



The top 8 execution imperatives for Canadian tech leaders to unlock value in 2026

An overview of key actions informed by KPMG's Global Tech Survey





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Foreword

Canada's digital future is advancing quickly and this is increasing the urgency around the decisions executives make and the strategies they use to drive transformation.

Across industries, organizations are investing in cloud, data and analytics, cybersecurity, and other foundational capabilities that support secure and scalable growth. Our work with C-suite leaders, supported by insights from the 2025-2026 KPMG Global Technology Survey, shows clear progress while also revealing the structural challenges that continue to slow impact.

Canadian organizations recognize the potential of AI and have set ambitious goals, yet many still struggle to achieve expected returns. One of the primary reasons is that technology decisions are still made in isolation. Today's technologies operate as a connected ecosystem: data & analytics enable agentic AI, blockchain reinforces security, and XaaS models complement digital twins to improve efficiency. When leaders consider these capabilities together, they uncover new opportunities to solve business problems, enhance customer experiences, and mobilize new lines of business.

Meaningful results also depend on extending technology discussions beyond the IT function. When technology and business leaders collaborate early, they can select the right combination of tools, ensure alignment to business needs, and direct investments toward outcomes that matter.

Outside the enterprise, Canada has an opportunity to strengthen collaboration with government, industry, and academic partners. With major national investments underway in digital and physical

infrastructure, aligning organizational strategies with broader economic and societal goals will be critical and will put productivity and competitiveness squarely in focus. Partnerships built on shared values can help accelerate progress, expand capability, and reinforce Canada's resilience.

Canada is entering a period in which technology choices hold greater strategic weight, and where today's decisions will influence long-term success. Moving forward requires clarity, coordination, and a commitment to long-term thinking, even when the pace of change encourages short-term reaction.

This whitepaper introduces eight strategic execution imperatives that outline where leaders should focus to unlock value in 2026. Each imperative reflects what we see across Canada's market today and is supported by data from the 2025-2026 KPMG Global Tech Survey. Together, they provide a practical guide to help leaders shift from ambition to action and deliver results that endure.



Sanjay Pathak

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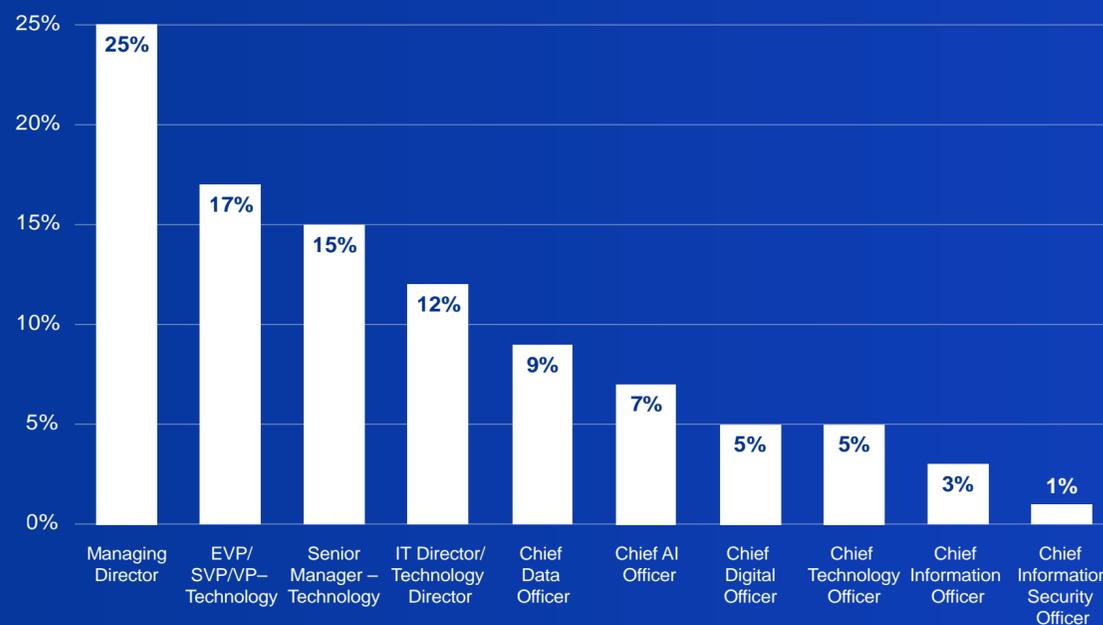


About the research

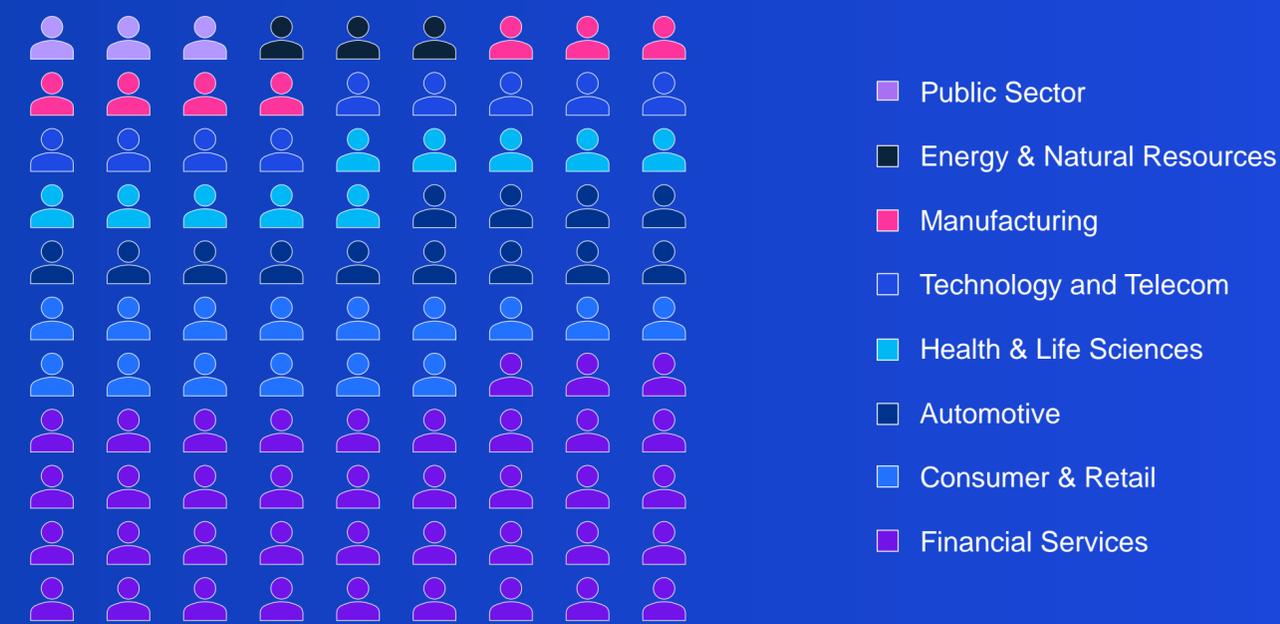
This report is based on a sample of:

150 Canadian technology leaders whose perspectives were captured in the KPMG's 2026 Global Technology Survey.

30% of respondents are part of the C-suite:



The tech executives are representatives from eight industries:



90% of respondents' organizations have revenues of between \$1 and \$10 billion.

Research was conducted in 2025, but with the accelerating pace of technological change, we've broadened the report's focus from recent progress to forward-looking insights for 2026 and beyond.



Imperative 1: Treat data as a product to unlock new value streams





Canadian organizations have invested heavily in building strong data platform and technology foundations.

Data literacy is generally high, as is maturity in security, and operational reporting. While these strengths support operational performance, they are not yet translating into next-level business value creation. Opportunities abound for data monetization and data culture to enable organizations to use data as a more fulsome strategic asset for revenue generation, innovation, or differentiated customer experiences.

Many Canadian organizations hold exceptionally rich data sets across customer behavior, supply chain performance, product development, and operations. These data sets can enable new forms of monetizable insights and, AI-driven services. To do this, organizations must treat data as an enterprise asset that creates business value.

Recommended actions:



Elevate data from transactional use to product-oriented value

To pursue new opportunities in data monetization, organizations must intentionally frame data as a product, and analytics as a service. This shift incentivizes teams to think beyond dashboards and operational metrics and toward new revenue streams, customer-facing insight products, cross-industry partnerships, and advanced AI-driven experiences. Leaders who embrace this mindset will be positioned to drive innovation and long-term ROI.



Break down silos and build integrated, accessible platforms

A true data-driven culture requires universal access to relevant data. This means eliminating internal silos and investing in architectures that allow data to flow across the organization. For example, cloud-based data lakes, fabric architectures, real-time data pipelines and integrated platforms can help decouple storage from compute, reduce costs, enhance data velocity and support more advanced AI and machine learning. These are not simply technology shifts, but essential enablers of enterprise-wide insight generation.



Reimagine risk as an enabler of data-driven innovation

Canadian organizations often approach data-related risk as a barrier to experimentation, but leaders must rethink this dynamic. Strong data security, governance, and controls do not impede innovation, they make innovation sustainable. Viewing risk as a necessary foundation, rather than a reactive response, allows organizations to move faster and innovate with confidence. Strategic discipline, step-by-step investment in controls commensurate with the complexity of the adopted data-driven solutions, and long-term thinking are essential.



Canadian organizations are starting to realize they need to address their data in order to be successful with AI. They have worked on data foundations, governance, controls, and management for the last 10 years, and now with all the AI use cases they are running, they recognize they have to go back to that foundation and look at it with a new mindset.”



Ven Adamov

Partner, National Leader,
Data and Analytics Risk Services,
KPMG Canada

Canadian indicators reinforcing this imperative

- **92 percent** report high maturity in optimizing enterprise data management.
- **68 percent** say their data and analytics strategy is funded and scaling, indicating a strong platform for future growth.
- **77 percent** plan to increase their data and analytics budgets.



Imperative 2: Scale AI for enterprise-level impact





Canadian technology leaders understand that AI will define the next era of competitiveness.

The insights we see across organizations, supported by survey data, reflect both strong ambition and a clear need to evolve their AI approach. Many organizations are now asking how they can scale fully integrated AI capabilities that drive higher ROI. This requires clearer strategic direction, stronger data foundations, and a more intentional focus on scaling what works.

Recommended actions:



Strengthen and modernize data foundations

Canadian organizations have long struggled with data quality, lineage, and sufficiency, and AI amplifies these challenges. To unlock meaningful value from AI, leaders will need renewed investment in data governance, data management, and enterprise-wide quality standards. What was once seen as a “nice to have” is now a requirement. Strong, reliable data is the foundation that allows AI to scale with consistency and trust.



Shift from “How do we start?” to “What are we trying to achieve?”

Leaders frequently begin their AI journey by looking for the first use case or pilot. The next phase requires reframing that mindset, asking, “What outcomes matter most to the business?” Whether the goal is speed, lower costs, improved quality, differentiated services, or entirely new revenue streams, understanding the ambition allows organizations to design AI programs that uplift or reimagine how work gets done and who should do it. This deeper, more intentional understanding of AI’s role leads to stronger long-term ROI.



Embed AI to drive revenue, not only efficiency

Much of today’s AI adoption is focused on productivity, and while this generates early wins, it will not deliver the highest levels of return. As their AI maturity increases, Canadian leaders will need to shift toward revenue-generating applications, using AI to reshape products, enhance customer experiences, and create new business models. Operating with an AI-first mindset across the enterprise allows organizations to unlock benefits that far exceed efficiency improvements.



Scale pilots into enterprise programs

Many Canadian organizations have multiple AI pilots active at any given time, yet few have successfully scaled these initiatives. To create impact at the enterprise level, leaders will need stronger AI governance, clearer decision pathways, and disciplined processes for identifying, funding, and expanding successful pilots. At the same time, leaders need to recognize that real adoption will not occur without a purposeful redesign of the work and the workforce. Scaling requires intentional investment, cross functional coordination, and shared accountability between technology and business teams to embed AI into how work is actually performed across the enterprise.



To transform the organization not only from a productivity perspective but also a revenue perspective, you need to make commensurate investments in data quality, data strategy, and data governance. Emphasize focus on right-sizing data investments that align to ambition, and do not cut corners.”



Sanjay Pathak

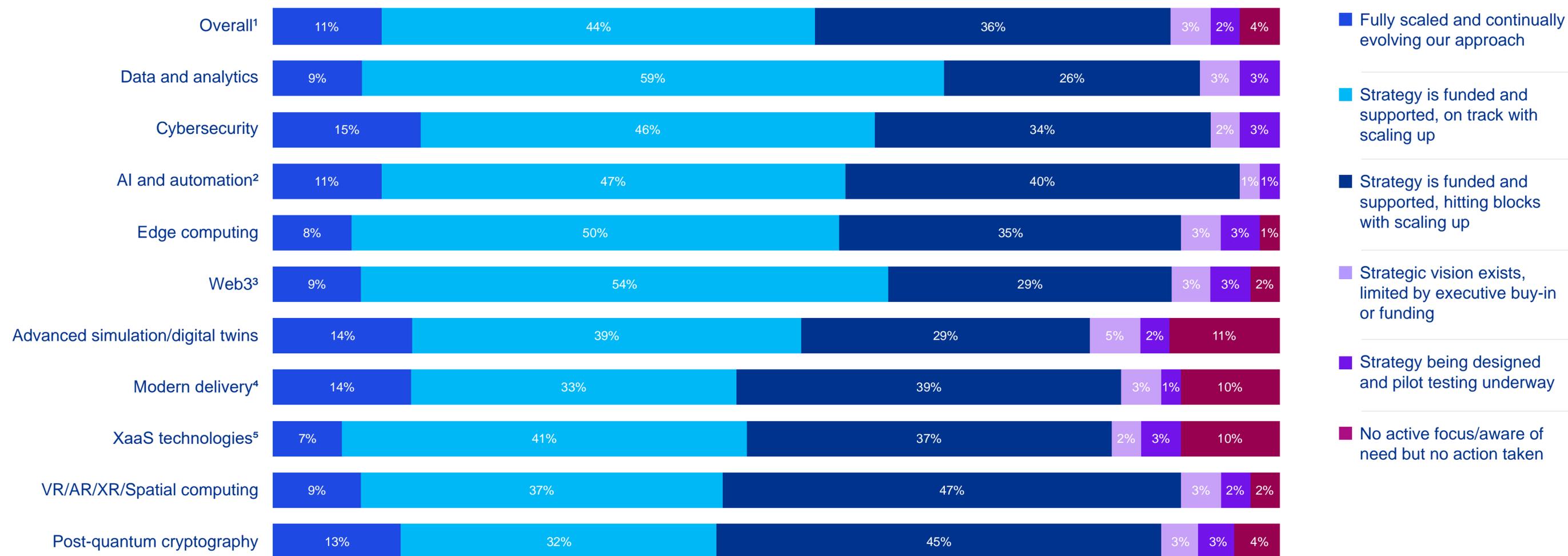
Partner and National Leader, Technology Strategy and Digital Transformation Services, KPMG Canada

Canadian indicators reinforcing this imperative

- **56 percent** of survey respondents have made strategic AI investments with active use cases returning value, but only **31 percent** are deploying AI at scale across the enterprise, where ROI becomes much stronger.
- **58 percent** say their AI and automation strategy is funded and scaling, signaling positive momentum but also the need for more disciplined execution.
- **81 percent** plan to increase budgets for AI and automation, confirming the importance of this capability for future competitiveness.
- **53 percent** struggle to demonstrate or communicate AI value to stakeholders, which limits long-term support and investment.



Figure 1: Tech maturity in 2025

How would you describe your organization's maturity today in each of the following areas?

¹ Average across all technology areas for 2025; ² Includes generative AI and agentic AI; ³ Includes blockchain and tokenization; ⁴ Includes Agile, DevOps and low-code/no-code; ⁵ Includes public cloud or multi-cloud



Imperative 3: Architect cloud environments intentionally for agility and efficiency





Canadian enterprises have made significant progress in adopting cloud and hybrid cloud models, and many now demonstrate high levels of maturity in core cloud capabilities.

But while adoption is strong, organizations continue to face challenges in fully optimizing these environments and making them cost effective. In practice, cloud portfolios often expand faster than governance structures can keep up. As leaders push for speed and improved capability, they sometimes introduce inefficiencies that limit ROI.

Canadian technology leaders recognize the importance of cloud as a foundation for modernization, but the next phase of value creation requires a shift from rapid adoption to intentional architecture. The focus for 2026 and beyond must be on simplifying and rationalizing hybrid environments, strengthening governance, and designing cloud models that support agility and optimize cost.

Recommended actions:



Design hybrid and multi- cloud models with purpose

Many organizations moved quickly into hybrid cloud without fully aligning architecture to long-term goals, leading to duplicated services, redundant environments, and unnecessary data transfer costs. Leaders should conduct regular architectural reviews to identify duplication, streamline services, and rationalize environments. This discipline helps ensure resiliency and efficiency across the entire cloud ecosystem.



Retire or refactor legacy systems to reduce technology debt

Canadian organizations often maintain on-premise systems that drain resources and limit agility. Managing hybrid environments effectively requires a clear strategy for modernizing, refactoring, or retiring legacy platforms to not only reduce operational costs, but open opportunities to redirect budget toward higher-value digital initiatives.



Use AI to optimize cloud for performance and cost

AI-enabled tools can help organizations continuously analyze usage patterns, identify underutilized resources, and predict cost anomalies. These insights support more precise optimization, and allow leaders to adjust architectures before inefficiencies accumulate, creating more sustainable cloud value.



Establish FinOps practices that connect cost to performance

To maximize cloud ROI, leaders should implement FinOps programs that set performance-based KPIs, eliminate underused services, and leverage provider pricing options, such as reserved instances or spot pricing. FinOps creates transparency, aligns cloud spend with business outcomes, and empowers teams to manage cloud resources more intentionally.



It is commonplace for Canadian organizations to use hybrid cloud models that include on-premises legacy systems that drain resources. Cloud providers are becoming more innovative in how they offer their pricing structures, giving Canadian organizations the chance to modernize their legacy systems and manage their technology debt more efficiently. It requires strong discipline to review systems regularly and ensure they are running as efficiently and cost effectively as possible to drive ROI."



Amardeep Johar

Partner, National Leader,
Enterprise Solutions,
KPMG Canada

Canadian indicators reinforcing this imperative

- **89 percent** report high maturity in optimizing network and cloud infrastructure.
- **53 percent** acknowledge that efforts to maximize speed or cost efficiency have resulted in trade offs that negatively impact areas such as security, scalability, or standardization.
- Only **48 percent** say their XaaS strategy is funded and scaling today, but that number is expected to rise sharply to **87 percent** within the next 12 months.
- **75 percent** plan to increase budgets for XaaS and cloud technologies, signaling strong commitment to continued modernization.



Imperative 4: Strengthen cyber resilience and advance digital sovereignty





Today's increasingly unstable and fast changing geopolitical environment is reshaping Canada's digital landscape, with shifting global power, economic volatility, and regional conflicts all contributing to growing uncertainty.

The pace of technological disruption adds additional pressure, particularly as advancements in AI fuel new forms of fraud, deepfakes, and cyber threats that were never envisioned only a few years ago. Together, these developments are pushing security, sovereignty, and resilience to the forefront of organizational strategy.

Across the country, these challenges have prompted deeper discussion about Canada's digital sovereignty, including how organizations can maintain control over critical digital infrastructure, data, and services to protect national security, economic interests, and cultural values. Achieving complete sovereignty is not realistic in the near term, but setting practical goals is both possible and necessary. At the same time, strengthening cyber resilience is equally important as threats continue to escalate.

Recommended actions:

Set practical goals for digital sovereignty

Achieving complete digital sovereignty is not realistic in the near term, but setting practical goals is both possible and necessary. This begins with identifying high-value targets to protect, including where key data should reside and how it should be processed.

Maintain strong controls and core risk priorities

Progress toward sovereignty cannot come at the expense of core risk priorities, and Canadian organizations continue to place significant importance on preventing fraud, bribery, and corruption. Although these issues may receive less attention in other jurisdictions, Canada's sustained focus can become a competitive advantage, as organizations that maintain strong controls and transparent governance offer greater operational confidence to stakeholders, investors, and talent.

Work with partners to advance sovereignty objectives

From there, organizations will need to work with hyperscalers and other external partners, since no organization can reach these goals alone. Collaboration is essential to balancing control, scale, and resilience across increasingly complex digital ecosystems.

Continue to strengthen cyber resilience to build trust and confidence

Strengthening cyber resilience is equally important. As threats escalate, Canada's heightened security posture can help differentiate the country as an attractive place to invest and build. A strong security environment provides peace of mind for businesses and creates opportunities for organizations that can demonstrate safety, reliability, and resilience.



We have come to a point where technology can accomplish things that were science fiction only a few years ago, but without the right guardrails, the risks multiply just as quickly. Strong governance and strong security practices are no longer optional. They are essential for building resilience and maintaining trust."



Kareem Sadek

Partner, Advisory, National Tech Risk Leader, Trusted AI/ Digital Assets & Cryptoassets CoE Leader, KPMG Canada

Canadian indicators reinforcing this imperative

- Only **61 percent** say their cybersecurity strategy is fully funded and scaling today, but that number rises sharply to **95 percent** when looking ahead one year.
- **30 percent** cite cyberattacks and **28 percent** cite deepfakes or synthetic content as their most significant AI related concerns over the next two years.
- **46 percent** say security concerns are a major barrier to collaboration between organizations.
- In response to trade threats, **45 percent** are hiring more onshore technology talent, **41 percent** are enhancing data sovereignty audits across their ecosystem, and **36 percent** are reducing tech investments in countries considered adversarial.



Imperative 5: Activate people as the engine of technology ROI





Any effort to unlock meaningful ROI from technology ultimately depends on the people who use it.

Canadian organizations understand this connection, and many are already investing in change management, upskilling, and workforce support. Even so, most organizations have only begun to tap the potential that comes from preparing employees to operate in an environment shaped by generative and agentic AI. As organizations look to 2026 and beyond, leaders will need to place greater emphasis on building the right skills, creating safe spaces for experimentation, and redesigning the work and workforce in a purposeful, AI-enabled manner.

Technology on its own does not create impact. It often increases efficiency and frees up time, but the value of that time is determined by what people do with it. When organizations use that freed capacity only to reduce labor costs, they may see a limited return that peaks as headcount approaches zero. When they leverage that same capacity to help employees do more of the same work more effectively, the return increases significantly. Moreover, when employees use that time to explore new lines of business, develop new services, or pursue innovation that did not previously exist, the ROI becomes limitless.

Recommended actions:



Invest in skills that unlock new value

This is why learning new and unique skills is essential. Employees need to understand how to create value from new opportunities, as well as how to use and manage technologies like generative AI and agentic AI to change the nature of their work. Employees who have never managed teams will soon be managing the work of AI agents and will need to develop the skills and confidence to do so. Organizations that invest deeply in upskilling will see faster adoption, stronger performance, and greater long-term impact.



Treat change management as a strategic enabler

While employees require some technologies to perform their work, others are optional. This means change management cannot be an afterthought. Leaders need to communicate early, explain clearly how work will change, and support employees through the transition. Successful change management is not only about adoption; it is about creating trust, reducing uncertainty, and empowering employees to use new tools to generate meaningful business value.



Create environments that encourage experimentation

Organizations should also create safe spaces for employees to experiment with AI without strict guardrails. When organizations encourage their people to test ideas, explore new approaches, and discover innovative use cases, they reduce shadow AI and high value opportunities emerge. This openness is key to accelerating learning and translating experimentation into scalable impact.



The use of agentic AI means employees who do not have the skills or experience gained over years or decades to manage teams will now need to manage the work of agentic AI. They will be expected to upskill quickly as the technology is implemented, which is a significant talent challenge organizations need to address. Everyone could soon be an 'Agent Boss.'



Lewis Curley

Partner, People and Change Practice, KPMG Canada

"We all know and have experienced how enterprise change is hard, but AI offers the greatest opportunity we've seen in decades to build a culture of experimentation. When leaders give their people permission to test, learn, and iterate, you transform AI from a source of uncertainty into a powerful engine for curiosity, creativity, and long term competitiveness."



Safdar Mahmood

Chief Technology Officer and Partner, Advisory, KPMG Canada

Canadian indicators reinforcing this imperative

- Canadian organizations believe that managing AI agents will become an essential skill within the **next five years**.
- In two years, Canadian leaders expect more than **30 percent** of full-time equivalent capacity to come from the digital workforce, including AI agents, RPA bots, and low-code bots.
- Many organizations **feel confident** in their AI journey and believe their AI and data foundations already enable employees to adopt and experiment with AI tools.



Imperative 6: Build disciplined innovation governance for long term value





Innovation continues to be an area where many Canadian organizations are reactive rather than proactive.

While they experiment and have emerging technologies on their radars, innovation efforts often lack the governance, structure, and long-term discipline needed to translate early ideas into sustainable value. Moving forward, organizations will need stronger frameworks and clearer accountability models that help ensure they use strategic priorities to intentionally guide innovation, instead of letting it happen in isolated or ad-hoc ways.

Sound governance is central to this shift. When clear processes, decision pathways, and accountability structures anchor innovation, it becomes easier to identify the right opportunities, allocate resources effectively, and move from ideas to impact. As organizations prepare for 2026 and beyond, it is essential they establish governance that supports both discipline and agility to create long-term competitive advantage.

Recommended actions:



Establish clear governance and ownership for AI and digital innovation

A formal AI and digital innovation governance framework is crucial. Many Canadian organizations still lack defined roles, responsibilities, and decision rights related to emerging technologies. By clarifying who owns the policies, guardrails, and approvals, leaders can reduce friction, ensure alignment, and move innovation forward more effectively and with greater confidence.



Move from reactive to proactive innovation planning

Canadian organizations often rely on “wait and see” approaches or hope to find a single breakthrough use case. Instead, leaders should proactively anticipate change, rather than react to it, embracing scenario planning, structured pilots, and portfolio management that supports experimentation across a variety of opportunities.



Use structured criteria to identify and prioritize use cases

Progress depends on shifting away from random or opportunistic innovation toward a systematic approach including pairing each use case with a prioritization framework that weighs risk against benefit and applies clear criteria for long-term value. And organizations should view data and technology as accelerators of strategic objectives, rather than objectives on their own. If a use case does not support their goals, they should deprioritize it or set it aside.



Balance risk with experimentation

Risk management should not serve as a barrier to innovation. Instead, it should help organizations move faster by aligning experimentation with acceptable thresholds. Creating a tiered approach between low-risk incremental innovations and high-risk high-reward initiatives allows leaders to advance multiple types of innovation in parallel.



Treat sustainability as a long-term differentiator

While some countries step back from sustainability commitments, Canada has an opportunity to lead. Investing in green technologies, improving energy efficiency, and partnering with sustainability-focused vendors can all become long-term advantages, supporting environmental goals while also strengthening operational resilience and competitiveness.

Canadian indicators reinforcing this imperative

- Only **27 percent** of Canadian respondents identify as innovators or early adopters, while **59 percent** consider themselves fast followers and **13 percent** slow followers.
- **91 percent** say investing in advanced technologies will be the primary driver of competitive advantage over the next three years.
- **85 percent** believe they will need to take more risks with emerging technologies to remain relevant in their industry.



Imperative 7: Shift from short-term metrics to long-term value creation





Canadian organizations often appear to lag behind their global and Americas peers in realizing higher levels of ROI from technology investments, but this may not be a weakness.

In many cases, lower short-term ROI reflects a more disciplined and strategic approach, with organizations prioritizing long-term outcomes over quick wins. When organizations invest with patience, intention, and a focus on the future, they often see stronger, more sustainable returns. The challenge comes when lower ROI stems from reluctance to invest, misaligned performance metrics, or limited understanding of how to measure value. In those cases, organizations risk falling behind.

In 2026 and beyond, leaders will need to strengthen their ability to balance discipline with strategic ambition. Investing in technology today and waiting to realize ROI in the years ahead remains one of the most effective paths to long-term competitive advantage. Short-term ROI tends to produce tactical results, while long-term ROI, grounded in strategy and clear measurement, produces lasting transformation.

Recommended actions:

Define value beyond efficiency

Building sustained benefit starts with reframing how organizations define value. Instead of measuring success solely through efficiency gains or cost savings, organizations should examine how technology impacts employee satisfaction, customer experience, revenue growth, workforce confidence in using new technologies, and organizational resilience. These measures create a more accurate picture of long-term value and better reflect how technology strengthens the business as a whole.

Use formal frameworks to link investment discipline to business outcomes

Canadian organizations will benefit from adopting a formal performance measurement framework grounded in a logic model, starting with linking organizational objectives directly to outcomes, relevant metrics, measurable KPIs, and the data sources needed to track progress. The emphasis should be on KPIs that are both measurable and meaningful. Metrics such as positive sentiment in employee satisfaction surveys or increased efficiency in completing specific tasks are far more valuable than counting the number of AI pilots in progress.

Meaningful KPIs also support stronger investment decisions. When organizations tie funding choices to strategic outcomes, such as market share growth or improved customer experience, it becomes easier to justify long-term investment and maintain organizational alignment.



There is a significant opportunity to monetize, or non-financially recognize, the benefits that accrue from investments and innovation. These benefits may not offer an immediate financial payoff, but if they shift culture or reshape how people approach problem solving, they can create a new wave of competitiveness.”



Sanjay Pathak

Partner and National Leader, Technology Strategy and Digital Transformation Services, KPMG Canada

“Business users often assume that rigorous governance comes at the expense of speed. Effective organizations challenge this assumption by building governance frameworks that support both rapid deployment and disciplined execution. Achieving both is essential.”



Glen Brookman

Chief Information Officer, KPMG Canada

Canadian indicators reinforcing this imperative

- Canadian organizations trail global and Americas peers in achieving ROI in the highest value ranges, particularly returns above 70 percent.
- **65 percent** say they track actual performance of technology initiatives against business plans and projections.
- **95 percent** say they take a long term, innovation led approach to technology investment.
- **57 percent** say they have strong ideas for digital transformation but lack the talent required to bring those plans to life.



Imperative 8: Expand multi-party partnerships to accelerate innovation





Partnerships have long been a strength for Canadian organizations and, compared to global peers, Canada consistently demonstrates a strong ability to collaborate with external partners to advance innovation.

However, most of these relationships have historically been transactional and focused on vendor support rather than co-creation. As organizations look toward 2026 and beyond, they will need to expand and deepen these partnerships to unlock new forms of value, accelerate speed to market, and share both risk and reward.

Canadian organizations have the opportunity to shift from traditional vendor engagements to multi-party innovation ecosystems where partners collaborate on shared goals, pool specialized capabilities, and build solutions that no single organization could develop on its own. With stronger collaboration, organizations can monetize innovation more effectively, access niche expertise, and develop intellectual property that strengthens both competitiveness and resilience.

Recommended actions:



Pursue multi-party innovation through consortium models

Consortium-based collaboration helps organizations gain capabilities, insights, and problem-solving capacity that extend beyond internal resources. These partnerships are most impactful when they bring together multiple industries, perspectives, capabilities and technologies, supported by rigorous governance over data, intellectual property, and security. A well-structured consortium allows organizations to ideate more creatively and scale innovation faster. The key to success would be removing the operational barriers and red tape in a safe manner by following established international and domestic best practices.



Cast a wide net for intellectual property development

Organizations no longer need to build IP alone. Engaging partners across government, academia, venture capital, think tanks, and specialized vendors can expand the pool of ideas and create shared IP that moves more quickly into commercial use. Dual-use technologies that serve both government and commercial sectors can shorten development timelines and create advantages for all participating organizations.



Leverage government incentives to reduce innovation costs

Federal and provincial programs offer meaningful support for organizations willing to invest in research, experimentation, and emerging technologies. Tax incentives such as SR&ED, as well as innovation initiatives like Canada's AI-focused clusters, can significantly reduce costs and accelerate development. Organizations that take full advantage of these programs will be better positioned to innovate during periods of economic pressure.



Find points of convergence across industries

Many of the most promising innovation opportunities come from looking outside a single sector. Banking can learn from utilities. Energy can draw lessons from retail. Broader perspectives on portfolio management, data use, and technological experimentation can fuel innovation in industries that seem unrelated, and leaders who build cross-industry connections will discover insights that help strengthen strategy and accelerate transformation.



We have seen throughout history that in times of crisis, businesses can successfully align behind the wider societal and governmental objectives. We are at that point again in Canada and around the world. If businesses and government collaborate and partner on innovation with discipline and based on shared values, we can achieve our goals and share in each other's success."



Ven Adamov

Partner, National Leader,
Data and Analytics Risk Services,
KPMG Canada

Canadian indicators reinforcing this imperative

- **45 percent** say they miss opportunities to invest in new and emerging technologies because of cost pressures.
- **97 percent** plan to expand and strengthen their tech ecosystems and partnerships to gain the expertise they need.
- Security concerns and limited internal governance capabilities are the top two barriers to external collaboration, indicating where partnership strategies must mature.



Conclusion



Conclusion

The role of the tech executive is more interconnected with business leadership than ever before. With technology changing and evolving at such a rapid pace and becoming an increasingly critical driver for growth for organizations across Canada and around the world, IT leaders have a heightened opportunity to help organizations drive greater ROI from their tech investments.

It's an opportunity every tech leader grapples with. How do you target tech investments to align with business goals? How do you keep IT and the broader workforce upskilled and knowledgeable about technology advancements? How do you measure ROI from emerging tech like AI, post-quantum cryptography, and Web3, in ways that are meaningful to the business?

IT leaders need to stay on top of evolving issues around AI, data & analytics, cloud and XaaS, cybersecurity, change management, innovation, and more, to answer these strategic questions. And they must also remain focused on the core values of the organization and its key partners. It is only by partnering with other organizations around these shared values that we'll be able to achieve our goals as organizations – and as a country.

At the end of the day, technology is an enabler. It's not the end goal. Whether core or emerging, technology helps our organizations get to where they want to go faster and more efficiently. Technology in and of itself cannot create value. It can only create more time to help the people in our organizations find new ways of operating and explore new lines of business. And the IT C-Suite is at the forefront of driving this value across our organizations.

In summary, looking ahead in 2026 and beyond, we recommend for tech executives to:

- Treat data as a product, enabling enterprise-wide access through integrated platforms, and reframe risk and governance as enablers rather than barriers to build a disciplined, data-driven culture that delivers long-term value and ROI.
- Implement intentional architecture, stronger hybrid management, AI-driven optimization, and FinOps practices that link cloud spend to performance and efficiency KPIs to maximize cloud value.
- Set realistic protection goals, build strategic partnerships, and maintain strong anti-fraud and governance practices to help Canada create a competitive advantage, offer businesses operational confidence, and position itself as an attractive hub for investment and talent.
- Support employees in using technology to free up time and enhance existing work or create new revenue streams to multiply ROI far beyond cost savings alone.
- Establish clear accountability, prioritize use cases, balance risk with experimentation, and maintain a focus on sustainability to become a leader in innovation.
- Link technology investments to meaningful business outcomes through relevant KPIs so that ROI reflects real impact on employee satisfaction, customer experience, revenue growth, and organizational resilience.
- Engage in multi-party consortia, leveraging government incentives, investing in shared IP, and drawing insights from academia and adjacent industries grounded in shared missions and values to help accelerate innovation, reduce costs, commercialize ideas more effectively, and create competitive advantage.



How **KPMG** can help

Organizations in every industry can seize the tangible opportunity to shape a dynamic tomorrow through digital transformation, fuelling growth, adaptability, innovation, and resilience. Business transformation is non-negotiable in our ever-evolving competitive landscape, but it's no easy feat. What to do first — and how to do it — may not be so clear. Our KPMG teams can help you.

KPMG leaders make a difference for clients helping them shape their business around their customers to create borderless organizations, where people, data and technology interact for new levels of productivity and value creation. We help you harness the latest technologies for a smarter, faster path to nimble, scalable business functions and effective operating models - all while effectively managing risks and regulations to cultivate and maintain stakeholder trust.

Let's work together to realize the full potential of your people and technology to deliver real-world outcomes. Because when it comes down to it: true transformation is always human.

Ready to take your technology strategy to the next level? [Connect with our team today.](#)



Connect with us



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