• Mike Sutcliff, Group Chief Executive, Accenture Digital
• Mike Murphy, Technology Reporter, Quartz

MM: There's been a lot of talk about AI, and the kind of futuristic visions of the world that it can enable. What do you see as the things that are actually in the market right now? Things that people are able to do now?

MS: We're starting to see people apply artificial intelligence to some pretty simple questions. Can I understand the individual that I'm interacting with? Can I understand their behaviors, their preferences? And can I create a more individualized response that's personalized to those preferences? We're starting to take advantage of the artificial intelligence that can understand how to process images, language, and video to get signals and information out of all of those and use it to create a more personalized response.

MM: What kind of commercial applications are we seeing where all of those technologies come together?

MS: We're seeing lots of things. For example, if people want to be able to recognize someone who walks into a space, because they are a VIP customer and I want to treat them with a certain treatment or direct them to a certain part of the store or provide different experiences for them, we can do that. We might be able to do something like that in a large population environment, like at a stadium or someone who has gone to a sporting event, understanding how the crowds are reacting to the sporting event, and then maybe change how that event is being presented to the crowd. Getting them a chance to maybe to even interact in the experience itself.

We're also seeing people want to provide a personalized response, in an interaction, in terms of the language I'm using or the tone, maybe you prefer a snarky response while someone else wants a more serious response. It's trying to make sure we adapt our interactions to the persona in the interest to the person we're interacting with.

MM: What sorts of things aren't really possible right now, that are kind of in the realm of science fiction, but might be things that businesses are doing in the near future?

MS: We have to differentiate between narrow applications of artificial intelligence, which sometimes seem like magic, but they're fairly narrow. And then the generalized applications of artificial intelligence. That has a long way to go. There are big gaps in what you see in the fictional portrayals of artificial intelligence and what we can actually do today.

We're more focused in the narrow applications where we can tightly control what we're trying to accomplish and in many cases, we can actually
prove what’s possible today.

**MM: Are there applications right now that you are impressed by or that you’re seeing that is delivering on that promise of AI?**

MS: I’m most excited lately by the natural language processing and the ability to do near real-time translation between languages. I think that’s going to change the ability of people around the world to communication with each other, and be confident in their ability to do that. I’m also excited about image and video processing, and we can take a lot of things that were unstructured data, to see the signals and the noise, and act on that. For example, we did an interesting public safety application of video analytics in Singapore to be able to help the public service that where they’re providing safety to understand where there might be a risk in the crowd to respond quickly. Whether it’s someone who passed out due to too much heat and need medical attention or if a fight is breaking out, to instantly know that it’s happening due to the video analytics and direct the public response to it to keep people safe and healthy.

**MM: What about the future excites you? What isn’t possible now that you’re hopeful we can do soon?**

MS: We’re excited about taking these new technologies to create what we call ‘living services’. Services that are designed to understand how you behave and what your preferences are, but in the context of this moment in time...what’s the right service to deliver to you. Not what did you need last week or what will you need next week, but what do you need in this moment and can we provide a service that in tune to that need. We think this is possible and we’re working on creating those kind of living services.

**MM: thanks for chatting.**