



Predictions

Entering the new frontier
of digital experience



In 2026, the world will enter what Conviva leaders call the **Agentic Era** — where specialized AI systems analyze and act on outcomes, autonomously and intelligently.

For product, growth marketing, and AI teams, this is a cosmic shift. Manual optimization is going the way of the dinosaur. AI is the Chicxulub asteroid. (If you have no idea what that is, ask ChatGPT.) Self-learning systems detect friction, inefficiencies, and confusion in your experience; they adapt creatively and rebalance your search results — all before a human team logs in for the morning standup.

Yet, as Conviva's Chief Scientist, Vyas Sekar notes, "This isn't about replacing people — it's about reimagining how we work alongside intelligence that learns." The Agentic Era will belong to the organizations that combine speed with oversight, innovation with integrity, and AI-driven execution with human-driven intent.

But here's the problem: Most teams are building agentic systems on outdated foundations.

The analytics infrastructure powering today's AI, product, and growth decisions is fundamentally flawed. Static funnels, linear journey maps, and conversion dashboards were designed for a simpler era — one where customer behavior was predictable, channels were discrete, and optimization meant tweaking a landing page or finding and fixing a slow user experience.

Those days are over.

Modern consumers don't move through static funnels. They loop, hesitate, compare across devices, abandon and return, research on mobile and convert on desktop. They create patterns — intricate, non-linear behavioral sequences — that traditional analytics tools simply cannot capture.

For AI Teams: Your models are only as intelligent as the data they consume. If you're training agents on funnel metrics and averaged conversion rates, you're teaching them to optimize for a fiction. Real behavior is patterned, contextual, and segment-specific. Without pattern-level intelligence, your AI will perpetuate the inefficiencies it's meant to solve.

For Product Teams: You're designing for the average user journey, but your actual users don't behave *averagely*. The loops, dead-ends, and friction points that drive churn aren't visible in step-by-step funnel reports. They're buried in behavioral patterns your current tools treat as noise. You can't fix what you can't see.

For Growth Marketing Teams: Attribution is broken. Channel mix decisions are guesswork. Campaign optimization is reactive. Why? Because linear models and last-click logic can't explain the behavioral chains that drive conversions. Pattern analytics reveals which sequences matter, which segments respond, and where your spend should shift.

This ebook outlines five predictions that will define 2026. But underneath each prediction is a foundational truth: The shift to agentic growth requires a shift from observation to personalization, from static funnels and journeys to consumer patterns. Winning teams must evolve beyond backend monitoring.

As you'll see in the pages ahead, the organizations that thrive won't just adopt AI — they'll instrument their businesses to understand behavior at the pattern level, enabling their agents to act on reality, not assumptions.

The future belongs to those who see *what's actually happening*. Let's explore what that future looks like, as we embrace the Agentic Era.

1 Growth Will Go Autonomous: Specialized AI Agents Take the Wheel

The age of manual optimization is over.

The days of teams manually tuning campaigns or adjusting pricing are ending. In 2026, specialized AI agents will operate as autonomous growth superstars — continuously learning from experience and engagement signals and acting across marketing, merchandising, and logistics.

“These agents won’t be general-purpose chatbots,” says Keith Zubchevich, Conviva’s CEO. “Each agent will focus on a specific outcome, train on proprietary data, and learn from its own feedback loop.”

Hui Zhang, CTO and Conviva co-founder, reinforced the importance of control hierarchy: “Companies that can define which agents optimize and which supervise will create intelligence that compounds, not conflicts.”

Chief Product Officer, Aditya Ganjam, says, “You can’t just measure response quality anymore — you have to measure the outcome itself.”

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“The winners will be the companies that can tune their AI architecture to their consumer expectation patterns to achieve desired outcomes.”

— Keith Zubchevich, CEO

“Measure the outcome, not just the response.”

— Aditya Ganjam, CPO

Next Metric of Success:

Outcome-driven optimization

Impact:

Real-time adaptation;
zero-latency performance loops

2 Trust Will Become the Ultimate KPI: Continuous Verification Is the New Guardrail

Automation without accountability is risk, not progress.

As AI autonomy scales, trust becomes the most valuable KPI. “Automation without verification is a liability,” warned Hui Zhang. The future of responsible growth will be defined by *supervisory intelligence* – systems that monitor other systems, ensuring every AI decision can be audited, explained, and reversed when needed.

Aditya Ganjam emphasized the human dimension: “The goal isn’t to have an agent do everything on its own – it’s to accelerate the human, not replace them.”

Keith Zubchevich predicted that “the kill switch will become the ultimate regulator – not because of fear, but because regulation can’t keep up with innovation.”

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“Trust must be earned through verification.”

– Hui Zhang, SVP & Founder

“Automation without oversight is just risk at scale.”

– Aditya Ganjam, Chief Product Officer

Emerging Disciplines:

AI QA & Ethics operations,
content engineering

Enterprise Policy Trend:

Human-in-the-loop compliance

New Metric:

Confidence score per
decision chain

3

The End of Search as We Know It: AI Agents Will Shop, Compare, and Convert for Us

Consumers won't browse — their agents will.

The customer journey will soon skip the click. In 2026, personal AI agents will browse, compare, and buy — collapsing the funnel from discovery to purchase in seconds. “The agent-readiness of digital storefronts will be the next competitive frontier,” says Kishore Krishnamurthy, Chief Strategy Officer.

Aditya Ganjam warns that this convenience comes with risk: “The moment users stop coming to your site and rely on their agent, your brand connection is lost.”

As Hui Zhang adds, “In the Agentic Era, your best customer may never see your website — but their AI will. Make sure it recognizes your value.”

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“Websites will evolve into machine-readable storefronts.”

— Kishore Krishnamurthy, Chief Strategy Officer

“Your best customer may never see your site — but their AI will.”

— Hui Zhang, SVP & Founder

Implication:

SEO → MAIO (Machine agent interaction optimization)

Strategy Shift:

Feed transparency, metadata accuracy, trust signaling

Risk:

Brand dilution/disinterest by personal AI

4 Video Becomes the New Storefront: Streaming Turns Intent Into Instant Commerce

Attention is the new inventory — and video is where it sells.

In 2026, content becomes commerce. As Vyas Sekar envisions, “Streaming won’t just be something we watch — it’ll be something we interact with.”

AI will embed shoppable intelligence into every frame, transforming moments of engagement into immediate transactions.

“Imagine a film where you can buy the outfit the actor is wearing or book the trip they’re taking — instantly,” said Sekar. Kishore Krishnamurthy sees this as a new metric frontier: “Attention, interactivity, and intelligence will define the next chapter of growth.”

Aditya Ganjam adds, “Agents will make recommendations behind the scenes — smarter than any recommendation engine today.”

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“Attention, interactivity, and intelligence will define the next chapter.”

— Kishore Krishnamurthy, Chief Strategy Officer

Format Shift:

Passive viewing → interactive streaming

Commerce Trigger:

In-frame shoppability

Growth Metric:

View-to-purchase conversion

5

Agentic Cultures Will Outperform Agentic Systems

The future of growth isn't just intelligent — it's adaptive.

Technology alone won't determine winners — culture will. "The success of the Agentic Era will hinge not only on advances in AI, but on the human culture that surrounds it," said Keith Zubchevich.

For Conviva, the future belongs to organizations that embrace experimentation and transparency. "Companies need to keep trying," urged Aditya Ganjam. "Some agents will fail, but that doesn't mean you stop — you just learn and try something else."

And as Hui Zhang reminds us, "Technology will evolve fast, but the companies that evolve faster — the ones that see AI as an amplifier of human creativity — will lead."

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“AI should accelerate humans, not replace them.”

— Aditya Ganjam, Chief Product Officer

“Culture — not code — will define the winners of the Agentic Era.”

— Keith Zubchevich, CEO

Cultural Imperative:

Experimentation over perfection

Guardrail:

Always human-in-the-loop

Leadership Mandate:

Build trust through transparency

Conclusion: From Prediction to Pattern

The five predictions outlined in this report share a common thread: **2026 will reward organizations that understand consumer behavior.**

Agentic AI will automate optimization. Specialized agents will take the wheel. Real-time decisions will become table stakes. But none of this delivers value if the underlying intelligence is built on flawed assumptions about how customers behave.

The brutal truth? Most analytics stacks are observation systems masquerading as insight engines. They tell you what happened. They don't tell you why it happened, who it happened to, or how to change it.

Funnels capture what you *expected* to happen. Pattern analytics reveals what *actually* happened — the journeys that delight customers and the ones fraught with loops, hesitations, and detours that create friction, confusion, and lost conversions.

For AI Teams building agentic systems in 2026: Your agents will only be as effective as the behavioral intelligence you feed them. If your training data comes from static funnels and averaged metrics, your AI will optimize for phantom users and imaginary journeys. Pattern-level data — segmented, contextualized, outcome-linked — is what transforms reactive automation into proactive intelligence.

For Product Teams designing experiences: You cannot remove friction you cannot see. The biggest barriers to conversion aren't always in the steps you're measuring. They're in the *patterns* between those steps: the repeated toggling, the loops back to search, the cross-device hesitations. Pattern analytics turns "why did this happen?" into "we can fix this."

For Growth Marketing Teams orchestrating campaigns: Last-click attribution and channel ROI comparisons are relics of a simpler era. In 2026, winning teams will understand the behavioral chains that drive outcomes — the social browse that leads to email click that results in direct conversion three days later. Pattern analytics doesn't just measure performance; it explains causality, enabling you to allocate spend where it actually matters.

That reimagining starts with seeing digital experiences clearly.

Conviva transforms every digital interaction, across apps, websites, and AI agents, into outcome-based intelligence that reveals how experiences truly perform and drive results. Powered by full-census client-side telemetry and a patented stateful analytics engine, Conviva continuously analyzes every session and conversation to expose behavioral patterns, connect them to outcomes, and surface opportunities for growth and improvement in real time. The result is a single, objective view of the digital experience from the consumer's perspective, empowering product, marketing, and engineering teams to build more adaptive, measurable, and outcome-driven businesses in the Agentic era.

To learn more about how Conviva can help improve the performance and outcomes of your digital services, visit conviva.ai or sign up for a [demo today](#).