

BARC EVENTS · EXCLUSIVE EXECUTIVE RETREAT

Data & Analytics Retreat 2026

The Data & Analytics Retreat brings together vendor executives and analysts from around the world to form a unique network of industry peers. Two days of unfiltered insight on market shifts, AI disruption and vendor strategy, at C-level, off the record.

WHEN

October 7–10, 2026
Workshops Oct 8–9

WHERE

Burg Schwarzenstein
Geisenheim, Rheingau

WHO

D&A and CPM vendor
executives worldwide

WHY ATTEND

Two+ days that set your 2027 agenda.

The AI platform era is redrawing the Data, Analytics & CPM market: buying behavior, valuations and product strategy all at once. The Retreat unites vendor executives and analysts from around the world in a unique network of industry peers: BARC's analysts share **what the research really says**, and a select circle of leaders debates **what to do about it**. No stage. No sales pitches. Castle walls only.

22

SESSIONS,
PANELS &
DISCUSSIONS

40

VENDOR
EXECUTIVES AND
SELECTED
INVESTORS

10

ANALYSTS &
INDEPENDENT
GUEST EXPERTS

1:1

PRIVATE ANALYST
AND PEER
MEETINGS
THROUGHOUT

Research before it hits the market

Exclusive first looks at BARC's 2026 findings: the trend matrix, the MCP interface benchmark, ROI on Intelligence, the Data Sovereignty study and the CPM Trend Monitor.

Straight answers to hard questions

Is the SaaS apocalypse over? Do you need forward-deployed engineers? Where can specialists still differentiate against AI giants? Debated openly, with investors, founders and fellow C-suite operators in the room.

A setting built for candor

A castle above the Rheingau vineyards, dinners at local wineries and walks between the vines. The peer-to-peer conversations that don't happen at trade shows happen here.

THE VENUE

Burg Schwarzenstein, Rheingau

Rosengasse 32, 65366 Geisenheim · A five-star castle estate high above the vineyards, and our home for keynotes, debates, dinners and analyst 1:1s from October 7–10. Two wine-estate dinners at Weingut Trenz and Weingut Hamm complete the program.



Two+ days. One market reset.

From a welcome dinner among old and new friends to private analyst 1:1s, every element is designed for depth and personal interactions.

WEDNESDAY

Oct 7

Welcome

Arrive, unwind, reconnect. Reception at 19:00 followed by dinner at Burg Schwarzenstein: excellent food, Rheingau wine and conversation with old and new friends.

THURSDAY

Oct 8

Workshop Day 1: Market Shifts, AI Disruption & Investment Signals

Where the market is moving and where the money is going: trends, research highlights, the agentic disruption, AI ROI, M&A and investment directions.

State of the Market MCP Benchmark ROI on Intelligence

SaaSocalypse Panel Vineyard Wine Tasting

FRIDAY

Oct 9

Workshop Day 2: Vendor Strategy, Product Innovation & Differentiation

What to build and how to win: delivery models, sovereignty, regional growth, then two parallel deep-dive tracks and a closing debate on hype vs. reality.

Sovereignty by Design Competing with AI Giants Track: Product Innovation

Track: CPM Strategy Dinner at Hamm winery

SATURDAY

Oct 10

Optional Add-On Day: Analyst 1:1s

Staying longer than Friday evening? Book a private 1:1 with BARC analysts, 09:00–12:00. Reserve your slot before or during the event via cchange@barc.com.

BEYOND THE SESSIONS

Analyst 1:1s and fireside chats run alongside both workshop days. Thursday closes with a walk through the vineyards and a wine tasting; evenings belong to long dinners at the wine estates Trenz and Hamm.



Market Shifts, AI Disruption and Investment Signals

Burg Schwarzenstein, Rosengasse 32, 65366 Geisenheim

MARKET SIGNALS AND STRATEGIC SHIFTS

10:00 – 12:00

- 10:00** **1** **State of the Market**
Carsten Bange · BARC
 BARC's trend matrix, decoded: which trends have gained (or lost) real influence on buying behavior across the D&A space, from data management to AI and CPM.
- 10:40** **2** **BARC Data & AI Research Highlights 2026**
Timm Grosser · BARC
 One year of research in one strategic vendor map: why enterprise AI success hinges on trusted data, governed context, readiness and sovereignty.

FROM AI CAPABILITY TO CUSTOMER READINESS

11:20 – 12:00

- 11:20** **3** **The AI-Ready Customer**
Donald Farmer · TreeHive Strategy
 Tech is rarely the bottleneck; readiness is. A framework to find high-value, low-risk processes for AI, flag the "toxic" ones, and align sales, CS and services to cut post-sale churn.

12:00 **Lunch**

AGENTIC AI: INTERFACES, WORKFLOWS AND MARKET DISRUPTION

13:30 – 14:50

- 13:30** **4** **Your Agentic Interface Is Now Your Product. Is It?**
Thomas Zeuschler · BARC
 BARC benchmarked the MCP interfaces of the leading data stacks: nine frontier models, four platforms, thousands of runs. Findings per platform, and what vendors must do about them.
- 14:10** **5** **Headless Data Management, Decision Intelligence & Action Workflows**
Mike Ferguson · Intelligent Business Strategies
 What MCP-exposed, headless products mean for software vendors: orchestration across pipelines, new integration plays, and strategic technology partnerships in the AI era.

AI ROI AND CUSTOMER MATURITY

14:50 – 15:20

- 14:50** **6** **Are Your Customers Getting ROI? How Enterprises Measure AI Value**
Shawn Rogers · BARC
 Findings from *ROI on Intelligence*, BARC's global AI ROI study: what separates customers who scale from those who stall, and how to position along the maturity curve of your buyers.

15:20 **Break**

M&A, FINANCING AND THE AI MARKET RESET

15:50 – 17:00

- 15:50** **7** **M&A and Financing Activity in the Data, AI and CPM Market**
Carsten Bange · BARC
 The year's most impactful acquisitions and funding rounds: where capital is concentrating, where valuations are under pressure, and what it signals for the industry's future.
- 16:20** **8** **Is the SaaSocalypse Over? AI, Valuations and Investment**
Panel moderated by Carsten Bange · with Eike Eul (Main Capital) et al.
 Investors and operators on AI's pressure on pricing, margins and exits, and where the smart money goes next.

17:00 **Summary of Day 1 & end of sessions**

THURSDAY EVENING

- 17:45** Walk through the vineyards with wine tasting (*bring sturdy shoes*)
- 19:00** Dinner at **Weingut Trenz**, Schulstr. 3, Geisenheim
- 22:30** Return to Burg Schwarzenstein on foot or by taxi



Vendor Strategy, Product Innovation and Differentiation

Morning plenary; afternoon deep-dive tracks (see next page)

BARC ROADMAP 2026/2027

08:30 – 09:00

08:30 9 BARC Research & Events Agenda 2026/2027

Carsten Bange · BARC

What's coming in research, events and BARC's own AI-based products, and an open floor to bring in your needs and ideas.

VENDOR STRATEGY: DELIVERY MODELS, SOVEREIGNTY AND TRUST

09:00 – 10:10

09:00 10 Forward-Deployed Engineers: Do You Need Them, and Are They Just Glorified Consultants?

Donald Farmer · TreeHive Strategy

Palantir popularized the role; many vendors now copy it. The economics of forward deployment (margins, cost of sales, product strategy) and when it builds lasting advantage vs. consulting under a different job title.

09:40 11 Sovereignty by Design: The New Sovereignty Agenda for Data, AI and CPM Vendors

Carsten Bange · BARC

Insights from BARC's 2026 Data Sovereignty study and a new framework for sovereignty levels in Data & AI, from the U.S. restriction of Anthropic's Fable 5 to open-weight models. Sovereignty is becoming a selection criterion and a source of differentiation.

10:10 Break

REGIONAL MARKETS

10:40 – 11:20

10:40 12 The Data and AI Market in the Middle East

Andreas Simon · Simon Consulting

A dynamic growth region shaped by geopolitical tension: market trends, buyer behavior, go-to-market considerations, and the opportunities an easing of conflicts could unlock.

DIFFERENTIATION IN THE AI PLATFORM ERA

11:20 – 12:00

11:20 13 Competing with AI Giants: Where Can Data, Analytics and CPM Vendors Still Differentiate?

Panel led by Shawn Rogers · BARC

As hyperscalers and foundation model companies move deeper into your market: where defensible differentiation still exists (domain expertise, trusted data, governance & semantics, workflow integration, customer intimacy, verticals) and the risks of being absorbed into larger AI ecosystems.

12:00 Lunch

FRIDAY EVENING

18:30 Walk to **Weingut Hamm**, Hauptstr. 60, Oestrich-Winkel

19:00 Dinner in the cozy winery tavern

22:00 Return to Burg Schwarzenstein on foot or by taxi

Afternoon options after the closing: analyst 1:1s, fireside chats, work time or a visit to Rüdesheim.

Choose your track.

Two parallel deep dives. Pick the room where your 2027 product strategy will be decided.

OPTION 1 · PRODUCT INNOVATION IN THE AGENTIC ERA

- 13:20 14 Context Intelligence: Hype or Emerging Discipline?**
Timm Grosser · BARC
 Beyond documents and retrieval: building a trusted context layer from metadata, semantics, ontologies and governance, and what it means across catalogs, MDM, semantic layers, lakehouses and AI platforms.
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- 14:00 15 Always-On Agentic Data Governance: The Data Governance Command Centre**
Mike Ferguson · Intelligent Business Strategies
 We are past the point where people can govern data alone. Unifying catalogs, observability and AI agents to detect incidents and enforce policy across a distributed data estate, and why to design governance into your product.
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- 14:40 16 Eaten by Agents? What Vendors Need to Rebuild Next**
Thomas Zeuschler · BARC
 Agents raise query loads by orders of magnitude and put pressure on price per question and meaning-less data. Neither is a tuning problem. Fuel for your innovation pipeline to stay the platform agents reason on.

OPTION 2 · CPM MARKET AND PRODUCT STRATEGY

- 13:20 17 Global CPM Trends and Priorities for 2027**
Christian Fuchs · BARC
 Exclusive findings from the CPM Trend Monitor with BPM Partners: feedback from ~1,200 performance management professionals worldwide.
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- 13:35 18 CPM in Turmoil: The Good, the Bad and the Indifferent**
Bani Brandolini · BARC Ambassador
 The market is in turmoil and customers risk paralysis. What will work, what won't, and what won't really matter.
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- 14:05 19 Trends in Corporate Planning, Financial Consolidation & Group Accounting**
Christian Fuchs & Stefan Sexl · BARC
 The world's largest independent user surveys, The Planning Survey and The Financial Consolidation & Group Accounting Survey, plus a first empirical benchmark of agentic AI in planning.
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- 14:40 20 Market for Disclosure Management and GRC**
Stefan Sexl · BARC
 Analyst views on two fast-professionalizing markets, and the vendors that matter.
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- 15:00 21 Update on CPM Market Figures, Including Asia**
Stefan Sexl · BARC
 Latest product and services market figures across world regions.

CLOSING DISCUSSION: HYPE, REALITY AND STRATEGIC CHOICES

15:50 – 16:45

- 15:50 22 Hype or Reality: A Discussion of Industry Trends**
Moderated by Shawn Rogers and Carsten Bange
 An interactive debate on where the most hyped technology is heading, why it will work, why it's overhyped, and what Data, Analytics and CPM will look like in 5–10 years.
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- 16:30 Wrap-up of two workshop days**
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- 16:45 End of the Retreat workshop program**

SPEAKERS & ANALYSTS

The people in the room.

BARC's senior analysts, independent experts and industry veterans, joined by a global circle of vendor executives shaping strategy, product and go-to-market, from startups to multi-billion-dollar market leaders. All analysts are available for 1:1 conversations throughout the Retreat.



Dr. Carsten Bange
Founder & CEO, BARC
Internationally recognized analyst on data, AI, analytics and CPM strategy, organization and architecture.



Shawn Rogers
CEO, BARC US
28+ years across data, BI, AI/ML and cloud; former executive strategy roles at Dell, Statistica, Qwest and TIBCO.



Donald Farmer
TreeHive Strategy
30+ years in data & analytics; built market-leading products at Microsoft and Qlik; advisor to investors and vendors.



Mike Ferguson
Intelligent Business Strategies
Managing Director and independent analyst; 37+ years in BI, big data, data management and integration.



Timm Grosser
Senior Analyst, BARC
Data strategy, governance and management; author of numerous BARC market studies.



Stefan Sexl
Senior Analyst & Fellow, BARC
30+ years in BI & CPM; co-founder and former board member of MIS AG and pmOne AG.



Dr. Christian Fuchs
Head of D&A Research, BARC
Leads BARC's Data & Analytics research; specialist in CPM, planning, consolidation and analytics.



Thomas Zeutschler
Senior Analyst & Fellow, BARC
Data, analytics, AI and cloud-native development; previously led these disciplines globally at Henkel.



Bani Brandolini
BARC Ambassador · President, Darwin Analytics
CPM/EPM veteran who led Oracle Hyperion, SAP OutlookSoft and CCH Tagetik to global success.

ALSO ON STAGE

Andreas Simon (Simon Consulting) on the Middle East market for data & AI · **Eike Eul** (Main Capital) on the investor panel

ANALYST 1:1S

Private meetings during both workshop days and on Saturday morning. Reserve your slot before or during the event: cbange@barc.com

SEATS ARE LIMITED

The market is resetting. Be in the room where it's read first.

The Data & Analytics Retreat is deliberately intimate: a unique global network of vendor executives and senior analysts. One castle, zero noise. Secure your place early.

DATES & VENUE

October 7–10, 2026
Burg Schwarzenstein
Rosengasse 32, 65366
Geisenheim
Tel. +49-6722-99500

REGISTER

Secure one of the limited,
invite only seats early at:
[www.barc-vendors.com/
retreat-2026](http://www.barc-vendors.com/retreat-2026)

PROGRAM STATUS

Draft agenda as of August
26, 2026. Sessions and
speakers may be refined as
the program is finalized.