization. What does that actually mean for us as a business? Can we even handle the output volume that we can now suddenly achieve because we have an A. I. Doing all the work for us?

So where do you think? First of all, I love that analogy in terms of like you've now got like an army of interns that have got the knowledge, but perhaps not the experience to to deploy that knowledge, which is of where the human comes in. Exactly. Um, what's your thoughts on then? The impact that that will have on organizational ships.

Have you seen [00:23:00] any anybody experimenting with new style organizations yet? Personally, no, I haven't seen it, but it is something that is discussed obviously within the Microsoft realms, but also again, that's been being discussed with our clients to is this this viewpoint of The way we've been doing business in this sort of internet age, you know, web 2.

0 sort of thing for the last 20 years. Yeah. Well, you've, you've now got this AI model that is, if you think about, let's say, um, this session we're in now, 10 years ago, what would be the topic we'd be talking about? Hmm. It'd be big data, and big data is going to change the world. Yeah, but the accessibility to use big data is not accessible to everyone.

Yeah. But the LLM models and the Gen AI stuff. You don't need a degree in computer science to be able to use it. You can turn it on and start using it and it'll do stuff for you straight away. There's a really important point about what caused the last six months acceleration in AI and what we're talking about, and it was simply accessibility for the normal, the untrained person to be able to interact with the technology and suddenly the interest [00:24:00]

explodes, whereas you don't need a degree in data science and AI and ML and data ops to be able to make this stuff work.

It was a very technical domain before. And now it's hugely accessible at a great price point and it's doing tasks that you, as the human, appreciate the Mex suit point again, isn't it? That is the, uh, it's helping me out day to day and I'll embrace it. But what does that, what, what do you think that does? I think that's right, but what do you think that does at scale to organizations?

So if you, if you've, if you've suddenly got, I dunno, 50% of your, let's say it's 50%, I dunno whether it's 70, I dunno whether it's 30. Probably depends on the role. Yeah. But what does that then do to the organization when you multiply that up hundreds and thousands of times? The whole, the whole shape of the org's gonna have to change.

Uh, and roles will change. If, if, if harnessed properly, productivity will shoot up in particular. Disciplines, which means there will be a bit of a, um, uh, a movement around with staff to maybe do different roles or actually it could help the areas in organizations that are [00:25:00] under huge stress because they just aren't enough.

There is enough ability to serve the demand that's coming through the front door. But undoubtedly, as the mastery occurs within the organization, it's going to, you know, change the way the shape, the whole shape of the organization has to be deployed. That's either from the tech teams right up to the, you know, the teams that serve the end user and the end user themselves.

I think it is a full stack impact. It's just how long before we properly understand what that new shape needs to be. And I think there'll be a bit of probing. Well, it's taken, it's taken the best part of like, well, I don't know. Maybe seven or eight years to be able to fully understand what a cloudified technology operating model looks like.

I was going to say, look at Microsoft Teams. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Pre COVID, there were many businesses I remember dealing with when I was in Avanade who were scared to go onto Teams. Right. They were worried about what it meant for their business. Uh, obviously COVID hit and the entire globe went work from home in about a week.

Nothing like an existential crisis to pick the technology adoption up. That's what I always say. Exactly, but the technology didn't change. It was [00:26:00] exactly the same the day before COVID, but then COVID did, but there was a force to use it where the Gen AI models have been very different because it works and it's easy to use that you can now just go and do it and the average person can start using.

I think this is where that point of what's it going to mean for businesses, we haven't seen it yet. Because chat GPT four and it came out in March copilot still in private preview and it's most businesses in the Scottish water have only done sort of 100 200 300 licenses to test the waters. What does it really mean?

And I think that's the right approach. And what we'll start seeing in the years to come is this new way of how businesses operate where again, shifting role, shifting mentalities of how you do things. And that idea of the annual appraisal of how much did you hit your target of This output, or if I've got a tool that can output 500 reports for me in a week.

Yeah, well, usually that would take me two years to do. How am I going to be measured on my performance? Right, because actually the machine is doing a lot of that work for me. My role will change fundamentally because I'm not output driven as much anymore. And it will also [00:27:00] take, it takes some time before companies are able to adapt, right?

People need to be trained, need to be moved into a new role. Take some time before it's really productive. Productivity will really increase. Yeah, and the technology needs to be trusted. Yeah, it needs to be tested. Trusted improvement, doesn't it? There's still a lot of that. So John, is anything through, through the very early days yet in terms of your use of co pilot and your experimentation in terms, in terms of the sort of impact we've been talking about, anything suggesting itself yet, or is it still too early to tell?

I mean, and there's one we talked to, I think I was on a. A session earlier, we're talking about the idea of making sure you look at security at the start, you look at data integrity and data protection at the start, and these are absolute, you know, prerequisites to making sure you get the most out of it, but at the same time, the technology is helping us work out where those vulnerabilities are, you know, so someone searching their whole semantic model and saying, show me this stuff and something pops up they shouldn't [00:28:00] see.

You know, as long as it keeps encouraging you to adopt more, it does. I think it does. It's a, it's a, it's kind of a, it's not so much a double edged sword. It's two swords, you know, but actually, you know, we're, we're tackling different problems by using this. And I think, I think that's just going to get.

Better and better for us in terms of uncovering new opportunities, but if I do think about the double edged sword piece then Yes, there is still fear people are scared by it There's also a lack of understanding of what it is. People understand that there's productivity savings, but they don't understand how it works The bias issue is always something that crops up And we're constantly looking at that.

We've got people who are focused on checking and rechecking and making sure that the information we get from it is accurate. And a lot of time it isn't accurate. Not just it's not accurate, but it's completely made stuff up. And I think if you again, if you understand the technology, understand how that happens, but we want people using it without needing to understand the [00:29:00] technology.

So that means we'll need measures in place to validate content, validate the stuff that comes out of it, check it. We're looking at using it for legal use cases. Um, so, you know, I don't know any of our lawyers who are going to just accept something that comes out of it. They'll want to read it word for word, so.

And you've been using the concept, I think, of knowledge graphs to, to, to help you understand the accuracy and the critical thought that's required. Yes. Go into that a little. Yes. I mean, the, where we are right now is they, I heard someone else last week talk about the, the Gartner model, the hype cycle. So I think generative AI is at that kind of, if you're familiar with the hype cycle, it's at that peak of inflated expectations.

It can do anything, you know, and, uh, people talk about artificial general intelligence and artificial super intelligence. Um, you've got Sam Altman just talking about it recently on the, the Joe, Joe Ro, Rogan, Reagan, whatever his name is, Rogan, uh, show. Um, so I don't think it helps. So we're at that point of it can do anything, but no, it can't.

We find there are limitations. Um, and I think we're going to get into that kind of trough of disillusionment over the next six months. And [00:30:00] then, then the slope of enlightenment where people really work out how to take advantage of this technology. And what comes next from it. So, for example, I've seen some great use cases where people are using knowledge graphs in order to bring other datasets in, bring other contexts in, and then use a large language model to do what it needs to do.

Don't use it for everything. It's really expensive to use. It's a, a very expensive tool. You know, if you've got facts that you know or answers you've got answered, put them in a database if they're never going to change. Don't keep going back to the L. L. M. Use knowledge graphs to come up with new use cases.

Um, the I think as as a technology moves into multimodal, in other words, when it's able to do quite a media analytics, make better use of video, audio. Um, and pictures and then again, the use cases start expanding. So I expect to see that being something that we start using in earnest in the next six months.

Steve, have you, have you, in your, with your innovation out, have you been looking at data accuracy and how through experimentation or use of things like [00:31:00] knowledge graphs up the resilience of it? I think that the most common. Use case we see every organization doing is how do you start to use your, you know, your own data against an LLM?

Um, so that's By far the, you know, the number one use case. I think that the point around sort of specifics and different LLMs is an interesting point as well, because actually, you know, we all look at the GPT models and how powerful they are. But as you said that they're expensive to run, the resources are expensive.

So actually some of those use cases where you've got very specific models for specific use, I think we're going to. Obviously, it's great that Microsoft and others are, are integrating a wider model set now. Um, so I think actually starting to look at what are some of those other models that are there specifically for a particular use in a particular use case and how do you use that potentially with, with some of your own data as well.

I think that's quite an interesting one where we're seeing more and more organizations out there doing it [00:32:00] and we'll see third party companies that are specializing that a little bit more as well. Cool. Well, let's talk specifically about some use cases. Now, Sjoukje, you've been looking at some use cases.

So why don't we, why don't we take a moment and actually just have a look at a few examples of use cases and then we'll come back in and go a bit deeper. Yeah, of course. So, um, at Capgemini, we help a lot of, a lot of our customers to transform their business using generative AI. So I thought it would be great to share a couple of use cases with you.

So the first one is at Unilever. We use it, uh, GenAI to, uh, create an AI enabled content, uh, platform. So we integrate GPT 3 into their e commerce platform to automatically create and publish content which is also optimized for search performance. So, at Roche, we created a self service, a self service assistant, which offers, um, a lot of information to [00:33:00] patients in their treatment process.

So, it's a 24 hour available assistant that can give you medical advice, medical information, and can answer your questions. So, at. Roche. For Sakringskassen, we created a service that generated, um, that synthetically created data about lungs and teeth. And because of the fact that this data is synthetically created, it can, it can be, it is, it doesn't fall under the GP, the GDPR.

So it can be used in the application development processes and in the testing processes. Um, at Bayer, we created a solution where we integrated large language models. Into the system that reason about internal documents and also make all those internal documents available to the employees and for several of our clients who created solutions to translate code from one language to another, like, for instance, one client has [00:34:00] decreasing global developers.

So we created a solution to translate that global code to a much more modern language like Java. And lastly, I want to touch upon Disney. Where we integrated, uh, generative AI into their VR solution. And they use that generative AI to also synthetically create data that can be used to test the rights that they have.

So, if there is dangerous behavior, they can use that synthetic data to let the models, uh, adapt to that. So, I have a question for all of you. Do you also see these types of use cases, or do you also see different ones? John, why don't you lead us off? We're seeing all of these, especially the vision one as well.

That's a big piece with, um, especially the manufacturing. Being able to provide that extra context where, I mean, everyone's probably heard of IOT and the sensors, sort of driven analytics. The ability to then have the camera vision over the top of those sensors as well, because there'll be sections of the manufacturing line.

Where sensors can't tell you anything, you know, and a prime example [00:35:00] would be we saw one use case, whereas a sensor door was being opened. You look at the statistics and he would say there's something wrong with our sensor doors, right? But actually what it was is the sensor door is triggering the alarm to stop the machine because someone's in fixing something in the machine that doesn't have a sensor on it.

And the camera was the only thing that could provide that extra context. Whereas obviously the previous I. T. Sensors didn't. The other one is well, obviously on the Unilever side with the marketing side is also to just the content Internally from a document management piece. If you've got recipes, you've got commercials, you've got, um, standard operating procedures, extension for maintenance.

How do you start to build those into models and use Gen AI to go, right, here's 150, 000 different contracts we might have with vendors. Where are we weak? Where are we strong? Where can we optimize variability across the globe. You can start to incorporate it all now. And the sort of business cases that are getting written around them, are they, the sort of outcomes that you're getting from them, give us a sense [00:36:00] of, from, from good enough to sort of pass the red face test through to wildly successful, broadly, what's the spectrum looking like?

Very hit and miss in terms of, of, of how they go. And I think the biggest challenge out of all of them, whether they've been successful or not, has been the data. So if the data is poor, you're going to get poor results. It's always been the case with any AI model, whether it's Gen AI or not. Um, where I think the biggest realization is that all of the use cases I've seen had is that realization of actually it's not a silver bullet.

It's not going to fix everything and we can just forget the problems that might live in that SQL server that sits in the basement sort of. Right, yeah. It's, it's about really understanding how do our processes work internally and then going and deploying it. And I think then where it's been very successful is on that content creation piece from taking vast swaths of information that they do have and going, how do we make a consensus of.

50, 000 documents into one standard way of actually talking about it. And I think that's been the really big use case. It's just that ability to go, [00:37:00] we had 20 people doing this before, now we have one. Yeah, absolutely. But it can hold all that context. And it's the speed to that. Yeah, I mean, it's something like...

Recipes, though you go, okay, it makes sense. You can generate some content, but you start to unpick it and think what's beyond the possibilities, you know, you get into combining

social listening data. Um, so, you know, what's in vogue in the market? What might people want to eat depending on just general social listening and trends?

We're seeing also things like food waste as well. So how can you start to look at Unilever is an example, there might be surplus stock in certain places, in certain countries that then you can target recipes to, to obviously help move some of that stock and reduce food waste. So you can take something that actually, you know, generating recipes sounds fairly straightforward, but the, the, the value stream again of, way you can go with that is, is really quite even also being able to add into the cultural sensitivities, obviously.

Yeah, different regions can't have particular foods. Yeah, it sounds like you're [00:38:00] setting up for a prediction though there and everybody loves a good tech prediction and they're always bang on and everybody's always right. But the, um, the use case you started to tease out there about AI starting to permeate throughout all the systems.

We still have these big Core transactional systems that run the business model and AI is very much helping on the the fringe Ask you for a prediction What do you think the timeline is before something like AI gets to an advanced level where it can replace an ERP? Platform with a different way of working right through the business.

Yeah, I'm presumably With a case study like that, a prediction like that, what you're actually doing is taking something that's very process bound at the moment. Yes. You know, so works in a series of, and let's be charitable and let's say journeys, but actually what we, what we know it is, is a relatively old school process.

Yeah, drumbeat type process. Digitized, rather than digitalized. What does an, yeah, what does an AI driven organization actually begin to look like, do you think? Do you want to, have a first punt at it, John? Well, okay. Good luck. [00:39:00] Good luck with that job. E R P, I dunno, I'll pick a date. Well, Sam Mann said 2031 for a day, you know, artificial super intelligence.

So I'll see 2030 then for the e r p the year before the e r p one year later. So we'll get e r P just before the super intelligence kicks in. That's a good one. I think. I mean, I think, um, we, we still need, I mean, these, these line of business systems, they, they do one function really well. They capture data.

And that data needs to be accurate, and that data feeds AI. So, um, I can't see an easy road to getting rid of them. It's more the processes around them, and that's coming back to more the AI agents. So I think the next generation of, I think Gen AI will move into probably, um, autonomous AI. So the ability to, for AI to run agents that do the job.

of humans, or that are able to understand the process of capturing data and the life cycle of data and do that for us. I think when that becomes a reality... So AI as team member, versus AI as [00:40:00] co pilot. Perfect, yep. That's it. Steve, do you want to pick up on that thread? No, I... Yeah, I think it's a good analogy.

I think that's the point, isn't it? If we think about things like high performing teams, um, where do we get to that point where I could, you know, we think about the makeup of a high performing team is empathy, you know, it's understanding each other's needs and how we work together and it. Feels like we're probably a little, little way off, um, you know, the AI being able to act as that member of a team.

Um, but I'm, I'm not silly enough, Dave, to make any kind of date prediction around that. I'll leave, I'll leave that AI

to keep an eye on you? Exactly, yeah. Yeah, yeah. Rob's already far too deep into that. There's

no reason picking that. Giles, what do you think in terms of big future organization changes like ERP disappearing? I think we won't see an ERP disappear. I think we'll see what we see as ERP today [00:41:00] disappearing.

And so what I mean by that is if you think about the gen AI, it will do a lot of the pieces that everyone's just talked about. I think what it will start to open up though, is that the fact that a lot of the automation pieces that don't happen at the moment with ERP, like. Pulling out reports, running the numbers, doing the, the, the documentation on what those numbers then mean.

Lots of those steps then can start being automated. Which means teams can start to discuss the results more than doing all the pre work to get to that result. Yeah. Instead of 90 percent of your time being building the report, getting the data together, it's 90 percent on what do we do with this information now.

And having Gen AI help support that decision making will be what I think ERP will become. And that's what Gen AI help with. Good note to end on, I think in terms of understanding then the path between the early experiments that we're seeing now and then actually how that could become more of an organism across an organisation.

And I know I'm particularly fascinated to see how that starts to evolve. Is it going to be platform thinking? [00:42:00] Is it going to be actually a next generation of even how we... Consume technology within organizations. So what's in this space of with interest on that? Um, but we end every episode of the normal podcast show by asking our guests what they're excited about doing next.

And that can be something like I've got a great restaurant booked at the weekend, or it could be something that's exciting in their professional life. So. John, what are you excited about doing next? I think, um, well, I'll stick to AI. I'll keep it, I have no restaurants booked for the next couple of days, you know.

So, um, I think the AI agents, that's the one that excites me. I think when AI gets to a point where it can do the human job, it's also a scary prospect, because that's when it really does impact, you know, the structure of life. So you've got the super intelligence pegged at 2031. You've got the ERP replacement pegged at 2030.

Where are you on the spectrum between, you know, here and then for that? AI agents, I would say probably within three years. Right. Yeah, I think that probably [00:43:00] sounds about right, doesn't it? Autonomous agents, three years. Yeah. And how do you think that will show up in your, in your day to day? So one example of, we've got a, we've got a knowledge intranet we call Scotty.

Right. I see it as being essentially, uh, a kind of Scotty agent, you know, that will do the job of anybody, even, even in the field, someone says to Scotty, you know, not beat me up. Take a photograph of an excavation, show me what's next in here, and it just says do this, do this, do this, do this. Right. Um, by integrating with ERP and all the other systems, um, looking at media analytics, says I'm not sure about this, take a photo.

Oh, yeah, that valve is such and such, you need to do this to it. You've not got the spare part in your van, but someone else has, I'll get it sent to you. Well, and to Steve's point on... Um, you know, A. I. is team member versus co pilot, you also then have the potential to have Scotty not only out with your field force and practitioners, but it could be in your boardroom.

That's it, yeah. You know, like Scotty, tell us the predictions. The mascot, yeah, just sitting in a chair. Yeah. [00:44:00] Giles, what are you excited about doing next? Uh, very similar. In

all honesty, when, um, Chet TBD 4 came out in March, I asked a lot of questions about Star Trek's engine and he raised Scotty. Um, because obviously if you look at the computer, it's a very similar thing in terms of what a chat GPT is.

It's obviously a very early stage. And one of the bits I think it came out with was obviously there's no chat function yet, but there is a chat function. Now it's been released from March to now was at six months. It's where we got the chat function. I'm looking forward to seeing similar. There's sort of the AI bots.

How does that deal with a chat functionality and help in anything from? Mental health side of things to work related issues because obviously if you've certainly got an AI agent that you can talk to in any sort of form of language, you want to help respond to that. I think that's gonna be incredibly powerful.

Yeah, it's all about nuance that for me, I think, you know, a little bit like your comment earlier about you can, you know, do you want to ask a graduate that question with all due respect to graduate? So do you want to ask a, you know, [00:45:00] 20 year experienced GP that question? Yeah, well, it's endless. We can tell the model.

Yeah. You are now a 20 year experienced GPO practitioner of this. Act like it. Tell me to go and pay for it. Get your act together. I think, I mean, that's the learning. That's going to come with this because it is so new. And I think a lot of, even myself, I sometimes forget, it came out in March was Chat GPT 4.

You know, that's seven months ago. You know, and some of this technology, like we look at just web development, you know, really has been around for years. And you still see terrible websites. Yeah. This is seven months old and it's everywhere. Yeah. Um, so you're going to get a lot of. Rubbish coming out, but you'll also get a lot of gems coming out.

I think it's just Test it and give a time and know that it is to remember. It's seven months old I shall Steve what you're looking forward to. Yeah, I'll do too. I'll do an AI one as we're on the thing I'll do it. I'll do a personal one to keep it a bit lighter. I I mean probably just following the same theme really I've done for me.

It's without being too deep It's that the positive impact on humanity that [00:46:00] we can see with some of this this technology. So I mean Jensen Touched on it in the in the keynote earlier, but you know, if we're starting to use visual learning and and obviously models acting like a, you know, a seasoned, um, healthcare professional to dictate types of cancer.

I think the potential for where we could go with this technology and then the positive impact on on humanity, um, you know, is fantastic. Um, on a slightly lighter note, I'm looking forward to the rugby at the weekend. Um, and the yeah. And hopefully England being in the final the following weekend, so fingers crossed.

You never know, miracles may happen. Yeah, there we go. That's a mighty prediction. It is a mighty prediction, yes, yeah. Well, a good conversation this afternoon, everybody. Thank you so much for your time and insight. It's been a pleasure talking to[00:47:00]

you. A huge thanks to our guests this week, John, Giles and Steve. Thank you so much for being on the show. Thanks also to our sound and editing wizards, Ben and Louie, the AV team at the conference, and our supportive producer, Marcel. And of course to all of our listeners, We're on LinkedIn and X, Dave Chapman, Rob Kernahan, and Sjoukje Zaal. Feel free to follow or connect with us and please get in touch if you have any comments or ideas for the show. And of course, if you haven't already done that, rate and subscribe to our podcast.

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