

Data & AI Transformation Maturity Report

2026

Beyond experimentation, into execution.

3,010 · 936 · 51

DELEGATES · COMPANIES · COUNTRIES

ABOUT

Hyperight

Hyperight is a leading global media and event company focused on data, analytics, and AI-driven transformation. We empower organizations to elevate their maturity and turn technological capability into measurable business value. Through our industry-leading events, curated executive communities, and digital media presence across four continents, we deliver premium insights, applied best practices, and real-world case studies that help enterprises move from experimentation to execution—and from innovation to competitive advantage.

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§ 00 — INTRODUCTION

Preface

Data Innovation Summit · Maturity Report 2026

The 2026 edition of the Data Innovation Summit marks more than a milestone in the evolution of one of the world's most applied Data & AI gatherings; it represents a moment of reflection for an entire industry transitioning from ambition to execution. Over the past decade, organizations have invested heavily in data platforms, cloud infrastructure, analytics capabilities, and, more recently, artificial intelligence. The narrative has been one of rapid technological progress, expanding possibilities, and increasing strategic importance. Yet, as this report demonstrates, the defining challenge of our time is no longer access to technology, but the ability to translate it into consistent, scalable, and measurable business outcomes.

This report is built on a unique and comprehensive dataset drawn from the Data Innovation Summit 2026 ecosystem. It combines insights from **3,010 delegates representing 936 companies across 51 countries, 405 Call for Speakers submissions from 270 organizations, 392 validated agenda sessions, 94 vendors and exhibitors**, and pre-event maturity assessments and delegate questions from senior Data & AI leaders. Together, these datasets form a multi-dimensional view of the market, capturing not only how organizations perceive their maturity, but also what they ask, what they build, what they present, what is validated, and what is commercially supplied.

What emerges from this integrated analysis is a clear and consistent signal: Data & AI transformation has entered a new phase. The market is no longer defined by experimentation or isolated innovation. Instead, it is characterized by organizations attempting to **scale capabilities, integrate systems, govern data, and operationalize AI within the fabric of the enterprise**. Across all datasets, the dominant maturity stage is not Foundational or Visionary, but **Established**—a phase where the complexity of transformation becomes fully visible.

This report introduces a unified maturity model—ranging from Foundational to Visionary—to provide a consistent analytical lens across all dimensions of the ecosystem. However, one of the central insights is that maturity is not linear, nor uniform. Organizations do not progress neatly from one stage to another. Instead, they operate across multiple maturity levels simultaneously, depending on domain, use case, and organizational structure. A company may be Leading in AI experimentation while still Foundational in data governance, or Established in platform architecture while Developing in value realization.

The purpose of this report is not to benchmark organizations in a simplistic way, but to **map the real dynamics of transformation**. It seeks to distinguish between narrative and execution, between supply and demand, and between capability and outcome. It highlights where the market is aligned, where it is fragmented, and where the most critical gaps remain.

Perhaps most importantly, this report reflects the voices and realities of the people driving transformation on the ground. The majority of participants in this ecosystem are not abstract strategists, but engineers, architects, analysts, and managers responsible for building and operating data and AI systems. Their presence, their questions, and their contributions shape the findings of this report and ground it firmly in applied reality.

As you read this report, it should be understood not as a static snapshot, but as a **dynamic representation of a market in transition**. The journey from technology adoption to business-first innovation is ongoing, complex,

and uneven. Yet it is precisely this complexity that defines the opportunity ahead.

The next chapter of Data & AI transformation will not be written by those who simply adopt new technologies, but by those who can integrate them into **coherent, governed, and value-driven operating models**. This report is intended to support that journey by providing clarity, structure, and insight into where the market stands today—and what it will take to move forward.

§ 01 — EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Market Beyond Experimentation

Entering the era of execution.

3,010
DELEGATES

936
COMPANIES

71.7%
ESTABLISHED STAGE

Data and AI have moved decisively beyond the phase of early adoption. Across industries, organizations have invested heavily in data platforms, cloud infrastructure, analytics capabilities, and more recently, Generative AI. The technological foundation for transformation has largely been established.

However, the findings of this report indicate that the defining challenge in 2026 is no longer whether organizations can adopt Data & AI technologies. It is whether they can **operationalize them at scale**, integrate them into business processes, and deliver measurable and sustained impact.

The analysis, based on a comprehensive dataset from the Data Innovation Summit 2026 ecosystem—including 3,010 delegates from 936 companies across 51 countries, 405 Call for Speakers submissions, 392 validated programme sessions, and 94 vendors—reveals a market that is **active, capable, and ambitious**, yet structurally constrained in execution.

The Dominance of the Established Maturity Stage

Across all datasets, a consistent maturity pattern emerges. Organizations are not predominantly Foundational, nor are they broadly Visionary. Instead, they are concentrated in the **Established stage** of Data & AI transformation. This is most clearly reflected in the validated programme, where **71.7% of sessions align with Established maturity**, compared to 12.0% at Leading and 4.8% at Visionary.

- Scale AI and analytics use cases across the enterprise
- Align data platforms with business processes
- Integrate capabilities across organizational silos
- Establish governance frameworks and operational discipline

This stage represents a critical inflection point. The complexity of transformation becomes fully visible, and the limiting factors shift from technology to **organization, process, and execution capability**.

A Fragmented Maturity Reality

Despite the apparent concentration in the Established stage, a deeper analysis reveals that maturity is neither linear nor uniform. Organizations do not operate at a single maturity level; instead, they exhibit **fragmented maturity profiles across domains**.

- Advanced AI experimentation may coexist with unresolved data quality issues

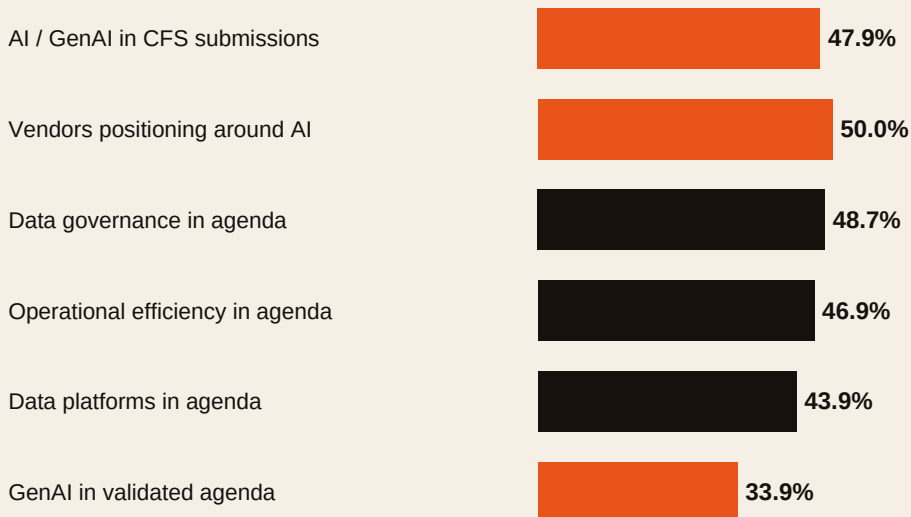
- Scalable data platforms may exist alongside unclear business ownership
- Strategic alignment may not translate into operational adoption

“Organizations are not struggling to start transformation. They are struggling to align and synchronize its components.”

The Gap Between AI Narrative and Enterprise Reality

Artificial intelligence—particularly Generative and Agentic AI—dominates the market narrative. In the Call for Speakers dataset, **47.9% of submissions are AI-focused**, and within the vendor landscape, **50% of vendors position themselves around AI capabilities**. However, this narrative shifts when moving from market positioning to validated reality. In the final programme, Generative AI appears in **33.9% of sessions**, while other domains—such as data governance (48.7%), operational efficiency (46.9%), and data platforms (43.9%)—are more prominent.

NARRATIVE vs REALITY · Topic share



The market talks about AI; organizations work on data, integration, and operations.

Execution as the Primary Constraint

The most consistent signal across all datasets is the centrality of execution challenges. Delegate questions focus on scaling, governance, operating models, and value measurement. Use cases concentrate in operational efficiency, decision intelligence, and platform integration. Vendor offerings are primarily designed to enable organizations to move from Developing to Established maturity. And delegate profiles show that **88.6% of participants operate at operational or tactical levels**—transformation is being driven by practitioners responsible for implementation.

A Structural Supply–Demand Tension

A notable insight from the analysis is the misalignment between vendor supply and enterprise demand. The vendor landscape is heavily concentrated in enabling capabilities: **62.8% software providers** and **55.3% of vendors aligned with Developing-stage enablement**. In contrast, the validated agenda shows that organizations are already operating at the Established stage and are attempting to scale and integrate

capabilities. Vendors are building and selling the tools for transformation, while enterprises are struggling to operationalize them.

The Practitioner-Led Transformation

With **3,010 participants from 936 companies**, the audience is dominated by operational and tactical roles: data engineers, data scientists, architects, analysts, managers and leads. Only **4.5% of participants are at the strategic C-level**, while the vast majority are directly involved in building, deploying, and managing Data & AI systems. Transformation is being executed by those closest to the systems and processes; strategic intent must be translated into operational capability to succeed.

Alignment with Global Research

- **McKinsey** identifies scaling AI and achieving business impact as the primary challenge.
- **Stanford AI Index** highlights uneven maturity and uneven distribution of benefits.
- **Deloitte Nordic** emphasizes strong foundations but limited large-scale value realization.
- **BCG** finds that only a small minority of organizations achieve AI value at scale.

The Central Conclusion

“From technology adoption to business-first execution. Organizations have the tools, platforms, and capabilities required to transform. The challenge now is to integrate them into a coherent system that delivers consistent value.”

The defining capability of the next phase will not be innovation alone, but **execution maturity**—the ability to align data, AI, processes, and people into a scalable, governed, and value-generating operating model.

Implications for Leaders

- Prioritize **operational integration** over new experimentation.
- Invest in **data quality, governance, and ownership**.
- Align AI initiatives with **business processes and decision-making**.
- Focus on **measuring and sustaining value**, not just generating it.

§ 1 — METHODOLOGY

How the dataset was constructed

How the Data Innovation Summit 2026 dataset was assembled and analyzed.

The findings presented in this report are based on a comprehensive and integrated dataset derived from the Data Innovation Summit 2026 ecosystem. Unlike traditional industry reports that rely on a single survey instrument or a narrow sample of respondents, this analysis brings together multiple independent data sources, each capturing a different dimension of Data and AI transformation. By combining these perspectives, the report is able to move beyond perception-based benchmarking and instead provide a more grounded representation of transformation as it is experienced, implemented, and operationalized in practice.

The dataset consists of six primary components. The first is the **pre-event maturity assessment**, which captures how organizations evaluate their own position in the Data and AI transformation journey. The second is the collection of **delegate-submitted questions** for panels and roundtables, reflecting the real concerns and priorities of senior practitioners and decision-makers. The third is the **Call for Speakers dataset** (405 submissions from 270 organizations), representing how the market positions its capabilities and transformation narratives. The fourth is the **final summit agenda** (392 validated sessions from 245 organizations), reflecting what has passed editorial scrutiny and is considered credible, relevant, and applicable. The fifth is the **vendor and exhibitor landscape** (94 organizations), providing insight into the commercial supply of tools, platforms, and services. Finally, the **delegate profile dataset** (3,010 participants from 936 companies across 51 countries) offers a detailed view of who is actively driving transformation within organizations.

These datasets were not analyzed in isolation. A central objective of the methodology was to create comparability across sources, enabling consistent interpretation and cross-validation of findings. To achieve this, all data was first normalized. Industry classifications were consolidated into broader categories to avoid fragmentation. Job titles were mapped to functional roles and seniority levels. Geographic data was grouped into regional clusters, and session content was categorized into thematic domains such as data governance, data engineering, artificial intelligence, analytics, and business transformation.

A critical aspect of the methodology is the use of **multi-label classification** for use-case analysis. Data and AI transformation is inherently multi-dimensional, and individual initiatives rarely belong to a single category. For this reason, each Call for Speakers submission, agenda session, and vendor offering was analyzed in terms of its underlying use cases—based on titles, descriptions, stated objectives, and business outcomes—and mapped to one or more categories: data governance and trust, operational efficiency and automation, data platform and architecture, generative AI and copilots, agentic AI systems, decision intelligence, customer experience, and risk and compliance.

In parallel with use-case classification, a unified maturity model was applied across all datasets. The model consists of five stages, ranging from Foundational to Visionary, and serves as the central analytical framework for the report. However, maturity was not treated as a static attribute. Instead, it was interpreted differently depending on the dataset—self-perception in the assessment; nature of the use case and operationalization in submissions and agenda; capability enabled in the vendor data; role and positioning in the delegate dataset.

An important methodological distinction introduced in this report is the separation of different signal layers within the ecosystem. In particular, the analysis distinguishes between **vendor-driven and industry-driven**

content. Within both the Call for Speakers and final agenda datasets, sessions were categorized into vendor-led demonstrations, vendor-led thought leadership, and industry-led case studies. This segmentation makes it possible to differentiate between what vendors are building and promoting, how they position transformation, and what enterprises are actually implementing.

The analytical approach combines **quantitative and qualitative methods**. Quantitative analysis includes the calculation of distributions, frequency counts, and proportional shares across datasets. Qualitative analysis is used to interpret session content, identify recurring themes, and extract underlying patterns in how organizations approach transformation. By combining these methods, the report ensures that findings are both statistically grounded and contextually meaningful.

While the dataset is extensive, several limitations should be acknowledged. The analysis is based on an event-centered ecosystem, which introduces a natural regional bias, particularly toward the Nordic and European markets. Vendor participation across multiple datasets may amplify supply-side signals. Some data fields are incomplete, which affects the granularity of certain analyses. In addition, elements such as maturity assessments and session descriptions are inherently subjective and may reflect aspirational positioning rather than fully realized capabilities.

Despite these limitations, the methodology offers significant strengths. The use of multiple independent datasets allows for cross-validation and reduces reliance on any single perspective. The focus on real-world inputs, including actual use cases, roles, and validated content, ensures that the analysis is grounded in practice rather than theory. Most importantly, the methodology enables the identification of structural patterns that would not be visible through a single-source analysis.

§ 2 — LANDSCAPE

The Data & AI Transformation Landscape

From capability accumulation to enterprise-wide operationalization.

The current state of Data and AI transformation reflects a market that has progressed significantly in terms of capability development, yet remains constrained in its ability to translate these capabilities into consistent and scalable business outcomes. Over the past decade, organizations have systematically invested in the foundational elements required for transformation, including data platforms, cloud infrastructure, analytics tooling, and machine learning capabilities. These investments have created a baseline level of technical readiness that is now broadly distributed across industries.

However, the findings of this report indicate that transformation has entered a fundamentally different phase. The primary challenge is no longer the acquisition or deployment of technology, but the integration of that technology into the operating model of the enterprise. This shift introduces a new level of complexity, as organizations must now align data, systems, processes, and people in a coordinated and sustained manner.

Across all datasets analyzed in this report, a consistent maturity pattern emerges. Organizations are concentrated in the **Established stage** of maturity. This is most clearly reflected in the final agenda, where 71.7 percent of validated sessions align with Established maturity, indicating that the most credible and relevant market activity is focused on scaling, integration, and operationalization.

The Established stage represents a critical inflection point. Data platforms must support a growing number of use cases across different business units. AI models must be integrated into decision-making processes rather than operating as standalone tools. Governance frameworks must balance control with innovation. Organizational structures must evolve to support cross-functional collaboration, while maintaining accountability and ownership.

One of the defining characteristics of this phase is the **increasing visibility of interdependencies**. In earlier stages, capabilities can be developed in relative isolation. At the Established stage, these separations become constraints. Poor data quality limits the performance of AI models. Weak governance undermines trust in analytics outputs. Misaligned organizational incentives reduce adoption and impact.

Across both the Call for Speakers and final agenda datasets, data governance, quality, and trust appear in approximately half of all use cases. This does not indicate that organizations are still at a Foundational stage overall, but rather that foundational capabilities remain incomplete or unevenly implemented. As a result, they continue to act as limiting factors for further progress.

Another important characteristic of the current landscape is the **uneven distribution of maturity across domains**. It is common to observe advanced capabilities in one area alongside significant gaps in another—a sophisticated machine learning infrastructure alongside struggles with data ownership and lineage; enterprise-wide data platforms without clear mechanisms for measuring business value.

The role of artificial intelligence within this landscape further illustrates the complexity of the current phase. While AI is highly visible, it is not the dominant focus of operational activity. In the final agenda, Generative AI appears in 33.9 percent of sessions, compared to higher representation for data governance, operational efficiency, and data platforms. AI is being integrated into a broader transformation context rather than acting as

a standalone driver. Its effectiveness depends on the maturity of underlying data and infrastructure capabilities.

Sectors such as financial services, public sector, energy, and industrial manufacturing show particularly strong engagement. These industries share several characteristics, including high data intensity, complex operations, and significant regulatory requirements. Their maturity profiles tend to reflect the Established stage, where scaling and integration are central concerns.

In summary, the Data and AI transformation landscape in 2026 is characterized by a shift from isolated capability development to integrated enterprise execution. The dominance of the Established maturity stage reflects both the progress achieved and the difficulty of the journey ahead. It is a phase defined not by the absence of capability, but by the challenge of coordination, alignment, and sustained impact.

§ 3 — MATURITY ASSESSMENT

Self-Perception vs Actual Position

How organizations evaluate themselves, and where that diverges from observed behavior.

The maturity assessment component of this report provides a structured view of how organizations perceive their own position in the Data and AI transformation journey. Participants were asked to evaluate their organization against a five-stage maturity model, ranging from Foundational to Visionary. The responses indicate that the majority of organizations place themselves beyond the early stages of transformation, with strong representation in the Developing, Established, and Leading categories.

At a surface level, this distribution suggests a market that has progressed significantly and is moving toward advanced maturity. Organizations report that they have invested in platforms, established governance frameworks, and begun to operationalize data and AI capabilities. However, when these perceptions are compared with the other datasets, a more complex picture emerges. The persistence of foundational challenges across use cases and agenda content indicates that key elements of that stage remain incomplete.

This apparent contradiction is not necessarily the result of inaccurate self-assessment. Rather, it reflects the multidimensional nature of maturity. Organizations tend to evaluate themselves based on their most visible or advanced capabilities. However, less visible dimensions, such as data quality, lineage, and cross-functional ownership, may lag behind and are more difficult to assess objectively.

Self-perception tends to emphasize areas of strength while underrepresenting areas of constraint. This creates a gap between perceived maturity and operational reality. While many organizations report that they have implemented data and AI solutions, fewer are able to demonstrate consistent, enterprise-wide impact. The transition from capability to value remains a critical challenge.

Another factor influencing self-perception is the relative nature of maturity. Organizations often benchmark themselves against peers within their industry or geographic region. In environments where overall maturity is relatively high, such as the Nordic region, organizations may legitimately consider themselves advanced in comparison to local benchmarks. However, when viewed against the full complexity of enterprise-wide transformation, the same organizations may still face significant challenges.

The assessment results also reflect a tendency to conflate progress in infrastructure with overall transformation maturity. The successful implementation of cloud platforms, data lakes, or analytics tools is often interpreted as a signal of advanced maturity. While these components are essential, they represent only one dimension of transformation. Without corresponding progress in organizational alignment, process integration, and decision-making, their impact remains limited.

Importantly, this gap between perception and reality should not be interpreted as a weakness. On the contrary, it reflects the inherent complexity of transformation at scale. As organizations progress, their awareness of challenges increases. What may appear as overestimation of maturity can also be understood as a recognition of progress in certain areas, combined with an evolving understanding of what remains to be done.

The key insight from this chapter is that maturity cannot be fully understood through self-assessment alone. It must be interpreted in the context of actual behavior, use cases, and outcomes. When viewed in this broader context, organizations are not as far along in their transformation journey as they may believe, but they are also

not as constrained as early-stage models would suggest. They are navigating the complex and demanding transition from capability to execution.

§ 4 — EXECUTIVE DEMAND

What Leaders Are Asking

From strategic ambition to operational pressure points.

The analysis of delegate-submitted questions provides one of the most direct and unfiltered views into the current state of Data and AI transformation. Unlike surveys or curated narratives, these questions reflect the immediate concerns, uncertainties, and priorities of practitioners and decision-makers who are actively engaged in transformation efforts. They capture not what organizations claim to have achieved, but where they are experiencing friction.

Across the dataset, a clear pattern emerges. The questions are not exploratory in nature, nor are they focused on whether organizations should invest in data and AI. Instead, they are centered on how to make existing investments work effectively at scale. This shift in focus is consistent with the broader maturity pattern identified in earlier chapters.

A dominant theme across the questions is the difficulty of **scaling AI and analytics beyond isolated use cases**. Many organizations report success in developing pilots or proofs of concept, but encounter challenges when attempting to extend these initiatives across business units, geographies, or functions. Questions frequently address how to standardize approaches, manage dependencies between systems, and ensure that models remain reliable and relevant over time.

Closely related to scaling is the question of **governance**. Participants consistently raise concerns about how to establish governance frameworks that provide sufficient control without inhibiting innovation. This includes data ownership, model accountability, regulatory compliance, and ethical considerations. The prominence of governance in the demand signal aligns with the use-case analysis, where governance, quality, and trust appear as the most frequent categories.

Another recurring theme is the **alignment between data and AI initiatives and business objectives**. Many questions focus on how to ensure that technical efforts are directly connected to business value, and how to define and measure that value in a consistent way. Organizations are seeking frameworks that allow them to move beyond activity-based metrics toward outcome-based metrics that reflect real business impact.

The issue of **organizational structure and ownership** also features prominently. Participants ask how to define roles and responsibilities across data, technology, and business functions. Questions address the balance between centralized and decentralized models, the role of data and AI leadership positions, and the mechanisms for enabling cross-functional collaboration.

Workforce capability and skills development represent another important dimension. As organizations scale their data and AI initiatives, the need for specialized skills becomes more acute. Questions focus on how to attract, retain, and develop talent, as well as how to upskill existing employees and ensure that business users can effectively interact with data and AI systems.

The emergence of **Generative and Agentic AI** introduces additional layers of complexity. While these technologies are widely discussed, the questions reveal a level of uncertainty regarding their practical application. Participants seek clarity on how to integrate these capabilities into existing systems, how to manage associated risks, and how to move from experimentation to production.

Taken together, the demand signal reflects a market that is under pressure to deliver results. Organizations are no longer asking whether to invest in data and AI, but how to make those investments effective. The primary constraints are not related to technology availability, but to execution—governance complexity, organizational misalignment, measurement challenges, and skill gaps.

§ 5 — MARKET SUPPLY

Call for Speakers Analysis

How the market positions itself — and where narrative diverges from execution.

The Call for Speakers dataset provides a comprehensive view of how organizations and solution providers position their Data and AI transformation initiatives to a global audience. Unlike the delegate questions, which reflect internal challenges and operational concerns, the Call for Speakers submissions represent external narratives. They are crafted to showcase success, innovation, and leadership, and therefore offer insight into how the market wishes to be perceived.

The dataset consists of **405 validated submissions from 270 organizations across 63 countries**, making it one of the most diverse and globally representative components of the report. At a high level, the distribution of topics confirms the centrality of artificial intelligence in current market narratives. Nearly half of all submissions, **47.9 percent**, are categorized under AI-related themes, including a strong presence of Generative AI, large language models, and emerging concepts such as agentic systems.

However, when the content of these submissions is analyzed beyond thematic labels and into underlying use cases, a more nuanced picture emerges. The most frequently represented use case category is not AI innovation itself, but **data governance, quality, and trust**, which appears in **51.9 percent** of submissions. This is followed closely by **operational efficiency and automation at 47.9 percent**, and **data platform and architecture at 42.7 percent**. Generative AI, while prominent, appears in **45.2 percent** of submissions, placing it alongside rather than above these foundational and operational domains.

The presence of **agentic AI in approximately 30 percent of submissions** further illustrates the gap between narrative and operational maturity. Agentic systems represent a forward-looking concept that is still in the early stages of practical implementation. Their prominence in submissions indicates strong interest and experimentation, but does not necessarily correspond to widespread deployment or impact.

Industry-level analysis reveals distinct patterns. Financial services submissions frequently emphasize risk management, fraud detection, and regulatory compliance. Manufacturing and industrial sectors focus on predictive maintenance, supply chain optimization, and operational efficiency. Retail and consumer sectors emphasize personalization, customer experience, and demand forecasting. Public sector submissions often center on data integration, decision support, and service delivery.

Vendor-led sessions tend to focus on capabilities and solutions, emphasizing what can be achieved with the right tools and approaches. Industry-led sessions, by contrast, are more likely to focus on specific use cases, challenges, and lessons learned. This distinction allows for a more balanced interpretation of the dataset, separating aspirational positioning from applied experience.

When the Call for Speakers data is mapped to the maturity model, the majority of submissions fall within the Developing and Established stages. A smaller proportion can be classified as Leading, typically those that demonstrate enterprise-wide deployment and measurable outcomes. Visionary submissions, while present, are relatively limited.

The contrast between the Call for Speakers dataset and the final agenda provides a particularly valuable insight. While the Call for Speakers reflects the full range of market narratives, the final agenda represents a curated

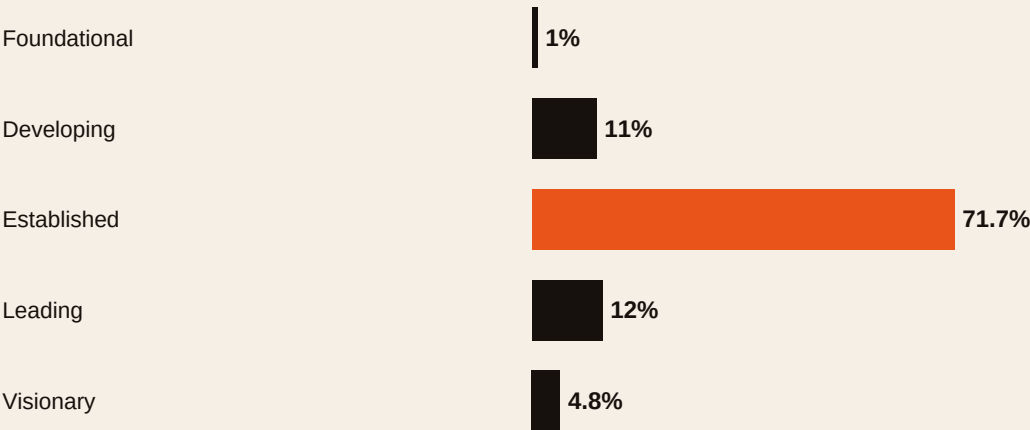
subset that has been selected for relevance, credibility, and applicability. The differences between these two datasets highlight the extent to which market positioning may diverge from validated practice.

§ 6 — VALIDATED REALITY

Final Agenda Analysis

What passes scrutiny — and what this reveals about real enterprise maturity.

MATURITY DISTRIBUTION · Validated agenda



392 validated sessions from 245 organizations.

The final programme of the Data Innovation Summit 2026 represents the most reliable and grounded signal within the entire dataset. While the Call for Speakers submissions capture how the market positions itself, the final agenda reflects what has passed a process of editorial evaluation based on relevance, credibility, and applicability.

The dataset includes **392 validated sessions from 245 organizations**, selected from a significantly larger pool of submissions. This selection process reduces the influence of speculative or marketing-driven content and emphasizes contributions that demonstrate practical experience, measurable outcomes, or transferable insights.

One of the most striking findings is the concentration of sessions within the Established maturity stage. A total of **71.7 percent** of sessions fall into this category, compared to **12.0 percent** in the Leading stage and **4.8 percent** in the Visionary stage. The remaining sessions are distributed across the Developing and Foundational stages, with Foundational content representing a very small minority.

The nature of the Established stage is reflected in the themes and use cases represented. **Data governance, quality, and trust appear in 48.7 percent of sessions**, making them the most prominent category. **Operational efficiency and automation follow at 46.9 percent**, while **data platform and architecture topics are present in 43.9 percent** of sessions. **Decision intelligence and forecasting appear in 36.5 percent**, indicating a strong emphasis on improving the quality and effectiveness of decision-making processes.

Generative AI, while still a significant theme, appears in **33.9 percent** of sessions, which is notably lower than its representation in the Call for Speakers dataset. This reduction suggests that while Generative AI is widely discussed and explored, only a subset of these discussions meet the criteria for inclusion in a programme focused on applied value. The same pattern is observed for **agentic AI**, which appears in **28.3 percent** of sessions.

A key methodological enhancement is the separation of sessions into **vendor-led demonstration sessions, vendor-led thought leadership sessions, and industry-led case studies**. Vendor-led demonstrations focus on

specific tools, platforms, or capabilities, often emphasizing features, performance, and implementation approaches. Vendor-led thought leadership sessions focus on broader narratives, frameworks, and strategic perspectives. Industry-led sessions provide the most direct view into how organizations are actually applying Data and AI in practice.

When comparing these different types of sessions, a clear pattern emerges. **Vendor sessions tend to emphasize capability and potential, while industry sessions emphasize execution and constraint.** This distinction reinforces the broader theme of the report, which highlights the gap between what is possible and what is achievable within the context of real organizations.

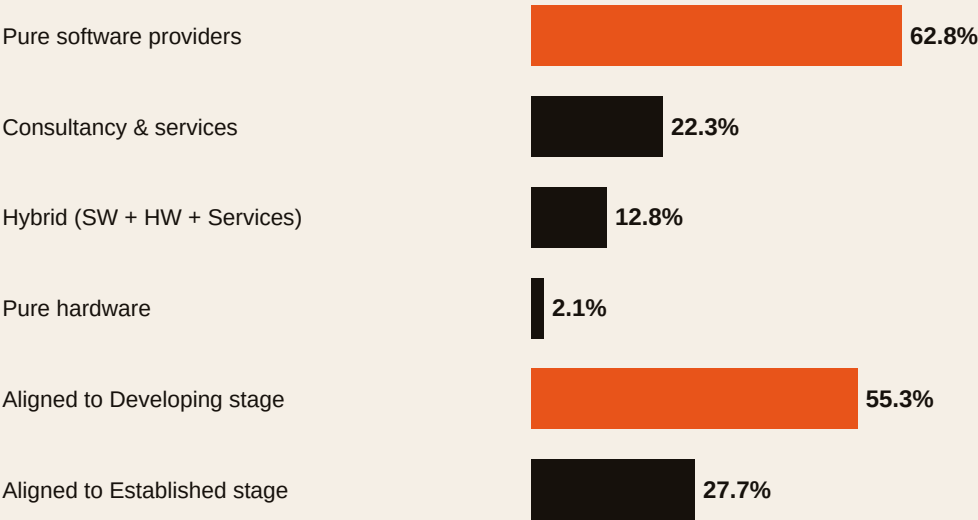
The industry distribution of agenda sessions further supports the conclusion that transformation is concentrated in sectors with high data intensity and operational complexity. Financial services, public sector, energy, and industrial sectors are strongly represented, reflecting their need to manage large volumes of data, comply with regulatory requirements, and optimize complex processes.

§ 7 — VENDOR LANDSCAPE

Commercial Supply

What the market is building and selling, and how it aligns with enterprise needs.

VENDOR COMPOSITION



94 vendors and exhibitors analyzed.

The vendor and exhibitor landscape provides a clear view of the commercial supply side of Data and AI transformation. It reflects the capabilities that technology providers and service firms are actively developing, packaging, and bringing to market.

The dataset includes **94 vendors**, representing a diverse ecosystem. **62.8 percent of vendors are pure software providers**, **22.3 percent are focused on consultancy and professional services**, and **12.8 percent offer a combination of software, hardware, and services**. Only a small minority, 2.1 percent, are dedicated hardware providers. This distribution highlights the central role of software in the current phase of transformation, while also emphasizing the continued importance of services in bridging the gap between technology and implementation.

Approximately **half of all vendors position themselves around artificial intelligence**, machine learning, and related capabilities, including Generative AI and agentic systems. At the same time, a substantial proportion focus on enabling layers such as infrastructure, data platforms, data engineering, analytics, and governance. These areas are essential for supporting the deployment and scaling of AI, even if they are less visible in external narratives.

When the vendor landscape is mapped to the maturity model, a clear pattern emerges. The majority of vendors, **55.3 percent, are aligned with the Developing stage**, providing capabilities that help organizations build, connect, and operationalize their data and AI environments. A further **27.7 percent of vendors support the Established stage**, focusing on scaling, governance, and enterprise-level integration. Only a smaller share of vendors are positioned at the Leading or Visionary stages.

This distribution reveals a structural tension. Organizations are already operating at the Established stage and are attempting to scale and integrate their capabilities. While vendors are supplying the tools required to

progress, enterprises are often under pressure to deliver outcomes that depend on capabilities that are still being developed or refined.

Vendors that frequently emphasize advanced AI capabilities should not overlook that the most common use cases across the ecosystem remain focused on governance, operational efficiency, and data platforms. Vendors that are able to address these foundational needs in a scalable and integrated way are well positioned to support enterprise transformation.

The reliance on external expertise also highlights a potential risk. If organizations become too dependent on external providers, they may struggle to build internal capabilities and ownership. This can limit their ability to sustain and evolve their transformation efforts over time. As a result, there is a growing emphasis on knowledge transfer, capability building, and the development of internal centers of excellence.

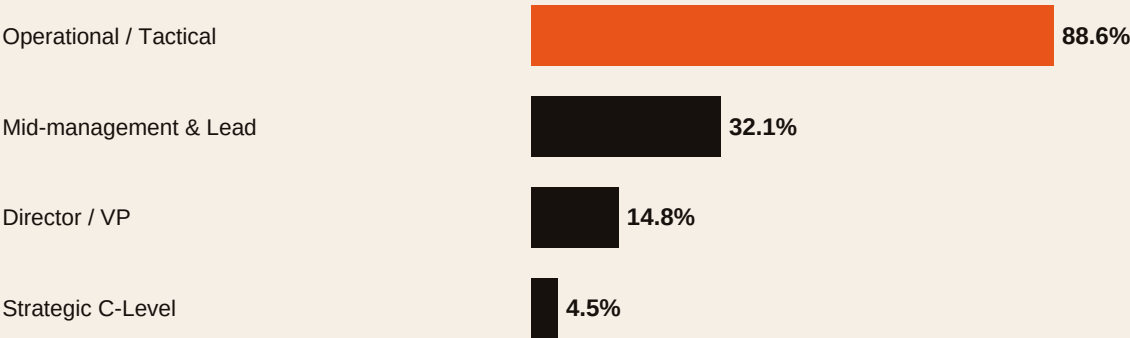
From a strategic perspective, the vendor landscape can be seen as both an enabler and a constraint. On one hand, it provides the tools and services necessary to accelerate transformation. On the other hand, the diversity and complexity of offerings can make it difficult for organizations to select, integrate, and manage the right solutions. Commercial supply is largely focused on enabling organizations to move from Developing to Established maturity—but enterprises must take responsibility for the final stages of integration, alignment, and value realization.

§ 8 — DELEGATE PROFILE

Who Is Driving Transformation

The human layer of Data and AI transformation.

DELEGATE SENIORITY · 3,010 participants



From 936 companies across 51 countries.

The delegate profile reveals who is actively engaged in the process of building, deploying, and scaling capabilities within organizations. The dataset includes **3,010 delegates representing 936 companies across 51 countries**. **Sweden alone contributes 1,362 delegates**, followed by Finland, Norway, and Denmark, which together form the core of the regional audience. Meaningful representation also comes from Germany, the United Kingdom, North America, and other regions.

A defining characteristic is the distribution of seniority. Of the total participants, **1,546 are classified at the operational level**, and **1,119 at the tactical level**, while only **134 participants are at the strategic level**, such as C-level executives or board members. This means that approximately **88.6 percent of delegates are directly involved in implementation, management, or technical execution**, rather than high-level strategy.

The composition of roles further reinforces this observation. The most frequently occurring terms in job titles include **data, engineer, manager, architect, AI, and analyst**. Specific roles such as data engineer, data scientist, data analyst, and data architect are among the most common. The presence of these roles at scale suggests that organizations have invested in building internal capability, but also that the burden of transformation is carried by individuals who must navigate both technical and organizational complexity.

The relatively small proportion of strategic-level participants does not imply that leadership is absent, but it does highlight a structural characteristic of the current phase. Strategic intent is often defined at the executive level, but its success depends on the ability of operational and tactical layers to interpret, implement, and sustain that intent. Gaps in communication or understanding can lead to fragmentation and inefficiency.

The industry distribution of delegates indicates that demand for Data and AI capabilities is broadly distributed across sectors. Financial services, public sector, energy, industrial, retail, and logistics organizations are all strongly represented—sectors characterized by high data volumes, complex operations, and regulatory requirements.

The delegate profile reflects the evolving nature of skills required for transformation. Traditional boundaries between roles are becoming less distinct, with increasing overlap between data engineering, analytics, and AI development. There is a growing need for individuals who can bridge technical and business domains,

translating analytical outputs into actionable insights and integrating them into decision-making processes.

The dominance of operational and tactical roles has direct implications for how transformation initiatives are designed and managed. Solutions must be practical, scalable, and compatible with existing systems and processes. They must also be understandable and usable by those responsible for implementation. This reinforces the importance of simplicity, standardization, and clear governance structures.

§ 9 — CROSS-ANALYSIS

The Integrated Maturity Signal

Connecting perception, demand, supply, validation, and execution.

The purpose of this chapter is to integrate the six analytical lenses developed throughout the report into a single, coherent interpretation of Data and AI transformation maturity. Each dataset captures a different dimension of the market: the maturity assessment reflects self-perception; delegate questions reveal demand-side pressure; the Call for Speakers submissions show how the market positions itself; the final agenda represents validated and credible practice; the vendor landscape captures commercial supply; and the delegate profile identifies who is responsible for execution.

The first and most consistent finding is the **dominance of the Established maturity stage**. This is evident not only in the final agenda (71.7 percent of sessions), but also supported by the nature of delegate questions, the composition of the audience, and the types of use cases being implemented. Organizations are no longer primarily engaged in building foundational capabilities or experimenting with isolated use cases. Instead, they are attempting to scale, integrate, and operationalize existing capabilities.

However, this concentration should not be interpreted as a sign of uniform maturity. The integrated analysis reveals that **maturity is highly uneven and fragmented**. The widespread presence of data platforms and AI models suggests progress beyond the Developing stage. At the same time, the persistent emphasis on data governance, quality, and trust indicates that foundational elements are not fully resolved.

A second key insight emerges from the comparison between **self-perception and observed behavior**. The maturity assessment suggests that many organizations view themselves as being at or beyond the Established stage. However, the demand signal points to ongoing challenges in scaling, governance, and value realization—characteristics of organizations still consolidating their capabilities.

The relationship between **market narrative and validated reality** provides a third important dimension. The Call for Speakers dataset is heavily oriented toward AI (47.9 percent). When filtered through editorial review, the relative prominence of AI decreases, and greater emphasis is placed on governance, operational efficiency, and data platforms. Generative AI appears in 33.9 percent of validated sessions, compared to higher representation in initial submissions.

The comparison between **vendor supply and enterprise demand** reveals another structural dynamic. The vendor landscape is dominated by software providers and is heavily focused on enabling capabilities associated with the Developing stage. In contrast, organizations are already operating at the Established stage. Vendors are providing the building blocks for transformation, while enterprises are under pressure to deliver outcomes that depend on the effective combination of those blocks.

The delegate profile provides further context. With the majority of participants operating at operational and tactical levels, the responsibility for bridging the gap between capability and outcome falls largely on practitioners. The relatively small proportion of strategic-level participants suggests that while direction may be set at the top, the critical work of transformation occurs at lower levels of the organization.

When viewed together, a coherent picture emerges. Data and AI transformation in 2026 is characterized by a **convergence of progress and constraint**. Organizations have made substantial investments and achieved

meaningful advances. At the same time, they face significant challenges in aligning capabilities, integrating them into operations, and delivering consistent value.

This distribution suggests that the market is entering a phase that can be described as **industrialization**. The initial phase of building capabilities and demonstrating potential is giving way to a phase focused on making those capabilities reliable, repeatable, and scalable. This shift requires a different set of skills, processes, and priorities. It emphasizes standardization, governance, and integration over experimentation and innovation.

The dominant challenge is no longer capability building, but execution. Success in this phase will depend on the ability to integrate diverse components into a unified system that delivers consistent and measurable outcomes.

§ 10 — EXTERNAL BENCHMARK

Global Research Comparison

Positioning the findings within the global research landscape.

Source	Headline Finding
McKinsey	Scaling AI and achieving business impact is the primary challenge facing enterprises. Few have achieved enterp
Stanford AI Index	Sustained growth in AI investment, research output, and deployment, but uneven distribution of benefits — a sm
Deloitte Nordic	Strong digital infrastructure and institutional trust in the Nordic region, yet challenges remain in scaling AI and
BCG	Only a small minority of organizations achieve significant AI value at scale. Execution and integration — not te

A consistent observation across global studies is that AI adoption has expanded rapidly, but the ability to translate that adoption into measurable business value remains limited. McKinsey's recent research highlights that while a growing proportion of organizations report using AI in at least one business function, far fewer have achieved enterprise-wide impact. The primary challenges identified include integration into workflows, alignment with business strategy, and the development of appropriate operating models. These findings closely align with the demand signal observed in this report.

The Stanford AI Index provides a broader macro-level perspective, documenting sustained growth in AI investment, research output, and deployment across industries. At the same time, it emphasizes the uneven distribution of benefits, with a relatively small number of organizations capturing a disproportionate share of value. This pattern is consistent with the fragmentation of maturity observed in this report.

Deloitte's research on the Nordic region offers a particularly relevant comparison, given the geographic composition of the delegate base. These studies indicate that Nordic organizations are relatively advanced in digital infrastructure, data availability, and institutional trust. However, they also highlight challenges in scaling AI initiatives and embedding them into core business processes—mirroring the findings of this report.

Boston Consulting Group's analysis of AI value creation suggests that only a small proportion of organizations have achieved significant value from AI at scale, despite widespread investment and experimentation. The gap between potential and realized value is attributed to insufficient integration, lack of alignment between business and technology, and challenges in scaling successful use cases.

Where the Data Innovation Summit analysis adds distinctive value is in its level of granularity and its focus on applied reality. While global studies often rely on surveys or aggregated metrics, this report draws on detailed, multi-source data that captures actual use cases, practitioner roles, and validated content. This combination of alignment with global research and depth of granular insight positions the report as a valuable contribution to the understanding of Data and AI transformation in 2026.

§ 11 — CONCLUSION

Strategic Implications

From capability accumulation to execution maturity.

The analysis presented in this report leads to a clear and consistent conclusion. Data and AI transformation has reached a stage where the primary constraint is no longer technological capability, but the ability to **execute at scale**. Organizations have invested in platforms, tools, and skills, and have demonstrated that data and AI can generate value. The challenge now is to make that value repeatable, reliable, and embedded within the core operations of the enterprise.

This transition marks a shift from a phase defined by **capability accumulation** to one defined by **execution maturity**. In earlier stages, progress is driven by the adoption of new technologies and the development of isolated use cases. In the current phase, success depends on the integration of these capabilities into a coherent system.

Maturity is not a linear progression from one stage to another, but a multidimensional and uneven process. Organizations operate across multiple levels simultaneously, with advanced capabilities in some areas and persistent gaps in others. This fragmentation creates both opportunities and constraints. It allows organizations to experiment and innovate, but also limits their ability to scale and sustain impact.

A key implication is that organizations must shift their focus from **building capabilities to orchestrating them**. This involves connecting data platforms, analytics, and AI systems with business processes and decision-making structures. It requires clear ownership of data and outcomes, as well as mechanisms for coordinating activities across functions.

Another important implication concerns the role of **governance**. Effective governance frameworks provide the structure needed to ensure consistency, manage risk, and support innovation. Governance must be treated not as a constraint, but as an enabler of transformation.

The findings also highlight the importance of **aligning technical initiatives with business value**. To address the value gap, organizations must develop clearer links between initiatives and outcomes, and establish metrics that reflect real impact rather than activity.

The **human dimension** of transformation is equally important. Organizations must invest not only in technology, but also in skills, culture, and organizational design. The relationship between vendors and enterprises also has strategic implications. There is a need for stronger alignment between supply and demand, as well as for solutions that address integration and orchestration rather than individual components.

Strategic Priorities for Leaders

- **Integrate** — embed data and AI capabilities within business processes and decision-making structures.
- **Govern** — strengthen governance to support trust, quality, and accountability.
- **Measure** — develop frameworks linking technical initiatives to business outcomes.
- **Empower** — invest in skills and organizational design to support execution.

■ **Standardize** — guide technology adoption with a coherent strategy that prioritizes interoperability and scalability.

“Data and AI transformation in 2026 is defined not by what organizations can build, but by what they can make work.”

The shift from capability to execution represents both a challenge and an opportunity. It challenges organizations to move beyond fragmented efforts and develop integrated operating models. At the same time, it offers the opportunity to unlock the full value of investments that have already been made. The organizations that succeed will be those that recognize this shift and act accordingly, building not only advanced capabilities, but also the maturity required to use them effectively.

APPENDIX

Maturity Distribution Across Dimensions

Validated Reality vs Market Perception and Narrative.

Maturity Level	Assessment	Call for Speakers	Final Agenda	External Research
Foundational	5%	6%	1%	10%
Developing	30%	35%	11%	35%
Established	40%	40%	72%	35%
Leading	20%	18%	12%	15%
Visionary	5%	5%	5%	5%

Note: Final Agenda data is based on validated session analysis. Assessment, Call for Speakers, and External Research distributions are indicative representations derived from thematic analysis and industry benchmarks.