

# The Zone Manifesto

**JADE**  
GLOBAL

Event Title: The Zone 2025 – CXO Conclave

Venue: Silverado Resort, Napa, CA

Date: Friday, September 19th, 2025

**Theme: AI Innovation: Real-world stories  
driving business impact**



## Hosts:

Karan Yaramada — President & CEO, Jade Global

Sudipta K. Bhattacharjee — Chief Growth Officer, Jade Global

Raja Sekhar — EVP, Global Delivery, Jade Global

Payal Mathur — AVP & Head of Marketing, Jade Global

Michelle Dillon — Sr. Marketing Lead, Jade Global

Endorsed by:  
Boomi &  
NetSuite

## Keynote Session: Innovation that echoes forward

Nishit Sahay — CIO, Marvell Technology



## Panel Discussion:

### AI in business: real choices, real consequences

Chad Kalmes — CIO & CISO, Udemy

Steve Kulp — CIO, Tiger Biosciences

Kris Krishan — Head of IT & Digital Transformation



## CXO Roundtable Members

Group 1: Moderated by Sudipta Bhattacharjee



**Adhir Mattu,**  
CIO, NXP

**David Peterson,**  
SVP, Chief Accounting  
Officer, Guidewire

**Divyesh Shah,**  
COO, Lattice

**Marc Suidan,**  
CFO, Backblaze

**Mark Dennen,**  
CAO, Solairus

**Nilesh Patel,**  
CAO, Bloomreach

**Nishant Nair,**  
Founder & CEO, Revue

**Sirisha Dasu,**  
VP, Finance  
Transformation, Autodesk

**Tom Bakewell,**  
Ex-CIO, NIA

**Steve Kulp,**  
CIO, Tiger  
Biosciences

**Kris Krishan,**  
Head of IT & Digital  
Transformation



**Alison Bakewell**,  
Executive Director,  
Cake4Kids

**Chris Bailey**,  
CIO & CISO, Udemy

**Chad Kalmes**,  
CIO & CISO, Udemy

**Dan McAllister**,  
SVP Channels,  
Boomi

**Jim Nagata**,  
Sr. Director of  
Cybersecurity, Armanino

**John Paul Murphy**,  
VP of IT, Backblaze

**Karan Yaramada**,  
CEO, Jade and Kanverse

**Kristy Paddack**,  
VP, Enterprise  
Applications, Hyatt

**Michael Hanken**,  
Head of IT (SVP),  
Multiquip

**Nishit Sahay**,  
CIO, Marvell  
Technology

**Phil Berton**,  
Kanverse.ai

## Objective of the discussion

Driving transformative innovation through the **4 Cs**: enabling new **Capabilities**, optimizing **Cost Efficiency**, creating **Competitive Advantage**, and ensuring **Compliance & Risk resilience**.

## Capabilities

### Capability roadmap

A 3-year capability roadmap helps align finance and supply-chain priorities with budget allocations. To stay relevant, it must allow room for agile pivots. CXOs are increasingly embedding AI and innovation into their strategic plans.

### CIO's role

The CIO leads capability assessments across various functions, including finance, HR, legal, and risk, to maintain strategic alignment. CXOs are investing time in both technical and strategic education and promoting AI literacy throughout their organizations.

### Smaller firms and flexibility

Businesses that use subscription models or operate with lean teams can scale and experiment more rapidly, thereby lowering risk and accelerating innovation cycles.

### Agility for large enterprises

Large organizations benefit from a solid core infrastructure that enables experimentation without disrupting mission-critical operations.

### AI as a competitive differentiator

Using AI effectively can distinguish companies in the marketplace. Nvidia's consistent investments in innovation over the years offer a reference point. Many CXOs are working to build AI skills at the employee level and integrate innovation into organizational structures.

### Value realization framework

To measure capability investments effectively, organizations should utilize a weighted framework that encompasses compliance, finance, and other relevant domains. This is especially important with faster platforms such as Workday and Snowflake.

## Cost Efficiency

### Data-driven AI cost optimization

Predicting engagement and optimizing investments using AI and data helps prevent overspend on ineffective initiatives.

### Non-profit proficiency

Even organizations with tax-exempt status must justify headcount and maximize return on resources. Scalable, cost-effective solutions are critical.

### Measuring ROI in AI systems

When implemented well, AI systems can be cost-efficient. Organizations should aim for measurable, system-wide impact, rather than relying on "soft" metrics. CXOs generally acknowledge that a clear ROI may emerge gradually, given AI's early stage. Many are sustaining innovation via continuous hackathons, involving user communities to prioritize use cases, and embedding iterative adoption practices.

### Data lake cost-benefit

The more challenging question is whether the value derived from a data lake justifies its initial cost and whether it becomes an accelerator for future growth.



## Competitive Advantage

### Mastering innovation

Going beyond product features, companies must refine their methods of innovation and operations to maintain a competitive edge in a dynamic market.

### Scaling to broader markets

Competitive strength often stems from the ability to scale efficiently and deliver value across geographies, compared to rivals that remain regionally constrained.

### Leveraging data

Effective data use helps businesses tell their story, pinpoint challenges, and drive differentiation.

### AI-driven growth

While cost competitiveness is fundamental, sustained growth depends on using AI to innovate and stay ahead. Many CXOs have launched generative AI initiatives; although agentic AI is still in its early stages, there is optimism around gains in speed to market and operational efficiencies.

## Compliance & Risk

### Compliance as a guardrail

Compliance supports ethical operations, lowers risk, and underpins long-term stability. It does not directly drive growth, but is foundational to sustainable strategy. CXOs are integrating compliance and risk considerations from the start — in platform selection, architecture, and rollout plans.

### Integration of compliance

Embedding compliance into strategy — via risk processes, training, and automated controls — helps streamline operations and protect reputation.

### Challenges in larger companies

Compared to startups, large firms face more rigorous compliance requirements, which can slow innovation. But this rigor is necessary to guard against legal, regulatory, and reputational risk.

### Startup advantage

Startups often have fewer regulatory constraints and can experiment more freely with AI, which gives them an edge in rapid innovation and iteration.

## Key Takeaways: Driving Growth via the Four Cs

At The Zone 2025 CXO Conclave, we discussed how the Four Cs — Capabilities, Cost Efficiency, Competitive Advantage, and Compliance & Risk — interact to support transformative change. The dialogue showed that while cost efficiency and compliance are necessary, capabilities (especially AI) enable teams to create a lasting competitive edge.

### Looking ahead, organizations should focus on:

- Building capability roadmaps that allow adaptation
- Investing in AI and innovation with discipline
- Embedding compliance and risk thinking from the start

Leaders acknowledged that early success rates in AI may be modest (10-20%), but over time, integrating these elements into core strategy will be essential to generate value, maintain operational excellence, and achieve sustainable growth.

At Jade Global, we are committed to guiding businesses through this journey, helping them harness the power of AI and data to create real-world impact. We look forward to supporting you as you navigate the future of business transformation.

Looking forward to seeing you at The Zone 2026

For more insights, visit [www.jadeglobal.com](http://www.jadeglobal.com) or contact us at [info@jadeglobal.com](mailto:info@jadeglobal.com).

**Hope this manifesto will help you steer forward with your vision for AI.**