DATA BUSTING ANALYTICS

TURNING COMPLEXITY INTO CLARITY

Your Ideas Move Fast. Can Your Analytics Keep Up?

How Generative AI is changing analytics - and what it takes to turn that change into business value.

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A POINT OF VIEW ON BUSINESS VALUE & GENERATIVE AI

Organizations have never had more ways to analyze data. Yet more reports, more models and more AI do not automatically produce better decisions.

My view: Generative AI will change analytics as we have known it for good. It will change the relationship between people and data, the work of analytics teams and the speed at which organizations can explore opportunities.

The bigger opportunity is to redesign how questions become evidence, decisions and action. The bigger risk is to use new technology to accelerate an old operating model that was never delivering enough value.

> **If AI helps us produce more analytics without changing decisions, we have accelerated activity - not value.**

BUSINESS CONTEXT & THE QUESTIONS WORTH ASKING

01 Start With the Business. Then Challenge the Question.

Analytics often starts with the data we have or the report someone requests. The stronger starting point is the decision: What are we trying to accomplish? What could we do differently? What opportunity, risk or trade-off matters?

Understand how the business creates value, how customers and operations behave, and which constraints and incentives shape decisions. Consider external forces too: a competitor, changing input costs or an economic shift can explain a pattern that internal data alone cannot.

A technically correct answer to the wrong question can still lead to a poor decision. Strong analysts help frame the problem, test assumptions and discover questions the business has not yet thought to ask. GenAI can help generate those alternatives; business judgment determines which deserve investigation.

The most expensive analytics mistake may be answering the wrong question exceptionally well.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE / A RETAIL SALES REVIEW

THE FIRST QUESTION

"Why did revenue fall?"

A report shows a 6% decline.
The obvious reaction: increase promotions.

THE BETTER QUESTION

"Where did we lose profitable demand?"

Examine stockouts, pricing, mix, returns and competitor activity.

The response could be replenishment rather than discounting. The analysis must establish the cause; the headline metric cannot. The example is hypothetical, but the decision problem is familiar.

DATA TRUST, CONSISTENCY & MODEL DISCIPLINE

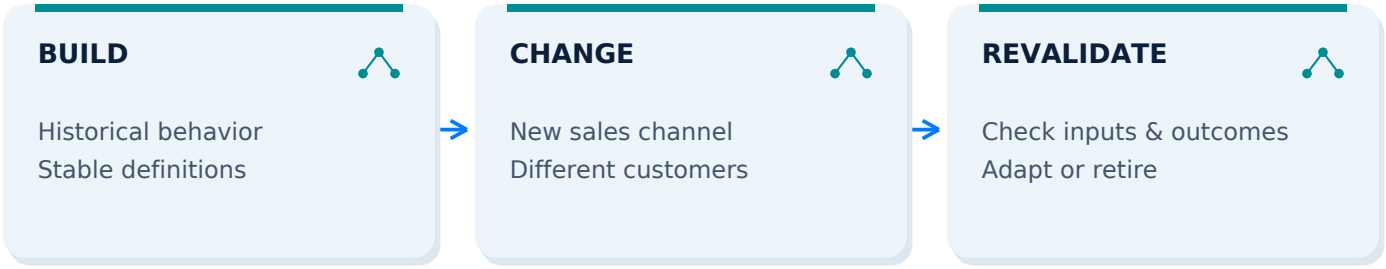
02 Tomorrow's Data May Break Today's Model

Having data does not necessarily mean having evidence. Know how it was collected, what it represents, what is missing and whether the sample reflects the population where the analysis will be used. Check for changes in definitions, business processes and source systems.

Overfitting captures historical noise instead of durable patterns. Data leakage makes performance look better by using information unavailable at the time of a real decision. A model that passes development tests can still fail when customer behavior, the economy or the data-generating process changes.

Consistency is a dependency to manage, not an assumption to make.

ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO / A CUSTOMER RISK MODEL



Validate on unseen data, across time and relevant segments. Monitor data quality, shifting distributions and real outcomes after deployment. Define who responds when performance deteriorates.

GenAI makes analytical work easier to initiate, but it does not remove these obligations. A fluent explanation can hide weak evidence. Reliable calculations, representative samples and explicit uncertainty become more valuable when more people can generate analyses.

REUSABLE CAPABILITIES THAT KEEP PACE WITH IDEAS

03 Your Analytics Backlog May Be a Design Problem

One answer creates three more questions. A new segment, hypothesis or opportunity changes what the business needs. If every question becomes a new ticket, another extract and another report, the organization will struggle to keep up.

My challenge to analytics leaders: some backlogs reflect capabilities that were designed to deliver individual answers rather than support exploration. Adding people or AI can increase throughput without resolving that underlying constraint.

Build trusted data products, reusable metrics, semantic models and analytical services that answer classes of questions. Design for new dimensions and growing demand. GenAI expands the range of questions people can ask; your data and architecture must be able to support them.

FROM A DELIVERABLE TO A LIVING PRODUCT

DIMENSION	OUTPUT MINDSET	PRODUCT MINDSET
Starting point	A requested report	A recurring decision
Success measure	Delivered on time	Used; outcomes improve
Change process	Another request	Feedback and a roadmap
Accountability	Project completion	An owner across its lifecycle

When answers are built one at a time, curiosity becomes a queue.

A report or dashboard can be an excellent product. What matters is whether it has users, ownership, an evolving experience and a measurable purpose beyond delivery.

GENERATIVE AI CHANGES THE OPERATING MODEL

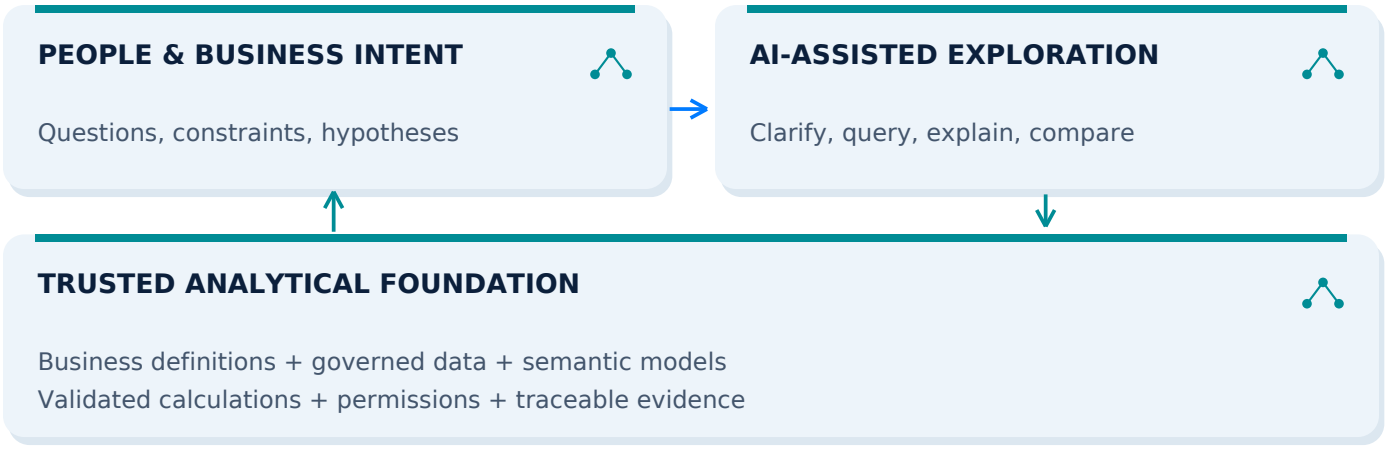
04 GenAI Will Change Analytics as We Know It

I see GenAI as a lasting change in how analytical work begins, develops and reaches decisions. Natural language can reduce the technical translation required to explore data. AI can assist with queries, code, explanations and hypothesis generation, while people iterate on what they are learning.

My expectation is that more routine analysis will happen inside the flow of business work. Users will increasingly expect an interactive investigation that responds to their next question. Dashboards will remain useful for monitoring and shared reference; they will no longer need to be the default endpoint of every inquiry.

A conversational layer on top of a reporting factory is still a reporting factory.

CONCEPTUAL DESIGN / A CAPABILITY FOR EXPLORATION



The interface becomes more flexible; the foundations become more consequential. Microsoft's Power BI guidance already calls for preparing data, semantic models and users for Copilot, and testing how people will consume answers. [1]

The pace and degree of change will vary. But an operating model built around waiting for the next report deserves a serious rethink.

ILLUSTRATING AN ANALYTICAL THOUGHT PARTNER

05 The Breakthrough Is Better Thinking, Not Just Faster Queries

The more transformative use of GenAI is to help people develop an investigation: challenge the framing, suggest competing explanations, expose missing evidence and identify the next useful question. Its suggestions are hypotheses to test, not findings to accept.

ILLUSTRATIVE CONVERSATION / NOT A LIVE SYSTEM RESULT

BUSINESS LEADER

Revenue is down. Should we increase discounts?

ANALYTICAL ASSISTANT

Before recommending a price change, which outcome matters: revenue, margin or customer retention? We should separate price, volume, mix and availability.

BUSINESS LEADER

Protect margin. Compare stockouts and product mix before proposing action.

ANALYTICAL ASSISTANT

I would query the approved sales and inventory models, show the calculations and flag missing competitor data. Then we can test whether replenishment is a better response than discounting.

This is the experience to design for: a question becomes a better question, evidence is retrieved through governed tools and a recommendation is examined before action. Do not ask a language model to substitute persuasive prose for validated analysis.

The scarce skill shifts toward knowing what to ask, what to trust and what to do next.

IMPLEMENTATION, ADOPTION & MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

06 Value Is Created in the Workflow

Analytics creates little operational value if it never changes behavior. Design adoption with users from the beginning: the decision, the owner, the timing, the available actions and the incentives that influence them. Trust and usability belong alongside technical performance.

GenAI can help explain a recommendation and make it accessible where work happens. More automated workflows may also connect analysis to action. The appropriate level of human review depends on the consequence, reversibility and reliability of that action.

Faster access to an answer is only valuable if someone can act on it.

ILLUSTRATIVE BUSINESS CASE / NOT A CLIENT RESULT

THE OPPORTUNITY

Avoidable annual loss
$1,000,000

THE ASSUMPTIONS

30% reduction where used
50% effective adoption

THE ESTIMATE

Gross benefit
$150,000 / year

SAME MODEL. GREATER ADOPTION. MORE POTENTIAL VALUE.



These are simplified estimates. Subtract implementation and ongoing costs. Confirm that the loss is addressable, that users change behavior and that the reduction is attributable to the intervention. Use a pilot, comparison group or other credible baseline where feasible.

Track the full chain: access, use, decision change, action and outcome. Measure exceptions and unintended effects too. A model's accuracy and a dashboard's traffic are inputs to the assessment; neither is proof of value.

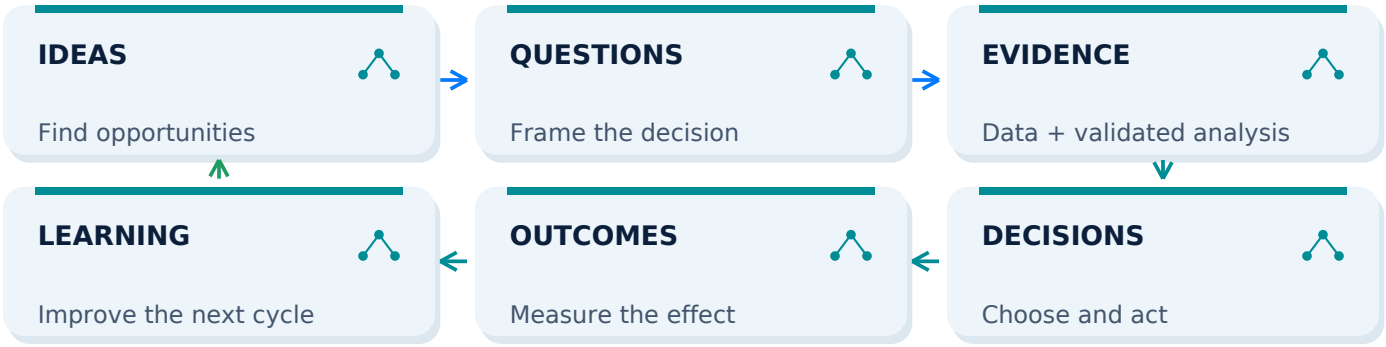
WHAT LEADERS AND ANALYTICS TEAMS SHOULD CHANGE

07 The Work Changes. The Standard for Value Should Rise.

As AI assists with more production tasks, I expect analytics teams to spend more of their effort on problem framing, data meaning, reusable capabilities, evaluation and adoption. Technical expertise still matters; its value increasingly lies in making analytical work reliable and scalable.

Leaders should challenge teams measured mainly on reports delivered or tickets closed. Ask instead: Which decisions improved? How quickly can a new hypothesis be tested? Are people using trustworthy evidence? Can we see the effect of the action?

THE ANALYTICS VALUE LOOP



GenAI can accelerate every part of this loop, but speed alone is not the goal. The ambition is to let the organization pursue more ideas, learn with greater confidence and turn that learning into better outcomes.

GenAI will change analytics for good. Getting value still requires us to change how the business works.

Helping organizations close the gap between their ideas and their ability to act on them is central to my work at Data Busting Analytics. I bring together business understanding, data and analytics strategy, reusable products, and GenAI to help turn that ambition into practical capabilities and measurable outcomes.

Todd Sobiech · Founder & Principal Advisor

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Source note [1] Microsoft Learn, Use Copilot with Semantic Models in Power BI, and Prepare Semantic Model for AI. Reviewed October 3, 2026. Forward-looking conclusions are the author's perspective; scenarios and numbers are illustrative.