While the cloud has solidified itself as a necessary technology with a plethora of use cases, the other end of that spectrum is blockchain. The promise and potential of blockchain is apparent, but for those in the intelligent information management space, it may be a couple of years before it starts to find its place.

"To use blockchain to solve an information management problem, we need to understand how things are evolving," said panelist Dan Abdul, vice president of data strategy and commercial implementation for UnitedHealth Group, based in Minneapolis.

Pelz-Sharpe agreed, adding that he is bullish about blockchain for intelligent information management purposes, but sees serious rollouts three to five years down the line.

"The question is, should you be getting up to speed on blockchain now?" Pelz-Sharpe asked the audience.

The panel wasn't all in agreement on the dawning of blockchain.

"If you have the capacity to run a lot of different initiatives, then try blockchain. But it takes a lot of focus and initiative," Kompella said. "What is the opportunity cost of doing a blockchain implementation right now?"

Al is a Nystical Term'

Splitting the gap between technology that is already here -- cloud -- and one that's on the horizon in blockchain, Al is growing in use cases and implementation, but not without some hesitation and concern from those in the intelligent information management space.

"Al is a mystical term," said Carl Hillier, product group head of data capture at Abbyy, based in Milpitas, Calif. Hillier was speaking at a separate workshop session at AIIM 2018 focused on determining whether AI is right for an organization. "When the cloud came out, people had a similar feeling."

But as use cases grew and companies could see the benefit, Al adoption continued to grow and intrigue more technological decision-makers.

"We want AI in every aspect of business operations," Abdul said. "Look at the state of U.S. healthcare. There aren't enough humans I could hire to help mitigate all the problems, but AI can help with that. But it's always important to keep an eye on what's coming out -- there's going to be a lot of things that are just noise."

But more so than other technologies, a company needs to have a strategy in place for what they want to solve when implementing AI.

"You don't make your company successful by buying a bucket of Al," Hillier said. "It's not about waving an Al wand -- there's no intrinsic value by itself. It's about picking the right thing to do with Al."

## Re-thinking Enterprise business processes using Augmented Intelligence



In the 1990s, there was a popular book called Reengineering the Corporation. Looking back now, Reengineering certainly has had a mixed success - but it did have an impact over the last two decades. ERP deployments led by SAP and others were a direct result of the Business Process re-engineering phenomenon.

So, now, with the rise of Al: Could we think of a new form of Re-engineering the Corporation - using Artificial Intelligence? The current group of Robotic process automation companies focus on the UI layer. We could extend this far deeper into the Enterprise. Leaving aside the discussion of the impact of Al on jobs, this could lead to augmented intelligence at the process level for employees (and hence an opportunity for people to transition their careers in the age of Al).

Here are some initial thoughts. I am exploring these ideas in more detail. This work is also a part of an Al lab we are launching in London and Berlin in partnership with UPM and Nvidia both for Enterprises and Cities

Re-thinking Enterprise business processes using Augmented Intelligence

How would you rethink Enterprise business processes using Augmented Intelligence?

To put the basics into perspective: we consider a very 'grassroots' meaning of Al. Al is based on Deep Learning. Deep Learning involves automatic feature detection using the data. You could model a range of Data types (or combination thereof) using Al:

- a) Images and sound Convolutional neural networks
- b) Transactional ex Loan approval
- c) Sequences: including handwriting recognition via LSTMs and recurrent neural networks
- d) Text processing ex natural language detection
- e) Behaviour understanding via Reinforcement learning

To extend this idea to Process engineering for Enterprises and Cities, we need to

- a) Understand existing business processes
- b) Break the process down into its components
- c) Model the process using Data and Algorithms (both Deep Learning and Machine Learning)
- d) Improve the efficiency of the process by complementing the human activity with Al(Augmented intelligence)

But this just the first step: You would have to consider the wider impact of AI itself

So, here is my list / 'stack':

- \* New processes due to disruption at the industry level (ex Uber)
- \* Change of behaviour due to new processes( ex: employees collaborating with Robots as peers)
- \* Improvements in current Business Processes for Enterprises: Customer services, Supply chain, Finance, Human resources, Project management, Corporate reporting, Sales and Logistics, Management
- \* The GPU enabled enterprise ex Nvidia Grid but more broadly GPUs Will Democratize Delivery of Modern Apps, More Efficient Hybridization of Workflows, Unify Compute and Graphics
- \* The availability of bodies of labelled data
- \* New forms of Communications: Text analytics, Natural language processing, Speech recognition, chatbots



## What Does Blockchain Technology Mean for the Procurement Industry?

It's easy to treat new technologies with a degree of skepticism. After an initial wave of excitement and expectation - accompanied, invariably, by many botched rollouts and protracted implementations - many of these supposedly game changing advances become bitter disappointments.

But this isn't necessarily the technology's fault. Indeed, many of these advances are - when divorced from the Gartner hype cycle and placed in their proper context - exactly as exciting and game changing as they seem, if not more so. Blockchain is a high-profile victim of this phenomenon: as a distributed ledger technology, that promises faster, more secure payments, many industries have been exploring its possibilities.

Procurement is no exception. And while Blockchain technology may have limited application in other professions, in this one, it looks set to live up to the hype. As a means of reducing costs, improving efficiency, controlling fraud, and boosting transparency, it has tangible, real-world benefits for procurement functions - whatever the market or business they