



NUCLEUS
RESEARCH

| Hot Companies to Watch in 2026

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The Bottom Line

Nucleus has identified 11 companies poised to stand out in 2026, recognizing them for meaningful product innovation and measurable impact across their industries. This year's list includes both rising disruptors reshaping key markets and established leaders pushing the boundaries to retain their competitive edge. Each organization was reviewed for its long-term positioning, execution strength, and ability to drive strategic outcomes. Named as 2026's "Hot Companies," these firms are primed for continued momentum, delivering tangible value to customers and expanding their market opportunities.

Overview

Nucleus selected 11 companies that are poised to maintain or propel market performance into 2026 and beyond. The list includes established leaders and new contenders, all of which are assessed on their ability to deliver solutions that drive value for customers.

Alta

Alta is emerging as one of the most disruptive vendors in the revenue technology market, distinguished by its focus on building an autonomous AI Revenue Workforce that executes the day-to-day tasks traditionally handled by SDRs and RevOps teams. Rather than offering another layer of sales productivity tooling, Alta delivers fully autonomous agents capable of outbound prospecting, inbound qualification, CRM hygiene, and ongoing pipeline maintenance. These agents integrate directly with an organization's existing systems to complete work end-to-end, completing tasks such as researching accounts, updating CRM fields, routing leads, and maintaining data quality without manual intervention. This agentic foundation positions Alta as a value-driven alternative for organizations seeking to expand capacity without increasing headcount, addressing one of the most persistent operational constraints in modern revenue organizations.

Alta's credibility is reinforced by strong early funding and a leadership team oriented toward rapid innovation. This momentum enables an accelerated roadmap focused on deeper workflow automation, cross-system execution, and broader go-to-market expansion. With the rise of agentic AI across CRM, sales intelligence, and RevOps, Alta is strategically positioned as a specialized provider that can evolve faster than legacy platforms encumbered by older architectures. This combination of a distinctive category vision, demonstrable operational impact, and early market traction makes Alta a compelling contender for organizations reevaluating how to scale revenue operations in 2026.

Atlan

In 2026, AI is moving from experimentation to production, and organizations are discovering that their biggest bottleneck is not compute or models but data context and trust. As enterprises deploy AI agents and LLM applications, the risk of hallucinations, compliance violations, and business decisions based on stale or misunderstood data is rising sharply. Traditional data catalogs that treat metadata as a separate system fail to keep pace with modern data stacks and AI workflows. This has led organizations to prioritize active metadata

Alta delivers AI agents capable of handling outbound prospecting, inbound qualification, CRM hygiene, and pipeline maintenance, allowing revenue teams to scale without adding headcount.

platforms that embed governance directly into data pipelines and provide real-time context to both human users and AI systems without introducing new silos or requiring teams to change tools.

Atlan differentiates its technology through its active metadata approach, which automatically captures lineage, usage, and quality signals across the modern data stack and surfaces them where users work rather than forcing them into a separate catalog UI. Atlan's recent momentum includes expanding its embedded collaboration capabilities and launching AI-specific governance modules that track prompt-to-output lineage for LLM applications. As regulatory pressure around AI transparency intensifies and enterprises demand provable data lineage for audit and compliance, Nucleus expects Atlan to gain additional momentum especially among regulated industries and organizations prioritizing governance-first AI architectures throughout 2026.

As AI moves to production, Atlan replaces passive catalogs with active metadata, providing the embedded trust layer needed to ground LLMs and prevent hallucinations.

Crusoe

Crusoe is transforming AI infrastructure by solving the industry's most pressing challenge, the massive energy requirements of AI compute. Through its innovative Digital Flare Mitigation technology, Crusoe captures stranded natural gas and combines it with renewable energy sources including wind, solar, and hydroelectric power to deliver GPU compute at significantly lower energy costs than traditional hyperscalers. The company's strategic focus on AI infrastructure positions it as a central player in OpenAI's Stargate project and has attracted partnerships with Oracle, Google, and NVIDIA. Crusoe is developing a groundbreaking hyperscale campus in Abilene, Texas (among the largest AI facilities in North America) with construction progressing at record speed. The company's vertically integrated model, combining direct access to underutilized energy resources with ownership of compute infrastructure, creates sustainable competitive advantages that pure-play cloud providers cannot replicate. As demand for AI training and inference compute continues to skyrocket, Crusoe's ability to deliver both cost advantages and environmental benefits positions it as a critical enabler of sustainable, high-performance AI infrastructure.

FourKites

FourKites has spent the past decade establishing itself as a major provider of real-time transportation visibility, but the market has reached a point where basic visibility is now viewed as standard functionality across many supply chain platforms. As a result, the vendor

has shifted its focus toward actionable decision support with the launch of its intelligent control tower. FourKites is using the data it has accumulated over many years to build digital twins for inventory, shipments, orders, assets, and facilities. These models give organizations a way to test scenarios, understand downstream impacts, and evaluate potential actions before disruptions escalate. This shift aligns with the broader pressure companies face from changing trade policies, supplier volatility, and the rise of nearshoring, where the ability to adjust plans quickly has become as important as knowing where goods are in transit.

A central part of this strategy is FourKites' investment in AI agents that automate tasks such as track and trace, carrier and partner collaboration, scheduling, document handling, and customer service inquiries. The broader market has also started to shift, with several visibility vendors expanding into adjacent supply chain functions as part of their long-term strategy. Based on its data foundation, product direction, and focus on decision support rather than passive visibility, Nucleus views FourKites as a vendor to watch as organizations look for more practical ways to apply AI and digital twin technology to everyday supply chain operations.

Gloat

Gloat is a workforce intelligence platform that uses AI to support internal talent mobility and skills-based workforce planning, with a focus on improving talent retention and utilization. The platform's underlying Workforce Graph and Skills Foundation aggregate data from core HR and adjacent systems to create a unified view of employee capabilities, skill adjacencies, and internal career options at scale. This structure enables organizations to identify internal candidates for open roles, model redeployment scenarios, and prioritize upskilling and reskilling initiatives based on current and projected skill needs rather than static job descriptions. Embedded analytics surface recommendations for internal moves and development paths, helping reduce reliance on external hiring while offering employees clearer visibility into potential career pathways. As organizations enter 2026 facing tight labor markets, rising hiring costs, and continued pressure to do more with existing headcount, Gloat's role in enabling data-driven talent allocation, workforce optimization, and skills-based planning makes it a company to watch for enterprises prioritizing resilience and cost-efficient talent management.

Gloat, a workforce graph-driven AI platform, turns HR data into a live skills marketplace, enabling enterprises to redeploy internal talent faster and reduce reliance on external hiring.

Google Cloud

In 2026, organizations are increasingly unifying cloud data platforms to consolidate analytics stacks and reduce complexity. While best-of-breed solutions offer specialization, the operational overhead and cost of integrating multiple vendors has organizations reconsidering consolidated strategies. At the same time, generative AI capabilities are moving beyond prototypes into production, requiring platforms that embed AI directly into data infrastructure rather than bolting it on as a separate layer. Google Cloud's unified solution set spanning BigQuery, Looker, and Vertex AI, combined with native Gemini integration, positions it to capture this momentum by functioning as a single platform designed for consolidated analytics. This approach accelerates enterprise adoption by embedding generative capabilities directly into data workflows, enabling natural language query generation, automated code generation, and faster model development cycles without the need for separate API orchestration or third-party connectors that introduce friction. By delivered a consolidated analytics stack with BigQuery, Vertex AI, Looker and Gemini, the platform offers a unique value proposition that allows organizations to improve data team productivity and significantly reduce costs by consolidating tools rather than maintaining separate vendor solutions.

In Nucleus research with Google Cloud customers, organizations improved data team productivity and reduced ML model delivery timelines by consolidating tools rather than maintaining separate vendor solutions.

Monte Carlo

As AI systems autonomously retrieve information, generate responses, and take actions on behalf of users, the risk of data quality issues manifesting as AI hallucinations, incorrect recommendations, or compliance violations is accelerating. Traditional data observability tools monitor inputs but go blind once data enters AI models, creating a critical gap between data health and AI output reliability. Monte Carlo Data has unified observability across both data and AI within a single platform through its Agent Observability capability launched in September 2025. Monte Carlo's recent momentum includes launching observability agents that autonomously investigate root causes across hundreds of sub-agents, expanding native monitoring for unstructured data across Snowflake, Databricks, and BigQuery, and establishing a comprehensive reliability loop for production AI systems. As enterprises further prioritize AI reliability and regulators increase scrutiny of AI decision-making in enterprise and production applications, Nucleus expects Monte Carlo to gain further momentum.

Rillet

Rillet has emerged as a vendor worth watching because it is one of the few ERP startups building core accounting processes on an AI native architecture. Rather than retrofitting automation into older workflows, the system is designed so that activities like journal entry creation, reconciliation, and close tasks are automated by default. The company has raised both Series A and Series B funding, which reflects steady traction in the market and continued interest from organizations that want to modernize finance operations without taking on the overhead of a traditional ERP deployment. Rillet supports a wide mix of customers from early-stage companies to mid-market organizations and professional services firms, largely because the product focuses on the areas where teams tend to spend the most time: general ledger, AR, AP, revenue recognition, and multi-entity accounting.

Rillet is gaining attention in the ERP market for its AI native approach to core accounting processes, reducing manual financial work at the source rather than layering automation on top.

Customers using Rillet report that the platform cuts down on routine manual work and shortens close cycles by reducing the number of touchpoints needed each period. The Aura AI assistant plays a central role here since it surfaces exceptions, highlights unusual entries, and guides users through remaining tasks. The interest in zero-day or continuous close capabilities has grown across the ERP market, and Rillet's design directly aligns with that shift. Based on current adoption patterns and the early outcomes reported by customers, Nucleus views Rillet as a vendor that is addressing a clear gap for organizations that want measurable efficiency gains in finance without adding more administrative overhead.

Una

Una Software is a financial planning and analysis platform that integrates financial, revenue, and operational data, enabling CFOs to directly link go-to-market execution to financial outcomes. Where Una distinguishes itself is in its architectural approach to embedding business intelligence and anomaly detection natively into planning workflows, rather than requiring separate connector logic or external BI tools. While competitors offer ERP AND HRIS integrations, they primarily use these connections to feed inputs into financial models. In contrast, Una positions integrated revenue data (pipeline, bookings, and churn) as central to the planning engine itself, ensuring that regular planning and forecasting cycles are grounded in actual operational reality rather than static assumptions. Una's focus on leveraging revenue data within the planning architecture represents a meaningful tactical positioning within the broader FP&A market.

Vetty

Vetty offers a unified screening and onboarding platform with three main solutions: VettyVerify, VettyOnboard, and VettyComply. VettyVerify enables employers to quickly run background checks, with visibility into status, timelines, and real-time updates. VettyOnboard offers the ability to customize onboarding workflows, supporting both standard and custom onboarding documents. Finally, VettyVerify offers continuous monitoring across various databases, including criminal records, motor vehicle records and healthcare sanctions. The vendor's mobile-first experience makes it easy for candidates to upload IDs, documents, and other required screening materials at any time. Meanwhile, running background checks or sending out onboarding documents can be completed with just a few clicks. Additionally, by pulling employee data directly from IDs, manual data entry errors can be eliminated entirely.

Vetty pulls employee data directly from IDs, which eliminates the time and errors associated with manual data entry.

The hype in the HCM market typically doesn't focus on compliance, but background checks and onboarding are notorious bottlenecks for many organizations, especially when deployed standalone or poorly integrated. Vetty's industry expertise, ease of use for employers and candidates, and keen focus on maintaining compliance at scale have the ability to drive substantial efficiency gains for organizations while also providing the visibility and assurance needed to mitigate risk.

Zip

Zip has emerged as the defining player in procurement orchestration, addressing the growing complexity of enterprise spend management as purchasing becomes increasingly distributed and risk oversight extends across functions. The platform unifies intake, sourcing, vendor management, purchase orders, and global payments into a single ecosystem, providing unprecedented transparency and control while dramatically reducing cycle times. Zip serves leading enterprises including HP, AMD, Anthropic, Snowflake, and OpenAI, helping organizations streamline procurement operations and achieve significant operational improvements. Zip's recent innovations including the AI Suite, AI Assistant, and AI-powered invoice coding position it at the forefront of agentic procurement, while its expansion into EMEA signals global ambitions. As enterprises prioritize spend visibility, risk management, and operational efficiency, Zip's orchestration-first approach addresses critical market needs that traditional spend management solutions often struggle to solve effectively, establishing procurement orchestration as the new standard for enterprise spend.