



WHARTON BUSINESS DAILY – THE AUTOMATION ADVANTAGE BHASKAR GHOST PODCAST

AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

DAN LONEY: It's risen sharply in the last couple of years, in part due to the pandemic, that investment is expected to continue to increase in the years ahead. A new book looks at how automation has evolved and where it is taking companies over the next couple of decades. The book is titled, *The Automation Advantage: Embrace the Future of Productivity and Improve Speed, Quality, and Customer Experience through AI*. One of the authors of the book, Bhaskar Ghosh, joins us right now. He is the Chief Strategy Officer with Accenture. Bhaskar, great to have you with us. Thanks very much for a few moments.

BHASKAR GHOSH: Good morning, Dan. Thank you for inviting me on the show.

DAN LONEY: Thank you. What is it that is kind of in the landscape right now that really brought forward the idea of you and your co-authors doing this book at this moment?

BHASKAR GHOSH: So I think it is two reasons. The number one is that what we believe is that whole paradigm for automation has significantly changed over the last few years in terms of the scope and opportunity due to maturity of some of the technologies, like cloud,

data, artificial intelligence. And due to this paradigm shift, that focus of the automation has changed and it is now all about driving the competitive advantage and the business value. So we thought that due to this new paradigm shift, it is important to document our knowledge and help our client.

The second part is the when they talk to our clients, what we see that the expectation of our clients, the maturity of the client has significantly changed and maybe it is partly due to the pandemic. And now it is they are not talking about why use automation. So they are all talking about how to use artificial intelligence, how to use technology to grow their business.

DAN LONEY: When talking about the term automation advantage and the book itself, what are the most important elements that you're trying to bring forward here in terms of where automation is going to take us in the future?

BHASKAR GHOSH: So I think that historically, the automation is all about driving the cost down, cost, scale, quality and productivity. But now with this, we call it intelligent automation powered by artificial intelligence, and this focuses on better decision making, superior



experience for the customers and growing top line. So these are the focus area. So in our book what we suggest that it is the time to companies should refresh their automation strategy and adopt the automation to drive business value.

DAN LONEY: And this is something, Bhaskar, that you have to look kind of across the entire spectrum of business at, in terms of big businesses, obviously, are making these changes. But in many cases, small businesses need to make a lot of these shifts as well.

BHASKAR GHOSH: You're absolutely right. I think this adoption has to happen in both in the big businesses and in small businesses. Their priority may be different, but if people do not adopt these new technologies, then that will be a competitive disadvantage. People need to educate their workforce to skill and reskill, upskill and reskill their employees to prepare them for the technology adoption of technology. More importantly, drive the right change management to implement intelligent automation to drive this business value.

DAN LONEY: Yeah, intelligent automation is what specifically?

BHASKAR GHOSH: So it's very simple concept. The concept is that when we talk about the technologies like cloud, data, artificial intelligence, machine learning all comes together, then you get the significant differentiated value in driving automation in terms of the better decision making or it is create the new business model and that helps you to drive the top line growth. In addition, of course, that the traditional benefits of automation continues in terms of cost, scale, quality and so on.

DAN LONEY: We're joined by Bhaskar Ghosh, who is co-author of the new book, The Automation Advantage: Embrace the Future of

Productivity and Improve Speed, Quality, and Customer Experience Through AI.

Now, in the book, you tackle some myths about automation which end up being what?

BHASKAR GHOSH: So, a lot of people think that they should not adopt the automation because their clients are not ready. But what actually happened during this pandemic, what we have seen, there is significant adoption of automation and technology in the industry. Our clients are actually ready. What did our survey says that around 40% increase in the automation spend in the companies, so people are using that. But a lot of times people think that our customers will not be ready, so we will not use the technology or sometimes people think that automation is all about the job loss. Of course, there'll be some job losses, they happen, but it will create a lot of new opportunity. It is all about empowering people to do their job better. It is about the grow business, not only about the cost cut.

So I think those are the few myths that we have listed the many myths in this book. But one need to clearly understand how to implement and scale this automation in this organization so that they can get the benefit.

DAN LONEY: So let me go back to the labor issue for a second because I wanted to touch on it. I know you did briefly there, but to expand on it, I think there has been for a while now this expectation that a higher level of automation was going to mean or lead to a significantly lower level of workforce. Now you say that's not going to happen, there will be some, but not the extremes that we've heard. I guess that means that you're talking in part about kind of the shifting dynamics of the careers and the mindset of individuals as to where they're thinking about their careers. Correct?



BHASKAR GHOSH: It is absolutely right that when you implement this type of automation, there's some jobs eliminated. But why do we see that at the same time, one need to reskill and upskill people, so that the people can be deployed in the new job or can be ready with the job with where they should be able to use the artificial intelligence and new technology.

One thing is extremely important for all of us to understand that this will also create a lot of new type of jobs. And when I talk about the intelligent automation, it is all about empowering the business, empowering the people. If I take one minute and to give you one or two examples, that may help you to help to explain that how intelligent automation can help people.

DAN LONEY: Yes, go ahead, sir.

BHASKAR GHOSH: So I'll give you the two small examples that, one, I'll talk about one digital bank. You know, so they give loan to the SMB sector, small and medium business without securities. This bank is in China and is a fast-growing bank and how it operates that one need to apply into this bank through their digital portal. It takes around three minutes to apply and then the AI based system accept or reject the loan in 30 seconds by checking against 3,000 different data points. And this bank's NPA, which is Non-Performing Assets, is one-third of the peer group. And this is a fast-growing bank.

Now, this is an example of how automation is used to create a very different business model by itself. I'll give one more example where insurance company in the U.S., after during the pandemic, they switched their complete sales to a digital sales, a very large part of the sale from the physical salespeople switched to a digital mode. And in the digital mode, the volume of inquiries has significantly increased.

So what they have done, they have used their artificial intelligence-based agent to help those salespeople, so that they can choose the right target and allocate the right product for the right customer. And that matching happened based on years of past data, and that helped this company to significantly increase the conversion rate and in terms of growing the revenue.

And you can see in this example, in the first example, it's a new business model, there is no job loss. And the second example is technology is empowering people to do the better sales, faster sales, higher productivity. So there are examples that where the technology will significantly help to empower people and the people and the technology will work together in the future to create more business value.

DAN LONEY: Bhaskar, thank you very much for your time. Good luck with the book. All the best.

BHASKAR GHOSH: Thank you, Dan. I appreciate that. Have a great day.

DAN LONEY: No problem. Thank you for joining us. Bhaskar Ghosh, who is a co-author of the book, *The Automation Advantage: Embrace the Future of Productivity and Improve Speed, Quality and Customer Experience Through AI*.

We will take a break, back with more of Wharton Business Daily in just a moment here on SiriusXM 132.

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