



The Quiet Turning Points That Will Reshape Technology, Markets, and Work

At Sia, we believe that big shifts rarely start with big announcements. AI is no exception, and things move fast, which means that defining what will happen in 2026 is becoming an art of prediction.

I have identified a list of 50 turning points to watch in 2026, moments that will quietly set the stage for disruption: subtle shifts that, taken together, will redraw competitive landscapes across technology, finance, geopolitics, and labor. These predictions are not headline-grabbing forecasts, but structural hypotheses.

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1 – Big Tech enters a new strategic era

In 2026, Big Tech will change rapidly to adapt to a swiftly evolving market.

/ Apple goes AI-first.

- Tim Cook steps down and the new CEO bets on direct-to-cell and a radical AI-first strategy shift.

/ Copilot & MS365 repricing, a defensive move to protect market share.

/ Ads invade your prompts : major catalyst for transition from SEO to GEO/AEO.

/ AI Bubble soft landing.

Debt incident on data center funding.

- Off-balance sheet or independent operator accident on the \$700Bn expected for AI infrastructure investments in 2026.
- End of the digital sovereignty fairy tale in Europe.
- Energy supply bottleneck in the US and Europe, with political disputes over electricity price surges for residential users.

One decacorn falls hard.

- Major setback in Series C/D funding.
- EV multiples tank.
- No successful \$100Bn+ IPO in 2026.
- Palantir premium pricing? Gone.



/ Some AI valuations diverge and go stratospheric.

- 1 or 2 newcomers join the trillion club.
- Blackwell / Rubin cross \$500Bn in cumulative revenue by the end of 2026.
- Cyber chaos: first major hack on LLM sends cybersecurity stocks soaring (bet on Palo Alto Networks and CrowdStrike).
- War gets AI-smarter: major AI-driven disruption in military forces with next-gen autonomous weapons, AI command systems, and cyber warfare.
- Science without humans: first autonomous scientific research hits headlines.
- The 10-person unicorn: AI-native startup hits \$1Bn valuation with a team you can fit in a luxury minivan.

/ EU vs US Big Tech.

- Record fines ignite a geopolitical firestorm.

2 – Reshaping competitive landscapes

Let's dive into how AI is reshaping competitive landscapes and moving the lines. From breakthrough innovations to shifting consumer habits and regulatory gaps, these trends will define the next wave.

/ LLM leapfrogging accelerates.

- Competitive releases every few weeks – the pace is dizzying.

/ Deregulation shockwave.

- Trump-era AI policies fuel crypto and tokenised assets across finance and real estate. Europe remains silent.

/ Financial giants double down.

- AI capex in banking doubles compared to 2025.

/ Drug discovery breakthroughs.

- AI cracks the next big molecule.

/ Autonomous ride-hailing explodes.

- 130M+ rides (4–5x growth). 30 Western cities (London, Tokyo) vs 30 Chinese cities. For the first time, the West could lead. Waymo vs Tesla in the same city? It's happening.

/ Super-app hunger games.

- Who wins the Western race for the “everything app”? Instant checkout becomes the norm.

/ The AI app store arrives.

- A new distribution war begins.

/ Personalization flips e-commerce.

- Driven by social-media-native platforms in the West.

/ AI-native supply chains.

- Year one of full automation for best-in-class players.

/ Asia leads AI-native consumer brands.

- Will the West catch up? Uncertain.

/ Data privacy becomes a luxury.

- A new lever for consumer brands and owners of fully private datasets.

/ Live-streaming booms.

- Growth could be 5x, 10x, even 20x – just to prove you're human, not an avatar.



3 – Tech acceleration & stack dogfight

After sharing some key events to watch closely, and pointing out that a major gambit is coming around the AI app store, let's take it further.

This shift will be accelerated by the multimodal merge – “Anything In, Anything Out” – with mega models (text, image, video) becoming the new paradigm. Acceleration now meets leapfrogging: the stack is evolving in dogfights between tech players. Here are some concrete examples of what we'll see next year.

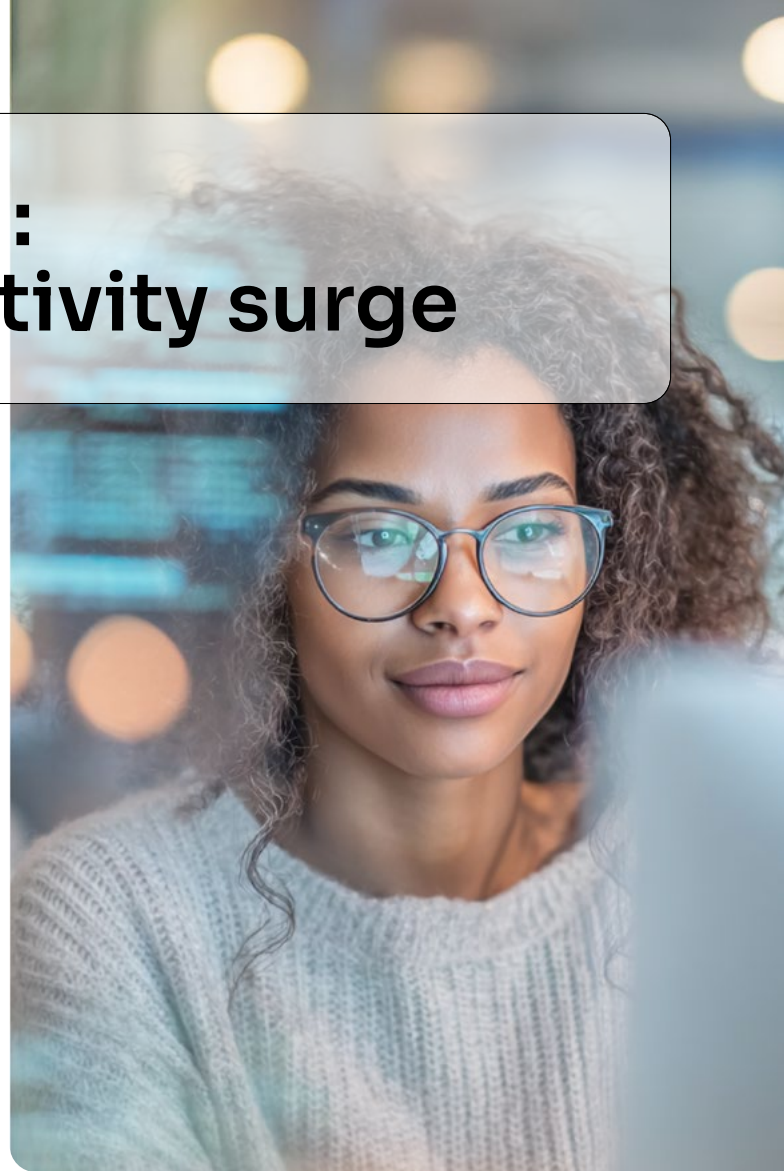
- / World models go mainstream: 3D environments for prompting fuel multi-billions fundraising.
- / Fortune 1,000 bets on fine-tuning: open-source models get their revenge.
- / Agentic orchestration are new superstars in AI adoption: AgentCore AWS to confirm its leadership status. AgentBricks series confirms DataBricks valuation numbers.
- / Leapfrogging between LLM coding agents and agentic coding assistants: circular deals and death threats at the end of the road.
- / Computing scaling law already secured for 2026 and likely 2027: factor 8x across AI infrastructure. A prompt already consumes 40x energy than 2 years ago. More ROI shifts to inference – as proven by Nvidia's move with Groq.
- / Google TPU strikes back with x2.5 in 2026 and more wallet shares. Tokens pricing war at his peak (-30% margin with Google).
- / Humanoids hit the floor: robots enter supply chain outside warehouses.
- / Direct-to-cell goes big: major business agreements between Starlink / Amazon Leo and Apple. Fierce battles for regulatory approval in each western country. The more it will wait, the more Amazon and Google can catch up. Different responses from Telecom operators.
- / Space data centers? Not yet in 2026 or even 2027.
- / Quantum computing breakthrough? Likely in cryptography, yes. For the rest, let's wait and see.
- / US keeps the lead thanks to the San Francisco narrative and the progressive adoption of AI by all industries. China closes in across LLMs, chips, and robotics.



4 – Work rewired: the AI productivity surge

While the transformative power of AI in the consumer space is undeniable, the central topic for 2026 remains: enterprise adoption and the productivity gains it will bring. The arrival of agents in 2025 – and their orchestration, potentially self-managed in 2026 – changes everything. Their industrialization is the key question for 2026. Most CEOs have already called for hiring freezes: either out of caution while assessing AI's real impact, or driven by conviction that productivity will soar.

- / IT productivity skyrockets: +20% as baseline, +30% or +40% in leaders.
- / Coding is not just for coders anymore: assisted coding becoming accessible – and mandatory — for a vast majority of white-collars.
- / Offshore outsourcing tanks: double-digits headcount cuts. EV multiples reset in India.
- / Voice real-time translation deployed: +20% as base productivity for multinational customer centers.
- / AI-repackaging is the new base narrative: professional, engineering services, logistics, finance... no function untouched.
- / Hybrid workforce goes mainstream: new playbooks for managing humans + AI.



- / Workforce planning gets rewritten: old models? Dead.
- / AI governance standards land: human-in-the loop becomes optional.
- / Consulting will be more heavily deployed: speed beats scale.

2026 will reward organizations that act early, reallocate capital decisively, and redesign operating models ahead of consensus. AI disruption is now about execution. While apocalyptic predictions about the end of consulting multiply, here's the elephant in the room: companies will need consultants more than ever to unlock this promise of productivity.



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