

2026 AGENDA

INFO~TECH
RESEARCH GROUP

IGNITE

POWERED BY INFO-TECH LIVE

Washington, DC

October 1-2



IGNITE Agenda

Oct 1, 2026

Time	Session Type	Session	Track	Role	Description
9:00 am	LEVEL-UP EVENT	IT Leadership Development – Adaptive IT Leadership Speaker: Amanda Mathieson	Adaptive IT Workforce	All Roles	Adaptive leaders create the environment for employees to thrive. A key enabler in a world of disruptive technologies is shifting from a traditional management mindset to adaptive leadership through self-assessments that define adaptive qualities and identify actions to create an adaptive culture. Adaptive leaders empower teams by delegating decisions and responsibilities to the levels where the work is being done, while encouraging different perspectives through experimentation and learning in the work. Join this session to learn about insights and tactics focused on developing the mindset and capabilities needed to lead effectively through disruption and uncertainty. Access this link to register: https://go.infotech.com/level-up-washington-dc
1:30 pm	REGISTRATION & NETWORKING				
2:00 pm	OPENING REMARKS	Welcome and Opening Remarks Speaker: Amanda Mathieson	All Tracks	All Roles	
2:15 pm	TECHNOLOGY KEYNOTE	Agentic IT: From Hype to Value Speaker: Gord Harrison	Agentic IT	All Roles	In this age of AI, you're expected to make confident bets on emerging technology while balancing credibility, delivery pressure, and board-level expectations. This opening keynote reframes the conversation, challenges familiar narratives, and sets out how CIOs and senior IT leaders can drive sustained, enterprise-level impact beyond the hype.

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2:45 pm	TECHNOLOGY KEYNOTE	Become an Exponential CIO Speaker: Aaron Shum	IT Playbooks	CIO	As technology increasingly shapes how enterprises operate and compete, many CIOs remain constrained by governance, funding, and metrics designed for a different era. This keynote challenges the assumption that the role must change through leadership alone, revealing how redesigning enterprise context and use of data and technology enables CIOs to move beyond firefighting and reliably shape enterprise-level outcomes.
3:15pm	NETWORKING BREAK				
3:45 pm	ACTIMTY	Data Playbook Deep Dive: How to Systematically Achieve IT Excellence in Data & Analytics Speaker: Nysa Zaran	IT Playbooks	Data & Analytics	In this interactive workshop, we'll dive deeper into the methodology behind the 12-step Data & Analytics 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 D&A from firefighting to forward-driving.
3:45 pm	ACTIMTY	Lead IT Like a Business: From Cost Center to Value Engine Speaker: Jack Hakimian	All Tracks	CIO	Get a clear and actionable playbook on how to allocate and control IT spend, communicate real business value to your organization's top executives, and turn IT finance into a competitive advantage for you and your team.
3:45 pm	ACTIMTY	CIO Agents: From Contracts to Action in Minutes Speaker: Andrew Sharp	Agentic IT	CIO	IT leaders spend hours buried in contracts, policies, and technical agreements. Learn how to build a simple AI agent to rapidly analyze complex documents, flag key clauses, surface risks to automate repetitive document workflows and compress review cycles to free your team to focus on decisions, not paperwork.

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4:30 pm	TECHNOLOGY KEYNOTE	From Data as a Product to the Data Value Chain: Reframing How Organizations Create Value From Data Speaker: Nysa Zaran	All Tracks	Data & Analytics	This keynote challenges the dominant “data as a product” mindset, not by rejecting it, but by exposing why it so often fails to deliver meaningful enterprise value. Through the lens of the data value chain, this session explores where initiatives break down and how leading organizations overcome those gaps. This session gives leaders a clear, practical blueprint to move beyond data curation and into decisions, action, and outcomes.
5:00pm	CLOSING AND RECEPTION				
6:30pm	NETWORKING DINNER				

IGNITE Agenda

Oct 2, 2026

Time	Session Type	Session	Track	Role	Description
8:00 am	NETWORKING BREAKFAST				
9:00 am	TECHNOLOGY KEYNOTE	Tech Trends 2027 Speaker: Gord Harrison	All Tracks	All Roles	This session explores the most significant technology forces reshaping IT in 2027 and how leaders can turn volatility, AI acceleration, and shifting global dynamics into strategic advantage. It highlights the emerging capabilities, risks, and operating models that are redefining how organizations build resilience and innovate.
9:45 am	ACTIMTY	CIO Agents: Use AI To Focus Your Calendar Speaker: Andrew Sharp	Agentic IT	CIO	What if every morning started with a briefing tailored to your priorities: flagged VIPs, shifting deadlines, and relevant industry and competitive news? See how AI analyzes where your time is going versus where it should be, and surfaces calendar optimization ideas that separate keep-the-lights-on work from strategic priorities.
9:45 am	ACTIMTY	EA Playbook Deep Dive: How to Systematically Achieve IT Excellence in Enterprise Architecture Speaker: Nysa Zaran	IT Playbooks	Enterprise Architecture	In this interactive workshop, we'll dive deeper into the methodology behind the 12-step EA 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 EA from firefighting to forward-driving.
9:45 am	ACTIMTY	Security Playbook Deep Dive: How to Systematically Achieve IT Excellence Speaker: Aaron Shum	IT 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.

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Oct 2, 2026

Time	Session Type	Session	Track	Role	Description
10:15am	NETWORKING BREAK				
10:45 am	LIGHTNING	Lightning Talks Speakers: Nysa Zaran, Andrew Sharp, Jack Hakimian, Amanda Mathieson, Gord Harrison	All Tracks	All Roles	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.
10:45 am	BREAKOUT	AI-Driven NetOps: Unifying Control and Observability for Stronger Networks Speaker: Scott Penney, Vice President of Product Management, BlueCat Networks	Exhibitors	All Roles	Modern enterprise networks span data centers, branch offices, private and public clouds, service providers, and an expanding ecosystem of infrastructure and security platforms. The result is a level of complexity that makes outages harder to diagnose, security incidents more difficult to contain, and compliance increasingly burdensome. Artificial intelligence is often presented as the answer. But AI cannot deliver meaningful operational outcomes without trusted data, sufficient context, and the ability to interact with the systems that run the network. This session examines what becomes possible when systems of control—including DNS, DHCP, IP address management, resolution, and security enforcement—are connected with systems of observation such as flow telemetry, packet data, synthetic monitoring, topology, and network resource monitoring. By correlating these sources within a common platform, AI can move beyond summarizing alerts to identifying probable root causes, explaining network behavior, and recommending or initiating appropriate action. Using examples from real-world network environments, BlueCat will discuss the architectural and operational challenges involved, where AI is already useful, and where its limitations remain. The focus will be practical: how shared context, integrated data, and carefully governed AI can reduce troubleshooting time, improve resilience, and remove friction from day-to-day network operations.

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10:45 am	BREAKOUT	To AI or Not to AI: A CIO's Framework for Spending Intelligently on Agentic Automation Speaker: Patricia Moore, AI Field CTO & Innovation Lead, Boomi	Exhibitors	All Roles	With 95% of enterprise AI pilots showing no measurable ROI and budgets burning out in months, the hardest skill for CIOs in 2026 isn't adopting AI — it's knowing when not to. This session gives you a practical framework for deciding when deterministic automation beats costly probabilistic AI, and when it's worth the spend. You'll leave with a lens for evaluating your own initiatives against Boomi's three pillars — Integration, Agentic Automation, and Data Readiness — so every dollar you spend on AI is a deliberate one.
11:30 am	TECHNOLOGY KEYNOTE	Talent Trends 2026 Speaker: Amanda Mathieson	Adaptive IT Workforce	All Roles	Explore IT talent trends for 2027 and beyond. The session examines what the IT talent trends mean for IT leaders with a forward-looking view on human–AI teams and securing and retaining top IT talent amid technological advancement.
12:00pm	NETWORKING LUNCH				
1:00 pm	CLIENT/ EXPERT PANEL	Digital Transformation: The Holistic View and Impacts Speaker: Scott Holland, Dr. Jesse Hillman, Executive Vice President and CIO at DC Water and Jean Brice, CIO at Maryland General Assembly	All Tracks	All Roles	Digital transformation is no longer just about implementing new technologies. It is about reimagining how organizations operate, serve customers, empower employees, and create value in an increasingly digital world. Learn more about how organizational capabilities predict digital transformation success more strongly than technological capabilities. You can procure technology; you have to grow capability.
1:00 pm	CLIENT/ EXPERT PANEL	Putting the "I" Back in IT: Designing Technology for Human Connection Speaker: Keith Rorer, Nate Wentland, CIO at Loudoun County	All Tracks	All Roles	As organizations accelerate their adoption of AI, automation, and digital-first experiences, a fundamental question emerges: Are we enhancing human connection or unintentionally eroding it? This thought-provoking discussion will explore how technology leaders can ensure innovation remains centered on people, relationships, and meaningful experiences.

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1:00 pm	BREAKOUT	Smaller, Smarter, Safer: The Enterprise AI Architecture Most Leaders Get Backwards Speaker: Ricky Thakrar, Head of Sales and Account Management, Zoho Corporation	Exhibitors	All Roles	The biggest mistake enterprises make with AI isn't choosing the wrong model, it's building on the wrong foundation. In this session, we'll challenge the assumption that more powerful AI automatically delivers better business outcomes, and make the case that constrained, context-rich, deterministic architectures consistently outperform expensive models bolted onto fragmented systems. You'll leave with a practical framework to rethinking your AI stack- one that prioritizes the context layer your organization needs to build before any model can deliver results worth measuring.
1:45 pm	TECHNOLOGY KEYNOTE	Lead IT Like a Business: Every Dollar is a Decision Speaker: Jack Hakimian	All Tracks	CIO	All CIOs and IT leaders face the test of proving IT's value in the language of the business. This keynote walks you through a proven, end-to-end ITFM framework – spend allocation, budgeting, forecasting, reporting, and optimization – illustrated with real-world data and results.
2:15 pm	TECHNOLOGY KEYNOTE	Five Key Takeaways from Info-Tech IGNITE Speaker: Amanda Mathieson	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 and what your next steps should be. Make your trip home stress-free!
2:30pm	EVENT WRAP UP				