



Q2 2026

TechCompass

Navigating the landscape of emerging technologies

Introduction

A trusted compass to emerging technology.

The technology landscape is evolving at an unprecedented pace, driven by advancements in AI, cloud-native development, and data-driven decision-making. For organisations with .NET, Azure, Umbraco, and Optimizely in their landscape, staying ahead means not just adopting new tools but integrating them strategically to enhance productivity, scalability, and innovation.

This Tech Compass 2026 is designed to guide you in making a decision by summarising the most impactful tools, frameworks and practices that were on our internal radar over the last year. We think these will shape the upcoming year.

We've categorised these items into three areas: Technical, Marketing and Business Strategy, and analysed them through the lenses of **SUPPORT**, **ENHANCE**, and **EVOLVE**.

Our focus is on practical, actionable insights that align with your expertise in .NET, Azure, and web content management, while addressing key trends like European privacy, structured AI use, AI cost efficiency, and human-in-the-loop validation.



Jeroen Wijdeven
Group CTO



Innovation matters to business leaders.

Business outcomes

In 2026, the intersection of AI, cloud-native development, and data-driven marketing will define competitive advantage. This compass provides a clear direction for leveraging technology to:

- **Reduce costs** with token-efficient AI workflows with Caveman and GSD
- **Enhance productivity** with GSD, spec-driven development and cloud-native simplification
- **Future-proof operations** with AI personalisation through Umbraco Engage, Opal and unified data intelligence
- **Ensure compliance** e.g., European privacy standards embedded in tools like Opal and Fabric.

Key takeaways

Technical Teams: Focus on Caveman, GSD, Aspire, Hotwire, Struct, Figma MCP, and Storybook to streamline development, reduce costs, and improve collaboration.

Marketing/Growth Teams: Opal, Umbraco Engage and Supermetrics to automate content, optimise SEO and GEO, and drive data-informed decisions.

Business Strategy: Use Microsoft Fabric and Supermetrics to unify data, gain real-time insights, and embed AI into decision-making.

Trends to Watch: Structured AI use, AI cost efficiency, European privacy, and human-in-the-loop validation are cross-cutting themes that will shape your 2026 roadmap.



Compass navigation

1. Support

Build your foundation on cost-efficient and structured AI practices.

Start with **Caveman** to slash your token spend by up to 65% through spec-driven workflows compatible with 30+ AI agents. Essential for sustainable AI development.

Layer in **GSD** to enforce disciplined planning and context engineering, preventing the "context rot" that derails long-running AI projects.

Round out your stack with **Microsoft Aspire** to simplify cloud-native .NET infrastructure, creating the opinionated backbone your Azure teams need to move fast without friction.

2. Enhance

Accelerate execution by integrating tools that unlock your teams' productivity.

Use **Hotwire** to keep frontend development aligned with backend expertise, eliminating context switching between frameworks.

Introduce **Figma MCP** to dissolve the design-to-development handoff, enabling AI agents to bridge design and code seamlessly.

Strengthen your component strategy with **Storybook** for isolated, reusable UI development.

Deploy **Rankbee** to embed AI-driven SEO/GEO into your Optimizely and Umbraco content workflows without manual grunt work

3. Evolve

Scale your intelligence and autonomy layer with enterprise-grade tools.

Unify data, BI, and AI decision-making through **Microsoft Fabric**, creating a semantic foundation for real-time insights across your customer base.

Orchestrate complex marketing and content operations at scale with **Opal** and **Engage**, automating experimentation and analytics while keeping humans in the strategic seat.

Finally, connect everything with **Supermetrics** to evolve your analytics pipeline. Aggregating marketing data, powering AI assistants, and surfacing the insights that drive ethical, data-informed decisions.



On your compass

Caveman

Tech

Caveman is a token-efficient, spec-driven development workflow designed for agent-native builders. It supports developers by reducing token usage by up to 65% through minimal-token communication structures, making it ideal for cost-effective AI-driven development. Its integration with 30+ agents (including Claude, Cursor, and Mistral) allows it to enhance productivity across multiple platforms. Caveman provides a blueprint for evolving our internal patterns and practices.

Get Ship Done

Tech

GSD is a lightweight, meta-prompting framework for AI-driven development, trusted by multiple enterprises like Amazon, Google, and Shopify. It enhances productivity by automating research, requirements gathering, and roadmap creation, allowing developers to focus on building rather than planning. Alternatives like DevKit and Superpowers offer similar spec-driven approaches but we currently experience GSD hits the nail with an agile way of working. It can guide a very structured way of working with AI.

Microsoft Aspire

Tech

Microsoft Aspire is an opinionated, open-source stack designed to simplify the development of cloud-native and distributed applications within the .NET ecosystem. It aims to improve developer productivity by making it easier to build, run, debug, and deploy these applications. Aspire is ideal for a team like us looking to enhance its cloud-native development workflows and reduce infrastructure complexity. We are actively looking at how it can improve our development process.

Umbraco Engage

Tech

Marketing

Umbraco Engage is an AI-powered personalization and marketing automation tool integrated directly into the Umbraco CMS. It supports real-time segmentation, A/B testing, and analytics, making it a strong fit for data-driven marketing strategies. By leveraging Umbraco Engage, we can enhance our marketing workflows, lead scoring, and customer journey mapping while ensuring compliance with European privacy regulations. For the future, combining it with Supermetrics could evolve our marketing automation into a human-in-the-loop system, enabling predictive personalization as AI models improve.

Struct PIM

Tech

Struct PIM is a Product Information Management (PIM) system designed to centralize product data for e-commerce and enterprise clients. It supports multi-channel publishing, localization, and compliance, aligning with our focus on European data sovereignty and data governance. Adopting Struct PIM will enhance product data workflows, ensuring consistency across Umbraco. To evolve our enterprise data strategy, we can integrate it with Microsoft Fabric, enabling real-time product insights.

Hotwire

Tech

The Hotwire stack (Turbo, Stimulus, and Strada) is now on our tech compass. Hotwire allows us to build modern, interactive web applications with minimal JavaScript, aligning well with our C#-centric team. Turbo Native extends this capability to iOS and Android, enabling seamless transitions between web and native sections. This stack supports our goal of keeping frontend development close to our backend expertise and enhances our ability to deliver technical UX without aesthetic compromises.



Q2 2026

On your compass

Optimizely Opal AI

Marketing

Opal is Optimizely's platform-independent agent orchestration platform. It allows teams to chain multiple agents together for complex tasks, schedule autonomous workflows, and integrate with existing tools. All without requiring developer intervention. Opal is purpose-built for marketing and communications teams, supporting content production, experimentation, and analytics while keeping humans in the strategic driver's seat. This makes it a strong candidate for enhancing our customer solutions and internal processes.

Figma MCP

Tech

Figma's MCP (Model Context Protocol) server enables AI agents to create and modify designs directly within Figma, using structured skills and design systems. This allows for two-way workflows between design and code, supporting collaboration between designers and developers. The MCP server integrates with tools such as Cursor, Claude Code, and GitHub Copilot, making it a powerful addition to enhancing both customer solutions and internal design-to-development pipelines.

Microsoft Fabric

Strategy

Microsoft Fabric is evolving into a comprehensive enterprise intelligence layer that unifies data warehousing, business intelligence, and AI. In 2026, Fabric is positioned as an AI-ready semantic foundation that supports real-time insights, intelligent data governance, and seamless AI integration. This makes it a strategic choice to enhance our data analytics capabilities and support customer solutions that require robust, scalable data platforms.

Supermetrics

Marketing

Strategy

Supermetrics continues to be a leading marketing data aggregation platform, now with expanded AI integrations and natural language querying. It supports marketers and analysts by automating data pipelines, enabling real-time insights, and enhancing decision-making. The platform's ability to connect to AI assistants like ChatGPT and Claude makes it a valuable tool for supporting both internal processes and customer-facing analytics.

Storybook

Tech

Storybook remains the industry standard for building, documenting, and testing UI components in isolation. It supports collaboration among developers, designers, and product owners and integrates with all popular frontend frameworks. Storybook's ability to streamline UI development and enhance component reusability makes it a key tool for evolving our frontend workflows.

Rankbee

Marketing

Adopting Rankbee can enhance your GEO/SEO/GEO workflows by automating repetitive tasks like keyword clustering, SERP analysis, and content brief generation. It's AI driven content optimization creates actionable recommendations. This ensures your content strategy remains competitive while freeing up time for creative and strategic work. Combine it with your CMS of choice and evolve further with tools like Supermetrics.



GrowCreate Limited

18 Weavers Branch, Thame
OX9 2FQ, UK

Company No: 08008475

VAT ID: GB133458910

GrowCreate Netherlands BV

Europalaan 28, 5232BC
den Bosch, Netherlands

Company No: 94944520

Tax ID: NL866945337B01

This document contains proprietary and confidential information, constitutes the intellectual property of Growcreate Limited or an affiliate and may be subject to legal privilege. If you have a confidentiality or non-disclosure agreement with Growcreate, this document constitutes confidential information of Growcreate. You may not copy or distribute this document, or any information contained in it to any other person except as required by law, regulation, or appropriate court order or by written agreement from Growcreate. Although reasonable care has been taken by Growcreate to ensure that the facts stated, opinions are given and projections made in this document are fair and accurate, no representation or warranty, express or implied, is made as to, and no reliance should be placed on, the fairness, accuracy or completeness of the information, opinions, estimates or projections contained in this document. Neither Growcreate nor any other person accepts any liability for any loss arising from any use of this document or its contents or otherwise. The information and/or recommendations contained in this document are given as of its date of publication and are subject to change without notice.

© GrowCreate Limited 2026. All rights reserved.

