

CLOUD REALITIES

CR094

Shifting perspective on
sustainability with Lewis
Richards, Microsoft



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[00:00:00] I'm using My Fitness Pal to do calorie counting. Is it telling you you eat too much and drink too much, David? Well, you didn't. I didn't need an app for that.

Welcome to Cloud Realities, an original podcast from Capgemini, and this week it's a conversation show, exploring sustainability in the intelligence age. I'm Dave Chapman. I'm Esmee van de Giessen and I'm Rob Kernahan and I'm delighted to say that this week to get into that incredibly important subject, we've got Lewis Richards, the Microsoft Chief Sustainability Officer for the UK.

Louis, how are you doing? Good to see you. Nice to see you all. Glad to be here. Where are you joining us from today?

I am hybrid working from my home in lovely, currently Sunny Baron Edmonds in Suffolk. I know I. Very nice and I noticed that you have got exactly the same [00:01:00] color walls as my lounge at home. It, I almost feel at home looking at that.

It's the worst paint colored. Your listeners never pick this because you constantly spend time touching it up. 'cause you look at it at its scratches.

Look at that consumer advice. We barely even got going. It is dark. It's, it's a sort of a dark, midnight bluish sort of color. Mm-hmm. For those that are trying to imagine what that looks like, it is quite intense. Yeah, it is good. It's good. I like it. I, I like a bit of deep and stormy. It's like your personality, Dave. That's what it is, Robert.

Well, yours would be shallow and stormy. Sorry I got that bit wrong. You, you, you are out with guns this morning. On, on form today. Yeah. How you doing? You good? Uh, well, I'm all right. It's, uh, it's Friday again, so the weekend is almost here. Yeah. It's just about to land, so that's always, uh, now you, I always say the peak time on the weekend, that's what you always say.

That's why, you know what I always say, David, peak time on the weekend. The happiest point is when you down tools for the day, it's. [00:02:00] Very early evening, you get in there, you might be sitting down with a family for dinner. That's it. That's peak weekend, and then you get to Sunday evening and you get the butterflies and you tell me and you go, I've got to go back to school again.

I do think Fridays. I think I agree with you. I think it Friday evening is peak weekend, isn't it? Peak that is it peak weekend. You can't beat the Friday evening if you're gonna have like a, a, a big night. It's gotta be the Friday, isn't it? 'cause that then gives you, like, there nothing worse than a big night on a Saturday night and then you, and then you're on your Sunday and you've wasted half your Sunday 'cause you're not feeling great.

Uhhuh. And then you, right, this is, this is it. This is it. This is my theory. Pete, you cannot beat Friday evening. Ez. What do you think? Yeah, I agree. I absolutely agree. And I actually missed you guys. You know that we've was the f we've spent quite some time in, uh, Barcelona together. I was actually looking forward to see you today. Yeah. Look at that. There you go. Look at that. That must sound surprised that the first time for everything, isn't it? Look at that. My words. Very good. And you're in a box, Esmee, today. Yeah, I'm in a box. Yeah. People say that. I, [00:03:00] I am a quite out of the box thinker, but I'm in the box this Friday. Yes. At the office.

Are they the ones that've got the ventilation in? 'cause if you sit in that box and the sun's shining in, they can get very warm, very fast. And do you know what they did? They actually removed the seats. They, they first had a seat that you could sit on it, but they, they actually removed them. You could only stand in them. That's madness. That's like strange torture.



What? That's that thing that McDonald's, it's motivation to not keep, you know it's better for your health in the box. It's better for your health. That's me. Technically, it's better for your health sit into a big killer, but it's trying to do that thing that McDonald's did years ago ain it where they deliberately designed seats.

You can only sit on for 20 minutes. So you, so you got in I did know that. Get out. Yeah. Is that a thing? That is a thing really. That is a thing to keep flow going in, uh, into highly populated things that all, all of the environment that's there is designed intentionally for you only there to be a certain amount of time.

So standing, it's 'cause they want you out there in five minutes. Yeah. You know. Yeah, so good job. We're not doing a three hour record today, isn't it?

Look at me. Well, we can turn it [00:04:00] into one if you want, David, but just keep going. Just keep going until er eventually fades and then we're right. That's the podcast.

Done. Then slumping, slumping. Laura. Laura on the screen. Anyway, Robert, what's confusing you this week? Oh, it's confusing me this week, David. It's s shaky user interface design and how it continues to, uh, to survive. So, um, and the reason this popped up was, you know, I've been traveling a lot. Recently in far-flung destinations, I've had to install multiple taxi apps on my phone to get around the place.

Now you've only just got your head around Uber, haven't you? So this is No, no, no. This is a big leap, right? So, yeah, but the, it was like, uh, there was one in Copenhagen I signed up to, and it was like, download the app. Authenticate with Google, where do you want to go? Oh, we'll use Google Pay. It was, it was incredibly simple, right? I was probably 10 seconds in and yeah, it was all done, right? This is the digital experience we should receive. It's like quick, quick, quick bang through. And there was another one, which shall remain nameless in a country not so far away, where it took me about 15 minutes to enter [00:05:00] in all the details, sign it up, get that, do that validate account, this, that and the other, and everything else.

And I'm thinking, if you've designed that app, do you not look at your. Your other apps that are your, your competitors and stuff, and go, well, we should probably copy that shut. I have, I have a similar, I'll tell you what, what really annoys me these days is. Websites where you're trying to buy something that you just don't have an Apple pay, but Oh yeah. It's like, why aren't you integrated with this? It's so much quicker. This like an API. It's like that's better than you writing four pages of kind put in my address and my birth town and like stuff like that. And it's like, what are you. Doing, it's like, um, line bikes as well. I, I'd never interacted with that organization.

You, you go up, scan a QR code, say, okay, I approve my Google integration, and they just let me take the bike and ride off. And you sort of think, you go to the alternatives like that and you go four pages of this and that and the other in details. You think so? I think, Robert, why, why I'm confused. David, why can't you be simpler?

Why? This is less of a confusion, more of a rant in it. Yeah. Well, I suppose, yes. Okay.

[00:06:00] Yeah, it is likes shaky user interface design. Please learn from those who have got it correct. And it's okay to copy because are we gonna have to, am I gonna have to change my little intro to this? Rob Rob's rant about now Rob's rant.

What you gonna rant about This way be so, but it just confuses me. Why? And, uh, you know, you just go, but why have you not looked to others and gone? Well, they've done it similarly. The other one was the app to download. One of the apps was like 250 megs. And I'm like,



that's just an unreasonable amount of data have to download on. It's very rare that I can clear up your confusions, but this one I can completely clear up. It's pure incompetence. Robert, there's pure, you have to use them. It's like, oh. No, you know, it's the same with streaming platforms. Why is the navigation different? Why is the menu, you know, oh, TV interfaces. Oh, don't get me started on that. That's on for another day. I think. Let's move on. Before we just get into full ramble, just, just run for an hour about user bad user interface design makes my, my blog post is to run a blog. Back in early two thousands called things I Hate in [00:07:00] the World. And it was kind of like, it was just literally that infinite resource.

Is it still there? Gonna, I read it. It feels like I need one of those was, it was on blog spot.com. I think there's, it's on the internet archive. This is the thing, it's their own, there it is. Just literally me ranting about technology and things. He used to annoy me. Basically.

You should be on this podcast every time at the beginning. And this is, this is, this is the bit about why is it like this? Yeah.

Well look on that note, let's turn to our course objective of the day. So why don't we start with the CRI report developing sustainable gen. Set out what's in that report, Lewis, and why you think it's significant. I think at the moment it is just because it's the, it's the side ghost of the moment, isn't it? Sort of generative ai when we talk about that, and I think there's a lot of, there's a lot of interest in it obviously because that kind of Pandora's [00:08:00] box has been opened.

I think in terms of the technology, I look our Microsoft's AI foundry platform that we customers can. Seven models, Nory closed. Lots of people are creep these, these, these things and releasing them, you know, meta Microsoft, you know, there's all these kind of things coming as well. It's a tremendous increase though. 'cause we saw Foundry released that Ignite last, when was that? Last November. Mm-hmm. And it wasn't in its thousands at that point.

I don't think it's hundreds though, wasn't there? That's hundred. Yeah. Yeah.

It's crazy. I, think the challenge is were around that then, obviously it's that balance between the, kind of, the way that we as humans consume news. Has changed. So lots of people's news comes by Instagram X. Well, I mean, if you even stay on X these days, phony baloney stories about the pyramids that people believe Yeah. Potentially for that. Who would've fallen? Who would've fallen for that? [00:09:00] I mean, that is ridiculous. I know, I know. So there's, there's things like that. But I think the problem is, is that because we, because we, we, we live in this ten second soundbite piece of the very easy for people to get. To misunderstand potentially the nature between the link between genive, ai, power resource users, sustainability, and it's like any other technology.

It doesn't run ons. It runs on compute platform and the judicious use of it to drive. Or build solutions or outcomes, which are, you know, more sustainable in nature, requires you to understand what model you're using, what outcome you're trying to get to, what data you're ruling over it, what's the inference patterns, who's gonna use it, that kind of thing.

So I think from a sustainability point of view, there's two aspects. One is that there's undoubtedly things we stand from the reporting about where these AI tools can.

That are gonna help sustainability, biodiversity, material science, that kind stuff. The flip side of that then is the internal kind of use by companies like that is how do you actually start [00:10:00] to leverage and use those technologies and understand the impact that has on your resource usage from a sustainability point of view as well.



It's a bit of a balance, so it feels like. It's almost like pre and post gen AI sustainability thinking. Isn't it like pre, it felt like we had a broadly decent handle on what net zero cloud might ultimately need to be. You know, kind of the scale of data center processing that's gonna be required to support that and how that can be offset.

And then post GenAI. It's changed the game, hasn't it, in terms of how we think about sustainability? Um, yeah, I think so. I'd also, I, pick into it a little bit though as well. I think there's been a, a conflation that the growth of data centers and energy usage is solely down to generative ai. And I'd argue that a little bit. I don't think that's quite the case. I think if you look at. Again, this comes back to the way that humans, it's like our timeframes for everything have shrunk. We don't study history. We don't think of anything with any kind of time. It's all No, no, no, no, no. And I think when you talk about data [00:11:00] centers, these things take a long time to build potentially.

And they, they also are designed to last for. 20, 30 years. I mean they, you know, the, the capital bill project. So if you look at the kind of the pattern of planned development for data centers globally by data center companies, that kind of stuff that hasn't just suddenly appeared overnight or ramped it just because of generative ai, I'd argue that probably the increase in data centers.

The plan is around our profligate inability to control how much data we create as humans. Data drives the demand for digitization. And if you think about generative ai, generative ai, all it's really doing is being, it's a lens into that data. It's making it easier for us as humans to basically find and create new content from that data because.

The type of data centers have been built in terms of how much they're ai, GPU [00:12:00] enabled data centers. That is starting to grow up. But the, the overall build, I wouldn't say is only because of generative ai, if that makes sense.

And I think, I think as a, as a very good point about digital litter in their, about how much smartphone are just pushing data to the cloud, I, I would want to create an algorithm that goes around and deletes every firework video ever taken. 'cause I've got a theory that nobody ever watches a fireworks. Video back, but yet you're at, you're at a big display and there must be a thousand people taking 4K video and that all has to be stored somewhere with a carbon footprint. And it is that social responsibility associated with your own personal footprint.

That's digital is very large these days, but that's that dichotomy between the kind of personal learning, digital skills and understanding versus when you corporation, very easy to. Point at business. What doing about this? Yeah. Whatcha doing? But same token, we went, friends came, we went to, [00:13:00] we went to Greece for days and I came back and I'd probably taken, I dunno, 50 photographs. Yeah. In the 10 days, that kind of stuff. I watched Summer and Ethan taking photographs and summer and Ethan would take 200 photographs to get one photograph. Right, right. To put on their Instagram profile. They've got no conception because, because they're not, and this is the thing, 'cause they're not, no one's biologically equipped to see the digital world.

What you have is that thing walking around. We still, you know, still d call a phone. I mean, I, I don't use it for phone calls. It hasn't been a phone for years. Yeah. But they taken 200 photographs in that. And I know for a fact that she's got Apple photographs and she's got Google photographs and I think, so those 200 images of highly resolution imagery is being streamed every single one of those up to the cloud and backed up.

But that, that, that linking of the impact that you have behavior wise because can't see it. It's



very hard for humans, I think, to conceptualize kind of their, their responsibility around that creation of data, that exhaust, you know what I [00:14:00] mean? I used to do it before joined Microsoft. My, I used to talk to s about it, about this idea of people's capacity and confidence to use everyday technology that surrounds.

How many apps have you got installed on your phone? And I guarantee you, in a room of 200, you could have 300 people in a conference. You might find one person who's got even a semblance. Most people don't even know where to look on their phone. Let's test.

Let's test. Do you see what I mean? Let's test that EE right now, shall we?

Um, because I, I, I'm gonna say, I'm one of the people that. I, no idea, but I haven't got very many. I'm relatively concerned, you know, I'm coming your way, Robert. I, well, I know, but I, I can tell you exactly. I knew it's a very No no, exactly. But I can tell you, so I've got four pages, uh, and it's about seven by four. So Yeah, they, they, any foldering going on there? Uh, no, I don't folder. No, I don't. I folder So I've got, are you search to find my app? Do you I'm [00:15:00] like a modern person who doesn't have to constantly scroll and locate an app. I just put three letters into the search and it pops up for me.

I think that's, that's the interesting thing with the AI piece, but if you think about it though, what the AI is doing is it's, it's dis. The paradigm of the way that humans interact with the technology because we've been very much a thumb driven type tap. You have to control type tap, but because generative language capability of generative ai, even though lot of people aren't using it that way, people still aren't talking directly to.

It's work for you. It understands. What do you wanna do? You ask the question. You as a human are getting kind of probably how to do stuff. I used to talk to people about like, you know, if you think about skills you need to [00:16:00] teach people moving forward, there's two things. Really critical thinking skills and imagination skills. You have to be able to analyze and think and understand what these generative AI tools are telling you from with some kind of critical lens in terms of understanding, you know, looking at the sources.

Is it real? How do you, before you just go.

A mental picture. Yeah. Of what these things are doing, where data sits and how it works, that kind of stuff as well. Because you know, that's the challenge with it. Let's maybe explore then that's a really nicely set up sort of current state of the world. Where we are in, we're in the beginnings of the intelligence age. We know intelligence, age, compute, whether it be the data stored, whether it be the processing power to handle it. Is Adam, whether it's quite expon, instantiating, but it's certainly, it's certainly at a different level than we were understanding power consumption even five years ago. Then you've got [00:17:00] this disintermediation issue with how people are personally using tech as well as how organizations are using tech.

Yep. So how on earth do you make sense of that from a sustainability point of view as it reframed the way we were thinking about it, say five years ago.

Yeah, from my point of view as well as being like kind of sustainability, the Microsoft, I think there's a couple of things. I think report, uh, reporting compliance and rules and regulations have been like an enabler for raising the bar or the profile of sustainability as an issue inside organizations.

I think that's been a thing. I think though. To the point though, instead of organizations where it's, it's become just about reporting and compliance to a certain degree because of, you know, and it's become just like any other kind of reporting function, which is led by,



we've got to get a report out on this day and everything goes around just capturing data. So last year we were at 69.9%. This year. Year we're gonna get to, yeah. And someone can press the magic button because they've [00:18:00] stuff does. It basically fosters the wrong kind of behaviors inside an organization because it becomes a pillar reporting and compliance pillar on its own. So all the, the pillars inside the business, legal, customer service, hr, finance, whatever, it's, they all know that they do a sustainability report and they capture data, but there's no ownership necessarily.

There's not enough ownership by the business because they know someone else is taking care of it.

We live in a febrile environment at the moment. Doesn't matter what kind of topic you pick, politics, religion, this kind stuff at the moment. And one of the things, the impacts we're seeing in almost real time is certain re around things like DEI around sustainability, this kind stuff because of.

Political changes in, you know, around the world. And one of the things that that's had an impact on, if you like, the European Union has had the gold standard of sustainability reporting really with the CSR D templates they've been doing. But [00:19:00] with their omnibus update in the last sort of like month, six weeks, I think that's something like 80% of the companies that were gonna have to do mandatory CSR d reporting, Cary.

I'm doing it. But I also think it's an opportunity as well though, because once it's only been about reporting and compliance, it means we're not using the data that we're capturing from the businesses as a transformational, positive thing. 'cause we're just using it to capture to as a report. But what we did the same dataset is the sense stuff that we wanna be applying AI and process change to how.

So I think if anything, it's gonna give people a bit more head space to probably think productively about how to move it forward as opposed to just being retrospective. You call out though, one of the biggest issues with bad corporate organizational design, which is accountability and where it lies and how it's Yeah. Threaded through the organization. [00:20:00] So if I'm not accountable for it, I don't, I don't think about it, therefore I just consume and that consumption drives it. So, um, to, to, to do that. I think some organizations need to really think hard about how they're wired and there's a change of that wiring to be able to get the outcome that we seek.

A classic one similar is if I don't pay for the consumption of my compute, I don't care. And what you find is the organization misuses that consumption 'cause they don't have to think about it 'cause they don't get the bill at the end of the month. It's the same thing with carbon. If I'm not res, if I'm not pushed to think about it, then it's not.

Present in my mind and I might not target its reduction. So yeah, it's a, I think there's a long way to go for corporate organization design to be able to cope with the types of things that you're talking about. I completely agree and Microsoft, I mean, we've not, I wouldn't say we're unique, but I mean, we've, we have a, a corporate carbon tax that is levied on the business units so that we have a carbon per ton dollar value, basically.

So it incentivizes our business units. [00:21:00] Transform to use less resources because they have to basically, then they, they contribute less to the bottom line that we use to fund our decarbonization efforts as one, one of the streams use of de funding. But if you think about most organizations, and I say that loosely, most organizations, what in my 25 years in IT kind of thing, I work around the place.



What typically happens is the business use credit cards and go. Shopping, buy applications, and now and again, the budget. To your point about consumption and this piece, that ownership then, because even migration,

99%, 99% of the business had no idea where the stuff was running beforehand. Yeah, yeah. And now they have idea where it's running now. So. [00:22:00] Kind connective tissue to it. It, it struck day, actually we had our AI tour in London last week. About five people came to the to come do it. A guy I with, Tom Uhin does our data center. So take people data center, slide deck was shown about in the audience and put.

Next time I'm gonna swap out his images and put in a Tesco distribution center and just get him to stand up and go, that's Dublin South. Yeah. Or something like for Microsoft, because you, it's, it's a, it's a box. See what I mean? It doesn't, there's no human connectivity to that thing in reality. And I think that's kind of where we have to work harder.

Connections [00:23:00] just generally. Rob, you talk about firework videos, but I always think when I look at people taking photos of anything at those corporate conferences, I'm like never looking at that again. That I'd rather watch a firework video to start with. And then secondly, I bet they're watched less looked at less than a firework video, aren't they? Especially one of, isn't it also.

Looking from a tech industry perspective, is it also a little bit kind of ballistic? Because I hear you say you wanna reduce the, the, the use of apps and, and, and tech. And on the other hand, you know, you're one of the, the largest tech product. Well, but this is the, this is the thing though, right?

So businesses that are capital driven, we we're in the business to make money ultimately that right? But point of view, so then becomes how value, how do.

There's a demand at the moment for anytime there's a front end application in the business that touches people [00:24:00] and data. There's a demand at the moment because most people have had, you know, this generative AI thing that people wanna bake generative AI into that thing because they, they, you know, productivity gains, benefits, whatever they think.

As efficiently and as effectively as humanly possible, and to help customers to use those efficiently and effectively from, you know, the right model, the right energy, that kind of stuff, right? But it's a, it goes back to the age old thing. It's business transformation, digital transformation. If that's your existing footprint from an energy resource usage point of view on your front end application and you're bolting AI onto the top right, you might get productivity gains, output gains.

By something on, unless you take the opportunity to refactor the application, if you use this kind of software foundation, right? Microsoft. [00:25:00]

There are, there are patterns in place and principles in place about how you reform and refactor software to optimize it for green computing. Right? So the challenge then becomes like, how would you get the business owners who don't want you to touch their front end application at all? How does CIOs and the data and you know, the, the sort of developer teams convince them to work together to say, if we modernize your application even as a couple of years old, if you modernize it, we use ai.

To actually help the developers to modernize it. Right? So like one of the things we've, we've done over the last couple months is we've taken all of the green Software Foundation principles and practice, which is all available on, on the internet. And we've used, we've the



latest open AI reasoning model against that and created an ai, a green assistive coding bot. We did it as part of our global hack, but then the developers, and if you're refactoring the application, you throw code at, tell me how to do it, what should I do? One vote. Shortening the time and helping the developers speed up how they transform the application. But if you could measure the front end application and [00:26:00] refactor it and move it to an energy footprint, which is less, you give yourself the headroom to add in the, the AI function, the copilot function, whatever it's gonna be on top of that, hopefully without making it additively worse than it was before.

Making it economically or potentially output more productive. You see what I mean? That's a harder thing to do. Just bolting on technology applications requires more partnership between business owners who don't like change as much as they demand change. They don't necessarily wanna have things change in their space as a paradigm. It sort of reminds me a little bit of the journey that cybersecurity has gone on over the last 20 or 30 years where there was a constant frustration in that community of. You don't really contact us until like the final gate before go live, and then we put our hand up and say it's not secure, and all of a sudden we're the problem.

It feels like that, doesn't it, that this is a, this is a thread that should just be in every conversation right from the outset. [00:27:00]

Yeah. I think for me as well, it's like I'm, I'm a massive believer in kind of empowerment for an education, digital skills end users across the business, and I think there's a, there's a real difference between.

Running training courses for people once or twice, this kind of stuff, and then ticking the box and going, right. Everybody can now use that to the best of the technology's ability because it's not because we we're humans and we, we are very, very driven by habit. I mean, I, before I joined Microsoft and I was in, outside my researching world, I'd argue it probably took Microsoft or it took people 10 years.

To press the share button in PowerPoint to change their behavior rather than downloading a file to their laptop and then creating an email and then adding attachment. And I argue, no, Rob still hasn't got his head around.

He sends, he sends me attachments. Yeah, but I'd argue no that even though the whole point about those files being back to OneDrive and the OneDrive, you know, the way it works, the way it's designed, be collaborative.

I'd argue now that people still will go work on a file in, in PowerPoint, save [00:28:00] OneDrive. And it puts a link in and they go, oh, I don't wanna do that. They download and then they'll download a copy and attach it and send it anyway. Do you hear that, Robert? Do you see what I mean? PowerPoint in the browser. Did you hear that, Robert? Yeah. In the browser, when, when there is functional parity,

I'll embrace, I will embrace that one from Rob's advanced, advanced slide design. When you've got skills with a Zs, yeah, you need the full functionality. That's all I'm saying. I, I'm kind of joking a little bit, but if you think about it, if I go back. You go back like two years and you look at low code and automation, right? And the way that the products are designed to interope operate the process have been designed to inter operate that for years.

Yeah. And I think the, the promise of things like power, automate and flow and these kind of things, you know, the, you know, the, the beers of the world, you know, if this, then that, so the early versions before they became corporate tools, that kind stuff. The idea was that you



as a human would understand enough business processes build.[00:29:00]

You'd argue how success that's been, if you think about what the AI doing at the moment though, right. It's, it's, there's the process that's been in the process for, and AI here on the end, and that's, we're using what we, not necessarily enough of. Why is the process the way the process is inside your organization, inside your function?

And I guarantee you go back into asking enough questions. It's because Jeff built a power, uh, an Excel 10 years ago with macros in it. And the corporate scar tissue that's built up around that macro enabled Excel is that's the way we do things. That's. Yeah. Not death, but it's terrible business process. I know, but yeah.

But I think the point is like unless you enable people to have the confidence and the skills and the capability to unpick the processes, collective as an individual, you're never gonna get the best out. I don't think of these AI tools or the automation tools and this kind of stuff, because it's. It's always at the edge rather than it being, you know, refactoring [00:30:00] everything.

So it, it feels like the argument for deep modernization is just strengthening over time. Mm-hmm. So it's been here for a while, hasn't it, in the sense of the move from client server to cloud and, and the ways of working and the way you can do finance around. All of that is very different to the sort of tech that at least some of us on this call grew up with.

How you fund it, how you manage it, how you work it, how fast you can move, all that sort of stuff. And this, this layer that you just describing, they're both, both the performance aspects of it. So AI built into processes, not just tagged on at the end, but like all the way through. But the sustainability.

Plus points of doing that properly, it just seems to get more and more compelling, doesn't it? And the, the only bit missing I think, from the argument we've been having is then connecting that to business results. So, and, and there is some natural connection there. I think if you can get into that, particularly if sustainability is something you are [00:31:00] measuring as a, as something you care about as a business.

Yeah. Tipping, moving so fast kind. Most people at interaction with generative ai. What I class as like almost like one shot at the moment. It's a very much like you pull up an app up or whatever, it's on your phone or a device and you ask it a question and it gives you an answer back. You might ask a number of questions, right?

But we're rapidly moving towards this and I don't like using buzzword bingo, that kind of stuff. But this is Gen Dick World. Oh yeah. Which is agents and agents. So where AI is talking to AI and you're getting basically it's workflow and it's workflow processing, but AI driven. Independent agents talking to each other, that kinda stuff.

And that has a knock on effect in terms of the human understanding, but has a knock on effect in terms of the energy, the power of the usage, the sustainability, because you know, it's not just one inference that you could measure from me asking a question and then try to get some rough estimation back of what was the [00:32:00] energy or resource footprint of that.

You might have multiple chain of thought agents working off in systems as well. It's becoming harder to quantify when it's outta your control. Do you know what I mean, in terms of that flow?

There's a lot, there's a lot for many to learn about the high agency version of what you describe there, which is like, it's adaptive, it's proactive.



Um, it doesn't always produce the same result like a human wouldn't. And um, it's autonomous, but it can do something that is complex. And I think if you, you just take something like AgTech, which has only been here for really six months in the corporate mindset, a lot of people still don't understand that level of agency that can be delivered by it.

However, it'll, it'll be a couple of good use cases pop in. Everybody is seeing, is believing. They realize the power of it, and I think it'll take off. What we need to see is that killer use case done somewhere that's, you know, everybody can get, and then bang, you're off. And, and you can talk about it as the, the personal agentic world, which is you've described to an agent what you [00:33:00] want for a holiday.

It goes, talk to a load of others and it comes back. You say book versus the corporate. We can replace our ERP system with agents. Yeah. Which I'm still waiting on. I know Dave will cheer the day that that happens, but ripple of applause in the background. That is, you know, it's, it's at the core. When it hits the core of how we are, I think that'll be really exciting.

And at the same time, I also wanna add something more pragmatic. I've, I've just had, uh, PI planning sessions and I still hear a lot of teams now going more and more into facing legacy systems, virtual machines, et cetera. And they also look into the, you know, what is the footprint of keeping this alive or not.

So I hear that on a developer level, uh, in PI planning. And that makes me, uh, I think also very proud, uh, uh, in general for all our developers, that it's also in. In, in the minds and hearts of them as well. In the end, they're the ones influencing which futures are, are gonna be, uh, created.

It's, it's like recycling. Yeah. So when recycling kicked in probably 20 years ago now, everybody was very [00:34:00] alien to it. And you know, it, it wasn't there. But now everybody separates the rubbish that wash it out. They, you know, the vast majority of us try and do the right thing. But it takes, it takes quite a number of years for it to become just.

What do and habit and yeah, habit forming and the, the thing that's about breaking the scar tissue, and I like that phrase, which is the, we're used to something. It takes quite a while to, you know, change that how we operate

type thing. Corporate inertia is one of the biggest things in the world, isn't it really? 'cause I mean, any industry you go to, especially as well, I think like, doesn't matter what kinda new technology comes on. The first six months a go to new industry and they go, oh, that's really exciting. But it won't impact us literally. I mean, I'm my fifth or sixth cycle of that where new technology where you go to people.

Yeah. But what we do is special. We're unique. Yeah. Oh, are you okay?

Do you know? Yeah. You just wait. Let's have this, let's have this conversation in five years time when the startups just beating you.

Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's [00:35:00] around and around and around. Again. You'd probably get better. The fact that it's a repeat impact and we'd be more aware of it, really. But we, uh, you would think so, wouldn't you? I mean, the, you made a point earlier about we don't look at history anymore. Everything's in the last six months or a year. But actually in the, the speed of technology right now, I'm not advocating for a second, we shouldn't look at history. We really should as a, as a human race, frankly.

But the, the sort of the need to adapt as businesses that cycle time is getting. Is getting smaller and smaller and smaller the whole time. So I you make a really good observation



there because you would, you would think the penny would've dropped at this point, wouldn't you?

I, but it's, it's the classic where you are at, there's a bit about this, which is where are you in your career and how's it gonna impact you?

Right? So if you are more than halfway through your career, AI will have a different impact on you. To say if you're at the beginning of your career, so let's take the paralegal, right? So you take the paralegal, you say, how do you learn your trade to become a lawyer? You have to experience it. However, AI [00:36:00] technology can do a lot of the heavy lifting that a paralegal does for those firms a day.

So how does somebody get started in that? Well now and considering what they're facing versus say somebody who started it 20 years ago, and it's this, so the people who run the organizations don't see it because they never experienced it, but the people coming into the organization probably are more acutely aware.

And I think there's this BL corporate blindness that occurs down that they don't really perceive it, and so they're slow to act. And you get that inertia point, which is actually how do you educate that tier to understand that it's radically different.

It's that kind of, it's the skillset and the muscle and the K capabilities. Organizations have our own strategy as well, and I think the tools that they use that kind of stuff is, because I know I still, I'm still amazed how much swap analysis goes on or pestles go on and this kind of stuff as well as tools. Right, which are, you look at, you know, strategy mapping and actual, as a discipline of actually.[00:37:00] You know, and organizations really are when it comes to strategy and aren't just like led by, I dunno, Gartner hype cycles or the this thing that's coming from a report point of view as well. Because you don't see a lot of, I don't necessarily see a lot of that kind of evidence that people are massively adept at strategy.

Yeah. Do know what I mean? We, we talk a lot about. Not only that issue, but the nature of strategy and, and how businesses should leverage it as a tool has changed so much in the last five years where you could write a strategy. You know, we've, I'm sure everyone on this call has written three year strategies in their time.

I know I have. Written a number of them, and that used to be fine when that was the speed of the world, but the speed of the world now, it's like you're lucky if your strategy withstands about a six to eight month, [00:38:00] you know, kind of series of cycles. So the, the, the nature of strategy has gone from, I. Sort of plan and then act and manage to plan much more to act, see what happens, and then have a response and adapt an adaptation strategy.

And, and that shift from like one way of acting to another way that hasn't happened as fast as I would've like to have seen that happen.

You do see that in pockets. Mm-hmm. I think you see it in pockets in organizations that sense and respond. It's a different mindset as well that's really needed.

Talking about different generations. I think the younger generation has that more. Yeah. Mm-hmm. No, I agree actually and intuitively and, and you see that in pockets. And I think the way to move forward in transformation is, is to really help those pockets. You know, keep their energy, remove obstacles that are in their way, and then see if you can create new and different other pockets that do do the same.

And then once they're, you know, that level of gravity is shifting, then you can all go into more larger pockets that help each [00:39:00] other out. But I think there's no, yeah, one, one



sits all.

You do see that with sustainability as well? I think there's a certain amount of I. Numbers isn't or like meme copying?

Yeah. You know, you look, you look at those macro patterns, I think like if you look post, you know, cop in Paris, everybody rushed to basically get a sustainability plan that was gonna be verified by SBT I or CDP. You know, there was a big rush towards everybody. The same thing like, you know, it was like a tick box or a badge of approval, and I see opinion.

As soon as it becomes hard in terms of actually being able to manage it, people are We're gonna shift it. We're gonna put levers elsewhere as well. You have to have that dynamism, to your point, Esmee, I think to react to kind of things that aren't working necessarily, [00:40:00] rather than just meme copy and sticking with the same thing, really. And I think that there's a lot of that in the sustainability space at the moment.

Like it's like the bit, you know, when it's been led by report and. This kind of thing where the bigger organizations sit in the middle and just send out spreadsheets. Demanding, yeah. Information from their suppliers. No, for, well, they're not gonna be able to give them hundred percent of the data because they can't at the moment.

How long do you keep at the endless ping pong? Yeah. Of back and forth, you know, without trying something different or trying some different kind of partnership or some approach to what you're trying to measure to help people.

So maybe just to bring our conversations today to a bit of a, a conclusion, what would be the two bits of advice you would give?

One to the organizational body and then one to the individual in terms of, in the intelligence age that we are now moving into where we're seeing some of the, uh, the differences and impacts that we were describing earlier. What are those two bits of advice just to. Bring [00:41:00] it to a conclusion.

If I start with the individual, I think it's the self-reflection and self-awareness is a key skill that needs to be taught to everybody.

And the fact that every single one of us has to start to think about how are we going to perform higher value tasks, higher value human tasks, this. So. That critical thinking or that skills awareness to think about how am I gonna, on a daily basis raise the bar and do something that's a higher value task as a human being. And I think that's, for me is the kind of the key thing for individuals that kind of stuff, is how do you, how do you do that as an individual?

And that's quite a hard thing to do, I think in, when you work inside organizations and you know, training and development is given to you, so.

[00:42:00] As opposed to mandatory training and development. You know, that culture of being in a state, a constant newbie where you're constantly learning, and that's, that's quite a hard thing for people to do because it's, it's a change to their kind of, their practices. I think from an organization point of view, if I look at like that transformation power, I think there's a responsibility for organizations to help.

How do you, how do they help ferment that? But also, also how do they help increase the kind of awareness of how world works? How does the world work from an outside context for them as an organization, you know, this digital world that we live in, there's an, I think that, uh, organizations who could do a great, a much better job of trying to educate people



about just how the modern world actually works, that kind stuff.

I think raising people's, just overall awareness of the entire world. Everybody would benefit from that. I think, to be honest, you know, it's like, I'll leave it on this one. It's like the morelock on the Eli from HSS time machine, that kind of stuff, right? So like, you know, are you gonna worship the jig, big stone head that's just gonna give you food, all that kind of stuff.

Or you gonna be the super [00:43:00] but you over Right on technology as well, kind of stuff. There's, it's the, there's the balance between the Morelock and the eli. Which one? S what you been looking at?

Well, it's not far from the attachment of, uh, Rob or SharePoint or pushing a button. I wanted to talk about, uh, and I'm guilty, you know, let's start with that. To have a digital, uh, bin. In my mailbox. Mm-hmm. You know, I never really delete stuff because you never know, you know, if I, you know, accidentally deleted it.

So my trash bin is very, very crowded in my outbox email. But if you look into the physical waste, uh, in our org, I don't, I'm not saying it's in our. Organization. But I think we've seen quite some organizations that we separate all our trash, you know, in five or [00:44:00] six different categories, which also makes me confused, talking about confused Rob, like, is this plastic?

Is this what, what type of waste is this? But then in the end, you see the cleaning company come by and they all, you know, outside, they put it in one large bin. Uh, so yes, yes, we have those bins in place, but you know, it's a broken system. Hmm. But what if you look into that digital folder and use what they call an organizational constellation, have you ever done that? Constellation? Could also be on a personal level. I've done, I've done constellations, like human constellations. Yeah, indeed. Yeah. Well, hey, you're gonna have to extract, I'm sorry, this is a new you. I'm, I'm being educated. Please explain.

Dave, can you share something about if you're talking about a human one?

Yeah. So at least the one I've done, I hope this is in the same space, is where like, let's say you are a team, uh. And you're in a room, like, like on an offsite sort of situation, you've got some sort of coach. That's generally the scenario in which I've done it. What the coach [00:45:00] does is they get the team to stand around and represent, uh, represent certain aspects of the organizational system that you're dealing with.

So you, you, and let's say you are, you are the person that's trying to understand a, a complex. Political situation or system situation, you physically stand in the middle of the room and other humans represent either themselves or other people, or bits of the organization. And the orientation that you have to each other physically is a representation.

What's going on? So let's say you're dealing with a, a, a politically difficult person who's not engaging with you, that you know, the representative would have their back to you and they might be stud. A hundred yards away instead of like where you need them right next to you. So in the sort of physical manifestation of it, you get your head around like, oh, it just gives you a window into like how the, what's actually happening here, and then you see the system physically [00:46:00] represented.

Is that what you had in mind as. Absolutely. Yeah. And what if we, if we put digital waste as a constellation, and so, and I even done it with, uh, like a Lego or mini things. So on a table you can do the same. Oh yeah, yeah,

yeah, yeah. Absolutely. You don't have to be large room, but you can do it. It, it's just to have



a conversation to make things visible. You're making a physical twin representation of your communication pathways, basically. Yeah. Yeah. But also you can, you can have like a mini fig, that's the user, so that's me. I'm afraid to delete my files. Uh, but you can also have like some other representation. Doesn't matter what for the digital trash bin.

Or the unconscious fear that I have, which is in the back of my head. Mm-hmm. And maybe even something else is influencing that fear. Maybe the legal department or the security department. And then you map out that entire system. Uh, and even if you think about it, how complex it would be in the IT department, you know, they're gonna say, you need to clean this up, you need to clean this up.

Or we have this, uh, CSR report. It's also [00:47:00] pushing. Uh, but you can imagine how complicated it is just by talking about just small. Example, and, and this is your personal issue with the fact that you are concerned about deleting things or is this something you think would have like a wider application somehow?

No, I think it can, if, if we map out these different huge challenges, you can see how complex the system is. So can you imagine if, if this is already complex, how can we have those huge, huge challenges that we have in one constellation? I think that's, uh, we talk about it even in this episode as well. You know, it's all those silos that Lewis was also referring to, like the different departments, but in the end, it's one big system that's influencing each other. I. A guy, Simon Wardley, who developed something called Wardley mapping, which Wardley mapping, it's a fantastic strategy map into it, but the purpose of the maps are maps are never complete and they're never perfect. Yep. Absolutely. What maps are very good at doing is drawing out that kind of evolutionary picture to understand the value [00:48:00] change is what you are talking about, estimate.

But the real power for them is you get them to do, like you imagine your constellation. You do. Function sometimes. Mm-hmm. Imagine them like, you know, do you like old school projectors? We to put it in school? Projectors? Come on. Oh, there's in the O you layer. On piece to build. Yeah, yeah, yeah. They were quite cool. And that's what we do with strategy maps. Maps is you overlay maps on top of each other because you, you're trying to literal see through the depth of the complexity of the, the strategies of each function to look for patents and things, areas of things that, you know, normally when you do them across sort of RP. It's fascinating Did you see the way that Rob perked up there when we talked about Yeah.

He left the building on the side about cons, human. Now, hang on. It's no interest [00:49:00] whatsoever. I love a bit of. Retro nostalgia. I have a whole, uh, thing of, right. I build old computers and things like that on, and virtualization, emulation.

I love to go back and relive it. So when you said over a projector took me straight back to minute to school. Yeah, right. Back in a minute and yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. It would be excellent actually. Simpler times to do a presentation on tech conference. But using hv that would actually be quite cool.

Like going old school that just swap the slide over. Yeah. And then you can annotate the slide and take it over. Yeah. But you do that because you could drop another acetate on top and draw on top and then it was, we've, we've lost a bit of that with recent digital tooling. It, yeah. A bit more complicated.

But look, thank you for that and uh, uh, Lewis, thanks for your time today and such an evolving conversation. Great to see you. And you guys now, we end every episode of this podcast by asking our guests what they're excited about doing next. And that could be, I've got something exciting booked to do with my family at the weekend.



Or it could be something in your professional life or [00:50:00] maybe a little bit of both. So Louis, what are you excited about doing next? I.

Mine's a bit kind of thing. I'm a bit of a, a fitnessy kind of biohacker type of thing as well. So I'm training for my, the CrossFit Open has just finished. I'm a bit of a CrossFit cult member, so we've just finished our global competition, but I'm then moving on to another High Rocks event.

So High Rocks is the late kind of fitnessy kind of race thing, and myself and my friend Mandy. So High Rock is a fitness race, so it's eight one kilometer runs and each, each one kilometer run is broken up by, um, a functional fitness station. So you might run a K together and then you do like a meters on a a row, then another K, then you back in, it's like sort of hundreds. And then there's lunges, squats, that kind stuff.

Quite a massively growing. There was the event in Glasgow last weekend, I think had 40,000 people. I hear a last three days of talking about it. Yeah. [00:51:00] But they've just, um, they're doing the first one in Wales at the end of April, um, start of May. Basically in, in the actual Millennium Stadium. The principality stadium's gonna be inside the World Stadium.

We're try and get tickets for that. I thought that's my next plan. Plan. Well, we, uh, wish you a huge amount of luck for that, and thanks again for joining us today. No.

If you would like to discuss any of the issues on this week's show and how they might impact you and your business, please get in touch with us at Cloudrealities@capgemini.com.

We're all on LinkedIn. We'd love to hear from you, so feel free to connect and DM if you have any questions for the show to tackle. And of course, please rate and subscribe to our podcast. It really helps us improve the show. A huge thanks to Lewis. Our sound and editing wizard, Ben and Louie, a good luck to all people in Karup being faced with our producer Marcel on skies, and of course, thanks to all our listeners.

See you in another reality next [00:52:00] week.

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