



The Triple Wave

IN TODAY'S RAPIDLY EVOLVING BUSINESS LANDSCAPE, leaders are facing a convergence of three forces that are accelerating change at an unprecedented pace: artificial intelligence, sustainability initiatives and the future of work. These three phenomena are not only reshaping industries but are also redefining the role of leaders in guiding their organizations through these transformative times.

Emmanuel Vivier is a noted expert on the intersection of technology and business innovation, and founder of the business transformation think tank, The Hub Institute. He suggests we are witnessing these three streams merging into a new paradigm for

Brunswick's
**MEAGHAN
RAMSEY** talks
with author
**EMMANUEL
VIVIER**,
who sees a
convergence
of accelerating
trends for
business.

business leadership. His book *Triple Wave of Acceleration* describes this trend.

"These three themes have become unavoidable," he told us in a recent interview. "They are the essential levers for ensuring the competitiveness, resilience and sustainability of businesses in a world marked by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. AI is revolutionizing business processes and decision making; sustainable development is a strategic requirement in the face of climate and societal challenges; and the future of work is redefining how companies are organized in the digital age and hybrid work.

REVOLUTIONIZING BUSINESS

From automating routine tasks to providing deep insights that guide strategic decisions, AI is enabling businesses to operate more efficiently and with greater precision. But AI's impact goes beyond operational efficiencies; it is fast becoming a core driver of business strategy.

AI-driven technologies, such as machine learning and natural language processing, are not only enhancing operational processes, but also enabling businesses to offer new products and services that were once considered out of reach. Business leaders that understand this and orient their companies to harness AI effectively are poised to disrupt markets and stay ahead of the competition.

But it would be easy to get carried away. Leaders must balance technological advancements with a clear strategy to ensure that AI investments align with their broader organizational goals. Vivier argues that AI should not be seen merely as a technological tool, but as a crucial element for achieving business competitiveness and long-term resilience.

It helps businesses optimize resources, cut costs and enhance productivity—key advantages in a volatile market. AI can dramatically improve supply chain management, reduce carbon footprints and streamline operations. It can even automate repetitive tasks, freeing employees to focus on higher-value activities, ultimately creating a more innovative workforce.

This implies a kind of partnership with the technology, embracing a cultural shift in how organizations think about data, decision making and automation.

Companies that use AI to enhance the employee experience and foster a culture of inclusivity and responsibility will stand out in the marketplace, helping them attract top talent and improve their organizational culture.

“French companies are taking a proactive approach, integrating strategies aligned with European regulations (the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, for instance) while exploring responsible innovations,” he says. “They are investing in relocation, resource circularity and transparency to reinforce legitimacy with consumers and investors.”

However, Vivier cautions that AI must be deployed ethically and humanely.

“Artificial intelligence has profound implications for society, business and individuals,” Vivier says. “Ethical AI ensures that technology serves humanity rather than causing harm or exacerbating

AI
IS PLAYING AN
INCREASING ROLE
IN DELIVERING
SUSTAINABILITY
PLANS TO IMPROVE
ENERGY EFFICIENCY, REDUCE
WASTE AND
OPTIMIZE SUPPLY
CHAINS.

inequalities. It's not just a regulatory necessity—it's a business and reputational imperative. Human oversight that can also curb algorithmic bias, build in transparency and accountability, protect user data and promote sustainability—these measures reflect a responsible use of AI that can build trust, reduce risks and contribute to a more just and equitable society.”

THE SUSTAINABILITY IMPERATIVE

Sustainability has become core to business strategy. As climate change accelerates and societal expectations evolve, businesses are under increasing pressure to demonstrate their commitment to sustainable practices. Proactive integration of sustainability measures and transparent reporting have become key factors in building trust with consumers and investors, Vivier notes. Companies that take a holistic, responsible approach are better equipped to address emerging challenges while securing a competitive edge in an increasingly eco-conscious market.

AI is playing an increasing role in delivering sustainability plans to improve energy efficiency, reduce waste and optimize supply chains. For example, AI algorithms can predict energy consumption patterns, helping businesses transition to renewable energy sources or reduce their carbon footprints. AI-powered analytics can also track and manage a company's sustainability goals in real time.

Vivier emphasizes that sustainability is no longer just about reducing environmental impact; it is about integrating sustainability into every facet of business operations, including the people-focused aspects like human resources, talent management and company culture. The future of work, according to Vivier, should be grounded in responsible practices that benefit both people and the planet, helping create a more engaged and productive workforce. According to Vivier, “organizations that embed sustainability into their core strategies are not only reducing their environmental impact—they are also positioning themselves as forward-thinking leaders in their industries, attracting talent and investment in the process.”

REDEFINING THE WORKPLACE

The future of work is increasingly digital, decentralized and dynamic—and AI is playing an increasing role. Automation, collaboration tools and virtual environments are transforming how people work, where they work and even the types of roles that exist. Companies need to equip their teams with the tools and resources to adapt to a fast-changing environment.

More and more businesses are investing in upskilling and reskilling programs to ensure their workforce is prepared for the demands of a rapidly changing world. Collaborative approaches with universities and startups are increasingly becoming integral to talent acquisition, helping organizations tap into diverse skill sets while staying ahead of technological advancements.

However, this technological shift also brings fresh questions to the fore, like how best to care for the well-being of employees. Vivier highlights that successful companies will be those that offer human-centered, flexible and inclusive work environments—ones that recognize employee engagement and mental health go hand in hand.

Leadership in this new era requires a commitment to fostering a culture of innovation and agility. Vivier says “Leaders must inspire their teams to embrace change, build cross-functional capabilities, and prioritize lifelong learning.” This also means investing in AI-driven tools that enhance collaboration, streamline workflows and improve employee engagement. Most importantly, he says, “it’s about understanding that people will always be at the heart of any organization—no matter how much technology is involved.”

CONVERGENCE

The growing interdependence of these three accelerations presents a unique opportunity for business leaders to rethink their strategies. Businesses that recognize these shifts as interconnected drivers of innovation and organizational success will be better positioned to lead in the next digital age.

To successfully navigate this triple wave, business leaders must focus on the following key areas:

1. Adapt quickly and proactively: As Vivier explains, acceleration means adapting to change at a faster pace, not waiting for it to slow down. Leaders must develop agile strategies that embrace technological and societal shifts in order for their businesses to stay competitive.

2. Foster adaptability: The future of work demands a mindset that values agility, continuous learning and collaboration. Business leaders must empower employees with tools, resources and opportunities, and organizations must create flexible, inclusive work environments that leverage AI to enhance productivity, creativity and the overall employee experience.

3. Sustainability and responsibility: Integrating sustainability principles into business operations



**“LEADERS
MUST INSPIRE
THEIR TEAMS
TO EMBRACE
CHANGE,**

**BUILD CROSS-
FUNCTIONAL
CAPABILITIES,
AND PRIORITIZE
LIFELONG
LEARNING.”**

Emmanuel Vivier

is no longer optional. Leaders must prioritize both environmental and social factors in their decision making to build trust with consumers, employees and investors alike.

4. Invest in talent: The intersection of AI, sustainability and the future of work requires a new set of skills. Business leaders must prioritize ongoing learning and development so their teams can thrive in an ever-evolving landscape.

The Triple Wave of Acceleration is not just a trend but a defining moment for businesses, Vivier says. “Leaders who understand the interconnections between these three forces and embrace them strategically will shape the future of their organizations, ensuring long-term success in a rapidly changing world.” ♦

MEAGHAN RAMSEY is a Managing Partner in Brunswick’s London office. She advises leaders on high stakes issues, particularly those impacting society.