APPENDIX H: Visual Dartboarding + the "Hidden Cost of Data Rich, AI Poor" Concept

How to Use This Appendix

This **Visual Dartboarding** exercise is designed to help organizations confront and solve the **"Data Rich, AI Poor"** problem. It walks you through a structured, visual approach to assess your current data landscape, identify barriers to AI-readiness, and co-create a practical roadmap for improvement. By making rough ideas visible early, this method enables faster alignment, better prioritization, and increased stakeholder ownership. Use it with cross-functional teams to illuminate where your data investments are underperforming, and design smarter, more strategic paths forward.

Visual Dartboarding is a collaborative exercise where rough drafts are used to engage stakeholders, gather feedback, and co-create solutions. This approach ensures that decisions about data strategy are based on a clear understanding of the organization's data assets and their value for AI. The process culminates in a concrete action plan for transforming the organization's data strategy and unlocking the full potential of AI.

Phase 1: Problem Visualization (Data Audit)

1. **The "Data Landscape" Visualization:**
   - Start with a very rough diagram (hand-drawn is great) of the current data landscape in the organization. This would include:
     - Data sources (CRM, claims systems, legacy databases, etc.)
     - Data volumes (estimated petabytes, terabytes)

- Data storage locations (cloud, on-premise, etc.)
- Key stakeholders responsible for each data source

2. **Add "AI-Readiness" Indicators:**
   - On the same diagram, use color-coding (e.g., green, yellow, red) or simple icons to indicate the "AI-readiness" of each data source. This assessment should be based on factors like:
     - Data quality (completeness, accuracy, consistency)
     - Data structure (structured versus unstructured)
     - Data labeling/annotation
     - Compliance with privacy regulations
3. **Visualize "Cost vs. Value":**
   - Add another layer to the diagram showing the estimated cost of storing and maintaining each data source (e.g., storage costs, compliance costs, data management overhead).
   - Compare this to the *actual* value being derived from each data source for AI initiatives (e.g., number of AI models trained, impact on key business metrics). This could be a simple bar chart or a visual scale.
4. **Visual Dartboarding with Stakeholders:**
   - Present this rough "Data Landscape" visualization to a group of stakeholders (data scientists, IT leaders, business unit representatives, compliance officers).
   - Emphasize the "roughness" of the visualization and the need for their input.
   - Ask specific questions like:
     - "Do you agree with these AI-readiness assessments?"
     - "Are there any data sources that are missing from this diagram?"
     - "Are we underestimating the cost of maintaining certain data sources?"
     - "Are we overestimating the value being derived from certain data sources?"

Phase 2: "New Thinking" Brainstorming

1. **"Before & After" Visualization:**
   - Create a very simple "Before & After" diagram showing the shift from "Old Thinking" to "New Thinking." This could be a side-by-side comparison of the two approaches, with key differences highlighted using visual cues (e.g., color-coding, icons).

2. **"Synthetic Data Opportunities" Map:**
   - Create a visualization (again, very rough) that maps potential opportunities for using synthetic data to address the "AI-readiness" gaps identified in Phase 1. For example:
     - If a particular data source is lacking in quality, synthetic data could be used to augment or replace it.
     - If a data source is unstructured, synthetic data could be generated in a structured format.
     - If a data source is lacking in labeled data, synthetic data could be generated with accurate labels.
3. **"Data Infrastructure Evolution" Roadmap:**
   - Visualize a roadmap showing how the organization's data infrastructure needs to evolve to support the "New Thinking" approach. This could include:
     - Implementing automated data pipelines
     - Adopting a dynamic data infrastructure (e.g., cloud-based)
     - Investing in synthetic data generation tools
4. **Visual Dartboarding™ with Stakeholders:**
   - Present these visualizations to the same group of stakeholders.
   - Ask questions like:
     - "Are these the right areas to focus on for synthetic data generation?"
     - "What are the biggest obstacles to implementing these data infrastructure changes?"
     - "How can we measure the success of this transition?"

Phase 3: Prioritization and Action Planning

1. **"Impact vs. Effort" Matrix:**
   - Create a simple 2 × 2 matrix visualizing the potential impact of each proposed initiative (e.g., synthetic data generation, data infrastructure upgrade) vs. the estimated effort required.
2. **"Action Plan" Roadmap:**
   - Based on the "Impact vs. Effort" matrix, create a roadmap outlining the prioritized action steps and timelines.
3. **Visual Dartboarding™ with Stakeholders:**
   - Present the matrix and roadmap to stakeholders and get their feedback on the priorities and timelines.

Key Benefits:

- **Visual Clarity:** The Visual Dartboarding approach makes the "Data Rich, AI Poor" problem more tangible and understandable.
- **Stakeholder Buy-In:** By involving stakeholders in the process of assessing the data landscape and identifying potential solutions, you increase their sense of ownership and commitment.
- **Data-Driven Decision-Making:** The approach ensures that decisions about data strategy are based on a clear understanding of the organization's data assets and their value for AI.
- **Actionable Roadmap:** The process culminates in a concrete action plan for transforming the organization's data strategy and unlocking the full potential of AI.