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Nitin Rakesh, chief executive officer and managing director of Mphasis. PHOTO SUPPLIED

Mphasis' chief executive officer discusses artificial intelligence's growing impact

JOEL SCHLESINGER
Postmedia Content Works

Artificial intelligence (AI) is already proving to be a game-changing, intriguing technology.

Yet Nitin Rakesh, chief executive officer of Mphasis — a leading IT solutions provider specializing in cloud and cognitive services — says we're only getting started in what AI can do.

"It's like the early stages of the internet that eventually changed everything," he says.

Indeed, AI will be revolutionary — and arguably already is.

"We're already using AI in virtually every aspect of our life," says Rakesh. He points to the AI technology being used to track financial fraud and accelerate software development — among countless other practical uses.

"AI will soon unleash a new, large wave of productivity for business," he adds.

Already, consumers are seeing better, more

tailored services, but AI will ultimately change dramatically how we work — for the better.

"AI will not take away skilled jobs, but it will eliminate onerous, repetitive ones," Rakesh says.

The technology will, in fact, help skilled workers be better and more efficient. "It will also create new job categories," he says, pointing to the emergence of generative AI specialists, called 'prompt engineers.'

Locally, AI will help many Calgary businesses grow faster, including those in health care, finance, logistics and energy.

"For oil and gas, it will be particularly helpful for exploration where a lot of effort goes into analysing the size of the prize," he adds. Like many other parts of the economy, AI will reduce costs, increase efficiency and ultimately make a risky endeavour more successful.

What's more, Calgary is well poised to take advantage of AI-powered

tools.

The thousands of talented workers in the energy industry will provide a highly skilled labour pool required to fill future AI jobs. That said, these workers will need reskilling and upskilling, an area where Mphasis is already assisting forward-looking companies.

Mphasis is a trusted guide for many organizations seeking to grasp the opportunities AI will open up in the coming years.

"We're already helping many Calgary companies," he adds. From developing AI-powered customer service programs to helping design foundational, AI-supported enterprise software frameworks, Mphasis assists its clients to seize the opportunities of today and in the years to come.

"We show them what is tangibly possible," Rakesh says. "Otherwise, AI is just a shiny new toy that may not have the transformational benefit companies expect."



Kathe Lemon, president and co-owner of RedPoint Media Group. PHOTO: WIL ANDRUSCHAK/POSTMEDIA CONTENT WORKS

RedPoint Media Group keeps local storytelling alive

JOEL SCHLESINGER
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Storytelling is as old as humanity itself, helping us connect with each other and our communities. It's not merely entertainment — storytelling helps us understand what is going on and build connections.

Yet local storytelling finds itself under threat in the social media age, replaced by constant scrolling for endless content. But social media lacks the emotional depth and meaning as well as trustworthiness of a print story well told, says Käthe Lemon, president and co-owner of RedPoint Media Group, which publishes the popular city magazine Avenue.

"That's where print media shines — we excel at sharing messages that are trusted and remembered," she adds. "Still, it is an uncertain time for us, though that is true of so many businesses right now."

Changing times require organizations to change and that includes RedPoint.

"This is a city that has changed dramatically over the 30 years that Avenue has been

around," she says. "While our goal remains the same — connecting people to their city — our way of doing business has changed and must continue to change."

Simply, traditional advertising revenue is not what it was. In turn, RedPoint has developed an innovative strategy to build new revenue streams to support local storytelling.

That includes the Avenue A-List program, a subscription membership that gives members access to exclusive events, like VIP entrance to local events such as GlobalFest.

"We provide A-List members the kinds of experiences that our editors get — behind the scenes and insider access to VIP events. It's a really fun way for us to connect with our readers while supporting our partners and the magazine," says Lemon.

RedPoint is also reaching out to the community — particularly local businesses — for direct support of its long-form journalism through its Community Story Development Fund, so that Avenue can continue telling

important stories, like those it has shared in the past on issues like intimate partner violence, mental health and addiction.

"These are expensive stories to tell that require time, expertise and extensive research, but they're also incredibly important to the community," says Lemon. "They highlight what members of the community are doing to make the city a better place that might otherwise go unnoticed."

The RPM Content Studio also generates substantial additional revenue by helping nonprofits and charities tell their stories through custom digital and print content including magazines for the Alberta Cancer Foundation, the Calgary Health Foundation, the Calgary Foundation and others.

According to Lemon, the initiatives are helping ensure great, local storytelling remains alive and well in Calgary. "Our overarching goal is to help Calgarians live their best lives in a community that is well-informed, vibrant and resilient."

EllisDon: A global leader in sustainable, innovative and community-driven construction

JOEL SCHLESINGER
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If a construction project in Calgary is focusing on sustainability and innovation, you will most likely find EllisDon involved — and for good reason.

"Sustainability and innovation are front and centre of everything we do," says Sean Dekoning, senior vice-president and area manager for Calgary at EllisDon.

The Canadian-headquartered, global construction services and technology company has a large footprint in Calgary with 79 projects on the go, ranging from hospitals to Light Rail Transit (LRT) lines and other infrastructure. With over 4,300 employees across the coun-

try, these projects will make Calgary a more sustainable place to live.

"As industry leaders, we are pushing for change in the way the industry works. We have significant investments in technological advancements at the site level and have committed to reducing emissions, both from our site processes and supporting our supply chain partners in working to address their sustainability goals" he says.

EllisDon is constantly pursuing excellence and staying ahead in innovative practices. Nationally, they have over 270 sustainable projects, including Green Globes, Zero Carbon Standard, and LEED. In Calgary alone, there are 29 projects worth over \$5 billion, such

as the Alberta Children's Hospital and Brookfield Place.

EllisDon is also integrating cutting-edge AI technologies into their construction process, Dekoning says.

This includes AI-enabled, computer vision technology where teams deploy drones to quickly and efficiently map buildings with precision, allowing for designs to maximize utility for end users while ensuring optimal energy efficiency. But EllisDon doesn't stop there.

"We're not just building projects that enhance communities; our employees prioritize enriching the communities we build in by volunteering and raising money for charities they're passion-



Sean Dekoning, senior vice-president and area manager for Calgary at EllisDon. PHOTO: WIL ANDRUSCHAK/POSTMEDIA CONTENT WORKS

ate about," Dekoning adds.

In Calgary, employees have volunteered at the Calgary Food Bank and raised a record-breaking \$260,000 for the Alberta Children's

Hospital Foundation.

EllisDon leads the industry by prioritising sustainable building practices, embracing innovative technology, and working to uplift

communities.

"While I'm proud that our buildings serve Calgary, what matters most to me is making a meaningful difference in the community."

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