

AI+IM GLOBAL SUMMIT 2026 · BALTIMORE

CRAWL FASTER.

Taking an AI-First Approach
to Data Strategy

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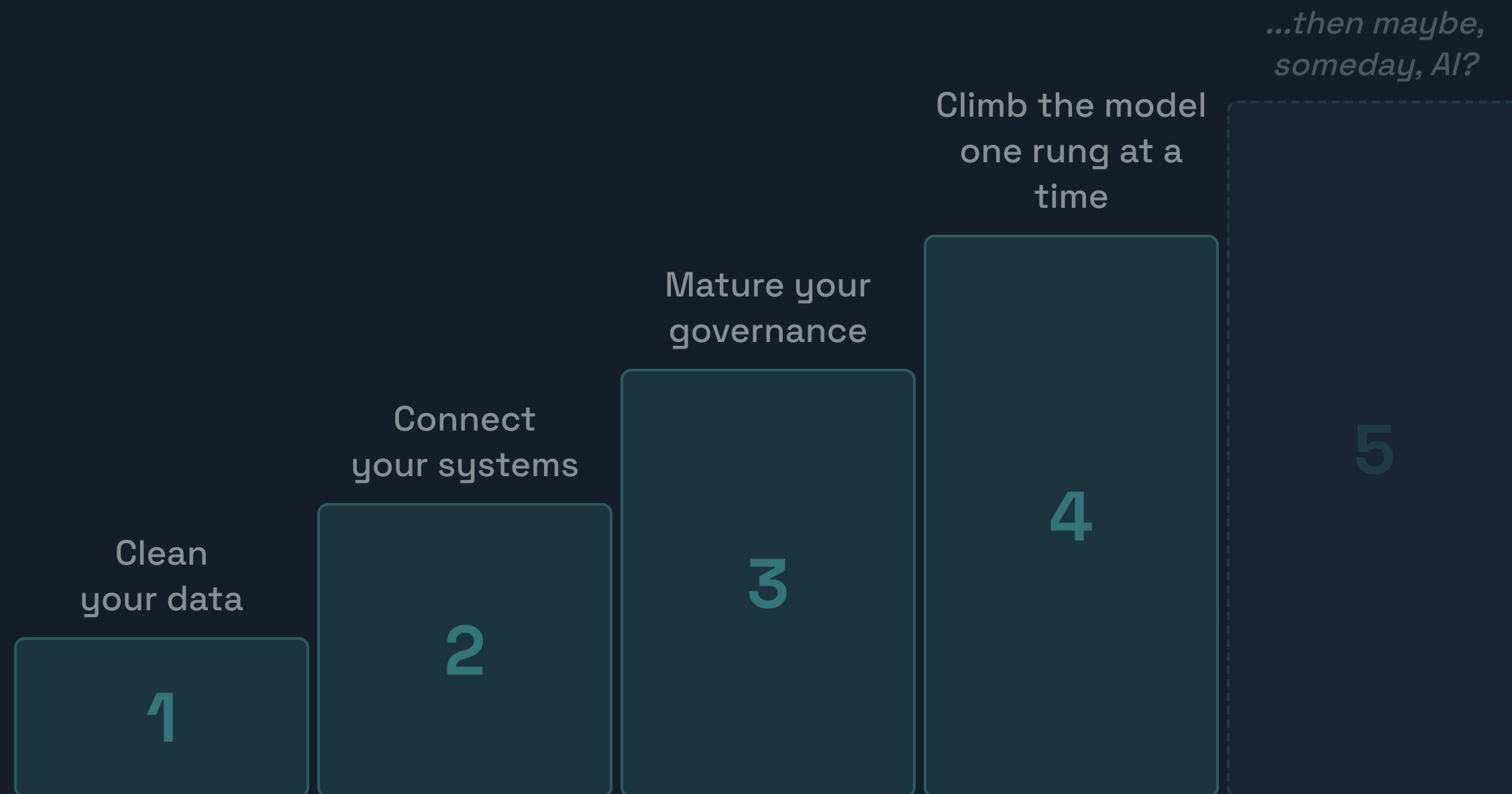
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THE CONVENTIONAL WISDOM

You know **the** playbook.



 You are here

What if the maturity model is the trap?

The traditional roadmap assumes you need to **earn** the right to use modern tools.

But the tools have changed.

The cost of experimentation has collapsed.

You don't have to crawl before you walk anymore.

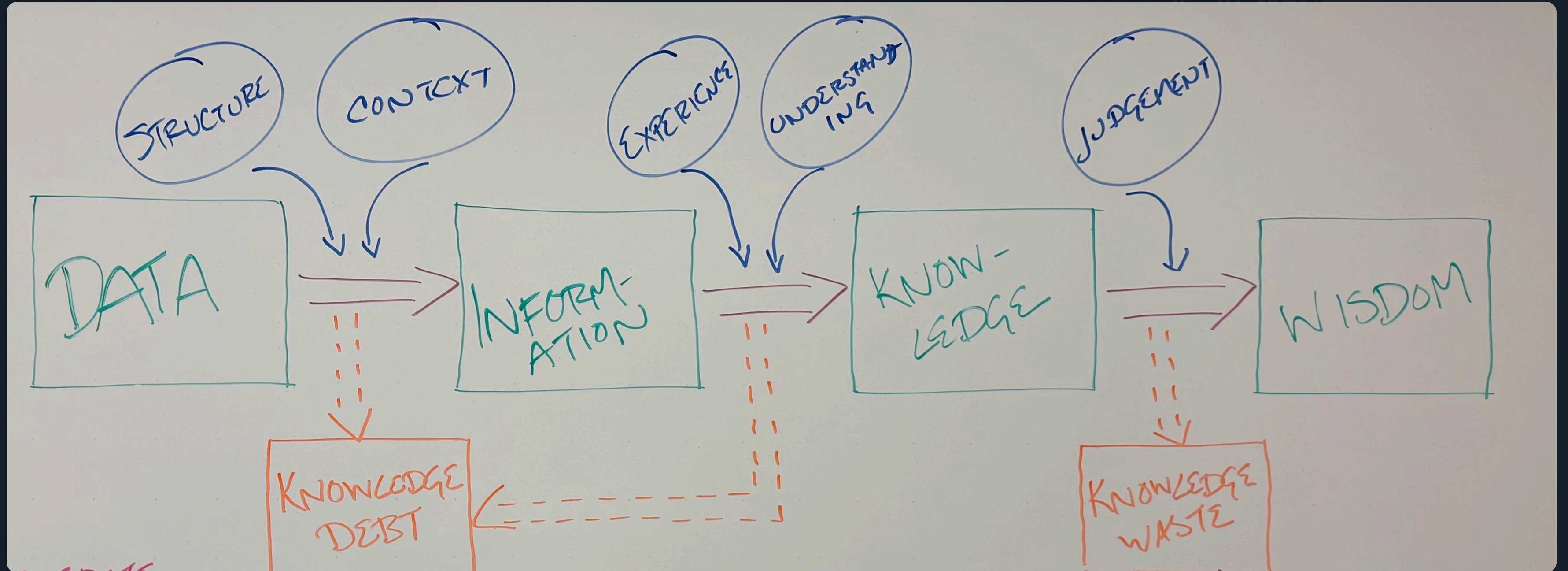


What if you just... didn't?

Skip the crawl. Start with platforms
built for the world we're actually in.



The data-to-wisdom continuum.



AI-first ≠ AI-only.

AI-FIRST MEANS...

- ✓ Choosing platforms that assume AI integration from day one
- ✓ Designing data architectures that are query-ready, not just storage-ready
- ✓ Shipping fast, using real feedback instead of abstract ideation

IT DOESN'T MEAN...

- ✗ Throwing AI at everything and hoping for the best
- ✗ Ignoring data quality entirely
- ✗ Moving fast without any guardrails



Pick platforms that assume AI.

The question isn't "does it have an AI feature?" — It's "was this built for a world where AI exists?"

Data Platforms

- Supports semantic querying — AI can reason over your data natively
- Portability — don't let the platform hold your data hostage if a better tool comes along
- Can serve apps and analytics from the same layer

Cloud Infrastructure

- AI services are observable first-class citizens, not add-ons
- Identity, access, and audit are native to the platform
- Scales without re-architecting

Analytics & BI

- Natural language intelligence — stakeholders ask questions directly
- Self-service exploration, not just report consumption
- Embeddable — lives where your people already work

Ship. Learn. Adjust.

Use real feedback to guide engineering, not abstract ideation.

1 SHIP

Get something real in front of people. A dashboard. A query. An answer. Not a roadmap.

2 LEARN

Watch what they actually do with it. What questions do they ask next? Where do they get stuck?

3 ADJUST

Build the next thing based on what you learned, not what a maturity model says comes next.

Make the unfamiliar familiar.

Getting non-technical teams genuinely comfortable with data
— not just receiving reports.



Decision canvases, not dashboards

Give people a space to explore questions, not just consume answers. The goal is building capacity, not dependency.



Curiosity over compliance

Encourage people to ask "what if" — not just "what happened." Make experimentation safe.



Proximity, not training

Sit with teams. Show them their own data. Let them see themselves in it. That's worth more than any workshop.



What's still sacred.

Moving fast doesn't mean moving reckless. Some things you don't skip.

WORTH SKIPPING

- Exhaustive data dictionaries before anyone's asking questions
- Months of requirements gathering for v1
- Waiting for organizational buy-in before proving value

DON'T SKIP

- 🛡️ **Privacy and security architecture** — design it in from day one
- 🛡️ **Data lineage and provenance** — know where your data comes from
- 🛡️ **Access controls and audit trails** — trust requires accountability

Scale must be to your advantage.

Every new node on the network makes it stronger.

Curiosity and judgement are your most valuable resources.

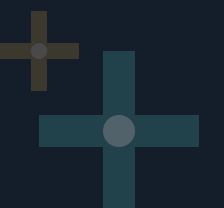
Failure is often the best teacher.



Move fast. Break less.

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