IDC MarketScape

IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Employee Experience Consulting Services 2026 Vendor Assessment

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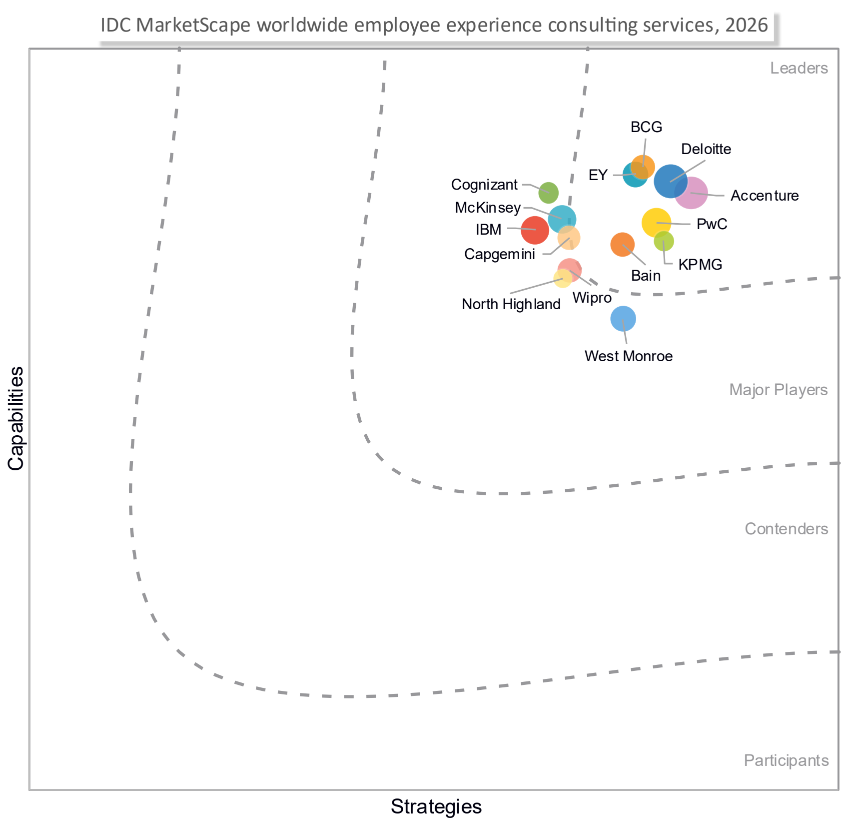
THIS EXCERPT FEATURES ACCENTURE AS A LEADER

IDC MARKETSCAPE FIGURE

FIGURE 1

IDC MarketScape worldwide employee experience consulting services vendor assessment



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Please see the Appendix for detailed methodology, market definition, and scoring criteria.

ABOUT THIS EXCERPT

The content for this excerpt was taken directly from IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Employee Experience Consulting Services 2026 Vendor Assessment (Doc #US54788126).

IDC OPINION

Employee experience (EX) consulting services are shifting as the impact of EX is reaching beyond human resources (HR) and manager training to impact how work is designed, teams are structured, and accountabilities are managed. The expanding relevance of EX transformation is being matched by the encroaching use of AI to centralize how insights from across the organization colorize decision-making within and across the workforce.

Recent IDC data shows that (source: IDC's *Future Enterprise Resilience and Spending Survey* Wave 2, March 2026; n = 1,009):

- Executive leadership teams (ELTs) and CEOs are 67% likely to prioritize IT investments in AI focused on operational efficiency, analytics, and business adaptability.
- HR leaders are 59% likely to focus first on cloud and datacenter resilience as they start to think about how to structure themselves to meet ELT visions for AI and adaptability.
- HR leaders are 43% likely to initiate and sustain consultative engagements regardless of evolving market conditions to drive EX transformation that focuses on flexible workforce dynamics as well as behavior-driven and personalized adoption of AI tools and workflows.

IDC's insights show that EX consultative services engagements are 76% more likely to be considered recession proof by their stakeholders now than they were just one year ago (source: IDC's Future Enterprise Resilience and Spending Survey Wave 2, March 2026; n = 1,009). While the emergence of AI is a key accelerator for strategic guidance, employers are also becoming more aware of the impact of EX on the broader organization as AI pushes them to deconstruct standard processes to support personalized digital resource and process flow engagements optimized for strong employee contributions at work.

The combination of EX and AI transformation strategies is augmenting how humans perform at work, de-routinizing processes and enabling various lines of business to innovatively flex in ways that automation did not previously and inherently support. Initially, EX strategies were focused on the organization's understanding of employee engagement, stresses, and successes. Today, data around engagement, stress, and success serve as a launch point into process flow redefinition that leverages AI to calculate the impact and risk factors associated with each and channel them into recommendations to achieve outcomes.

The path to flexible and adaptable business models runs through EX transformation as much as it does through AI transformation. With that in mind, the market for EX transformation guidance and consultative services is leveling up across its three distinct points of client partnership:

- In the strategy layer
- In the operations and process layer
- In the IT and data layer

Traditionally, strong services providers in each layer are continuing to grow and evolve their offerings. Key to their evolution is the provision of deeper knowledge bases, expanding AI augmentation and use cases within their consulting ranks, and infused digital transformation to support clients to continue to manage transformation beyond the initial partnership. At the same time, the infusion of AI into guidance and strategy consulting is moving some providers to blur lines between their traditional points of engagement and new ones that represent opportunities for new market share relative to the EX buyer transformation maturity curve. Furthermore:

- For providers, expansion into AI transformation governance, as well as the infusion of AI-based discovery and insights tools for EX transformation guidance, is opening doors to new market share opportunities built out from their traditional core strengths.
- For buyers, provider evolution to embrace nexus points between AI potential and EX transformation is making strategic, operational, and digital EX transformation more accessible and situationally personalized than ever before.

IDC MARKETSCAPE VENDOR INCLUSION CRITERIA

This IDC MarketScape includes analysis of business consulting services organizations with the largest exclusive practices covering EX transformation as referenced from IDC's Services Tracker. The definition of EX consulting services is referenced from *IDC Market Glance: Employee Experience, 2Q26* (IDC #US54426426, April 2026), with defined practice submarkets identified within IDC's services taxonomy.

The collective criteria were used to clearly define the scope of this IDC MarketScape evaluation tailored to reflect core aspects of EX transformation as well as the likely aspects of business, operations, talent, AI, and HR transformation to tie into EX transformation based on the most common model taxonomies provided by the field of market-leading consultancies.

Selection for participation focused on the leading practices by revenue, scale, and AI-human hybrid investment with additional thresholds for revenue and market reach into serving enterprise and small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs). In balancing scope of services with revenue, scale, and application across market segments, IDC can account for consultancies with broad service offerings, integrated service programs within and across applicable practices to EX transformation, and specialists serving specific components within the scope of EX transformation.

IDC measured participating providers based on its own definition of what EX transformation services include. For more detailed information on our definition of what constitutes business consulting services, see *IDC Market Glance: Employee Experience, 2Q26* (IDC #US54426426, April 2026) and *Generative AI Use Case Taxonomy, 2025: The Human Resources Function* (IDC #US53970225, December 2025). For more information on what is included in EX transformation, please see market definition in the Appendix.

ADVICE FOR TECHNOLOGY BUYERS

This 2026 IDC MarketScape for worldwide employee experience consulting services is one tool that can be used to qualify and select an EX transformation consulting partner. Each participating provider in the evaluation framework met, exceeded, or at times challenged IDC's evaluation criteria, leading to a well-rounded and quantified evaluation that resulted in their placement in Figure 1.

Figure 1 represents a map of the EX consulting services market within the context of IDC's established evaluation framework for the assessment:

- The capabilities axis on the vertical is indicative of offerings, services, and functionality currently provided by each provider relative to IDC's framing of the market today.
- The strategies axis on the horizontal is indicative of offerings, services, goals, and functionality to be released across the next two years relative to where IDC frames its expectations for the market looking out across the same timeline.

EX transformation is emerging in maturity — every organization has different goals and expectations for what the end stage should look like as they engage and partner with their chosen consultancy to strategize, operationalize, and mobilize toward personalization, adaptability, and workforce flexibility. IDC's EX Buyer Transformation Maturity Curve — published in *EX Buyer Transformation Maturity, 1Q26: The HR-IT Partnership Becomes a Deeper Remit for AI Personalization* (IDC #US54420726, March 2026) — can be overlaid to the IDC MarketScape framework peaking just to the right of the dividing line between "Leaders category" and "Major Players category."

The curve represents buyer readiness to engage across the EX transformation space relative to how close data orchestration and strategy development are to the executive vision for AI-driven workflows and personalization and engagement-backed adaptable business execution and responsiveness.

Evaluating the placement of each vendor should keep the referenced maturity curve in mind as context to map readiness to the type of initiation point for transformation needed and identifying the provider that best supports that starting point:

- **Starting in the IT and data layer:** Consulting partners build their earliest client connections in the in-house data environment, supporting early data orchestration, digital and AI ecosystem modernization and optimization, IT and AI strategy guidance, and resulting business transformation and strategy adoption. Consultancies beginning in the IT and data layer partner with clients at almost any level within the business, with a common early engagement point centered on assessing the data-tracked state of the problem for which they are asked to support and solve with the client. Embedding within the company's operational and workforce data models then allows these partners to scope and scale EX transformation from any corner of the business and from any starting point within the overall solution scope.
- **Starting in the strategy layer:** Consulting partners partner with the highest-level stakeholders commissioning and/or driving and impacting the change and transformation effort. Most strategy enablers are given the client's scope of the immediate problem and quickly embed within the client's decision layer to identify gaps in planning, execution, and engagement before recommending strategy changes for communications, resource management, organization design, and engagement modeling. A key aspect of strategy-led partners is the dissection of executive goals into what they mean for various components of the business followed by the establishment of a communications plan to link those components together across the change and transformation effort. Strategy-led partners lean into technology and their own knowledge columns to build adaptable guidance into the change process, transforming the business to be more predictive, responsive, and accountable to outcomes.
- **Starting in the operations and process layer:** Operations-led partners embed within the business execution layer of the organization to seamlessly evaluate the state of business operations as a part of the front-office teams. Operational enablers increasingly leverage AI to assess the state of business execution metrics and work out where disconnects in decision-making, workforce allocations, resourcing, and the operational model need to be corrected to realize targeted business opportunities. Operations-led partners are commonly agile in discovery to embed in the client's flow

of operations and engagement prior to deconstructing process standards and putting AI and change guidance to work for a shift to predictive and preemptive adaptability.

Dividing up featured providers by stylistic partnership approaches makes this 2026 IDC MarketScape for worldwide employee experience consulting services different from traditional core vendor and provider assessments. The assessment provides a list of scoped transformation services partners that is organized, segmented, and plotted around the unique points of entry that the partner typically supports.

When referencing this 2026 IDC MarketScape for worldwide employee experience consulting services, it is important to connect the profile descriptions of each provider to their placement in the graphic. Connecting the profile to the provider's position helps source the ideal provider within the filtered engagement and partnership style that is right for the business based on leadership culture, the scope of the problem, and where EX transformation best originates.

Consumed properly, the Leader category will not be an arbitrary filter for what is "best" for every buyer. Determine which areas are important and make sure to directly investigate each relevant area to understand the strategies and capabilities of each potential business consulting services provider. When reviewing the provider definitions, first consider the business' EX transformation goals, where they originate, how ready the business is to execute on them, and their order of priority.

IDC's recommendation is to consider creating a quick and simple case study of the current state against future goals that will be shared with the potential provider partner. The concept for a case study proposal tool will help maintain a "center" when providers position their capabilities.

VENDOR SUMMARY PROFILES

This section briefly explains IDC's key observations resulting in a vendor's position in the IDC MarketScape. While every vendor is evaluated against each of the criteria outlined in the Appendix, the description here provides a summary of each vendor's strengths and challenges.

Accenture

After a thorough evaluation of Accenture's strategies and capabilities, IDC has positioned the company in the Leaders category in this 2026 IDC MarketScape for worldwide employee experience consulting services.

Accenture positions employee experience transformation as a critical enabler of enterprise reinvention in the age of AI — it is human centric and data driven. Accenture helps companies bring EX closer to customer experience (CX) standards through areas such as employer branding, employee communications, digital employee platforms and applications, human-machine interfacing, workplace experience, and service design.

Accenture orchestrates EX across the full breadth of its capabilities and partners, recognizing that the scale and reach of EX impact goes beyond HR and manager training and giving clients access to an integrated and unique ecosystem.

Accenture positions EX services across five connected offerings to help clients design, activate, and sustain life-centric employee experiences:

- **EX Strategy** defines a clear EX vision and ambition as well as measures of success aligned to business strategy, purpose, workforce needs, and the employee value proposition.
- **EX in Transformation** embeds EX into enterprise transformation programs by redesigning employee journeys, moments that matter, ways of working, adoption strategies, and change interventions to improve workforce and business outcomes.
- **EX Capability** builds the operating models, governance, tools, data, technology, and internal capabilities needed to manage, measure, and continuously improve EX over time.
- **EX Managed Services** supports clients in operating, measuring, and sustaining EX capabilities over time, including ongoing service delivery, optimization, employee listening, and experience management.
- **EX Rapid Experimentation** uses data, employee insights, human-centered design, and test-and-learn methods to quickly prototype, pilot, measure, and scale employee experience interventions with speed and precision.

Client partnership model

Accenture goes beyond a traditional advisory structure to serve as an end-to-end orchestration partner with an engagement blueprint that relies on collaborative co-development with clients.

The following are some examples (not comprehensive):

- **Co-Creation and Pod-Based Teams** form multidisciplinary pods that are deployed to work natively alongside client project teams. The pods act as centers of excellence (COEs) that bring together competencies in behavioral science, data engineering, user experience design, and platform configuration.
- **A Scientific and Evidence-Based Approach** is reinforced across client partnerships through a rigorous framework loop that goes from hypothesis to testing to measuring to iterating outcomes. Accenture runs behavioral experimentation pilots within small business units before scaling cultural changes to the broader organization.

- **Proprietary Accelerators** augment engagements with built-in technical frameworks including:
  - **Transform GPS.** It serves as a data-driven diagnostic tool used to measure employee readiness, organizational alignment, and transformation adoption in real time.
  - **myConcerto and SynOps.** These are proprietary digital platforms that tie process mapping and business value tools straight to technology road maps.
  - **Culture MRI.** It "measuring culture without asking people" allows a client's culture to be assessed and benchmarked against competitors without surveying employees by using existing data signals.
  - **Talent Navigator.** It is an AI-enabled work redesign and talent transformation toolset that helps leaders break jobs into tasks, map tasks to skills (and cost/value), and then decide what to automate, augment, reskill, or redeploy across a human + AI workforce. Talent Navigator also supports role reinvention by modeling a future-state workforce and guiding workforce strategy discussions.
  - **AI embedded across every engagement.** AI and GenAI are embedded directly into the fabric of how Accenture delivers its services and how it shapes the client's workforce.
- **AI-Driven Personal and Sentiment Analysis** use natural language processing (NLP) and GenAI tools to scrape and analyze employee behavior, readiness, and text sentiment patterns across the enterprise to deliver real-time culture snapshots. AI is leveraged to help with change management and to bring sentiment into action.
- **Human and Digital Workforce Orchestration** helps clients design operating models to enable human and agentic AI tools to work together in the flow of work. Accenture's orchestration involves rewriting job matrices and redefining workflows for human accountability to balance AI-driven acceleration and augmentation.
- **Generative AI Content Customization at Pace** operates within change management workstreams to leverage GenAI to automatically build, text, and personalize communication playbooks and manager enablement content tailored to localized regions and varying workforce demographics.

Commercial cost of engagement

Accenture projects are customized to each engagement, and fee structures acutely target the scope of work and the client's expected outcomes as well as anticipated duration and transformation scale.

Accenture commonly operates within four distinct pricing levers:

- **Fixed-Price and Deliverable-Based Milestones** form the most common approach for large-scale enterprise EX transformations. The approach is broken down by explicit deliverables with fixed-fee billing tied to client sign-off on milestones and outcomes.

- **Rate Card Blend for Time and Materials** support continuous advisory, post-implementation managed services, and/or fluid project scopes. Within the rate card blend model, Accenture bills on a standard hourly/daily rate card that can vary by geography and engaged specializations and practices.
- **Upside-Based and Value-Performance Risk Sharing** offers a split model with a low, near-cost baseline fixed fee coupled with variable, value-based bonus payouts. The performance bonus is triggered when a client achieves specific target business outcomes, like a designated reduction in costs or time spent, improvement in workforce sentiment, or reduction in flight risk and turnover.
- **Consumption-Based AI Unit Models** support engagements tapping extensively into Accenture's hosted technical platform tools or automated digital agents. Consumption-based pricing scales dynamically based on consumption credits to allow clients to ramp up technology use elastically.

Accenture partners with clients to build a forward-looking EX vision with a unique model for fusing humans and AI together to build pathways toward and through execution. Accenture's integrated EX approach that embeds AI, data, and human-centered design across all engagements enables continuous innovation while driving tangible business and workforce outcomes. Accenture's ability to operationalize EX through scalable platforms, ecosystem partnerships, and global delivery models builds consistent execution and continuous learning across industries and geographies.

Strengths

Accenture clients note that the consultancy supports solutioning for complex challenges, especially when areas of the organization are starting from different maturity levels for EX transformation. Organizations that have a unified vision for change and transformation but that have distinct and uneven operational and data silos are well supported by Accenture to evaluate, normalize, and harmonize disparities toward a central orchestration structure to move through digital personalization, communications improvements, and minimal change fatigue when working toward their EX goals and outcomes.

Accenture's clients recognize the firm's ability to seamlessly bridge gaps between IT and HR to extend EX guidance into various lines of business as well as Accenture's willingness and ability to act as "client zero" to develop methodological proof points toward client outcomes. Accenture received similar commendation for its data-driven frameworks and its ability to embed deeply within the client organization to hyper-personalize resource delivery, accountability frameworks, and process flows that support employee moments that matter close to the beginning of the client engagement. Clients find Accenture's consultants to be high energy and knowledgeable about the clients' ecosystem regardless of the consultant's experience and tenure with the firm.

Challenges

Accenture clients note that early agility in the partnership can make it difficult to keep up with the firm's staffing velocity. While engagements are often scoped with high-level subject matter experts (SMEs) and managing directors who are tenured and experienced in human-centric design and EX strategy, day-to-day execution is often managed by more junior team members and associates. While junior team members are generally knowledgeable and versed in Accenture's tools and approaches, they are not as confident toward exercising intuition without consensus prior to providing guidance and participating in strategic decisions.

Clients also noted that Accenture's role as a systems integrator (SI) and its pivot to AI augmentation in discovery and client resource deployment can, at times, be at odds with the client's readiness to quickly absorb and ramp up on those toolsets. Some clients found that the technology component was not as imperative toward their EX transformation goals despite Accenture integrating it as a core driver in its work and, ultimately, in the clients' outcome.

Consider Accenture when

Accenture is a strategy-led consulting partner that extends well into the data and digital transformation layer while supporting data-backed operations and workflow optimization. Organizations should consider partnering with Accenture for EX transformation when their needs hit a specific threshold of scale, technological complexity, and structural disruption.

Accenture enables organizations with geographic, scale-based, and operational complexity to normalize the view of their current EX capabilities, strategies, and initiatives. Accenture navigates operational and digital complexity while supporting workforce concerns in global compliance and location mechanics, making the firm a good partner for mergers and acquisitions (M&A), global expansion, reconfiguration, and EX strategy and resource reconciliation, management centralization, visibility, and adoption. Accenture's infused AI capabilities in its native guidance as well as its bridge role as an SI partner further supports clients to elevate digital and AI transformation as a core component of EX transformation as the organizational engagement strategy shifts to embrace personalized employee readiness across organizational change and transformation.

APPENDIX

Reading an IDC MarketScape graph

For the purposes of this analysis, IDC divided potential key measures for success into two primary categories: capabilities and strategies.

Positioning on the y-axis reflects the vendor's current capabilities and menu of services and how well aligned the vendor is to customer needs. The capabilities category focuses on the capabilities of the company and product today, here and now. Under this category, IDC analysts will look at how well a vendor is building/delivering capabilities that enable it to execute its chosen strategy in the market.

Positioning on the x-axis, or strategies axis, indicates how well the vendor's future strategy aligns with what customers will require in three to five years. The strategies category focuses on high-level decisions and underlying assumptions about offerings, customer segments, and business and go-to-market plans for the next three to five years.

The size of the individual vendor markers in the IDC MarketScape represents the market share of each individual vendor within the specific market segment being assessed.

Evaluating the placement of each vendor should keep the referenced EX buyer transformation maturity curve in mind as context to map readiness to the type of initiation point for transformation needed and identifying the provider that best supports that starting point. Please refer to the Advice for technology buyers section for more information.

IDC MarketScape methodology

IDC MarketScape criteria selection, weightings, and vendor scores represent well-researched IDC judgment about the market and specific vendors. IDC analysts tailor the range of standard characteristics by which vendors are measured through structured discussions, surveys, and interviews with market leaders, participants, and end users. Market weightings are based on user interviews, buyer surveys, and the input of IDC experts in each market. IDC analysts base individual vendor scores, and ultimately vendor positions on the IDC MarketScape, on detailed surveys and interviews with the vendors, publicly available information, and end-user experiences to provide an accurate and consistent assessment of each vendor's characteristics, behavior, and capability.

Market definition

Employee experience strategies cover consultancies that guide organizations in adopting employee experience strategies and digital resources through change management strategy, organizational redesign, and technology deployment. Larger firms integrate all aspects, including vision, strategy, tools, and optimization, linking actions across the employee experience shift and assessing associated risks, returns, and rewards.

This IDC MarketScape covers employee experience strategies within IDC's Employee Experience Taxonomy (see *IDC Market Glance: Employee Experience, 2Q26,* IDC #US54426426, April 2026).

LEARN MORE

Related research

- *IDC Market Glance: Employee Experience, 2Q26* (IDC #US54426426, April 2026)
- *EX Buyer Transformation Maturity, 1Q26: The HR-IT Partnership Becomes a Deeper Remit for AI Personalization* (IDC #US54420726, March 2026)
- *Generative AI Use Case Taxonomy, 2025: The Human Resources Function* (IDC #US53970225, December 2025)

Synopsis

This IDC study for worldwide employee experience (EX) consulting services includes analysis of the business consulting services organizations with the largest exclusive practices covering EX transformation as referenced from IDC's Services Tracker. The definition of EX consulting services is referenced from the IDC Market Glance for Employee Experience, 2Q26, with defined practice submarkets identified within IDC's services taxonomy.

Employee experience consulting services are shifting as the impact of EX is reaching beyond human resources (HR) and manager training to impact how work is designed, teams are structured, and accountabilities are managed. The expanding relevance of EX transformation is being matched by the encroaching use of AI to centralize how insights from across the organization colorize decision-making within and across the workforce.

"EX consulting is increasingly becoming intertwined with AI transformation as workforce leaders need guidance to transform employee enablement to align workforce outcomes with business expectations for agility and adaptability," says Zachary Chertok, senior research manager, HCM Applications and Agents at IDC. "While consultancies continue to be best classified by their strategic point of client partnership, an increasing number are branching out beyond those points of entry to support strategy, operations, and digital orchestration guidance for their clients."

ABOUT IDC

International Data Corporation (IDC) is the premier global market intelligence, data, and events provider for the information technology, telecommunications, and consumer technology markets. With more than 1,300 analysts worldwide, IDC offers global, regional, and local expertise on technology and industry opportunities and trends in over 110 countries. IDC's analysis and insight help IT professionals, business executives, and the investment community make fact-based technology decisions and achieve their key business objectives.

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