

News monitored for: HCL Technologies

# Reimagining Tech! AI's the Art of the Possible

GenAI is rapidly changing the IT services landscape presenting both opportunities and challenges. **Annapurna Roy** spoke to some of India's Top IT CTOs on how they approach their roles in the AI era and what's their advice to young techies

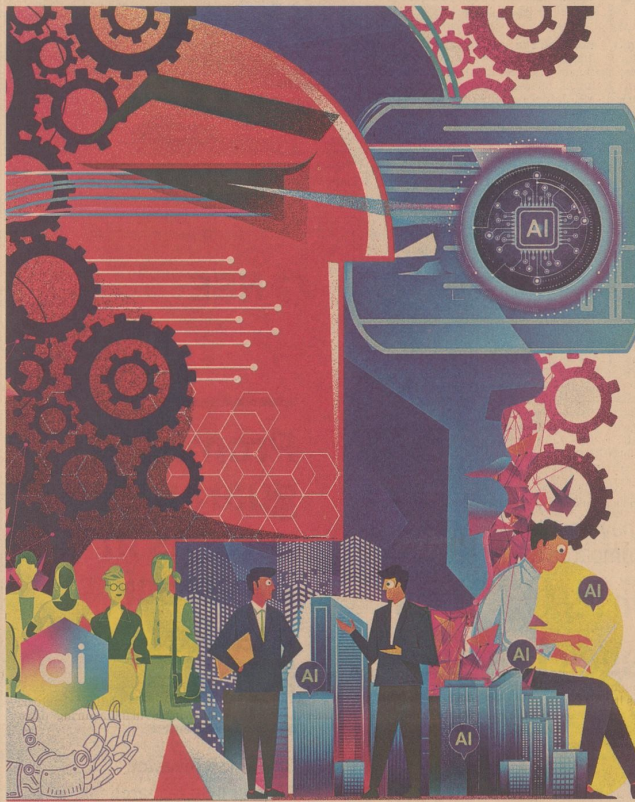


ILLUSTRATION: ANIMISHA

### Harrick Vin, CTO, TCS

Becoming adept at the 'art form' of AI solution engineering and helping enterprises use the technology to redefine their businesses are huge opportunities before the Indian IT industry, according to Harrick Vin, chief technology officer of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS).

"Every company in the future will run thousands of AI solutions or agents," Vin said. "The question is how do you actually build and engineer them well? How do you maintain, observe and run their operations?"

With AI, an IT CTO has to additionally think about responsible use of technology as well as making sure that people and job roles are gradually evolved in order to use the best combination of people and machines, Vin said. He believes that most innovations and opportunities will arise at the boundaries of traditional disciplines. Interdisciplinary learning and work such as applying AI and computational methods to medicine or finance will be key for young people.

"The unfortunate thing today as far as the education system is concerned is that, for example, if you are doing engineering, then you would not have done biology. People who are engineers are scared of biology and vice versa, and that is a big challenge," Vin said. He said regulation will be useful in ensuring responsible data use and preventing adverse impacts of AI on individuals or populations, while guardrails may be needed beyond just design.

"As they are running, getting more data and adapting, how do you detect if they are deviating from acceptable behaviour? Because otherwise you introduce what I often refer to as artificial insanity," Vin said.

build the developer community of AI and strengthen it, right into our education system," Guntur said, adding that AI and data sciences can be taught in high schools. The industry too must find innovative ways to build talent capabilities as the existing pool is thin, he noted. "There will definitely be some displacement (of jobs), but coding is not going to go away," Guntur said. When 80% of coding can be done by coding assistants, the expectation of developers is to think about design and deployment aspects, he said. Guntur said we see extreme approaches to AI regulation around the world and that "India needs to play somewhere in the middle", where areas like banking or healthcare may need more regulation compared to, say, retail.

### Sandhya Arun, CTO, Wipro

In the AI era, emphasis on humanities education is equally as important as STEM, said Sandhya Arun, CTO, Wipro.

"Historically we have taken pride in saying 'I'm a maths student' and not so much pride in saying 'I'm a psychology student', but with the advent of AI and the fact that technology is becoming so human, if you have one and not the other, you're not going to succeed," Arun said.

A focus on empathy, social skills, working in teams, managing emotions, and communication skills are required from the school level, she said.

"It is important for people who start off as software engineers and developers to understand the big picture," Arun said. "While this was always encouraged in the past, this is now becoming existential."

For Wipro, the opportunity with AI is across

accelerating its adoption for clients, transforming the IT core in terms of architecture and data, and derisking AI systems, Arun said.

"Today, we are also seeing back-end processes becoming intelligent with the help of agents, where you have personas in a workflow being mimicked by AI," Arun said.

While coding assistants are bringing 30% improvement in developer productivity, in finance, AI helps predict whether a client contract will live up to its promise of profitability, ascertaining whether budgets are adequate, and even reviewing proposals for the CFO, Arun noted.

Further, she said it is vital to ensure global alignment on responsible use.

"It's not just about preventing intentional harm, but it's preventing unintended consequences, and that requires a multi-pronged, global consortium that can come together."

### Vijay Guntur, CTO, HCLTech

Advancements in AI require IT CTOs to be futuristic and realistic simultaneously, said Vijay Guntur, CTO, HCLTech.

"You have to future-proof the organisation and make sure we build something ahead of the market," Guntur said. "As somebody who is going to then go sell this to the customers and actually deploy it, you have to be realistic."

Wearing the experimental hat, technologists have to think about the possibilities; while wearing the practical hat, they must consider returns on investment and ethical and legal safeguards, Guntur said.

He sees opportunity for the company across the AI stack, from helping create AI chips to engineering and running models and applications for enterprises. For India, research and IP creation should be a focus, he said. "There is a big opportunity for us to

