TABLE OF EXPERTS

AI and Dallas Business

The Dallas Business Journal, in partnership hosted three local entrepreneurs and executives from Allata, Suffolk Construction, and Greenberg Traurig to discuss the promise, potential, and pitfalls of artificial intelligence (AI). The esteemed panelists covered the impact this new technology could have in Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) and beyond.

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>
> **TODD BASILE**

understand and shape the battlefield in advance increases the chances of a positive outcome for our clients.

WHAT ARE SOME SPECIFIC INSTANCES WHERE AI HELPED OUT IN PLACE OF A TRADITIONAL METHOD?

MATT ROSEN: We are working with a professional services firm in accounting to develop several AI services and proofs of concept (POCs). A task that might take an accountant a week or two can now be input into an AI model, which completes a complex tax analysis in minutes. In the past, conducting an analysis with this volume of data could take a professional several days to finish. As we advance in developing AI applications, we are witnessing a 20% increase in coder productivity as they create scaffolding code. The code generated for use tests is continuously evaluated, allowing our coders to concentrate on creating new datasets instead of constructing the infrastructure components of code.

BRAD BROWN: At Suffolk, we believe in the power of data to make better business and operational decisions on our projects. We have collected incredible volumes of data from our jobsites throughout the country, and we leverage that historical data to help us manage our existing projects. We use AI solutions as "tripwires" that help us predict financial and operational exposures at the early stages of projects, which leads to more efficiencies and productivity. We also use AI to streamline our proposal

SHARE A UNIQUE WAY AI IS BEING USED IN YOUR INDUSTRY AND WHAT YOU BELIEVE WILL BE ITS MOST IMPACTFUL APPLICATION.

BRAD BROWN: Building construction projects have become more sophisticated and complex than ever, which is forcing contractors to find ways to be more efficient and productive while still delivering safe jobsites and quality work. Suffolk has been at the forefront of leveraging technology, data and AI solutions to add value on our projects. We are currently using an AI-driven predictive software tool that evaluates historical project data from past projects to predict the jobsites with the greatest probability for safety incidents to occur, which allows our project teams to take proactive action before it is too late. We are even using generative AI to provide clients faster and more accurate design-assist services so teams can avoid incorrect or incomplete design and construction documents that can lead to delays in the field.

TODD BASILE: Savvy lawyers are using AI to develop more effective legal strategies. Imagine being able to predict who will hear your case and knowing in advance which arguments are winners and losers in that judge's eyes. AI platforms are analyzing swaths of publicly available data to attempt to tell us just that. Once an Examiner is assigned, AI can anticipate whether I'll have greater success interacting with a particular examiner over the phone versus in writing. It will even identify the responses that have been most successful with that examiner on a particular issue. AI is doing similar things with courts, judges, and juries. Anything we can do to better

THE EXPERTS:

TODD BASILE
Shareholder & Patent Attorney
Greenberg Truarig

BRAD BROWN
President South Central Region
Suffolk Construction

MATT ROSEN
CEO
Allata

and contract review processes, which allows us to save significant time setting up projects for success, especially when compared to more traditional approaches.

HAVE YOU ENCOUNTERED ANY CHALLENGES WITH AI VERSUS TRADITIONAL METHODS?

MATT ROSEN: Data is your differentiator. That is a common theme and one of the most important aspects when using AI tools. Our team uses AI internally to manage our proposals and contract library. AI can quickly identify what master services agreements (MSAs) are expiring and which proposals might have misinformation. Initially, we did not have a clear understanding of all the data in the final documents. As we started to pull back the data, we got all sorts of mixed-up results during our searches. This is why data is crucial. The quality of your results depends on the data you feed into AI. Historically, we struggled as many organizations do, to keep the metadata for each file up to date, leaving the AI uncertain where to search for information.

TODD BASILE: AI can be very helpful, but it can also hallucinate. There have been instances where generative AI was used to draft legal

briefs, and it cited case law that does not exist. Judges do not take kindly to that sort of thing, so the attorneys were disciplined and clients lost their hearings. I read a study where many of the sources relied upon by a chatbot to provide allergy information were accurate – we're talking expired web pages, fabricated journal articles, and

miscited articles. AI is great for a first draft, but there is often no substitute for putting eyes on the work product to ensure it's accurate.

DO YOU THINK THE PACE OF AI ADOPTION IS UNIQUE TO YOUR INDUSTRY?

BRAD BROWN: The construction

industry has traditionally been associated with resistance to change or technological advancement. The reality is AI requires an investment many contractors are not willing to make. At Suffolk, there is a strong commitment to innovation and technology that starts at the very top of the organization with Chairman and CEO John Fish. John has helped create a strong culture of innovation, creativity and curiosity at Suffolk, which trickles down throughout our culture and our jobsites. We have been fortunate to have implemented AI and other groundbreaking technologies before most other contractors, partly due to our strong investment and partnerships with construction tech startups. While AI adoption at Suffolk has been faster than at most construction companies, I still feel we are just only scratching the surface of what is possible.

HOW DO YOU ADVISE COMPANIES TO ATTACK THE BARRIERS TO ADOPTING AI?

TODD BASILE: My job is to identify and mitigate risk, and those risks vary from company to company when it comes to AI. It's important to have a good plan for AI adoption. Start by identifying your goals, consider how you'll get there, and then look into your crystal ball to predict where

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>
> **MATT ROSEN**

> "We also use AI to streamline our proposal and contract review processes, which allows us to save significant time setting up projects for success, especially when compared to more traditional approaches."
>
> **BRAD BROWN**

failure points, challenges, and legal issues might arise. Generate a map of the minefield and chart a path through it.You'll inevitably encounter unforeseen issues, but an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure as the law continues to evolve.

MATT ROSEN: When using AI, a human presence is necessary. Without double-checking the AI outputs, using other sources can lead to faulty information and results. Users need to understand the biases and training data for the AI model. For example, the European Union (EU) and California both have passed legislation to enforce some level of transparency for how an AI model is trained. AI technology is advancing so quickly that regulatory efforts struggle to keep up. As a result of this, many new positions will emerge, focusing on anticipating ethical issues with AI and managing data privacy, bias, and fairness, all to ensure each AI model has safeguards in place when used for business.

ARE JOB SKILLS AND REQUIREMENTS CHANGING DUE TO AI?

BRAD BROWN: In the world of construction, AI is not replacing

workers but is helping to make them more efficient and productive. AI allows our people to focus on more client-focused and collaborative activities by streamlining workflows and reducing administrative tasks.. AI allows our teams to be more hands-on in the field because of that freed-up time. And our Chairman and CEO is truly driving this change throughout our culture. In fact, we just held an all-company meeting focused on AI where he challenged all 2500 Suffolk employees to embrace AI and new technologies as an opportunity to find ways to add more value and work smarter rather than harder. The reality is AI is here so we need to find ways to use it to our advantage. Our CIO has said smartphonestook 16 years to get a 100 million users, while Facebook took seven years to get 100 million users. ChatGPT took 90 days to reach 100 million users. AI is moving quicker than most people realize.

MATT ROSEN: The "No Robot Bosses Act" has faced setbacks a couple of times. Congress is trying to keep people from reporting to robots in the workplace, but really what they do not want is hiring and firing decisions to be made without

human input. If you think about it, an AI robot could effectively manage multiple workloads and complaints. We also need to consider the transparency of the algorithms and how they are trained. Is it being trained ethically? Is there bias baked into the programming? The only way to achieve this is through data governance, which includes documenting the data added to the AI model, holding audits and assessments, and training people to understand and how to interact with these systems. This is ever-evolving, and we strive as a firm to keep up with every day.

WHAT IS ONE PIECE OF ADVICE YOU WOULD OFFER TO OTHER BUSINESS LEADERS IN TERMS OF IMPLEMENTING AI WITHIN THEIR INDUSTRY?

BRAD BROWN: Embrace curiosity. I'm fortunate to work in an industry where we learn something new every day. Be open-minded. Welcome new ideas and transparent conversations. Foster an environment of innovation and creativity. Embrace your people's curiosity about AI and technology. Be careful which ideas you cut off, and be careful which conversations you don't allow to have happen. Let people

explore. And try new solutions as long as they make sense for the business. Embrace the future.

TODD BASILE: Be purposeful. AI is a tool, and you want it to create a meaningful benefit. Otherwise, you're just taking on cost and risk. That said, as with any emerging technology, we're only beginning to realize its true potential, so as Brad said, embrace curiosity. Call Matt to help map out an AI opportunity landscape. Creative applications of AI can really differentiate you from your competition – just ask Suffolk.

MATT ROSEN: Do not panic. Stay calm. As someone in charge of keeping up with AI, I suggest companies invest in appointing a dedicated AI champion, someone who can stay ahead of trends. It is essential to understand and embrace the AI opportunity landscape. Do not tackle everything at once. Focus on the business problem you are trying to solve. Start small with a POC and make sure your data is safe and secure. Stay curious and keep iterating. Start with a simple AI model and if that model turns out to be incorrect, have an open mindset to fail, iterate, refine, and try again.