

From AI ambition to commercial impact

A market-reality guide for connecting supply, shelf and shopper decisions in CPG and retail

Contents

03 Why AI readiness matters before AI scale

05 4 starting positions on the map to commercial AI impact

06 Where you are determines what to do next

12 3 ways to move from insight to commercial impact

15 Your next AI move

How AI readiness directs AI scale

AI is becoming part of every commercial interaction and plan. It's changing how consumer packaged goods (CPG) and retail teams forecast demand, plan promotions, manage field execution, personalize customer engagement and measure performance.

AI leaders are seeing the benefits. NTT DATA's research found that leaders "are nearly 2.5 times more likely than all other organizations to post revenue growth of more than 10% and 3.6 times more likely to run at margins of 15% or more."¹

"AI leaders are found in many industries, but our data shows they appear slightly more often in insurance (11.6% versus 11.3% of all other organizations), consumer packaged goods (9.6% versus 6.8%), technology, media and telecommunications (7.8% versus 4%), retail (6.1% versus 4.2%) and life sciences (4.8% versus 4.1%)."²

But you don't need to be an AI leader to benefit from the strong data foundations needed for AI.

This guide helps you understand where you are now, what is blocking progress and which commercial decisions to connect first.

The goal is to move from AI ambition to commercial impact — responsibly, practically and in a way your teams can measure.

^{1,2} NTT DATA. 2026 Global AI Report: A Playbook for AI Leaders.

Why AI readiness matters before AI scale

4 starting positions on the map to commercial AI impact

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3 ways to move from insight to commercial impact

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The pressures behind commercial AI

Supply is harder to predict

Disruption is changing how teams plan, source and respond.



Shoppers are quicker to switch

Value-conscious consumers expect the right offer, channel and experience.



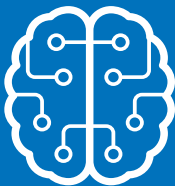
Every investment must prove its value

Margin pressure is making measurable impact a business requirement.



Retail media raises the bar for measurable impact

Growth depends on connecting shopper data, media activity and sales outcomes.



Already adopting AI?

Organizations that are adopting AI are at different positions on the AI value spectrum. Understanding where you are and how these positions interact is a useful way to see what's working and what isn't, so you can make a clear case for continued AI investment.³

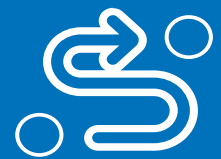
[Read the blog](#)

³Asutosh Mohapatra and Ankur Dasgupta. AI in 2026: Understand the value spectrum to get ahead. NTT DATA. May 15, 2026.

4 starting positions on the map to commercial AI impact

Organizations are at different levels of AI readiness.

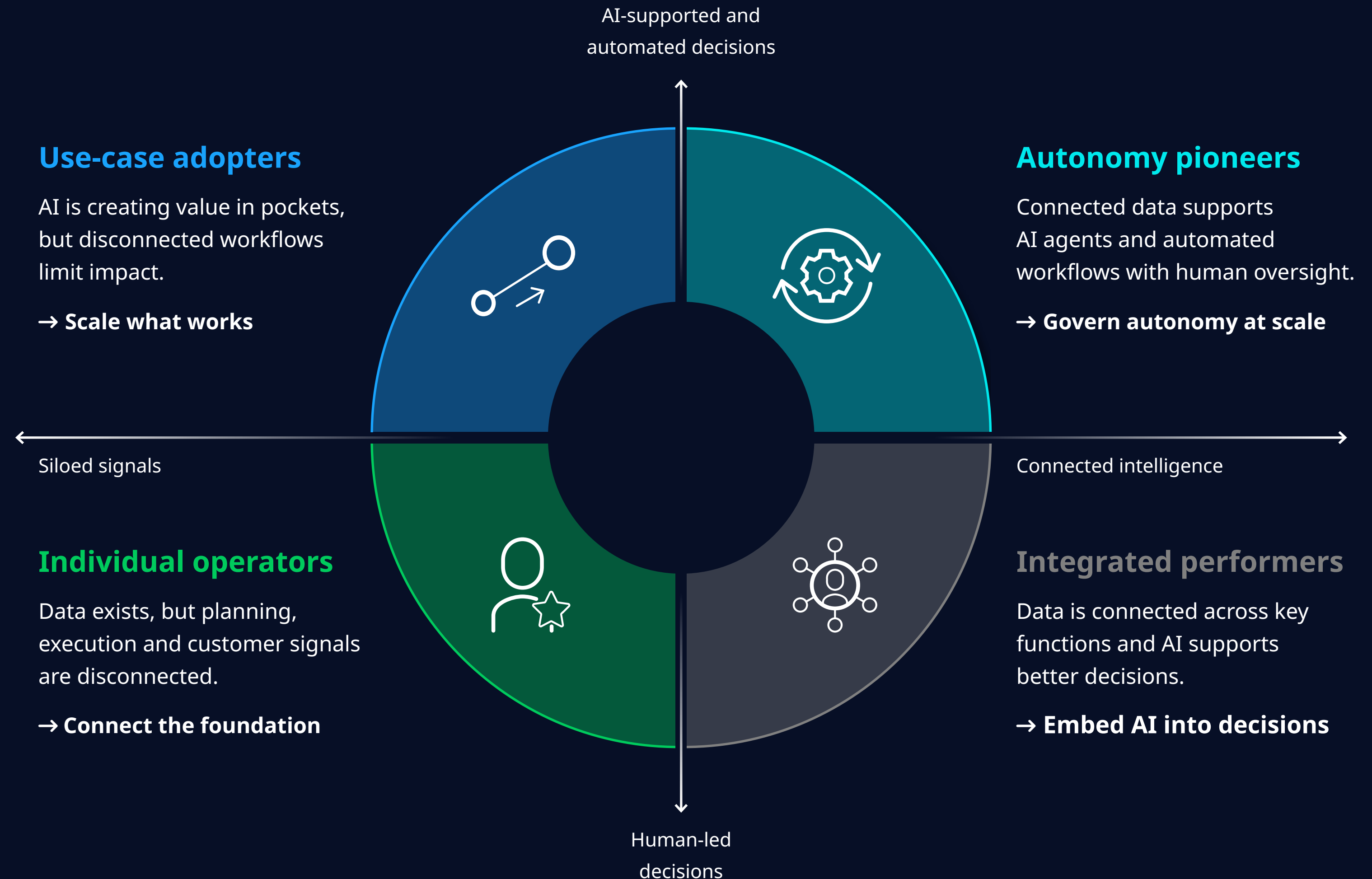
Some are still connecting planning, execution and customer data. In others, individual teams have identified strong AI use cases, but they're not shared with the company. AI-ready companies are starting to embed AI into daily decisions.



The path to impact depends on where your business is today: how connected your data is and how much AI helps you make decisions. This map helps you identify your current position and the kind of progress that can create the most value next.

From AI ambition to commercial impact

The market-reality map



Why AI readiness matters before AI scale

4 starting positions on the map to commercial AI impact

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3 ways to move from insight to commercial impact

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Where you are determines what to do next

Closing the readiness gap is the foundation of successful AI adoption.

To realize value from AI, organizations must:

1. Get the data right
2. Build better processes
3. Account for the human factor
4. Prioritize responsibility and governance
5. Consider the technology behind the technology⁴

⁴ Philip Higgs. Closing the AI readiness gap: The foundations of successful AI adoption. NTT DATA. July 1 2026.



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4 starting positions on the map to commercial AI impact

Where you are determines what to do next

3 ways to move from insight to commercial impact

Your next AI move

Individual operators

Connect the foundation

Commercial teams have data but not a shared view of performance. CPG teams may plan trade activity without live supply or store execution signals. Retail teams may have shopper, point-of-sale (POS), loyalty, e-commerce and media data spread across separate platforms.



What blocks impact

Leaders can't act quickly or confidently when teams have delayed reports, manual workarounds and different versions of the truth. AI adds limited value if the data behind each decision is still fragmented.



What to do next

Start with one high-value decision, such as promotion planning, shelf availability, assortment, pricing or campaign measurement. Connect the data and workflows behind that decision before expanding AI further.

Why AI readiness matters before AI scale

4 starting positions on the map to commercial AI impact

Where you are determines what to do next

3 ways to move from insight to commercial impact

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Use-case adopters

Scale what works

AI is already creating value in specific areas, such as demand forecasting, promotion optimization, field execution, personalization, store tasking and retail media analytics. But those use cases are not yet connected across functions, markets or channels.



What blocks impact

AI impact remains limited when each use case improves only one part of the business, for example:

- Store execution data doesn't factor into feed trade planning.
- Retail media results are separate from sales and margin data.
- Demand signals do not inform replenishment or promotion decisions fast enough.



What to do next

Connect successful AI use cases to the workflows around them. Use what already works as the starting point for shared intelligence to inform trade, supply, field, shopper and media decisions.



Why AI readiness matters before AI scale

4 starting positions on the map to commercial AI impact

Where you are determines what to do next

3 ways to move from insight to commercial impact

Your next AI move



Integrated performers

Embed AI into decisions

Core data is connected across key commercial functions. CPG teams can link account planning, trade investment, demand signals and supply constraints. Retail teams can connect customer intelligence, merchandising, e-commerce, store operations and media performance.



What blocks impact

The business can see more, but it may still act too slowly. Dashboards and reports help teams understand what happened, but they don't always help them decide what to do next.



What to do next

Embed AI into daily commercial work. Use it to recommend actions, prioritize exceptions, guide field teams, adjust plans, improve targeting and measure outcomes while keeping people in control where judgment matters.

Why AI readiness matters before AI scale

4 starting positions on the map to commercial AI impact

Where you are determines what to do next

3 ways to move from insight to commercial impact

Your next AI move



Autonomy pioneers

Govern autonomy at scale

Connected data supports AI agents and automated workflows in business-critical areas. CPG teams may be exploring agentic trade promotion, AI-supported revenue growth management or autonomous supply adjustments. Retail teams may be exploring AI-led retail media optimization, store operations automation or real-time customer engagement.



What blocks impact

Trust is a constraint. Leaders need clarity on where AI can act, where people must approve decisions and how actions can be traced, governed and improved over time.



What to do next

Build governed autonomy. Define decision rights, approval thresholds, traceability, human oversight and KPIs for outcomes before scaling agentic workflows.

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4 starting positions on the map to commercial AI impact

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3 ways to move from insight to commercial impact

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How organizations are designing AI for trust, control and resilience

Scaling AI is a question of both capability and design. You need to decide where AI runs, how data is handled and what can be controlled across infrastructure, models and ecosystems.

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Why AI readiness matters before AI scale

4 starting positions on the map to commercial AI impact

Where you are determines what to do next

3 ways to move from insight to commercial impact

Your next AI move

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Once you know where you are on the market-reality map, you have to decide what to connect first.

For CPG and retail leaders, the commercial impact depends on how well decisions work across supply, shelf and shopper. A promotion plan must reflect what the supply chain can deliver. Store execution data must feed back into account planning. Retail media activity has to connect to shopper behavior, sales performance and margin.

NTT DATA focuses on three capabilities that help commercial teams make these connections:

1. Agentic trade and revenue-growth management
2. Intelligent retail execution
3. Retail media and customer intelligence

Together, these areas connect supply chain, commercial and customer intelligence to improve growth, efficiency and commercial performance.



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Where you are determines what to do next

3 ways to move from insight to commercial impact

Your next AI move

1. Agentic trade and revenue-growth management

Link trade plans to supply and financial reality

Trade investment creates value only when teams can connect the plan, the shelf execution, the claim and the outcome. Too often, these parts of the workflow reside in different systems. Teams may know what they planned to spend, but not whether the promotion could be supported by supply, executed in store or measured quickly enough to improve the next decision.

The solution is to connect promotion planning with execution, supply signals, financial reconciliation and performance measurement. With connected processes, AI can support scenario modeling, anomaly detection, recommendations and closed-loop learning from plan to proof.

From there agentic capabilities can help coordinate activities across planning, sales, supply and finance, accelerating decision-making and reducing manual effort. This enables commercial teams to respond more quickly to changing conditions, with the transparency, governance and human oversight needed to maintain trust and accountability. The result is more agile, intelligent and accountable revenue-growth management.

Your next move

- **Individual operators**
Connect promotion planning with supply, sales and financial data.
- **Use-case adopters**
Connect proven promotion or forecasting use cases to adjacent workflows.
- **Integrated performers**
Use AI to recommend actions and prioritize exceptions.
- **Autonomy pioneers**
Scale agentic trade workflows with governance and human-approval thresholds.

2. Intelligent retail execution

Guide store teams with real-time execution signals

Retail execution is where commercial plans either succeed or break down. Field teams need to know which stores need attention, what to fix and which actions will have the most impact. Without real-time store intelligence, shelf gaps, compliance issues and out-of-stocks can stay hidden until long after the sales opportunity has passed.

These gaps can be addressed with the use of store-level data, AI-powered image recognition, shelf compliance monitoring, product availability insights, next-best-action recommendations, route optimization and performance dashboards.

By combining execution intelligence, the associated productivity and automation, you can improve compliance, reduce lost sales opportunities and increase the effectiveness of every store visit. Execution data feeds back into account planning, trade decisions and supply planning, creating a closed-loop connection between commercial strategy and store execution.

Your next move

- **Individual operators**
Connect store execution data to account and trade planning.
- **Use-case adopters**
Scale field execution or image recognition use cases across more stores.
- **Integrated performers**
Use AI to guide field teams with prioritized next-best actions.
- **Autonomy pioneers**
Automate routine execution workflows while keeping people in control of exceptions.

3. Retail media and customer intelligence

Measure shopper engagement from media to margin

Retail media and customer intelligence create new growth opportunities, but only when teams can connect the signal to the outcome. Shopper, loyalty, POS, e-commerce, app, media and sales data often sit in separate systems. Without a shared measurement model, teams struggle to know what worked, what changed behavior and where to invest next.

By connecting customer, retailer and media data, teams can improve targeting, measurement and monetization across every channel. AI can support campaign optimization, account recommendations, audience intelligence and closed-loop measurement from media exposure to sales outcomes.

By bringing together engagement signals, you create a shared view of customer behavior and business performance. This allows commercial teams to move beyond campaign reporting to continuous optimization, ensuring investments are directed to the audiences, channels and offers that generate the highest growth.

Your next move

➤ Individual operators

Connect shopper, sales and media data in one use case with measurable outcomes.

➤ Use-case adopters

Connect retail media analytics to sales, margin and customer intelligence.

➤ Integrated performers

Use AI to improve targeting, optimization and account recommendations.

➤ Autonomy pioneers

Scale AI-led media optimization with governance, traceability and clear decision rights.



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map to commercial AI impact

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what to do next

3 ways to move from insight
to commercial impact

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AI move

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The market-reality map is a decision tool that helps you focus investment, align teams and avoid treating AI as a standalone technology program.

Your next move is determined by the answers to these three questions:

1. Which commercial outcome matters most now?

Focus on the decision that has the clearest link to growth, margin, availability, execution or customer engagement.

2. What is keeping our organization back?

Identify whether the constraint is disconnected data, a siloed AI use case, slow action or lack of governance.

3. What needs to connect next?

Decide which data, workflow, team or AI capability will remove the constraint and create measurable impact.

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AI becomes commercially impactful when supply, shelf and shopper decisions are based on the same intelligence.

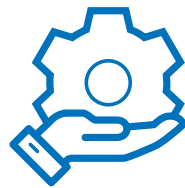
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4 starting positions on the map to commercial AI impact

Where you are determines what to do next

3 ways to move from insight to commercial impact

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It is to make the next commercial decision faster, smarter and easier to measure

NTT DATA helps you move from AI ambition to commercial impact by connecting the technology, data, workflows and governance behind business-critical decisions.

Take the next step

Learn how NTT DATA helps retail and consumer packaged goods organizations connect supply, shelf and shopper intelligence to drive commercial performance.

Explore our services

Visit nttdata.com to learn more.

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