



# Futures

ISSUE 2 Q2 2024

## AI Agents at Work





# Welcome

By Salesforce Futures

Our inaugural issue of this magazine focused on possible futures where AI agents transform how companies connect with their customers. In this issue, we turn to agents in the enterprise and the potential they hold for a wholesale reorganization of work. We invite you to envision a workplace teeming with next-generation copilots, autonomous agents, and augmented humans. How does it function? How does it feel for the human employees that work in this environment? And what can we all learn from time-traveling into such a future that we can bring back to improve the questions we ask ourselves today?

The pace of AI progress offers one clue as to what might be in store. In May, OpenAI launched GPT 4-omni, whose multi-modal capabilities and flirtatious female voice drew immediate comparisons to the 2013 film *Her* and its omniscient and overly-familiar personal assistant. Here at Salesforce, The Einstein Enterprise vision is quickly becoming a reality, including the launch of Agentforce, a platform for intelligent agents in service, sales, commerce, and beyond.

At Salesforce Futures, our mission requires us not only to anticipate, but also to imagine fleshed-out futures. This allows Salesforce and our customers to identify the choices they might need to make to shape their own destiny. Amara's law says that we overestimate

the impact of technological change in the short-term and underestimate it in the long-term. When new technologies like generative AI are first introduced, we apply them narrowly to existing processes, and their impact can seem limited. It's only over a longer time-frame that innovators figure out how to use the capabilities of the new tech to redesign larger systems.

To meet this challenge and bring possible futures to life where AI agents are fundamentally changing the shape of work, we use three fictional companies. They're at varying stages of AI transformation, and they operate differently, due to factors like their age, past strategic choices, and the intensity of competition they face. This reflects the reality we see in today's business world. For example, while a few organizations are aggressively preparing for an agent-driven future, others are just beginning their exploration.

In part this is because the challenges AI brings are not only—drawing on leadership expert Ronald Heifetz—technical ones, relatively easily defined and where expert knowledge exists on how to solve them. Rather, AI is generating more fundamental adaptive challenges, ambiguous and difficult to define, let alone to think about solving.

Navigating adaptive challenges requires sophisticated leadership skills, and many pitfalls lie in wait along the way. Our story-telling aims to bridge the gap in imagination, creating a shared understanding that provides a basis for identifying adaptive challenges.

Tech blogger Byrne Hobart has written of how AI “places a much higher premium on clarity and accuracy in internal communications.” We took inspiration from Hobart, and the everyday experience of platforms like Slack, to imagine a variety of communications artifacts that bring the texture of these companies to life. These messages—generated both by humans and machines—are directed through private and public channels to diverse stakeholders. In aggregate, they convey the choices, practices, and culture that make up how each company operates.

As you read along, you’ll also notice that our companies still operate in a context with human messiness, resistance, and unpredictability. It’s easy in depicting futures to ignore and smooth over such realities, what Nick Foster called “The Future Mundane”. In our futures, just as today, things break, human tensions persist, and much of what surrounds us is not recently-invented and new.

Speculations, like fictional companies and the future they inhabit, have a rich history, including at earlier points in the futures lineage of our own team, at Global Business Network, in Wired Magazine’s “Found Objects,” and at Shell Scenarios. But they work best when complemented with some analysis.

So, each company’s story concludes with a section, “Unpacking This Future”, that pulls together thematic highlights, explores the rationale of the storytelling, and calls out broader implications for business. If you prefer, you’re welcome to switch the reading order and unpack each future before you jump into it.

A brief note on terminology: In our previous issue, we addressed the ongoing debate surrounding the term “agents” and its application in AI. Since that issue, AI agents have only become more mainstream. However, you’ll observe that each fictional company uses different names for AI entities, reflecting their unique orientations and intentions.

We’re confident this issue will give you a richer understanding of AI agents at work in the near future. Bridging the imagination gap between present reality and potential futures is not easy, and not everything we discuss may ultimately come true. That’s okay. Our goal is not perfect accuracy, but to catalyze better, more strategic conversations about the adaptive challenges AI agents will surface. So dive in and think hard about how your company might fare in these futures. (Hint, hint, the Closing gives you some pointers.)

And, please, let us know your questions, objections, and most of all, the ideas and conversations this issue sparks.

#### The Salesforce Futures Team



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## **Tomorrow's business leaders won't run their companies the way they're run today.**

They'll rely on specialized, autonomous AI agents to augment employees. They'll have AI chiefs of staff that manage teams of these specialized agents. And they'll use new, AI-powered tools to get closer to their customers and make faster, better decisions.

Let's explore these changes through the stories of three companies, part of the same value chain but at different stages in their AI transformation...

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**Unpacking  
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FUTURE: COMPANY 1

# Caravan Movers

An AI-native  
relocation services  
expands its offerings

Caravan found success by taking the pain out of moving. The company's ambitious, AI-first leader, Cara Jain, figured out how to use AI agents to provide value for Caravan, its customers, and its partners. Now, she's focused on sustaining growth and making sure the relationships she's worked so hard to build endure.





# caravan

**Caravan Movers**  
Company

**Detroit, MI**  
HQ

**2026**  
Founded

**12**  
Employees

**caravan.ai**  
Website

**For-Profit**  
Company type

**323-555-0100**  
Phone number

**Cara Jain (CEO)**  
Founders

**Emily Jackson (Chairperson),  
James Shin, Cara Jain**  
Board members

**Elio Ventures, TK Capital  
The Coro Group**  
Investors

## About

Caravan specializes in providing top-tier relocation services for companies and individuals. The company uses specialized autonomous agents and generative AI to remove the pain from long-term and short-term moves, location and school selection, utilities coordination, and other location-related services. Caravan has recently developed a marketplace of services related to home-finding, home maintenance, mobility, and other sectors.

**\$1.37B**

Valuation

## Series B

Funding Status

**\$85M**

Total funding amount

**March 2028**

Last funding date

## Latest News

Caravan secures Series B funding of \$100M to expand services.

March 2028

Named as one of the top startups to watch in 2027 by TechWatch

January 2027

# How one business leader uses AI in her day-to-day



 caravan

Cara Jain  
CEO, Caravan

Cara, CEO of Caravan, records all status meetings, notes, bad ideas, good ideas, work-related DMs and messages, and inspirations using her personal vinner (an AI agent).

She scans and interrogates summaries of all Caravan's communications, customer data, and internal data.

Her AI Chief of Staff, vinnerCOS, summarizes all of this data and constantly interrogates conclusions.



vinnerCOS

Good morning, Cara. Would you like a tea before your team sync? ☕



Cara

No, thanks. Could you read me the agenda and my notes?



vinnerCOS

Here is today's Weekly Rundown agenda... 

Launch Decision

Partner Updates

Innovation Highlights

New employee Welcome



Cara

Great, please add the team activity to the end.

vinnerAC

Hello Alejandra, your personalized Weekly Rundown from Cara Jain is below.

On the run? Get the [TL;DR](#)

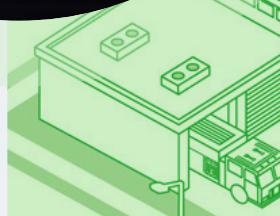


## NEW FEATURE LAUNCH

The winning feature this week comes from James Shin and our newest Vanner, Alejandra Coles. Alejandra and James cooked up a better interface for our automated inventory management system. As before, they incorporate computer vision to help track and categorize items, but it just feels so much more intuitive. For example, there is a “Get rid of it” feature that allows customers to sell or donate items they don’t want with the press of a button.

👉 Customers are going to love this and I anticipate interest from reselling platforms.

Check it out. Run it through its paces. Talk to your customers and their agents. Share feedback. Iterate. Refine. Repeat.





## INNOVATION HIGHLIGHTS

12 unique ideas and supporting experiments proposed.👉

8 entrants ran simulations to generate synthetic data.

Everyone used challenger sim teams to stress test their ideas.

4 entrants talked to customers in our advisory panel about their ideas.

I love seeing human connection as part of the innovation process.

Note: remember to practice with our persona sims prior to engaging with customers to improve your interview skills and refine your idea before you jump in. 😎

## CMATCH UPDATE

Two years ago, when we made the difficult decision to invest precious resources in building our CMATCH multi-agent environment for relocation, I had reservations about the ROI. @Lucy Fuentes, @Kylie Collinsworth, and @James Shin all played a big role in convincing me—using their signature, easy-to-read data visualizations—that investing in the success of our partners would pay huge growth dividends. I was wrong. They were right.





## CMATCH M2M LOG (MACHINE-TO-MACHINE)

```

## Accessing Job Request - [2030-05-28 00:01:25]

## Optimizing Schedule for Date Pull-In - [2030-05-28 00:01:29]
# Target move-in date: 2030-07-01
# Current date commitment: 2030-07-08
# Schedule pull-in needed (days): 7

#> Scanning for overlap tasks...
# Pulled in interior painting to 2030-06-07
# Pulled in Landscaping Kickoff to 2030-06-14

#> Requesting expedited inspections
# HVAC inspection moved to 2030-06-04
# Queued request for priority electrical inspection

# Schedule successfully pulled in by 9 days

# Flagged for manager approval

## Running Schedule Health Check - [2030-05-28 00:01:33]
# Conflict detected: HVAC installation must precede
Fiber optic cabling installation.

## Initiating Conflict Resolution - [2030-05-28 00:01:37]
#> Simulating 314 possible schedule adjustments...
#> Rescheduled Fiber optic cabling installation.
#> Notifications sent

## Final Verification Completed - [2030-05-28 00:02:51]
# All task dependencies aligned. On track for move-in date.
# Coordination sequence completed.

## Scan for Upsell Opportunities - [2030-05-28 00:02:56]
# Opportunity identified to upgrade kitchen fixtures
# Opportunity identified to upgrade HVAC capacity
# Escalated to Caravan Upsell Queue for review

```

Via multivariate simulations, agents make it far easier to adjust complex things like construction schedules that involve multiple parties.

Humans remain at the helm when appropriate.

Agents scan for opportunities, flag items for human escalation, and constantly improve systemic efficiency.

#### End of Log



## LATEST PARTNERSHIPS

### FLEETCHECK

Provides maintenance for electric moving shuttles

### JURNEE

AR-based remote maintenance training

### MONOKLE

generates immersive, multi-modal tours of potential living spaces



## PARTNER HIGHLIGHT



### Sandstone Services



Improving our customer maintenance experience

Leveraging real-time data and multi-agent operating environments

Best-in-class example of how a legacy company can reinvent itself



Those investments have been a key ingredient to our success. Our ecosystem continues to thrive, and CMATCH is a big reason why.

In the last three months, we've seen the launch of Fleetcheck, a company that provides maintenance for electric moving shuttles, Jurnee, an AR-based remote maintenance training company (the AI and IRL instructors are already generating rave reviews), and Monokle, a company that generates immersive, multi-modal tours of potential living spaces. It won't surprise any of you that these companies are already finding ways to collaborate together on CMATCH. CMATCH also enabled our initial partnership with Sandstone, which continues to be a defining multiplier for Caravan stakeholder value.

To me, Sandstone represents a best-in-class example of how a legacy company can reinvent itself. The way they're leveraging real-time data and CMATCH to improve efficiency and trust at massive scale is something I think we all could learn from. What else can we do?



## PARTING SHOTS...

Let's keep up the experimentation, innovation, and energy and do it again next week. As always, before I go, 🎉 it's time for these week's parting shots! 🥂  
Coming in 🔥...

If you see our @Alejandra Coles (mentioned upthread) in the feeds, please give her a shout and set up time to connect F2F. Alejandra, for those who don't know, is our 12th employee. Four days in, and she's already building and shipping. Alejandra brings a wealth of experience from her time as a product stitcher at Monokle, and I fully expect her to pitch in on our road to \$2b. It's increasingly clear to me that as we grow, we're going to need to augment our compliance agents with an actual policy exec who can both oversee the digital workforce and advocate on our behalf given the changing regulatory environment. Stay tuned.

I just chatted with our sustainability vinner. After removing anomalies and analyzing the viz, our score is only up 3% this week. That's better than the back-sliding we saw last week, but it's still not good enough.

**NEW EMPLOYEE PROFILE**

**ALEJANDRA COLES**  
Client Relationship Stitcher

Enhancing Caravan relocations with personalized service and AI-driven products

*Alejandra has authorized her onboarding agent to schedule the following F2F meetings:*

**Initial Meet:**  
Gathering at CaravanHQ

**Feedback Sessions:**  
Prefers regular chats to gather feedback and improve services

...



I hate to bring this up again, but the microwave at my house is a community asset. ⚠️ If you come over for a F2F and use it, please show respect for your fellow Vanners (and my partner, Tina) by placing a paper towel over any food you're warming that has a tendency to splatter.

Our group hike Friday will be to Elk Falls. I'm bringing Dusty 🐾, who plans to wear her snappy new canine cargo vest. When I started the company and spent all of my time with artificial people, it was not good for my mental health. Come on out and leave your devices behind for some exercise and water-watching.

- Cara

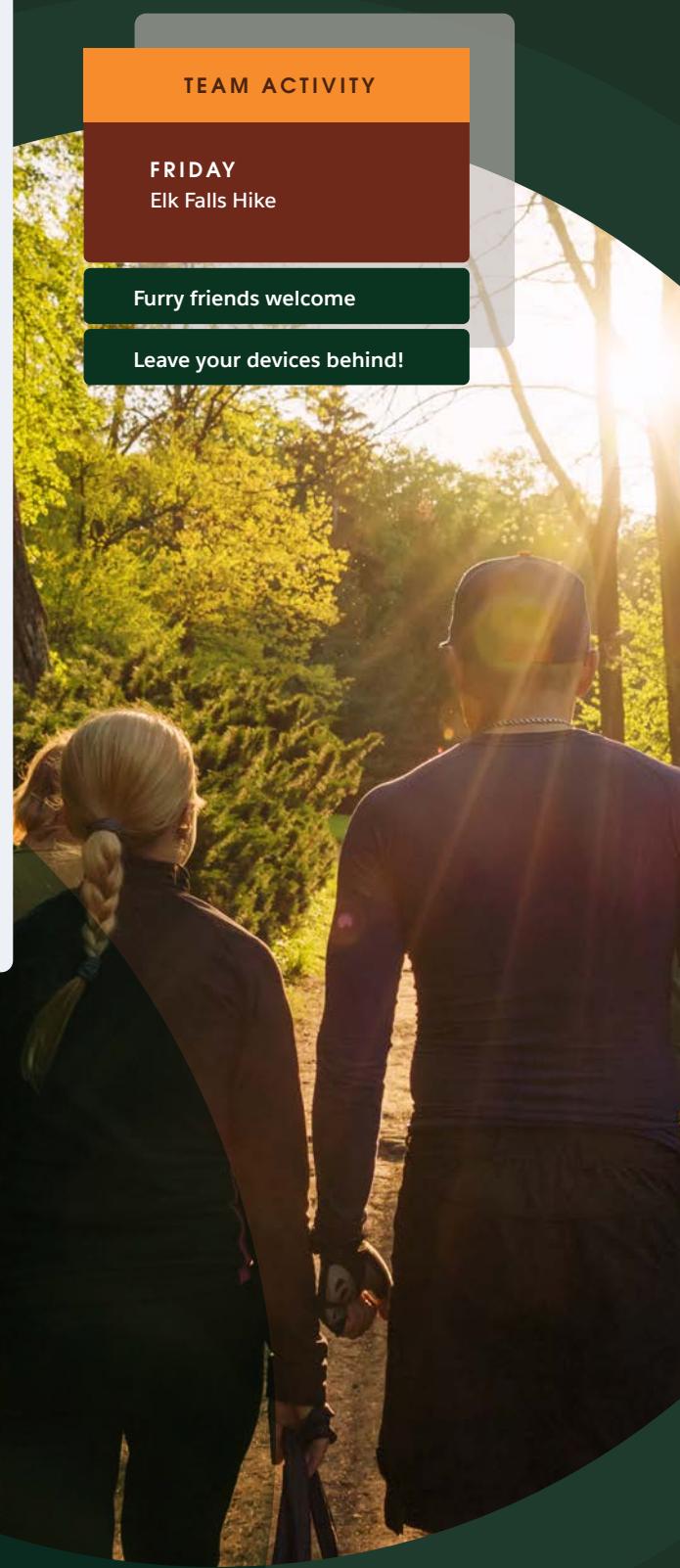
#### TEAM ACTIVITY

##### FRIDAY

Elk Falls Hike

Furry friends welcome

Leave your devices behind!



 vinnerCOS

### Great meeting, Cara. CaravanAI Active Projects Sync:

**Caravan:** James Shin assisted by vinner01, vCOS, vLogi, ShinShinV

**Walker Homes:** Dan Simons assisted by SImo88PAI

**Sandstone:** Kendra Torrero

**Commverse:** Olivia Washington assisted by OWashPAI, Commverse CoPilot

**Monokle:** Abigail Hsu assisted by HsuPAI, MonoMonkey

 vinnerCOS

### Key Updates

#### Walker Homes:

Answered questions related to updated timeline projections shared in advance by CaravanAI re: projects in Minneapolis and Chicago



#### Sandstone:

Shared metrics re: model updates including 20% improvement in latency reduction; industry-specific model for international relocation is moving from prototype to beta and will now allow specialized language and currency support; prototyping new offering targeted at short-term rental owners; shared metrics from pilot showing significant improvement without cost increases for partners

### Challenges

**New Opportunities** 🎉 Cara, Sandstone is in here with your priority notes.

### Action Items



Cara

Cool. Let's talk challenges and opps.



vinnerCOS

**Challenges:** API integration challenges for co-worker compliance. Walker Homes reported use of outside partner for resolving agent-to-agent negotiation challenges and recurring errors.

**Opportunities:** Caravan discussed feasibility considerations of a new 'relocation package' offering; gave quick overview of latest feature incorporating satellite data for relocation impact projections. Monokle demo of new, immersive residential space tour. Sandstone ready to scale service offerings.



Cara

Give me a deeper read on Walker's performance.

vinnerCOS

**Strategic considerations from CaravanAI  
(\*\*CONFIDENTIAL, FOR CARAVAN EYES ONLY\*\*):**

Summary is Caravan confidential as it contains subjective assessments of this meeting's contents. Share with caution. Walker's delivery performance is declining and there are no signs of trend reversal other than leadership promises. Investing more in the relationship could be "good money after bad" without evidence of changing circumstances. Here is how I arrived at this conclusion: Walker leadership shows signs of frustration in non-verbal cues and elevated stress levels, which could be caused by a lack of optimism in short-term resolution. Independent research may be worthwhile given conflicting accounts regarding Walker customer and partner sentiment.



Cara

That's good intel. What about Sandstone's performance?  
Is there anything I'm missing re: upcoming decisions?

vinnerCOS

Sandstone is delivering improved performance and higher CSAT at lower cost and greater scale. All signs point to benefit for expanded collaboration. Sandstone could be a top-tier strategic partner. Consider investing in the relationship F2F and exploring greater opportunities. Sandstone's CTO mentioned a forthcoming trip to visit an operations hub in Chicago. Based on calendar availability and travel preferences, Samantha Caldwell and Lin Hyunh-Barnette will both be geographically close and seemingly available to connect with them in Chicago if desired. Check with them first.

COMPANY 1: CARAVAN MOVERS

# Unpacking This Future

**Successful, AI-native companies will take full advantage of new affordances unencumbered by the limitations of the past.**

However, to beat incumbents, the experience they offer customers has to be an order of magnitude better than their competitors. They will accomplish this not just by using new technologies, but by working in a way that unlocks unseen potential. Caravan represents what an AI-native company started today or in the near future might look like in a few years. While the concept of single-employee unicorns has captured a subset of the popular imagination, we decided it was more reasonable to give Cara, Caravan's CEO, eleven additional [human] co-workers.

Through Cara's Weekly Rundown memo, and the selected artifacts of meeting summaries, machine-to-machine logs, and other communications, we evoke a company that innovates constantly and automates for efficiency, but also prioritizes collaboration, connection, and human decision-making, both inside the company and with outside partners.

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Leadership AI

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Multi-agent Environments

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Synthetic Research

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Human Connection





## LEADERSHIP AI

Economist David Autor has written about how “[as] AI’s facility in expert judgment becomes more reliable, incisive and accessible in the years ahead, it will emerge as a near ubiquitous presence in our working lives.” Company leaders will be no exception. New research from Salesforce shows that leaders already trust AI to do more than half their work. Cara embodies a new type of CEO who offloads decisions that don’t require her personal attention so she can focus on more dynamic and strategic ones. She uses AI-summarized troves of business intelligence and unstructured data to refine her thinking and decision-making. She also constantly records ideas, conversations, and interactions with partners, then uses her Chief of Staff AI to distill and analyze all this information prior to reviewing and sharing her fully informed perspectives.

Cara uses AI to make her decisions better, not just easier. Leaders will increasingly be called upon to experiment and reinvent parts of the business as conditions on the ground change. Cara intuitively understands how AI should drive product experimentation, and she pushes her team to constantly prototype, refine, and share ideas to improve customer experience. All of this feeds better decision-making and analysis. In one moment, we see Cara reflect on how she was wrong about CMATCH and reversed course, thanks to a strong case from employees; just one example of how AI enables Cara to prioritize data-driven calls in and pivot quickly.

## MULTI-AGENT ENVIRONMENTS

A feature of Caravan is the use of multi-agent environments. Cara highlights how they can compensate for skill gaps and introduce thought diversity early in the product development cycle. Emerging academic research by Yulin Du et al suggests that increasing the number of “debating agents” for complex tasks may improve factuality and reasoning in language models, compensating for accuracy limitations in LLMs. At Salesforce, we’re also developing special-purpose agents and LLMs that are smaller, more cost-effective, and easier to operate at scale within a trust layer.

In her Weekly Rundown, Cara notes Caravan’s use of specialized, proven agents in policy, sustainability, and other domains. Establishing secure and trustworthy multi-agent environments for collaboration between businesses is also highlighted through Caravan’s CMATCH platform: a secure, interpretable log of multi-agent interactions inspired by numerous emerging products. Such environments could exist independently, or they may emerge in existing platforms such as Slack.



### SYNTHETIC RESEARCH

In a recent conversation with Jason Winters, Salesforce SVP of Product Design/UX, he pointed to the potential for AI to revolutionize the research process in product development: “Imagine taking all of your marketing data and segment info and using it to generate synthetic customer personas you could test products on.” Here, we suggest one way synthetic qualitative research might facilitate customer experience innovation.

**“Imagine taking all of your marketing data and segment info and using it to generate synthetic customer personas you could test products on.”**

JASON WINTERS  
SALESFORCE SVP, PRODUCT DESIGN / UX

While Caravan also focuses on speaking with human customers later in the process, synthetic data democratizes access to customer research earlier in the product cycle.

### HUMAN CONNECTION

How would an AI-native company build a corporate culture? Caravan demonstrates notable intentionality regarding “face-to-face” human interactions, connecting teammates to each other and the larger org. Cara once underestimated these kinds of connections, but has come to appreciate how critical they are to the company’s success. When it’s easier to offload mundane tasks through digital twins and automated processes, the ability of humans to collaborate on difficult decisions becomes even more critical to competitiveness. We’re likely to see more thoughtful design of human-to-human moments to build the trust required for the tough, business-critical calls that will invariably remain in any future. In short, we think success will require a sophisticated understanding not only of when to use AI, but also when not to.



FUTURE: COMPANY 2

# Walker Homes

A once cutting-edge multifamily housing company struggles to get its footing after a series of strategic missteps

Walker Homes saw the growing need for sustainable, affordable urban housing early and won major market share with an innovative offering well positioned to meet growing customer demand. But in a world where personal agents handle more purchasing decisions, the company finds itself struggling to connect with customers. With sales slowing and an aging tech stack, the company scrambles to align on a strategy that will allow it to catch up to competitors.





## Walker Homes

**Walker Homes**  
Company

**Tulsa, OK**  
HQ

**1983**  
Founded

**8,456**  
Employees

**Walker.ai**  
Website

**For-Profit**  
Company Type

**713-555-0199**  
Phone number

**Jim Walker (deceased)**  
Founders

**Kenny Haynes (Chairperson),  
Paul Jenkins, Jeannette  
Chang, Cornell Thompson  
Katherine Coleman**  
Board members

**N/A**  
Investors

### About

Walker Homes specializes in urban living. The company initially began as a traditional developer of multifamily dwellings, but pivoted toward sustainable and affordable, high-density, parking-free developments in non-traditional locations. The company was also a key partner in Y-town, an ambitious effort to build a city from the ground up based on the company's principles.

**\$1.2B**

Valuation

**NA**

Total funding amount

### Latest News

**Walker scrambles as  
competition for affordable  
urban living accelerates**

November 2027

**Walker to participate in  
Caravan's CMATCH Marketplace**

April 2029



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Leadership  
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Unpacking  
This Future



New message

From Richard Lawson <[richard.lawson@walkerhomes.com](mailto:richard.lawson@walkerhomes.com)>

To Susan Fields <[susan.fields@walkerhomes.com](mailto:susan.fields@walkerhomes.com)>

Subject REORG FAQ + MAJOR ISSUES TO ADDRESS!!!

Hi Susan,

As we prepare for the reorg announcement, there are three “elephants in the room” we need to cover: 1. AI Jim. 2. The Great Productivity Push of 2027. 3. The Sales Collapse. Since I wasn’t here, I need greater context to prepare. Can you please fill me in? No need to pull punches.

RL



From: Susan Fields <[susan.fields@walkerhomes.com](mailto:susan.fields@walkerhomes.com)> To: Richard Lawson <[richard.lawson@walkerhomes.com](mailto:richard.lawson@walkerhomes.com)> Subject:Re: REORG FAQ + MAJOR ISSUES TO ADDRESS!!!

Hi Richard,

All right. You asked for it. Please do not distribute these to others as this is for your eyes only.

**1. “AI Jim”** – The introduction of “AI Jim,” our misguided attempt at a generalized intelligence, was supposed to revolutionize our processes, but it ended up being a colossal failure. It’s critical that we explain what went wrong and how we’re ensuring such mistakes won’t be repeated.

**2. The Great Productivity Push of 2027** – In the fall of 2026, when we first saw some softness in the pipeline, we decided to theme all of 2027 around productivity. At the time, this made sense—we wanted to unify folks around a common cause and recapture some of our fighting spirit. In actuality, the push on productivity divided the company, directly caused the exodus of top-level talent, and sowed division throughout the ranks. While it wasn’t quite on the level of disaster that was AI Jim on a PR level, it was arguably even more destructive to company morale and definitely more destructive to our business reputation.



From: Susan Fields <[susan.fields@walkerhomes.com](mailto:susan.fields@walkerhomes.com)>  
To: Richard Lawson <[richard.lawson@walkerhomes.com](mailto:richard.lawson@walkerhomes.com)>  
Subject: Re: REORG FAQ + MAJOR ISSUES TO ADDRESS!!!

Leadership's lack of foresight about job-shifting, reskilling, and implications of automation decisions showed a lack of human empathy and understanding.

**3. The Sales Collapse** – There's just no good way to explain a 20% drop in YoY sales but, yes, our sales continue to crater due to the rising adoption of personal AIs in the consumer space, customer adoption of next-gen sales agents and coaches, and the move of AI-first companies like Caravan into multi-family real estate services. Our sales culture, which Jim Walker defined and exemplified, has always been a differentiator for us against our competitors. Jim, a seller of rare skill, believed in boots on the ground and thought the only way to sell real estate was "in-person, face-to-face, tech-free." He was famous for taking shifts in demo units to show trainees how to build rapport, ask good questions, and see what you could learn from every customer.

Honestly, because so many of our reps learned from Jim and had such initial success applying his approach, it took us too long to realize how much customer decision-making and our overall pipeline was changing. It's essential that we address how this reorg will adapt to the evolving market dynamics and technology advancements. Let me know if you need further clarification on any of the above.

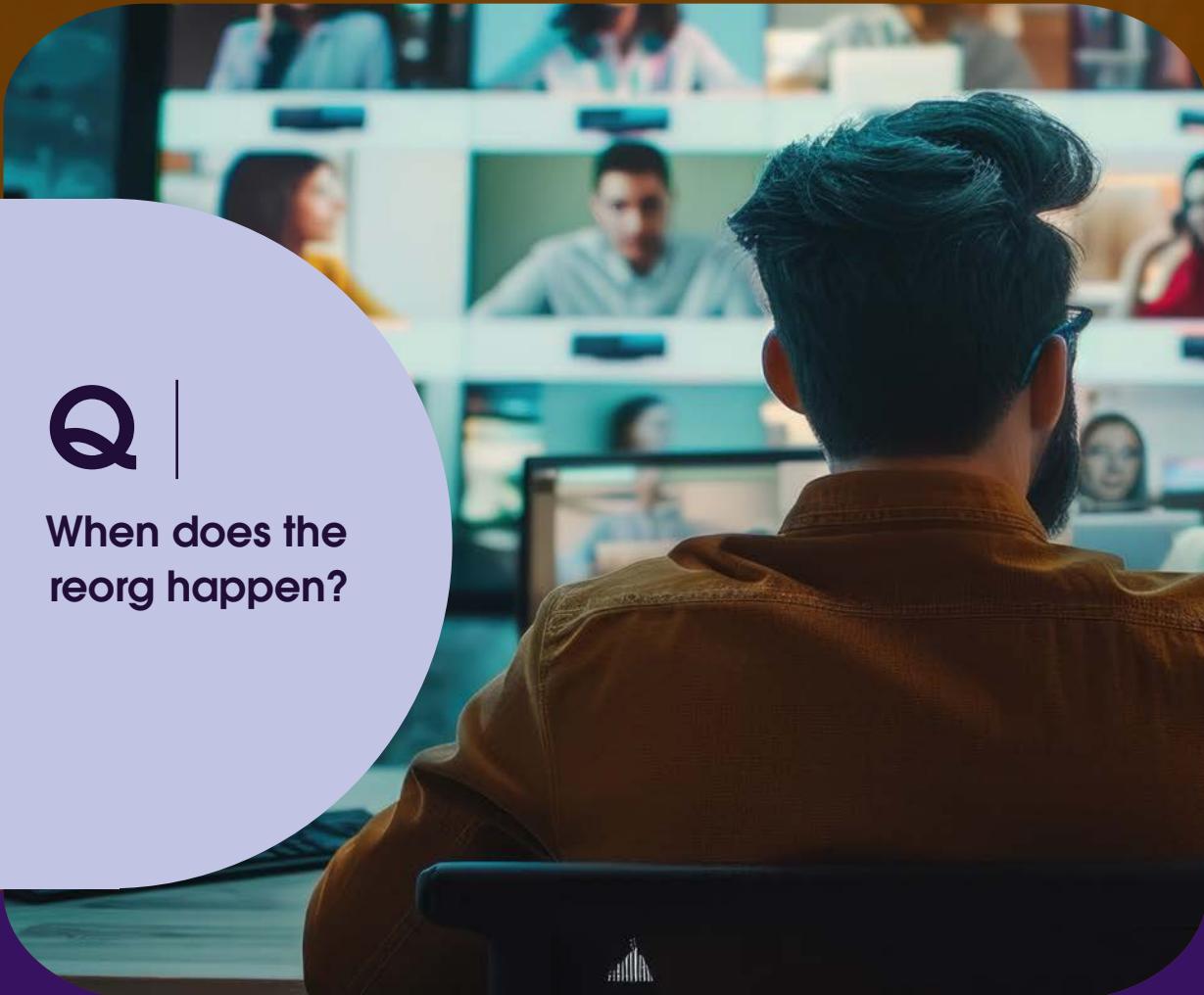
Best,  
Susan

From: Richard Lawson <[richard.lawson@walkerhomes.com](mailto:richard.lawson@walkerhomes.com)>  
To: Susan Fields <[susan.fields@walkerhomes.com](mailto:susan.fields@walkerhomes.com)>  
Subject: Re: REORG FAQ + MAJOR ISSUES TO ADDRESS!!!

Thanks, Susan. Exactly what I needed. I'll refine the language for the employee-facing FAQ and feed it to the HR Agent. Should be fine. – RL

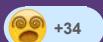
Q |

When does the  
reorg happen?



walkerHR\_AI @everyone

We are acting with bold urgency at a time of marketplace upheaval. Impacted teams will hear from their managers within 24 hours. Please share your questions in Walker\_all and our HR Agent will answer.





## One more time. Why did we use AI to reanimate our deceased CEO?



walkerHR\_AI @everyone

Our founder was a legend, and there is no Walker Homes without his vision, insight, and irrepressible enthusiasm. We made a heroic effort to deliver an AI copy of Jim after his untimely passing in the hope that we could leverage Jim's insights and institutional knowledge. In retrospect, this effort was both more expensive and less practical than hoped for, but it did directly lead to our pivot to prioritizing technology investments that serve the needs of our customers and employees. Our current investments represent a more strategic approach, and we believe we're on the right track with our revised strategy.



SammyMiller @walkerHR\_AI @everyone



Sara Tyler @SammyMiller AI Jim memes: the gifs that keep giving.



TommyXu @everyone BRING BACK AI JIM!!



## Why were AI Supervisors introduced only to be abandoned?



walkerHR\_AI @everyone

In response to our declining fiscal performance over the last nine quarters, we searched high and low for ways to improve productivity on an individual level. It was in this spirit we became interested in AI's ability to contribute to employee oversight. We now acknowledge that our implementation of "AI Supervisors" was ill-conceived and poorly executed. These agents were not meant to replace management, but we understand why some employees felt that to be the case. More care and attention should have been paid to early employee complaints that we had created a "surveillance state" where humans were punished for taking care of their needs or even connecting with co-workers and customers.

In retrospect, we should have considered performance one part of a larger strategic picture. By over-indexing on efficiency, we hurt our relationships with critical customers and lost our focus on innovating to keep up with an increasingly competitive marketplace. It's regrettable that employees went public with their concerns, but we have paused this program as a part of the reorg in order to more thoughtfully design an approach that improves performance, respects employee privacy, and nurtures culture-building and connection.



21



90



30



SammyMiller @walkerHR\_AI @everyone



10



SicilyT @everyone I get the snark and no, this shouldn't come from an AI, but I for one am encouraged that someone (or thing) is saying, "Mistakes were made."



Q |

## What is our strategy to right the ship?

**walkerHR\_AI: @everyone**

We have aligned around a three-part strategy to drive growth over the next 3 years:

- 1. Talent** – In addition to the already-announced reorg, we are actively recruiting AI-first leaders who know how to use today's tools to deliver the kinds of experiences our increasingly savvy customers expect.
- 2. Smarter Selling** – Smarter selling means preserving the relationship-based approach we've always used, but augmenting it with AI co-sellers, new self-service options, and agent-to-agent selling programs. Our goal is to turn our marketing efforts and our selling efforts into a single, unified experience and show our partners that we're ready to deliver mutually beneficial results.
- 3. State-of-the-art Service** – Customer expectations are higher than ever. We need to see every service outreach as a relationship-building opportunity and use everything we know about our customers to exceed their expectations. This means a massive investment in digital service agents and smarter optimization of human-to-human interactions. It means delivering Walker agents in environments, like CMATCH, where competitors are negotiating with consumer agents. And it means learning, together, what it means to deliver traditional Walker service into the autonomous era.



43



20



70



11



**Susan Fields @everyone** We will be sharing a detailed strategic plan shortly for those who want to discuss how we built this strategy and why.

# What people are saying about Walker Homes



REVIEW BY MIGUEL R.



I've had an amazing experience with Walker. Their units are modern, eco-friendly, and perfect for urban living. The process of getting a unit was smooth for me, and I've had no issues with maintenance. The location is unbeatable, and I love the sense of community here.



REVIEW BY TAYLOR R.



I actually love my Walker unit, but the process of securing it was crazy-making. They STILL don't have a way to do a virtual walkthrough and their chat thing is partying like it's 2019. It's not an agent....it's a chatbot!



REVIEW BY JORDAN S.



We want an actual agent! My sink broke and I had to walk to the main office and wait for dude to get off a phone call (!!!) before I could get help. In every other apartment like this you can just ask your agent to talk to their agent and that's it. Why must it be so hard?



## REVIEW BY MORGAN L.



The units are great, eco-friendly, and well-designed. But the management needs to catch up with the times. Still selling with demo units? Come on, Walker! And their support is practically nonexistent. You can only rely on them if you have a lot of patience.



## REVIEW BY MARIA F.



While I appreciate the sustainable focus and the design of the units, Walker's customer service is seriously lacking. The chatbot is useless, and getting in touch with a human is nearly impossible. They need to improve their tech and support systems to match the quality of their homes.



## REVIEW BY RILEY P



Living here has been a nightmare. The unit itself is fine, but the management is a joke. No live support, just an outdated chatbot, and getting any maintenance done takes forever. I regret moving here and can't wait for my lease to end.



## NEW JOB POSTINGS



Search jobs





Job Category

Country (2)

AI Companion

Remote (5)

## Unstructured Data Engineer

Tulsa

Regular

90 percent of data generated by Walker is currently trapped and unavailable for use. Much of this data is unstructured. Walker is looking for a visionary leader who can tap the potential of our lost intelligence and build the data pipelines needed to incorporate it into our existing workflows, where it can help employees make better decisions, automate redundant tasks, and improve the employee experience so that our team members can focus on doing what they love: building the sustainable, affordable urban housing of the future.

## Product Stitcher

Remote

Intense

Our Walker residents expect our products and services to constantly improve. Keeping up with the ever-growing capabilities of our AI-powered tools and seizing opportunities to refine customer experience is a full-time job for the right individual...is that you? Walker is looking for an AI-first product stitcher who can quickly stitch together modular software tools into workflows and products and quickly refine their work through customer input. Successful candidates will break trail for a new wave of hires and have ample management opportunities as we reimagine how we deliver value to our customers.

## Head of Employee Experiences

Tulsa

Regular

At Walker, we know a thriving, values-based culture is the key to innovation and growth. In our increasingly virtual and automated world, we want to ensure we preserve the unique, relationship-based culture that made our company great in the first place. Walker's HR department is looking for a deeply empathetic connector who knows how to make the most of real-time interactions, bring greater intentionality to hybrid, asynchronous, and virtual exchanges, and reinvent our seller experience for the brave new world of automated agents.

COMPANY 2: WALKER HOMES

# Unpacking This Future

**Walker Homes is a company that bet big on affordable, sustainable urban housing when others shied away.**

Though Walker nailed that transition, they struggled to foresee how the rapid proliferation of AI agents would transform the relationships with customers. In a world where personal AIs now broker buying decisions—even big ones like deciding where to live—companies like Walker who counted on easy access to customers risk diminished relevance and success.

The artifacts here tell the story of a company processing this realization and struggling to catch up. Employee morale is low, the company has misallocated its precious investments by swinging for the fences on a “founder reanimation” vanity project with questionable business utility, and a reorg is underway.

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Magical AI Thinking

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Designing for Adoption

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Long-Term Talent

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The Future of Selling





### MAGICAL AI THINKING

It's exciting to imagine a future where AI agents offload all mundane tasks, supercharge our creativity, and make our difficult decisions easier.

In getting excited about the possibilities, however, it can be tempting to overlook the messier aspects of transformation.

**New Salesforce research shows that the majority of workers (63%) say more human involvement would build their trust with AI.**

Walker wants to go straight to the promised land, but the tech just isn't there. "AI Jim" is an intentional exaggeration designed to serve as a cautionary tale, but the impulse to skip ahead and ignore the hard work it will take to get to transformative capabilities is a real risk for companies leveraging new technologies.

For a company like Walker Homes, Salesforce would propose a more practical AI blueprint. This includes identifying early use cases to build trust and prove value, investing in skilling up employees, and encouraging broad experimentation. Walker would also benefit from keeping humans at the helm of AI workflows to ensure trust and reliability.

### DESIGNING FOR ADOPTION

Employees who don't trust tools are highly unlikely to adopt them. New Salesforce research shows that the majority of workers (63 %) say more human involvement would build their trust with AI. Through the Walker artifacts, we learn of employee accusations of "AI supervisors," observe multiple signals of a top-down innovation culture, and read between the lines about a prior regime that actively dug in their heels against change. In combination, these actions disempower Walker's workers, undermine trust, and exacerbate an adversarial relationship between leadership and employees. All of this makes it harder for Walker to catch up with their competition.

### LONG-TERM TALENT

Walker's lack of care related to adoption of new technologies and tending to its culture, particularly in absence of a charismatic founder, make it ill-prepared for the transition it must urgently undertake. As author and professor Ethan Mollick has pointed out, one possible consequence of AI reliance could be a loss of focus on talent development. As Walker shifted its focus to "AI Supervisors" in the face of a softening pipeline, it further alienated employees who might have otherwise served as the next generation of leaders. Now, the company must aggressively hire outside talent and task its new recruits with the difficult job of transforming a damaged culture.



### THE FUTURE OF SELLING

Walker sellers believe in the power of relationships to drive sales. When AI agents become increasingly central to these relationships, Walker Homes finds itself cut off from the ability to connect with potential customers. It lacks the capabilities needed to participate in agent-to-agent selling environments, like Caravan's CMATCH, and customize its outreach efforts to potential customers. In essence, Walker struggles to translate its relationship-building strengths into new channels where context, personalization, and mutual value scale the 1:1, relationship-building skills of expert sellers to every potential buyer.

Salesforce's new Einstein Sales Agent features personalized engagement, access to trusted CRM data, and the ability to operate across sales, service, marketing, and commerce. It also collaborates with human sellers to deliver customer success at a scale. Being a "relationship company" isn't at odds with being an AI company, especially if AI changes the nature of relationships.





FUTURE: COMPANY 3

# Sandstone Services

An established maintenance services company transforms into an AI-first organization

Sandstone seeks balance between preserving the qualities that fueled its growth in the past and embracing the potential of technologies that increasingly define its future. The company looks to democratize innovation, keep its eye on the bottom line, and preserve its focus on the customer in an increasingly automated world.





## Sandstone Services

**Sandstone Services**  
Company

**Duluth, Minnesota**  
HQ

**1987**  
Founded

**2738**  
Employees

**sandstone.com**  
Website

**For-Profit**  
Company type

**218-555-0100**  
Phone number

**Kal Williams (retired)**  
Founders

**Alicia Jones (Chairperson)**  
**Victor Patel, Evelyn Martinez,**  
**Samuel Okoro, Clara**  
**Nguyen, Janelle Williams**  
Board members

**N/A**  
Investors

### About

Sandstone is a home maintenance services company that began as a hardware store. Initially, the store specialized in DIY builders, but later pivoted to providing home maintenance services and logistics arrangement for a wide range of purposes, fueling its dramatic expansion. Founder Kal Williams' daughter, Janelle, has accelerated this push and currently serves as Sandstone's CEO.

**\$2.5B**

Valuation

**Public**

Funding Status

**\$250M**

Total funding amount

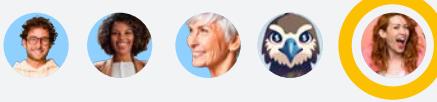
**sandy.ai**

Company agent

### Latest News

Sandstone to expand partnership with Caravan (March, 2028)

Sandstone celebrates original hardware store anniversary with remodel and community celebration (May, 2029)



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## LETTER TO STAKEHOLDERS



45

## IN-PERSON MEETING AGREEMENTS



Sandstone  
Services



# LETTER TO STAKEHOLDERS



JANELLE WILLIAMS  
CEO, SANDSTONE SERVICES



## LETTER TO STAKEHOLDERS

JANELLE WILLIAMS  
CEO, SANDSTONE SERVICES

### Dear Fellow Sandstone Stakeholders:

We stand today as a leader in servicing innovative prefab home communities, exemplifying our adaptability and forward-thinking vision.

As we reflect on Sandstone's remarkable journey from its humble beginnings as a mom-and-pop hardware store founded by my father, Kal Williams, it is with immense pride that we celebrate our enduring legacy and transformative evolution. Since 1987, Sandstone has weathered numerous business cycles. Each challenge has not only strengthened our resolve, it has reinforced our commitment to serving our community. We stand today as a leader in servicing innovative prefab home communities, exemplifying our adaptability and forward-thinking vision. Yet, as we navigate the ever-changing landscape of the present, we face a pivotal moment: the integration of increasingly multi-modal and sophisticated intelligence across our sales, service, marketing, and collaboration efforts.

I see an opportunity for us to redefine our operations, enhance our customer experience, and ensure Sandstone remains at the forefront of the home maintenance industry, but it will require considerable investment in our people, our systems, and our business processes.





The past year has been marked by a significant shift in our business landscape, as Sandstone navigates the challenges of slowing growth due to demographic trends and an abundant supply of manufactured homes. Despite achieving a modest revenue growth of 3%, it's evident that our expansion pace is decelerating. Our operating margin stood at 8%, slightly below industry benchmarks, reflecting our historical focus on growth over profitability. However, operational efficiencies are now becoming a top priority as investors increasingly demand higher returns on capital employed. In response, we have initiated a series of strategic measures aimed at streamlining our processes, which have already led to a 10% reduction in overhead costs. Leadership remains committed to implementing

additional efficiency programs that leverage geographical and technology cost advantages. For example, our homegrown Margin Hawk Agent shows considerable promise for internal use by making employees five times more likely to consider cost-cutting

and holistic interactions at every touchpoint. In this new landscape, traditional departmental functions such as sales, service, marketing, and commerce are becoming obsolete.

At Sandstone, we are embracing this change by ensuring that every employee is equipped to deliver a unified customer experience. This means that regardless of their

**Our AI Margin Hawk, Penny, shows considerable promise for internal use by making employees five times more likely to consider cost-cutting measures that do not impact customer experience.**

measures that do not impact customer experience. Efforts like these are crucial as we adapt to the evolving market dynamics and strive to enhance shareholder value, targeting an increase in return on capital employed (ROCE) from 12% to 15% over the next five years. Thanks to personal AIs that get better by the day, today's customers demand seamless

role, each team member is empowered with the knowledge and tools to address a wide range of customer needs and provide consistent and personalized support.

By breaking down silos and fostering a culture of collaboration and agility,





we are not only meeting the expectations of our customers—we are exceeding them. Sandstone's ability to deliver a cohesive and exceptional customer experience every day is what sets Sandstone apart.

In our transformative journey toward automated intelligence, we are fortunate to have a strategic partnership with Caravan, a pioneering company at the forefront of innovation in our industry. My long-time friend, Cara Jain, the founder and CEO of Caravan, has done an amazing job using AI agents to build her company, showcasing how these technologies can revolutionize business operations.

Caravan's successful implementation of new solutions provides us with valuable insights and serves as inspiration for how our own roadmap can evolve.

By collaborating closely with Caravan, we aim to accelerate our integration efforts, ensuring that Sandstone not only keeps pace with industry advancements but also leads in delivering cutting-edge services to our customers. I recognize the valid concerns surrounding the potential loss of jobs for our team members and the challenges posed by misaligned AI. We purposefully decided to be a fast follower in our adoption of this technology. This allowed us to monitor the advancement of AI and build confidence in the benefits to our business while being

able to mitigate the risks. It is essential that we approach this evolution with the same beginner's mind that has been a cornerstone of Sandstone's culture since its founding. This mindset will allow us to remain open, innovative, and adaptable as we navigate these changes.

**My long-time friend, Cara Jain, the founder and CEO of Caravan, has done an amazing job using AI agents to build her company..**

I am confident that our business will continue to thrive as our customers and partners discover the immense value we bring to their lives. By making the lives of homeowners, renters, property developers, and managers easier through our advanced services, we will solidify our position as an industry leader. Together, we will harness the power of new technologies to enhance our capabilities, while staying true to the values that have always defined Sandstone.

Thank you for your unwavering support and trust as we step into this exciting future.

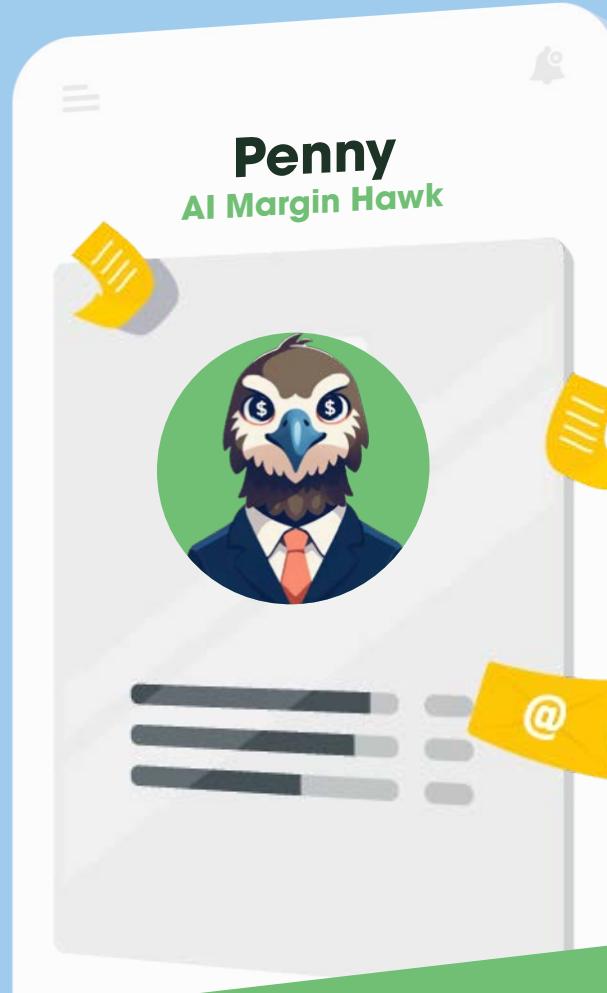
United by purpose, driven by service,  
**Janelle Williams**  
**CEO, Sandstone Services**



Hey all....you may have seen Janelle's announcement about a renewed focus on cost-cutting. That means it's time to unleash the hawk! Our Margin Hawk helper, Penny, is out of beta and available for general use.

Penny is easy to use, effective, and built for interpretation so you can dive into the company financial data, procurement records, and expenditure reports that inform Penny's decision-making.

Thanks to beta tester feedback, we've incorporated advanced data visualization tools that present cost analysis and recommendations more clearly. We've also added escalation paths for compliance and ethical flags, tweaked Penny's humor settings, and softened the "martial qualities" of Penny's avatar.



## Meet the AI Margin Hawk

Sandstone  
Services

# GUIDANCE ON IN-PERSON, PRIVATE MEETINGS



The value of recording everything and using helpers to summarize and interrogate meeting data is well established, and we all know how powerful contextual tools are for connecting with customers and partners. At the same time, Sandstone believes there are some meetings where private, deliberative, and person-to-person connection is both more appropriate and more effective. Our research and outreach to current employees suggests the following meeting types benefit from offline modes:





## 1:1s



There's been pushback on this, but we stand by our belief it's best practice to talk to your manager offline and practice deep listening. If you'd like to track your action items, invite your helper(s) in for the last five minutes and rundown priorities and next steps.

## Job interviews

We get it. Interview processes are long, aligning on who to hire is challenging, and it can feel unsettling to make talent calls, especially when they invariably involve subjective judgements of other humans. That said, we believe your human intelligence and intuition is of value here, as is the practice of considering your own biases in relation to your decision-making. Best practice is to leverage the support you need to challenge your assumptions and check your logic, but make the final call offline.



## Team-building meetings

Meetings explicitly designed to remind team members they are a part of the team should not be attended by personal digital twins or personal avatars of any sort.



## Inclusive Innovation Sessions (IIS)

Sandstone believes the best ideas come from matching the employees closest to our customers with sophisticated pattern detection and prototyping tools. But we also need IIS participants to feel comfortable building on ideas with each other. Best practice is to review your recorded observations ahead of time, followed by ten minutes of offline personal reflection, and then bring in your helpers to help you prototype for the build phase.

## Judgement calls

If your decision can be solved by data and analytics, automate away! If you're making a more subjective judgment, it's best practice to put your earpieces down and talk out what you're struggling with in real time. It is increasingly common to let helpers identify issues, frame the decisions to be made, and bring in actuals when it's decision time.



# Invitation to IIS



We're thrilled to invite you to our next Inclusive Innovation Sessions (IIS)!

[JOIN](#)

As a front-line employee who regularly interacts with our customers, we want to tap your first-hand expertise and observations to help us imagine better customer experiences across our range of products and services.

**Wait, I'm not an idea person!**

IIS sessions don't require any special skills or innovation experience. They are collaborative sessions designed to surface things you may have noticed in your interactions with customers. Each session begins with your observations and ideas—shared offline in a casual, human-to-human conversation with colleagues from across Sandstone.

Next, we'll pick a few ideas to focus on. We'll leverage personalized helpers designed to help you think of solutions, prototype winning concepts, and even help you test what you come up with on synthetic customer personas to see how they do. Want to go further? Run market sims or A/B your idea against another one in the group.

Promising ideas will all be entered into our innovation pipeline for launch. Should your idea be selected, you'll be eligible for an initial \$10k bonus and much more if your idea makes it to market.

# INCLUSIVE INNOVATION SESSION



+34



## SYNTHETIC RESEARCH

Workers can test ideas on generated customer personas



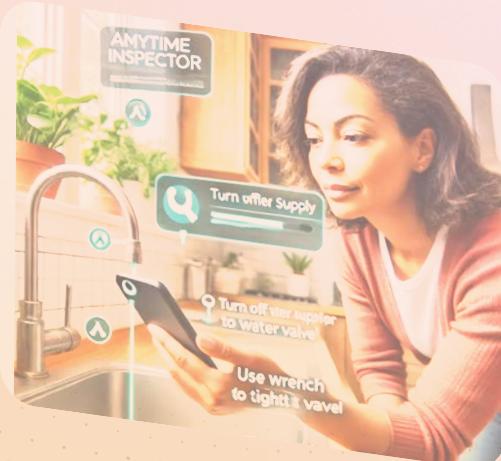
## MARKET SIMULATOR →

Every worker has access to powerful simulations



**PRODUCT NAMER**

It's far easier for human teams to refine ideas with a range of specialized AI agents



**Product Namer**

see how important it is to maintain your strongest brand qualities and to family with your existing product lines so customers know what to expect.

Let's ask **@MarketingStrategy** if they agree

**M** **@MarketingStrategy** 2:14pm  
Certainly! I am happy to weigh in. Based on my sources and the Sandstone wisdom I have access to, I would strongly encourage us to pick a name that is easy to spell, that has a reasonable domain available, and if possible that alludes to desert materials like sandstone. **@BrandBot**, why don't you generate a list of 10 possible names to get us started.

**J** **@Janice** 2:15pm  
Wait — I have an idea... What if we used the concept of an Inspector as inspiration because a lot of domestic challenges do need to be investigated a bit before you know how to fix them...

**B** **@BrandBot** 2:16pm  
Ooooh, good idea @Janice. Ok, so then based on your Inspector idea and **@MarketingStrategy**'s advice as well as our brand guidelines and accrued Sandstone wisdom, here are some product names we could go with:

- Sandstone Inspector
- Anypoint Inspector
- Anypoint Detective
- Sandstone HandyBot

**J** **@Janice** 2:15pm  
Nice list! Hmm, I might need to think about these for a bit... but I do like Anypoint Inspector. Can you run that one past **@Legal** and **@PartnersOrg** to see if any red flags come up. And prepare this idea for synthetic research and add it to the prototype backlog for simulation testing. Thanks! Good work today, team!

Oh, also.. I almost forgot. Can you also...|

# Winning concept



+34

EXIT IIS SESSION



COMPANY 3: SANDSTONE SERVICES

# Unpacking This Future

**Sandstone represents how incumbent companies of today might successfully navigate the transition to becoming AI-first organizations.**

Originally founded as a hardware store, Sandstone saw a new opportunity to provide reliable, customer-friendly facilities maintenance in the multifamily residential space and pivoted to take advantage and drive growth. The company continues to evolve based on customer needs, but balances this instinct with careful consideration of its employees and the communities it serves.

How does an established company like Sandstone preserve its proud culture while embracing disruptive innovations in a fast-moving marketplace? In the artifacts, we see a company that threads the needle by exercising deliberation, but still bets big on opportunities that align to its values and goals.

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Fast-following

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Democratized Innovation

---

Specialized Agents

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Stakeholder Mindset





### FAST-FOLLOWING

In the stakeholder letter, Sandstone CEO Janelle Williams mentions her rationale for a “fast-following” strategy with AI. While being a follower may lack the early-mover prestige associated with disrupting existing markets or cracking open new ones,

Janelle points to the ability to “build confidence in the benefits to our business while being able to mitigate the risks.”

This approach allows Sandstone to adopt new technologies without sacrificing trust. The “meeting guideline” artifact highlights the thoughtfulness

the company is bringing to how and when to prioritize direct human interaction and when to bring in AIs. The strategy also makes sense from a business perspective, enabling Sandstone to place bets in places (like Caravan’s CMATCH platform) that deliver proven results.

### DEMOCRATIZED INNOVATION

An established company like Sandstone with an army of frontline maintenance workers has a treasure trove on their hands: employees who see and interact with customers regularly. Sandstone’s “Inclusive Innovation Sessions” represent a specific strategy for capturing insights from these workers and using new AI tools to ideate ways to solve them. Thanks to the potential of generative AI, it’s far easier to push the fidelity of such ideas higher without specialized skills. New tools like Meta’s 3D to text generator and OpenAI’s text-to-video tool, Sora, already

point the way to a world where the barriers between idea and prototype collapse. Smart companies will seize the power of these tools to capture trapped potential across their workforce, especially from those who interact regularly with customers.

**“Inclusive Innovation Sessions” represent a specific strategy for capturing insights from these workers and using new AI tools to ideate ways to solve them.**

### SPECIALIZED AGENTS

Like Caravan, Sandstone relies on specialized agents functioning in multi-agent and hybrid AI/human work environments. These agents are easier to build, more reliable in aggregate, and provide the benefits of both thought diversity and specialized expertise in more conversations.

AI is only as good as the data it draws on. You need real-time, verified customer data from disparate sources to ground AI agents and provide relevant context, which Salesforce’s Data Cloud makes possible. With the right data integrated into their systems, companies like Sandstone can build and deploy specialized agents tied to specific business use cases. For example, Penny, the “Margin Hawk” agent is designed to help employees consider ways to cut costs.

It's also worth noting that agents like Penny will require ongoing refinement and human design expertise. Sandstone tests the product in beta before it launches more broadly, then adds more powerful data visualization and better escalation paths for compliance and ethical flags.

### STAKEHOLDER MINDSET

As a mature, successful company, Sandstone represents our most explicit effort to articulate what a stakeholder-centric organization might look like in a world of AI agents. Challenges like worker adoption of new technologies and automation-related job loss won't disappear any time soon, but companies like Sandstone who consider tradeoffs and make values-aligned decisions will preserve their reputations while they innovate. How employees, customers, and communities feel about companies will become even more important in a world where companies have less access to direct customer attention due to the proliferation of personal AIs.





# Closing

**Imagining fictional companies can help us anticipate real strategic decisions. In this issue, we spent time with three invented organizations in a future where work looks a lot different than it does today.**

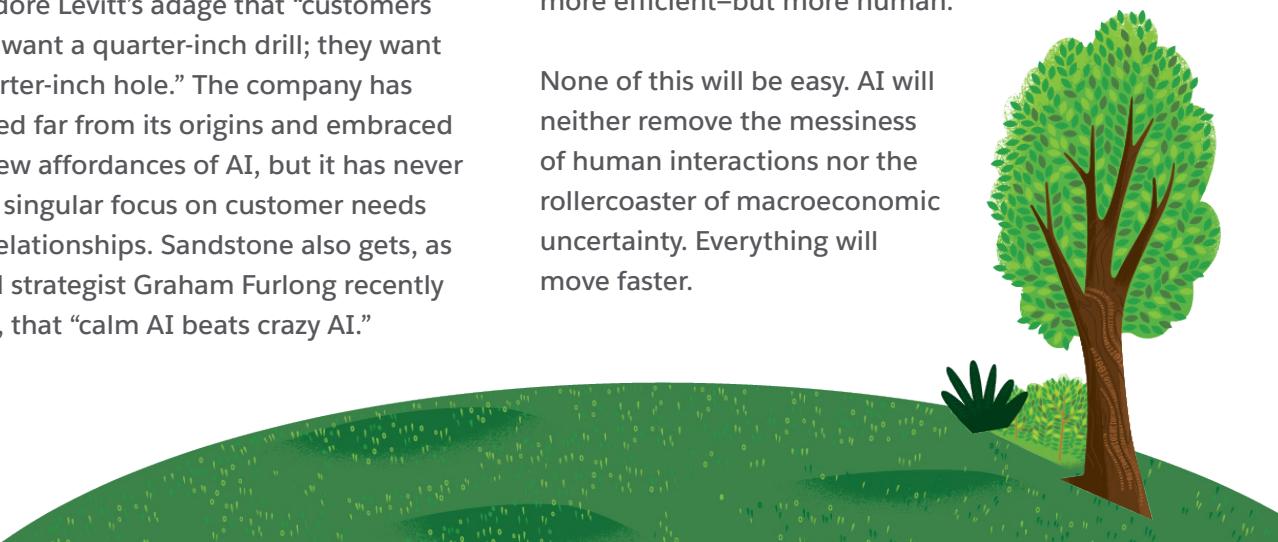
By design, each of these companies faces unique business challenges. Caravan is a fast mover that attacks adjacent spaces and leverages partnerships well, but the organization needs to ensure it stays close to its customers and that its relationships pay dividends. Walker Homes, after a series of strategic missteps, must figure out how to catch up with competitors. Sandstone Services strives to preserve the qualities that fueled its growth while continuing to evolve for an ever-changing marketplace.

Leaders of today's successful businesses might want to pay attention to Sandstone. As a company that began as a hardware store, Sandstone still understands Theodore Levitt's adage that "customers don't want a quarter-inch drill; they want a quarter-inch hole." The company has evolved far from its origins and embraced the new affordances of AI, but it has never lost a singular focus on customer needs and relationships. Sandstone also gets, as brand strategist Graham Furlong recently put it, that "calm AI beats crazy AI."

You can try some of Sandstone's strategies at your company today. First, start using AI to drive a more bottom-up innovation culture that improves adoption of new tools and unlocks the trapped potential of your customer-facing employees. Follow that by being more intentional and systematic about when to use AI and when not to use AI. Finally, begin the hard but important work of thinking about what it takes to preserve and strengthen your culture in a world where more tasks can be automated and offloaded.

Transforming today's businesses into Einstein Enterprises will require more than just adopting new technologies. As our stories show, it will require both strategic vision and deft touch at the interface of humans with AI. Success will hinge on decision-makers who understand the difference between technical challenges and adaptive ones; stay focused on building better customer and employee relationships; and manage tradeoffs to build businesses that are not just more efficient—but more human.

None of this will be easy. AI will neither remove the messiness of human interactions nor the rollercoaster of macroeconomic uncertainty. Everything will move faster.



As Sandstone CEO Janelle Williams mentions in her letter to stakeholders, keeping up will “require considerable investment in our people, our systems, and our business processes.”

The good news is that in a world of agents, humans still have agency to shape what comes next. Anticipating and imagining the futures shared in this issue of the magazine has already helped our team have better conversations with Salesforce leaders and our customers. We hope you’ll share the magazine and use it to start discussions in your company. If you do so, please let us know how you get on by dropping us an email at [futures@salesforce.com](mailto:futures@salesforce.com). Like you, we’re very much interested in building a future worth working toward, and we’d love to hear what you’re learning.

**The Salesforce Futures Team**





# references and inspiration

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David Berthy, Mick Costigan, Marc Escobosa, Angela Gleason, Daniel Lim, Peter Schwartz

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"How AI Could Help Rebuild the Middle Class"

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"Owning the Workflow in B2B AI Apps"

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"77% of Workers Trust an Autonomous AI Future. Humans Are Critical to Getting There"

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"The Friction Project: How Smart Leaders Make the Right Things Easier and the Wrong Things Harder"

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Andreessen Horowitz | [LINK](#)



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### HUMAN ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Salesforce Futures is indebted to the following individuals for their direct and indirect contributions to this work: Silvio Savarese, Kat Holmes, Jason Winters, Chris Reyes, Ramayya Krishnan, Christophe Combermale, David Schmaier, Emily Witt, Yoav Schlesinger, Joahna Kuiper, The AI Research Team, Ajay Kumar Kambadkone Suresh, Mike Massimi, Sarah Lemma, Sandra Keinzen, and Stephanie Dowling.

### AI ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND DESIGN CHOICES

The AI tools in the production of this magazine include: Adobe stock (including stock AI-generated), Adobe Firefly (custom AI-generated), Midjourney, and DALL-E for imagery; ChatGPT was used to develop concepts, test headlines, and copy-edit.

In the visual design approach to this issue, we aim to ground readers in both natural and human elements to balance the focus on technology. We use a color palette, shapes, and graphics that evoke these qualities and connect our work to the Salesforce brand. Connecting to themes of human-AI collaboration, our design choices seek to highlight the visibility of AI while avoiding problematic anthropomorphism. Our focus is on the synchronicity of teamwork in an AI-collaborative future. The visual story leads with multi-modal environments, followed by hints of familiar collaboration spaces, and finally leaves viewers to imagine their own version of the future of work.

## DISCLAIMER

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Coming soon in Futures Issue 3





# About Salesforce Futures

We help Salesforce and our customers anticipate, imagine, and shape the future, building the shared understanding required to tackle adaptive challenges.

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