

The Competitive Edge

A monthly operations knowledge boost



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By Maroubra Consulting

Welcome to the third edition of *The Competitive Edge*: The monthly operations knowledge boost from Maroubra Consulting. In this edition our writers share their point of views on balancing focus on consulting client demands and personal freedom. We look at the pressing figures for cyberattacks, and we dive into a practical approach for data management in areas of cyber security and AI. **Read on!**

Business modelling for win-win: Balancing delivery focus with employee freedom

Looking back to 2025 we saw the beginning of larger strategic structural changes in the consulting industry as larger Big4 firms divested parts of their business to move forward with a stronger strategic core, and several larger Consulting enterprises also performing layoffs. In this demanding environment, how do we keep ahead of the curve, making sure we keep competitiveness through high value consulting, and at the same time take care of our consultants?

For Maroubra Consulting, a niche boutique in Operational Excellence, strategic business design becomes part of the solution. The company balances the act between relentless focus on supporting clients succeed with their strategic agenda. At the same time there is strategic focus on facilitating positive consultant experiences through full freedom to work remotely from wherever they want. Not only do we ‘allow’ travelling while working, but we encourage our consultants to find new adventures and explore the world while combining this with project delivery.

Some of the key benefits in being part of a remote delivery team, as stated by our consultants:

- Increased freedom
- Improved time to prioritise family, sports, travel and adventures
- Make money on a lifestyle choice

Full freedom for the consultant to work from wherever they want is a perfect fit for the adventurous. Read on below from the Maroubra Consulting Co-founder Marta Serra!

2. Cybersecurity: What never changes in a rapidly changing world

In a world where technology evolves at lightning speed, some truths about cybersecurity remain constant. According to DemandSage, globally, over 2,200 cyberattacks occur every day—that’s one every 39 seconds—cybercrime reached \$10.5 trillion annually in 2025. These numbers highlight why strong governance, clear access controls, and a culture of security awareness are still the foundation of resilience.

While AI and automation are transforming threat detection and response, the human factor continues to be both the weakest link—and the greatest opportunity. Organizations must balance innovation with discipline: adopting advanced tools without neglecting basics like multi-factor authentication, regular patching, and employee training. Cybersecurity isn’t just a technical challenge; it’s a strategic imperative that protects trust, reputation, and operational continuity.

As we embrace AI-driven solutions, let’s remember that the principles of risk management and proactive defence will always matter—because in cybersecurity, what doesn’t change is the need for vigilance.

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Business modelling for positive employee experiences: Living the dream

“Surfing has been a passion of mine for years—it’s more than a sport; it’s a way to connect with nature and recharge. Traveling and surfing are essential parts of my life, and being able to combine them with meaningful work is something I value. Working remotely from Lombok, Indonesia, during my three-month stay has been an incredible opportunity to blend professional growth with adventure. My typical week begins with a quick sync with the project manager to organize priorities. By sunrise, I’m catching waves at 6 a.m., then diving into business analysis from a cozy café or home office. Afternoons are dedicated to strategy and AI projects. When the day wraps up, I’m back to the ocean for a sunset surf. As a Co-founder of Maroubra Consulting, being able to pursue travel adventures and surfing while driving impactful projects for our clients truly feels like living the dream.”

Marta Serra – Co-founder and Business analyst, Maroubra Consulting

Cyber Security and AI: From Theory to Practice
– Data Governance and Management

As cybersecurity and AI continue to gain prominence, the effective management of data becomes increasingly critical. The speed and accuracy of data are essential, but managing enterprise data remains a challenge for many organizations.

Maroubra Consulting’s strategy team shares their insights as we move into 2026.

Cybersecurity will remain an ongoing battle, with constant countermeasures and evolving threats. The financial incentives to attack systems are significant, making it essential for organizations to maintain a strong, responsive foundation for staying current.

This is best achieved by integrating cybersecurity into business processes and data management, rather than treating it as a separate compliance requirement.

For example, consider incorporating security-focused questions into your business processes and data architecture, such as:

- What are the sources of your data? Are they reliable and secure?
- How is your data lineage structured? Is it auditable and traceable?
- Can your data lineage plan assist in disaster recovery?

Additionally, managing user access security requires ongoing vigilance, regular reviews of access controls, user education, and particularly attention to external API calls and response management. Organizations have started by integrating cybersecurity frameworks across their business functions. Platforms like Vanta, which include essential cybersecurity frameworks such as ISO 27001, can streamline the implementation of these frameworks. These tools can help guide organizations in addressing key cybersecurity questions. To dive deeper into these practices, Maroubra Consulting, a partner of Vanta, can help you navigate these critical considerations.

Cybersecurity is also a critical component of how AI is adopted within an organisation. For AI to be accurate, effective, reliable, and trusted, it must be supported by strong data management practices. Core data management principles—such as clear data ownership, consistent business glossaries, well-defined data definitions, and structured data models—play a vital role in ensuring compliance and enabling sustainable AI solutions. These principles underpin data quality and integrity, which are essential for trustworthy AI outcomes.

So how does data management impact AI? Consider how much more effective AI could be if business terminology and its associated data sources were easily referenced directly from AI prompts. More importantly, embedding data management into core systems and data platforms provides organisations with validated data. When implemented properly, this becomes the most reliable source of information within the organisation. It allows AI systems to reference trusted data to validate insights, improve the use of external data sources, and identify critical anomalies with greater confidence.

There are practical and achievable ways to begin implementing effective data management. As with cybersecurity frameworks, data management must be treated as integral to the business—not as a standalone initiative or isolated function.

Data practices should be embedded into everyday operations.

- A practical starting approach includes:
- Defining a clear business need, project, or business objective
 - Identifying the relevant business Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)
 - Defining requirements in terms of the information needed — often starting with information makes it easier to later break it down into specific data elements
 - Building a business glossary and data dictionary aligned to these requirements

With a strategic approach, organisations can often cover critical business areas by addressing fewer than 200 key data points, delivering meaningful value without unnecessary complexity.

Closing thoughts

As we enter 2026, balanced business design remains a strong driver for optimising both consulting delivery processes, as well as employee freedom and positive experiences. The opportunities created through remote delivery improves the flexibility and balance between client demands and employee needs. Sound, practical approaches to data management for both cyber security and AI needs to be integrated both in business processes rather than treating the areas as a stand-alone innovation or compliance focus. The pressure for operational resilience continues. What is your next move on reframing operations?



About Maroubra Consulting

Maroubra Consulting is an international management consulting firm, specialists in business operations. The company supports client organisations with improving competitiveness, strengthening operational resilience and achieving sustainable growth. With a 'global-first' and 'remote-first' business model, and market presence in Bergen, Barcelona, Amsterdam, San Francisco and Sydney, Maroubra Consulting combines strategic direction with digital innovation. The company proudly support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal #1: No Poverty, partnering with NGOs to create lasting impact.