

# Trust and Resilience in the Age of the Intelligent Enterprise

**Barath Narayanan and Pratik Patel**

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**Barath Narayanan:** Welcome to another episode of Re(AI)magine Conversations that we have at Persistent. I'm glad to have Pratik Patel join me in this conversation. Again, primarily discussing the topic of AI, which is no surprise to any of you. But today we will not just talk about the use cases but really go beyond that in terms of how we should look at adoption of AI with two primary elements: resiliency and trust. With that, Pratik, glad to have you as part of this conversation. I request you to introduce yourself.

**Pratik Patel:** Yeah, it's great to be with you again. Always look at opportunities for where we can inspire people. I'm Pratik Patel and I've been in the procurement space for 22+ years, and love talking about this topic.

It is a passion of mine and I'm, hopefully raising a level of awareness. And by awareness, I hope people get an understanding of this space and get motivated to take action. I'm looking forward to this conversation Barath. Thanks again for having me.

**Barath Narayanan:** Thank you, Pratik. And every conversation with you is a huge learning experience for me personally, and I'm sure that it is going to be for our audience as well. So, in the last 12 months, you have participated in five different podcasts. Of course, Very, varied topics with AI being the center piece, how do you manage this?

How do you get time? And what motivates you to do that?

**Pratik Patel:** Yeah, so I do about one to two podcasts a month on average, right? And it's all about people that are approaching me all over the world, because they've known me from various different avenues. And, all I really want to do, is understand their pain points.

What pain points do people have? If I can share a perspective on a pain point and be able to share how I would approach that pain point and that inspires people, then I've done my job. I'm also trying to really drive more awareness of lean principles and how lean can help with addressing those pain points as well.

Eliminating waste. Anything I can do to be able to do that. And in terms of preparation, this is the sum of my life experiences. So, there's very little preparation that I do for these podcasts. It all comes from the heart in terms of what I'm sharing, and hopefully a little bit from the brain, but mostly from the heart.

**Barath Narayanan:** That's a good combination if you ask me, very similar from my end. I also want to congratulate you for being awarded four out of five times in the last five years, you have been a game changer in the areas of specialization that you operate in. And one of the recent things I saw in 2025, the Game Changer Award was given to you primarily from an AI standpoint.

Could you brief us a little bit more about AI chatbots? What actually transpired you to drive that initiative? And, what has been the learning out of that?

**Pratik Patel:** I think that ultimately if you're going to have a chatbot, you're going to have a chatbot because you want to create a better experience for your customers, whoever those customers may be.

A chatbot itself has been all about minimizing data variability over the years. The more you can minimize variability of data, the greater predictability you will be able to have too. So, it's the understanding about how we get this into a Dataverse and then get inside that Dataverse. How does natural language processing of that chatbot understand the data from the Dataverse and then provide the insights in a manner that is valuable to a business owner.

There's a whole evolution that we want to have in terms of how we go about doing this. To be honest, it has been a learning curve over the last year. We've had a lot of, I wouldn't say failures, but definitely learnings in terms of, okay, going in this one direction. We didn't quite yield the results we wanted to.

Sometimes you have to restart. And with AI it's so easy to do that. It's about agents and being able to instruct the agents. It's because in the beginning we were trying to do it in a more structured approach with dropdowns. Dropdowns meant that people could choose only from a few options. That became so restrictive. The agent, I think, became a little confused as well because there wasn't a conversation that could be taking place.

And I think that's an important piece. This is not RPA, this is not robotic process automation. This is truly a conversation to try to get to. What is it that you need to understand, from a perspective of What's your job role? What's your location? What region do you want?

Let me give you some recommendations. No, let's have a conversation. Let's understand. What are the different types of tech stacks that you would like to look at? Do you have a preference, in terms of region? It's getting to be more than just a prescriptive response, but about enabling the person who's engaging with the chatbot to have a sense of ownership in the response and the output, if that makes sense.

**Barath Narayanan:** That's an interesting point you're bringing in. That takes me to how things are evolving, right? Yeah. And the evolution on the AI front where so much of the conversation is happening, it's like the digital transformation evolution that happened from 2012 onwards in the last decade when everything became digital.

Everybody is packaging the regular vanilla stuff as digital and then having conversations. Right? Today, AI is significantly disrupting in terms of potential or conversations. How do you see this? For example, what is coming out in my own conversations with customers in US versus Europe versus Middle East, versus say Asia Pacific.

Customers in Singapore or Japan or Australia. It varies significantly in terms of potential disruptions. Of course, it's also driven by the regulatory framework each of these countries operates in. But one client in the Middle East challenged me when I said, 30% is a productivity that we can really look at things.

They laughed at me and said, really, Barath? Come, I'll show you. The productivity possibility that we are already driving is 50 to 60% in terms of process digitization. If I have the conversation with a customer in a different region, I don't want to say which region. Depending on the customer being a tier one, tier two, tier three, or which region they belong, they even step back saying, oh, these numbers people throw, we don't see that happening.

We are still at 10 to 15% of impact rather than forget about 30%. If somebody's talking about 50 to 70%, how do you see this and how do you kind of, because you are in the center of your business as a stakeholder and the external suppliers, how are you managing this?

**Pratik Patel:** Yeah, so I think there's a couple of things if I can share.

One is risk appetite. What type of risk is the party willing to accept as it relates to relinquishing control as well? Because you are relinquishing control when you are enabling more things to be driven from an AI use cases perspective, right?

Second is the maturity. Where's their maturity at? If their maturity is not very high, then of course they're going to see 50, 60% improvement, right? In terms of their productivity and efficiency that they get from the AI. So, it's a perspective among the different parties in terms of where they are at. I always say the sum of our life experiences.

So, it's the sum of their experiences as it relates to the maturity of their ecosystem that they built too. And also, the third piece that I would say is resiliency there too. How do they look at resiliency? Resiliency is a big word. There's many different dimensions of resiliency. I would say one thing is how much can you accept hallucinations?

Yes. How come? How much can you accept not having perfect data? How much can you accept that you're going to be scrutinized by regulators for it? And are you going to be able to address all of their concerns as it relates to business disruption, business continuity, and what they're trying to protect from an economic perspective, depending on what is it that the goods or service that you're providing?

So, all of those things have to be considered.

**Barath Narayanan:** Excellent point!

**Barath Narayanan:** But I want to hold onto the point of resiliency because that is something I really want to deep dive into. How do you see leveraging resiliency as a strategic advantage rather than as a potential bottleneck or a challenge, right?

**Pratik Patel:** Yeah. So, I think, resiliency, if I can substitute words for resiliency and what it means to me, it means reliability. It means consistency, right? It means the quality as well, because both reliability and consistency both have a component of quality. So, you as a company, as a product, as whatever it is that you are trying to develop or bring to market, resiliency should be something you want to be able to demonstrate to your customers as a part of whatever your brand is.

**Barath Narayanan:** Yep.

**Pratik Patel:** In any way, whether it's our brand and procurement in terms of what we deliver to our customers, or whether it is your company and what your company stands for. So, it should absolutely be looked at as a strategic advantage that you can enable because your customers ultimately do not want.

The best thing since sliced bread, whatever else that new technology that's out there, they want consistency, they want reliability. And in doing that, if you can enable new technologies, that's great, but you cannot sacrifice that consistency and that reliability.

**Barath Narayanan:** That's an excellent point.

I totally concur with you in terms of moving faster in adoption and driving things for change. You can't compromise on your own ability to articulate or audit how certain things have been developed to avoid the hallucinations or various other things. And also make sure ethically that in a very structured way, you're able to drive things that you can explain with consistency, right?

So, absolutely. I concur to that. We are extremely conscious of things, how it is evolving in terms of AI, and we are looking at how do we look at our talent supply? How do we look at the way we need to develop the talent that is needed for today, as well as in 12 months or 18 months, what customers like you and others would be looking out for in terms of agents plus humans as a procurement staff.

Right. Keeping in mind the consistency, regulatory framework, and the required governance, how are you looking at your procurement stuff changing?

**Pratik Patel:** I think that, everything always centers around talent ultimately. Right? And your ability to find the talent, nurture the talent, sustain the talent. So when it comes to AI, it's, it's not about, I don't think, like Python engineers and being able to find Python engineers.

I think when it was machine learning, that was kind of where we were going. Now, I think we've evolved a lot more since then, and you need to really be thinking about the overall experience that you want to create. So that talent that you look at is about not just enabling data clusters and insights that you can get from data clusters, from a data engineering data scientist perspective, but it's also about how that "enabling" then translate into "satisfaction."

Because our ultimate goal should be satisfaction. Developing the talent, finding the talent, the evolution of that, I think we have to be cognizant that it's not just about the skillset, because to a certain extent, if you focus just on the skillset piece, you're going to face bad actors. You're going to face people that will portray themselves as something they're not, because skillset is something that AI has gotten very good at. Being able to help anybody be able to quickly accelerate their learning curve, at least in terms of a basic understanding to get by in an interview. But then if you've really focused around how does that skillset translate into achieving that satisfaction for that customer?

The soft skills piece. I think that's where that evolution is going to really be impactful. And so, I hope that companies are investing in building out those soft skills in terms of really understanding as part of those soft skills, like ethics for example. I think ethics is something that kind of gets lost a little bit, so you need to be thinking about the ethics.

What's right and what's wrong. Just because you can develop something and be able to roll it out does not mean it's ethically right. So, you got to think about that aspect. Whatever talent that you're able to pull out there, has to adapt, the world will adapt. There'll be all types of different tools out there. Learning will be crucial. People can have courses as the demand is there.

The supply will follow.

**Barath Narayanan:** Got it. But tell me something, Pratik, do you see this change happening? I'll give you a reason why I am calling that out. Even today, most of the customers who reach out to us, still technical. It is still about X, Y, or Z technical competency. The job description that we get,

or even for project work, because one of the areas of specialization for Persistent is our engineering depth.

Right? So, the ask is still very less in terms of learnability, adaptability, like ability to change and learn. Like one of the senior leaders, without naming him, whom I look up to a lot, when I asked him what should be the things to look at from a futuristic standpoint, he gave a beautiful answer. He said that it is a communication, it is problem solving skills, mathematics, who are very strong.

Problem solving, analytical, and problem solving skills are the foundation. Everything else is the ability of an individual to learn. But that's a good conversation. Even today, in reality though, I see it doesn't translate into the ask or the engagement with the players. It is still about the technicalities, the skillsets that sort.

Do you see the change happening in your vicinity, what do you observe?

**Pratik Patel:** Culture. It is how you are able to overcome just thinking about the technical kind of capabilities. Problem solving, I think, is a critical component, and that's where Lean comes in as well, because Lean gives you the tools to be able to really identify the root cause.

So that is a skillset that can be learned, to your point. But the skillsets that I think are more difficult to just learn are the ones that comes from being exposed to cultures that exhibit those. Like ethics, what's right and wrong, right? And so that I think is something where you inherently either have or you don't have.

Because of the sum of your life experience. And I would instill on whoever's listening to us to really think about this from a cultural perspective of how you're enabling people to kind of really say, "Hey, we can do it this way, but let's take a step back and think about what are the consequences of that?

What are the ethical implications?" So, that's just one thing that I would share from that perspective.

**Barath Narayanan:** Yeah.

**Pratik Patel:** Yeah.

**Barath Narayanan:** A follow-up to that point is how do we build trust with the ecosystem that is around us, with our shareholders, with our customers, internal and external customers, whom we serve based on our roles, right?

How do we build trust in this new scheme of things where you have machines and humans? With lot more complementing each other to deliver different steps, how do we build that trust? How do you see that?

**Pratik Patel:** I don't think trust and how you build it changes over time. I think it's always the same components.

So first it's the relationships that you build. Because if we don't have a good rapport then we're going to have a little bit of doubt when it comes to being able to trust each other. So, you got to build a good rapport. Good rapport comes from time. You need examples of where you've been able to demonstrate that that you can rely on me. That I'm credible. That I'm someone who is actually going to help you with what you need to get done.

Those are things that I think are the qualities that help build trust. Now, from an AI perspective, the AI is going to build the trust in terms of the output that it provides. And maybe it will build trust in terms of the questioning what it shares because it's not confident in the output based on the questions you're asking. It's further probing.

Maybe that is an element too, by its ability to question that it can start to build credibility and trust.

**Barath Narayanan:** Interesting. What you are highlighting is that even agents or AI models should build trust. Is that what I'm hearing?

**Pratik Patel:** Yes.

**Barath Narayanan:** That's interesting. I thought the human element will bring the trust on top of the machine, but you're saying the agents themselves should build that confidence and trust.

Could you elaborate a little bit more?

**Pratik Patel:** So, we're all a little bit sensitive to the hallucinations that AI output sometimes gives. And hallucinations is simply, you know, just like a positive, a false positive, or a false negative.

**Barath Narayanan:** Hmmm...

**Pratik Patel:** Right? That the AI did not intentionally want to give you a false positive or a false negative, but it only knows the data set that it knows it has. That's not always the full data set.

**Barath Narayanan:** Yeah.

**Pratik Patel:** And so I think there is an element of that trust that needs to be built. Transparency that we need to bring in.

**Barath Narayanan:** Interesting! Let's close off the conversation is in terms of how you have really deployed the whole AI chatbot. You have the learnings from it and various things.

How do you see the evolution of performance metrics when it comes to AI and human collaboration?  
How are the overall performance metrics evolving, you think?

**Pratik Patel:** Yeah, so the performance metrics are going to be around how fast is the AI actually supporting the need, how many queries does it take

Before it gets to an output? How often is the person coming back? What's the frequency? Is it daily? Is it weekly? How can we enable greater engagement? What other types of information can we provide that creates more of that engagement? The more engagement that we would have, the greater the affinity to the brand and the brand being procured.

And what we can do to drive value back to the business.

**Barath Narayanan:** Yeah. Excellent. Thank you, Pratik. This is wonderful. If I were to summarize our discussion about the way it evolved, few principles I heard today from you, which are being consistent, ethical, transparency, some of the fundamental pillars as it evolves. It is not about how soon we adopt things, but how do we protect our customer and our shareholders in terms of the ethical brand that you have developed so far is not getting compromised in terms of the speed of things that we want to evolve.

So excellent conversation! I really enjoyed every bit of it. I'm assuming the audience who listened to this has also equally enjoyed it. Any last words from you, Pratik, before we sign off?

**Pratik Patel:** Yeah, I think you summarized it well, and thanks for having me on this podcast today.

I would just summarize with a few more words if I can share. Resiliency being one of those, right? Because that kind of summarizes a lot of that piece about consistency, reliability, and even ethics. From a resiliency perspective, if your ethics are compromised, that will compromise how people think, how resilient you are.

So, I think resiliency is something, and then I love the word that you put brought in there about trust. So, thank you for that question because I think trust is a two-way component with the AI. The AI doesn't know truly. It automatically trusts people. But the person that it's interacting with, they have to build that trust. They have to build that confidence.

**Barath Narayanan:** We kind of summarize this by the two terms, resiliency and trust.

**Pratik Patel:** Yes.

**Barath Narayanan:** I think that's all. Thank you so much, Pratik. Wonderful to have you as always.

**Pratik Patel:** Thank you. Really appreciate the opportunity. Hopefully we continue to inspire.



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## About Persistent

Persistent Systems (BSE: 533179 and NSE: PERSISTENT) is a global services and solutions company delivering AI-led, platform-driven Digital Engineering and Enterprise Modernization to businesses across industries. With over 26,000 employees located in 18 countries, the Company is committed to innovation and client success. Persistent offers a comprehensive suite of services, including software engineering, product development, data and analytics, CX transformation, cloud computing, and intelligent automation. The Company is part of the MSCI India Index and is included in key indices of the National Stock Exchange of India, including the Nifty Midcap 50, Nifty IT, and Nifty MidCap Liquid 15, as well as several on the BSE such as the S&P BSE 100 and S&P BSE SENSEX Next 50. Persistent is also a constituent of the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index. The Company has achieved carbon neutrality, reinforcing its commitment to sustainability and responsible business practices. Persistent has also been named one of America's Greatest Workplaces for Inclusion & Diversity 2025 by Newsweek and Plant A Insights Group. As a participant of the United Nations Global Compact, the Company is committed to aligning strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labor, environment, and anti-corruption, as well as take actions that advance societal goals. With 468% growth in brand value since 2020, Persistent is the fastest-growing IT services brand in 'Brand Finance India 100' 2025 Report.

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