



## Forrester: Top Emerging Technology Trends To Watch In 2021 And Beyond

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### The trends will help leaders accelerate digitization and create resilient businesses

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Oct. 22, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- According to [Forrester](#) (FORR: NASDAQ), the next decade will require CIOs to both respond to digital acceleration and proactively manage uncertainty. Rapidly changing consumer trends, complex security concerns, the ethical use of artificial intelligence, and the increasing impacts of climate change will drive businesses to incorporate systemic risk into their long-term planning.

The Forrester report "[Top Trends And Emerging Technologies, Q3 2020](#)" highlights important trends and organizes emerging technologies into seven key domains that will play a big role in accelerating this shift: artificial intelligence; business automation and robotics; enterprise risk management; human experience and productivity; new compute architectures; next-generation communications; and Zero Trust security. Key trends include:

- **Rising demand for ethical AI.** In the past, firms that adopted machine learning and other AI technologies paid little heed to their ethical impact. Today, however, values-based consumers and employees expect companies to adopt AI in a responsible fashion. Over the next few years, firms will deliberately choose to do business with partners that commit to data ethics and adopt data handling practices that reflect their own values and their customers' values.
- **Recasting of automation roadmaps.** COVID-19 is changing firms' automation agendas rapidly toward back-office processes and business resilience. Intelligent automation will represent the infusion of robotic and digital process automation with pragmatic AI and low-code tools. These technologies will help businesses become more efficient and resilient while expanding their operations.
- **Moving toward hyperlocal business operations.** In the next decade, large enterprises will improve their ability to operate hyperlocally, with regional midsize businesses growing and expanding to new geographies. Organizations will need to design architectures that can strategically distribute customer engagement and business operations systems to important geographic regions while retaining centralized technology management benefits. Zero Trust security will help clients navigate this shift.
- **Driving innovation everywhere using cloud-native technologies.** Emerging cloud-native technologies, born from open source and incubated in public clouds, drive fast innovation — and in more locations than just the public cloud. Over the next five years, cloud-native technologies such as container platforms and serverless computing will herald a new era of distributed enterprise software — from cloud providers, edge providers, and software vendors alike.
- **Shifting cloud strategies toward the edge.** Interest in edge computing has been historically tied to the internet of things. In 2020, innovations in next-generation communications, cloud-native technologies, and edge computing architectures have come together to create breakthroughs in cloud-to-edge integration. Over the next three to five years, firms will shift their cloud strategy to include more edge services from more vendors, challenging public cloud vendor market dominance.

"The recipe for successful tech innovation is changing," said Brian Hopkins, VP and principal analyst at Forrester. "The strategies that worked in the 2010s will not work in the 2020s. Firms that make big bets on new business models, new ways of working, and new talent will be more adaptive and resilient to the disruptive forces that will characterize the 2020s. To sprint forward, CIOs must renew their organization's resolve to digitally transform and turn these efforts into must-have foundational investments."

#### Resources:

- To see the full list, access Forrester's "[Top Trends And Emerging Technologies, Q3 2020](#)" report (client login required).
- Register for [Technology & Innovation Global](#) to further explore the 15 trends and associated emerging technologies.

#### About Forrester

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