Strategic Directions for Enterprise Artificial Intelligence

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Executive Summary

For most of its existence, the field of artificial intelligence (AI) was confined to academic and highly technical pursuits, but in 2016, AI became the next business imperative. Thanks to the rise of a non-technical AI community, software and services bringing AI to enterprise needs, and enterprise software vendors shifting to “AI-first” from “mobile first” strategies, corporate users now have real offerings to choose from and real decisions to make, like:

» **Which vendor should I choose, for what enterprise needs?** Enterprise AI vendors are bringing techniques like machine learning, predictive analytics, and machine vision to bear on business problems that all firms face: selling to customers, recruiting talent, and keeping in compliance with regulations. In each area, a dozen or more specialist startups has arisen, and enterprise software giants like Salesforce.com and SAP are launching new offerings.

» **How will my industry be affected?** In addition to functional offerings, industry-specific AI solutions are emerging. Health care and banking, in particular, have administrative and skill-based jobs that AI can complement or replace.

» **What should my company’s strategy be?** Past waves of enterprise IT, from MES to ERP, have transformed industries by eliminating human work and extending corporate scope – and that will happen this time, too. As AI gets better at analytical work, it will enter creative roles and fields like design and strategy itself.