

We conducted correlation analysis and discovered that Torchbearers most frequently use exponential technologies in concert. They aren't majoring on just one technology. Instead, they are creating value by combining them. AI is central to that effort. The Torchbearers stand apart from all others in their focus on AI to make sense of data in context and light up new paths forward (see Figure 11).

Which brings us back to trust. AI-supported organizations turn decisions into iterative innovation and intelligent workflows. They're at the forefront of delivering customer experiences that are not just personalized but humanized, building trust through never-before-possible services.

Figure 11

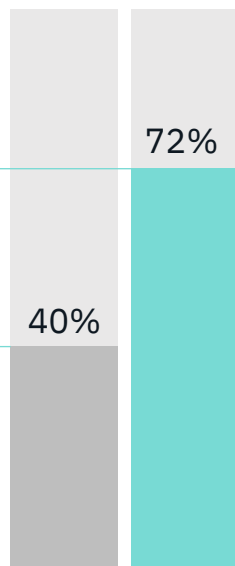
Making intelligence choices

Torchbearers seek to extend their advantage

Planning large investment in AI or machine learning

80% more

Torchbearers
Aspirationals



Bots are ubiquitous online as self-service apps. But they aren't destined to stay there. They can help humans better interpret customer needs anywhere so more empathetic decisions can be available on the front lines and in the moment, whether for a salesperson on a shop floor, a customer service rep in a call center, or a procurement specialist.

The objective is not to replace humans but to augment human intelligence and interactions. At Club Med, AI-enabled systems can alert employees in call centers about the context of the call—what website pages customers were looking at, for example—as well as offer detailed histories of customer behavior. (See sidebar, “Club Med: A Torchbearer's tale.”)

The Torchbearers are ready. In the next few years, 62 percent of Torchbearers expect to use AI to a large extent to facilitate interactions among customers or employees, compared to a paltry 8 percent of Aspirationals.

Data grows in value as context is applied. Likewise, the humanized experience must be attuned to context: a customer's specific preferences in the moment. AI can reveal what makes those moments human and, in the process, build more trust. Tone analyzers can read emails, tweets, and call-center scripts to determine if a person is frustrated or thrilled. Organizations can draw on social, psycholinguistic, and other unstructured data to create personas, extend empathy to stand in their customers' shoes, and map steps in the customer journey.

Step three: Confront what's difficult

As AI advances, it is pushing our workflows and operations, as well as customer services, toward greater autonomy. Over time, cars aren't the only things that will be self-driving. Banks are already implementing self-driving investment portfolios. Autonomous shipping containers can act on their own to protect their contents from spoilage in the case of unforeseen delays. But first, organizations need to master the data behind dozens, if not hundreds or thousands, of algorithms.