The Hidden Costs of AI Implementation:
What Product Leaders Need to Know

Michael Cinquino (00:09)
Welcome everyone to episode eight of Ascendle Unscripted. Today, we're going to be talking about the hidden costs of AI implementation, what product leaders need to know. We have Jason Ling, Director of Product Strategy, a veteran as far as Ascendle Unscripted goes. And we have no one new to Ascendle, but someone new to Ascendle Unscripted: Gina Angelone, Product Strategist. Welcome to you both.

Jason Ling (00:35)
Thanks.

Michael Cinquino (00:36)
Of course. Great to have you. I always like to dive right in. As you know, there is this thing, this question that comes up. The pressure on product teams to quote, have an AI strategy, asking, what is our AI strategy? I'm just going to drop that out there. I see both of you kind of smirking already. Might have some point of view on that. So I'm going to zip it and let one of you dive in.

Gina Angelone (01:02)
Yeah, so I'd be happy to take this one. Yeah, it's a great question. So, the pressure to have an AI strategy is something that I think we're seeing across the industry. AI is this shiny new tool that everyone wants to adopt. But the key is really to ensure that it aligns with your business goals and it's adding real value for your customers. So I think before even jumping into AI, you start asking questions like, why do we want to use AI? What problems are we solving?

Clarity is going to be critical because adopting AI just to say, you know, "we use AI," isn't really helpful. It needs to solve specific challenges or deliver measurable value. So, I think if your goals include things like automating processes or enhancing personalization or extracting insights from data, then AI makes sense and you can start formulating a strategy. I think even then there's still some questions you need to consider.

Michael Cinquino (02:02)
Gina, it sounds like thinking about what the actual end goal is and then connecting that to AI - yes or no? And the answer could be no, it sounds like.

Gina Angelone (02:14)
Yeah, yeah, I think it's not always the right answer in every situation. Every business need is unique. So I think you need to ask some questions, right? Like, is it really going to solve the problem that we have? Is the organization ready to adopt AI? What tools do you want to use?

What is the ROI you're expecting? So I think you need to answer some of these questions related to AI before you decide to jump head first into - we need to build an AI strategy.

Michael Cinquino (02:49)
Got it, thank you Gina. Jason, do you have thoughts on the same question?

Jason Ling (02:53)
Yeah, but I read a Substack article. It says I need to have AI. That's typically the thing that I've been hearing - my competitor has it, so I need to have it. And I think Gina, she summed it up. I can't really add any more of like, you don't really maybe need to have it. It's "what are you trying to accomplish?"

It's interesting hearing some of these new reports coming out and like, well we've implemented these AI agents and we've increased our ROI by three X. Cool. How? How did you do it? Because it's not free. None of this is free to do.

Michael Cinquino (03:44)
Well, which brings us to the next question.

You walked us right into it. Real costs and considerations. It sounds like a lot of times we forget that this is going to cost money, sometimes a lot of money. Yeah, so can you talk about what a lot of money looks like? I think there's an example from Microsoft.

Jason Ling (03:56)
Yeah. So, McKinsey put out a report towards the end of last year about the projected costs of implementing AI. And you've really kind of have to, you really have kind of two, two ways of doing it. You can own your own model, which means you basically create and train your own LLM, a large language model, which is, you know, that's basically like Claude or Lama3 or OpenAI, ChatGPT is an LLM and everything like that. Or you basically create a workflow and you use money and utilize one of one of them. Amazon has SageMaker. Like I said, you have Anthropic, you've got ChatGPT, so forth and so on. McKinsey put out a report, like I said, towards the middle end of last year. On average, if you're going to do your own model, which personally, I highly recommend not doing now, you're looking at between $1-2 million a year just to maintain it and just to train it - just to maintain it, just to grow it. Like that's a couple million bucks a year. And then now the new word is "agents." AI agents, you know, Salesforce was the one that really rolled out the big one.

Jason Ling (05:24)
Towards the middle of last year, they had it at Salesforce, their agent force or whatever the heck they're calling it. Can't remember. But even then, running these AI agents, which are just basically like automated little task masters, like I said before, AI is an unpaid intern that you have to be very specific with. AI agents are going to cost you anywhere from like eight to 10 grand a month.

Just maintaining and that's that whole umbrella of where it is being maintained? What is your cloud computing solution look like? It's not free. So there are a whole laundry list of advantages of having it, obviously, which is why we're in this AI revolution. But from my experience recently, it's been very interesting hearing all of these organizations going like, we're going to/need to implement AI. Need to implement. We're going to do agents. Now we're going to do this. We're going to do that. First, it was a generative AI. Now it's agents. No one, I'm not hearing cost. Like there's this wonderful meme going around where it's like, well we've used AI to increase our marketing. And it leads over. It's like, what did you really do? It's like, we spent $700,000 on AI to get a million dollars worth of business. It's like.

Michael Cinquino (06:55)
As Jason, as you were speaking, Gina, I was going to ask you, hearing Jason talk about kind of like balancing things out, like kind of needing to do it, but the costs, there's all kinds of hidden costs. What would you advise someone to kind of start to look in that direction of how do you stay forward thinking? How do you stay competitive, but at the same time, not do this thing where we're yet in another iteration of a new technology where folks are racing to implement and it may or may not really solve a problem. The velocity of change seems to be ever increasing.

Gina Angelone (07:34)
Yeah. It's a good question, Michael. I think it kind of comes down to evaluating your, like the genuine AI use cases you have versus the hype, you know, and then figuring out if it's not a genuine AI use case, come up with some innovative ideas to handle it. I think, you know, when you're evaluating your AI use cases, you know, the keys again, kind of going back to what I said earlier: focusing on the problem, not so much on the technology, identifying customer business challenges you're trying to solve. AI should only come into play if it's the best tool for the job. And is it actually going to enhance the customer experience, or is it just a nice to have? And then thinking about your measurable outcomes. If you're going to reduce your processing time or improve accuracy or increase engagement, okay, then maybe it makes sense to use AI. But if you can't clearly measure success, then this might be more hype for your business than a viable use case. And you might want to think about some other innovative ways to solve those use cases.

Michael Cinquino (08:46)
Speaking of things to think about, Gina, are there some things that you might implore folks to think about around data security, privacy implications?

Gina Angelone (08:57)
I think there's a whole bunch of things you need to think about if you're going to implement AI. There's your data challenges. Do you have poor quality or insufficient data that could hinder your AI training? Are there technical limitations you need to consider? Infrastructure upgrades or third party integrations that you'll need to do? And are you accounting for those in your development plan? Of course, the security and privacy concerns being transparent about how the data will be used, and then compliant with privacy laws, testing your team capabilities. So I think there's a whole slew of things you have to take into consideration.

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Michael Cinquino (09:40)
Jason, how does an organization stay attuned to what's happening to their data? Because I would imagine that the AI company is like, well, we're going to need your data. I guess the question would be like, well, then what are you going to do with the model that you trained on our data? What are your thoughts on that? Is that something that's, I don't know what the standard is.

Jason Ling (10:06)
Sure. So it's now 2025 and everyone's really kind of talking about like, AI really has only been around for the last, like the explosion has been the last 18 months. That's not true. Like this thing is, this has really started probably around 2016, 2017, really 2018 is when people started paying attention to this. And there are a lot of organizations, and I personally know of several, I'll just say very large media entertainment companies that are now utilizing AI. But before they even implemented a single thing, they basically put together a governance board and you're seeing now across many, many, many, many, organizations of these AI governance boards, because Gina, exactly to your point and Michael, to your point, is that unless you are hosting your own instance, the data that you were hosting your own instance and doing your own model, the data that you are feeding into these models - Anthropic, OpenAI, Llama, Llama, all of them, I'm blanking on the Google one for some reason right now - is you're giving them your data to train that model. And again, this very, very prominent entertainment and media company has refused in certain projects to utilize AI because the data that would be used in there is incredibly sensitive. And there are a lot of organizations that'll do this. They're forming these government and safety boards, to the point like Gina was saying, it's like, well, we need AI. I'm like, OK, well, we need to have data security because we don't want our data to be outside of our walls. And it is a big concern.

So there, is starting to happen, I think as more and more people have it. And I really hate to say this is like every single time you see an article where one of these AI companies has a data breach, people get really nervous because at the end of the day, these AI companies exist because they are collecting the data from their users to continue to train their model. Now I don't want this to sound like they're terrible. You should never do it. Absolutely not. Just be smart about it. Understand what you're doing and how you're utilizing it. Or host your own instance, which actually there are a lot of organizations, and you can do that. Open AI, you can host your own instance. Microsoft, you can host your own instance. And you can kind of keep itself contained. But that also comes with other challenges, because now you have to have individuals internally to maintain that.

Michael Cinquino (12:59)
I want to ask an existential question. It feels like an arms race. These things oftentimes don't end so well. I saw the Terminator. I've seen the foot crushing the human skull. But I understand, and I would love to hear your thoughts on this, because of course there's levels of organization. If we're talking very large enterprise, because one of the arguments is that, it's an adversarial thing. Like our adversaries, when you talk about government and security and stuff like that, it's

like, hey, we have to keep up because the adversaries are, and if we don't, then, you know. Meanwhile, it's like really not paying attention to the fact that this thing's going to wake up later and be like, I don't want to get turned off.

You know, I know we laugh about it, but it's like, it doesn't really feel like it's that far off. So, could you first, both of you speak about the size of organizations maybe and how AI relates particularly to the size of an organization? Speaking of very large enterprise, you know, mid-size small business, etc, or however Ascendle/you all classify. Because it's my understanding that, and please correct me if I'm wrong, that depending on what the size of the organization is, is gonna determine how much, how little, how the implementation happens, how much you even need to do it. Whereas you have Boeing worried about it running away on them because they're investing in so much. Whereas a company with 150 people, it's not the same kind of problems. So could you maybe just give a landscape of maybe what AI looks like across the stack of large organizations to maybe the smaller based on what you all are working with or have thoughts around?

Jason Ling (14:46)
I can start - the way that I kind of see it as, like, kind of got two buckets. Michael, to your point, where it's like, large, massive organization. I'll use Amazon. Actually, you know what I'll use with the report that just came out, the largest company that just reported revenue, Walmart. Walmart is number one. They are the biggest company, technically the biggest company on the planet, when it comes to revenue - they are using AI.

I have friends down at Walmart labs, not too far from here in the Bay area. They are using AI. They are using AI as a tool. Very similar to Amazon where it's more like recommendations. It's helping crunch data. It's more enhancements and efficiency, both as an internal tool and as an external capability to give to the customers that increases. Well, I'll call it the delight factor kind of thing. All commerce sites live and die by how good are your recommendation engines? That's just how you know, Amazon laid the groundwork and now everybody does it. So the arms race for AI in that one is definitely like, can we enhance? Then you have the smaller companies where AI is it's almost like a backbone, like these companies came into existence because they're now offering like, we do AI agents for cold calls, for sales companies kind of thing.

So, but both of those personally, I put them in the bucket of, I mean, I could legitimately see an Amazon-like warehouse robot waking up one day and going on a rampage, but for way different reasons, AI will have nothing to do with that. But those are just kind of like, okay, they're tools and everything like that. And then like the government sector, I think that's where it gets into that black box that none of us will ever see. And these are people who are infinitely smarter than anyone in a 20 mile radius from where I am. They just are. We're not going to get Terminator. Like people were saying the exact same thing in 2008 when we had the iPhone and we had the first Android device. And then by 2009, we had five different smartphone operating systems.

And people were freaking out going, I'm being tracked. I'm being this, this is going to be the end of everything. And it's like, it's not, it's just a tool.

Gina Angelone (17:19)
It enhances your ability to do work.

Jason Ling (17:21)
Exactly. Yeah.

Michael Cinquino (17:25)
Gina, do you have thoughts on augmentation? Because hearing what Jason was saying, and I have personal beliefs that the next level is augmentation. Like those of us that are able to augment with AI are going to do the best. You can still land the plane without it. And like Jason was saying, there's organizations that exist and if AI went away, they would not exist. And then the example you gave Jason about Walmart, which is like they were doing just fine and they're using it to kind of in certain areas, in certain ways to be able to.

Gina, do you have any thoughts about how companies of what size or maybe even sector, how they can kind of steal from that Walmart model and start to augment maybe certain areas where they can really enhance certain things without going full in kind of thing and getting in the weeds?

Gina Angelone (18:15)
Yeah, I mean, I think there's AI tools now that allow you to kind of figure out and push the boundaries of what's possible. And I think you can do that without having to full blown introduce something into your processes or systems. I don't know if I can give you a specific example of that.

Jason Ling (18:43)
AI isn't HAL, and I know I'm totally dating myself with a 2001 reference. AI currently is not just running rampant in your system. Once you've kind of started up and everything like that, I'm going to belabor this point till the day I die. It's an unpaid intern. Currently it just, it's efficiency. It's like, give me some ideas, help me do this, save me some time, and things like that.

If we do have terminators based on that, they are going to be the dumbest terminators that walk the earth. It's going to be really easy to fool them. I mean, it's right up here with the Waymo taxis we have here in San Francisco. Somebody recorded a traffic jam between nine of them because one of the Waymos stopped, got confused, and had a chain of Waymos behind them who couldn't figure out, why aren't we moving? And it literally was a gridlock that required tow trucks to come and move them. I'm not too worried about Terminator 2 yet.

Michael Cinquino (19:51)
Right, Gina, are there some implementations that you've seen in your experience that seem to be prominent? Companies are like, like kind of use cases, if you will, or case study-ish kind of stuff.

Gina Angelone (20:10)

I think implementations around, I would say more basic things. I mentioned earlier workflows. So introducing AI to workflows for onboarding or just mapping out how users currently operate.

Michael Cinquino (20:34)
You gave me an idea, I would actually love to hear from each of you. First, Gina, what is one thing you absolutely love about AI and the future of AI? And then we'll talk about something that like, eh, not so much. So is there something that you as a product strategist are really excited about as far as AI goes?

Gina Angelone (21:05)
Yeah, I think it goes back to something I mentioned earlier just about, you know, you can push the boundaries, like there's no limits, right? So if you can articulate your idea to AI, it can really help you, you know, to sort of conceptualize that. And then you can go in and fine tune that. So I think that's really powerful as a product person. I think we're always ideating and coming up with things. And so being able to really quickly make something come to life and then iterate on it is super powerful. And I was just having a conversation with a colleague yesterday about all the other different ways you can utilize AI, not just professionally, but personally. And so I think that's really interesting. They had mentioned that their daughter sort of uses AI as a therapist. And I'm like, I've never thought about it in that way, but the AI is prompting this person back with questions, being really introspective. I know, I think that's kind of interesting.

Michael Cinquino (22:07)
Yeah, absolutely.

And you've brought up a really good point, like just speaking personally, I've gone back to school. I haven't been in school since 2005. So now I'm in a master's degree program for clinical psychology. And I didn't have AI 20 years ago. So now one of my use cases is fantastic. I read a book and then upload the book to AI and say, give me a study guide on this.

You know, but the point I got to make is that I have to read the book. I can't rely on the machine to inform me because like Jason was saying earlier, it's an unpaid intern and it will make mistakes and you'll analyze things and it'll say that it'll hallucinate. Jason, are there things that you're excited about from your purview about AI looking, looking forward?

Jason Ling (23:00)
I would say there's several, but I would say one that really, really has me kind of interested is, kind of to build on what Gina was saying about personalization is, I would say probably over the last 15 years, there's been, in my opinion, there's been the shift in what users and customers kind of expect in their, I'll just call it, you know, digital experiences.

And what that shift is, is that I don't want to interact with it. I want it to interact with me. You know, we now have two going on three generations of individuals who never knew a world without the internet. So now we have this whole thing of like my personal data is such a misnomer in my opinion cause we share everything. Everything is shared. That's just how it is.

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And it's shared willingly depending on whatever social media platform, whatever, you know, Amazon, TikTok, all of it is shared. So it's this whole notion of like, well, my experience every time I interact with something or more importantly, it interacts with me should feel personalized. It feels like it should just be for me. And I think what I'm really excited about is utilizing AI and mainly the computing power behind AI. That's the thing that I'm excited about is now we can start creating these more conversational experiences. Google's already kind of starting to roll out like within search, with Gemini, within search, where it's much more conversational. Siri, the latest update on the Mac OS, now their Apple intelligence is all rolling. It's like now we're starting to have the, it's more conversational. That excites me because now it's kind of that, to what Gina said, like say like an onboarding experience. So say I'm a business analyst sitting at, you know, Deloitte and, I'm like, okay, I have to create all of these BI dashboards because that's what I'm getting paid for. Cause I just got out of college and now I'm in Deloitte kind of thing. Instead of going through the hoops of like, well, I have to set up this and then I have to do this. This whole idea of like, when you go in and literally all you have is a prompt. I'm going to be very specific - so whoever steals this, I know where you're going to get it from. It's kind of that conversation of like, what's important to you. It would be very important for me to see, month, month over month, RPU from the last 18 months of this particular customer base. Sure. And here you go.

So now it becomes personalized, becomes more conversational. That is what I'm really, really, really excited about.

Gina Angelone (26:00)
It starts to learn what you care about.

Jason Ling (26:02)
Because you keep telling it what you care about. And like, it's the computing power. Microsoft announced that this year alone, they're going to be spending $80 billion just on data centers to do AI. It's the computing power. That's what I'm excited about. Now I'm almost talking to that intern.

Michael Cinquino (26:26)
Do you think, though, that creatively, it seems to be getting narrower and narrower and narrower? This is one thing I would love to hear both of your takes on this. Also, one of the things that I have recognized in movies in the entertainment world is this model of, like, we have to get more content, more content, more content.

Michael Cinquino (26:52)
And I have a hard time watching certain shows nowadays because they're very formulaic and you could tell like, hey, we need to get this out there. We need to get the content out there. So at what point does it become unhealthy and maybe even unsafe to be playing that game? You know what I'm saying? Like the game of like, we just got to crank this show out. We just got to crank it out. We have to crank it out because those, that AI, that platform knows no satiation. And it's like movie after movie after show after show.

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It's like at what point do you, I don't know, level? Like how do you stay in a healthy relationship with AI in an organization?

Jason Ling (27:26)
Yeah.

So I want to first say that I am 100 % on the side of artists and how AI has in the past stolen from artists. I do not like that. That I would say is like, look, this is the bad side of AI, of all of it. But to your point, if utilized correctly, in my opinion, listen, media has been cranking out, cranking out, cranking out, seeing what has worked, everything like that since we invented the printing press. It's just taken a while to see what works and what doesn't work. Then fast forward and now you've got the Nielsen rating. So we know what shows work. We know what shows don't work. And then even before that, you've got focus groups, you have all the stuff. The reason I'm getting in that part is that's where I think that computing power of AI can use that to sift through these massive amounts of data points of like number of views, length of views, what's your demographic, like something that would have normally taken an army of individuals to kind of distill of like, as I'm saying this, I know it sounds like you're kind of taking the soul out of art, which I totally understand. It is, I know it's like, listen, media is going to be using it. I would rather them personally, Gina, I'll stop monologuing because I want to hear yours, is I would rather they use AI to more analyze what's successful than use AI to create it. Because I firmly believe that AI can't do that.

Gina Angelone (29:23)
Yeah, I think you can augment some of it, to actually use it to full blown create these artistic endeavors, it's taking the soul away from what makes art art, right? Like the originality of it and the depth of it, if you're just like feeding it through some AI. I mean, I see the benefits of augmenting, but I don't see, you know, it's scary.

Michael Cinquino (29:52)
What about it's scary for you, Gina?

Gina Angelone (29:55)
I think it comes down to you're removing the human from it, from some of these things that are so unique to being a human and human life and having those shared experiences and conveying that across the screen to other people. If you're putting that in the hands of AI to write a script on or decide on. Again, I think it's helpful to augment, but I don't think it should be all in the hands of AI.

Michael Cinquino (30:21)
Do you have any thoughts on how to break the algorithm? Gina, in a healthy way.

Gina Angelone (30:29)
That's a good question.

I don't know, I'm not sure. I'll have to give that some thought.

Michael Cinquino (30:37)
Cool. We always like to leave some takeaway that's implementable. And I'll stay on you. From a product strategy perspective, what do you feel is the first question you ask a client who wants to implement AI? What is that first question?

Gina Angelone (30:59)
I think it goes back to something I said earlier. That's like, what is your why for wanting to adopt AI and what is the problem that you're trying to solve? And is your organization ready to adopt AI? I think those are some of the initial things I would, you know, I'd ask.

Michael Cinquino (31:17)
Got it. So really bringing the problem to the forefront first and then, like we said earlier, making that connection between we got to implement AI. Okay, well, how does this connect to a real problem or strategy or?

Gina Angelone (31:23)
Mm-hmm.

Yeah, I mean, you know, want and anything you do, you want to make sure it's aligning with your business goals. You don't go chasing this, you know, this dream of AI that might not actually give you the results that you're looking for or that are important or valuable to your customers.

Michael Cinquino (31:46)
Jason, the opposite end of the spectrum, how do you help clients think through the long-term implications of AI dependency?

Jason Ling (31:55)
It's very similar, you know, to quote Gina in the beginning of it, it's say, well, what are you trying to do? Like what problem are you trying to solve? And then once that's kind of like, we're trying to do this or we're trying to increase our data processing, efficient, whatever the reason is. Okay, cool. That totally makes sense. And everything like that. Now it's the whole thing of like, okay, well, what does this look like middle and long-term and then because trying to think of best way to answer this, can't just plug in AI. Like it's not just a no. I don't know. I've read a few Substacks and it's not just doing a technical implementation. It's not just doing a product implementation.

I would argue and this is the conversation long-term that we have with clients and we have a couple of clients that we aren't speaking to this about actually. And they're about that. It's kind of like that to sci-fi nerd real quick. It's like that time in Star Trek, when a civilization is first introduced to the replicator because they're ready. There was this whole thing about it going like, there's a reason why it's that next step of evolution in the society. It's kind of like, okay, you're ready for this because it's going to open up so many more doors for you, but you weren't ready a hundred years ago, but you're ready now. And with it is with companies, it's the again, it's not

just a product implementation. It's not just a technology and believe we're talking true, like truly to be successful. This is change management. This is coming from the top down.

This is changing your ideologies within your organization. This is changing how you operate. What philosophically, what is success for you? Caveat, my opinion, if you do it right, like we are going to embrace AI. Okay, well, why are we doing it? How are we doing it? How are we going to use it? How is it going to impact our current organization from a resource perspective, from a cost perspective, big one cost perspective. Take that step back and go, I am now introducing a truly disruptive game changer within my organization. This isn't just shiny, this is now fundamentally changing who we are. Are we ready for it? Exactly. Gina, are we ready for it?

Gina Angelone (34:41)
Are we ready? Are we ready for this? Yeah.

Michael Cinquino (34:46)
Gina, in your opinion, how do you know?

Gina Angelone (34:51)
I think if, you know, the best way to know, I guess is by having a plan, right? If you're going into this completely blind, chances are it's not going to go well. So I think if you're having honest conversations, if you're getting aligned across departments, if you fiscally have budget and money allocated for it and you've hired and trained the right people, then I think that will help you know, I think you're on the right path to success. So I think you will fully know once you've realized, you know, did it meet our short and long term goals? Can we, you know, quantify the impact of the ROI what we were expecting? So yeah, I think it's good to have a plan.

Michael Cinquino (35:48)
One last, just wrapping it all up here, you were talking about real ROI conversation, like measurements. Are there some things top of mind that companies, organizations should be considering from best practices measurement or is it contextual?

Gina Angelone (37:08)
I think there's things you should be measuring. What's the revenue impact of introducing or adopting AI? Are you seeing increased sales or conversion rates? Are you experiencing any cost savings? Are there operational efficiencies you're seeing from implementing AI? Are there productivity gains? I think those are some real ROIs that you can measure in and think about.

I think, one, sorry, one other that just came to me is I think is really important is like, you know, you've introduced AI and you've launched it. What are those post launch metrics? Yeah. I think that's absolutely crucial to know if you've been successful. So.

Michael Cinquino (37:53)
Post-launch metrics. Jason, any additions to that?

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Jason Ling (37:58)
I mean, the one thing that I would say is... I'm going to be very, very biased being, being product people is I really feel that implementing any type of AI solution should really come from your product organization because your product group, our responsibility is to have that 360 degree view of what value and what success is for our customers via our product.

I am not discounting the technology group. I'm not discounting a data group. I'm not any of that by any stretch of the imagination. They are vital for all of this, but I really feel that these types of initiatives and these types of mad scientist dreams, depending on what they are, should really come from the product org because it's, we're doing that right now. Actually we have a client that this year we are proposing to them actually implementing an AI capability. I'm not going to say feature. I'm not going to say anything that it is a capability because this thing is going to be interwoven into their entire digital experience. So as a product person, if you're listening to this, it's kind of, I view it as it's your responsibility to really kind of sit there and think about all of the things that we've been talking about, where it's like, what is the impact? Not just on your customer and on your user, but what is your impact on your organization? Because there's a really good, there's a really good possibility that you're the one who's going be standing in front of your executive leadership going, we need to do this. And here's why.

Michael Cinquino (39:44)
The distinction you just made around capability feels like a really important one. Not feature, but what capability in organization is this guy going to either enhance capability or create for us? And it sounds like enhancing might happen more frequently. Yeah, you're nodding yes. And I like the idea of capability because it's transferable, it moves. It's not something that's static or in one spot and then gets kind of left behind or someone writes another piece of software and it gets, you know, obsoleted in a second. But a capability, something that enhances a capability, because that feels like there's already a foundation there and it doesn't feel hollow. It feels safer, for lack of better terms.

Jason Ling (40:35)
Capabilities are potential solutions to problems that you have. That's how I see it. That's kind of my mantra. So it is a capability. Is it you're trying to increase efficiency externally or internally? Are you going to use AI because your accounts payable department is underwater because they are behind on invoices. Well, we can introduce an AI capability to help them out. Are your customers having problems? Like, are you seeing a bounce rate, an attrition rate of your customers through a commerce platform of like they come in and they buy one thing and then they leave because your marketing department is again, underwater or, or not, or whatever reason isn't as efficient as it could be to kind of do that whole viral loop to quote near aisle, that viral hook, that viral loop to pull that customer back in the purchase something else. Let's introduce an AI capability to help support that organization. So that's why I say AI is not a feature. It is a new capability that we are introducing to technology.

Michael Cinquino (41:59)

Love that distinction. Thank you both. Gina Angelone, Product Strategist at Ascendle. Jason Ling, Director of Product Strategy. For those of you that haven't subscribed yet, we would invite you to subscribe. We usually do an episode every week or so. We won't hammer you with episodes, so please hit that subscribe button if you like this content and want to be notified as soon as the next episode comes out. But in the meantime, thanks for joining us as always. And we'll see you on the next episode of Ascendle Unscripted.

Jason Ling (42:28)
Thank you.