

The HCLTech Trends and Insights podcast

Nick Ismail

Alan, thank you for joining us today on the HCLTech trends and insights podcast. We're going to be talking about AI here at the World AI Summit in Amsterdam. Just to start with, can you outline some of the current client adoption trends you're seeing when it comes to AI?

Alan Flower

Yeah. Well, Hi, Nick, thanks for inviting me to speak to you today, and of course, we'll hit the world's AI Summit. And isn't it busy, right? It is an incredibly busy event, and I think this event reflects some of the trends around adoption that we're seeing in the industry. Nick, I think if I thought back maybe barely 18 months from where we are today. We saw a lot of experimentation from our clients around the globe. A lot of clients unsure whether AI or GenAI specifically was really going to bring value to their organization. I think where we are today, and again, this event really reflects that is there's a lot of confidence. I think clients have seen the results of some of their early deployments. Good examples would be the use of GenAI in the software engineering domain as a lot of confidence. There clients have collected a lot of positive metrics around the productivity gain from AI. And I think what we've seen Nick is this growing level of confidence in clients has now kind of moved into the sort of whatever all the business domains so overwhelming, and clients are thinking about business transformation with GenAI, we talk about value stream innovation, Value Stream transformation. And this is the big adoption trend that we're seeing, senior business leaders now utterly convinced that GenAI is going to bring real value to their organization. Where HCLTech is busy, of course, is these clients, whilst they all have very often, a very clear vision about what this impact will be, they don't know how to get there. So where, where we're busy, for example, in our AI labs in HCLTech, it's just helping clients understand, how do they convert that vision to a reality? How do we get them ready for scaled deployment as rapidly as possible, too?

Nick Ismail

And with this growing confidence, are you seeing a drive to create vertical inspired AI solutions?

Alan Flower

Absolutely right. So again, 18 months two years ago, we saw nothing but horizontal experimentation. A good example would be generic contact center type, type solutions. But that confidence has now reached the business leadership across an organization. And I would say overwhelmingly, if I look at all of the demand coming into our labs, it is utterly dominated by clients who have found a value stream within a specific business domain where they see a need for a vertical solution, right? And if you look at some of the clients that we're supporting, and every industry has impacted Nick you've seen this yourself, right? We've been surprised. Whether it's health care, manufacturing, oil & gas, utilities, you name it, every business leader seems to have found a set of use cases or processes where they genuinely believe that GenAI will add value to their business.

Nick Ismail

Sure, and when it comes to hybrid cloud, multicloud, HCLTech's recent cloud research found that they are essential for AI and GenAI deployments. I don't think that's necessarily a surprise, but can you talk about the role you see multiclouds and hybrid cloud playing in the future of AI?

Alan Flower

Yeah. Well, that, that cloud evolutions report, right? Was was incredibly illuminating. We all suspected we knew what was going on, but the the cloud evolutions report, that I think the listeners should, should, should look at clearly, kind of provides that proof point, right? It's really clear. We've seen this for some time, whilst a lot of clients may start their AI journey, typically with a hyperscaler or a single hyper scaler, because it's they make it so easy, let's just not ignore the fact that it's very, very easy to get started. I think a lot of organizations, as they get closer to production, they're asking fundamental questions like, so where's the data that this AI system is going to need to access? For example, there'll be concerns around regulation and exposure of data, for example. So as many clients now start to go into production, the pragmatic reality for many organizations is AI, just like cloud is a hybrid, multicloud journey.

Nick Ismail

Sure. And finally, just looking ahead, what are your expectations from AI over the next 12 months?

Alan Flower

Well, look, I mean, things have moved quickly over the first 24 months, this journey. When I think about the next 12 months, I think the early signs are here already. So we already have clients that are moving beyond conversational AI. We're all familiar with the chat GPT kind of chatbot type experience into what I would call agentic systems. This is where we now expect AI to make decisions and take responsibility for outcomes as well. So we talk about things like reasoning systems, for example, so clients have already got the confidence now to take those early steps into giving more responsibility to AI systems. And along with that, we see trends. We talk about multi modal AI speech is really the next big kind of inflection point on this journey. Clients expect their end users to have a conversation with these agentic systems, right? So multi modal is the reality. We've already started to deploy some of those solutions, and along the way, we see this movement towards what we would call multi model architectures as well. What that really means, and you'll see a lot of this over the kind of next year or so, is everyone's familiar with what a large language model is, their general purpose, humongous entities. The reality is, many of these solutions need specialized models. So we start and see the emergence of specialized models that run alongside these large language models to provide a more accurate environment to support the end user, so that combination agentic systems that can reason conversational, multi modal solutions and multi model architectures, they're here now, but they will become the norm quickly over the next 12 months.

Nick Ismail

Sure. Alan, thank you very much.

Alan Flower

Thanks. Nick back to the show.