



Foundations for AI Adoption

Softcat Summit 2026

Speakers



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Chief Technologist,
Cyber Security,
Softcat



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UKI Platform Architect,
Data & AI,
IBM

Where do you sit?

Positively
sceptical

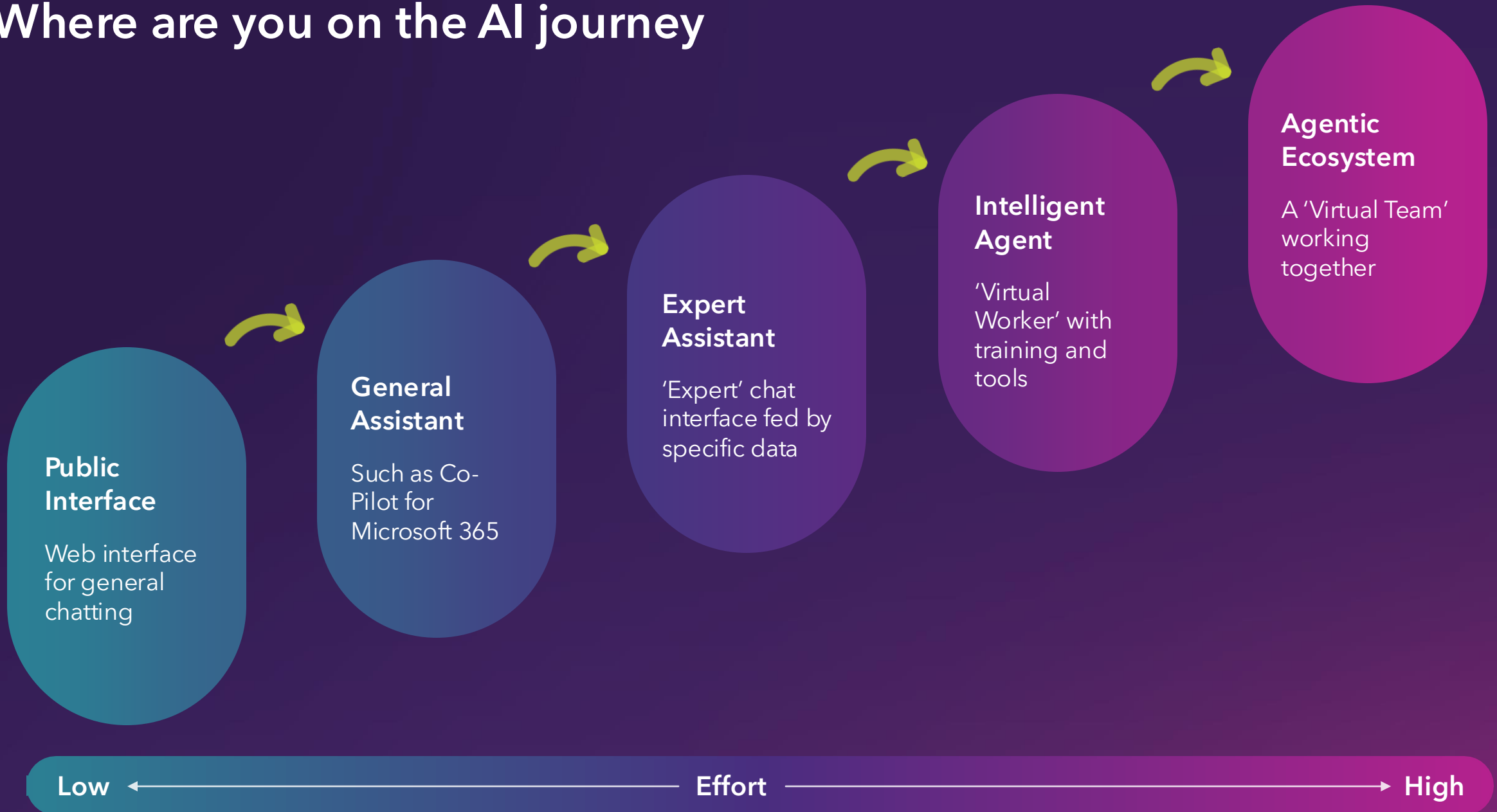
Frustratingly
excited

Where do you sit?

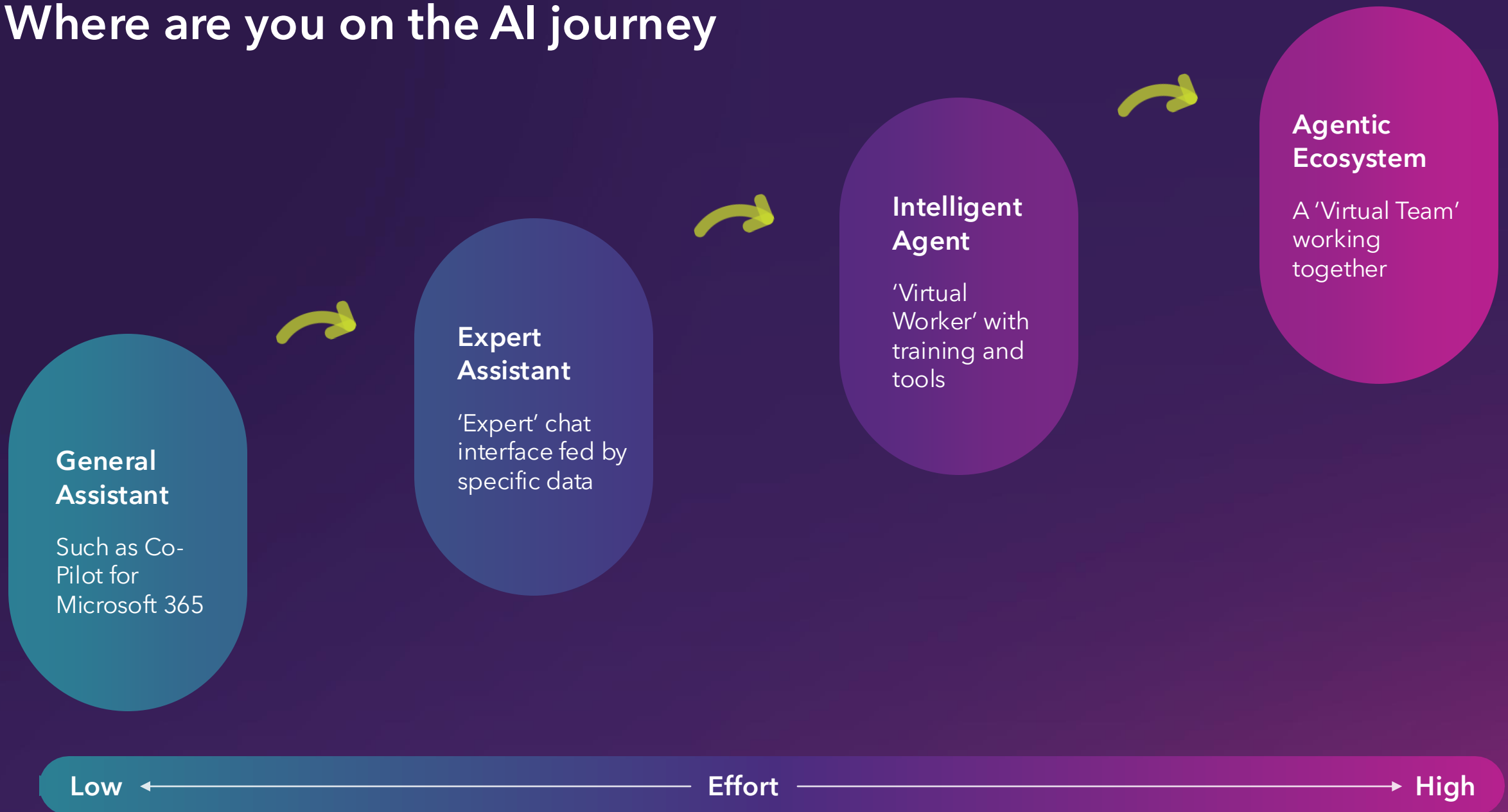
Positively
sceptical

Frustratingly
excited

Where are you on the AI journey



Where are you on the AI journey



The Oakland way: five principles of data that delivers

Value first and
value fast

A balanced
approach

Build
capabilities

People,
people,
people

Customers first,
not vendors

Foundations for AI adoption

Application layer

Data

Security

Networking & connectivity

On-premise platforms

Cloud platforms

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Helping Customers Become Frontier

Reinvent
customer
engagement

Reshape
business
processes

Enrich
employee
experiences

Bend the
curve on
innovation

Frontier transformation needs resilient apps and agents

Foundations for AI adoption

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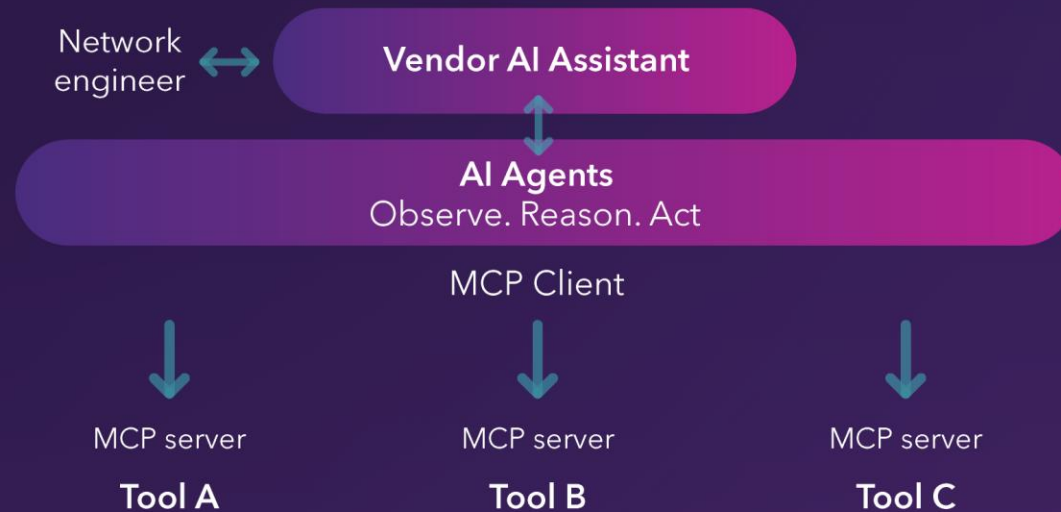
Security

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Agentic Architecture



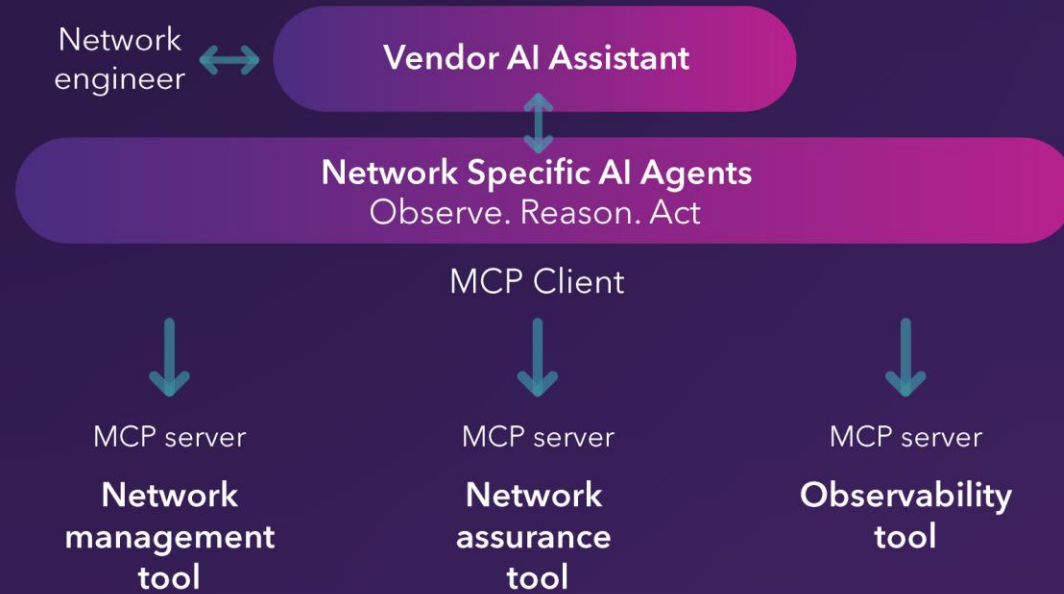
✦ **Model Context Protocol (MCP)**
Agentic AI's universal communication standard

✦ **MCP Servers**
Expose tools and data

✦ **MCP Client**
For each agent to request tools and data

✦ **Orchestration Agent**
Vendor AI assistant coordinates AI agents

Agentic NetOps Architecture



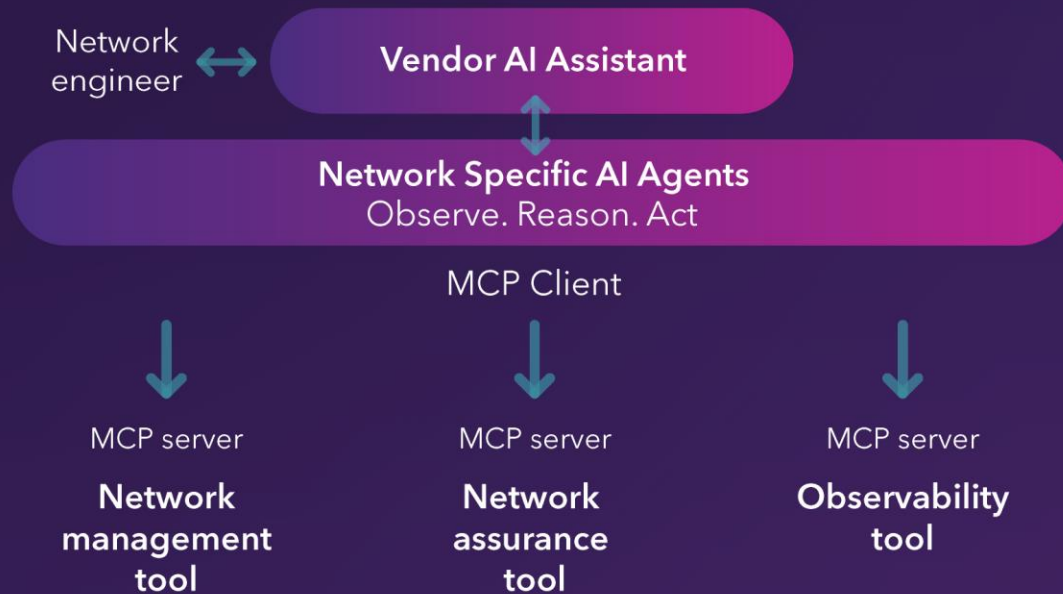
- ✦ **Gain insights**
- ✦ **Better decisions**
- ✦ **Centralised interaction**

Agentic NetOps Architecture



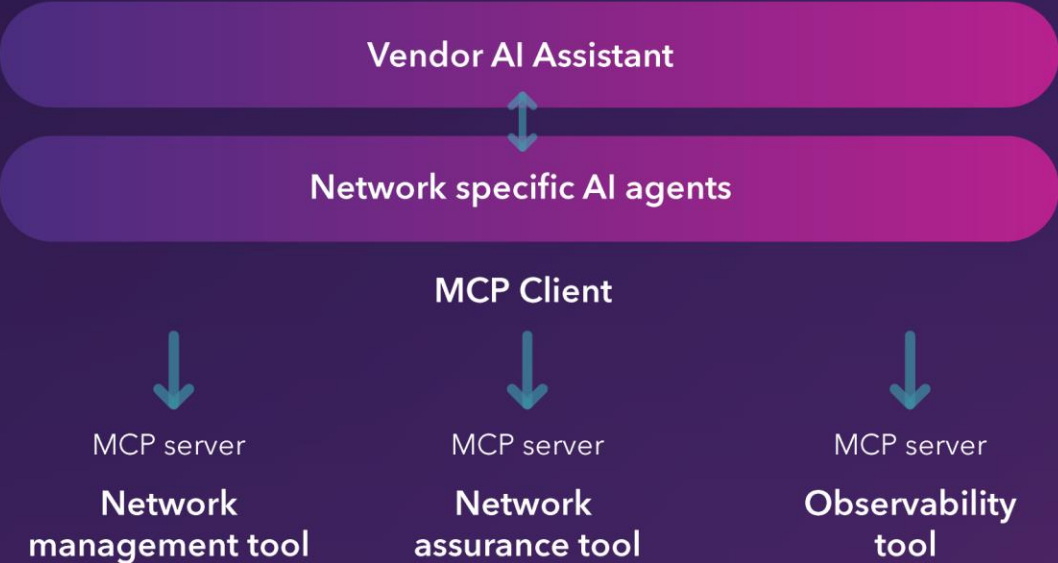
- ✦ Onboarding Agent
- ✦ RCA Agent
- ✦ Support Agent
- ✦ Firmware Agent
- ✦ Energy Mgmt. Agent
- ✦ Policy Mgmt. Agent
- ✦ Performance Agent
- ✦ Security Agent
- ✦ Config Drift Agent

Agentic NetOps Architecture



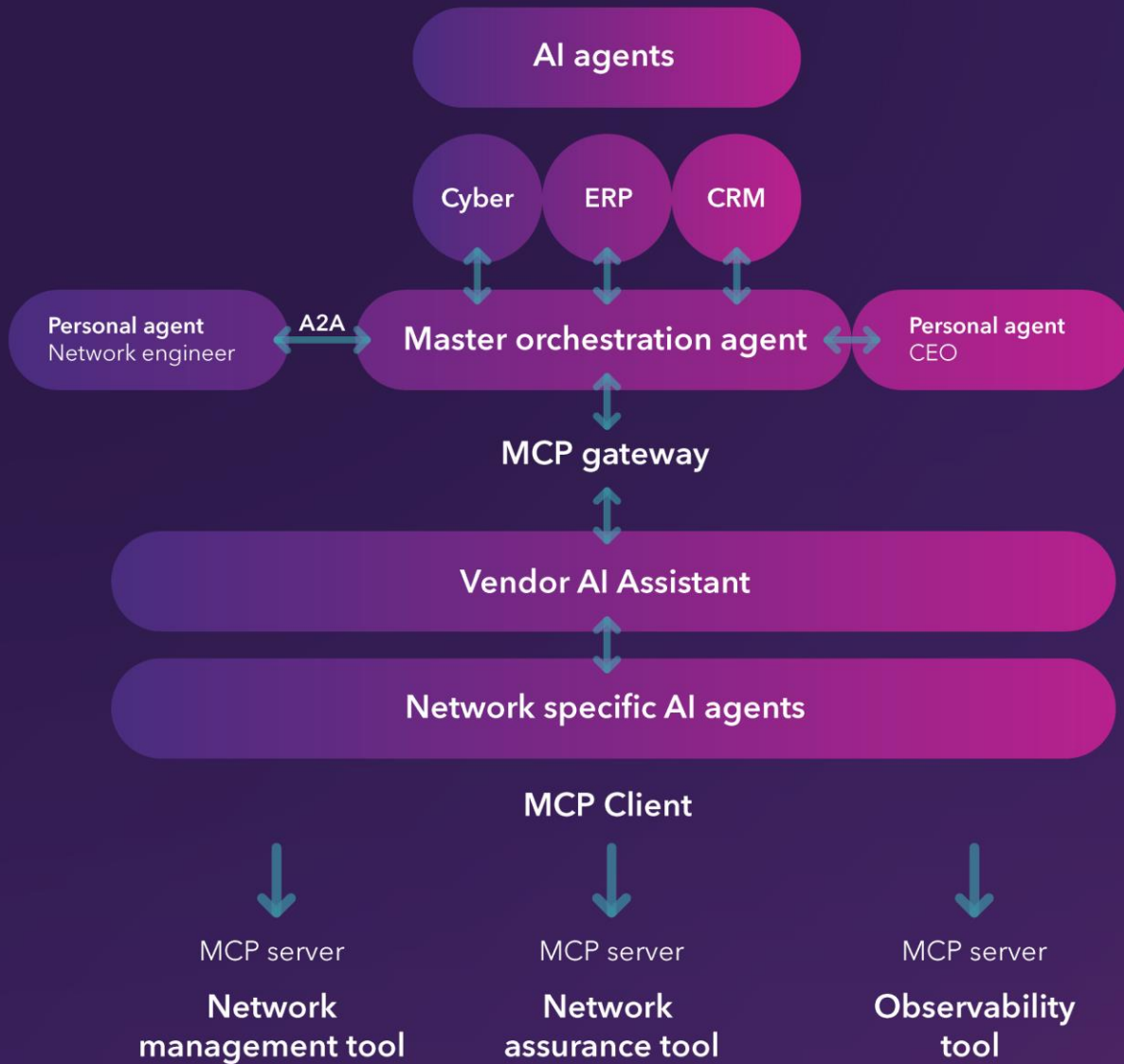
- ✦ **Focused AI Agents**
Enable radical operational efficiency
- ✦ **Deep Context**
Dedicated trained models for networking
- ✦ **Human-in-the-loop**
You remain in control

Future agentic operations



✦ **The quiet but important shift**
to bring AI Agents together

Future agentic operations



✦ **MCP Gateway**
Enforces controls and routes AI interactions

✦ **Centralised & Hyper-Personalised**
AI access and interaction

✦ **Enhanced Context**
Better decisions

✦ **Standardisation**
Better experiences

✦ **Governance**
Better operational control

Foundations for AI adoption

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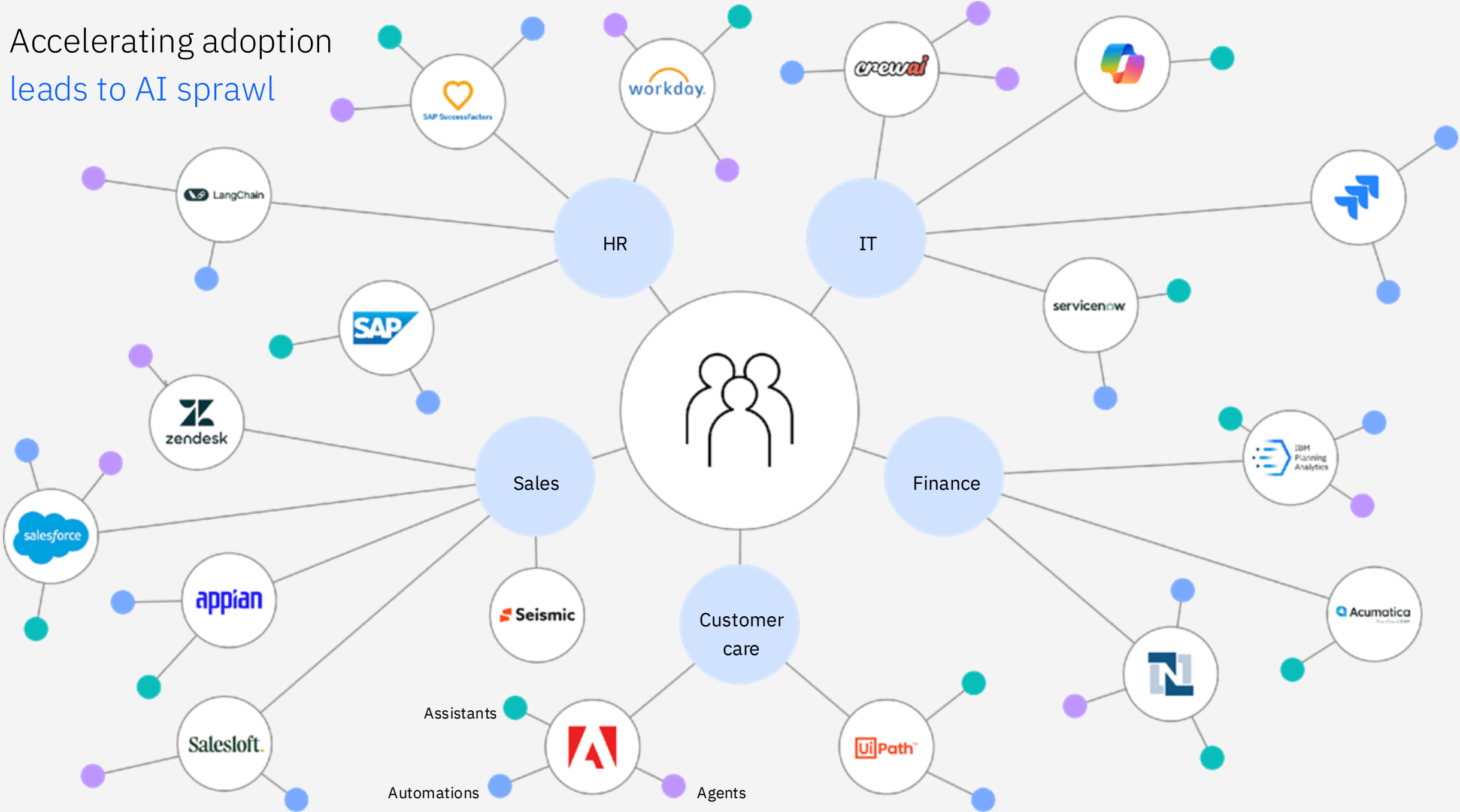
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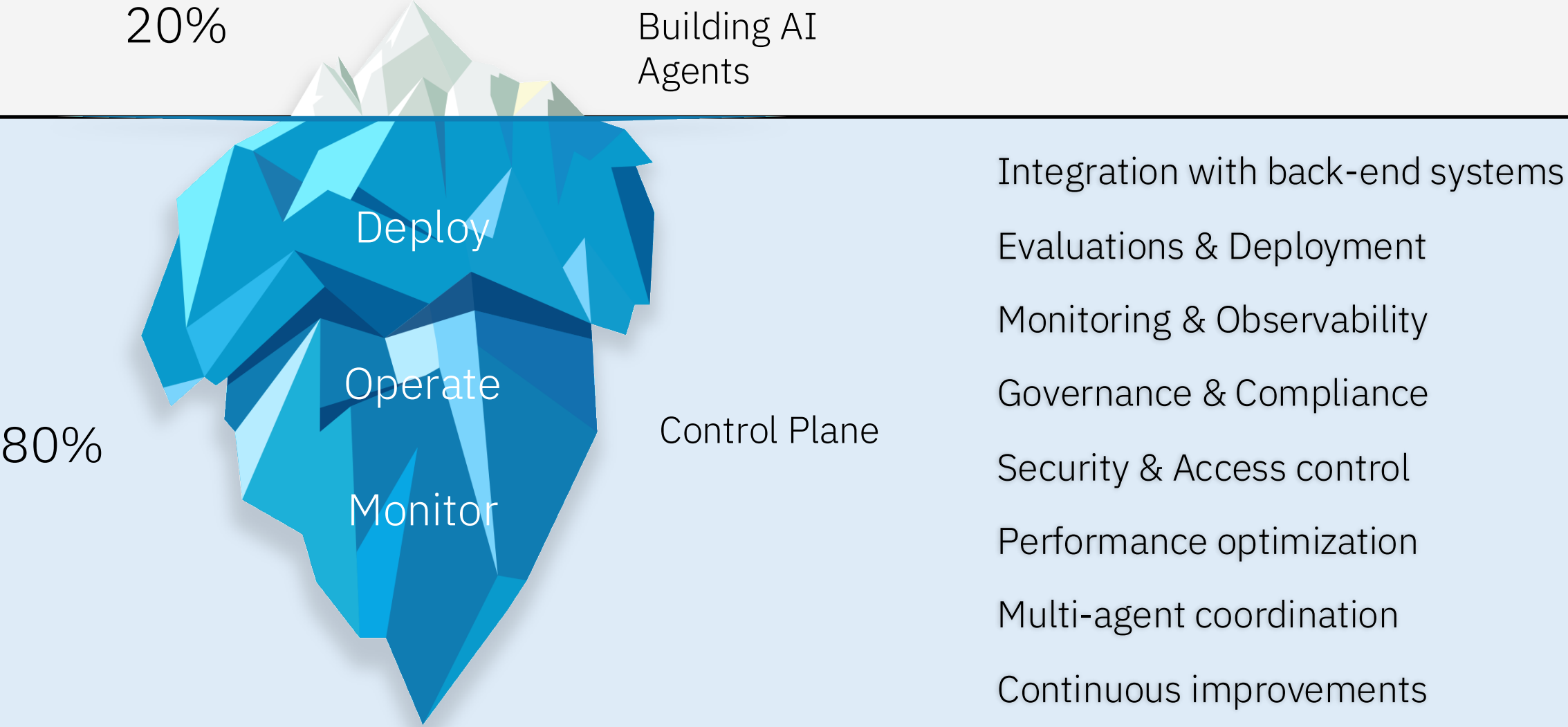
On-premise platforms

Cloud platforms

Accelerating adoption
leads to AI sprawl

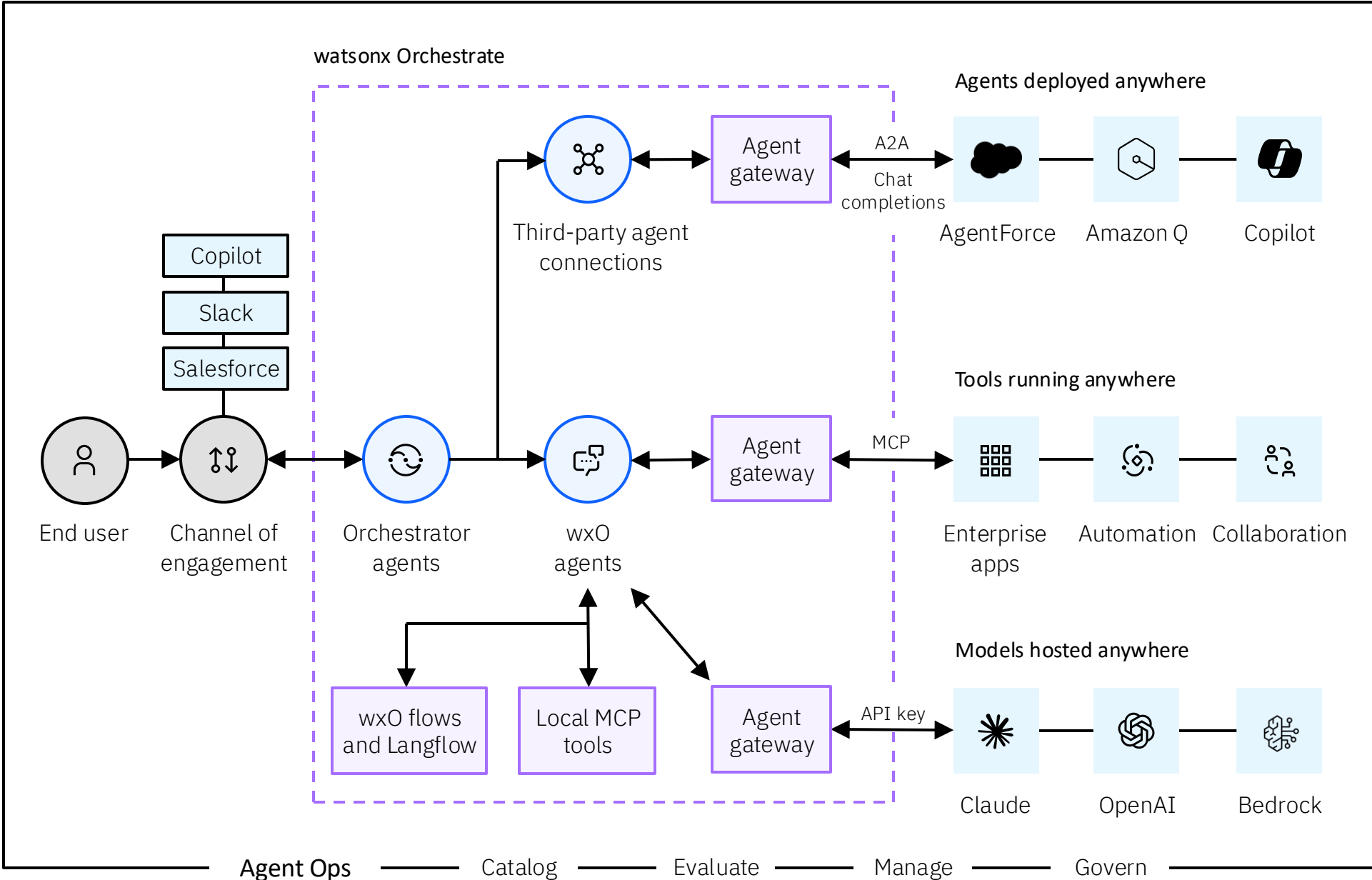


Building AI agents is just the beginning....



Open agentic framework

Open, interoperable and pluggable agentic orchestration with centralized governance for agents running anywhere



Client zero: The path to \$4.5B (and counting)
AI productivity gains since 2023

AskIBM

A central unified interface for all IBMers, connecting to each domain assistant

IBM AskHR

10M

Annual HR interactions fully resolved by AI

40%

Reduction of HR operating budget

+55

Improvement of HR NPS score

IBM AskIT

80%

Inquiries resolved via AskIT

100

Days to build + deploy AskIT from scratch

50%

Reduction in support tickets after deployment

IBM AskSales

180K

Hours per week saved in gathering account insights

5,000

Seller questions answers per week

40%

Improvement in quality of outreach content

IBM Procurement

85%

Orders now processed via 'touchless procurement'

50%

Reduction in time spent on manual, repetitive tasks

15%

Enterprise workforce comprised of contractors

IBM AskIncentives

96%

Sales related inquiries contained within AI Assistant

90%

Greater accuracy in expense accruals

76%

Increase in productivity while serving 22k sellers

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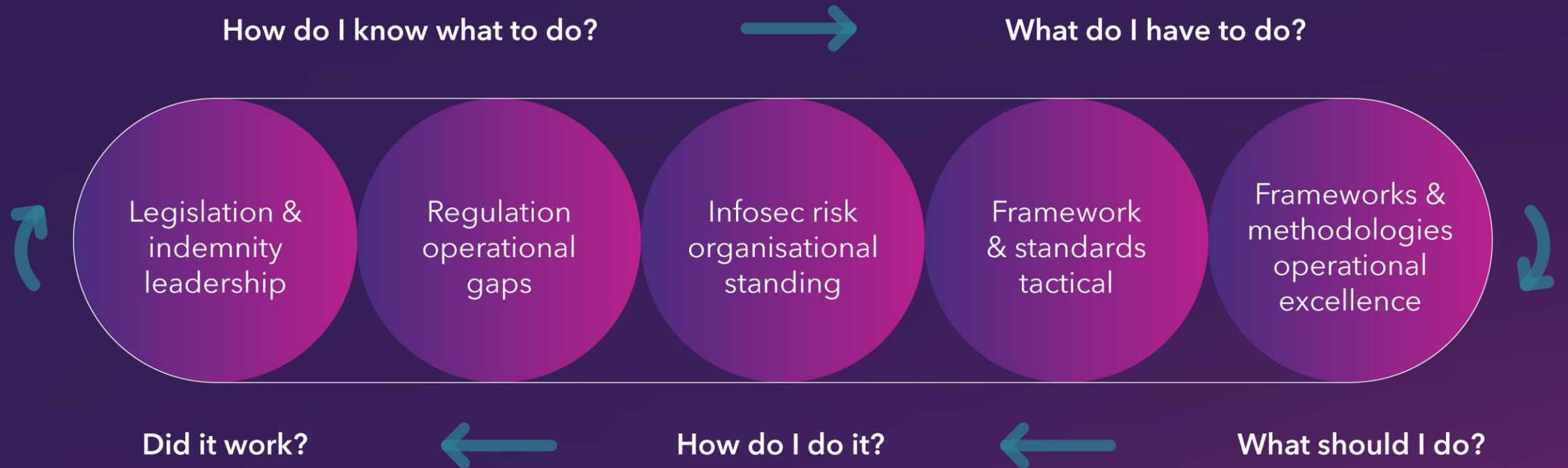
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The cyber security leader loop



Four tenets of AI security

1 Secure the AI workforce

- How we consume AI day-to-day
- Immediate challenge with LLM's

2 Govern AI agents

- Empower the enhanced humans
- Ensure the correct guardrails are in place

3 Build AI securely

- New generation of application security testing
- Largest drive to change existing controls with Vibe Coding

4 Build your own securely

- New hardware & software interfaces
- Use reference architecture

Architecture that breeds innovation

AI workspace

AI Assets

- User-driven AI
- Autonomous AI
- Delegated AI

Traditional workloads

- Apps
- CI/CD pipelines
- Serverless scripts

Developers

- Code development
- Test environments

Architecture that breeds innovation

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AI identity

Human identity



MCP authorisation server



Agent identity



Agent token

GenAI

- Public LLM's
- Browser protection

- Agents/plugins/API
- MCP Proxy

Agents

- MCP Server
- IDE Plugin

- Code Scanning
- Secure versioning

Architecture that breeds innovation

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Build-your-own AI

- AI-partner aligned architecture

- Secure AI runtime environment

- Endpoint protection for local agents

- Cloud runtime protection

- Dynamic identity security

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Foundations for AI Adoption

Application layer

✓ Orchestration

✓ Agent control

50%

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Foundations for AI Adoption

Application layer

Data

✓ Data governance

✓ Data & AI strategy

✓ Data & AI platform

50%

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Security



Secure the AI workforce



Govern AI agents



Build AI securely

90%

Networking & connectivity

On-premise platforms

Cloud platforms

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Networking & connectivity

✓ Networking for AI workloads

✓ Agentic network operations

50%

On-premise platforms

Cloud platforms

Want to hear more? Let's continue the conversation...

- ✦ What are your foundations like today? (think)
- ✦ Tailored AI readiness assessment (feel)
- ✦ Match breakouts to your priorities (do)

Agenda

13:00 - 13:50 Foundations for AI Adoption

14:05 - 14:45 Breakout session 1

- ◆ AI data centres for the future
Queen Charlotte
- ◆ Accelerating AI outcomes with public cloud
Porter Tun

15:00 - 15:40 Breakout session 2

- ◆ Empowering an AI-enabled workforce
Porter Tun
- ◆ Secure by design: Data resilience & recovery
Queen Chartlotte
- ◆ AI & Quantum: Shaping decisions in financial services
King Vault

15:40 - 15:50 Refreshments

15:50 - 16:20 Panel

16:20 - 16:30 Wrap up

16:30 - 18:00 Networking

 SOFTCAT

Thank you