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WHERE DIGITAL & BUSINESS BECOME HUMAN

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ON COMPUTER SCIENCES & MANAGEMENT TOUCHPOINTS,
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**FROM CITIZEN VOICES TO BUSINESS VALUE: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN
PARTICIPATORY ECOSYSTEMS**

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Abstract

AI has brought about radical changes in every aspect of citizens' daily lives, especially through the emergence of online platforms that enable continuous interaction between citizens and businesses. From product reviews, ratings, and social media engagement to participation in feedback systems and digital surveys, citizens are generating vast volumes of valuable data. These platforms serve as the primary medium where users express their preferences, concerns, and experiences. Businesses are increasingly leveraging these citizen-centred platforms not only to improve customer service but also to shape their strategic decisions. AI technologies, particularly those based on Machine Learning and Deep Learning, allow for real-time analysis of both explicit and implicit citizen needs. By analysing vast and diverse forms of unstructured data—including textual feedback, user-generated content, and digital interaction patterns—AI systems uncover hidden patterns, detect sentiment shifts, and extract actionable insights that help organisations anticipate societal needs and adapt their offerings in a timely and targeted manner. In this context, AI functions as a bridge between community expectations and business strategies, directly contributing to the development of more adaptive and user-centred products and services. The paper explores the role of AI in transforming business operations by highlighting its benefits for public transparency. Through a conceptual analysis and illustrative examples, the study proposes a model that links the knowledge gained from citizen input to the creation of value for business through an inclusive medium, which, in this study, is called a participatory ecosystem. The paper further reflects on the ethical implications of extracting commercial value from public opinion, addressing concerns over data ownership, algorithmic bias, and the risk of eroding trust if civic data

is used without accountability. The findings emphasise the need for frameworks that ensure responsible AI practices while maximising mutual benefit for citizens and businesses alike.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Citizen-Centred Platforms, Unstructured Data, Business Strategy, Participatory Ecosystem

I. INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a sophisticated technology that has impacted all areas of human daily life. It can be defined as a technology that enables computer systems and machines to imitate human intelligence through simulations and training with massive data (Stryker, Kavakoglu, n.d.). This innovation has made it possible to automate many processes, led to data-driven decision-making, significantly reduced the cost of various operations, and increased accuracy across various fields. AI-integrated systems can conduct comprehensive analyses, produce intricate reports for specialists, forecast future scenarios based on input data, and operate autonomously through ongoing learning from the data they receive. In short, the potential of this technology is revolutionising many industries, such as education, healthcare, and finance. Together with robots, which are nothing more than a set of AI mechanisms, it has also changed every basic aspect of how businesses operate (Choi & Ozkan, 2019). The advanced mechanisms offered by AI have created opportunities for businesses to significantly improve their decision-making processes based on the knowledge generated by AI systems and have pushed them to quickly adopt more beneficial management and marketing techniques (Prasanth et al., 2023). In the business sector, the utilisation of AI encompasses enhancing customer relations via virtual assistants or specialised services; analysing and producing comprehensive reports expeditiously; aiding in decision-making processes; generating predictive models; and facilitating the formulation of new strategies to optimize operational efficiency and elevate performance in the corporate arena (Velu & B, 2020). For example, to facilitate the customer experience in purchasing various services or products from a business, AI uses Machine Learning (ML) and Natural Language Processing (NLP) algorithms to analyze the input received from each user. ML is a form of AI that uses hidden patterns in data and can learn from that data without explicit programming (McKinsey, 2024). Whereas NLP, a type of AI, enables computer systems to comprehend, evaluate, and produce human language. Moreover, it is a part of ML that focuses on text analysis to identify parts of speech, entities, hidden sentiment, etc. Despite appearing simpler than an image, video, etc., this type of data requires specific techniques for machine learning analysis (Lexalytics, 2020).

In business, text analytics are very useful, especially for customer reviews, public comments on social media, survey responses, financial or regulatory documents, etc. In summary, the primary

objective of ML and NLP in handling this data is to transform it from an unstructured format into valuable insights using the statistical techniques inherent in ML. Today, the nature of the customer-business relationship has evolved to a new stage that relies on technology and interactive online platforms (Ruggieri et al., 2018). One of the most used online platforms by businesses, whether are large or small businesses, is social media, where people have total freedom to express their opinions and are more flexible since they are also widely used for other purposes, such as entertainment, information, etc. (Shehu et al., 2025; Soelaiman & Ekawati, 2022). Other platforms are applications dedicated to businesses, online forums, etc. Each of these mediums of communication between the customer and the business offers many benefits, which we will explore in more detail in the following sections. AI makes these communication channels suitable for use by providing personalized content, conducting sentiment analysis on collected data, automating customer service through chatbots, and implementing recommendation systems. As a result of these tools, AI-enabled digital platforms are transforming traditional business methods into a more inclusive and efficient model. This study aims to investigate how advanced digital tools powered by AI have impacted customer relationships. Additionally, it seeks to determine whether these platforms have affected citizens' faith in business or in company transparency. Despite the sensitivity of the topic, certain studies emphasize the value of safeguarding data privacy and cybersecurity, although they do not explicitly address data accessible to businesses, which may encompass even more vital information, including matters pertaining to online payments. Following an extensive review of the relevant literature, it is proposed to adopt a conceptual model termed a "participatory ecosystem" that emphasizes an inclusive environment.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

II.1 AI, Social Media & Digital Business Models

Due to the necessary changes brought about by digital transformation, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, traditional business methods have been transformed into a completely new model. The idea of online platforms for businesses began several years ago, although this concept is now being put into practice. For this reason, it is worth mentioning the study conducted by Parker in 2016 (Parker et al., 2016), in which he wrote about the concept of the "Platform Revolution". This book examined the impact of digital platforms on the global economy. As very successful platforms of those years, the authors mention Uber, Airbnb, Facebook, and Alibaba. The book primarily pointed out the importance of platform architecture, its functional design, and its governance. The term governance, in this context, refers to the regulations and methods that govern online business operations and facilitate an appropriate balance between the enterprise and its clients. Furthermore, the study is detailed down to the strategies followed in financial transactions, subscriptions, marketing, etc. In conclusion, the authors emphasise the necessity of recognising the

risks associated with using these platforms, including data exploitation and antitrust challenges. This ensures that the strategy for using these platforms is well thought out and technically maintained to avoid these problems.

Social networks today are widely used by all age groups and are the most widespread platforms due to their ease of use, entertaining and informative content, and minimum technical requirements. Soelaiman & Ekawati (2022) studied the factors that encourage businesses to be on social media and the expectations of their managers. The study was made possible by a questionnaire that asked managers about the expected benefits and perceived impact of using them, which was distributed to managers across various businesses. Moreover, the author analysed the acquired data to assert the risks associated with operating on social media. The research indicated that most companies used various social networks, with Instagram the most popular at 88.83%. In conclusion, the results of the data analysis once again confirmed the outstanding advantages that social media offers for promoting products or services, improving customer relationships, reducing marketing costs, and expanding market share. Bharadyia (2021) studied the applications of AI in business, with a focus on customer management. For this, the main applications of AI in customer relations have been discussed in detail, such as:

- improving customer service (through ML algorithms and NLP) (Coombs et al., 2020);
- providing services tailored to customers based on the analysis of their behavior on the online platform or the preferences shown about services or products, which, according to the author, is known as 'audience segmentation';
- figuring out the clients' satisfaction by using sentiment analysis with certain ML and DL classification algorithms, along with NLP methods for handling text;
- identification of fraud through real-time monitoring and reporting of transactions carried out;
- increasing efficiency in supply chain activities;

The figure below shows the cyclical relationship among data, users, and the products/services the business offers.

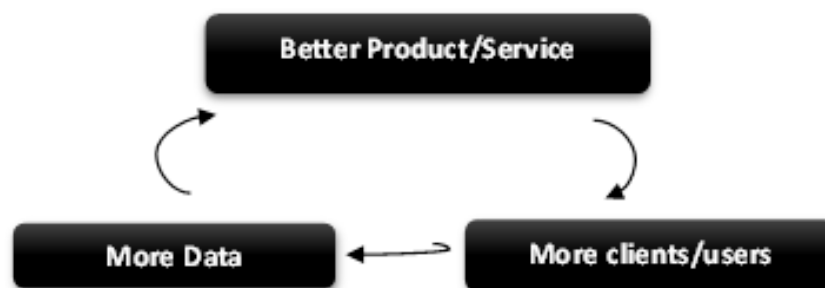


Figure 1. The virtuous cycle of AI

Source: Authors processing

Ruggieri et al. (2018) studied the impact of digital platforms on business models, specifically in businesses that base their activity on online platforms. These businesses are otherwise known as SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises), which refer to businesses that do not necessarily have a physical location, such as a store, but operate online. The study involved several Italian firms operating in different fields and several startups. Through well-structured interviews and mixed-method analyses of qualitative and quantitative data, the study compared SMEs' various strategies. These comparative analyses were also made possible by data collected through direct observation of secondary sources, such as websites, magazines, reports, and multiple articles, and by the application of the Canvas business model. This study highlighted the great importance of digital platforms in fostering innovative business models and in improving the supply-demand balance, thereby steadily driving a technology-based economy. The data analysis also confirmed the positive impacts of customer relationships and transparency, as well as of business scalability and adaptability to market and environmental changes.

II.2 AI in Business Decision-Making

In their study, Prasanth et al. (2023) show how AI has impacted business decision-making and how business models have changed as a result of this major technological shift. AI-based systems can analyse large volumes of data in a very short time thanks to sophisticated ML and DL mechanisms. This is also emphasised in this study, which points out that decision-making is a more efficient and accurate process thanks to the digital systems used. Furthermore, the author argues that the integration of AI in business, especially in its most important process, which is decision-making, significantly impacts managerial success and improves future practices.

Ogunbukola (2025) highlighted several important subtopics related to AI in business strategies. The first subtopic is AI and decision-making. In this context, he highlighted that AI can help identify business trends and generate predictive analytics and valuable insights for essential business operations. Data-driven decision-making is most important in businesses dealing with healthcare, economics, manufacturing, etc., where complex data need to be analysed to optimise resources and detect and predict faults in specific equipment. Another area explored by the author is the role of AI in process automation and productivity enhancement. Automation of various functionalities not only speeds up operations and increases productivity. For example, here we can mention the automation of repetitive emails, meeting scheduling, virtual assistants, etc. Furthermore, the study emphasises that the use of technology, specifically AI in customer relations, enables real-time support and creates a positive customer experience. AI, through ML mechanisms, enables analysis of customer behaviour and preferences, offering personalised services and immediate interactions with virtual assistants or chatbots. This increases customer trust in the business's products or services.

Gu (2024) analysed the role of AI in business decision-making by considering several case studies of concrete businesses with different characteristics. The study also compared AI implementation techniques across large and small businesses, focusing primarily on online work within SMEs. Gu examined in detail how certain technologies have been used in specific business contexts, enabling an accurate analysis of the significant impact that AI has on business strategies and success in the present and future. The companies for interviews were selected based on several criteria, such as:

- They should have AI at the core of the services or products they offer.
- They should have a specialised field in one of the types/applications of AI.

The author asserts that this selection was crucial in assessing the collected data to determine if organizations employing AI in their service or product operations utilized advanced AI processes, such as machine learning, natural language processing, or deep learning, for decision-making. Following an analysis of the chosen companies—those seeking to engage with AI, including those that marketed AI products—and a series of semi-structured online interviews, it was determined that 71% of these companies use AI for decision-making in their operations. In the extensive and detailed examination of firms that integrate AI at their core across several contexts, Gu presents several recommendations, including:

- To enable AI with its functionalities and benefits to be equally useful for small and large businesses (SMEs), a strategy or framework must be designed specifically for SMEs, which are businesses that face many challenges and limitations due to their way of operating in the market.
- As AI-based online platforms are being widely used in businesses, a general system that offers key functionalities in an easier and more advanced way should be developed to optimise operations and the decision-making process.
- In the automation of work processes, specifically through robotic process automation (RPA), it is essential to prioritise time-consuming, critical, and frequently occurring processes within the organisation to optimise technological utilisation and enhance overall workflow efficiency.

III. METHODOLOGY AND DATA

The methodology adopted in this study begins with a contextual definition of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its current applications in business environments. The research is grounded in an extensive review of professional literature, including peer-reviewed articles, academic studies, and documented case analyses. Sources were selected based on their relevance to AI in strategic business processes and their citation frequency in recognised databases. The literature was categorised into two main groups:

1. Studies that focus on the role of digital platforms and the drivers of social media adoption in business.
2. Research that highlights the benefits of AI integration in business models, particularly through machine learning (ML) applications.

A conceptual analysis of these sources informed the development of a theoretical framework that illustrates the interrelationships among AI technologies, customer engagement, and business value creation.

IV. RESEARCH RESULTS

Studies have shown the benefits of using AI in business models. However, many researchers categorise the limitations and challenges that accompany this innovation as follows (Gu, 2024; Soelaiman & Ekawati, 2022):

- Challenges related to the technological aspect include problems that may be encountered with data. The quality of the collected data directly influences the training phase of machine learning models and, consequently, the outcomes. Moreover, resolving the issue of data security requires appropriate expertise, and in several regions globally, there is a deficiency of cybersecurity professionals (Shehu & Lezzerini, 2024). IT infrastructure may be another problem, particularly in developing countries, where a digital divide between urban and rural areas still exists. One challenge that could lead to the misuse or non-use of AI systems in business strategies is algorithmic transparency, which is linked to the need for a specialised technological sector.
- The organisational challenges primarily involve managing and adapting to change. In today's rapidly evolving world, driven by technology and AI, all organisations must adopt new tactics and strategies to thrive in the market. This necessitates training employees who can endure significant transformations. On the other hand, the technical costs of proper infrastructure and its maintenance are relatively high. The most important factor in eliminating these challenges is a clear vision for AI adoption, given the numerous benefits it offers businesses across all fields.
- Ethical and regulatory challenges regarding data concern the bias that may exist in data that may not equally represent the given context. This requires a thorough training phase on the data, using appropriate techniques to address any imbalance in the collected data. Another challenge in this regard is the lack of a clear regulatory framework for the use of customer data. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is an important step in this direction. However, challenges in its interpretation and implementation are particularly acute for companies that use highly advanced AI models.

The graph below illustrates the variation in AI utilisation across various workplaces in the US over the course of a year. The sectors related to information, technical services, finance, manufacturing, education, public administration, and agriculture have been analysed (Maslej, 2025). The graph clearly indicates that the information and data sector has expanded by almost 80% in 2024. The heightened interest in AI's functions across various domains has also led to a marked increase in the ratio within the professional services, banking, and manufacturing industries. Moreover, in areas deemed more conventional, such as agriculture, transportation, and waste management, there has been a notable increase. The only area that has seen a decrease is public administration, probably because there are not enough skills to use AI effectively, along with rules that limit its use and other reasons. In conclusion, the graph unequivocally illustrates the broad proliferation of AI utilisation across all industries.

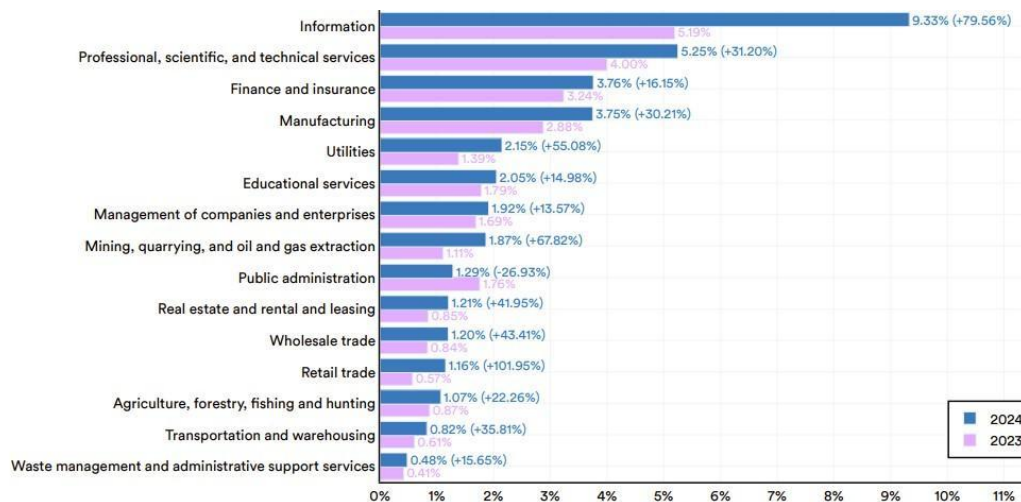


Figure 2. AI job shares by sector in the US, 2023 vs. 2024

Source: Authors processing

Therefore, it is critical to increase public awareness of the benefits AI offers to society, the economy, and other aspects. The goal is not only to train them to adapt easily to rapid changes but also to increase their trust in AI services. Global reports show that the proportion of customers who consider AI-based services or products beneficial and of added value has increased to 55% from 52% in 2022, reflecting a gradual increase in the acceptance and adoption of AI in the consumer experience (Maslej, 2025). However, trust in the transparency of businesses and companies regarding the use of their data has fallen to 47%, down from 50% in 2023. This decrease reflects a lack of transparency in how businesses use, store, and manage customers' personal information, resulting in uncertainty and scepticism among users. This situation emphasises the necessity of taking citizens' voices into consideration in the decision-making process of businesses, in the process of establishing policies or rules on how their data will be used, etc. (Gonesh et al., 2023).

Only through such a process, where the citizen's voice is truly considered, can long-term trust be strengthened and a healthier relationship between consumers and the advanced technologies that serve them be ensured (Shehu & Luarasi, 2024).

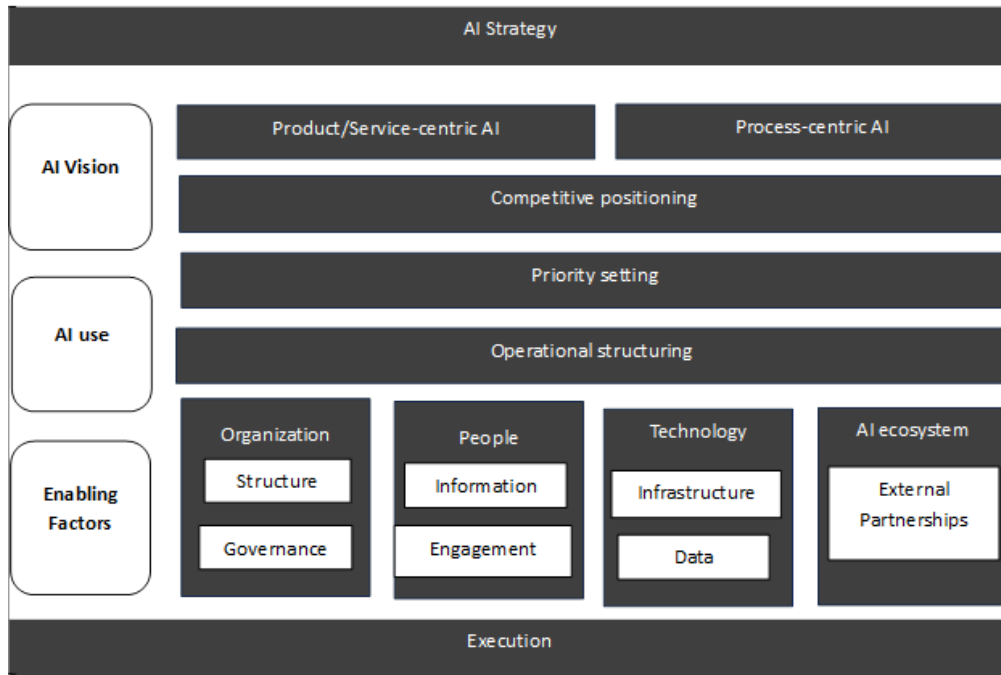


Figure 3. Conceptual model of AI in business models

Source: Authors processing

The following figure illustrates a conceptual framework for incorporating AI into a business. In a structured form, we see that in the first layer lies the strategy which should be in the same line as the business strategy. This layer is followed by a vision that presents the focus, purpose, and objectives for using AI to optimise business operational processes and to create new products/services creatively and competitively in the market. The penultimate layer encompasses the key elements that enable the proper integration of AI, such as leadership structures, citizens through cooperation and expertise, technology and third-party collaborations. At the end of the model lies the execution of these defined strategies. The scheme summarises the key concepts to keep in mind when designing a business mechanism—essentially, the voices of citizens and customers.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The recent advances in artificial intelligence have presented numerous obstacles for businesses, alongside various benefits. As the world progresses rapidly, there is an increasing necessity for adaptation and training in this domain. The capacity of AI, utilising ML, NLP, and DL techniques, to analyse vast quantities of data rapidly and produce highly accurate models and predictive analytics renders it an essential asset for organisations to maintain strength and competitiveness in the marketplace. Decision-making processes for them have been significantly facilitated, and citizens are increasingly becoming part of this ecosystem every day. Digital platforms and continuous public reports for customers and citizens in general demonstrate transparency, which directly impacts the trust they place in the services/products businesses offer. One of the key factors affecting the accuracy of analyses is the quality of the collected data; therefore, organisations must use regulatory models that ensure accurate decisions by minimising data-related losses and risks, and preventing biased decisions that arise when the data fails to accurately represent reality. The study thus recommends establishing a specific business model that aligns with business objectives while prioritising customers in the value-creation process. The success of this paradigm ultimately depends on the ethical application of AI, with genuine involvement from customers and citizens, who may both contribute to and directly profit from this transformation. Definitive objectives, robust data governance, transparency, adaptability through innovation, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of AI systems enhance a business's safety, competitiveness, and efficiency in the marketplace.

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