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Ecosystm VendorSphere

Salesforce AI Innovations Transforming CRM

DATE

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AI Driving Personalisation & Productivity

Organisations are moving beyond digitalisation to a focus on building market differentiation. It is widely acknowledged that customer-centric strategies lead to better business outcomes, including increased customer satisfaction, loyalty, competitiveness, growth, and profitability.

AI is the key enabler driving personalisation at scale. It has also become key to improving employee productivity, empowering them to focus on high value tasks and deepening customer engagements.
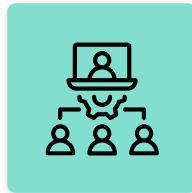
ORGANISATIONS' TOP FOCUS AREAS FOR AI INVESTMENTS
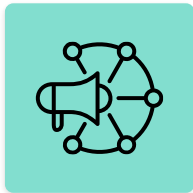
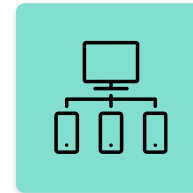**75%**
Improve Sales & Marketing
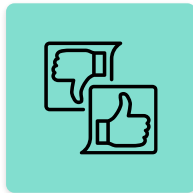
75%
Enhance Customer Experience

69%
Drive Employee Retention/ Productivity

66%
Innovate on Products/ Services

64%
Increase Operational Efficiency

Source: Ecosystm Digital Enterprise Study, 2023

Over the last month – at the Salesforce World Tour and over multiple analyst briefings – Salesforce has showcased their desire to solve customer challenges using AI innovations. They have announced a range of new AI innovations across Data Cloud, their integrated CRM platform.

Ecosystm Advisors comment on Salesforce's recent announcements and messaging.

Kaushik Ghatak
Principal Advisor

Niloy Mukherjee
Principal Advisor

Peter Carr
VP Ecosystm Consulting

Sash Mukherjee
VP Industry Insights

Salesforce's Generative AI Focus on Accessibility

FLOW INTEGRATES WITH DATA CLOUD AND EINSTEIN GPT

By integrating Data Cloud, which consolidates customer data from various channels into real-time profiles, customers can automate complex workflows and trigger actions based on up-to-date information. Einstein GPT, a Generative AI CRM technology, enables users to create and modify automations using a conversational interface, making the process simpler for non-technical users.

SLACK GPT IS DESIGNED TO ENHANCE PRODUCTIVITY

It provides native AI features within Slack, allows the use of Generative AI app integrations, and enables access to secure customer data insights from Customer 360 and Data Cloud. Users can create no-code workflows with AI actions by following simple prompts, making AI automation accessible to all.

TABLEAU LEVERAGES GENERATIVE AI TO ENHANCE DATA UNDERSTANDING AND INTERACTION

Tableau GPT, built on Einstein GPT, enables users to ask questions within the console for conversational insights, smarter data experiences, and contextual reports. Tableau Pulse provides automated insights and personalised analytics to business users and data consumers, utilising Tableau GPT. It presents insights in natural language and visual formats for easy comprehension.

Where do you see Salesforce's strengths?

Niloy Mukherjee
Principal Advisor

Salesforce has seen immense growth over the last decade – their FY 2023 revenue is 10x when compared to FY 2013. The completeness of vision that Salesforce demonstrated during the World Tour in Singapore, explains why they have been able to grow at such astonishing speed. With their five clouds and umbrella offering, they have something for everyone. And once an organisation chooses Salesforce, it is easy to then add on more services on the same platform rather than manage multiple providers. The network effect which has worked so well for giants such as Apple and Amazon seems to be working equally well for Salesforce.

Kaushik Ghatak
Principal Advisor

Salesforce's vision has a strong data component to it – the Data Cloud. Salesforce's message of AI + DATA + CRM has all the ingredients to enable a powerful Customer 360 view and transform Sales, Marketing and Service capabilities that can empower their customer base to provide the hyperpersonalisation they want to. It will be interesting to see how this vision gets realised when the rubber hits the ground.

The Salesforce World Tour had some great tech demonstrations – which impressed you the most?

Kaushik Ghatak

Principal Advisor

I was expecting some great examples around the customer lifecycle and use cases around Marketing, Sales and Customer Service – and I was not disappointed. The two demonstrations that stood out for me:

- **Einstein GPT's potential to be a gamechanger in precision marketing.** The ability to deliver hyperpersonalised multi-media content at an individualised level was showcased through the **F1** website and the virtual assistant who could put together the right deal for an F1 enthusiast for the upcoming F1 event in Singapore – without any human intervention!

- **Einstein GPT's ability to automate Sales.** A sales EDM to an unhappy customer who is still waiting on his order prompted Einstein GPT to come back with very specific responses in terms of the order status, and also enquire if the customer was interested in the product he had just browsed on the website – again, no human intervention.

What are your thoughts on Salesforce's Public Sector focus?

Peter Carr
VP Consulting

In the era of industry clouds, it is puzzling that so many vendors have hesitated to focus on the public sector, often citing a perceived lack of common service orientation across different tiers and departments. This has always been a significant misconception.

Salesforce's public sector team is pursuing a well-defined strategy to deliver improved industry solutions to a worldwide public sector clientele. Their deepening comprehension of governmental processes, delivered as a composable governmental toolkit, is yielding strong results and has the clear potential to underpin their industry leadership in both the short and long term. Particularly in the Asia Pacific region, Salesforce's public sector growth trajectory is promising, as more government digital leaders adopt the advantages of low-code platform architectures.

However, challenges do remain, particularly concerning competitive price benchmarking within the confines of stringent legacy procurement guidelines and against the entrenchment of legacy skills and solutions.

How is Salesforce empowering business teams?

Sash Mukherjee
VP Industry Insights

It is one thing to empower business teams – in this case Sales, Marketing and Customer Service teams – with the right technology that is easy to use. But Salesforce is also working on empowering business teams with the training required to grow.

Salesblazer was recently launched as a platform for sales professionals to learn, connect, and grow. Trailhead is a free online learning platform that is aimed at deepening selling skills. Sales professionals can earn more than 55 badges depending on their role – sales representative, business development, leader, or operations. The Trailblazer Community provides sales professionals a dedicated place to share knowledge and grow their network.

Ecosystm research finds that nearly 50% of organisations are not able to derive value from their AI investments because employees lack the combined business and AI skills required to fully leverage these solutions. Tech providers can play a much larger role in developing these skills – that in turn will see more successful deployments of their AI solutions.

Where should Salesforce continue to focus on?

Niloy Mukherjee
Principal Advisor

With Generative AI for a company like Salesforce, all the old learning that AI bots and customer response systems and tools have gathered so far, can become obsolete in a matter of a few months. As Generative AI by nature will offer a more comprehensive "script", the learning on what does not work, will be swift and will quickly displace the old knowledge. This technology will greatly benefit Salesforce. They have recognised that and have embraced it wholeheartedly which is great news for their customers. All in all, one would expect Salesforce to keep growing very fast if not as exponentially as in the last 10 years.

Kaushik Ghatak
Principal Advisor

The ability of an organisation to provide the hyperpersonalised service they want to, will depend entirely on its ability to collect the right data with very high levels of accuracy. That is a must if the hyperpersonalisation vision is to be realised. We have seen too many high-profile programs fail because of the difficulties in getting the right high-quality data, at the right time. While empowering their customers with best-of-breed technology is a step towards Sales & Marketing transformation, that also will not deliver the right outcomes.

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