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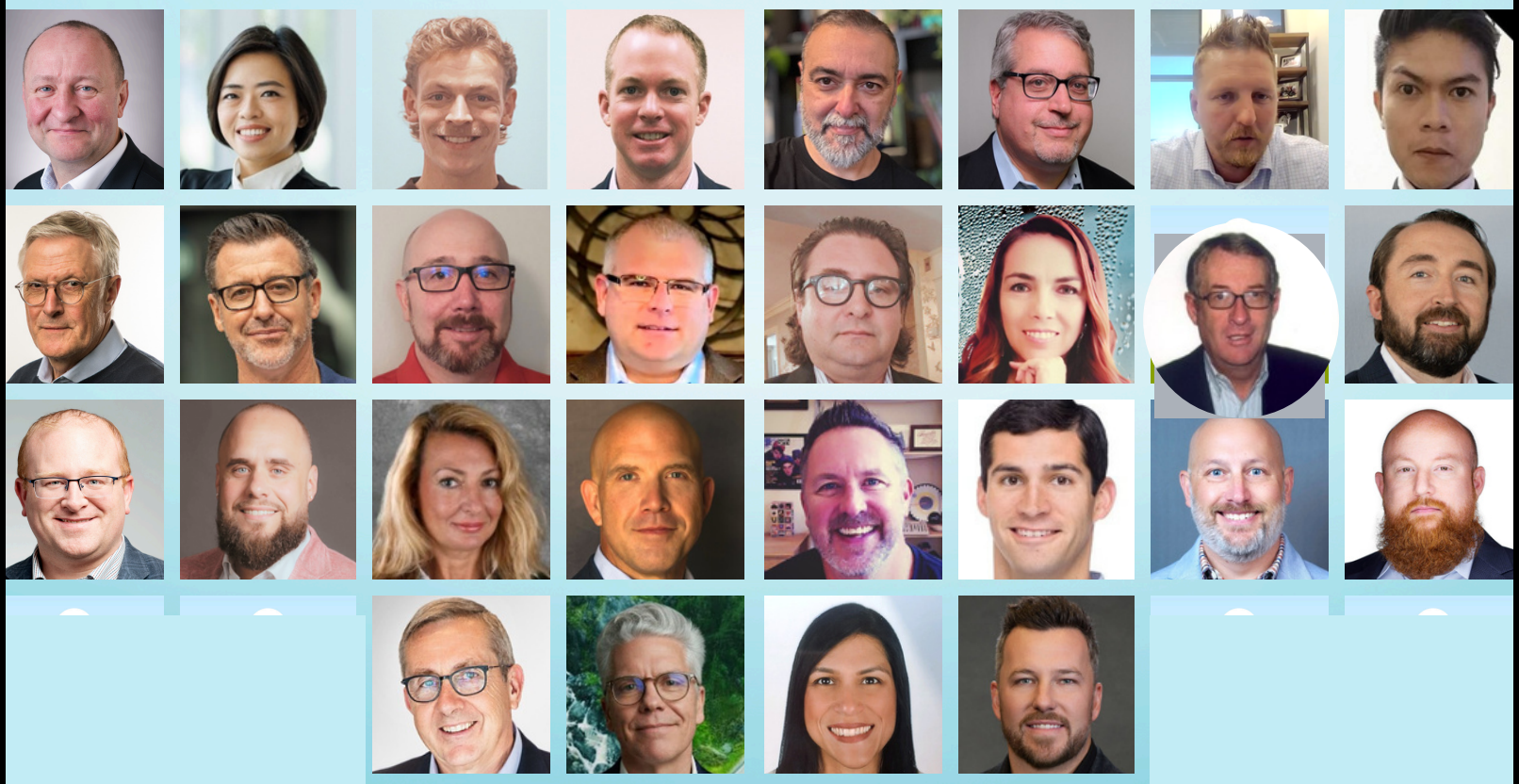
DATA CENTER FACILITIES EXPERTS PREDICT THE FUTURE

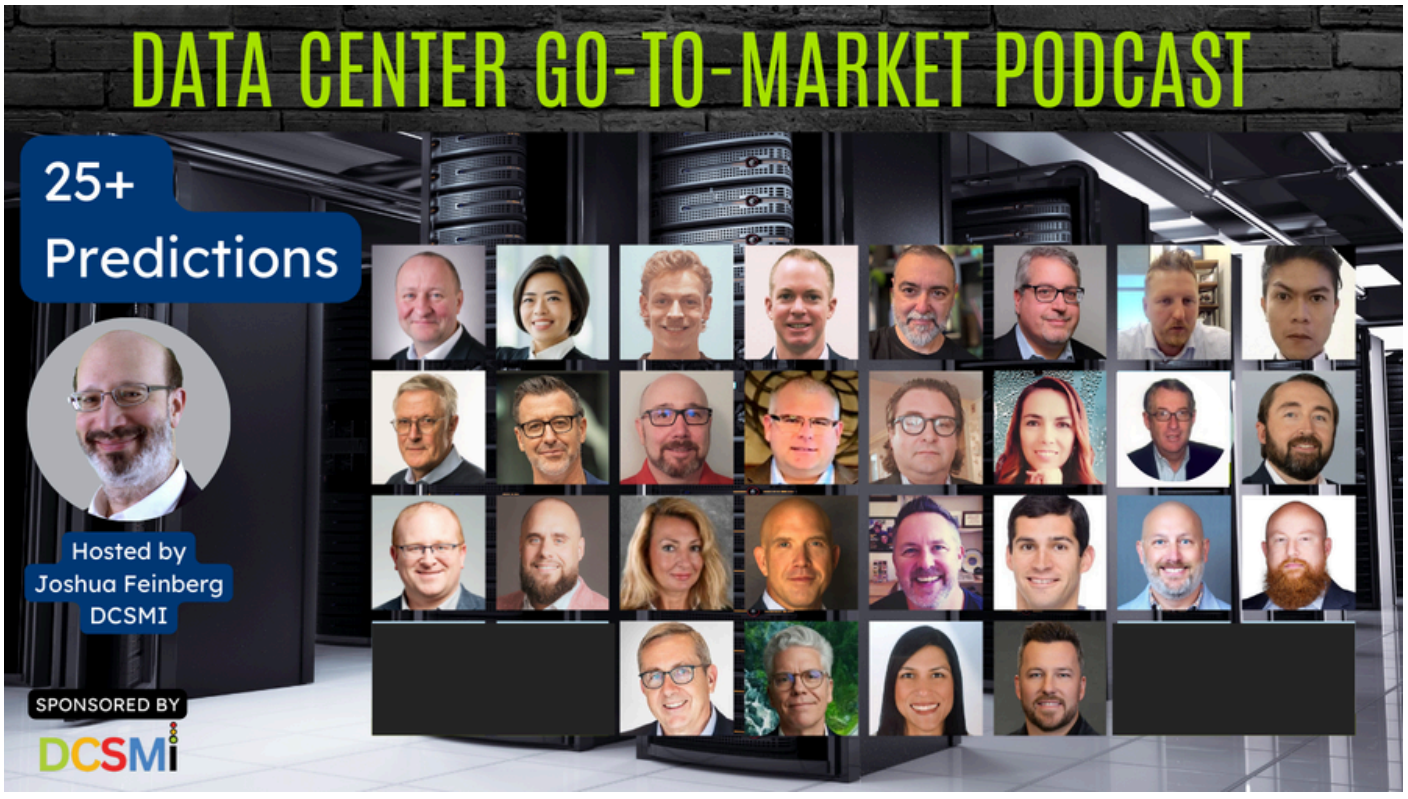


AI-driven workloads, grid constraints, sustainability pressures, and a radically more self-directed buyer's journey are all coming together in data centers at the same time. That's creating both massive opportunity and massive uncertainty for anyone involved in facilities, operations, design, power, or go-to-market.

To help you see around the corner, we asked 26 data center experts a simple question:

"When you look 2–5 years into the future, how do you see your role, your company, or your part of the data center ecosystem changing?"

These experts were selected for their diverse job functions, geographic locations, and extensive field experience, providing you with a comprehensive view of the industry's future.



This guide brings their answers together in a simple, skimmable format:

- A short introduction to each expert and their role
- A key quote capturing their future prediction(s)
- A brief takeaway summarizing why their prediction matters

Use this as:

- A trend radar for what's likely to change in power, AI density, operations, sustainability, sales, and marketing
- An icebreaker with your team, clients, channel partners, board members, and other stakeholders
- A career guide to where skills and opportunities are headed

You can read through the guide exactly as presented. But there's no need to read it cover-to-cover.

Instead, start with the experts closest to your world today. Then branch out to adjacent roles to see how your counterparts are thinking about the same future from different angles.

How to Go Deeper

Each expert featured here appeared on the Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast. After you've skimmed a quote that resonates, follow the call-to-action to:

Watch the full podcast interview and hear the complete context behind their predictions.

Mark Acton

Data Centre Consultant
Acton Consulting

Mark Acton is an independent data centre consultant with decades of experience advising operators, vendors, and investors on design, resiliency, and strategy. In this compilation, Mark focuses on how accelerating change around AI and density is reshaping what “standard” even means in data centre products and roles.

“It’s a really difficult question to answer, because we’re subject to such change: AI, the whole high-density workload that we’re facing at the moment. How on earth do you sell space in the data centre right now when you’re not really sure how much power demand, what the power density is going to be?

So I think it’s a very, very difficult question to answer, and again, I’ll probably go back to one of my previous answers and say it’s all about being flexible and being able to adapt to changing conditions.

What are we going to look like? I think (we’ll still be) seeing people, but I think we’ll probably have slightly different skills.

I think we’re probably going to have to be a bit more technical. I think the idea that a data centre is going to be, or a data centre product is going to be, a standard product; a traditional tier three-type colocation center; I think is going away.

Those sorts of workloads will continue to exist. They're not going away.

But I think it's going to be a much more differentiated market. I think it's going to be much more driven by regulation, and particularly by sustainability regulation, energy efficiency, power demand.

So again, I think people are going to be much more adaptable. It's not going to be as standard as it has been in the past. I think it's going to be more change, more variation.

And I think again, people [will need] a bit more technical understanding [of] some of the drivers around the power, driven by the demand on the IT side. So yeah, brush up on the technical skills, I would suggest."

Mark predicts a future where facility offerings fragment into many more variations, shaped by regulatory and sustainability pressures, unknown densities, and diverse workloads. His message for professionals is clear: treat flexibility and technical depth as core career assets, not nice-to-haves, because the "standard tier III colocation product" is fading.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 30 Mark Acton, Data Centre Consultant at Acton Consulting -- Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Patricia Alvina

Business Development for ASEAN
EkkoSense
(Former Sales Manager ASEAN at Siemens at the time of the interview)

Based in Singapore, Patricia Alvina works in business development focused on energy performance, sustainability, and data centres across ASEAN. Drawing on her sales background, she explains how smarter, better-informed buyers are changing what it means to be effective in data centre and infrastructure sales.

"I believe the sales will still be sales. You still have to turn leads into opportunities, opportunities into a deal, into a project. So there will still be the function of sales.

But the thing we have to understand is that the consumer will get smarter and smarter as the internet will become more available for everybody, especially in Singapore, where we have the ideal situation of information flow.

The consumer is very highly educated. So they may not need to read more brochures. We don't need to read more brochures. We need to understand what is the challenge they have behind the question they ask.

Sometimes they listen to information on YouTube and the internet. They understand there is the product, but how can this product address the challenge?

So this requires a lot of listening skills, active listening, to understand what is the problem and try to address that issue by understanding what is the challenge at hand, what they have done to address the challenge, and what they feel about it…

If you just straight away (start) selling the product, you will not hear about all this stuff.

You want to hear what they say first, what they have done to address the problem and how happy they are with the solution.

If they are not happy, why are they not happy?

If they are not happy, have they done something about it?

So keep asking kind of why and why and why, and try to learn more about the challenge they have beforehand; before you start selling your solutions.

That's probably my opinion of what the future of the sales professional will look like for data centers."

Pat predicts that future sales success in and around data centre infrastructure will hinge less on pushing product and more on diagnosing real problems for highly educated, self-directed buyers. Active listening, deep questioning, and connecting solutions to business challenges will increasingly define top performers.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 42 Patricia Alvina, Sales Manager ASEAN at Siemens | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Oliver Bredgaard

Business Development Manager
for Data Centres
Hovmand A/S

Oliver Bredgaard is a business development manager focused on the data centre segment at Hovmand, where he spends much of his time building relationships at conferences, associations, and industry events. He looks ahead at how a people-centric approach can remain central even as technology and AI advance.

"First of all, I think this industry is very tough to predict, but I think in two years from now, we will definitely see even more data centres, that's for sure. It's one of the most exploding and evolving industries in the world. So I think we will see way more companies as well.

I think we will see smaller companies trying to find their way into this industry. We will probably see many more companies manufacturing the same things because they want a piece of the big cake. So I don't think it will be boring the next couple of years.

What I don't see changing right now is the way we're going to work in terms of getting in touch with people. Because for me, in an industry that is very much dominated by AI and all these software things where things are getting automated and all the support functions as well, then we need the human relationship.

So attending trade shows and being a part of your association within your country, I think that will be a very good way of approaching the next couple of years.

So you will be a part of that network, and you will be able to be around people that have the right knowledge inside this industry."

Oliver foresees explosive growth in data centres and vendor competition, but he does not see human relationship-building going away. In his view, belonging to the right networks, associations, and communities will remain a key differentiator for business development managers as AI and automation take over more routine tasks.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 160 Oliver Bredgaard, Business Development Manager - Data Centres at Hovmand A/S | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Matt Caldwell

Director of AI / Cloud Data Centers
Hyper Solutions

Matt Caldwell leads AI and cloud data center initiatives at Hyper Solutions and has deep experience in complex solution sales. He shares a nuanced view of where human sellers will remain essential versus where commoditized offers will move to marketplaces and automation.

"I think what you're going to see is people buy from companies. People do business with people, right?

So I think you're going to see, if it's anything that is a commodity, if there's really not a lot of differentiation, there's not a lot of complexity to it, you're going to see that direct salesperson with a heartbeat going away from that.

There's going to be marketplaces that address that need where,

'Hey, I just need X number of this component that meets this specification. I need three quotes. I need to know price, lead time… maybe reviews or some past performance of that equipment.'

Then you're going to see, on the solution side, on the 'people do business with people' side…

That's still going to exist.

So you really need to stake a claim, if you're getting into sales, business development, working for organizations, in more of a complex environment.

And we see a lot of that in the data center space, where it's not just a commodity sale. There's so much more that goes into it regarding reliability, lead times, 'Is this going to actually arrive on site? I want a person to be able to manage that relationship back within the organization that I'm doing business with.'

My unofficial title, 'Director of Steaks and Beverages,' that job description is going to be the last job that AI can take, right?

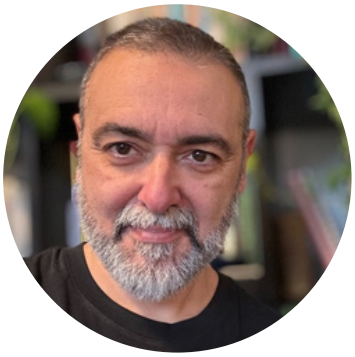
Because there is a value to sitting across the table from somebody, eating wagyu and drinking a nice glass of Cabernet that you cannot replicate with an AI agent.

At the end of the day, people want to do business with people. They want to trust people. They want people who are not just looking to sell them something, but actually solve a problem."

Matt predicts that straightforward, commodity components will increasingly be purchased through digital marketplaces, while complex, high-risk solutions will still depend heavily on human relationships. His advice is to orient your career toward complex solution spaces and become the trusted problem-solver that customers call first.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 144 Matt Caldwell, Director - AI/Cloud Data Centers at Hyper Solutions | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Giuseppe Caltabiano



VP of Marketing
(Senior Marketing Director at the time of the interview)
AVK

Giuseppe Caltabiano is VP of Marketing at AVK, with a background in enterprise and data centre marketing. He shares his view on how the buying cycle is shifting away from early sales contact and why that elevates marketing's role in the data centre ecosystem.

"I think in general terms, our role as marketers will evolve and will be taking more and more space.

I mean, I think it was you mentioning the fact that the buyer journey today is mostly detached from personal sales contact, right?

Sales is still critical, but it's really the very end of the cycle, which in a way is giving more space and more importance to us.

So I think we need to own the buyer journey in a way. We should be prepared to do this and this is probably giving the marketing roles more importance than the one they have today in the data centre space.

So in general terms, I think I see a very bright future for marketing in data centres. It's a growing space. It requires a proper narrative. Without a good narrative, you probably go nowhere.

And where is this narrative coming from? From us.

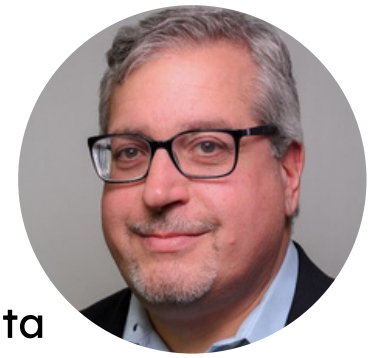
So I think we have the possibility to play a key role. But at the same time, we need to be prepared, meaning we cannot just focus on PR and communication stuff.

We need to be proper marketers with the proper education, understanding narrative, understanding go-to-market, all this kind of stuff. And if we are prepared enough, there will be a lot of space for us in the future."

Giuseppe anticipates that as buyers self-educate and delay contact with sales, marketing will own a greater share of the journey in data centre projects. Marketers who can craft strong narratives, understand GTM strategy, and go beyond surface-level communications will see their influence and opportunities expand.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 70 Giuseppe Caltabiano, Senior Marketing Director at AVK | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Steve Carlini



VP of Innovation and Data Center
Schneider Electric

Steve Carlini is Vice President of Innovation and Data Center at Schneider Electric, where he tracks macro trends, works with analysts and investors, and communicates complex technical shifts to broader audiences. He explains how the surge of capital into AI and data centers has changed his day-to-day focus.

"The number of investor relations people I talk to (is) a lot higher.

And the number of people that are interested, the different industries and the different types of press, analysts…

The number of analysts that are covering data centers now, I think, just doubled over the last six months.

We're getting all this interest:

'Hey, we want to talk to you and show you what we have.'

It's just amazing.

So my role is more about taking this very, very complicated, technical thing that's going on in the data center industry and kind of communicating that in a way that a lot of people can understand."

Steve's prediction is less about technology and more about attention: As AI and hyperscale investments attract vastly more capital, media, and analyst scrutiny, data centre leaders will spend more time on investor-relations-style communication. Translating complex infrastructure and AI impacts into clear narratives for non-technical stakeholders will become a core part of senior roles.

Watch the full podcast interview:
[Ep. 136 Steve Carlini, VP of Innovation and Data Center at Schneider Electric | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast]

Aaron Casey

President
Tubbesing Solutions

Aaron Casey is President of Tubbesing Solutions, a company deeply involved in mission-critical power and infrastructure projects. In this conversation, he reflects on how AI, high-density computing, and the continued data center boom will impact his leadership focus over the next several years.

"Again, I think the biggest issue is people, right?

And so we continue to invest in our people, invest in their knowledge, invest in their ability to solve problems.

I look three, four, five, six years from now, I don't think this data center boom right now slows down.

Obviously, any market can slow down, and things outside of our control can cause a slowdown.

But if things stay the way they are, I think they continue to go up.

Densities continue to go up, power continues to go up.

And so people are going to have to solve problems and solve issues.

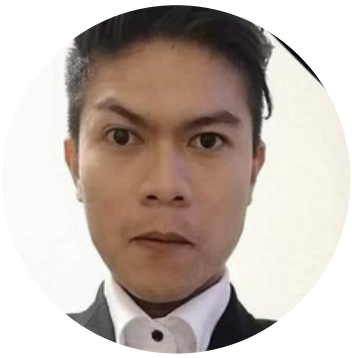
The smarter you are, the more knowledge you have around those solutions and those issues, the more people will come to you.

That's really what we're trying to do over time; just continue to educate and help our team solve those problems for the customers that we work with."

Aaron expects sustained growth in demand, density, and power, but sees talent and problem-solving capability as the fundamental constraint. His prediction: organizations that relentlessly invest in educating their teams and building consulting-level expertise will be the ones customers turn to as the environment gets more complex.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 80 Aaron Casey, President at Tubbesing Solutions | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Christian Dupalco



Mission-Critical Systems Engineer
Bureau Veritas

Christian Dupalco is a mission-critical systems engineer at Bureau Veritas, working on data center commissioning and design across multiple regions. He offers a future-oriented view of flexible, sustainable compute and what that means for future facilities and engineering careers.

"In the near future, it's all about flexibility…

Right now, the biggest players, AWS, Google Cloud, they already let you rent servers by the hour. But, for example, Alibaba Cloud in AP (Asia-Pacific) is taking it further with burstable data centers that scale up in peak demand.

In the Middle East, in the UAE, I heard about data centers partnering with solar farms to offer green AI housing.

It's like carbon credits for computing. If you run your workloads during the day when the sun's out, you get a discount. Meanwhile, in Europe you have operators using AI to dynamically shift workloads between countries based on electricity prices and carbon emissions.

So the future isn't just about selling space; it's about selling smart and sustainable compute. We keep learning. We trial and error. No one knows the future, but we can see the trends: sustainability, AI, computation.

And when we design data centers, it can't just be about extreme conditions on paper. We have to consider actual operating hours, how efficient the cooling is, and even the impact on neighbors; noise from chillers, generators.

There are many things to consider. AI will definitely be more powerful in the future. I'm very interested and very excited about what will happen in the next five to ten years."

Christian predicts a future in which data centers act as flexible, location-aware, sustainability-optimized compute platforms, tied closely to renewables and price/carbon signals. For engineers, commissioning and design will need to evolve past static extremes to account for real operating behavior, community impact, and dynamic workload patterns.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 118 Christian Dupalco, Mission-Critical Systems Engineer at Bureau Veritas | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Pierre Ellow

BDM Business Development Manager, Data Centre Pronomic

Pierre Ellow is Business Development Manager for data centre solutions at Pronomic, where he focuses on material handling and ergonomics. He explains how his go-to-market approach is evolving with AI, digital tools, and changing buyer behavior, while still relying on in-person engagement

"We are talking (about) AI changing the way we, of course, prospect new clients; all new techniques related to AI or ChatGPT or whatever, LinkedIn. That has changed since, I would say, since COVID.

A lot of things have changed in the way of going to market, to reach out to the client.

We also, of course, always (will be) making exhibitions. That's also important to continue with, and I don't think that will change in two or three years' time.

We will continue (to) make a lot of exhibitions, because it's really the moment we can meet the client and show the product.

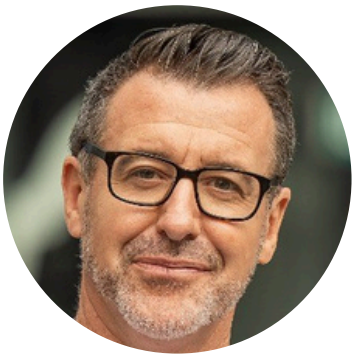
But the approach to clients is really changing. We are working on different levels; normal prospecting on LinkedIn, emailing, but also by organizations… for data centres, of course, to create and to be informed about the changes on the market, but also to have good relations to the actors on the market.

I see it now, when I'm at the end of my professional career, what the young people can do today and the knowledge they have about the different tools existing today… these tools are changing, that's for sure."

Pierre sees AI, LinkedIn, and digital prospecting tools rapidly changing how business development is done, while exhibitions and industry organizations remain critical for relationship-building. Over the next few years, he expects success to come from blending new digital outreach with traditional, in-person channels to stay visible and informed in the data centre ecosystem.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 58 Pierre Ellow, BDM Business Development Manager Data Centre at Pronomic Data Center | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Rich Farrell



Commercial Director - Data Center Business - Middle East & Africa
(Asia-Pacific Regional Director – Digitalization & Data Centre Business at the time of the interview)
Eaton Corporation

Rich Farrell leads Eaton's data center business across the Middle East & Africa. He contrasts how he operates in mature versus emerging markets and explains how that shapes his role and priorities in the coming years.

"In what I do and how I deal with customers, the easiest way to answer that question is looking at mature markets versus emerging markets. How we treat a mature market is going to be a lot different to how we engage and treat an emerging market.

In APAC, an example of emerging markets would be Thailand, Vietnam, (and) the Philippines.

Mature markets would be China, Japan, Singapore, Australia, probably Malaysia now as well. These markets, how you engage with them, it's a lot different.

The mature markets are mature for a reason. They've got a huge install base. They've got a lot of subject matter experts as well. The business just keeps churning over in these locales. You're not scrapping to be the first into the market. There are dozens or hundreds of data centers.

They want to make sure they are looked after, pricing is competitive, supply chain is solid, projects delivered successfully.

If you go into an emerging market, it's a lot different. You may be assisting the first entrant into that country or city. They may still be looking for land, still trying to acquire power.

What can you do to help them? You're trying to be the easiest supplier to work with.

They've got a hundred different things to worry about. You try to be the thing they don't have to worry about. Give them peace of mind that you can do what you say you're going to do."

Rich anticipates his role continuing to oscillate between steady, optimization-focused work in mature markets and hands-on, problem-solving engagement in emerging markets. His north star is to make Eaton the easiest supplier to work with, especially for first-time or early-stage entrants navigating power, land, and regulatory complexity.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 110 Rich Farrell, Asia-Pacific Regional Director - Digitalization & Data Centre Business at Eaton Corporation | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Ted Fletcher

Owner
FMS Integration

Ted Fletcher is the owner of FMS Integration, working closely with data center operations teams on controls, monitoring, and integration. He paints a compelling picture of how augmented reality and remote support could transform day-to-day maintenance and troubleshooting.

"I was down at a show a couple months ago, and I got to see kind of a blending of using augmented reality and VR; putting QR codes throughout different sections of the building, using something like Microsoft HoloLens; to bridge data.

I see, if people keep embracing technology the way it is, the way things are advancing, it's going to become a lot easier, hopefully, because we have so much great data; it's a matter of just tying it into that common repository.

The demonstration I saw… you could actually walk into a room, put your glasses on, start looking at a device, and be able to actually scroll with your finger to pull up wiring diagrams, mechanical flow diagrams, (and) start looking at application guides as you're standing in front of the device.

So I think if we keep leaning on the side of technology, it's going to make a lot of people's lives a lot easier.

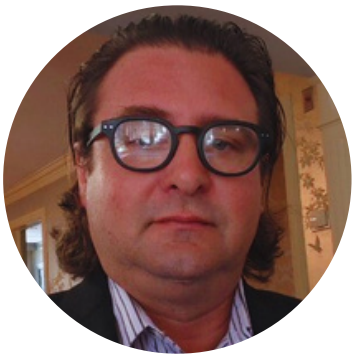
Someone in operations, you've got someone new on staff going through. They get in front of a panel. They have no idea what they're really looking at.

That's where being able to share that data interactively with other people that are maybe the ones that built it, or other knowledgeable people, helps decrease that potential downtime, trying to keep everything up and running."

Ted predicts that as AR and VR mature, they'll become practical tools for operations: guiding technicians with in-context diagrams, enabling remote experts to see what's happening, and shortening the learning curve for new staff. With so much data already available, the real innovation is in how it's delivered at the point of work.

Watch the full podcast interview:
[Ep. 34 Ted Fletcher, Owner at FMS Integration -- Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast]

Lyoid Fussell & Jesse Webb



President and Vice President of Strategic Development
TURBINE-X and TURBINE-X Energy
(Fussell and Webb were at GenSystems Power Systems and Jereh International, respectively, at the time of the interview)

Lyoid Fussell and Jesse Webb have deep roots in on-site power generation. They discuss how moving from mobile oilfield deployments to stationary data center environments will change their daily routines

Lyoid Fussell:

“I don’t know that it’s going to change our daily routine that much.

I mean, I think where it’ll change my daily routine is… usually (when) I get up, I read my performance reports from where our units are deployed the day before.

It’s a very dynamic environment that we’re deployed to now, where we’re moving every 20 or 30 days, moving our equipment.

There’s a lot of logistics involved with that, and a lot of maintenance created from just the brutality of moving across the oil field with this type of equipment.

Whereas in the future, as we begin to enter this (data center) market, our equipment is going to be stationary. It's going to require less maintenance and less reports.

There's going to be a lot more reports to read, but I think it's going to be a lot easier to deal with than the very motion-active business that we're in currently."

Jesse Webb:

"I think Lyoid said that well. I don't know if I could even add to that."

Lyoid and Jesse foresee a shift from brutal, highly mobile deployments in oilfields to more stable, stationary applications in data centers. While reporting and monitoring will still matter, they expect fewer logistics headaches and less physical wear on equipment, supporting the broader trend of on-site generation becoming a more predictable part of the data center power stack.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 90 Lyoid Fussell of GenSystems Power Solutions and Jesse Webb of Jereh | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Maria del Pilar Galeano

Business Development Manager Data Centers
South America
Legrand

Maria del Pilar Galeano leads data center business development for Legrand in South America. She describes a significant mindset shift inside her organization, from selling individual products to delivering integrated solutions and services.

"We're having a big change in our mindset.

Two years ago, we were thinking about products; only the products. Now we are thinking (of) solutions and services.

We have countries that are able to give services – services like startup, commissioning, and maintenance.

So now we are thinking in a global way. In the past, we only offered some products. Now we are offering solutions, which is a big challenge, because we are kind of new in this system of working, but we are now having good experience.

Legrand is a company that (makes) investments all over the world and in our countries. That investment includes service companies.

So now we are manufacturers, and we have those services in a complete solution.

There's a new company in our area that is also able to be a total constructor, total consultant… a global contractor.

So now we are changing our mindset. We are in the process of learning from the manufacturing side and the services side, and we are working together.

We are thinking more about giving solutions 360 degrees (rather) than only going with a sales notebook to give some products."

Maria del Pilar predicts that in South America and beyond, vendors will increasingly compete as solution and service providers, not just component manufacturers. Offering 360-degree solutions that combine products, design support, startup, commissioning, and maintenance will be key to meeting data center customers' expectations.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 116 Maria del Pilar Galeano, Business Development Manager Data Centers South America at Legrand | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Peter Gross

Managing Partner
PMG Associates (Consulting and Advisory)

Peter Gross is Managing Partner of PMG Associates, a long-time consultant, advisor, executive, and innovator in the data center and critical infrastructure space. He offers a big-picture view of the unprecedented wave of investment and build-out coming to the industry, and why power is the defining constraint.

"The industry is now clearly at an inflection point. It has never seen anything that comes close to the level of growth and the kind of changes we're seeing today. It's clearly a unique time in our industry. Never been like this, and I doubt it will ever occur again.

This period, probably the next five years or so, (is) going to see an unprecedented growth. The projection is that in the next four years, there are going to be more deals than (data centers) built in this world than everything that has been built since the (19)80s or so. The industry will spend over a trillion dollars in the next four or five years.

Just in this country, we're going to probably build anywhere from 17 to 25 gigawatts' worth of data centers.

You look at what's happening in this country (U.S.) with not only the data centers, but also the EV charging stations and all the manufacturing industries moving back here. The demand and stress on the utility is tremendous. A lot of the innovation today, a lot of the new things being done today, have to do with addressing this issue.

In the long run, the business is a lot more complex.

What's next? Quantum computing. What is that going to do? It's going to also turn this whole industry upside down. The look of the data center is going to be fundamentally different.

The one thing that is certain: the industry will grow at an unprecedented pace, at least for the foreseeable future."

Peter predicts that the next four to five years will combine historic growth with severe power constraints, forcing innovation in how and where data centers are built. He expects the very form factor and economics of data centers to evolve dramatically, with quantum and new compute models further reshaping infrastructure.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 6 Peter Gross, at PMG Associates Consulting and Advisory | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Richard Grundy

President & CEO
AVTECH Software

Richard Grundy is President & CEO of AVTECH Software, a company focused on environment monitoring and alerting for critical facilities. He talks about how leadership, innovation, and culture must adapt as the data center ecosystem and its technologies rapidly evolve.

"One of the ways it's changing directly for us is we're actually pushing more innovation and accountability down into the organization.

It brings our conversation full circle with where we started; bringing people into the organization. What we're finding is that the more capability we push further down into the organization, the more good things happen.

The more opportunity, and the more we focus on trying to determine what somebody's individual potential is, the greater our potential as an organization becomes.

Really, where my focus has been over the last couple of years, and I expect to fully continue, is focusing on that core value of thriving on growth; developing a culture of learning, a culture of expansion, a culture of new ability.

Rather than feeling like it's up to me to then drive the implementation of that, I trust that by creating a great team, they're the ones driving the implementation, and I just need to tell us where we're going.

It's a really exciting time for us as an organization. I think it reflects what's really an exciting time for the industry.

The entire economy depends on digital infrastructure, so we are really at a central place of the global economy with an opportunity to influence in ways that we can't even imagine. By creating that focus on growth and opportunity and skills expansion, we can ensure that our team is going to be ready to respond with whatever the new opportunity is 12 months from now or six years from now."

Rick predicts that as digital infrastructure becomes even more central, successful vendors will be those that push innovation and decision-making closer to the front line, cultivating a learning culture. His forecast emphasizes building teams that can rapidly adapt to new opportunities and technologies rather than relying on top-down directives.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 92 Richard Grundy, President & CEO at AVTECH Software | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Tim Heidel

CEO & Co-Founder
VEIR

Tim Heidel is co-founder and CEO of VEIR, a startup developing high-capacity transmission solutions for power-constrained environments, including large data center campuses. He shares how his role will evolve as VEIR moves from R&D to commercial scale, mirroring broader industry transitions.

"The startup journey is really exciting, because you transit through all these different levels of maturity.

Today, we're focused on building demonstrations of our first-generation products and focusing on lining up pilots to deploy with key partners to demonstrate the full capacity of what we can do with our cables. What does that look like? And how does it interact with the pods?

Next year, we're going to be focused on building out and qualifying our manufacturing facilities and really firming up all the resiliency within our supply chain and getting ready to start doing commercial deliveries.

That requires us to build a project execution team that will work side by side with the folks that are going to go out and implement all of our technologies.

You look forward two or four years, and we expect to be in commercial projects that we're delivering into megascale campuses and starting to grow the overall volume of our deliveries.

It's super exciting to be in an environment where what you're working on and what you're focusing on every day is changing so quickly, and the core competencies you need are changing so quickly as well.

It's amazing every day to see our team maturing in real time and learning in real time and being capable of doing things today that they could not possibly have thought about doing two years ago.

And I expect to see a lot of that same transformation in the next two years."

Tim predicts that as data center growth smashes into power constraints, new transmission technologies like VEIR's will move from pilots to core infrastructure for mega-campuses. His own role will shift from technology demonstration to large-scale execution, mirroring the industry's need to professionalize and quickly scale new power solutions.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 152 Tim Heidel, CEO & Founder at VEIR | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Daniel Lawrence

CEO and Co-Founder
OBM

Daniel Lawrence is CEO and co-founder of OBM, a startup focused on unlocking energy agility through flexible loads and automation. He argues that the real issue isn't just data center growth. It's the rigidity of most loads on the grid.

"We wake up every day, and one of our core values, our mission here, is to really unlock energy agility, and the way that we do that is through load flexibility.

The narrative that's kind of getting built right now is that data centers are a problem, but it's not just data centers. It's the fact that industries just aren't flexible.

There's a lot of power that's taken off the grid by loads that would consider themselves to be firm, or maybe they are loads that consider themselves to be flexible.

But their definition of flexibility is nowhere close to ours, because they are, 'Hey, we got a phone call. We've got an hour to call up somebody, and they're going to show up at the facility and start turning things off.'

That's how steel, cold storage, wastewater, and a lot of chemical manufacturing would call themselves flexible: they can respond to a light that turns on, or they can respond to a phone call or an email dispatch.

But what I would consider flexible is, can you do everything different within five minutes?

And if you can't, it's because you're not automated, and you're not that great of a resource as you could be.

For our business, we're really focused on how we solve these energy problems in industries that expand beyond just data centers.

It's not a data center or AI factory problem that we're solving right now. It is the fact that the grid needs more flexibility.

The AI factory constraints we hear in the news; those all go away if everybody else is just a lot more flexible."

Dan predicts that grid stability will depend on fast, automated load flexibility across many sectors, not just data centers. He believes that as more industries automate and become dispatchable within minutes, many of today's AI power crisis narratives can be defused, and that companies enabling this flexibility will play a central role.

Watch the full podcast interview:
[Ep. 158 Daniel Lawrence, CEO and Co-Founder at OBM | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast]

Tanja Lewit

CEO
Alternate E Source

Tanja Lewit is CEO of Alternate E Source and a strong advocate for workforce development in the data center industry. She highlights the gap between the sector's growth and the pace at which traditional education is adapting to meet its talent needs.

Joshua Feinberg:

"At some point, there's a problem. If you look at what's happened with the big SaaS and platform companies in the last couple of years.

Google said they were tired of waiting for higher education to change, and they got into creating this whole certificate program. AWS has created a ton of courses. IBM has created a ton of courses. At some point, this is going to start being a legit competitive threat for traditional higher education if higher education doesn't get on board with similar programs.

It's inconceivable to me that there's still only one major university in the US where you can basically get a data center degree. How is it that there's not a major program in New York, DC, San Francisco, Chicago for getting a Bachelor's of Science in data center management or something like that?"

Tanja Lewit:

It has to change.

We're on that. We're on that, kind of pushing that change.

And hey, maybe AI can help us with that. It could help with the content, help facilitate and get things (moving with) expeditious action."

Joshua and Tanja predict that unless universities move much faster, industry-driven training and certificate programs often supported by major tech companies and AI tools will fill the gap. She sees an urgent need for dedicated data center degrees and training paths, and believes those who help create them will be critical to solving the sector's looming talent shortages.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 26 Tanja Lewit, CEO at Alternate E Source | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Loren Long

Co-Founder of Clear Sustainability
Managing Partner of Digital Infrastructure Advisors

Loren Long works at the intersection of sustainability, finance, and digital infrastructure, advising operators and investors on climate and ESG risk. He sees a coming shift from optimistic rhetoric to a more sobering, science-driven view of sustainability in data centers.

"I think the feelings or the sentiments around sustainability, we're going to see it shift.

There are a lot of great things going on. I love Yuval Bachar and his off-grid, hydrogen-powered megawatt data center in Texas with ECL. Is it perfect? No. Is it moving the needle significantly in an innovative direction? Yes, that's fantastic.

But I think we're going to see a sobering within not only our industry, but all industries and regulatory bodies as we start grappling with the magnitude of what we're doing.

Every year, the IPCC puts out another report. If you look at the science, if you believe the science and follow the science, putting out a sustainability report that starts with 'To stay below 1.5°C…' science is pretty much telling us that's in the rear-view mirror. So now we've got to keep it from hitting 2.0°C.

It's going to start getting more important. The science is going to become more reinforcing, and I think we're going to see sustainability discussions get a lot more serious.

They're going to be much more programmatic; operationally, financially, regulatory, and in the boardroom as well.

And I think investors, that's another big one you're going to see coming; the large investors are going to recognize the risk that they have, and that's where the pressure really comes in."

Loren predicts that data center sustainability will shift from aspirational messaging to **hard-edged risk management**, driven by climate science and investor pressure. He expects more rigorous, programmatic approaches that permeate operations, finance, regulation, and board-level decision-making.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 76 Loren Long at DIAL - Digital Infrastructure Advisors and Clear Sustainability | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Sean McKay & Christian Bonilla

Co-CEOs
DMARK Energy Solutions

Sean McKay and Christian Bonilla are co-CEOs of DMARK Energy Solutions, focused on bridging the gap between data centers and power/energy strategies. They explore how AI, flexible loads, and on-site generation will change the look of data center projects over the next few years.

Sean McKay:

“I think it’s (the data center energy sector) going to continue to merge as new technologies emerge.

At some of the conferences we were just attending and sponsoring, listening to conversations of how AI compute loads or clusters start to be designed to be even more flexible loads on the grid.

Just the nature of the designs to meet the needs of AI compute, we’re in the infancy of that. Chip manufacturers and board manufacturers are trying to up efficiency, bringing down power, so you can get more for less power.

Then the characteristics of that are going to change, how loads can stop and be moved to another part, another cluster somewhere else in the grid that has cheaper power.

There's going to be very new, innovative thinking about how to solve the bigger problem, not just use the pieces we're used to on the chessboard. New pieces, new strategies are coming."

Christian Bonilla:

"So much of it comes back to the power question. Even now, you see surveys where 70% of data center development stakeholders expect their future projects will all assume on-site generation as a starting point.

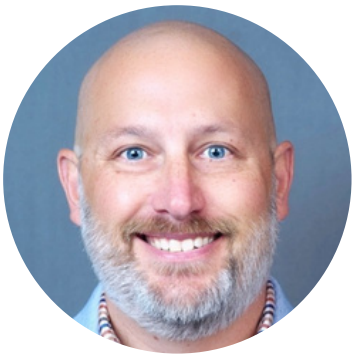
What a change that is from just a few years ago. Compute is becoming so disproportionately power-hungry that we'll see more integrated projects and business combinations between data centers, power, and ancillary services.

I don't see the demand for compute and power abating in the foreseeable future."

Sean and Christian predict a world where AI clusters are designed as flexible, grid-aware loads and where on-site generation is assumed by default. They believe power and compute will be developed as a single, integrated business, with new architectures and business models emerging to keep up with demand.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 146 Sean McKay and Christian Bonilla, Co-CEOs of DMARK Energy Solutions | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Benjamin Myers



National Accounts Sales Executive
DH Pace Company

Benjamin Myers is a National Accounts Sales Executive at DH Pace Company, serving data center and mission-critical customers on doors, docks, and physical access. He describes how owner-operators are changing their approach to procurement and supply chain in the wake of pandemic disruptions.

"The biggest change that I'm seeing, this isn't just in what we do. I hear this from non-competing folks in the industry, and is moving to more of the owner-furnished, contractor-installed (OFCI) model.

These owner-operators really want to have a bigger stake in the supply chain. They're still fresh off of COVID and all the crazy lead time issues, so people want to control it more, not only from a cost perspective, but just from an uptime perspective.

Over the next few years, you're going to see more and more owner-operators taking an active role in inventorying and product alignment so that it makes their life easier. Today, a lot of that goes through the GC, and they're just allowing the GC to make the decision.

Sometimes, depending on the GC, they're great. They know what they're doing. They're not hyper-focused on cost. They're focused on value.

Others are only focused on squeezing every penny they can. That's created heartburn. You have some products that are 32-week lead times, and if people aren't taking that into account, you can have real major issues.

As the owners get more and more involved, I think there's going to be a change in the total supply chain."

Ben predicts that major owner-operators will increasingly take direct control of critical components through OFCI models, standardization, and central inventory strategies. This shift is driven by uptime risk and long lead times, and will change how GCs, vendors, and facility teams coordinate on projects.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 56 Benjamin Myers, National Accounts Sales Executive at DH Pace Company | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Zachary Peña

Chief Executive Officer
Empirix Partners

Zachary Peña is CEO of Empirix Partners, a firm focused on data center strategy, development, and advisory. He uses a vivid metaphor to describe the current industry moment and how he sees his firm evolving with partners and customers.

"If my (crystal) ball plays out how I want it to, life's going to be good, right?

Because I think overall in the industry, there's a bunch of gold in the ground. And this is the gold rush, and it's time to pick it up. But no individual firm can do it by themselves.

Having the right partners and growing our firm with those right partners, not only our customers, but also the OEM partners we have, the service provider partners.

We have to all work together and kind of go out there and collectively build that, like, three-prong little claw in the claw games and reach down and grab that gold together and figure out how to use it the best.

I see the firm, over the next three to four years, building on those strategic relationships that we already have and evolving them into what needs to be here for the success of the industry. Because what got us here is not going to get us there.

Those relationships are going to be the basis of what we build to figure out what that next widget is, or that next solution, to meet the challenge of tomorrow."

Zach predicts that the coming years will feel like a gold rush for data center development, but emphasizes that no company can capture the opportunity alone. He sees Empirix's future in strengthening strategic relationships with OEMs, service providers, and customers to co-create the next generation of solutions.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 98 Zachary Peña, Chief Executive Officer at Empirix Partners | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Gregory Ratcliff

Chief Innovation Officer
Vertiv

Gregory Ratcliff is Chief Innovation Officer at Vertiv, responsible for fostering innovation and aligning it with strategy and execution. He reflects on how the innovation function itself is evolving as it becomes more tightly integrated with planning and product development.

"I may be the last of the innovation officers at Vertiv; could be the first and the last.

This world of innovation really took off maybe 15 years ago, and there was some great work that said companies needed this.

But I see it in the future combined with planning and strategy.

So much of what I'm working on outside of the university space and startups is directly tied to, 'Wow, that's a neat company. Should we consider a partnership or something even deeper?'

This thing that started as just innovation and 'help the culture have an open mindset for anything new that adds value' is changing to be more of a planning, strategy, execution role, which is exactly what it is. It's a project that has a different kind of outcome.

Innovation projects have an outcome of maturing so that, at least in our world, engineering can own it and take it, and then the new product development process carries it all the way to customers.

The closer those get, the lines will be blurred. And that's a great thing."

Greg predicts that standalone innovation roles will blur into strategy and execution, with innovation seen as a pipeline feeding directly into engineering and product. At Vertiv and across the industry, he expects tighter linkage between scouting, partnerships, and concrete product roadmaps.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 66 Gregory Ratcliff, Chief Innovation Officer at Vertiv | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Martin Renkis

Executive Director of
Data Center Infrastructure Services
Johnson Controls

Martin Renkis leads data center infrastructure services at Johnson Controls. He balances a deep belief in the enduring importance of relationships with enthusiasm for AI tools that can supercharge productivity.

"When I think about what's going to stay the same, I'm sure you probably agree with this: relationships.

Everything, most everything, is still going to come down to relationships. Building, maintaining relationships with people will always be a key part of how we do business and how we get things done as human beings.

I'm kind of excited about agentic AI. That's what I see coming for me personally. Today, I use AI probably the same way everybody's using it: for research and proposals, letter writing, reviewing complicated documents and summarization.

One of my favorite tools is NotebookLM. Someone sends me a couple large PDFs of research that was done on the data center industry or cooling or something; I'll throw it into NotebookLM and say, 'Give me a 15-minute podcast,' and something that would take me eight hours to read. I get to listen to it in 15 minutes.

When it comes to the future, I'm very much looking forward to some type of agentic AI handling things that I just don't want to do anymore, or doing things better than I can do, given certain guardrails.

Making my life faster, easier, more efficient. I see that coming. Overall, I'm a techno-optimist."

Martin predicts that relationships will remain central, even as AI takes over more of the busy work of research, summarization, and first-draft writing. He expects agentic AI to automate routine tasks further, allowing leaders to invest more time in strategy, creativity, and human connection.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 156 Martin Renkis, Executive Director of Data Center Infrastructure Services at Johnson Controls | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Rossy Rosillo

Key Account Manager at Lightera
(Former Marketing Engineer at Legrand at the time of the interview)

Rossy Rosillo is a Key Account Manager at Lightera and formerly a marketing engineer at Legrand, working closely with data center accounts. She highlights how AI is transforming market analysis and strategy development for marketers in the sector.

Rossy Rosillo:

“I think it’s (the future of data center marketing) more related to the change of AI. Now we have this wonderful tool which helps us to analyze the market in a very quick way. It doesn’t take weeks looking for information and analyzing your data about the market.

In two years, we will develop new strategies more quickly than we do right now. With AI, you can analyze a big amount of data you have from the last few years and make comparisons. Now, with AI, you could do it in a very fast way. In minutes, you can have the results.

For something simple like making a comparison between two products, you use ChatGPT and you have the result very quickly. For sure, you have to use your expertise to analyze that conclusion, but it helps you get the information fast.”

Joshua Feinberg:

“Especially with qualitative data, if you have a field on a contact form that’s a write-in field, you can take these write-in answers from hundreds or thousands of people and say, ‘Tell me the top 10 most frequently written responses,’ and run this once a week or once a quarter. Before, that would have been very challenging.”

Rossy predicts that AI-assisted analysis will become standard practice in marketing and account strategy, enabling faster, deeper insights from both quantitative and qualitative data. Marketers who pair these tools with domain expertise will be able to refine positioning and personas much more rapidly than before.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 102 Rossy Rosillo, Marketing Engineer at Legrand | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

Brandon Smith

VP Sales & Product
ZincFive

Brandon Smith is Vice President of Sales and Product at ZincFive, a company pioneering nickel-zinc batteries for mission-critical and other applications. He describes how AI will change the day-to-day work of product and sales leaders, while batteries become ever more central to infrastructure.

"From the product side, batteries are becoming a more important part of life, that's data centers, transportation, everything. And a novel chemistry like nickel-zinc has a very unique value proposition.

There's a lot of opportunity and growth. It's going to be very exciting how that changes.

From a management perspective, what does a sales and product leader look like five years from now?

I really think the proliferation of AI tools are going to make the day-to-day report writing, MRDs, PRDs, much simpler.

We're going to be able to lean on a lot of these tools to create and iterate faster than we ever were, because that took a lot of manpower to write these things down.

Where I see leaders in this business going is the strategy and the creativity, because all the information is there at the end of the day. It's all at your fingertips. What do you do with it? How do you interpret it, and how do you use it?

That's the strategy, the creativity, and the relationship-building.

Leaders that can bring strategy, creativity, and relationship-building can leverage all of these tools to 10x their output. The product manager next to you who can manage five products because they have AI tools, versus someone who can only manage one because they're caught up writing components, that's going to matter."

Brandon predicts that AI will dramatically reduce the grunt work of documentation and analysis for product and sales leaders, putting a premium on strategy, creativity, and relationships. In parallel, he expects batteries, especially advanced chemistries like nickel-zinc, to play an increasingly critical role in data centers and other power-sensitive sectors.

Watch the full podcast interview:
Ep. 150 Brandon Smith, VP Global Sales & Product at ZincFive | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

The Bottom Line

What These 26 Perspectives Have in Common

Across roles, regions, and companies, a few themes keep showing up in these predictions:

- Power and grid constraints are becoming the defining bottleneck.
- AI and high-density workloads are breaking standard design assumptions.
- Sustainability and investor pressure are moving from slide decks into board decisions.
- Operations are getting smarter with AR, better data, and tighter supply chains.
- Buyers are more self-directed, pushing sales and marketing toward solution-led, educational approaches.
- Careers will favor those who mix technical depth, consulting skills, and AI literacy.

The details will evolve, but the direction is clear: the next 2–5 years in data center facilities and go-to-market won't look like the last 20.

Your Next Steps

1. Pick three to five experts whose quotes hit closest to your current challenges.
2. Share a favorite excerpt with your team or leadership and ask, “What does this mean for us?”
3. Choose one area to act on in the next 90 days: power strategy, flexibility, ops tooling, GTM, or skills.
4. Go deeper with the full conversations:

Watch the full podcast interviews on the Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast.
(Ep. 164 The Future of Data Center Facilities Go-to-Market | Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast)

To get notified about new podcast interviews and related resources as they become available, be sure to also subscribe to the Data Center Sales and Marketing Newsletter (DCSMI) at https://www.dcsmi.com/newsletter

The experts in this guide are already preparing for what’s next.

This guide is your invitation to do the same; on your terms, starting today.

About Joshua Feinberg

Editor of this guide (26 Data Center Facilities Experts Predict the Future)

Joshua Feinberg helps go-to-market (GTM) teams in the data center industry differentiate, get found earlier in the sales cycle, achieve trusted advisor status, and command premium pricing power to drive sustained, profitable revenue growth.

Besides his role as CEO of the Data Center Sales & Marketing Institute, Joshua hosts the Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast where he interviews chief executives, sales, marketing, channel partnership, and product/ innovation leaders from some of the industry's top companies, all over the world (from six continents)

including Blancco Technology Group, Bureau Veritas, Compu Dynamics, Connectbase, CyrusOne, DataBank, Delska, DH Pace, Digital Parks Africa, Eaton, eStruxture Data Centers, IBM, Johnson Controls, Legrand, Nokia, PhoenixNAP, Pronomic Data Center, Schneider Electric, Siemens, Supermicro, Vertiv, and Wesco.

Joshua has presented some of the highest-rated educational sessions at regional, national, and global conferences for audiences of sales-, marketing-, and IT professionals, including Critical Facilities Summit, Data Center World, Datacenter Dynamics Colo+Cloud, HostingCon, and MSP EXPO.

A former Microsoft Corporation content provider, Joshua advised the Small Business Server (SBS) product and channel partner teams in Redmond, WA. He authored the groundbreaking book Building Profitable Solutions with Microsoft BackOffice Small Business Server. He also developed and wrote Microsoft's bi-weekly VAP Voice column, which helped shape Microsoft's small-business partner and product marketing strategies and, ultimately, the managed services business model. This content was also localized and translated into 12+ languages for a global audience of 500,000+

Joshua's insights have been quoted in USA Today, Business Insider, CMS Wire, CRN, Inc, VAR Business, and TechTarget. Joshua's bylined content has been published in Data Center Knowledge, Inc., Windows NT Magazine, and Microsoft Certified Professional Magazine. And he served as a contributing editor for Selling Windows NT Solutions Magazine. Joshua also served on the boards of AFCOM Miami, Florida Direct Marketing Association, HostingCon, and ProductCamp South Florida.

Joshua is a former MCSE and PC Support Specialist for Merrill Lynch Global Research. He began his career in higher education marketing and sales at IBM.

Connect with Joshua Feinberg on LinkedIn

About the Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast

In the **Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast**, you'll explore the data center landscape with expert insights tailored for CEOs, sales professionals, marketers, customer success managers, product managers, and channel partner managers.

From achieving sales targets to fostering team development and innovation, nurturing customer relationships, and optimizing go-to-market strategies, the Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast equips you with actionable strategies for success in the AI data center industry.

The primary audience is go-to-market professionals who work in and around AI data centers -- including colocation, wholesale, hyperscale, edge, modular, technology, facilities, construction, real estate, sales, and marketing companies. This podcast is especially relevant for CEOs, sales professionals, marketers, customer success managers, product managers, and channel partner managers.

To stay up to date about upcoming episodes, **subscribe to the Data Center Sales and Marketing Newsletter** on the **DCSMI website @ dcsmi.com**

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About the Data Center Sales & Marketing Institute (DCSMI)

The Data Center Sales & Marketing Institute (DCSMI) is a boutique business advisory, consulting, and training firm serving data center providers and IT, facilities, construction, real estate, and sales and marketing companies that partner with data center providers.

DCSMI specializes in go-to-market (GTM) and webinar-led growth (WLG) for the data center industry. The firm empowers data center professionals across GTM teams, including sales, marketing, customer success (CS), product, channel partnerships, and C-suite executive sponsors.

DCSMI also produces and hosts several related media properties, including the Data Center Go-to-Market Podcast, Data Center Sales and Marketing Newsletter, and Data Center Sales and Marketing Webinars.

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