# Microsoft advances Copilot Studio with new AI features



At the recent Ignite conference held in Chicago, Microsoft announced significant advancements to its Copilot Studio, aimed at enhancing operational efficiency within businesses through autonomous artificial intelligence (AI). The tech giant unveiled a suite of new features intended to expand the functionality of AI agents, advancing the capabilities of its generative AI tools originally introduced last year.

Microsoft's Copilot Studio enables organisations to create customised AI assistants tailored to specific tasks within their workforce. Enhanced capabilities include memory functions for managing linked activities, entitlements to control data access, and integration tools to facilitate task completion. The platform supports a range of predefined roles including agents designed for employee self-service queries related to HR and IT, collaborative management in SharePoint, and real-time note-taking and translation during meetings.

Notably, Microsoft has augmented its offerings by introducing an Agent Software Development Kit powered by Azure AI, along with a low-code builder through Power Apps for creating business applications. The integration of these AI solutions with third-party software like Salesforce, ServiceNow, and Zendesk aims to provide users with real-time data access, enhancing the agents' ability to address complex inquiries. Microsoft's recent updates are geared towards improving the accuracy of outputs generated by these AI agents, which can assist in completing tasks around the clock.

The role of AI in business is evolving, with tools being developed that extend beyond basic prompt-and-response functions. AI agents are now being positioned to autonomously execute tasks, such as processing customer returns and validating shipping invoices, which could potentially streamline operations and reduce costly errors associated with supply chains. CEO Satya Nadella emphasised the importance of these agents as integral team members designed to relieve employees of repetitive duties, thereby allowing them to focus on more strategic initiatives.

However, the emergence of these AI capabilities has not been without contention. Salesforce’s CEO, Marc Benioff, has publicly critiqued Microsoft's strategy, referring to their rebranding of Copilot as "agents" as indicative of "panic mode." His characterisation of Microsoft's AI efforts as flawed suggests a competitive landscape where the efficiency and performance of such technologies are under scrutiny.

Microsoft's commitment to safeguarding data integrity remains paramount, with robust measures in place for data protection, including encryption and controlled access, complemented by human oversight in critical decision-making processes. As Microsoft navigates this new chapter in workplace automation, it raises questions about the future of the workforce, the necessity for reskilling employees, and the potential implications of relying on AI-driven solutions.

The emphasis on "agentic AI" showcases a transformative direction in which businesses are likely heading, with Microsoft advocating for tools that not only enhance productivity but also facilitate better organisational outcomes. The conference sentiments underscored the company's vision of creating a suite of AI tools that empower users to harness technology effectively within business environments, navigating an ever-evolving digital landscape.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

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