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MAGAZINE

3 REASONS MEASURING CULTURE IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS

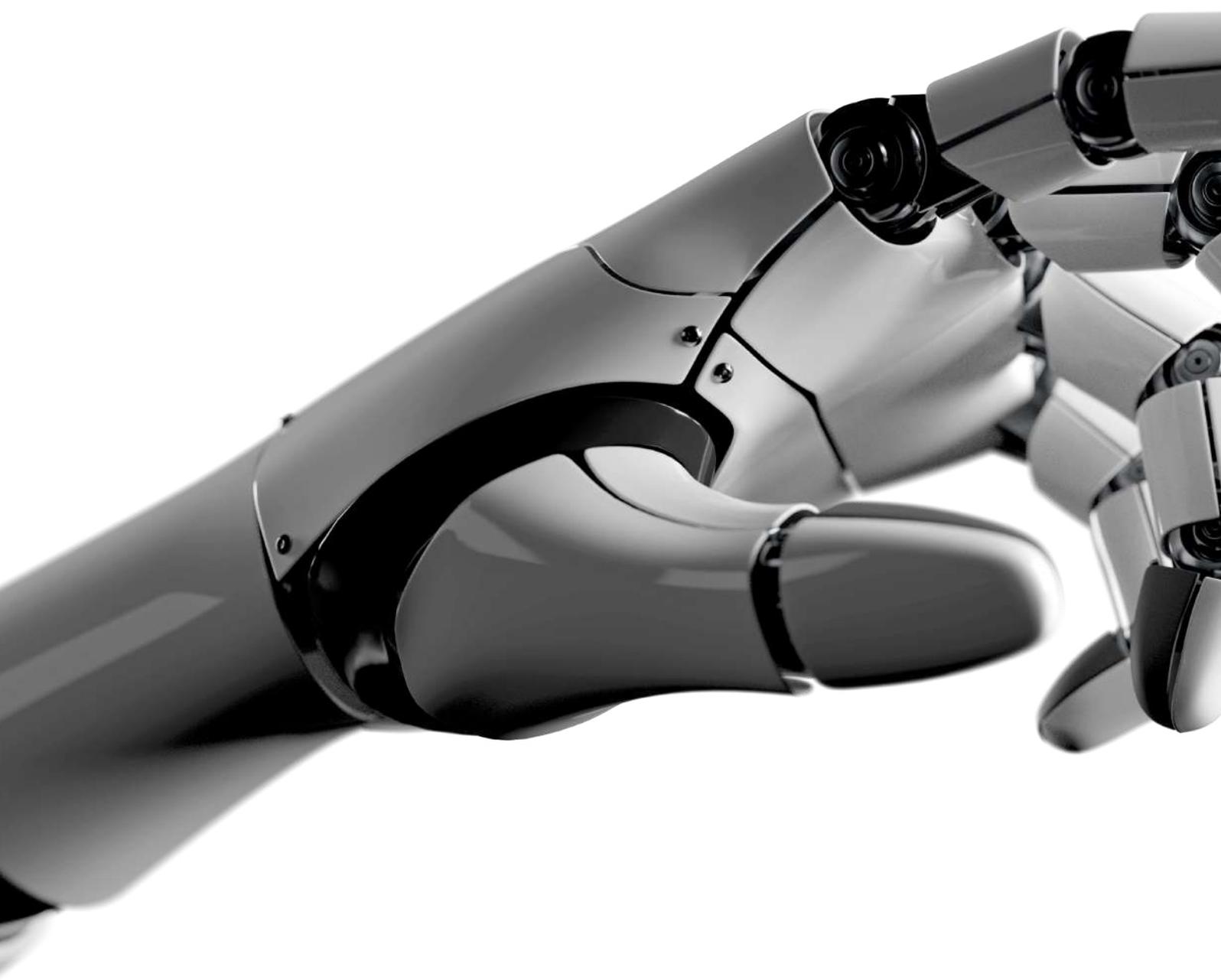
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INSPIRE
INNOVATION

PEOPLE
THE KEY TO DIGITAL
TRANSFORMATION

INSPIRATION
CAN COME FROM
THE DARKEST PLACES

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✍ by Gihan Perera

AI IN YOUR WORKPLACE – *coming,* READY OR NOT

A few years ago, one of my friends told me he wanted his son to be a bricklayer because “at least that job can’t be outsourced to India or China”. But last year, Perth company Fastbrick Robotics announced the release of its one-armed robot bricklayer Hadrian X, which can build a three-bedroom, two-bathroom house, in half the time of a skilled brickie.



The robots are coming for some jobs. In Australia, the report “Australia’s Future Workforce” predicts about 40% of jobs could be lost to robotics, automation and artificial intelligence (AI) in the next 10-15 years. But there’s a positive side as well. According to technology analyst Gartner, AI might destroy 1.8 million jobs, but it will also create 2.3 million new jobs, and many more in the long term.

You don’t have to completely automate your operations with robotics and automation – that’s risky and costly. The biggest benefit comes from AI working with people, rather than replacing them. According to Dell, most leaders expect their employees and machines to work as “integrated teams”. And Adobe research says most employees are looking forward to AI assisting them in their work.

Think “Humans and machines – better together.” Find ways for AI to simplify and automate boring and repetitive tasks, assist people to do their jobs better, and provide intelligent information to improve your decision making.

For example, AI can do simple administrative tasks such as scheduling appointments, sending reminders, and recording and transcribing conversations in meetings. Outsourcing this work to smart software frees up valuable

time for your people.

At a more sophisticated level, AI can handle more complex tasks, such as reading and interpreting contracts and legal documents. This is already being used in industries such as law, banking, insurance, and mortgage broking to simplify these time-consuming and repetitive tasks.

AI can also help you attract, choose, and keep the best people. There have been some stories about AI making controversial hiring and firing decisions, but it doesn’t have to be this intrusive. Deloitte reports one-third of HR teams globally are using AI in their HR functions – in job advertising, filtering candidates, assisting with reporting, and even monitoring performance for early warning signs of potential problems.

AI, together with the Internet of Things (IoT), can create “smart” workplaces with sensors that constantly monitor patterns of behaviour to create safer, more productive, and more effective work environments. CSIRO research suggests robotics and automation will reduce physical workplace injury by 11% by 2030.

In customer-facing operations, you’re probably already familiar with online chatbots offering help when you visit a Website. These sales and customer service chatbots are increasingly being powered by AI software, which engages customers in simple conversations, and hands

over control to a human for more complex interactions. That online model will also move to the physical world: Imagine facial-recognition software identifying a customer as they walk into a retail store and instantly providing intelligent advice about that customer to a sales assistant.

Most leaders expect AI to play an increasingly important role in the workplace, boosting productivity, efficiency, and safety. If you haven’t already started integrating AI, it’s not too late – but don’t wait too long!

Finally, AI can assist with learning and development. For example, it can listen to sales calls in real time, and either offer immediate advice to the salesperson or suggest areas of improvement to their manager. It can also integrate with online learning tools to monitor progress and guide employees to improve their learning.

About the author

Gihan Perera is a business futurist, speaker, and author who works with business leaders to help them lead and succeed in an uncertain but exciting future. He is the author of “Disruption By Design: Leading the change in a fast-changing world” (RRP \$33). For more about how Gihan can work with your leaders and teams, visit GihanPerera.com.



