AI IMPACT REPORT NO. 165 · REVISED 5 OCTOBER 2026 · 250 ROLES COVERED

IT Operations Managers

AI revolutionizing infrastructure monitoring, incident management, and automation (AIOps).

EXPOSURE	WINDOW	ADOPTION TODAY	READING
49	2–5 yrs	Very High	The role is being reshaped.
Elevated exposure	until change lands		Exposure is the share of today's work AI can plausibly take on within the window.

§ 01 WHAT IS HAPPENING

What is happening to it operations managers

Impact

AI is central to modern IT operations, powering AIOps platforms that automate system monitoring, detect anomalies, predict outages, perform root cause analysis, and automate incident response and remediation for many common issues.

Risk

Leading AIOps adoption; focus on service reliability, automation oversight, and proactive optimization.

The IT Operations Manager role is fundamentally changing to become a manager and orchestrator of AI-driven operational tools. Their focus is on ensuring the reliability, availability, and performance of IT systems through the implementation and oversight of AIOps, managing teams that work with these AI systems, and driving continuous improvement and automation in IT operations.

Sector readiness

AIOps is Core to Modern IT Operations

AIOps is no longer a niche concept but a mainstream approach for managing complex IT environments. IT Operations Managers are at the forefront of selecting, implementing, and maturing these AI-driven capabilities.

§ 02 POSITION

Where you stand

i The IT Operations Manager role is becoming heavily reliant on AI (AIOps) to manage the complexity and scale of modern IT environments.

ii AI automates routine monitoring, incident detection, and basic remediation, allowing operations teams to shift from reactive firefighting to proactive and predictive management.

iii The future IT Operations Manager will be an expert in leveraging AIOps platforms, leading teams that work with AI, ensuring service reliability through intelligent automation, and continuously optimizing IT operations using data-driven insights.

§ 03 ACTIONS 15 POINTS

What this means for you

Concrete changes to how the work gets done, in the order you are likely to meet them.

01 **Implementing & Managing AIOps Platforms.** Leading the deployment and ongoing management of AIOps tools for comprehensive monitoring, event correlation, anomaly detection, and automated remediation.

02 **Proactive Incident Prevention & Predictive Maintenance.** Using AI insights to identify potential system failures or performance degradation before they impact users, and scheduling proactive maintenance.

03 **Automated Root Cause Analysis (RCA).** Leveraging AI to quickly analyze vast amounts of log and metric data to determine the underlying cause of IT incidents, reducing mean time to resolution (MTTR).

04 **Overseeing AI-Driven Automation of IT Tasks.** Managing the automation of routine operational tasks such as patching, backups, resource provisioning, and basic troubleshooting.

05 **Capacity Planning & Performance Optimization.** Utilizing AI to analyze usage trends, forecast future capacity needs (server, storage, network), and optimize system performance.

06 **Ensuring Service Level Agreement (SLA) Compliance.** Using AI to monitor service availability and performance against SLAs, and to automate reporting on compliance.

07 **Managing IT Operations Team & Upskilling for AI.** Leading teams of IT operations staff, ensuring they are skilled in using AIOps tools and adapting to AI-driven workflows.

08 **Incident Management & Escalation (AI-informed).** Overseeing the incident management process, where AI often handles initial triage and provides rich diagnostic data for escalated issues.

09 **Cybersecurity Operations Support (in collaboration with SecOps).** Using AIOps insights to detect anomalous behavior that might indicate security incidents.

10 **Cloud Operations Management & Cost Optimization.** Employing AI tools to monitor and optimize the performance and cost of cloud-based infrastructure and services.

11 **Developing and Refining Automation Playbooks.** Creating and maintaining automated response procedures (playbooks) that AI systems can execute for common incidents.

12 **Data Governance for Operational Data.** Ensuring the quality, security, and appropriate use of the vast amounts of operational data collected and analyzed by AIOps platforms.

13 **Vendor Management for AIOps & Monitoring Tools.** Evaluating, selecting, and managing relationships with vendors providing critical AI-powered operational tools.

14 **Change Management for IT Infrastructure.** Using AI insights to assess the potential impact of changes and to monitor systems post-implementation.

15 **Reporting on IT Operational Performance to Leadership.** Using AI-generated analytics and dashboards to report on system health, incident trends, and operational efficiency to senior management.

§ 04 CAUSES 10 DRIVERS

What is pushing this change

01 **Extreme Complexity of Modern IT Environments (Hybrid, Multi-Cloud).** Human teams cannot manually monitor and manage the intricacies of today's distributed IT landscapes; AI is essential.

02 **Massive Volume & Velocity of IT Operational Data (Logs, Metrics, Traces).** AI is needed to ingest, correlate, and analyze the terabytes of data generated by IT systems to find meaningful signals.

03 **Need for Proactive, Predictive IT Operations (Zero Downtime Goals).** AIOps aims to identify and fix issues before they impact users, moving IT from reactive to predictive.

04 **Demand for Faster Incident Resolution (MTTR Reduction).** AI can quickly pinpoint root causes and automate initial remediation steps, significantly speeding up incident recovery.

05 **Advancements in AI/ML for Anomaly Detection & Pattern Recognition.** Sophisticated algorithms can detect subtle anomalies and patterns in operational data that humans would miss.

06 **Availability of Mature AIOps Platforms & Tools.** A growing market of vendors offers comprehensive AIOps solutions that integrate various monitoring and automation capabilities.

07 **Shortage of Skilled IT Operations Personnel (AI as a Force Multiplier).** AI can automate many routine tasks and provide intelligent assistance, allowing smaller teams to manage larger, more complex environments.

08 **Pressure to Reduce IT Operational Costs & Improve Efficiency.** Automating IT operations and preventing outages through AI leads to significant cost savings and improved resource utilization.

09 **Increased Cybersecurity Threats Requiring Intelligent Monitoring.** AIOps can detect unusual system behavior that might indicate a security breach or an active attack.

10 **Business Demand for High Availability & Reliability of Digital Services.** As businesses become more digital, the reliability and performance of underlying IT systems are critical, driving AIOps adoption.

§ 05 VARIATION 5 SECTORS

Impact by sector

The headline figure is an average. Where you work changes the picture.

Data Center Operations Managers	AI for monitoring physical infrastructure (power, cooling), server performance, storage capacity, and automating routine data center tasks.
Cloud Operations Managers (CloudOps)	Heavy use of AIOps for monitoring cloud resource utilization, optimizing cloud spend, managing auto-scaling, and ensuring cloud service availability.
Network Operations Center (NOC) Managers	AI for network traffic analysis, predicting network congestion or failures, automating responses to network alerts, and security monitoring.
IT Operations in Large Financial Institutions	AIOps for ensuring high availability and compliance of critical financial systems, fraud detection (operational), and managing complex transaction processing infrastructure.
IT Operations in E-commerce & Online Services	AIOps crucial for managing high-traffic websites and applications, ensuring uptime, scaling infrastructure dynamically, and responding rapidly to performance issues.

§ 06 PREPARATION 8 SKILLS

Skills to build

The skills that keep the human part of this work valuable as the routine part is automated.

01 **Deep Understanding of IT Infrastructure & Operations.** Expertise in servers, networks, storage, databases, cloud services, and how they interoperate.

02 **Proficiency with AIOps Platforms & Monitoring Tools.** Ability to select, implement, configure, and effectively use AIOps tools to monitor systems and automate responses.

03 **Data Analysis & Interpretation of Operational Metrics.** Skill in analyzing dashboards, alerts, and reports generated by AIOps tools to understand system health and identify trends.

04 **Automation & Scripting Skills (e.g., Python, Ansible).** Ability to develop and maintain automation scripts or playbooks that AIOps systems can execute for remediation or routine tasks.

05 **Incident Management & Root Cause Analysis (AI-assisted).** Leading the response to major IT incidents, using AI-driven insights for faster RCA, and implementing preventative measures.

06 **Leadership & Management of Technical Teams.** Guiding and developing teams of operations engineers and analysts working in an AI-augmented environment.

07 **Cloud Computing Expertise (AWS, Azure, GCP).** Strong knowledge of cloud platforms and their operational management tools, including AI-driven optimization features.

08 **Problem-Solving in Complex, Distributed Systems.** Diagnosing and resolving issues in intricate IT environments where problems can have multiple, interconnected causes, often with AI assistance.

§ 07 INSTRUMENTS 11 ENTRIES

Tools in use

KINDS OF TOOL WORTH KNOWING

01 **AIOps Platforms (Comprehensive Monitoring & Automation).** Solutions that ingest and analyze data from all IT domains to provide holistic visibility, predictive insights, and automated remediation.

02 **Log Management & Analytics Tools with AI.** Platforms that use AI/ML to parse, index, and analyze massive volumes of log data to detect patterns, anomalies, and security threats.

03 **Infrastructure Monitoring Tools with AI Anomaly Detection.** Tools that monitor servers, networks, applications, and storage, using AI to identify unusual behavior or predict potential failures.

04 **Automation & Orchestration Tools (e.g., Ansible, Terraform with AI insights).** Software for automating infrastructure provisioning, configuration management, and application deployment, with AI potentially optimizing these processes.

05 **Cloud Provider Native AI Operations Tools.** Services offered by AWS (e.g., CloudWatch Anomaly Detection, DevOps Guru), Azure (Monitor, Log Analytics with AI), and GCP (Operations Suite) for AI-driven monitoring and management.

06 **IT Process Automation (ITPA) / Robotic Process Automation (RPA) for Ops.** Tools used to automate repetitive IT operational tasks, such as system checks, user provisioning, or basic incident response steps.

NAMED TOOLS ALREADY IN USE

Dynatrace / Datadog / Splunk IT Service Intelligence (ITSI)
Leading observability and AIOps platforms that provide comprehensive monitoring, AI-powered root cause analysis, and automation capabilities.

Elastic Stack (with X-Pack ML) / Sumo Logic / LogRhythm (for SIEM & logs)
Platforms for centralized log management and analysis, leveraging machine learning for anomaly detection, security analytics, and operational insights.

ScienceLogic SL1 / LogicMonitor / New Relic One
Hybrid IT infrastructure monitoring platforms that use AI to detect anomalies, predict issues, and provide context for troubleshooting.

Ansible (potentially with AI-driven playbook suggestions) / HashiCorp Terraform
Widely used automation tools for infrastructure as code and configuration management; AI is an emerging area for optimizing their use.

AWS DevOps Guru / Azure Monitor (with AI insights)
Cloud-native services that use machine learning to automatically detect operational issues, recommend actions, and improve application availability.

§ 08 EXAMPLES 5 EXAMPLES

In practice

Ways people in this role are already using AI, and what they get from it.

Implement an AIOps Platform for Predictive Outage Detection

EXAMPLE 1

HOW — Deploy and configure an AIOps tool that analyzes telemetry from your servers, network, and applications to predict potential failures or performance bottlenecks before they impact users.

GAIN — Reduces system downtime, improves service reliability, minimizes business impact from outages, and shifts the team to proactive management.

Automate Root Cause Analysis for Critical Incidents

EXAMPLE 2

HOW — When a major incident occurs, use AIOps capabilities to automatically correlate alerts, analyze logs from multiple systems, and identify the most probable root cause, significantly reducing MTTR.

GAIN — Drastically speeds up incident resolution, reduces the need for manual log sifting, and allows IT staff to focus on permanent fixes.

Use AI to Optimize Cloud Resource Utilization & Costs

EXAMPLE 3

HOW — Employ AI tools from your cloud provider or third-party vendors to continuously monitor cloud resource usage and receive recommendations for right-sizing instances, deleting unused resources, or leveraging reserved capacity.

GAIN — Lowers cloud computing costs, prevents over-provisioning, and ensures efficient use of expensive cloud resources.

Develop AI-Driven Automation Playbooks for Common Issues

EXAMPLE 4

HOW — Identify recurring IT operational issues (e.g., full disk space, application restarts) and create automated scripts or workflows that AIOps tools can trigger to resolve them without human intervention.

GAIN — Increases operational efficiency, reduces manual toil for the IT team, ensures consistent resolution of common problems, and frees up staff for more complex work.

Leverage AI for Capacity Planning & Forecasting

EXAMPLE 5

HOW — Utilize AI/ML models within your AIOps platform to analyze historical usage trends and forecast future demand for compute, storage, and network resources, enabling more accurate capacity planning.

GAIN — Prevents performance degradation due to insufficient capacity, optimizes IT infrastructure investments, and ensures systems can scale to meet business needs.

§ 09 CONTEXT

How this role compares

Three neighbouring roles chosen to show the direction of travel.

Basic System Monitoring Operators (L1 NOC/SOC Analysts - alert review)

MORE EXPOSED

AI IMPACT — Very High (AIOps platforms can automate alert correlation, noise reduction, and initial triage of common operational alerts)

WORK MOVES TO — Significant role shift to managing AIOps tools, investigating AI-escalated complex alerts, developing automation playbooks, or specializing.

AIOps Platform Engineers / SREs specializing in Observability

DIFFERENT SKILLS, GROWING

AI IMPACT — Foundational (They design, build, implement, and tune the AIOps platforms and observability stacks that operations teams use)

WORK MOVES TO — Deep skills in AI/ML for IT data, distributed systems, automation scripting, data engineering for telemetry, and SRE principles.

IT Governance & Risk Managers (Strategic Policy Focus)

COMPLEMENTARY, LESS EXPOSED

AI IMPACT — Moderate Augmentation (Use AIOps data for risk assessment and compliance reporting), but core focus is on defining IT policies, risk frameworks, and ensuring regulatory adherence, which is human-led.

WORK MOVES TO — Expertise in IT governance frameworks (COBIT, ITIL), risk assessment methodologies, regulatory compliance, and strategic policy development.

§ 10 VERDICT

Closing judgement

> For IT Operations Managers, AI is not just a tool but a fundamental shift in how IT services are delivered and maintained. Mastering AIOps, leading teams in an AI-augmented environment, and focusing on proactive, data-driven optimization are critical for ensuring resilient, efficient, and high-performing IT operations.

§ 11 BASIS REVISED 5 OCTOBER 2026

Evidence and revisions

What the exposure figure rests on, what changed when it was last revised, and the published work cited for this role.

SCORE

50 to 49

WINDOW

2-5 years (unchanged)

The 5 October 2026 review moved the score down by 1 points.

Exposure Index v2. Inputs: task applicability 30/100 (Microsoft AI applicability score 0.15 for Computer and information systems managers); observed usage 21/100 (Anthropic observed exposure 0.16); official exposure tier 100/100 (BLS: very high); labour-market trajectory 10/100 (BLS projects employment to grow 15.8% over 2025–35); published adoption rating 85/100 (very high adoption). Weighted base 48.6. Final score 49. The previous figure of 50 was lowered by 1 point, a small change that comes from moving off scores rounded to the nearest five. The change window is unchanged.

HOW THE FIGURE IS BUILT (EXPOSURE INDEX V2)

Task applicability — Microsoft Research, AI applicability score	30 × 35%	10.6
Observed usage — Anthropic Economic Index, observed exposure	21 × 20%	4.2
Official exposure tier — US BLS AI-exposure category	100 × 20%	20.0
Labour-market trajectory — US BLS projected employment change 2025–35	11 × 10%	1.1
Published adoption rating — This report's adoption level	85 × 15%	12.8
Weighted base		48.6
Exposure score		49

MEASURES BEHIND THE SCORE

US Bureau of Labor Statistics · *Employment Projections 2025–35 and AI Exposure Categories* (27 August 2026)

AI-exposure tier: Very high. Projected employment change 2025–35: +15.8%. Matched to Computer and information systems managers.

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Microsoft Research · *Working with AI: Measuring the Applicability of Generative AI to Occupations* (10 July 2025)

AI applicability score 0.15 (percentile 53 of 785 occupations) for SOC 11-3021.

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Anthropic · *Anthropic Economic Index report: Cadences* (26 June 2026)

Observed exposure 0.16 for SOC 11-3021 (percentile 81 of 756 occupations).

PUBLISHER PDF

UK Department for Science, Innovation and Technology · *Assessment of AI capabilities and the impact on the UK labour market* (28 January 2026)

UK context: around 70% of UK workers are in occupations with tasks AI could perform or enhance, above the US average; a one-standard-deviation rise in exposure was associated with a 3.9% fall in UK job postings.

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ALSO CITED FOR THIS ROLE

Microsoft · *2026 Work Trend Index Annual Report: Agents, human agency and the opportunity for every organization* (5 May 2026)

Microsoft's 2026 Work Trend Index documents the shift toward managing agents alongside people; leadership roles change in content more than in headcount.

PUBLISHER PDF

PwC · *2026 Global AI Jobs Barometer* (May 2026)

PwC finds AI-exposed sectors recording 34% productivity growth since 2018 against 24% for the least exposed; managerial roles capture the gains where they redesign work.

PUBLISHER PDF

Archived copies are served only where the licence permits; otherwise the link goes to the publisher. Full research library: https://www.careerguard.ai/sources

§ 12 APPENDIX

Method and sources

Each report was written from a large body of published research. The exposure score itself is computed, not written: it is the CareerGuard Exposure Index, a weighted average of occupation-level measures from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (AI-exposure classification and 2025–35 projections), Microsoft Research (AI applicability scores) and Anthropic (observed exposure), together with the adoption rating published on the report. The organisations and publications below are the standing literature behind the narrative sections. Every source, with dates, licences and archived copies where we are permitted to hold them, is catalogued in the research library.

Exposure Index v2 (October 2026). Each input is scaled to 0–100 and weighted: task applicability 35% (Microsoft AI applicability score ÷ 0.5), observed usage 20% (Anthropic observed exposure ÷ 0.75), official exposure tier 20% (BLS very high = 100, high = 70, moderate = 40, low = 10), labour-market trajectory 10% (50 2.5 × projected % employment change), published adoption rating 15% (very high = 85, high = 70, medium-high = 55, medium = 40, low-medium = 25, low = 10). Inputs not measured for an occupation are dropped and the remaining weights renormalised. An editorial adjustment of at most ±12 points is allowed only for automation channels the measures cannot see (robotics, self-service, machine vision, medical imaging, RPA/OCR, generative video) and is always logged with its reason. Scores are whole numbers, not rounded to five. The change window shifts one notch (a year at each end) per ten points of movement.

I GLOBAL AND MACROECONOMIC IMPACT OF AI ON WORK

World Economic Forum

The Future of Jobs Report series — Employer survey of expected job growth and decline, skill shifts and technology adoption (2020, 2023 and 2025 editions); Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Entry-Level Work (2026).
AI governance and transformation reports — Frameworks on ethical AI, talent strategy and industry transformation.

McKinsey Global Institute

AI, Automation and the Future of Work series — Research quantifying automation potential by task, sector and demographic, from "Jobs Lost, Jobs Gained" to "Agents, robots, and us" (2025).
Industry-specific reports — Financial services, healthcare, manufacturing and others.

PwC

Global AI Jobs Barometer — Annual analysis of job postings and productivity by AI exposure (2024–2026 editions).
Upskilling Hopes and Fears survey — Employee perceptions and readiness.

Microsoft Research and Anthropic

Working with AI (2025); Anthropic Economic Index (2025–2026) — Occupation-level usage data from Copilot and Claude conversations, the two observed-usage measures behind the 2026 revision.

Stanford Digital Economy Lab and Stanford HAI

Canaries in the Coal Mine? (2025–2026); AI Index Report (annual) — Payroll evidence on early-career employment in exposed occupations; annual measurement of AI capability, investment and adoption.

Deloitte

Human Capital Trends series — Workforce, talent and HR technology trends.
Tech Trends series — Emerging technologies and their business implications.

Accenture

Technology Vision series — Forward-looking analysis of emerging technology, with emphasis on AI.
Fjord Trends — Design, innovation and human experience in a digital world.

Boston Consulting Group

AI/ML insights and industry solutions — "The AI Revolution in the Workplace" and related research.

EY

AI and workforce reports — Adoption, talent strategy and ethics.

IBM Institute for Business Value

AI and automation studies — Business models, workforce evolution and leadership.

OECD

AI Policy Observatory — International data and policy on AI, labour markets and skills.
Employment Outlook — Labour-market trends including technological impact (2023–2026 editions).

International Labour Organization

Generative AI and Jobs: A Refined Global Index of Occupational Exposure (2025) — Task-level exposure gradients for every ISCO occupation; successor to the 2023 global index.

International Monetary Fund
Staff Discussion Notes on AI and work (2024, 2026) — Complementarity framing: where AI augments and where it substitutes.

UK Department for Science, Innovation and Technology
Assessment of AI capabilities and the impact on the UK labour market (2026) — UK occupational exposure and job-posting evidence.

Brookings Institution
AI and automation research — Economic and social implications, displacement and skills.

Yale Budget Lab and Goldman Sachs Research
Tracking the Impact of AI on the Labor Market; AI and the US labour market (2026) — Aggregate labour-market monitoring; macro displacement estimates.

Oxford University (Oxford Martin School)
The Future of Employment — Frey & Osborne and subsequent research on susceptibility to automation.

MIT Technology Review
AI & Work — Reporting on AI research and its implications for industries and jobs.

Gartner
Hype Cycle for Artificial Intelligence — Maturity and adoption of AI technologies.
Future of Work reports — Workplace models and talent strategy.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Employment Projections 2025–35; AI Exposure Categories; Occupational Outlook Handbook — Ten-year employment projections and, from the 2025 cycle, an AI-exposure tier for every detailed occupation.

Indeed Hiring Lab
AI at Work Report (2025) and posting-market updates — Skill-level transformation estimates and job-posting trends by occupation.

II CORE AI AND MACHINE-LEARNING RESEARCH

OpenAI
Research papers, blog and API documentation — Large language models, generative AI, safety and societal impact.

Google DeepMind
Research papers and blog — Reinforcement learning, AI for science, AGI and ethics.

Meta AI
Research papers and blog — Large language models, computer vision, AI for social good.

Hugging Face
Transformers library and model hub — Open-source state-of-the-art NLP models.

TensorFlow and PyTorch
Documentation and community forums — Core frameworks illustrating practical capability.

arXiv
cs.AI, cs.LG, cs.CV, cs.CL — Pre-print research.

NeurIPS and ICML
Conference proceedings — Top-tier academic research.

ACM and IEEE
Journals and proceedings — ACM Computing Surveys; IEEE Transactions on AI.

Kaggle
Datasets and competition solutions — Applied machine learning on real-world problems.

The Alan Turing Institute
Research and reports — Responsible and applied AI.

III ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE AI DEPLOYMENT

NIST
AI Risk Management Framework — Voluntary framework for managing AI risk.

European Commission
AI Act — Risk-tiered legal framework for AI.
Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy AI — Principles for responsible development.

Partnership on AI
Research and best practice — Responsible AI development.

AI Now Institute
Annual reports — Social implications: power, inequality, rights.

ACM FAccT
Proceedings — Fairness, accountability and transparency.

Data & Society
Publications — Social implications of data-centric technology.

WIPO
Conversation on IP and AI — Intellectual-property implications of AI.

IEEE Global Initiative on Ethics of A/IS
Ethically Aligned Design — Recommendations for ethical AI design.

Center for AI and Digital Policy
Policy briefs — Accountable AI policy.