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The AI Revolution

The future of the workplace is now

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Introduction

The era of AI is here.

The speed and breadth of AI adoption is unmatched by almost anything in recent tech history, but harnessing the power and realising the possibilities that it offers requires us to modify how we work and to understand the differences between the multitude of options open to us.

Take Microsoft Copilot, for example. Copilot is a generative AI tool, meaning it operates based on the instructions – known as 'prompts' – that you give it. Imagine throwing a stick to a dog: the dog chases after the stick and returns it to you, but then sits quietly, waiting for you to give it its next instruction. The dog responds to your command and your action - and then stops. If you don't throw the stick again, the dog simply waits – it has the ability to do your bidding but first needs your instruction.

Microsoft Copilot requires the user to take the initiative, to set the tone, to take charge. Your AI assistant offers previously unimagined power - but you must lead it. You have to master thinking of it like a tool but treating it as a person to get the best from it. Put simply, we all need to adapt to new ways of working.

No matter whether you have already gained some experience of AI tools or whether you consider yourself a total novice, this eBook offers the building blocks to help you consider which solutions will benefit your people most. Your questions, your concerns, the risks involved and the rewards on offer will all be dealt with in the coming pages.

A cautionary tale: you might have already onboarded some AI solutions or benefited from early adoption of automation technology. You may be reading this and thinking that AI is something you're already familiar with, that you don't need to dive into what's on offer. You may be right.

But when email first became a global business tool, who among us truly understood the power and potential it could unlock? I guarantee that most businesses – yours and mine included – couldn't function without email now, but it took years of developing, experimenting and learning to get to this point. When the first handful of smartphones were launched, they were conversation starters and status symbols, to be sure. But who among us possibly imagined where we were headed in just a few short years with mobile technology? With hindsight, we can all agree that those who held out against adopting email or mobile technology were doomed to years of catchup – or worse.

AI isn't going anywhere. Its influence and impact are going to continue growing at an astonishing rate. Some organisations are already achieving incredible things in the era of AI, and they know first-hand how crucial AI is going to be in the years to come.

Organisations that are bold and forward-thinking have a great advantage over those that are not: they benefit from the earliest inception of new technology and can hit the ground running, leaving the competition trailing behind when the rest inevitably realise that they need to catch up.

It might be counter-intuitive - even uncomfortable - to imagine, but it's entirely possible that the leading technology and automative systems that you currently use internally have already been superseded by what kids all over the world have access to thanks to tools like ChatGPT and Microsoft Copilot.

Microsoft describes its AI solutions as having the potential to "turn your words into one of the most powerful productivity tools on the planet".

Here's how we can achieve that together.

Dan Coleby
Director of Client Technology Value

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AI: Where it all began

The roots of artificial intelligence go back much further than many people imagine. From the birth of AI in the 1950s to the explosion we are living through today, here is your AI history 101.

1956

At the Dartmouth Conference in New Hampshire – a gathering of some of the brightest minds in science and mathematics – Professor John McCarthy coins the term 'artificial intelligence' to describe the field of 'thinking and automative machines'.

1970-1980

Due to lack of funding and complications in developing the required technology, AI takes a back seat to many other competing scientific and computing priorities, leading to a period known as the AI winter.

2021

The first version of DALL-E, a text-to-image AI tool powered by natural language, is released.

2022

OpenAI releases ChatGPT, instantly transforming the public perception of artificial intelligence. Between November 2022 and January 2023, ChatGPT gains more than 100 million users, introducing the world to the power of modern AI and sparking a global phenomenon.

2024

Major corporations, namely Tesla and BMW, begin introducing AI-powered robots in their factories.

1964

ELIZA, an early example of natural language processing, is created by scientists at MIT. Presenting an illusion of being able to engage in conversation, ELIZA could be considered the world's first chatbot.

2010

With thoughts of AI slowly creeping back into business and academia, interest is reignited in the possibilities that automated systems and generative AI could provide.

2015

Microsoft launches Azure Cognitive Services in February. A suite of tools designed to help developers build intelligent applications, this release made AI commonly available for the first time. Following the ACS launch, the desire to actively engage AI across broader functions continues to grow at pace.

2023-2024

Technology giants including Microsoft, Google and Meta all enter the AI race, releasing AI models such as Copilot, GPT, Claude and Llama.

2023-2024

Microsoft Copilot creates a direct link between AI technology and established, business-critical solutions such as Microsoft Word and Teams. For the first time, users can now interact with AI inside their daily work environment.

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ChatGPT

Unless you've been hiding under a rock for 12 months, it's almost guaranteed that you've come across ChatGPT in one way or another in the not-too-distant past. Developed by OpenAI and gaining more than 100 million users in just two months, ChatGPT revolutionised what could be expected of common AI tools and redefined the standard of AI technology available to the public.
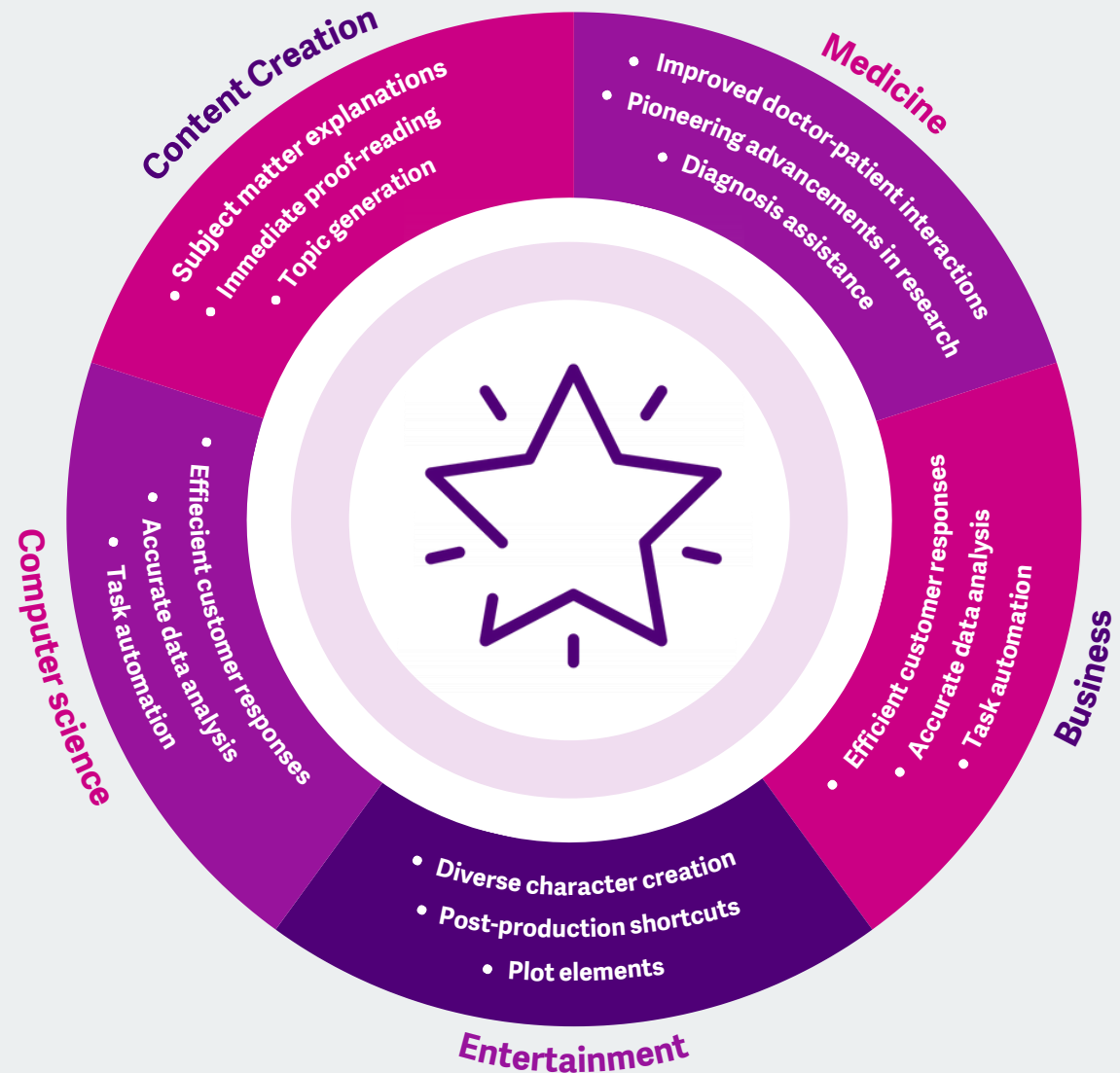
A generative AI chatbot, ChatGPT is capable of engaging humans in conversation to generate a huge range of outputs, including literature, computer-coding, translations, data analysis and research.

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The Good

In almost no time at all, ChatGPT has revolutionised and up-ended long-accepted traditional working process. By engaging ChatGPT with natural human language, OpenAI's technology has impacted industries including content creation, entertainment, medicine, computer science and business.

By 2023, ChatGPT was being used daily across the world to draft emails, generate programming code, develop business strategies and even assist with research and translation.

Content Creation
- Subject matter explanations
- Immediate proof-reading
- Topic generation

Medicine
- Improved doctor-patient interactions
- Pioneering advancements in research
- Diagnosis assistance

Business
- Efficient customer responses
- Accurate data analysis
- Task automation

Entertainment
- Diverse character creation
- Post-production shortcuts
- Plot elements

Computer science
- Efficient customer responses
- Accurate data analysis
- Task automation

The Bad

So, with all this hype, why are businesses looking for alternatives to ChatGPT? The answer lies in the processes that happen under the hood of OpenAI and the risks that these processes pose.

ChatGPT stores and saves all the information it receives from users. In the standard version of ChatGPT, data is used in a variety of ways. While some of these ways are harmless and pose no danger to your or your business, others are significant red flags. In the standard version, your data can be used to train future models or be passed to third parties. Confused? Think the following:

Imagine a user asking ChatGPT to summarise a document. Sounds fine, right? Now imagine that the document contained any of the following:

- Confidential information about your organisation
- Personally identifiable information
- Intellectual property
- Financial or other sensitive data

By sharing this document with ChatGPT, users are granting OpenAI permission to record all this information. Once this information is entered into ChatGPT, depending on the version you are using and the ongoing changes made to OpenAI's workflow, there are risks that other users could have eyes on your confidential data through their own use of ChatGPT. It could be business related or personal, from your private banking details to confidential R&D reports. The potential catastrophic results of this are clear.

In 2023, this is exactly what happened to tech giant, Samsung. A major data leak was traced back to a user mistakenly inputting confidential data to ChatGPT - resulting in a major crackdown on Samsung employee's use of the platform. It was one of the first publicly damaging ChatGPT leaks, but almost certainly won't be the last.

The Alternative

But fear not. There is another way to harness the power of ChatGPT without being exposed to these dangers.
Introducing: Private ChatGPT from Advania.

Private ChatGPT: Power and protection

Unlike public ChatGPT tools, Advania's Private ChatGPT is secure by design, keeping you safe from the risks posed by public AI solutions.

Our solution provides you with:

- A secure, private ChatGPT tool, complete with individual company branding
- Functionality matching public AI tools housed in your own environment
- Understanding of your company data
- Ability to answer organisation-specific questions
- Organisational knowledge from your Microsoft 365 tenant in its answers
- Compatibility with multiple front-end options
- Ability to work with complex environments

All of your data remains in your organisation's cloud, meaning your confidential information is secure 24/7, protected by the most up-to-date security technology.

Private ChatGPT standout features:

- Latest LLM technology
- Constant security
- Integrated data
- Streamlined workflows
- Usage analytics to improve adoption

Ready to jump into a Private ChatGPT environment?
We offer two models - one to get underway quickly and another which offers a personalised service suited to more complex needs.

Standard: Get started quickly with our ready-to-go solution

- Baseline of common needs
- Your company branding and unique URL
- Single sign-on with ADD
- Per-user chat history

With your data: Private ChatGPT with your company data

- Combine ChatGPT with your documents in Microsoft 365
- Specify high-priority areas of your M365 environment for Private ChatGPT to understand
- Internet search and document upload capabilities

Copilot for Microsoft 365:
Make the extraordinary ordinary

Released in November 2023, Copilot is an AI-powered assistant – a suite of tools that integrate seamlessly with your existing Microsoft apps and accompany you in your day-to-day work.

By engaging with Copilot through human language prompts inside apps like Microsoft Word, Excel and Teams, you can harness the power of AI to draft and edit documents, analyse complex data, create a summary of emails received while you were on holiday and catch up on the meeting you just joined halfway through – all in seconds. And Copilot exists in many different forms, with each version suited to a particular area of your business and skillset.

Here are three examples:

Copilot for Microsoft 365
Your AI assistant for Microsoft Word, Teams, PowerPoint, Excel etc

Copilot for Dynamics 365
Connected to your Dynamics 365 apps to boost efficiency

Copilot for Sales
Integrates with your CRM of choice, offering detailed sales analyses

By combining the power of AI, your familiar Microsoft apps and your own knowledge of your organisation, you can generate detailed personal responses that offer significant value to users.

Think of it as an equation:

$$\text{AI} + \underbrace{\text{Microsoft}}_{\text{apps}} + \underbrace{\text{your company}}_{\text{data \%}} = \text{Personalised AI responses}$$

Copilot with confidence:
getting to grips with change

Don't worry, Copilot isn't putting you out of a job. As you read in the introduction to this eBook, the tool is not an autopilot that you cede control to – it's a Copilot that works with you hand-in-hand, following your instructions at high speed to improve your efficiency and productivity. But generating the greatest level of value from Copilot requires more than just using it.

Users need to understand how to get the best from it. We need to change the way we work – prompting correctly, engaging consistently and understanding the outcomes Copilot offers. All of these are crucial to getting the best from Copilot and are skills that our experienced team can share, empowering you to become a Copilot champion in quick time.

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You and AI were made for each other

We know that for many people the whole concept of AI is daunting. It might feel like it's come out of nowhere, that you have no idea how to adapt and adopt, that it's taking over everything. As the tech company with people at heart, we know that any major change can be stressful. We understand your AI concerns and we know that a clear roadmap can help allay some fears, offering clarity on how to position yourself to be AI-ready.

Here are our top tips for setting your organisation on a path that transforms your culture into one that can get the best from cutting-edge technology.

Embrace AI	AI is here to stay. The first step really is that simple – understanding and accepting that AI will impact more and more parts of our life and is going to play an ever-greater role in our professions. Once you know it can't be ignored, you're halfway there. Now, here's what we can achieve together...
Cultural change	A crucial step is having the buy-in from everyone in your organisation. From the newest hires up to the CEO, a shift in mindset that sees AI as a foundation of your IT strategy is required. It's essential to get your people on board. If you need guidance on how to adopt a modern IT strategy with AI at its core, our experts are ready and waiting to help.
Smart choices	Oh, for the long-gone days of inserting a single disc and installing your new software. One and done, right? It was so simple. The AI explosion that we are experiencing means that you now have a plethora of tools to choose from. Expensive and often complex, you need to select the ones that will generate real value for your business. From Copilot to Jasper, and from Otter to Private ChatGPT, making the smart choice is a critical part of your strategy. It's also where a trusted partner can add enormous value.
Adapt and evolve	Once you have landed on the tools that will benefit your business, you need to know how to get the most from them. From understanding AI's strengths and weaknesses to learning how to write prompts that will deliver valuable results, working with AI is a skill that can be learned and perfected. It's something that our AI consultants do best, and they can share that expertise with you.

By tapping into the wealth of our experience, you can leverage the power of additional AI-related services including Azure OpenAI, Azure Cognitive Services and more. Copilot for Microsoft 365 itself runs on Azure OpenAI, and so these solutions are really two sides of the same coin. It's a coin you want to become familiar with – keep reading to find out how.

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Microsoft Azure: AI integration without expensive development

"You need to be in the cloud."

If you're anything like us, you'll have heard statements like this over and over in recent years. If you're anything like us, you'll also roll your eyes when people can't clearly articulate what it means. So, here goes:

Microsoft Azure provides the foundations for modern business transformation and growth, powered by cutting-edge cloud services that result in greater adaptability and productivity for you, and improved experiences for your clients.

Azure offers a sustainable, scalable and cost-cutting way to modernise your workflows and bring your digital operations on par with your vision.

For innovative services that can overcome today's business challenges for both users and customers, the cloud *is* where you need to be.

Migrate and modernise data and apps:

- Greater agility
- Greater efficiency
- Migrate and modernise to Azure's stable infrastructure

Optimise and secure your cloud:

- Maximise value and take control of your spending
- Leverage scalable resources
- Best-in-class security and business continuity features

Innovate for greatest value:

- Greater customer experiences
- Cut technical debt through AI and automation
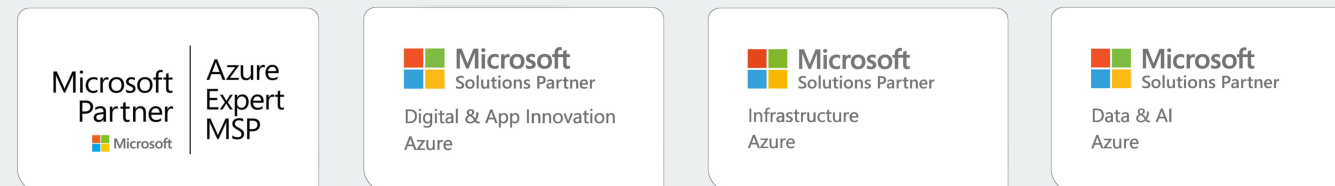- Accelerate innovation with services such as DevSecOps and Azure Arc

Stand apart from the competition with Microsoft Azure

For many years, AI remained a solution available only to data scientists, complex machine learning algorithms and well-funded, niche projects. Today it's within reach of everyone and available in familiar cloud platforms. With the peace of mind that comes from reduced costs and optimised, reliable security, you can focus on harnessing the potential that the cloud offers to achieve the innovation that will differentiate your organisation.

At Advania, the expertise that has generated us global recognition allows us to build intelligent services into our apps and solutions. Our knowledge and experience with Azure OpenAI, Azure Cognitive Services, AI Builder, SharePoint Premium and more can support you to take advantage of:

- Image recognition and tagging
- Key phrase extraction
- Language translation
- Anomaly detection
- Sentiment analysis
- Speech transcription
- Document summarisation

As an Azure Expert Managed Service Provider and with our world-class Microsoft Azure expertise, we are one of Microsoft's leading global Azure specialists. Our extensive capabilities make us the perfect partner to help you develop your Cloud strategy.

Microsoft Partner | Azure Expert MSP
Microsoft

Microsoft Solutions Partner
Digital & App Innovation Azure

Microsoft Solutions Partner
Infrastructure Azure

Microsoft Solutions Partner
Data & AI Azure

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Powerful, intelligent content

The way we work is changing at incredible speed and your people will be happier, have greater focus and be more successful when the best tools are available to them. Microsoft Syntex – now part of SharePoint Premium – is Microsoft's AI-powered document understanding capability.

With Syntex you can take control of AI-powered content analysis based on intelligent document processing, content AI and advanced machine learning.

Sound complicated? Let's break it down.

The world runs on documents – contracts, service agreements, loan applications, CVs, invoices and more. SharePoint Premium allows you to automate all your document-related processes, such as organising, sorting, classifying and segmenting everything across your Microsoft tenant, providing enormous savings in time and resources.

Document creation

Recognise and classify existing documents

eSignature functionality

SharePoint Premium

Document processing

Translation

Image processing and recognition

Power Automate: create, automate, integrate

Now more than ever, long-term sustainability relies on streamlining your operations and saving time and money wherever possible. Power Automate enables organisations to automate repetitive tasks and streamline your common and not-so-common processes. With more than 400 connectors that can create links between your apps and solutions, Power Automate provides the glue for your integration and automation revolution. With seamless workflow automation across multiple apps and services, and without the need for extensive coding, Power Automate can deliver peak efficiency for every user.

- Automate data entry and processing
- Streamlining approvals
- Automating email management
- Integrating with various Microsoft tools
- Generating reports and analyses
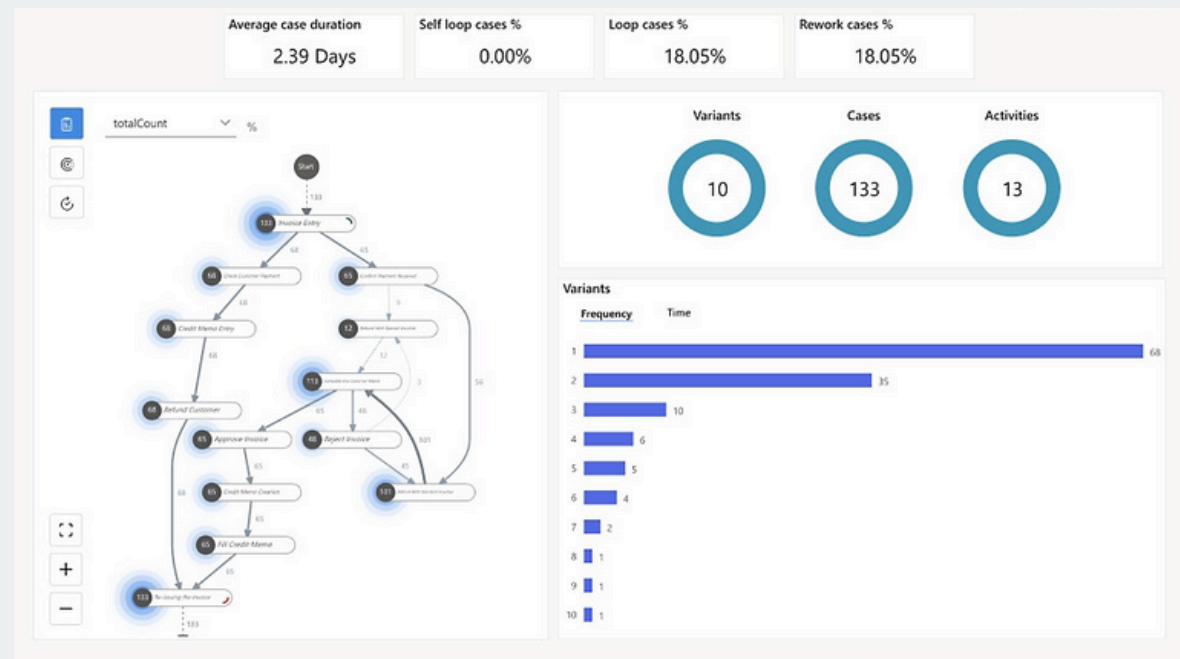- Streamlining and automating HR processes

Image source: Microsoft Power Automate (https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/power-platform/products/power-automate)

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Walking the walk: how we've achieved real-world AI success for our clients

Case study: Construction

This eBook is building a case that we're the AI partner you can trust, but what you really want to know is whether we can also walk the walk. In this first case study, discover how Advania addressed the needs of a national civil engineering partnership*, answering their complex and business-critical health and safety data needs with a state-of-the-art AI implementation. *Anonymised at request due to confidential nature of client responsibilities*

At a glance: a complete AI integration

Transformed 18 separate systems containing 25 terabytes of data into a single integrated location	**9.5 terabytes of data ingested to Azure, a figure which continues to increase**	**More than 16,000 artefacts provided by AI to users in first six months of adoption**	**Up to 50% reduction in time to gather relevant information**

The challenge

As a major enterprise in the construction and civil engineering space, our client had a critical need for effective and reliable incident management, on a scale that matched the national importance of their work. Engaged in some of the UK's most complex and extensive infrastructure projects, years of collaboration and business expansion had created a patchwork of 18 separate systems, resulting in an overwhelming amount of internal documents and data, and an outdated method of handling incident management.

Central to the client's needs was the ability to investigate and analyse safety incidents that had been logged. In a landscape that allowed for claims to be filed more than six years after a project's completion and with each claim containing an avalanche of related data, this created a data stream stretching a long way into both the past and the future. This combination of multiple systems and mountains of data meant the client often faced weeks of effort just to establish the facts of a given incident. Unsustainable and frustrating, this combination of multiple systems and mountains of data meant the client often faced weeks of effort just to establish the facts of a given incident. Inefficient, wasteful and unsustainable, the existing system placed extreme demands on our client's budget and time, while providing a significantly sub-par service at the expense of the British taxpayer.

The solution

Azure OpenAI

Azure AI Search

Advania Private ChatGPT solution

Azure Document Intelligence

Using the above technology and combining cutting-edge AI solutions with the client's own data, Advania built a bespoke AI environment that got right to the heart of the challenges and established a new model of working.

From a time-consuming, complex and often illogical process, the client's investigative team are now able to simply engage AI with questions such as "Do we have a record of person X being involved in any incidents, and what HSE certification did they hold?" or "Tell me about incidents in 2018 relating to damaged materials". Rather than dozens or even hundreds of search results, the ChatGPT-style app collates incident data from multiple sources, determines its relevance and generates a ready-to-go response for the user.

Our experts created a tailored solution able to respond to human conversation while analysing, segmenting and reporting on complex masses of data, stored in multiple repositories and presented in multiple formats – responsibilities that previously took a number of people significant time.

Operating across a bespoke AI environment that encompassed the client's existing Microsoft 365 tenant and apps, and leveraging technology across Private ChatGPT, Copilot and Azure capabilities, Advania created a new reality where accuracy, completeness and immediacy of information are standard.

By engaging the power of AI and focusing on the client's specific challenges, as well as decommissioning many pre-existing but redundant systems, we were able to boost efficiency and productivity to new levels and provide significant cost-cutting measures that propelled the client towards their long-term goals of sustainability and profitability.

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Case study: Finance

Our second case study offers a deeper dive into an internationally recognised organisation's* use of AI. With a goal of using generative AI to modernise and enhance their business, this client story sees the organisation partner with Advania to immerse its operations in new AI technology, leveraging data breadth, quality and auditability.

By adopting Copilot for Microsoft 365 and making it a foundation of their IT strategy, our client saw instant benefits that translate into long-term value to future-proof their organisation.

The big picture:

10 departments engaged in our initial Copilot trial across 25 separate offices

A minimum of 30 minutes saved per-day for each user, across all departments

Estimated value of £5,342 annually saved per employee, based on time-saving and process efficiencies added

Anonymised at request due to confidential nature of client responsibilities

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The facts and figures tell their own story - but here is how our client made use of Copilot to reshape and revolutionise their ways of working.

What they did with Microsoft Copilot

- Over 5,000 Copilot actions submitted monthly
- Almost 2,000 Teams meetings summarised and analysed each month
- 361 email drafts generated
- 286 documents modified
- Total of 83,000 minutes saved each month

What they said about Microsoft Copilot

❝ I don't know why we are even asking ourselves what the business case for this is. The value is obvious.

❝ Copilot is like having a second pair of eyes and a second brain... it's not just a tool, it's a partner.

❝ Provision of tools like Copilot is fast becoming a differentiator for recruiting the best candidates.

❝ There's an element of 'If we're not doing this, we're falling behind'.

What you should know about Microsoft Copilot

- 60% of Fortune 500 companies have already made Microsoft Copilot part of their operations
- 51.9% of companies surveyed by Microsoft cite employee wellbeing as a top outcome of their Copilot adoption
- With Advania as your AI strategy partner, Copilot for Microsoft 365 can become a foundational part of your IT future, bringing the power of AI to every user.

Fast facts: Copilot in action

We asked our client from the second case study to generate feedback from their people about their attitudes toward Copilot throughout our pilot programme. The true functionality and opportunities that Copilot offers are deeply personal to each user - but here are the all-important benchmarks that you can expect.

How often do you use Copilot?

Weekly - 91.5% | Every other day - 66.1%

Has Copilot been a helpful assistant?

Yes - 89.8%

Has Copilot saved you time?

Yes - 68.6%

Copilot: delivering a better workplace environment.

By surfacing information quickly and accurately, AI makes it easier to get things done and improve communication. By enhancing productivity – particularly for neurodivergent individuals – Copilot helps develop and foster a culture of integration and inclusivity. Through reduced workloads and optimised employee schedules, Copilot can advance career progression for your people by allowing them to redirect their time to learning and development opportunities.

Similarly, Copilot can help employees deliver enhanced and improved products and services for their customers by driving innovation. Suggesting ideas and synthesising an array of information that would not be possible without AI offers users the opportunity to learn more about their customers, markets and products to discover new ways of growing revenue and generating maximum value for your business.
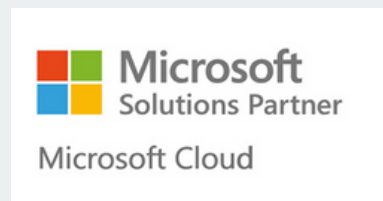
Why you can trust Advania with your AI strategy

Both globally and across the UK, Advania is recognised as a Full Solutions Partner for Microsoft Cloud and an Azure Expert Managed Services Provider. These commendations place us among a worldwide elite of Microsoft partners.

Solutions Partner for Microsoft Cloud

As a Full Solutions Partner for Microsoft Cloud, Advania are among a global elite of Microsoft partners holding competencies in all six solution areas of Microsoft technology:

1. Business Applications
2. Data and AI
3. Digital and App Innovation
4. Modern Work
5. Infrastructure
6. Security

Microsoft Solutions Partner
Microsoft Cloud

Microsoft Partner
2023 Partner of the Year Winner
Education

Microsoft Partner
2022 Partner of the Year Winner
Customer Experience

For your business, it's your people who make the difference. We're the same. Our successes become your successes when we work together, and your goals become our focus. With Advania, you can trust you are getting the best support and expert advice.

Driven by client success

We're proud to work with some of the most ambitious and innovative organisations

Legal & General

EDWARDIAN HOTELS LONDON

pets at home

BARCLAYS

Ministry of Justice

MOTT MACDONALD

McLaren

The tech company
with people at heart

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e hello@advania.co.uk   w advania.co.uk   t 0333 241 7689