

CAVENDISH

Top Ten Technology Predictions For 2026

Analysis of the biggest trends covered by global analysts, businesses and technology media, to inform PR and communications programmes this year.

Analysing the ‘most predicted’.

With 2026 predictions now out in force from analyst houses, enterprises and major media, we have reviewed the most repeated themes that are set to dominate the technology conversation this year.

This analysis is based on over 20 prediction pieces and outlooks published between October 2025 and early January 2026.

We reviewed analyst and research forecasts including [Gartner](#), [Deloitte](#), [IDC](#), [Forrester](#) and [Omdia](#). For an editorial and market perspective, we included major media and influential specialist titles such as [The Guardian](#), [WIRED](#), [Reuters](#), [TechCrunch](#), and [Business Insider](#). We also referenced trade and institution-led forecasting including [Computer Weekly](#), [Trend Micro](#) and the UK National Cyber Security Centre ([NCSC](#)).

Across these sources, clear patterns emerge. While the language varies by outlet, the same ideas surface repeatedly, giving a useful snapshot of what is most likely to dominate the technology conversation in 2026.

AI is still the headline, but the emphasis is shifting from novelty to operating models, infrastructure constraints, trust and security, and what it takes to turn projects into programmes. [Gartner](#) frames 2026 around the foundations Chief Information Officers (CIOs) need to orchestrate intelligent systems and protect enterprise value, while [Forrester](#) predicts a sharper reality check on spend as hype fades.

In parallel, mainstream media highlight challenges with data centres, energy, and public pushback. [The Guardian](#) reports that the infrastructure behind AI will expand globally in 2026, while [Reuters](#) sketches the downside risk of overbuild and even a potential bust.

By way of background, Cavendish is one of the fastest-growing large agencies in EMEA, ranked in the top 30 of UK firms, in the top 25 for technology. From AI to connectivity, we help leading organisations communicate innovation, build profile, navigate policy and shape industry debates.

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Top Ten Predictions.

1. Tighter ROI discipline applied to AI



As organisations move away from AI experimentation, AI value and ROI discipline is emerging as the dominant 2026 theme. The clearest statement of “value reset” comes from [Forrester](#), which predicts enterprises will defer 25% of planned AI spend to 2027 as hype fades and scrutiny rises.

The same caution shows up in executive commentary, with [Business Insider](#) quoting leaders who expect increased focus on data quality and cybersecurity to bring AI value at scale.

Our client, [Freshworks](#), a customer and employee experience software provider, makes a similar point from a CX and EX angle, predicting “uncomplicated service” will become a competitive differentiator in 2026.

2. Data centres and power become a bottleneck

Infrastructure constraints appear repeatedly across analyst and media predictions. [Deloitte](#) predicts that inference, the simple doing part of AI, will make up two-thirds of computational power needed to train and run complex AI models by 2026. It argues most inference will still take place in data centres and enterprise servers using power-intensive chips.

Meanwhile, [The Guardian](#) frames 2026 as a year when data centres “blanket the globe”, expanding beyond the US and China, and highlights electricity and local resistance as real constraints. [Reuters](#) provides a counterpoint, warning that an overbuild cycle could also become a story if demand falls short of ambition.

For comms planning, the infrastructure narrative is now part of the mainstream AI story, which gives spokespeople permission to talk credibly about power, data centres, resilience and the trade-offs of scaling.

3. Multi-agent AI moves from demos to deployment

Multi-agent systems also appear repeatedly across analyst predictions as a key next step in enterprise AI maturity. [IDC](#) positions 2026 as the moment organisations prepare for an “agentic era” where systems can learn, reason and act across enterprise layers, while [Deloitte](#) also points to agents moving from experimentation into more structured, governed deployment.

Media is already pushing the narrative from possibility to practicality. [TechCrunch](#) reports that enterprise-focused investors again expect 2026 to be the year adoption becomes meaningful, while acknowledging the industry’s ongoing struggle to show a return from pilots.

And there are implications across organisations. Our client, financial and accounting automation software provider, [BlackLine](#), predicts CFOs will take a leading role in governing automation in 2026, influencing integration decisions and how outcomes are measured.

4. Trust, provenance and verification of data rise in significance

As AI-generated content becomes routine, trust and provenance concerns are clear. [Gartner](#) explicitly highlights digital provenance as a top trend for 2026, signalling that authenticity and traceability are moving into mainstream technology planning.

This theme is strongly reinforced by [Reuters](#) who forecasts greater demand for verification work as audiences increasingly access information through AI systems, while [WIRED](#) focuses on how disinformation and political campaigns could target AI infrastructure and adoption.

In practice, [TrustedTech](#) (client), a Microsoft Cloud Solution Provider (CSP), predicts responsible AI will become a core compliance requirement as shadow AI grows, pushing organisations to implement clear guardrails, verified data pipelines and role-based controls.

5. Cybercrime industrialises and cyberdefence automates

Cybersecurity predictions for 2026 repeatedly point to the same theme of attacker scale accelerating. [Trend Micro](#) calls 2026 the year cybercrime becomes “fully industrialised”, citing autonomous intrusion, changing malware and deepfake-driven social engineering as standard tools.

Gartner supports the defensive shift, placing pre-emptive cybersecurity and AI security platforms in its top ten for 2026. The same direction is showing up in broader media roundups, such as [TechNewsWorld](#), which argues AI-driven threats are pushing changes in governance and spending.

For spokespeople, generic warnings will struggle to land, so anchor security commentary in concrete shifts such as automation, faster attack cycles and deepfake-enabled fraud, then translate them into plain business risk.

6. Data sovereignty rises the global agenda



Sovereignty is an increasing theme, for instance [Gartner](#) predicts a large share of enterprises will move workloads into solutions designed to reduce geopolitical risk over the coming years. For Danish IT company, [Netcompany](#) (client), data sovereignty is increasingly about enabling public and private organisations to retain control over where data is stored, processed and governed – supporting national resilience, regulatory confidence and long-term digital trust.

The same issue appears in broader “risk and resilience” language. [Omdia](#) positions 2026 as a year where navigating risk and building resilience is critical, while corporate predictions such as those from managed connectivity provider, [Expereo](#) (client), reflect how this is being translated into leadership agendas, with sovereignty treated as a practical consideration alongside security and connectivity, not a compliance afterthought.

7. Less new AI tools more mainstream platform reliance

Consolidating AI tools is emerging as a practical 2026 theme, as organisations move from testing new tools to relying on what is already inside core platforms. [Deloitte](#) predicts GenAI usage will shift towards existing applications, with AI in search and mainstream tools overtaking standalone GenAI apps. [Omdia](#) reinforces the same direction in software development, pointing to the challenge around trust and productivity, alongside the push to overcome “configuration hell” as AI-assisted development scales.

[Computer Weekly](#) flags reducing AI sprawl and consolidation, as buyers look for simpler models that are easier to run and secure and [Reuters](#) frames 2026 as a year when enterprise AI spending determines winners, with major platforms and model providers competing for corporate budgets.

8. Quantum planning becomes more timely

Quantum computing is improving, and while it is not breaking today’s encryption at scale yet, it is widely treated as a credible future threat to the cryptography that protects data, payments and critical systems. The practical risk is that sensitive information stolen now could be decrypted later as quantum capability advances, which is why more organisations are being pushed to plan earlier than they expect.

The UK [NCSC guidance](#) sets target dates for key migration activities, and its accompanying roadmap frames this as a phased transition rather than a last-minute upgrade. Meanwhile, [The Guardian](#) summarises the UK timelines and makes the case for companies to prepare for “Q-day”.

9. AI integrates with Robotics



Major media now forecast opportunities for AI deployment rather than AI novelty. [WIRED](#) reports on Google Gemini being integrated into Boston Dynamics robots for factory environments, while [Axios](#) covers Hyundai's plan to mass-produce humanoid robots for manufacturing contexts.

This pushes physical AI into a more practical conversation about rollouts, not demos. For communications, the strongest angles will be real use cases, measurable outcomes and responsible deployment of these tools.

10. Connectivity, the critical foundation for AI scale

Connectivity shows up as a "quiet foundation" theme across predictions, [Computer Weekly](#) frames 2026 as a year when networks determine whether organisations can turn potential into profit, which ties directly to AI's infrastructure and resilience pressures. For [Expereo](#) (client), this reinforces connectivity as a strategic business asset – one that underpins performance, resilience and security across increasingly distributed enterprises, rather than a background utility to be managed in isolation.

Research and enterprise outlooks reinforce that networks are not just plumbing. [Omdia's enterprise wireless trends](#) point to shifts in private networks and modern enterprise wireless capabilities, with wider predictions also emphasising connectivity as a core enabler of performance, security and resilience.

Three Reminders for 2026 Comms

Predictions aren't just for the end (or beginning) of the year

A lot can change in three to six months, particularly in AI capability, regulation and risk. This is why it helps to treat these themes as a live tracking framework, then refresh commentary based on what the media is covering, what has broken through, and what is already overused.

Where analysts like [Forrester](#) flag budget scrutiny, it creates natural mid-year moments to revisit AI value narratives and publish more evidence-led viewpoints.

Evidence and real decision detail needed

The predictions that resonate most are supported by measurable signals, even if they are imperfect. That might be adoption milestones, governance changes, revised investment priorities, or what leaders have learned from deployments that did not work as expected.

This is also where trade coverage, such as [Computer Weekly](#), helps because it translates big themes into operational realities like networks, capacity and resilience.

No one-size-fits-all approach

Different publications will pull different threads, even when they cite the same macro trend. Infrastructure and public impact will often be strongest for mainstream titles, while agent governance, security posture and operational readiness will play well in tech and trade outlets, and sovereignty will resonate where there is a regulatory or risk framing.

Using the same core themes, you can tailor messaging to the editorial lens without changing the substance, and you can also spread viewpoints across spokespeople so that each person speaks to a specific slice of the agenda.

To find out more on the above or about how Cavendish can support your brand, please contact Steph MacLeod at steph.macleod@cavendishconsulting.com