

2026 AGENDA

INFO~TECH  
RESEARCH GROUP

# IGNITE

POWERED BY INFO-TECH LIVE

**Chicago, IL**

May 6-7th, 2026



# IGNITE Agenda

May 6, 2026

Time	Session Type	Session	Track	Role	Description
1:00pm	REGISTRATION				
2:00pm	WELCOME	<b>Welcome and Opening Remarks</b> Speaker: Jeremy Roberts			
2:15pm	TECHNOLOGY KEYNOTE	<b>Transform IT. Transform Everything.</b> Speaker: Gord Harrison	Exponential IT & AI	All Roles	The past two years have seen unprecedented advances in both technology and societal changes. In a world of critical changes to supply chains, reciprocal tariffs, market volatility, and AI breakthroughs, how can today's CIO survive the collision of major global forces? In this talk, we will explore how to meet sociopolitical and cultural uncertainty head-on by leveraging advanced technology and Exponential IT. If CIOs can transform their departments using exponential technologies, they can become the organizational leaders needed in this new age of technology-first enterprises.
2:45pm	TECHNOLOGY KEYNOTE	<b>From Predictions to Reality: Exponential IT, Two Years Later</b> Speaker: Fred Chagnon	Exponential IT & AI	All Roles	The technology landscape has shifted significantly in the past two years. In this session, we will explore the exciting and emerging technologies driving Exponential IT. Discover how these technologies are transforming industries and connecting through the value chain to impact IT operations, and learn how IT leaders can navigate this evolving landscape to deliver organizational value.
3:15pm	NETWORKING BREAK				
3:45pm	ACTIVITY	<b>Build Your AI Strategy &amp; Roadmap</b> Speaker: Justin St. Maurice	Exponential IT & AI	CIO	In this interactive session, we will help you derive an initial shortlist of AI use cases to guide the foundational steps of creating an AI strategy and roadmap.
3:45pm	ACTIVITY	<b>Build a Business-Aligned IT Strategy</b> Speaker: Anubhav Sharma	Value-Driven IT	CIO	In this session, our expert analysts will help you craft a goals cascade for use in your IT strategy document. We will quickly work through the process of gathering enough business context and details of new and existing IT initiatives to demonstrate how to achieve alignment.

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3:45pm	ACTIVITY	<b>Drive Business Value With M365 Copilot</b> Speaker: Fred Chagnon	Value-Driven IT	Security & Privacy	Organizations that buy M365 Copilot licenses as a stand-in for their AI strategy tend not to realize value from it. This session will cover how you can get the most out of M365 Copilot, offering an approach to realize key opportunities and avoid risks on the platform.
4:30pm	TECHNOLOGY KEYNOTE	<b>The Race to Develop Talent: The Hidden Speed Limit on IT's Ambition</b> Speaker: Isabelle Hertanto	Adaptive IT Workforce	All Roles	The talent challenge isn't just about hiring – it's about accelerating development. This keynote unveils the AI-Human Flywheel, a practical model for scaling capability through automation, augmentation, and human adaptability. Learn how to create a system where people and machines continuously learn and evolve, giving your organization the ultimate competitive edge.
5:00pm	CLOSING AND RECEPTION				

# IGNITE Agenda

May 7, 2026

Time	Session Type	Session	Track	Role	Description
8:00 am	NETWORKING BREAKFAST				
9:00am	TECHNOLOGY KEYNOTE	<b>The Exponential IT Leader: Info-Tech's Playbook for IT Transformation</b> Speaker: Davin Juusola	Playbooks	All Roles	In this keynote, we will explore Info-Tech's new IT Playbooks, a comprehensive and scalable framework for achieving excellence across the IT leadership team. Anchored by the CIO Playbook, and extended through targeted playbooks for Data, Security, Applications, and Infrastructure, this suite empowers leaders looking to take their function to the next level individually or against a coordinated, unified vision. It's time to stop firefighting and start building a high-performance IT organization.
9:45am	ACTIVITY	<b>The AI Playbook: Secrets &amp; Steps to Systematically Achieve IT Excellence</b> Speaker: Justin St. Maurice	Playbooks	CIO	In this interactive workshop, we'll dive deeper into the methodology behind the 12-step AI Playbook and help you understand how to apply it to your unique environment. Participants will not only gain a deeper understanding of what each of the 12 steps means for them but will also leave with a prioritized roadmap to begin implementing the playbook and start turning AI into a growth engine instead of a gamble.
9:45am	ACTIVITY	<b>The CIO Playbook: Secrets &amp; Steps to Systematically Achieve IT Excellence</b> Speakers: Anubhav Sharma	Playbooks	CIO	In this interactive workshop, we'll dive deeper into the methodology behind the 12-step CIO Playbook and help you understand how to apply it to your unique environment. Participants will not only gain a deeper understanding of what each of the 12 steps means for them but will also leave with a prioritized roadmap to begin implementing the playbook and start transforming IT from firefighting to forward-driving.
9:45am	ACTIVITY	<b>The Security Playbook: Secrets &amp; Steps to Systematically Achieve IT Excellence</b> Speaker: Fred Chagnon	Playbooks	Security & Privacy	In this interactive workshop, we'll dive deeper into the methodology behind the 12-step Security Playbook and help you understand how to apply it to your unique environment. Participants will not only gain a deeper understanding of what each of the 12 steps means for them but will also leave with a prioritized roadmap to begin implementing the playbook and start transforming Security from firefighting to forward-driving.
10:15am	NETWORKING BREAK				

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10:45am	LIGHTNING	<b>CIO Priorities 2026</b> Speaker: Anubhav Sharma	All Tracks	CIO	Lightning round presentations offer attendees brief but incisive looks into the most critical topics impacting IT today, guided by some of the best thinkers and researchers in the field.
		<b>Applications Priorities 2026</b> Speaker: Tom Larson	All Tracks	Applications	
		<b>Data Priorities 2026</b> Speaker: Justin St. Maurice	All Tracks	Data & Analytics	
		<b>Security Priorities 2026</b> Speaker: Fred Chagnon	All Tracks	Security & Privacy	
		<b>Infrastructure &amp; Operations Priorities 2026</b> Speaker: Jeremy Roberts	All Tracks	Infrastructure & Operations	
10:45am	BREAKOUT	<b>Conquering Complexity: A Maturity Model for IT Excellence</b> Speaker: Warren Gouws, Senior Manager, Solution Engineering, Freshworks	Exhibitors	All Roles	<p>In today's fast-paced IT landscape, organizations are unknowingly paying a steep "complexity tax" that stifles innovation, drains resources, and hinders operational efficiency. This session will uncover the hidden costs of complexity within IT environments and provide actionable strategies to eliminate it. By reducing complexity, organizations can unlock the full potential of Enterprise Service Management (ESM) to drive transformation and deliver exceptional business outcomes.</p> <p>Join us as we explore a practical maturity model that guides IT leaders through the journey of simplifying operations, implementing ESM, and extending its value across the enterprise. Learn how to align your organization's IT strategy with business goals, reduce inefficiencies, and achieve measurable success in key verticals like manufacturing, healthcare, government, and financial services. Don't miss this opportunity to gain insights that will empower your organization to thrive in a competitive, ever-evolving market.</p>

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May 7, 2026

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10:45am	BREAKOUT	<b>Chaos to Consistency - Standardized Delivery That Scales</b> Speakers: Vanessa Stanton, Consultancy Trusted Advisor, TOPdesk, Arianna Theofan, Sales Manager, North America, TOPdesk	Exhibitors	All Roles	Everyone feels the chaos when service delivery breaks down and projects struggle to land. For executives, assurance comes from knowing work is executed consistently and aligned to strategy. This session explores how a trusted advisor and delivery partner helps standardize project and delivery processes, strengthen accountability, and build confidence in scalable value-driven execution.
11:30am	TECHNOLOGY KEYNOTE	<b>Run IT by the Numbers: How to Inject Real Meaning Into the Decisions You Make</b> Speaker: Tom Larson	Value-Driven IT	All Roles	We live in a world where exponential technologies require IT leaders to rise to the challenge of leading their organizations through transformational technology-enabled change. This cannot happen unless IT takes control of its budget, adopts best practices in proactively managing its finances, and makes data-driven decisions on spending. Info-Tech shares its insight on how to become world-class ITFM leaders.
12:00pm	NETWORKING LUNCH				
1:00pm	CLIENT/EXPERT PANEL	<b>AI: Is it an Asset? or a Threat?</b> Speaker: Tom Hawley, Riaz Yusuff, Chief Information Officer, William Rainey Harper College, Joe Jordan, AI & Insights Executive, Elliam Inc., Sayeed Shariff, Sr. Director of Data, AI, and Digital Platforms, Hollister Inc.	Exponential IT & AI	All Roles	We are delighted to invite you to join us for a lively and insightful conversation featuring three distinguished panel members. They'll be sharing their perspectives on how AI can truly enhance the way we work and drive positive changes across various areas of business and professional life. Our panel will dive into strategies for mitigating the vulnerabilities that AI may introduce, ensuring that we safeguard both our businesses and personal accountability. It promises to be an engaging session where thoughtful discussion meets practical advice.

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1:00pm	CLIENT/EXPERT PANEL	<b>Addressing the CIO Priorities List: Turning Strategy into Execution</b> Speaker: Vicki van Alphen, Sandeep Nema, Chief Enterprise Architect & Director of EA, Cook County Government, Jason Katcher, Senior Vice President & Chief Information Officer, ITA Group	All Tracks	CIO	The 2026 CIO Priorities List highlights some of the most pressing challenges facing today's technology leaders—including demonstrating return on investment from AI initiatives, strengthening proactive risk management, ensuring data accountability, addressing AI-driven cybersecurity risks, and running IT with measurable, outcome-driven metrics. At the same time, CIOs must continue to deliver reliable day-to-day operations and support business continuity. This panel brings together experienced CIOs to share how they are balancing strategic transformation with operational excellence. Panelists will discuss practical approaches, lessons learned, and real-world tactics for moving from priorities on paper to results in action—while maintaining trust, resilience, and value across the organization.
1:45pm	TECHNOLOGY KEYNOTE	<b>The Rise of AI Agents</b> Speaker: Justin St. Maurice	Exponential IT & AI	All Roles	How can one succeed in the exponential world of AI agents? Attend this important keynote to discover how to bridge the AI adoption gap and unlock the potential of agentic AI. Also learn how Info-Tech is leveraging agentic AI to enhance your team's performance.
2:15pm	TECHNOLOGY KEYNOTE	<b>Five Key Takeaways From IGNITE Chicago</b> Speaker: Jeremy Roberts	All Tracks	All Roles	At every conference, you're supposed to learn things, bring back your insights, and share them with your colleagues. But that can be hard when there's so much great information packed into such a short period. Please allow us to help you out. In this keynote, we'll walk you through what we think the five most important takeaways are from Info-Tech IGNITE and what your next steps should be. Make your trip home stress-free!
2:30pm	EVENT WRAP UP				