Think Stockholm 2025

20 November 2025

Capture AI's full potential to drive growth, productivity and competitive advantage.

Summary of keynotes and insights from the day.

Keynote Summaries

Think Stockholm 2025 opened with a reflection on pivotal technological shifts through time. Today, AI represents another seismic transformation allowing for organisations to unlock new value creation and productivity and turn this into a competitive advantage. Whilst we navigate the future of computing with quantum. IBM's call to action was clear: build with trust and transparency. As AI agents become embedded in workflows, trust in the technology, the data, and the people behind it will determine long-term success. As the CEO of IBM Sweden and IBM GM North Region, Vahid Zohali stated in his closing remarks "It all about purpose."

Keynote 1: Unlocking the Full Value of Enterprise AI

Dave McCann, Managing Partner IBM Consulting EMEA
Thomas Kinnman, Head of AI and Automation Development, Ericsson
Carl Risberg, Head of Digital Banking Technology, Nordea

As the AI hype cycle fades, the focus is shifting towards delivering real enterprise value. While general-purpose models continue to make headlines, meaningful transformation lies in smaller, open, fit-for-purpose models trained on organisational data. IBM's watsonx and Granite models are already helping clients automate complex workflows, reduce costs, and personalise services at scale. Hybrid cloud and AI are no longer seen as separate strategies, but as a unified architecture for productivity and innovation.

- AI built for business is smaller, open, and more cost-efficient – delivering faster ROI.
- Hybrid cloud provides the control, compliance, and agility needed to scale AI responsibly.
- Human + digital labour combined deliver unprecedented value – augmenting human creativity with AI-driven efficiency to unlock new levels of productivity and innovation.

Keynote 2: Embracing AI for lasting advantage: A comprehensive approach to transformation

Elaine Parr, Vice President Consumer Industries, IBM EMEA
Daniella Waldfogel, CEO, Chamber of Commerce Sweden
Konrad Olsson, Founder & Editor in Chief, Scandinavian MIND
Amy Rollinson, Senior Advisor, Vogue Business

As businesses accelerate their adoption of AI, it's clear that success requires bringing the right technology together with deep transformation expertise. Lasting impact and advantage necessitate a holistic approach that brings together the right ecosystem of partners, strategically prioritizes transformation initiatives, and augments people with trusted digital workers to thrive in an AI-driven world. In this panel we brought these elements to light through the retail and fashion lens – allowing to reflect and take learnings across industries to embrace AI for lasting advantage.

Keynote Summaries

Keynote 3: What is next for the future of computing

Dr. Heike Riel, IBM Fellow, Head Quantum & AI Technologies, IBM Research
Martin Nilsson Jacobi, President and CEO, Chalmers University of Technology

Recognizing future trends and capabilities in computing has always been instrumental in gaining a competitive advantage. This is truer today than ever before. Quantum computing and AI are technologies that both promise to completely transform the way we do business. While some see quantum and AI as competing technologies, we seem them as complementary tools that will one day integrate with each other, and additional components, to enhance our overall computational capabilities. At IBM, we are actively exploring how clients can bring these different tools together with classical compute resources to achieve their organization's mission and drive the desired value outcomes that will help advance their business.

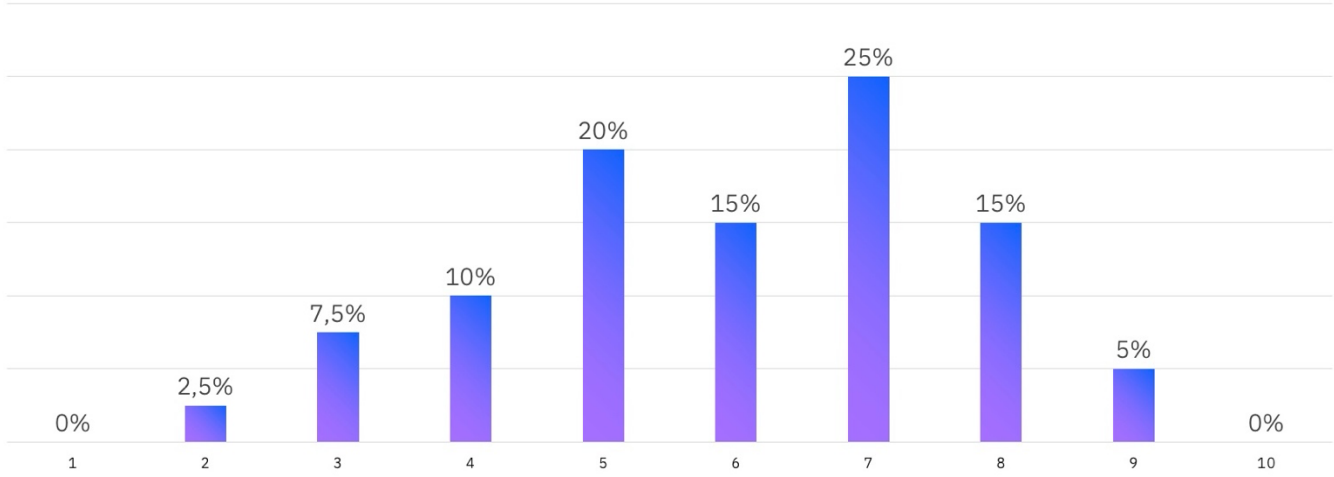
Keynote 4: How enterprise data becomes AI's most powerful tool

Rodney Rapson, Chief Digital Officer, Agassi Sports Entertainment
Hanna Björnbom, Solution Advisor in finance and AI Lead, SAP Sweden
Stefano Rebattoni, General Manager, Northern, Central and Eastern Europe, IBM
Maria Koblanck, Strategic Business Developer, Region Kalmar

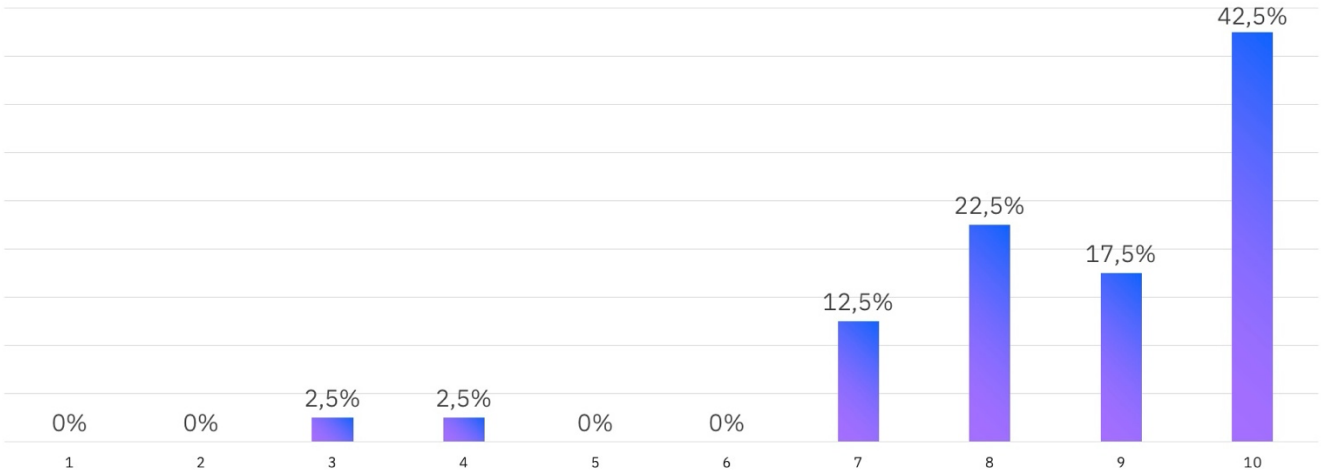
There is no argument that generative AI has enormous potential for the enterprise. Yet, generative AI has a data issue. The good news is organizations already have the key. Agents and models are useful only when the most important tool is available … data. With 80% of data being unstructured, it is a business imperative to have both an effective data strategy that covers both structured and unstructured data + solutions to allow for data access, verification, integration and governance across disparate environments. During this panel different insights were shared, if you like to learn more about the collaboration between IBM and Agassi Sports Entertainment, please find the latest announcement here.

Opening Questions

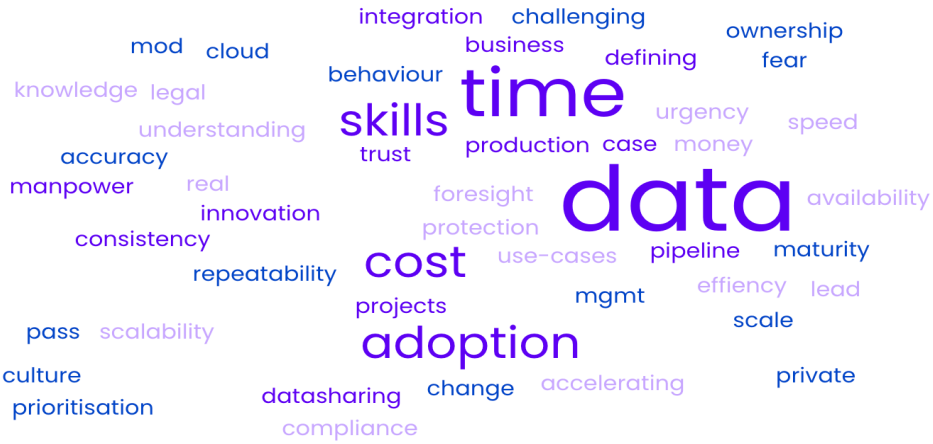
Question 1 – *On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your company's level of maturity in relation to AI adoption?*



Question 2 – *On a scale of 1-10, how important do you believe the adoption of AI to be in driving productivity?*



Question 3 – *Provide 1 word that best describes the challenges of AI adoption in your organisation?*



Today's Key Themes

Roundtable: Transform to Unlock Value and ROI

1. Operationalizing AI for Tangible Value Creation

Participants emphasized the need to move from experimentation to execution, focusing on use cases that clearly demonstrate ROI. Discussions highlighted the importance of governance, target operating models, and data orchestration to make AI initiatives scalable and sustainable. Many agreed that productivity gains are the first measurable outcome, with automation and insights serving as the entry point.

2. Bridging Skills and Strategy Across the Organization

The dialogue underscored a growing need to align business and technology teams through targeted upskilling and cross-functional collaboration. C-suite leaders were recognized as increasingly open to AI, moving from initial curiosity to active sponsorship. Reverse mentoring and empowering younger talent were identified as ways to accelerate understanding and adoption at the executive level.

3. Exploring New Revenue Streams Through Responsible Innovation

Attendees discussed identifying "white spaces" for growth by leveraging AI in external services and new markets. There was agreement that success depends on a data-driven approach and thoughtful orchestration across teams, while also remaining mindful of regulatory frameworks such as the EU AI Act. The consensus was to start small, scale what works, and be bold in pursuing opportunities that align with both business impact and ethical responsibility.

Roundtable: Technology - Agentic AI

1. Driving Enterprise Integration and Governance for Agentic AI

Participants stressed the need to connect existing IT and data silos through strong orchestration and governance frameworks to enable effective agent-to-agent collaboration. Many organizations are still in early testing phases and highlighted that "test and learn" should precede ROI measurement. Clear data ownership, integration between business and IT, and avoiding vendor lock-in were seen as foundational steps toward scalable AI deployment.

2. Buiding Skills and Culture to Accelerate Adoption

A consistent theme was the shortage of AI talent and the need for both reskilling existing employees and fast-tracking young professionals with growth potential. C-suite leaders were encouraged to champion cultural change and foster trust in AI outcomes, ensuring responsible and transparent use. Participants also noted that the next generation of workers will naturally embrace AI, and organizations must create structures that encourage creativity and proper validation of results.

3. Focusing on Practical Use Cases and Responsible Innovation

Roundtable discussions centered around identifying quick-win applications—particularly in back-office operations such as HR, finance, and internal data processing—where agentic AI can deliver measurable ROI. Responsible experimentation was encouraged, starting with defined problems rather than technology-first approaches. Participants emphasized ethics, compliance, and trust as non-negotiable pillars for scaling AI, alongside establishing leadership roles such as Chief AI Officers or AI ambassadors to guide enterprise-wide adoption.

Roundtable: People and Culture

1. Evolving the Role of HR in the Age of AI

Participants discussed how HR functions must adapt to integrate AI responsibly while maintaining the human element in workforce management. There was consensus that new roles and skill pathways are needed to manage AI-driven processes, from recruitment to employee engagement. Upskilling and reskilling initiatives were seen as essential to ensure employees remain relevant and confident in an AI-augmented environment.

2. AI as an Enabler for Productivity and Decision Support

Attendees shared examples of AI applications such as text analysis for employee feedback, credit checks, and scheduling optimization in sectors like healthcare. These use cases were viewed as valuable for improving efficiency and insight generation but must be implemented carefully to preserve human judgment and empathy. The overarching message was that technology should support—not replace—human interaction and decision-making.

3. Shifting from Exploration to Enterprise-Scale Impact

2025 was described as a year of experimentation with no-code and productivity tools, with adoption driven largely by end users. Looking ahead to 2026, participants expect a stronger enterprise focus on ROI and measurable business outcomes. Leadership commitment and clear governance structures were identified as key to moving from pilot projects to scalable, value-generating AI initiatives.

Roundtable: Governance and Trust

1. Bridging the Gap Between Legal and Technical Teams

Participants highlighted a disconnect between legal departments and technology teams regarding AI governance. Legal experts often lack the technical understanding needed to translate regulatory requirements into actionable evaluation metrics. Strengthening collaboration and developing shared frameworks were identified as key steps to ensure compliance and accountability.

2. Clarifying Ownership of AI Governance

There was broad agreement that unclear ownership of AI governance creates confusion and slows progress. Organizations need to define who is responsible for setting policies, monitoring compliance, and driving ethical AI practices. Establishing clear accountability across business, legal, and IT functions was seen as essential for sustainable governance.

3. Stimulating Business Engagement Through Client Demand

Limited client interest in AI governance was viewed as a barrier to broader business engagement. Participants noted that stronger external demand and regulatory pressure could accelerate internal investment and prioritization. The group emphasized the importance of demonstrating tangible business value from compliance and governance efforts to sustain executive attention.

Roundtable: The Future of Computing

1. Preparing for a Quantum-Safe Future

Participants agreed that organizations must begin transitioning to post-quantum cryptography (PQC) now to safeguard data and systems from future vulnerabilities. Financial services and telecommunications were identified as particularly exposed sectors, where early planning and standards adoption are critical. The consensus emphasized that quantum security readiness should be treated as a strategic priority rather than a technical afterthought.

2. Defining Industry-Specific Quantum Use Cases

Attendees highlighted the importance of tailoring quantum algorithms to industry needs, with examples such as energy grid optimization and financial modelling showing early promise. Establishing innovation groups within organizations was recommended to identify and test initial use cases that can demonstrate tangible value. This structured approach can help secure executive buy-in and guide the first wave of investments in quantum initiatives.

3. Bridging the Talent and Investment Gap

A major concern discussed was the difficulty of attracting quantum computing talent, given that AI currently receives most of the funding and attention. Participants recognized the need for stronger collaboration between academia, startups, and enterprise innovation teams to build the necessary skills pipeline. Incentivizing cross-disciplinary expertise and creating visible success stories were seen as key to balancing resource allocation between AI and quantum technologies.