

COLUMBUS
BUSINESS FIRST

SPONSORED CONTENT

COLUMBUS BUSINESS FIRST

TECH

TOMORROW

EMPOWERING PEOPLE TO BUILD TOMORROW

KEYNOTE PARTNER

BREAKOUT SESSION PARTNERS

LANYARD PARTNER

BRAND PARTNERS

TRACE3

slalom

 Tech Defenders

 Strategic Systems

 glofiber
business

 Summit celonis

WELCOME LETTER

Empowering People to Build Tomorrow

Welcome to Tech Tomorrow 2026, Ohio's premier gathering for today's and tomorrow's digital leaders. In partnership with Central Ohio's vibrant community of CIOs, IT executives, educators and workforce development leaders, Tech Tomorrow, formerly CIO Tomorrow, has become a driving force within the region's technology ecosystem. It is where ideas spark action, meaningful connections are made, and leaders gain insights they can put to work immediately.

Now in its 24th year, and the 12th year hosted by Columbus Business First, Tech Tomorrow brings together visionary leaders, innovative thinkers, and emerging talent for a day of thought-provoking discussions, practical learning, and inspiring conversations. For many, this event has become far more than a conference. It is a catalyst for innovation, leadership, and growth.

Tech Tomorrow offers a unique opportunity to engage with senior executives, influential decision-makers, and the next generation of IT professionals who are helping organizations navigate change and build for the future.



NICK FORTINE

**President & Publisher,
Columbus Business First**

This year's program explores the technologies and trends reshaping business and society, including artificial intelligence, cloud computing, cybersecurity, and the cultural transformations required to drive innovation. Together, we will examine not only the opportunities these advancements create, but also the risks, responsibilities, and ethical considerations that accompany a data-driven world.

There has never been a more exciting time for technology in Central Ohio. Our region is experiencing a technological

renaissance that is transforming industries, redefining career pathways, and fueling unprecedented economic growth. From semiconductor and advanced manufacturing to renewable energy, life sciences, and defense technology, Central Ohio is undergoing a generational transformation.

At the center of this evolution is generative AI, a powerful force changing how organizations operate, compete, and innovate. Across every sector, AI is helping businesses improve efficiency, accelerate decision-making, unlock new opportunities, and reimagine what is possible.

Tech Tomorrow 2026 will showcase how organizations are leveraging AI, cloud technologies, and cybersecurity strategies to thrive in a rapidly evolving landscape. Just as importantly, it will explore how fostering a culture of innovation, adaptability, and continuous learning has become essential for long-term success.

As we gather for this year's event, our mission remains clear: to expand the conversation, elevate diverse perspectives from across the technology and business

communities, and inspire collaboration that extends far beyond a single day.

This event is thoughtfully curated by the Tech Tomorrow planning committee and purpose-built for Ohio's technology ecosystem. Together, we are helping shape the future of digital innovation across our state and beyond, driving investment, talent development, opportunity, and growth.

A special thank you to this year's executive committee chair, Katrina Flory, State CIO and Assistant Director of the Office of Information Technology at the Ohio Department of Administrative Services, along with the entire planning committee and the community of digital leaders whose vision and commitment made this event possible.

To our speakers and Future Five participants, thank you for sharing your expertise, experiences, and ideas. You are what makes this event exceptional. And to our sponsors, thank you for your continued partnership and support.

Welcome to Tech Tomorrow 2026. Let's build tomorrow together.



ALEXA BERMUDEZ

Director of Operations

“

Our partnership with Columbus Business First has opened doors to opportunities we may not have otherwise accessed. Partnering with CBF has elevated our presence, perspective, and positioning within the Columbus business community. It has expanded our visibility beyond job sites and allowed us to engage in conversations that shape the future of the region we help build. CBF has challenged us to grow not only as a company, but as active participants in the broader economic and civic landscape of our city.



A LETTER FROM TECH TOMORROW 2026 CHAIR

Tech Tomorrow

I am honored to serve as the 2026 Tech Tomorrow Committee Chair.

Ohio is amidst a statewide technological transformation; a movement to modernize government, enhance digital services, and deliver smarter, faster, and more secure solutions that build prosperity today and ready us for what's next. Our remarkable progress in recent years began with a vision of better serving the people of Ohio by embracing innovation.

Technology has never had more influence; it is transforming every industry in ways we could not fathom even a decade ago. From semi-conductor manufacturing to modernized IT, Ohio is thriving as the Silicone Heartland. But technology does not create this progress. The people behind it do that.

It is our innate curiosity as humans, our desire for exploration and problem-solving, and the ways in which we

collaborate, that move us forward. Data tells a story, but it is always a human story.

Within State of Ohio government, we have a willing, dedicated, adaptable team that works to serve the well-being of our state and every Ohioan so they can reach their fullest potential. It is the collective efforts of IT professionals that fuel the strength of our IT ecosystem and the progress of our generational transformation. They embody the "Empowering People to Build



KATRINA FLORY
2026 Committee Chair,
Tech Tomorrow

Tomorrow" theme of Tech Tomorrow 2026.

In my role as State Chief Information Officer, I have been privileged to be a part of the tremendous momentum Ohio is building as a national leader in leveraging technology to enhance government services.

Through strong partnerships across state and local government, we are advancing major initiatives in cybersecurity, digital services, artificial intelligence, data management, and more to make government accessible and responsive. These innovations support the streamlining and modernization necessary to boosting operational efficiency and improving customer service.

Industries across the state are similarly experiencing fast-paced advancements and positive energy.

This is truly Ohio's time. And our progress

is driven by DNA, not source code. It is driven by the vision of entrepreneurs and thought leaders working across startups, Fortune 500 companies, governments, universities, and more.

Regardless of the industry, the fast pace of our growth can feel overwhelming to those we serve, and even ourselves at times, but behind every screen, every upgrade, and every new tool is a team dedicated to realizing the progress and prosperity that will continue to propel Ohio forward.

Tech Tomorrow symbolizes why this work matters. This gathering of leaders, strategists and technology experts creates space for growth, driven by relationship building and a shared commitment to expanding the boundaries of what we believe is possible.

I look forward to joining you as we think beyond the technology itself and reflect on empowering our teams to carry Ohio further than ever before.



Your Business. Our Fiber. Unlimited Potential.

We offer high-quality, highly reliable fiber connectivity for businesses of all sizes.

Glo Fiber Business services:

- Ethernet and Dedicated Internet Access
- Cloud-based Hosted Voice and Managed Services
- Superior local customer support monitoring your network 24/7/365

Glo Fiber Business gets you connected - contact us for a **FREE** network design analysis

glofiberbusiness.com | 1-833-WANT-GLO



Nationwide®

Technology is driving innovation at Nationwide

Learn more by scanning the QR code



Nationwide, the Nationwide N and Eagle and Nationwide is on your side are service marks of Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company. © 2026 Nationwide

OVERVIEW

Angelo Mazzocco Is No Stranger to Tech Leadership in Columbus

As president of the tech advisory firm **Mazzocco Consulting** and the former CIO for major Columbus companies including Central Ohio Primary Care, Progressive Medical and The Columbus Dispatch, Mazzocco knows first-hand what's required to lead a technology team.

Mazzocco has also been instrumental in efforts to bring Columbus' ever-expanding technology industry together, starting with an event that now seems from a distant tech era.

"In the late 1990s, we started circulating the word in the tech community: How are you tackling Y2K?" Mazzocco recalled. "We had two years to work on it and plan it. For many of us, it was very stressful. It was big."

More than a quarter century later, panic over turning the millennium calendar may seem quaint, but at the time it was uncharted territory.

"As it turns out, nothing happened but we didn't know nothing was going to happen," Mazzocco noted.

The Y2K threat is long gone, but the local tech gatherings that it spawned continue to bear fruit. Mazzocco's get-togethers evolved into the CIO Forum, regular gatherings of Columbus technology leaders that still meet once a month.

"You name the company, they're in that group," he said. "Each month usually highlights one technology and one company. You get to hear what that company is doing with that technology."

Central Ohio's tech community has evolved in countless ways since the days of Y2K, but the need to share information and perspective in the tech world has remained constant. The CIO Forum grew from eight original members to more than 300, becoming so popular it spawned an annual tech gathering.

"In 2002, we said the forum is getting too

"When you look at Columbus and central Ohio, look at all the industries we support - retail, logistics, health care, insurance, utilities - there's a wealth of tech talent across the board."

Angelo Mazzocco

Mazzocco believes the cooperative and approachable nature of the Columbus tech sector has also paid off by helping attract others to central Ohio.

"When you hear about the kinds of opportunities in central Ohio, whether Intel or some of the other major things going on, I think it's because of how the technology sector has laid the framework. If someone wants to be in this market, it's easy to do..."

"As soon as we hear an Amazon or Facebook or Intel is coming to town, we embrace that, we tell them what's happening in the tech world here. We've had them at our Tech Tomorrow and other events. They welcome it."

Cooperation among tech firms has benefits beyond simply sharing information and strategies. When OhioHealth announced in 2022 that it was laying off nearly 600 IT workers, for example, Mazzocco and other tech leaders went into action, employing the networks nurtured over years.

"We went to them (OhioHealth) and said, 'Can you give us a list?' We didn't want to see good tech people leave the area, and we worked with OhioHealth and others to make sure people who wanted to stay in this market had other opportunities."

The arrival of global tech giants in Columbus has impacted the makeup of tech leadership, but Mazzocco noted that central Ohio tech leadership comes from many industries, not strictly technology firms.

As someone who taught for years at Ohio State University and Otterbein University, Mazzocco is also bullish on the ability of central Ohio's higher education systems to produce young tech talent. He is confident that local tech expertise, along with the arrival of tech titans and the region's higher-ed opportunities, will continue to supply central Ohio with a fountain of tech leaders well into the future.

"When you look at Columbus and central Ohio, look at all the industries we support - retail, logistics, health care, insurance, utilities - there's a wealth of tech talent across the board."

... [LEARN MORE AT] > CELONIS.COM <

Transform strategically. Disrupt minimally.

MODERNIZE ON YOUR OWN TERMS WITH CELONIS.

Hundreds of CIOs trust the Celonis Platform to make modernization programs more intelligent — whatever the project. Use Celonis to:

→ GIVE ENTERPRISE AI THE RIGHT OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

→ GET AI ROI

→ DE-RISK MIGRATIONS

→ MAKE TECHNOLOGIES AND OPERATIONS COMPOSABLE

4 SEPTEMBER 11 - 17, 2026 • ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT TO COLUMBUS BUSINESS FIRST

The Slalom logo, consisting of the word "slalom" in a lowercase, sans-serif font, is positioned in the top left corner of the advertisement. The background of the entire page is a vibrant blue, with a large, abstract, yellow-green shape on the right side that resembles a stylized, curved arrow or a large letter 'S'.

AI is everywhere. *Impact isn't.*

AI embedded into how the business runs.

Most organizations already have AI tools, pilots, and experimentation underway. **The challenge isn't adopting AI. It's turning it into measurable business value.**

At Slalom, we help organizations make AI part of how the business runs, connecting strategy, technology, governance, and adoption so **work moves faster, friction decreases, and outcomes improve.**

See how AI moves business forward at slalom.com

Katrina Flory Has Started AI Training for Her Employees — All 47,000 of Them

Next up: her 11.9 million clients.

After serving for a decade as Ohio's deputy CIO, Flory was named the state's CIO in June 2021, taking over as AI was moving from science fiction to everyday reality.

"ChatGPT was introduced in November 2022," said Flory, who chairs the 2026 Tech Tomorrow Executive Committee. "The next day even my 80-year old dad was talking about ChatGPT. We wanted to get ahead as much as we could and started looking at AI in 2023."

Flory faced two monumental tasks: implementing AI internally and employing it for the benefit of Ohio's citizens.

Flory knew the state needed AI "guidelines and guardrails," so she introduced the first AI policy for state employees in December 2023. The guidelines reflect her conviction that AI can be a useful vehicle but shouldn't be

in the driver's seat.

Among other things, the policy requires AI use to be approved by agency directors, be fully disclosed and to be independently verified.

"We want to make sure we don't defer to AI. We want to leverage AI," she said. "How does AI benefit experience and employees? How is it privacy protected? What testing is being done before rolling it out? How are you measuring that? Where's the transparency and accountability?"

Flory rolled out AI training for the state's 47,000 workers, roughly a third of whom have gone through the sessions. The training may be unprecedented, she said.

"I can't think of other technology where we look to have training for all our employees," said Flory, whose efforts led her to be named one of 2024's Top 25 Doers, Dreamers and Drivers by Government Technology magazine.

"From day one, Gov. DeWine challenged us to use technology to improve service delivery... AI offers incredible opportunity to do that."

Katrina Flory

Flory sees such training as empowering for state workers, and essential to keep them in the technological forefront of their careers.

"Our employee union, they want to know how this (AI) will impact our jobs," said Flory. "We say we want to put these tools in your hands to help you do your job."

The state has otherwise employed AI internally on several fronts, including RegExplorer, an AI tool that identifies potentially outdated, repetitive or confusing regulations, allowing the state to remove or refine the language. The effort has resulted in 900 state regulations being rescinded and 2.3 million words eliminated from state rules.

Other state AI applications include implementing security measures and developing code, said Flory.

Now, the state is cautiously heading into the next AI chapter: interactions with Ohioans.

"We wanted to do those things that were initially employee-facing," said Flory. "Now we're looking at citizen-facing."

In one of the first applications, employers filing a Bureau of Workers' Compensation claim, or seeking information from the agency, will interact with AI, allowing information to be gathered before the caller speaks with a state employee.

"The worker will be prepared, so you're not waiting on hold while the information is being looked up," explained Flory.

Another early example may come as a relief to those weary of filling out forms.

"You'll see with contact centers, as folks call in, we'll offer services to meet constituents where they are. ... Maybe

you don't have to sit there and fill out a form, but you're just chatting with an AI bot and they're filling out the form for you."

Flory expects the state to use AI more and more with citizens as its uses become more clear and any concerns are addressed.

"From day one, Gov. DeWine challenged us to use technology to improve service delivery," said Flory. "AI offers incredible opportunity to do that."

To help navigate the new world of AI, Flory has sought to engage state employees with tech leaders in central Ohio and elsewhere in the state.

For more than two years, for example, the state has hosted the AI Council, monthly meetings to help chart the state's AI strategic direction. The state also hosts Thrive Thursdays, featuring tech companies offering hands-on training with AI tools for state employees. Participants have included a blue-chip lineup including Meta, Google, Amazon Web Services, Salesforce and Microsoft. The state also hosts the Ohio Digital Summit and IT Leadership Forum with private partners.

For Flory, such events, including Tech Tomorrow, are essential for sharing information across sectors in a way that allows everyone to benefit.

"At Tech Tomorrow, we bring together industry, higher ed, the public sector," she noted. "At the end of the day we have similarities. How to leverage technology and data? How to attract talent? How to prepare teams for the future?"



Summit

SALESFORCE CERTIFIED, CUSTOMER APPROVED.

A reputation you can count on.

175+
Salesforce
Certifications

1,100+
Successful
Projects

300+
Satisfied
Customers

Managed Services Health Checks Consulting Training



PARTNER
SINCE 2016

www.summittech360.com

6 SEPTEMBER 11 - 17, 2026 • ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT TO COLUMBUS BUSINESS FIRST

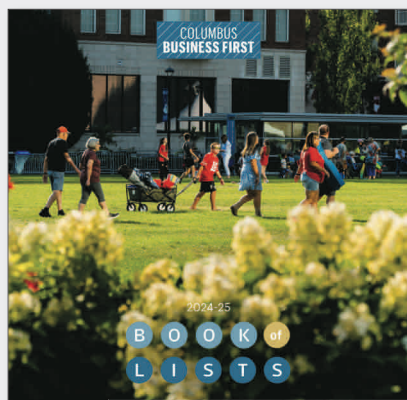
The Power of Partnership

American City Business Journals reaching 45 markets

Brand Building

Elevate brand favorability, recognition, and market positioning.

Weekly Edition and Book of Lists
Banners
Email Newsletters
High Impact
Mobile App

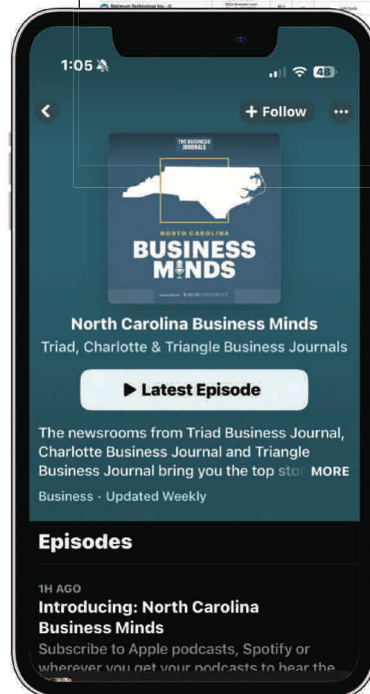


Audience and Content Targeting

Aligning your brand with the content and people that matter to you.

Print and digital lists
Editorial Podcast Sponsorship
Industry Targeting
Print and Digital Special Sections

GENERAL INTEREST									
Minority-owned Businesses									
RANKED BY COMPANY REVENUE									
Rank	Company Name	Address	City	State	Zip	Phone	Website	Industry	Notes
1	Blackstone Development Co. LLC	10000 E. 1st Ave.	Indianapolis	IN	46241	(317) 555-1234	blackstoneindiana.com	Real Estate	
2	Blackstone Development Co. LLC	10000 E. 1st Ave.	Indianapolis	IN	46241	(317) 555-1234	blackstoneindiana.com	Real Estate	
3	Blackstone Development Co. LLC	10000 E. 1st Ave.	Indianapolis	IN	46241	(317) 555-1234	blackstoneindiana.com	Real Estate	
4	Blackstone Development Co. LLC	10000 E. 1st Ave.	Indianapolis	IN	46241	(317) 555-1234	blackstoneindiana.com	Real Estate	
5	Blackstone Development Co. LLC	10000 E. 1st Ave.	Indianapolis	IN	46241	(317) 555-1234	blackstoneindiana.com	Real Estate	
6	Blackstone Development Co. LLC	10000 E. 1st Ave.	Indianapolis	IN	46241	(317) 555-1234	blackstoneindiana.com	Real Estate	
7	Blackstone Development Co. LLC	10000 E. 1st Ave.	Indianapolis	IN	46241	(317) 555-1234	blackstoneindiana.com	Real Estate	
8	Blackstone Development Co. LLC	10000 E. 1st Ave.	Indianapolis	IN	46241	(317) 555-1234	blackstoneindiana.com	Real Estate	
9	Blackstone Development Co. LLC	10000 E. 1st Ave.	Indianapolis	IN	46241	(317) 555-1234	blackstoneindiana.com	Real Estate	
10	Blackstone Development Co. LLC	10000 E. 1st Ave.	Indianapolis	IN	46241	(317) 555-1234	blackstoneindiana.com	Real Estate	



Promoting People and Expertise

Showcase company expertise through credible content.

Branded Content
Podcasts
Table of Experts
Executive Insights



COLUMBUS
BUSINESS FIRST

Contact Steve Hewitt for more information | shewitt@bizjournals.com

Why AI Will Accelerate Growth, Not Shrink Opportunity

Guru Vasudeva has heard all the fears about AI. It will harm jobs, the environment, the electrical grid, even humanity itself.

He's not buying it.

Vasudeva doesn't dismiss the concerns but he is also confident that artificial intelligence, properly managed, will safely yield benefits.

"The best chapter of technology has yet to be written," Vasudeva said. "I'm optimistic about this."

As Senior Vice President and CIO of Property & Casualty at Nationwide, Vasudeva is on the front lines of technological evolution, including AI. He directs a 3,000-person team responsible for the critical technology systems powering Nationwide's core operations. In addition, he spearheads advanced technological innovations designed to advance and modernize the property and casualty business.

Vasudeva argues that the history of technology is one of progress and of overcoming fears. He likes to cite Jevons paradox, named for the English economist William Stanley Jevons, who argued in the late 1800s that a more efficient steam engine would lead to more coal consumption, contrary to fears that it would damage the coal industry.

"Jevon had a controversial, contrarian, approach," explained Vasudeva. "He predicted that because steam engines had become far more efficient, people would start using steam engines for purposes not even known at the time. As a result, coal consumption would actually increase. That turned out to be right."

Something similar is starting to happen with AI, Vasudeva said.

Consider, he said, the field of radiology. Vasudeva noted that Jeffrey Hinton, dubbed the "Godfather of AI," predicted that AI would make radiologists obsolete

because computers would replace humans at reading images. Instead, said Vasudeva, the demand for radiologists has grown.

"The cost of doing images and scanning has gone down because of AI, so we are using scanning more to detect more things," he said. "As a result, the need for radiologists is increasing."

The point, said Vasudeva, is that AI is a tool, a very sophisticated one, but still one that needs humans.

"People think AI can do the whole job, but AI is able to do part of the job. It can really scan the image. However, someone has to interpret it in the context of this particular patient," he said.

Closer to home, Vasudeva said AI is being increasingly employed at Nationwide, fueled in part by the company's decision last year to spend \$1.5 billion on technological advancements over three years, including an estimated \$100 million each year on AI.

Some of Nationwide's AI applications are simple, such as summarizing notes on insurance claims for customer service reps before their discussions with customers.

"It helps everyone," says Vasudeva. "The customer, because they don't have to wait for a long time to engage in the discussion, and the CSRs because they can actually get to the bottom of the issues faster..."

"It just jumpstarts the discussion. The key is, AI is not making any decisions. It's the claims adjustors, claims reps, making the decisions. AI is just giving them the information in a more summarized way."

As part of a goal to grow Nationwide's sales by 50% over the next five years without significantly adding expenses, the company is employing AI in three broad ways, said Vasudeva: everyday use; the transformation of business processes; and in software development.

In the first instance, Nationwide wants its 25,000 employees to employ AI on a regular basis, just like Vasudeva says he recently used AI to help plan a vacation. To help, Nationwide has adopted technology called Glean, which employees can use to find information about financial reports or other items

they are researching.

"It is speeding up their ability to do their work, speeding up their ability to research," Vasudeva said.

One current example of Nationwide employing AI to transform business practices is managing commercial agriculture clients.

"These businesses are very complicated, sometimes billions of dollars in revenue," Vasudeva said. "They have operations in multiple states, they own multiple vehicles, ... they've got multiple buildings, and rules and regulations in various states are different. So when we underwrite those types of insurance, it takes a long time for our underwriters to look through all the information that gets submitted..."

"How can we ... help leverage AI to speed up the process of looking through all this documentation to get to the information that is critical for making risk decisions? So the decision-making is still with the underwriter. A human in the loop is critical here. However, we want the underwriter to focus on what they do best, which is underwriting."

The third area Nationwide is engaging AI is in assisting the 5,000 or so employees who develop software.

"There's significant demand for developing new software and every year we say no to so many projects. We would love to really do more software development automation of processes. And if we can do it faster, better, cheaper, we would love to do that."

Vasudeva's examples of software developers and underwriters illustrate his belief that workers best suited to take advantage of AI are those with knowledge in their field.

"Domain knowledge is still critical to be effective in this new AI world because without domain knowledge you don't even know what questions to ask, you don't know how to interpret the summary that comes back, you don't know what actions to take," he said.

In Vasudeva's view, AI will ultimately be beneficial because it will serve humans.

"As long as humans are creative, we'll find new uses for our time and services, so I take a very optimistic view that we will find new things to do."

**Tech Defenders®**

ENTERPRISE IT ASSET DISPOSITION

Enterprise Solutions.

A Partner Right in Your Backyard.

Maximize value, protect sensitive data, and provide complete visibility.

**MAXIMIZE VALUE RECOVERY**

**CERTIFIED DATA DESTRUCTION**

Centralized visibility across your assets with our **CONTINUUM PORTAL**

TECHDEFENDERS.COM

TRACE3

LIVEAI

AI PRACTICAL
USE CASE
VIDEO SERIES

When it comes to artificial intelligence, there is no shortage of thought leadership. At Trace3, we are implementing real world AI solutions for our clients.

Curious?

Watch **LIVEAI**, then look us up at
TRACE3.com/AI



SCAN TO VISIT TRACE3 VIDEOS,
THEN LOOK FOR LIVE AI

AI
APPLICATION
NOT JUST
PONTIFICATION



Keeping AI Running: Vertiv's Role in the Largest Infrastructure Expansion in Modern History

Anand Sanghi has worked for Vertiv and its former parent, Emerson, for 29 years, but he's never seen the Westerville-based company sizzle like it does now.

"We're the coolest and the hottest company on the planet," quipped Sanghi, who was named president of Vertiv's Americas Region in 2023.

The "coolest" part comes from Vertiv's specialty: managing temperatures of computer centers. AI has transformed that business, landing Sanghi at the center of a technological and economic revolution.

"AI is driving the largest infrastructure growth that our nation and the world have ever seen," Sanghi said. "This is foundational. We talk about the arms race, we talk about the lead for global technology, reanchoring jobs in the U.S. All of that is rooted in what AI is driving."

The AI transformation has dramatically accelerated demand for Vertiv's products

while propelling changes in the design and manufacturing of those products. Unprecedented spending on AI data centers has led Vertiv's sales to leap from less than \$5 billion in 2021 to more than \$10 billion last year. In the last three years alone, the company's market capitalization has jumped from less than \$10 billion to more than \$100 billion.

With more than 34,000 employees worldwide, Vertiv operates 30 manufacturing centers and serves 130 countries.

Demand for Vertiv's cooling technologies has been fueled by AI chips, which generate far more heat than conventional chips.

"The first problem with AI we needed to solve is the amount of heat, which went up ten-fold in two years," said Sanghi. "We knew how to solve that problem. When the transition to AI happened, we were front and center."

Unlike traditional computer centers,

"We're the coolest and the hottest company on the planet..."

Anand Sanghi

which were cooled by air, AI centers require liquid cooling. Even though Vertiv's roots lie with the air-conditioning firm Liebert, Vertiv was prepared for the change to liquid cooling.

"The entire thermal chain had to be reimagined and rebuilt at very high efficiency," Sanghi said.

At the same time, AI puts enormous strain on powering data centers, which drives customers to Vertiv's other specialty: products that stabilize the power supply to provide uninterrupted flow.

"We were asked, 'How can you help us address power and cooling?'" he said. "That led to a surge in demand. Innovation has kept us in the forefront."

Vertiv has weathered the industry's lightning-fast changes, but Sanghi knows countless challenges are ahead, including growing opposition to AI data centers on several fronts including concerns over job losses, and data centers' consumption of electricity, water and land.

Sanghi believes the challenges can and will be addressed, including demands on the power grid.

"There's a lot of work around the country being done, with natural gas, even nuclear," he said. "That development had to happen with or without data centers."

As for labor, Sanghi believes AI, like other transformative technologies, may change jobs but will not lead to an overall loss of employment.

"The entire labor force needs upgrading, it's a generational shift," he said, recalling his father's business in India while Sanghi was growing up. "My father ran a small-scale factory producing packaging. There's a lot of manual work. As the business grew, there was automation but the number of jobs didn't decrease. ... The same thing is happening with the

entire workforce now."

Vertiv itself offers another example. Sanghi said Vertiv uses AI in more than 15 applications across the business, from scheduling to designing. The applications have freed up Vertiv's employees for more productive work, he said, while at the same time improving Vertiv's efficiency and speed. Products that used to take three to four years from design to market now take less than a year, he said.

Vertiv is nurturing that employment transition by running Vertiv Academy, training programs held on campuses throughout the world, including one next to Vertiv's Westerville headquarters. The company also operates an expansive intern program, with 120 participants this summer.

Sanghi, who previously led Vertiv's Asia-Pacific Region, is confident Ohio is well-positioned for a tech future.

"There are several data center companies, key customers, here in Ohio, and the support infrastructure for that," he said. "There's a proven and successful ecosystem and base of operations in Ohio. Columbus has a really strong university system, a talented workforce; it's one of those locations people don't appreciate as much until you're here. We've seen as we've grown here, we've been able to attract talented professionals across segments."

Despite challenges and concerns facing AI, Sanghi believes the AI will surmount the obstacles, with the help of Vertiv and others.

"We're in a unique moment in history, with our role in enabling AI and making America more competitive," he said. "We don't take that lightly. We're committed to scaling and growing."

Activate Your Brand. Forge Lasting Relationships.

Sponsor events that connect you directly with your target audience.

In today's digital-first world, real connections make all the difference. Our event sponsorship opportunities put your brand front and center—engaging influential business leaders and decision-makers face-to-face. By aligning your company with curated, high-impact events, you can build trust and create authentic relationships that digital channels simply cannot replicate.

Learn more at bizjournals.com/createconnections



The AI Problem Isn't Activity. It's Turning Activity Into Value.

BY CHARLIE HALL

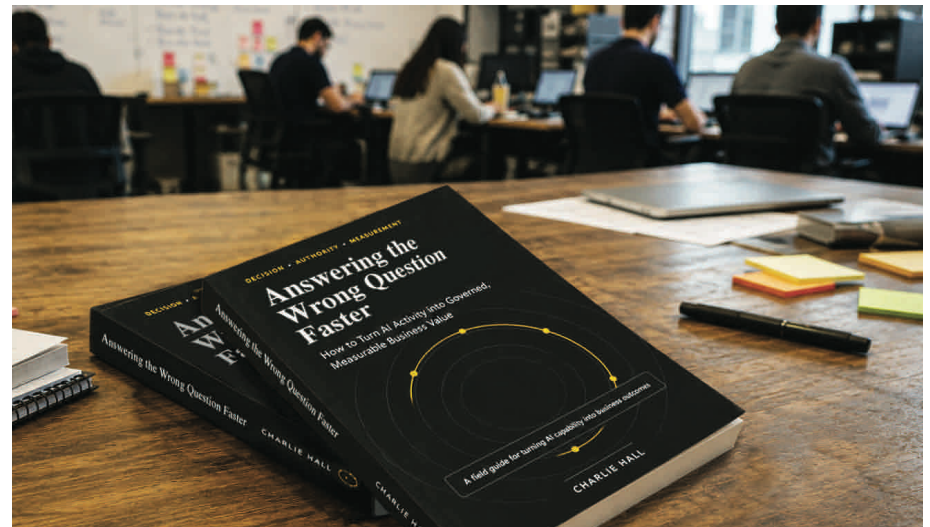


Most organizations don't lack AI activity. Pilots and proofs of concept are everywhere. So are copilots, agents and model testing. Investment isn't the problem.

What's often missing is a repeatable way to turn that activity into governed decisions and embedded workflows. The real test is whether AI produces measurable outcomes and improvement that compounds over time. That is the premise behind my new book, *Answering the Wrong Question Faster: How to Turn AI Activity into Governed, Measurable Business Value*.

The model shifts the focus from AI itself to the decisions AI is intended to improve. Who owns the decision? What evidence supports it? Does the person or system acting have the authority to do so? And ultimately, how will the organization know whether it created value?

AI can inform a decision, recommend an action, or increasingly take action itself. But the technology is only one part of the operating system around that decision.



You can explore the book and the overview on the Strategic Systems website: strsi.com/book

The real opportunity is to build a repeatable way of working around those decisions. Clear ownership establishes accountability. Evidence provides the basis for action, while defined authority establishes its boundaries. With that structure in place, AI becomes easier to govern and its contribution to the business easier to measure.

The organizations that move beyond experimentation will be the ones that build that system deliberately.

Looking for “that” person to get your AI moving?

We call them purple squirrels, and they don't exist.

The reality is, no single individual can bring the deep expertise for everything a business needs to move forward. Today it may be data and AI. Tomorrow, infrastructure, adoption, or a specialized skill you didn't know you were missing.

Strategic Systems works differently. Our model draws from advisory, talent solutions, and technology services to bring in the right skills in real time, as your needs evolve. You get what the work demands, from people who keep pace with change.



WHY ADVERTISE WITH COLUMBUS BUSINESS FIRST?

COLUMBUS BUSINESS FIRST delivers unmatched access to the region's most influential business leaders. If you haven't partnered with us recently, it's time to take another look. The numbers highlight the powerful impact your brand gains when it's in front of Columbus Business First's audience of Central Ohio's top decision makers.

WHERE COLUMBUS'S BUSINESS LEADERS STAY INFORMED, CONNECTED, AND READY TO ACT

For more than 40 years, Columbus Business First has been the trusted source for breaking business news, market intelligence, and industry insights. Partnering with us aligns your brand with award-winning journalism and a deeply engaged audience that drives economic growth across the region. We connect your brand directly with C-suite leaders, entrepreneurs, investors, and professionals who drive growth across Central Ohio.

REACH A POWERFUL, HIGH-VALUE AUDIENCE

Our readers and event attendees represent the core of Columbus's business ecosystem. These are active leaders who invest, hire, innovate, and buy.

51%

are owners, partners,
or top management

80%

influence purchasing
decisions

\$2.84M

average
net worth

\$298,438

average household
income

LOCAL EXPERTISE + NATIONAL STRENGTH

As part of *American City Business Journals*, we offer deep local insight backed by a national footprint across 45 markets. Advertisers benefit from both regional expertise and powerful national capabilities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact VP of Sales, Steve Hewitt | shewitt@bizjournals.com or (614) 220-5440