How to leverage Microsoft 365 Copilot successfully: get your data ready to burn

Generative AI (GenAI) is the gamechanger in Industry 5.0, leading today's ever evolving digital transformation journey. As the trajectory of the corporate agenda shifts towards investment in new age technologies, business leaders and their IT teams must be ready to take their enterprise and their data on the journey.
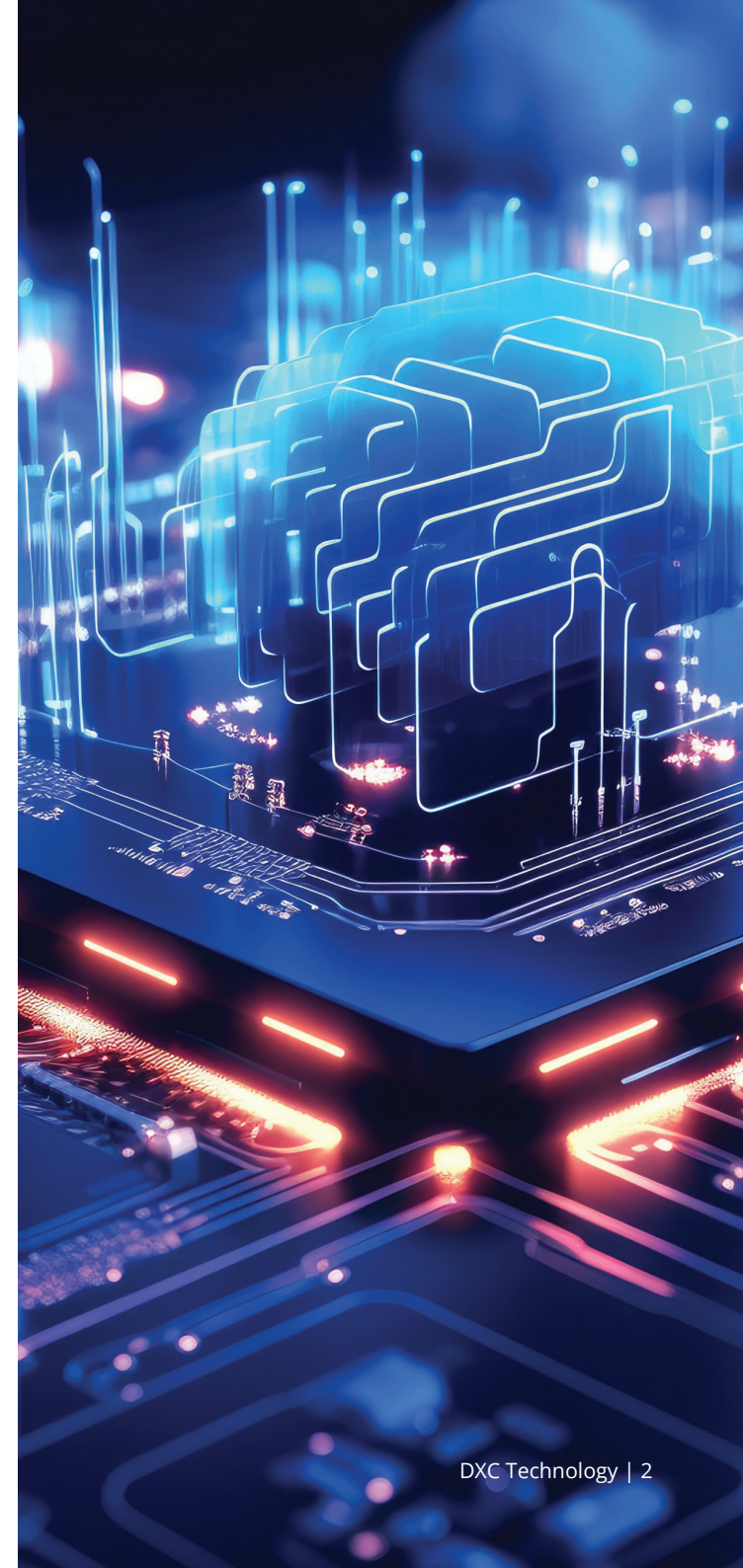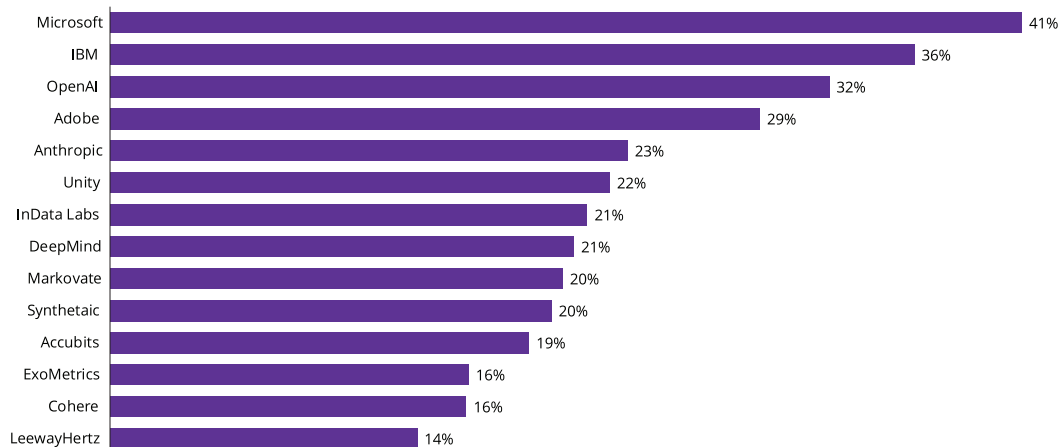
Ready or not – the journey has begun

According to a recent Telsyte research report, 41 per cent of organisations throughout the Asia Pacific, Japan, and Middle Eastern regions are already considering Microsoft for their GenAI projects.

Microsoft has a consistently strong presence in cloud services and productivity tools and the launch of Copilot continues this tradition. An advanced iteration of Microsoft's AI-powered coding assistant, Copilot is at the forefront of unlocking the potential of GenAI within an enterprise context, and business users are readily embracing it through the Microsoft Office applications they employ every day.

The widespread adoption of GenAI tools like Copilot across the business requires a proactive approach from IT teams. This includes developing comprehensive data and AI strategies alongside recruiting and training people with the necessary expertise. This proactive approach is essential to ensure GenAI's controlled and responsible implementation before its proliferation outpaces effective governance.

Microsoft the most popular GenAI technology partner with a strong presence in cloud services and productivity tools

Q: Which of the following GenAI service providers is your organisation considering engaging?

Provider	Percentage
Microsoft	41%
IBM	36%
OpenAI	32%
Adobe	29%
Anthropic	23%
Unity	22%
InData Labs	21%
DeepMind	21%
Markovate	20%
Synthetaic	20%
Accubits	19%
ExoMetrics	16%
Cohere	16%
LeewayHertz	14%

Telsyte APJME GenAI Study 2024; n=696; base: orgs looking to patnership for GenAI projects

Some typical use cases

GenAI capabilities can be leveraged in various industries, including financial and insurance, technology, media & telecom, and energy and utility services.
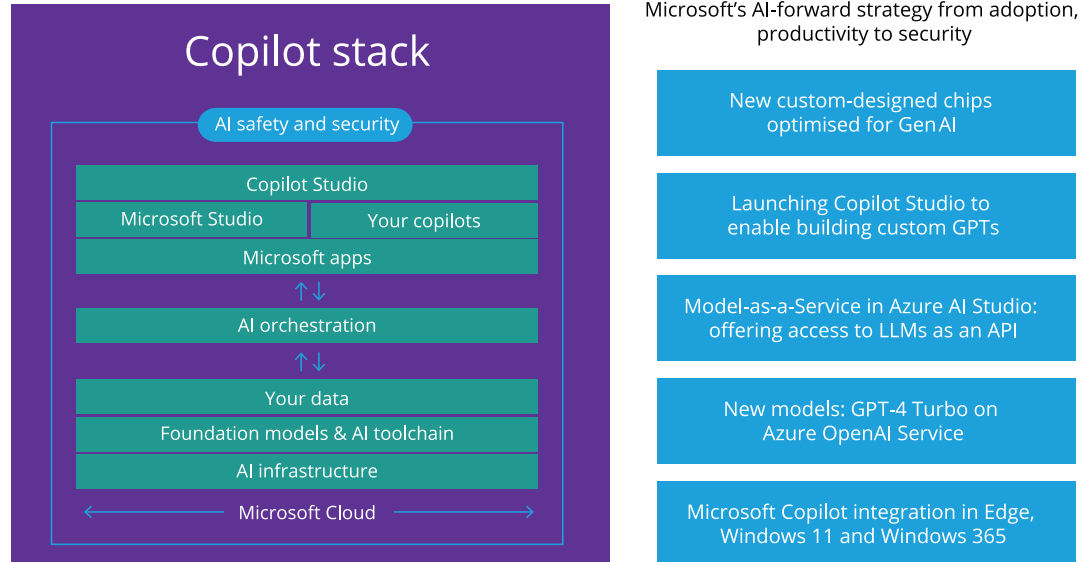
- **In financial and insurance services,** GenAI can be used for data analysis, personalised customer service, risk assessment and management, asset valuation, and fraud detection/prevention.

- **In technology,** media & telecom services, GenAI can assist with content generation, personalised customer service, data analysis, network management, and competitive intelligence.

- **In energy and utility services,** GenAI can support network management, customer service and billing, energy trading, predictive maintenance, and sustainability and resource conservation.

Garbage in, garbage out – it's all about the data

While the business may be ready to explore Copilot and unleash the power of GenAI, unfortunately, organisational data might not be equally prepared. Just like any advanced machine learning models, GenAI algorithms rely on large amounts of data for learning, making predictions, and detecting patterns. The quality of input data directly impacts the performance, accuracy, and reliability of AI models. Poor data quality can result in biased, incorrect, and inaccurate outcomes.

The effectiveness of GenAI hinges on the quality, management, and governance of data. Many organisations face significant hurdles due to poor data quality, data inconsistencies, lack of data privacy, and inadequate data governance practices. These challenges pose a substantial risk. Organisations that struggle to leverage GenAI effectively will quickly fall behind their competitors.

Businesses set to embrace Microsoft's Copilot stack and build their custom copilots

Copilot stack
- AI safety and security
- Copilot Studio
- Microsoft Studio
- Your copilots
- Microsoft apps
- AI orchestration
- Your data
- Foundation models & AI toolchain
- AI infrastructure
- Microsoft Cloud

Microsoft's AI-forward strategy from adoption, productivity to security
- New custom-designed chips optimised for GenAI
- Launching Copilot Studio to enable building custom GPTs
- Model-as-a-Service in Azure AI Studio: offering access to LLMs as an API
- New models: GPT-4 Turbo on Azure OpenAI Service
- Microsoft Copilot integration in Edge, Windows 11 and Windows 365

Telsyte APJME GenAI Study 2024; Source: Microsoft

Data management - the secret ingredient in GenAI

Early adopters have reported the benefits of bringing GenAI into the business, citing enhanced productivity, insights, and innovation across knowledge work activities.

So how can IT teams get control of organisational data and how can data be managed to leverage Microsoft Copilot and empower knowledge workers before it's too late?

Data preparation is essential. Preparing data for AI must be prioritised before the project foundations are put

in place. While perfection isn't necessary, consistency is key, as AI struggles with conflicting datasets.
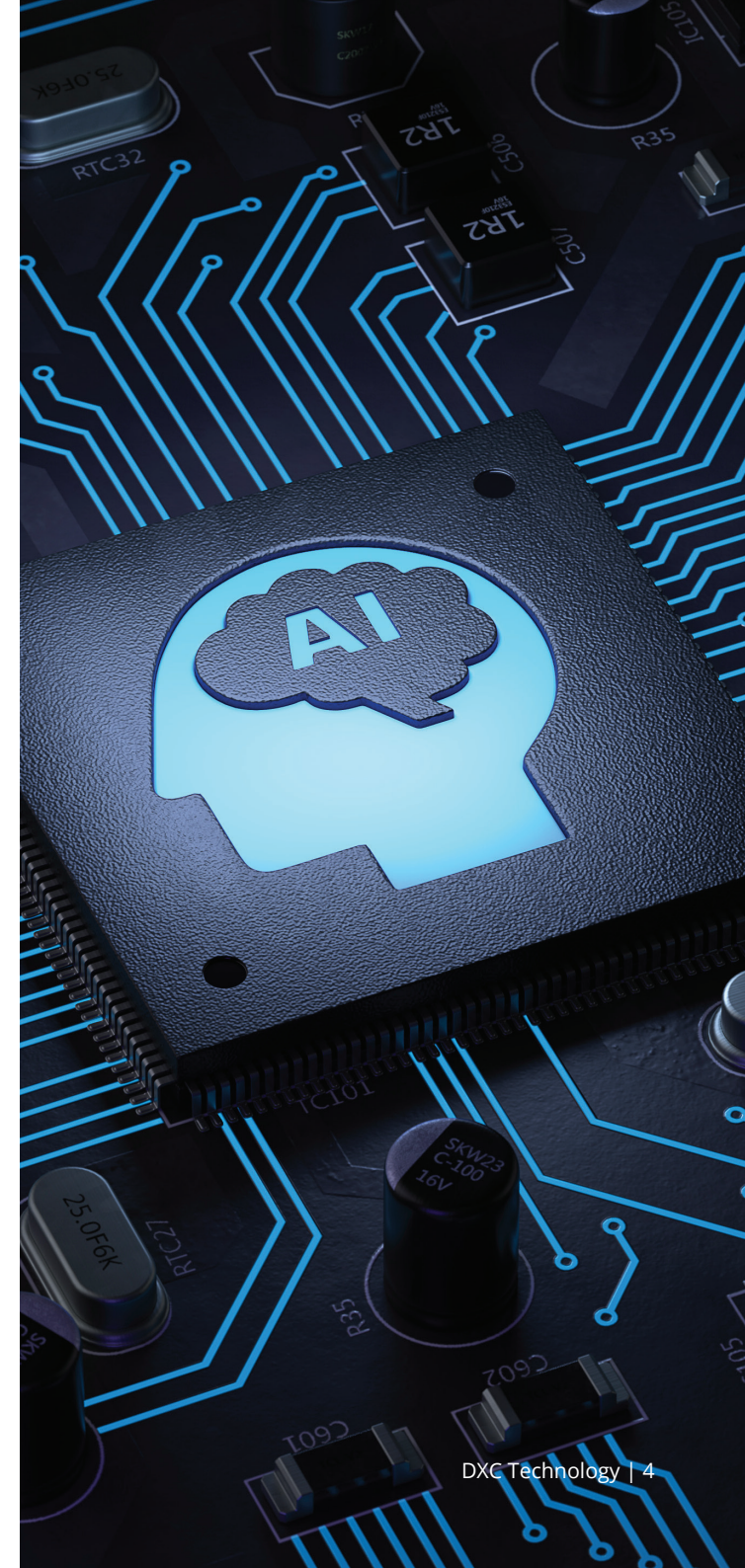
Well-prepared data is the foundation for successful AI models. The primary focus must be on cleaning and pre-processing to ensure data quality and data structure. Data can often be trapped within departmental silos, so it is worth considering centralising data to make it easily accessible before the project begins.

Early adopters already reaping benefits from using GenAI; those planning to are eying a boost in data analytics capabilities

Q: What potential benefits do you envision GenAI bringing to your organisation?

	APJME	Implemented Gen AI	Plan to implement Gen AI
Enhanced creativity and innovation	45%	45%	48%
Improved product design	43%	44%	49%
Improved employee productivity	41%	40%	44%
Streamlined content generation	40%	39%	51%
Enhanced data analysis and insights	39%	37%	60%
Personalised customer experiences	39%	40%	47%

Telsyte APJME GenAI Study 2024; Source: Microsoft

Project pointers - other factors to consider before GenAI

Before embarking on a GenAI or specifically, a Microsoft Copilot project, it is important to consider the following factors:

Search for immediate value:

Organisations should prioritise proof of concepts and pilots that deliver measurable outcomes to demonstrate the tangible benefits of GenAI. By focusing on specific use cases or projects, teams can quickly validate the technology's potential, building stakeholder confidence and understanding. This approach ensures that investments in GenAI yield immediate value, laying the foundation for broader adoption.

Starting the AI journey:

Providing clear guidance on where and how to begin the AI journey is essential. Identifying impactful entry points and outlining strategies for effectively integrating AI technologies helps organisations navigate the complexities of adoption. Businesses can accelerate their AI initiatives and drive meaningful outcomes by breaking down the process into manageable steps and setting realistic expectations.

Commit to experimentation:

Cultivating an environment encouraging experimentation with AI technologies is crucial for driving innovation and understanding. By embracing a continuous learning and exploration culture, organisations can uncover new possibilities and opportunities for applying GenAI. Encouraging teams to experiment with different approaches and solutions fosters creativity and resilience, essential for capturing the full potential of AI's transformative impact.

Put data governance practices in place:

Robust data integrity and strong governance frameworks are foundational for successful AI adoption. Emphasising the importance of data quality, privacy, and security ensures that AI systems function effectively and ethically. Implementing transparent data governance practices builds trust and confidence in AI technologies, mitigating risks and enabling responsible use across the organisation. Organisations serious about deploying AI are appointing AI officers to C-level positions to ensure governance is taken seriously and managed appropriately.

Adoption and change management are crucial:

Managing adoption challenges and driving effective change is often more critical than technological solutions. Organisations must prioritise change management strategies to ensure successful integration and engagement with GenAI. By addressing concerns, providing training and support, and fostering a culture of openness and collaboration, businesses can facilitate smooth transitions and maximise the benefits of AI adoption.

Scale pragmatically:

Advocating for a measured scaling approach enables organisations to build on their learnings and capabilities iteratively. Starting small and expanding gradually ensures that each step delivers ongoing value and aligns with broader business objectives. By scaling strategically and incrementally, businesses can minimise risks and maximise returns on their investments in GenAI.

Realise the potential for transformation:

Integrating GenAI alongside classical AI can revolutionise workflows, interactions, and insights across industries. By leveraging both technologies, businesses can reimagine traditional processes, unlock new value propositions, and harness the power of extensive unstructured data. Recognising the transformative potential of AI sets the stage for groundbreaking changes, driving innovation and competitiveness in the digital age.

Innovate strategically:

Driving strategic innovation involves integrating new value propositions into the core of digital transformation efforts. By aligning GenAI with broader business strategies, organisations can identify opportunities for differentiation and growth. Strategic innovation goes beyond incremental enhancements, focusing on transformative changes that reshape industries and drive sustainable competitive advantage.
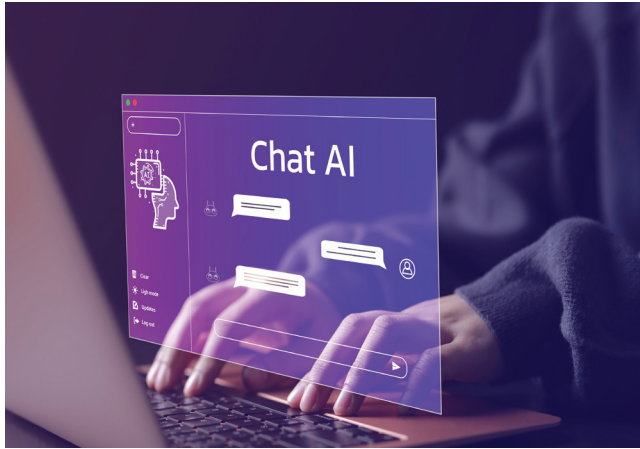
How DXC can help

Almost 75 per cent of organisations are actively exploring partnerships or managed services for their GenAI projects, and over 40 per cent anticipate challenges ahead in launching GenAI projects due to a lack of technical expertise and data availability.

DXC has developed a data and AI capability framework that is available to support organisations on their GenAI journey.

Successful GenAI projects need a strong foundation of data strategy and AI framework. The data strategy acts like a fuel filter, ensuring the AI model is trained on clean, relevant data, avoiding biases and producing accurate outputs. It also establishes data governance to manage security and privacy concerns. The AI framework provides a roadmap for development, including technical specifications and performance metrics. This keeps the project on track and allows for ongoing optimisation.

For more information and to talk to us about your GenAI aspirations speak to DXC Practice for Microsoft.

Contact us
practices.microsoft@dxc.com

Capitalising on GenAI requires organisations to first identify specific use cases where this technology can create substantial value. Implementing proof-of-concepts will be critical in exploring and refining potential AI applications.

Concurrently, organisations need to thoroughly analyse and restructure their data culture, capabilities, and governance frameworks to understand what organisational capabilities need to be upgraded or acquired. This strategic approach will ensure that the benefits of GenAI are not only realised for a proof-of-concept but also scaled across the business in a secure and ethical manner.

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