

# How Trusted AI Is Driving MediaTech Innovation

Matt Stagg in conversation with Sujay Kumar, Chief Revenue Officer, NStarX

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Hi, everyone. It's Matt. Welcome back to the IAMT podcast. I'm here with a very special guest, Sujay Kumar, who's the Chief Revenue Officer at NStarX. And we're going to be going through where are we going with AI, and what do we need to do as an industry to make sure we get this transition right. So, do you want to give us first, Sujay, a little bit of background into NStarX and what you do as a company, and then I want to drill a bit deeper into some of the industry trends.

Absolutely. Thank you for having me. Like you mentioned, NStarX is a very interesting company. We are reimagining ourselves in the industry of what you call software services. We call ourselves one of the pioneers in service as software. What that essentially means is, unlike traditional software as a service, how do you flip it around by saying, okay, with the arrival of these powerful reinforcement learning LLMs, how can you essentially allow enterprises to build their own Salesforce, their own ServiceNow, at a very rapid pace with a higher degree of innovation? And that's the kind of offerings we provide to our customers.

And that build... You know, I've worked in AI for broadcast and sport for a while as a consultant, but a lot of what we're going to talk about, around building trust, provenance and control, is the feedback I'm getting from, you know, broadcasters, sports companies, federations. So actually, to start this off, can you just go into a little bit of how AI's changing the MediaTech landscape at the moment?

Yeah. So it's a very interesting journey, especially the last three years. It's been a big revelation for all of us. And if you look at the media industry, right, and if you look at the proliferation of what I also call citizen journalism, or the citizen journalist. Now, with that and with the arrival of AI, what's happening is you are transitioning very rapidly from content creation to content generation at scale. What used to happen before was there were humans, and there was a controlled workflow which essentially defined what the output in terms of content was. Now it's all free for you. Okay? Anyone can create content. Anyone can, you know, create content at scale. So, as I mentioned before, what you're moving away from is a situation where you had well-defined, well-controlled content, to anyone and everyone creating content. Now, in that scenario, how do you trust the content which is coming to you, right? So for the industry today, it's not about AI content creation, but it's about how do you trust the origination, how do you trust the creation of it.

Well, and that's a big thing. You know, we talk about trust and there's always trust with partners. But now it's: have we got trust in a technology? Which is very unusual. So why would you say it's becoming such a critical issue now where we are?

Yeah. So if you look at it, if you look at different consumers and actors within the media industry, right, your audience always emotionally connects with and trusts what they watch. Right? When you look at the advertisers, they place their content where they can trust. And when you look at

partners, they look at where their content is being placed, right? So there are different actors, but they all believe in trust at the end of the day, right? And today, in an environment where you have synthetic image creation, synthetic video creation, you have deepfakes, the trust is broken.

Yes. Yeah. You only need to get it wrong once. You know, the BBC in the UK, if they put it out there on news, or even sports broadcasters, if they rebroadcast something about a player signing and it's not right, the trust is gone. It's so important, I think. So what do we do about it? I mean, this is why you're on here, because you guys know. You're the visionaries in this area, and our members need to know: what can we do?

So if you look at it, there are three or four fundamental challenges today. There is an authenticity crisis, so there is a belief that a piece of content needs to be looked at through some sort of a trust lens, number one. The second thing is when you look at provenance. Provenance is essentially the origination, the pipeline. Where is it coming from? There has to be governance. That is a piece which needs to be further strengthened in a lot of enterprises. The third thing is security. Now remember one thing. In the context of where we are today, in an enterprise you always operate within a controlled environment. There are ethics, there's governance, there are guardrails. For a bad actor, there are no such limitations. So when you look at operating in that space, it's fundamentally more enforcing that you have to have very fortified guardrails to operate against such bad actors. Right? And the fourth thing is, you know, audience scepticism. And it goes back to the point that, you know, how fabricated or how deepfaked the content is.

So I've heard you talk about this before and you talk of a trust-first MediaTech architecture. Can you expand a little bit on that? It's a term I've only heard you use, and I've not heard it before.

Yeah. So essentially, think of it this way, right? We have always had typical file-based, controlled workflows. Right? So now we have to move from that to a lineage-based pipeline. So, for example, metadata creation is so critical today. So for anything, whether you have edits, whether you have content creation, you should have metadata and should have an audit trail. So you should know where it's coming from. So the provenance becomes very important, right? Similarly, the security guardrails become very important. So I think these are some of the very important aspects when you look at why your governance, why your central theme or forefront thinking around security becomes so important. Your thinking of provenance becomes very important because at the end of the day, you should know the origination of where this information is coming from.

And that's, I mean, really now we need to know this stuff. So where does NStarX actually fit into the evolution that we're talking about?

Yeah. So like I was telling you, right? I mean, there are a few things we have been working as an organisation, and for us, security has always been at the forefront when we have been working and providing what you can think of as guidelines, governance and consulting and, you know, building products and platform for enterprises and also in the media space. There are two, three things we do, and we do very well. One is in the world today where we live, sovereign AI and data sovereignty is going to become very critical. So think of it in a very simple example. If you are a publishing house, you have consumers sitting in Europe, you have consumers sitting here, they all have different tastes, they all have different likings. How do you protect their interest, yet you make meaningful models and analytics out of it, right? So one of the questions is, without

moving the data from where it is, how do you build enriched models? And this is a concept called federated learning. This is picking up steam. It is called decentralised machine learning. We have been working in this space for the last eight, nine years. So in fact, in the very recent time, we have been also collaborating with NVIDIA and their NVIDIA FLARE orchestration layer to build a very robust solution for the media industry, number one. Number two, building a total trusted environment using confidential computing is becoming very essential. Going back to the point that there are two aspects of content which is critical today. Identifying deepfakes. Second, if you have bad actors, they can infuse malicious viruses into the content. How do you detect that? How do you identify? How do you make sure you're protecting yourself against such malicious injections? So we look at how do you try and build a total trusted environment where you build a solution for the organisations. And the third piece, which I talked to you about, is provenance, right? We are building that kind of a lineage. And the fourth thing is how, when we are living in the world of agentic AI, how do you build what we call as an AI control plane? How do you build the right kind of AI control plane for an organisation to make sure they have a very trusted environment within which they operate?

I mean, that's perfect. And, you know, it's been really good for me to have that explained and you know, there was lots in there that I didn't know, and I work in this area, so it's going to be, you know, invaluable to our members. I guess I'd like a final thought from you, and that is, if I'm a MediaTech leader, what do I do next?

I think at some point in time, provenance as a standard is going to become critical in this industry. So it's very important for every media leader to think about when they look at their content: where is the origin of the content? How is the content getting transformed? How are you looking at layering it? Make security at the forefront of your, you know, thought process. And the third thing is, you should absolutely embrace AI, but embrace AI with governance, with balance. You know, I keep teaching my seven-year-old: life is all about balance. We have to live between euphoria and scepticism. We have to balance ourselves between the two, and that's where I think we need to be, which is again, building the right kind of AI control plane in an enterprise to make sure that, you know, your entire content origination to distribution is within the guardrails of what you want.

What a great final thought that is. We could talk for hours here, but we're going to have to wrap up now. Sujay, thank you very much. NStarX: I know this discussion will have been resonating with people, and you know where to go. I'll be back with you later on today. Thank you for joining us, and thank you again.

Thanks so much. Appreciate it.