Gartner IT SYMPOSIUM | Xpo™

October 19 – 22, 2026
Orlando, FL

2026 Executive Summary

A message from the Conference Chair

Do you feel empowered to ignite intelligence? We look forward to working with you as you use AI alongside human ingenuity to improve your business and handle change confidently, and hope to see you at Gartner IT Symposium/Xpo 2027!



Kristin Moyer,
Conference Chair,
Distinguished VP Analyst, Gartner

Top takeaways

1 Large-scale SaaS replacements are unlikely, but the disruption is real

By 2030, the focus of AI will shift from software agents to robots. Prepare for incumbent SaaS providers to lose ground around the edges while maintaining absolute dominance as the system of record. As software engineering, applications, and enterprise architecture (EA) continue to undergo rapid change driven by the relentless pace of AI innovation, EA needs to shift from siloed architects to a cohesive, enterprise-wide architecture engine that accelerates innovation.

"AI agent hype is peaking, and CIOs believe AI agents will replace many enterprise applications. However, large-scale replacements are unlikely through 2030, especially in regulated industries or business processes."

Jason Wong,
Distinguished VP Analyst,
Gartner

2 The urgency to deliver AI value rises along with the AI bill

To make AI work for you, understand the truths around AI adoption in enterprises. The raw cost of AI is rising and the opportunity costs it presents are even bigger. The pressure from the executive suite to adopt AI is matched only by a newfound passion for governance, including monitoring for spending and "value." Patience for experiments is draining away. Management wants to see impact in ledgers. Now that the next big thing is a new kind of AI and the fear is that an AI bubble's end will flood everybody, pragmatism is the new enthusiasm.

"You're planting a garden. The CFO wants kale. The Board wants a new vegetable that no one's ever grown. The customers want candy. Farmer CIO, speed the plow."

Whit Andrews,
Distinguished VP Analyst,
Gartner

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3 Technology impact tells a better business value of IT story

Remember that successful business value of IT stories are not tales of effort expended, resources consumed, or systems configured; but they are stories of technology-powered impact on critical business deliverables measured in speed, efficiency, and risk reductions to business outcomes. CIOs must pivot their value of IT conversations with businesses leaders from the work they do to the outcomes they enable and improve, measuring this by the improvement in quality, availability, and efficiency improvements.

"Stop telling the business how hard IT works. Tell them what impact IT has on things they care most about!"

Robert Naegle,
VP Analyst,
Gartner

4 Dark AI is changing the basis of competition between us and threat actors

Although the rise of dark AI has cybersecurity and business leaders concerned, keep in mind that these same innovations which help advance threat actors also advance defenders' capabilities, and defenders have better AI sooner. AI will ultimately transform the discipline of cybersecurity, requiring CIOs to double down on cyber-automation, and IAM.

"The main governance question we need to be asking is, **is this something I want AI to do, or something I want it to write a program to do?**"

Leigh McMullen,
Distinguished VP Analyst,
Gartner

5 The work of tomorrow, even the work executives do, will be almost completely unrecognizable

Lead your organization's AI transformation by mastering the human and leadership shifts that matter most. Unlock the true potential of human-AI collaboration, redesign work for lasting impact, and future-proof your talent. Become the CIO who doesn't just keep pace with change, they become the pacesetter.

"The biggest risk we face is not that machines become more human, but that work becomes less human."

Tori Paulman,
VP Analyst,
Gartner

6 Change capacity is the new strategic asset

Change formerly arrived as a project with a start and an end. Now the work itself is being rewritten, and there's no pause between one shift and the next. The workforce is absorbing the costs. CIOs must decide whether any of this sticks through change willingness, the capacity people have left, and how deliberately they shape the culture around both.

"You can't build a predictable plan for unpredictable times. Instead, use organizational change as a dynamic discipline to build continuous readiness in your workforce and IT."

Shawn Murphy,
Sr Director Analyst,
Gartner

Save the Date!

Join us October 18 - 21, 2027 in Orlando, FL for Gartner IT Symposium/Xpo™, and don't miss the added value of attending with your team.

You can also take a look at our calendar to explore the range of conferences we hold to find those most relevant to you and your organization.

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