1 out of 2 executives are disappointed with the quality of thought leadership.

And 86% of all executives believe that thought leadership is a missed opportunity*

*Based on an Edelman/LinkedIn survey of 1,329 executives
Business leaders in today’s 24/7 marketplace need not just thought leadership, but actionable decision support that combines visionary thinking, analytical insights, and innovative client engagement.

Achieving such excellence is challenging. It requires a blend of originality, quantitative rigor, industry expertise, and marketing flair not typically found in any one firm.

That is why we established ESI ThoughtLab as a think tank of economic, industry and thought leadership experts that excel in creating innovative analysis for business and government.

Our links to top universities, research institutes, and global media organizations enable us to develop fresh ideas validated by quantitative evidence and delivered in compelling ways.
Building ROI through decision support

Turning traditional thought leadership into higher-value decision support will significantly boost your marketing returns.

To gain the attention of busy executives, B2B organizations need to provide actionable analysis that will distinguish their brands, energize their sales teams, and generate business with clients.

**BEHIND THE CURVE**
- Research findings
- Editorial driven
- Opinion-based
- Static presentation
- Occasional insights
- Case studies
- Traditional outreach
- Creates interest
- Gives exposure

**AHEAD OF THE CURVE**
- Decision support
- Analytics driven
- Evidence-based
- Interactive presentation
- Insights with foresights
- True best practices
- 360 marketing
- Prompts action
- Generates business
A goldfish has an attention span of 9 seconds, 1 second longer than an executive’s.
### 3 steps for creating high-impact decision support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.   | Create visionary thinking  
Identify ahead-of-the-curve thinking and actionable insights that will set you apart |
| 2.   | Apply advanced analytics  
Apply analytics and mixed-methods research to validate and present your thinking |
| 3.   | Use innovative content formats  
Deliver decision support in compelling formats across media channels and devices |
Step 1: Visionary thinking.

- **Develop fresh ideas** by staying on top of public- and private-sector research, including competitive studies.
- **Draw on insights** from advisory boards of industry leaders and prominent experts.
- **Focus on technological innovation** and its implications for business and government.
- **Harness advanced analytics** to assess future trends and scenarios, and their impacts.
- **Take a multidisciplinary approach** that considers economic, political, consumer, and market shifts.
- **Build on a deep body of research** with senior executives, policymakers, futurists, and academic leaders.
Visionary thinking requires visionary thinkers

That is why we set up ESI ThoughtLab as a think tank that draws together thought leaders, top economists, and industry experts.

Our founders include Dr. Richard Voith, and Louis Celi, pioneers in thought leadership and digital publishing.
Step 2: Apply advanced analytics

The most effective thought leadership is macro-to-micro

**Macro analytics**
- Global and country forecasting
- Scenario and risk analysis
- Industrial analysis
- Economic modeling
- Consumer trends

**Micro analytics**
- Benchmarking and indexing
- Big data analytics and forecasting
- Economic and social impact
- Cost-benefit and ROI analysis
- City and geospatial mapping
How we create smarter surveys

» **Extensive panels** of executives, consumers, investors, futurists, and policymakers.

» **Worldwide coverage** of over 200 countries and 3,000 cities.

» **Executive surveys** across sectors, functions, and seniority levels.

» **Online or CATI** surveys conducted in any language.

» **Real-time** survey results, data visualizations and tools.

» **Performance benchmarks**, impact analysis and forecast scenarios from survey data.

Our research for Cognizant’s Center for the Future of Work generated ROI indicators by industry.
Step 3: Use innovative content formats

Reaching executives requires unique analysis delivered in formats that are innovative, interactive, and digestible.

Our track record

Our groundbreaking study on Wealth and Asset Management 2021 generated over 100 articles in the media, including the *Financial Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and *The Street*.

Our economic, employment, and tax business case helped the University of Pennsylvania raise $2.5 million for the development of its Pennovation Center.

We conducted twitter chats and webinars for our *Go Digital or Bust* thought leadership program with Cisco, which resulted in 1,000+ strong leads.
Decision makers want decision support. 

Here are examples.
Wealth and Asset Management 2022: The Path to Digital Leadership

We surveyed 1,500 investment firms and interviewed 40 senior executives worldwide. Our team analyzed the survey data to understand trends across sectors, regions, and digital maturity, and then created models to assess the impact of digital adoption on performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Institutional</th>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Broker-dealers</th>
<th>Fintechs</th>
<th>Universal banks</th>
<th>Mutual funds</th>
<th>Private banks</th>
<th>Retail banks</th>
<th>Advisors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profits</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUM</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productivity</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market share</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conducted in cooperation with:
ThoughtLab worked with Cognizant to create definitive analysis on how digital innovation would transform work and corporate performance. The program featured a decision-support microsite offering a data navigator, blogs, infographics, articles, and a white paper.

**Research methods**

**Survey of 2,000 C-level executives** across 18 nations, 6 industries.

**Survey of other workforce participants**, including 250 employees, 150 MBA students, and 50 futurists.

**Micro-analysis and benchmarking** to show the impact of digital technology on revenue and profits in six key sectors.

**Macroeconomic modeling** to assess the impact of digital transformation on world economies.
KPMG engaged ThoughtLab to analyze how exponential changes in technology and customer behaviors will transform the consumer industry. Our research showed that consumer companies will morph into omnibusinesses using smart technologies to drive hyper-customer-centricity and end-to-end integration.

**Research methods**

**Global survey of 400 C-level executives** across all consumer market sectors, plus a survey of 7,100 consumers.

**Correlations of survey results** by omnichannel and digital maturity, industry, size, revenue, profitability.

**Interviews with C-level executives** from Campbell Soup, Hershey, Pick n Pay, Kingfisher, and others.

**Brainstorming sessions and interviews** with a range of KPMG practice leaders and subject matter experts.

**Program deliverables**

**Distinctive hypothesis** developed from interviews with partners and secondary research

**Interactive database of all survey results** with Tableau-generated visualizations

**Thought-provoking white paper** including expert interviews and calls to action

**Infographics and case studies**, which highlighted best practices and trends.
Cashless Cities

Question from Visa
How much does a city and its constituents stand to benefit from becoming cashless?

Our approach
Segment – Worldwide cities into five categories based on their current digital payment usage and readiness
Survey – 3,000 consumers and 900 businesses across 6 representative cities
Model – Net benefits for 100 cities

Direct Impact + Catalytic Impact

Consumer Benefits
- Lower costs
- Time savings in banking and shopping transactions
- Faster transit and travel
- Increased convenience
- More personalized customer service
- Simplified record keeping

Business Benefits
- Lower administrative and back-office costs
- Lower labor costs
- Lower transport and banking costs
- Time savings
- Increased convenience
- Better customer data
- Potential for greater sales through digital channels

Government Benefits
- Lower administrative and back-office costs
- Lower costs of managing cash and minting coins
- Increased tax compliance
- Better data on citizen needs and behavior
- Support for smart city initiatives
- Potential reduction in crime
Global Risk: Views from the Top

Program overview

ThoughtLab worked with Protiviti and North Carolina State University to globalize their research into top management views on macroeconomic, strategic, business, and operational risks.

ThoughtLab supplemented Protiviti’s US study with surveys of 200 board directors and C-level executives across Europe and in Asia. We fielded the survey, and provided full data analysis and segmentation.

Executive Perspectives on Top Risks for 2016

What do board members and C-suite executives view to be the top risks for their organizations this year? Not surprisingly, according to an annual survey from North Carolina State University’s ERM Initiative and Protiviti, regulatory changes, the economy and cyber threats top their lists of concerns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Issue</th>
<th>Percentage of “Significant Impact” Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory changes and scrutiny</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic conditions</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyber threats</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy/identity management and information security</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Succession challenges and ability to attract and retain top talent</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid speed of disruptive innovations and new technologies</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volatility in global financial markets and currencies</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resistance to change operations</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustaining customer loyalty and retention</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization’s culture may not encourage timely identification and escalation of risk issues</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Each respondent was asked to rate the likelihood of individual risk issues using a 1-to-5 scale, where 5 is “likely to exist” and 1 is “not likely to exist.” The risk was rated a “significant impact” if the likelihood of the risk occurring over the next year is rated a 4 or higher in response to the risk that will have a “significant impact” on the organization.

*The ERM Survey: Executive Perspectives on Top Risks for 2016, may be associated with questionnaire packets and registries. All records contain the identifiers of the entity by department, role, organization size, industry and other characteristics.
The future of private equity

To create a truly distinctive look into the future of private equity, ThoughtLab developed an advisory group of the industry’s founding fathers. The unique white paper presented the perspectives of Chairman, CEOs and market visionaries.

David Rubenstein
Co-Founder and Co-CEO
The Carlyle Group

Stephen Schwarzman
Chairman, CEO, and Co-Founder
The Blackstone Group

Glenn Hutchins
Co-Founder
Silver Lake
and Chairman
North Island

John Canning
Founder and Chairman
Madison Dearborn Partners

David Bonderman
Chairman and Founding Partner
TPG Capital

Charles (Chip) Kaye
Co-Chief Executive Officer
Warburg Pincus

Dr. Nouriel Roubini
Professor of Economics
NYU Stern School of Business

Shane Feeney
Senior Managing Director
Canadian Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB)

Professor Josh Lerner
Harvard Business School
How we can help
ESI ThoughtLab is an innovative think tank that offers fresh ideas and evidence-based analysis to help business and government leaders understand and respond to economic, industry and technological shifts around the world.

Our team of economic, industry, and thought leadership specialists excel at creating valuable decision support content that combines visionary thinking, analytical excellence, and multi-format content delivery. We draw on a global network of experts, in-country analysts, and research partners to fill any of your research needs—from surveys, executive panels and interviews to interactive indexes, infographics, and models.

ESI ThoughtLab is the thought leadership arm of Econsult Solutions, a leading economic consultancy. We have an exclusive partnership with the National Institute of Economics and Social Research, Britain’s first research institute, and close links to Wharton Business School, Drexel, New York University, and the University of Pennsylvania.
Our services

Mixed methods research
- Global surveys
- Executive interviews
- Statistical analysis
- Economic research
- Advisory groups
- Web-based analytics

Multi-format content
- Editorial content
- Data visualization
- Analytical tools
- Video production
- Digital and social media
- Executive microsites

Cross-channel marketing
- Mobile
- Live events
- Email and online
- Educational channels
- Social communities
- Media partnerships
Our team of specialists

Our Thought Leadership Specialists

Lou Celi
CEO, ESI ThoughtLab

Barry Rutizer
Commercial Director

Julien Beresford
Director of Market Research

Janet Wikler
Director of Strategic Consulting

Benedicte Clouet
Head of Marketing

Janet Lewis
Executive Editor

Ted Saad
Director of Digital Media

Bruce Rayner
Senior Editor and Economist

Ramona Dzinkowski
Senior Editor and Economist

Ed Ruehle
Senior Editor

Our Economists

Richard Voith, Ph.D.
President and Principal

Stephen Mullin
President and Principal

Lee Huang, MPA
Senior Vice President and Principal

Steve Wray, MS
Vice President and Director

Gina Lavery
Director

Peter Angelides, Ph. D.
Senior Vice President and Principal

Daniel Miles, Ph.D.
Vice President and Microeconomic Coordinator

Alison Shott, Ph.D.
Director

Brittany Forman, MPA
Director
Lou Celi, the CEO of ESI ThoughtLab, has over 35 years of thought leadership and digital publishing experience. Lou set up The Economist Group’s thought leadership business, and headed the firm’s digital transformation. He later founded the global thought leadership practice at Oxford Economics, where he was President and a Board Director.

Dr. Richard Voith is the President of Econsult Solutions, Inc. and a board director at ESI ThoughtLab. He is currently an adjunct professor at Wharton Business School and a Faculty Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania Institute for Urban Research. Dr. Voith was formerly an Economic Advisor at the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia.
What our clients say

“ESI ThoughtLab stands out in its ability to provide true visionary insight backed up by rigorous economic analysis.”
- Yoni Assia, CEO, eToro

“Lou and his team did a terrific job helping us with our Work Ahead program. From idea development through to fact checking.”
- Benjamin Pring, Co-Director, Center for the Future of Work

“I want to thank the whole team for their effort. You helped us with a work product that is a real treasure for Emory.”
- David Payne, Senior Director of Operations, Emory University