



AI360 podcast

Season 1, Episode 14: Data management for enterprise AI success

Host:

Rohan Gupta, Principal, Deloitte Consulting

Guest:

David Chan, Managing Director, Deloitte Consulting

Rohan Gupta: Hello, everyone, and welcome to yet another episode of *AI360*. I'm your host, Rohan, and I'm really excited today to be joined by David. David's a leader in our practice here at Deloitte. David, why don't you introduce yourself?

David Chan: Hey, everyone. My name is David Chan. I am the US commercial lead for customer data platforms for Deloitte Digital. And my background is I help clients drive better personalized experiences, leveraging a combination of data, AI, and cloud technologies.

Rohan Gupta: So, David, thanks again for joining us. I think this is an extremely timely topic for us because, given the surge of Generative AI, many companies are now looking at their data and their infrastructure and are beginning to question what exactly the data can do for them. So, given the growing importance and priority of this data, could you speak to what an AI-ready data strategy entails, and why it's important for companies to create one today?

David Chan: Yeah, I think a lot of people sort of jump to the end with AI, but when you think about it, the success of your AI solution or your program is really disproportionately tied to how good your data is. You've all heard "garbage in, garbage out," so if you get bad data, how is the AI going to be good? I was on a panel a couple of months ago with Jaclyn Woods, and she said something I really liked.

She said everyone keeps on talking about how data is the new fuel. And she said data's actually the new water. And that was interesting because she said there's so much water. There's like over 70% of the world is covered in water, yet only 1% of it is actually usable. And when you think about how much data is being generated, which is basically exponential in nature, and how every company and organization and brand is trying to figure out how to wrap their heads around, make use of it. That is a great example of how when people talk about data lakes turning into data swamps, that is why being able to collect it, refine it, and make it usable is the hardest thing to enable your AI strategy.

Rohan Gupta: Yeah, that makes a ton of sense. I love that analogy. I know that as companies are trying to adopt their AI capabilities into their workflows, they kind of tend to see these roadblocks or delays primarily due to their data. So how should they be thinking about their data and making it AI ready? What are the things that organizations should begin considering today?

David Chan: Yeah, you know, I think a couple of questions you should really ask yourself is—at least from a data perspective—what kind of data do you need to feed your large language model? How do you make sure you're confident in the quality, the accuracy, the usability of it? The second question I would ask yourself is where does that data live? Is it in many places? Do you have to license it? Have you figured out a way to compile it into one central repository so you know the quality and you can govern it? The third one, I would say, is now that you're collecting all this data, how are you going to maintain customer trust and regulatory compliance to make sure that this data is being collected and used in the right ways? And then finally, I think the fourth question I would ask is, how are you going to monitor and validate these outputs so that they're accurate and ensure that they are relevant? How do you limit the sort of hallucinations and biases that come with some of the outputs today that you're trying to desperately avoid?

Rohan Gupta: I like that you talked about trust. You know, we've seen that these Generative AI models come with their own suite of unique considerations. For example, privacy. So how should organizations navigate customers' privacy concerns, especially as they're beginning to adopt this at scale?

David Chan: Yeah, I think it's all about transparency. And I think how you apply that within your organization is establishing a set of internal frameworks. And these frameworks have to prioritize customer trust as well as regulatory compliance. And I think about it in two halves. The first one is that the framework allows your internal teams to understand how the governance and process skates of how you collect what data, what's legal, how do you make AI ethical? So that you understand the ways of working—how does work get done, and who does that work? The second part of it, I think, is about the customer. They need to understand that you're going to take good care of this very valuable and sensitive data that you're collecting—and then using it for their benefit ideally—and how do you do that in an ethical way without bias? So part of that is 100% making sure that there's a clear communication strategy to them that, you know, if there's an update to your approach to how you're going to take and use their data, you have to make sure that they're aware.

Rohan Gupta: So, David, you talked a little bit about risk, or at least you kind of alluded to it, in your previous response. So I'd like to pick on that a little bit more and talk about how should organizations minimize their risks with AI, especially around hallucinations, ensuring that their model outputs are both accurate and relevant?

David Chan: I think three things that you can do to minimize risks is number one, sometimes less is more. So focus on creating more task-specific datasets for task-specific solutions. Because in general, if you leverage larger general datasets, they tend to hallucinate more because there is more variability in the responses. The second one I would focus on is around optimized inference techniques. And that's about, how do you use things like RAG and verifiers as another layer of validation of what that model output can look like. And finally, the third one is it's really important to help not only your internal teams as well as your customers understand how to prompt the AI to get the best results. So since you can't control necessarily how the end user ultimately engages, you can definitely give them some direction to get the best experience.

Rohan Gupta: I love that. As we close this out, and especially for our enterprise listeners, many of whom are getting started on their journey today, where would you advise them to focus?

David Chan: Yeah, I see a lot of people focus on two ends of the spectrum. The first one is they want to plan, plan, plan; have an exhaustive strategy before they start doing anything, which can create some level of planning fatigue. On the other hand, you have the other extreme of companies who want to start immediately and start running one POC, multiple POCs. But sometimes it can feel like a bridge to nowhere, where the next step is just more POCs. And so what I would recommend companies do is to establish a vision very quickly. Doesn't have to be the perfect one, but it has to exist. It has to be forward-looking that your organization understands where you're driving the bus towards. And then I would use POCs not as a strategy, but as a tactic to help refine and calibrate your overall strategy as a way to move forward and make progress.

Rohan Gupta: Perfect. Thank you again, David, for joining *AI360*. We're really excited to have you come back for another episode. And for all of our listeners, please make sure to give us your feedback by rating, liking, or subscribing. Thanks again, David!

David Chan: Thanks, Rohan. Thanks for having me.

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