



## Opinion

# Why global standards necessary in field of artificial intelligence

Without standards, we'd have no benchmarks for success, no product-safety security, no common technology unifying global markets and certainly no opportunity for competition to thrive.

BY KEITH JANSA

This era is plagued with clichés about supporting our entrepreneurial ecosystems, elevating success, and harnessing local talent so they can exceed on the world stage. But what does this all mean?

How do we translate these ambitious statements into action that will result in our local companies becoming leaders in the global marketplace?

The answer is standards.

Standards are more than guiding principles. From cars to car seats, standards prevent harm, ensure reliability and generally improve our way of life. They are essential to spearheading technology advancement, innovation and trade. At their core, standards allow us to establish accepted practices, technical requirements and modernize, at times, complex policies.

They are a fail-safe that allow Canadian companies to compete at home and abroad. They are vital to both business growth and security, especially in our ever changing, fast-paced, global digital economy that shows no signs of slowing.

In an era of constant technological change and evolution, the development of the first-ever, globally recognized standards for the ethical use of both artificial intelligence (AI) and big data, are the footholds that will allow our Canadian companies to build their innovation products and expand their service offerings.

Canada is a legitimate global player in AI and data research and manufacturing.

Think of Canadian AI and data trailblazers like Element AI, an AI-product company with the largest AI research and

live their lives. Working under a common framework for the ethical use of AI and data will be critical not only for our future economy, but how we function as a society.

Let's think about this practically. Without standards, we'd have no benchmarks for success, no product-safety security, no common technology unifying global markets and certainly no opportunity for competition to thrive.

Take cellular communication for example. From 3G to 4G to 5G technology, the adoption of

changes in the future of work in a thoughtful, strategic, and timely way. That is where the CIO Strategy Council (CIO SC) comes in. CIO SC is leading a national forum to inform, develop, and drive the adoption of best practices and standards for its ethical use.

What is vitally important about the work of the CIO SC in developing standards for the ethical use of both AI and big data, is that we can make sure Canadian interests are reflected in standards adopted here at home. Bringing together the expertise required to create standards that meet the needs of our businesses and their unique intellectual property is essential to our future growth and leadership role in this space.

To compete on the world stage, private- and public-sector decision-makers need to work together to support our great Canadian AI and data innovators and entrepreneurs. This is where the opportunity lies.

Together, we can better identify the blindspots and opportunities that standards create in order to advance commercialization prospects for Canadian companies on a global scale. Together, we can ensure we are moving the innovation dial forward by developing standards that protect critical capital like intellectual property ownership and improve freedom-to-operate policies. Together, we can ensure startups have an opportunity to influence and identify practical standard solutions that will respond to the barriers they are experiencing in the marketplace.

Only together, can we move from words to action and establish Canada's role in the global AI and data marketplace.

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AI and big data will drive how Canadians work, play, and live their lives. Working under a common framework for the ethical use of AI and data will be critical not only for our future economy, but how we function as a society, writes Keith Jansa of the CIO Strategy Council. Photograph courtesy of Unspalsh

development lab in Canada; or Pythian, a Canadian leader in data services. These are just two examples of companies that are implementing cutting-edge solutions that are reimagining how we solve some of our most complex business problems. It's our job as policy creators to help guide their pathway to success by determining standards that spur, not hinder, their ability to compete.

The importance of these standards is not to be underestimated. AI and big data will drive how Canadians work, play, and

standards has allowed for the evolution and improvement of our mobile-network architecture. Standards have ensured expanded connectivity, improved security, reduced data rates, and enhanced energy savings. Because mobile standards are in place, we are able to connect as seamlessly to our families when we're abroad as when we are at home—and that's no accident.

Disruptive technology and game-changers like artificial intelligence pose both challenges and opportunities. We need to prepare for the transformational