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**SPOTLIGHT**

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**As the pace of change in the AI technology landscape increases, organizations need help from strategy partners to navigate complexity and create new operating models that deliver business results.**

# The Value of Strategic Partners in Building Technology Architecture and Foundation for Successful AI Adoption

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## Introduction

With the introduction of generative AI (GenAI), building an AI competency shifted from the custom and expensive development of proprietary AI models to off-the-shelf vendor-supplied foundation models and digital assistants. The recent introduction of AI agents further simplifies the effort required to embed useful AI capabilities into tasks, applications, and workflows.

As GenAI is pitched as a disruptive and transformative technology, executive leadership is looking for significantly greater benefits than simple incremental improvements, with the ability to transform how knowledge work is performed and how they can build AI-powered capabilities to better compete and provide differentiating service to customers.

### AT A GLANCE

#### KEY STATS

According to IDC research:

- Half of organizations require at least an 80% success rate with their GenAI projects to sustain their current investment plans.
- Less than 40% of organizations report achieving at least 80% success with their GenAI projects so far.
- Of organizations achieving high success rates, 47% cite strategic support from partners as the main driver of success.

To meet these objectives, teams begin to focus on selectively building custom components to address specific business needs or industry requirements. This might involve fine-tuning existing foundation models, developing specialized applications on top of vendor platforms, or creating custom integrations between multiple AI services.

This is when more challenges appear, including:

- Inaccessibility of data
- Integration complexity across multiple data types (structured, unstructured, streaming, video)
- Governance concerns around sharing, privacy, and intellectual property to become critical with the need to build policies that are supported with technology
- Struggles with data quality, system limitations, and continuous growth of new data being generated by AI systems

Organizations realize they will need to build out strategic AI capabilities incrementally and are heavily dependent on selecting use cases that are backed by good data quality, implemented with appropriate controls and policies, and the ability to gradually expand data capabilities and more use cases as the organization matures.

At some point in this journey, enterprises often realize they need to choose a professional services partner. IDC research shows that organizations struggle to find the right partner for their AI efforts and have learned that successful partners:

- Help organizations avoid the common pitfall of scattered, unfocused proof of concepts (POCs) by helping build a strategic road map that balances quick wins with long-term value creation.
- Demonstrate strong capabilities in data management, understanding that data quality and accessibility are foundational to AI success.
- Can translate business objectives into practical AI initiatives, define clear KPIs, and prioritize use cases based on value and complexity.
- Have knowledge beyond the technical aspects, with an ability to address business alignment, governance, and change management needs.

The ideal firm should also exhibit strong risk management capabilities, including frameworks for security, compliance, and ethical considerations specific to AI implementations.

## Benefits

Organizations face an abundance of choices when looking to transition to an AI technology operating model encompassing infrastructure, data, AI platforms, and applications. There are no one-size-fits-all solutions, and it is not always clear which tools or methodologies will meet organizations' unique business and technology needs. Professional services providers help organizations navigate and make the right tool and platform decisions to plan and execute their AI transformations at scale and to achieve better outcomes from their AI investments than those organizations would be able to on their own. Those benefits include:

- **Better solutions:** Services providers bring technology, industry, and functional expertise to help clients craft solutions that achieve their specific business and technical objectives. Engagements typically start with an assessment of the organization's AI readiness, data, infrastructure, and application needs, leading to the creation or refinement of AI strategies and operating models. Services providers advise on technology selection and supply blueprints or reference architectures that incorporate organizations' existing technology investments and data sources with new capabilities, such as AI models and AI agents.
- **Faster development:** Services providers help speed up the development of AI solutions through innovation and delivery accelerators, which can include pretrained industry- or function-specific models, reusable component repositories, curated and annotated training data sets, developer tools and microservices, and even full-fledged products and platforms. These assets can fill gaps in commercial software products, address specific business domains or technical challenges (such as integrating legacy enterprise systems with AI capabilities), and industrialize AI solution development and management.

- **Better value realization:** Services providers help organizations conduct cost-benefit analysis to determine the appropriate technology solution for their goals and available resources. Depending on what will work best for the client based on this analysis, a provider can support a variety of deployment scenarios with different cost profiles, such as implementing an off-the-shelf AI application from an independent software vendor, designing a custom application around a pretrained foundation model, integrating AI capabilities with enterprise intelligence and automation systems, and fine-tuning foundation models for specialized tasks. Services providers can also orchestrate multiple technologies across infrastructure, data, platforms, and applications, providing further opportunities for optimization of costs and value delivery.
- **Earlier access to innovation:** Services providers work closely with an ecosystem of partners, including foundation model providers, public cloud platforms, enterprise application and source data system providers, third-party data providers, and academia to access and drive innovation that benefits their customers and moves the industry forward. Interoperability with a broad range of technologies through API connectors provides organizations with the flexibility to "plug and play" to take advantage of modern tools, applications, microservices, and AI models that best fit organizations' emerging needs.
- **Greater risk awareness and mitigation:** Services providers can help organizations develop or adjust governance frameworks to consider the implications of AI adoption and introduce appropriate guardrails. Providers can also offer consulting and technology solutions that help clients build responsible AI systems and tackle risks associated with algorithm bias and fairness issues, interpretability and explainability of AI-based decisions, and AI data governance and compliance. These can include the implementation of tools and platforms that detect potential bias in AI training data sets and provide model validation, monitoring, and analysis on a continuous basis.
- **Better adoption:** Providers can help design AI applications and platforms with different roles and user experiences in mind, considering the dependencies and linkages between AI and other technologies and workflows. Infusing AI within business workflows will also almost certainly require some reengineering of business processes, as well as training and change management for employees whose roles will be changed by the introduction of a new and disruptive technology.

## Trends

IDC forecasts that the global economic impact of AI will be $19.4 trillion through 2030. This represents 3.5% of global GDP in 2030 and is linked to increased direct spending on AI solutions and services driven by accelerated adoption and an induced impact from increased household income/spending of employees across the entire AI value chain. Organizations and their employees successful in building and deploying AI-powered solutions and services will be part of this large shift in the economy.

A top factor in success is the strength of critical partners, according to an April 2024 survey conducted by IDC. The 47% of organizations with high success rates in this survey rated strong partner relationships as both critical and challenging. Of key partners:

- 34.6% of respondents rated IT consulting partners as most critical to their success.
- 30.3% rated cloud providers as the most critical.

- 29.6% of AI platform providers were rated as the most critical.
- 26.5% rated enterprise application providers as the most critical.

However, organizations experiencing high success rates are still in the minority, and IDC research indicates that the ROI results to date on GenAI implementations are not yet high enough to create a virtuous cycle of savings and further investment. IDC's April 2024 *Future Enterprise Resiliency and Spending Survey, Wave 4,* also revealed that half of all organizations surveyed require at least an 80% success rate with their GenAI projects to sustain their current investment plans. The success rate in this context means that at least 80% of the project's ROI goals were met. Less than 40% of survey respondents report an 80%+ success rate with their GenAI proof-of-concept projects so far, which means most organizations will need to see success rates improve to sustain current investment plans.

What factors are hindering the success rates of GenAI implementations? IDC survey research shows that for organizations achieving less than an 80% success rate with GenAI projects, the top limiting factors were developer shortages, high costs, inadequate infrastructure performance, and poor IT/line-of-business (LOB) coordination. Other limiting factors include failure of technology or service partners to meet project specifications, misaligned use-case scope and requirements, poor data access and/or quality, and unacceptable levels of bias or confabulation. Conversely, what factors are likely to improve the success rate of GenAI implementations? The same IDC survey showed that for organizations achieving 90%+ success with their GenAI projects, the top factors were strategic support with project prioritization, effective coordination between IT and LOB teams, and access to the right developer skills and effective tools.

## *Considering Minfy's Enterprise General Intelligence Reference Architecture*

Minfy is a provider of applied technology architecture and cloud-native systems integration services, with core competencies spanning data and AI, application services, and cloud enablement solutions. The company uses its industry expertise and partnerships with global technology platforms to tailor solutions to the business and technical needs of its customers. It also offers a suite of proprietary solutions through its Swayam platform to enable cloud adoption (Swayam.Cloud), AI model deployment and management (Swayam.AI), and infrastructure and application performance management (Swayam.Observe).

In response to the challenges posed by the complexity of enterprise systems, Minfy developed the Enterprise General Intelligence Reference Architecture (EGIRA) to assist businesses with AI-led transformations. The company positions EGIRA as a custom unified AI platform to build a competitive advantage for organizations. For example, a CEO that wants to know whether the company should make incremental investments into a particular project, based on threshold target return, could get an answer to that question from EGIRA.

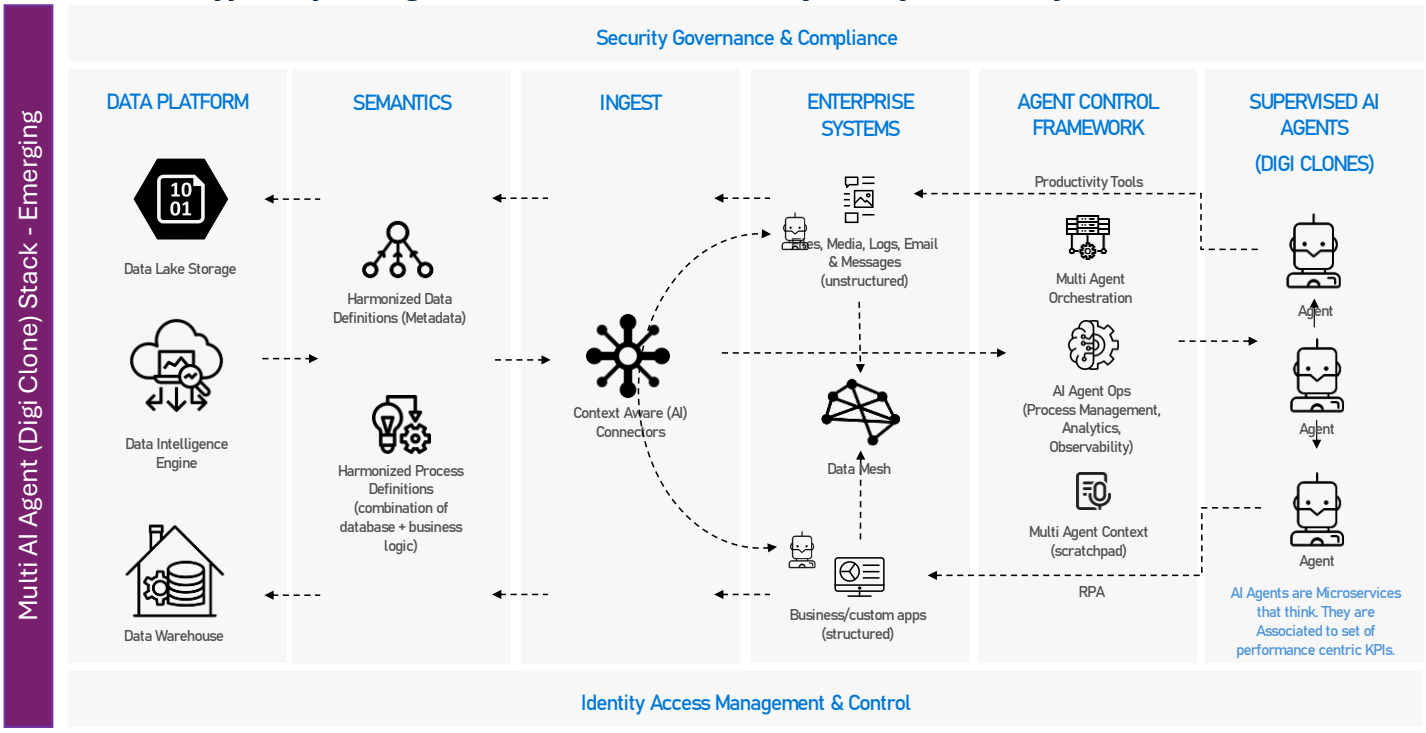
EGIRA is intended to help organizations align AI adoption with strategic objectives and ensure seamless integration, robust governance, and actionable intelligence. EGIRA includes the following components:

- **EGIRA Unified AI Framework** integrates structured and unstructured data, models, and AI services within a single ecosystem, with the goal of creating a harmonized data foundation. This would help break down organizational silos and ensure data and models are accessible and actionable for agents across the enterprise.
- **EGIRA Agentic AI Framework** complements the Unified AI Framework by establishing a goal-driven ecosystem of autonomous agents that leverage the unified data foundation to perform complex tasks and make collaborative

decisions. It includes multiagent orchestration, interagent protocols, and a harmonization layer that aligns agent actions with business objectives and data provided by EGIRA Unified AI Framework. The intent is to ensure coordinated operations, such as synchronizing inventory reordering with real-time dispatch updates to prevent stock-outs.

- **EGIRA Unified and Agentic AI Architecture** uses the EGIRA Unified AI Framework as the foundational layer, organizing data, AI models, and language models for cohesive integration:
  - **Data harmonization layer:** This acts as a semantic bridge that unifies data and entities across multiple functions, making it accessible to all AI agents for seamless task execution and decision-making while ensuring that AI agents can communicate effectively across disparate systems. Data harmonization is accelerated through AI agents.
  - **Orchestration layer:** In the EGIRA Agentic AI Framework, this layer coordinates agents' activities, allowing them to work with the data and models organized by EGIRA Unified AI Framework.
  - **Large action models (LAMs):** LAMs enable agents to autonomously carry out complex tasks, acting on insights generated by EGIRA Unified AI Framework to meet organizational objectives.
- **Building Blocks for EGIRA Unified and Agentic AI Framework:**
  - **Knowledge-driven decision-making:** Leveraging knowledge graphs and causal models, AI agents provide data-driven answers to complex business questions, enabling organizations to uncover relationships and insights for more informed decision-making and autonomous task execution.
  - **Agent control framework:** The agent control framework manages and organizes AI agents, ensuring secure access, governance, and accountability across workflows. It establishes boundaries for AI agent action, aligns operations with compliance requirements, and maintains human oversight over critical decision-making.
  - **Data and workflow integration:** EGIRA Unified AI Framework's APIs bridge the gap between AI capabilities and legacy enterprise systems, ensure agents have access to applications and workflows across the organization, and support more efficient and reliable operations. Minfy employs a comprehensive approach to deliver solutions based on the EGIRA Framework. An "enterprise twin" model is created to simulate an organization's people, processes, tools, and practices. The model helps surface raw data and knowledge locked in teams' operating practices and formal systems. Data harmonization is the first step, followed by application integration at the user interface level. AI agents using natural language act as connectors between humans and applications, applications and applications, and humans, applications, and enterprise data. AI agents can undertake a combination of supervised, unsupervised, and reinforcement learning to decode metadata and develop knowledge graphs (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1: ***Minfy Swayam.Agentic — EGIRA Accelerator for Unified AI Platform***




*Source: Minfy, 2025*

## *Challenges*

GenAI investment has become an imperative for many organizations, but resources and budgets are not unlimited. IDC has observed that business leaders are trying to limit their exposure to downside risks by taking a more gradual approach to some types of major investments during the current period of uncertainty. According to IDC's 2024 *Enterprise Intelligence Services Survey,* 22% of worldwide respondents reported they planned to shift the budget from data management initiatives to fund GenAI investments. Minfy will have to convince organizations that investing in a robust data harmonization layer will not only be beneficial to the enterprise but also be critical to the successful implementation of GenAI and AI agent solutions — and to achieving desired business results.

While EGIRA is designed for the needs of CEOs and boards, implementing the architecture will require alignment of stakeholders across IT, business, and data teams. This is necessary to address key data modernization pain points, such as breaking data silos, standardizing business processes, implementing data governance policies, and improving data quality and availability. Minfy will need to not only engage with the C-suite but also communicate effectively with engineering teams and end users that need to consume high-quality data at speed and scale to make decisions that ultimately impact business outcomes for the organization.

## Conclusion

The journey to successful AI adoption is complex and carries high stakes for executive leaders. Organizations can better orchestrate and accelerate their movement from experimentation into production with a strategy that prioritizes use cases across the enterprise, calculates the benefits of AI agents, manages data so that it is accessible and has business value, and creates a multi-stakeholder, unified governance model. A strategic partner with expertise in both technical architecture for AI and workflows that incorporate AI capabilities into business decisions and actions is essential to ensure AI initiatives deliver their desired business outcomes.

# About the Analysts

***Jennifer Hamel,*** *Senior Research Director, Enterprise Intelligence Services*

Jennifer Hamel is a senior research director for IDC's Worldwide Services team, responsible for the Enterprise Intelligence Services research program. In this research, Ms. Hamel covers the life cycle of project-oriented, managed, and support services related to the deployment of technologies, such as data management, analytics, artificial intelligence (AI), and automation, as part of enterprise intelligence initiatives. In particular, her research focuses on how service providers work with organizations to ensure investments in enterprise intelligence technologies result in improved business outcomes.

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Maureen Fleming is a program vice president for IDC's Intelligent Process Automation research. In this role, she focuses on a portfolio of technologies used by enterprises to speed up, drive cost out of, and support a customer-centric approach to business operations. She especially focuses on the convergence of AI, machine learning, and automation and how that combination changes the economics and benefits of process improvement.

## MESSAGE FROM THE SPONSOR

Minfy empowers enterprises to leverage AI through its Enterprise General Intelligence Reference Architecture (EGIRA). Our solutions integrate data, models, and AI agents, focusing on data harmonization to ensure seamless accessibility and actionable insights. Key features include a unified AI framework, robust data engineering, and an autonomous AI ecosystem aligned with business goals. Minfy provides scalable, ethical AI solutions tailored to industry needs, accelerating innovation with proven methodologies.

IDC Custom Solutions

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