June 2025

Systems of Execution and the Consulting Opportunity

Redefining Enterprise Transformation in the
Age of Autonomous Execution

Contents

Executive summary

Systems of Execution (SoE) – intelligent, autonomous platforms capable of making and executing decisions in real time – are reshaping the enterprise operating model. This transformation renders legacy systems of record and engagement insufficient to meet today's demand for agility, resilience, and hyper-efficiency. As enterprises pivot from dashboards to dynamic decision execution, their expectations from consulting partners will radically shift.

In the SoE era, enterprises will expect consulting providers to:

- Design and build intelligent operating models – powered by real-time decisioning and automated action
- Redesign workflows for autonomy, adaptability, and orchestration across departments
- Construct AI-enabled governance frameworks to manage risk, bias, and compliance
- Transform workforce strategies to embed digital fluency and human-in-the-loop protocols
- Deliver not just transformation roadmaps, but working, scalable solutions

This Viewpoint explores how SoE is not only redefining enterprise operations but also catalyzing a once-in-a-generation transformation in the consulting industry. It outlines emerging client expectations, the services that consulting providers must offer, where these needs are surfacing first, and the key investments firms must make to capture the new growth frontier.

The new enterprise mandate: the evolving nature of consulting demand

Most enterprises are deeply entrenched in legacy Systems of record (ERP, CRM) and engagement (customer portals, collaboration platforms). Transitioning to SoE – a real-time, intelligent, autonomous decisioning layer – requires rethinking enterprise architecture, workflows, governance models, and talent structures. The shift is not just technical modernization (such as cloud migration); it is a business process and operating model transformation. Enterprises will need help redesigning their organizations to support agentic AI and autonomous execution. As enterprises accelerate SoE adoption, their consulting needs are expanding beyond traditional silos. Clients now seek end-to-end support – from reimagining operating models and workflows to embedding real-time data orchestration, AI governance, and workforce transformation. This shift demands integrated, cross-functional services that blend strategic insight with executional depth.

Exhibit 1 demonstrates the specific types of consulting services that enterprises will require.

Exhibit 1: What types of consulting will firms require?

Source: Everest Group (2025)

Consulting area	Specific needs	Example services
Enterprise strategy	Design new operating models for agentic execution	SoE strategy roadmaps, transformation business cases
Process reimagination	Redesign workflows for intelligent orchestration and automation	End-to-end process redesign, intelligent workflows
Data and AI readiness	Build unified, real-time data fabrics for dynamic decisioning	Real-time data architecture design, AI orchestration
Talent and workforce transformation	Reskill and reorganize workforces around AI-human collaboration	New role creation (AI process architects, automation overseers), digital reskilling programs
Change management and governance	Embed human oversight in autonomous systems	Trustworthy AI governance frameworks, responsible automation adoption plans
Technology enablement	Architect and integrate the SoE layer across legacy systems	Real-time orchestration engine implementation, microservices/API design

As leading enterprises invest in intelligent, autonomous operations, their leaders are voicing the transformative impact of AI and SoE-enabled initiatives. The following examples highlight compelling proof points of how strategic consulting partnerships are helping organizations embed decision intelligence, accelerate execution, and deliver measurable business outcomes.

Lufthansa Group: Lufthansa aimed to improve operational resilience and customer experience during flight disruptions – a complex problem involving fast, multi-variable decisions. Partnering with BCG X, the airline developed intelligent orchestration engines that automate rerouting, rebooking, and customer communication workflows. These SoE capabilities allow Lufthansa to manage disruptions in real time with minimal human intervention while retaining strategic oversight. The solution has significantly enhanced Lufthansa's ability to deliver personalized, consistent service even during peak irregular operations.

"We are working with AI at all levels to make traveling even easier and more enjoyable for passengers – from booking a flight to checking into a hotel."

– Dr. Ivan Terekhov, Director of Research and Intelligence, Lufthansa Innovation Hub

Procter & Gamble (P&G): Facing the need to modernize and de-risk its global supply chain, P&G sought to move from reactive planning to real-time, intelligent execution. With help from Accenture, the company implemented a digital control tower that integrates predictive analytics and AI orchestration across its supply chain. This SoE-aligned system enables dynamic inventory allocation, real-time demand sensing, and proactive disruption management. The transformation has resulted in improved service levels, reduced waste, and enhanced operational agility.

A consulting paradigm shift: from siloed expertise to end-to-end enablement

The transformation of traditional service lines into SoE-aligned offerings marks a profound shift in the consulting value proposition. The isolated domains of strategy, technology, or operations will cease to be compelling enough for enterprises; instead, they will expect integrated, cross-functional solutions that drive real-time, autonomous execution.

This convergence demands a fundamental retooling of capabilities – combining AI orchestration, dynamic workflow engineering, governance expertise, and digital talent strategy into cohesive client engagements. As a result, the traditional boundaries of technology vs. business vs. risk vs. industry consulting will collapse in favor of integrated end-to-end solutions and services.

The result will be an evolved consulting model that:

Embeds AI from strategy to execution	Reimagines processes across data, technology, and talent	Governs risks while enabling autonomy	Integrates functional, technical, and strategic advisory into a single continuum

"If you are a traditional consultant and you are just doing the thing, you are executing the thing, you are probably in some big trouble."

– Travis Kalanick, Co-founder, Uber and CEO, City Storage Systems

Exhibit 2 shows how the key offerings and service lines need to evolve to address the SoE-aligned expectations.

Exhibit 2: The evolution of traditional consulting services

Source: Everest Group (2025)

Service line	SoE-aligned offerings
Strategic advisory	Agentic operating model design, AI-first growth strategies, SoE RoI, and readiness assessment
Process and operations transformation	Dynamic workflow design, cross-functional process orchestration, continuous optimization frameworks
Technology enablement	Unified data layer development, orchestration engine deployment, AI integration into legacy systems
Risk and governance consulting	Real-time risk control systems, AI ethics and explainability, autonomous compliance overlays
Talent and workforce consulting	Role redefinition for automation oversight, digital capability mapping, upskilling for AI collaboration

Consulting providers' success in the SoE era will hinge on their ability to design for action, embed intelligence at the core of operations, and deliver sustained outcomes, not just recommendations.

"We are not just building AI tools – we are helping clients embed intelligence into the fabric of their operations. That means integrating AI into workflows, not just layering it on top."

– Arvind Krishna, CEO, IBM

The high opportunity segment: functional hotspots

SoE adoption is likely to scale rapidly in business functions that are data-rich and decision-intensive:

- **Supply chain and fulfillment:** inventory orchestration, automated restocking, route optimization
- **Finance and risk:** real-time closing, autonomous reconciliation, fraud prevention
- **Customer experience:** AI-based support resolution, sentiment-driven engagement flows
- **Insurance claims and underwriting:** automated claims assessment, dynamic fraud triaging
- **Healthcare operations:** preemptive care planning, AI-led clinical triage

How consulting providers can tap into the SoE space

To seize the SoE opportunity, consulting providers must rethink how they structure their offerings, talent, and delivery models. This shift requires moving beyond siloed service lines toward orchestrated, execution-focused engagement models. Leading firms will differentiate by taking a process-first approach, embedding AI into workflows, and positioning themselves as partners in intelligent orchestration rather than passive advisors. Creating centers of excellence, specializing in agentic operating models, and scaling real-time, domain-specific blueprints will become essential.

"I think the word consulting is a misnomer. I have not figured out the new word. What we do is we effect change: change in results and capabilities."

– Bob Sternfels, Global Managing Partner, McKinsey & Company

BCG anticipates that 40% of its revenues in 2026 will stem from AI consulting. Here are the top five strategic priorities that consulting firms must act on to lead in the SoE era:

1   **Build integrated execution toolkits and IP:** Consulting will shift from advice to activation – clients expect working solutions. Firms must invest in building reusable SoE frameworks, orchestration engines, and accelerators. These assets must enable rapid deployment of intelligent workflows, real-time decisions, and adaptive processes.

2   **Create vertical-specific SoE playbooks:** SoE needs differ drastically across industries, from autonomous fulfillment in retail to dynamic triage in healthcare. Consulting firms must craft industry-aligned blueprints that embed domain expertise, real-time analytics, and agentic decisioning flows. ZS, for instance, has built playbooks tailored to life sciences operations, focusing on AI-enabled clinical trial orchestration.

3   **Develop hybrid talent pools and reskilling programs:** Firms need to cultivate teams that span AI engineers, data architects, ethical risk strategists, and domain specialists. Reskilling current consultants into T-shaped hybrid roles –blending strategic advisory with technical fluency – is essential. McKinsey's QuantumBlack has led with cross-disciplinary talent hubs combining analytics, AI, and human-in-the-loop design.

4 Scale AI governance and risk advisory capabilities: As AI assumes a more agentic role in operations, clients need assurance. Consulting providers must embed real-time risk control, ethical oversight, and compliance-ready AI frameworks. PwC's Responsible AI suite is a leading example, offering guidance on explainability, bias detection, and escalation design.

5 Build ecosystem alliances with platform providers: Speed and scale in SoE implementation depend on leveraging the right technologies – data fabrics, orchestration tools, and AI engines. Consulting firms must form joint solutions with hyperscalers and automation leaders. Capgemini's partnerships with Microsoft Fabric and IBM on AWS demonstrate how alliances can accelerate intelligent execution delivery.

Several leading and boutique consulting firms are already taking bold steps to align their capabilities with the emerging demands of SoE adoption:

- **BCG X,** the consulting firm's innovation and AI unit, is helping clients design autonomous operating models by embedding AI decision engines and real-time orchestration across core processes
- **Deloitte** has operationalized this transformation through its aiStudio platform, enabling clients to integrate AI, automation, and governance into their enterprise fabric
- **Fractal Analytics** is powering SoE-like capabilities in supply chain and finance by fusing predictive intelligence with autonomous execution
- **Tquila Automation** is delivering cross-platform hyper automation solutions tailored to embed decisioning and orchestration into client workflows. These firms exemplify how consulting providers can move beyond advisory to become key enablers of intelligent, autonomous enterprise operations

Conclusion

The future of consulting: continuous, intelligent transformation

The SoE era demands a consulting model built for adaptability and depth:

- Engagements will not end with strategy decks – they will begin there
- Consulting will move from projects to platforms, from static advice to dynamic orchestration
- Clients will expect continuous enablement, powered by consulting firms that think like integrators, builders, and AI ethicists

Those who break silos and lead agentic enterprise models will shape the next decade. Everest Group continues to track this evolution and will publish additional insights on consulting readiness in the SoE economy.

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