

THEIASM
INSTITUTE
CYBERSECURITY & AI ETHICS THINK TANK
WASHINGTON, DC

MEDIA KIT 2026

www.TheiaThinkTank.com
Washington, DC

Includes bios for:

*Dr. Todd A. Jacobs, Barak Engel,
Doug Shannon, Dr. Lisa Palmer and Q. Wade Billings*

OUR COMMITMENT TO A PRAGMATIC AND
UNBIASED APPROACH SETS US APART IN THE
REALM OF AI GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC POLICY.



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP: PIONEERING APPLIED AI GOVERNANCE VISIONS FOR A SECURE TOMORROW

Theia Institute is a non-profit AI governance, ethics & cybersecurity think tank based in Washington DC, dedicated to advancing policy and decision-making through rigorous research and comprehensive analysis. Our commitment to an ethical, balanced and unbiased approach sets us apart in the realm of business privacy, AI governance, and public policy.

From former government policy advisors, thought leaders and Silicon Valley innovators, our panel of experts offers unparalleled insights into the future of cybersecurity in the AI era. These seasoned professionals lend their expertise to identify business opportunities, current vulnerabilities, identifying robust solutions, and offer robust solutions in an effort to help guide strategic policy.



DR. TODD A. JACOBS, CISM CISSP MBA PHD

THOUGHT LEADER

Specializations include AI Governance, Cybersecurity, CIO Advisory, DevSecOps, Audit Remediation, and Digital Transformation.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/todd-a-jacobs/>
<https://www.theiathinktank.com/>
<https://app.qwoted.com/sources/todd-a-jacobs>

MEDIA BIO

As a Founding Member of the Theia Institute, a Washington DC based think tank, and Chief Information Technology Officer at CodeGnome, Dr. Jacobs specializes in IT audit remediation, strategic planning, and DevSecOps transformations for Fortune 500 firms and government agencies with a focus on cybersecurity, data privacy, and regulatory compliance.

An authority in governance, strategic tech and security, he tailors technology and security measures to help organizations around the globe.

Dr. Jacobs also offers insights to start-ups, executives, speaking engagements, and publications.

Recent media:

US Copyright Office Public Policy Comment: The rapid evolution of AI in software development brings forth not only technical challenges but also significant legal ambiguities, particularly concerning copyrights and distribution. AI-generated content...Link to full report: <https://tinyurl.com/upstotheia>

Using Generative AI while keeping your SDLC Secure | Theia Institute: A CyberSecurity Forum

FTC eyes competitive practices for genAI — concerns include data, talent and compute resources

NearshoreAmericas.com/Super Peso threatens nearshore vendors profits

Phishing & Generative AI | Theia Institute: A CyberSecurity Forum



A key figure on the panel is Dr. Todd A. Jacobs, Theia's Executive Director. Dr. Jacobs, with his multifaceted background, plays a pivotal role in steering Theia's strategic direction, bringing expertise in CIO advisory and DevOps transformations. His leadership roles extend to President Emeritus of Maryland Mensa. Author of "The Agile CIO" and a contributor to numerous IT-related publications, Dr. Jacobs combines his professional acumen with a passion for public speaking, frequently traveling for business and speaking engagements.

Dr. Jacobs' leadership and expertise, along with the collective wisdom of the Advisory Panel, are instrumental in guiding Theia's mission to shape the future of AI governance and cybersecurity.



DOUG SHANNON

THOUGHT LEADER

Specializations include Strategy, Innovation, Operations, Digital Transformation, RPA, AI, Startup Mentoring

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/doug-shannon>

<https://app.qwoted.com/sources/doug-shannon>

MEDIA BIO

Doug Shannon, listed as an [MSN Top 10 AI Leaders to follow in 2026](#), a Forbes Technology Council member and Global Intelligent Automation Leader, is a thought leader in the realm of intelligent automation, known for his strategic acumen in digital transformation and his ability to innovate and operationalize complex technologies.

As a panelist and contributor at Theia Institute, Doug's role as a mentor and public speaker further amplify his influence, make him a pivotal figure in shaping the future of intelligent automation and digital strategies.

With over two decades of experience in advanced technology, Doug currently spearheads initiatives in the clinical research organization sector. His expertise spans both IT and Automation roles, reflecting a deep understanding of the dynamic interplay between technology and business processes.

Doug's professional journey includes significant tenures such as Cisco and Chevron. His roles in these organizations have honed his skills in intelligent automation, contributing to his reputation as a leader in the field.

Public Speaking and Community Involvement: Gartner Peer Community Ambassador: As an ambassador, Doug engages with a network of peers, sharing insights and contributing to the discourse on intelligent automation.

Council Member: His role in the VOCAL council and The Theia Institute, an AI governance & cybersecurity think tank, underlines his commitment to advancing the field through collaborative efforts and thought leadership.



Thought Leadership: Recognized as a [MSN Top 10 AI Leaders to follow in 2026](#) and Thought Leader in Digital Transformation, Doug has influenced the discourse in intelligent automation, offering groundbreaking perspectives and innovative solutions.

Global Recognition: Earned a spot among the top 50 Intelligent Automation leaders worldwide, a testament to his strategic vision and impactful contributions.

Innovative Automation Solutions: Pioneered the development of Self-Healing and Resilient Automation and Bot Processes, setting new benchmarks in the industry.



BARAK ENGEL

THOUGHT LEADER

Veteran Silicon Valley insider, vCISO, Tech Pioneer, best selling author and visionary, with a proven track record executing and driving change in Silicon Valley

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/barak-engel>
<https://www.barakengel.com/>
<https://app.qwoted.com/sources/barak-engel>

MEDIA BIO

Barak Engel is an Amazon best-selling author and well-known and respected longtime Silicon Valley insider, bringing his unique, people-centric approach to cyber security.

As a distinguished technology, operations, and business leader with over 30 years of expertise, Barak serves a pivotal role at Theia Institute. Renowned for pioneering the virtual Chief Information Security Officer (vCISO) concept, he stands as the first vCISO, with his enterprise, EAmnue, being recognized as the world's oldest vCISO services firm. Engel's profound impact on information security is further highlighted by his authorship of influential books such as "Why CISOs Fail" (his book was nominated and accepted into the Cybergannon in 2021.) and "The Security Hippie" (2022).

At Theia Institute, Barak leverages his extensive background, which includes a prior role as Head of Security for Webex fresh off its IPO and growing rapidly and globally long before its acquisition by Cisco.. He has been instrumental in establishing, leading, and bolstering security frameworks across a diverse array of organizations in various industries, including MuleSoft, Livenation/Ticketmaster, Amplitude Analytics, StubHub, Barnes and Noble, BetterUp, and bebe Stores. Beyond his direct operational contributions, Barak offers strategic governance and insightful expertise on technology, risk, product, and market trends as a board member and advisor to numerous entities. His multifaceted experience and visionary approach make him an invaluable asset to Theia Institute, where he continues to drive innovation and excellence in information security and technology governance.



Barak is a best-selling author, was CISO and Chief Privacy Officer for MuleSoft just prior to its \$6.5 billion acquisition by Salesforce, and has seen StubHub as its CISO through the company's \$4 billion acquisition by ViaGoGo and its massive digital transformation project. He helped to launch Think Security First!, for America's first cyber secure city (Walnut Creek, CA, population 64,000). Partners in the initiative include Microsoft, Cisco, McAfee, AT&T, and the Department of Homeland Security.



DR. LISA PALMER

THOUGHT LEADER

Doctorate in Artificial Intelligence (2023). Keynote speaker helping business leaders drive innovation and avoid risk in an AI-fueled world

<https://www.drlisa.ai>

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/palmerlisac/>

<https://app.qwoted.com/sources/dr-lisa-palmer>

MEDIA BIO

Dr. Lisa Palmer is a well known figure in the world of Artificial Intelligence, blending pragmatism with visionary insights. As the founder and Chief AI Strategist of Dr. Lisa AI, she leverages her profound knowledge in technology and research to navigate top-tier business leaders through the intricate landscape of Generative AI.

Dr. Lisa Palmer serves as a key advisor at The Theia Institute Think Tank, where she applies her extensive expertise in artificial intelligence to drive innovative strategies and forward-thinking discussions in the technology sector.

Dr. Lisa Palmer is an artificial intelligence business strategist who designs business models, processes, and services that align to the unique needs of board directors, executives, product leaders, and revenue professionals. One of the world's top AI experts, she challenges leaders to think differently, ensuring they stay ahead of trends and risks.

With a career punctuated by executive & advisory roles at technology powerhouses including Microsoft and Gartner, Splunk, and ConocoPhillips, multinational businesses, government organizations, Fortune 500 companies, and universities, Dr. Palmer stands out for her exceptional leadership and technological acumen.

Her educational journey includes an MBA and a recent doctorate in Artificial Intelligence (AI), further solidifying her expertise in the field.

Dr. Palmer is particularly revered for her ability to blend ethical AI practices with business strategies, making her a moral compass in the tech world.

Her commitment to ethical AI and the promotion of women in technology has made her a role model and a leading authority in the industry.



A dynamic and compelling speaker, Dr. Palmer excels in demystifying the intricacies of AI for diverse audiences, from industry experts to general enthusiasts. Her speeches not only illuminate the current landscape of AI but also offer practical insights into harnessing its potential for tangible business benefits.

Additionally, Lisa is an expert contributor to NBC, Fox News, Newsy, Global Finance, CIO, and Financial Times, among others.

Dr. Palmer's recent speaking engagements include The Cybersecurity CIO Forum, a critical examination of the risks and opportunities presented by custom GPTs on Large Language Models (LLMs) offering thought-provoking analyses and case studies that highlight the practical implications of AI advancements.



Q. WADE BILLINGS

THOUGHT LEADER

Infrastructure and Operations Professional,
DevOps/SRE & InfoSec Leader, Cultural Change Agent
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<https://app.qwoted.com/sources/q-wade-billings>

MEDIA BIO

Q. Wade Billings (Wade) has a passion that lies in designing, building, and delivering technology that positively impacts people's lives. Equally important to him, is the growth of individuals he's mentored, many of whom have blossomed into leaders, founders, and change-makers within their fields.

At Theia Institute, Wade leverages his extensive experience in technology and organizational culture to guide discussions on AI ethics and cybersecurity, influence public policy and contribute to the development of responsible AI practices. His background in mentoring and building resilient work cultures provide valuable insights into the ethical and societal implications of AI and technology in the evolving modern workplace.

An IT veteran, Wade has worked for giants like AT&T, Sprint, Intel, and Excite@Home. His entrepreneurial spirit led him to establish several successful ventures, collaborate with innovative founders, and play key roles in startups like Lowermybills.com, MediCity, Workfront, Instructure, Ambi, Honorlock, and BetterUp, where Prince Harry, The Duke of Sussex, is Chief Impact Officer.

Currently, Wade is dedicated to guiding leaders and organizations through the complex intersection of culture, technology, and security, leveraging his extensive background to provide insightful direction.

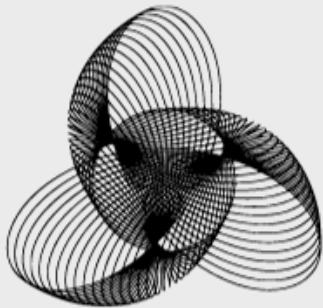
Recent Publications:

- On Why Culture Matters
- Canvas' Fourth Annual Open Security Audit
- Why AWS in Education: Transforming Education in the Cloud
- 5 characteristics of next-gen cloud technology
- Toxic Cultures; can they be predicted?



Q. Wade Billings' career is marked by a deep-seated passion for developing technology that has a meaningful impact on people's lives. His dedication is equally evident in his role as a mentor, where he has guided many individuals who have grown into influential leaders, founders, and innovators in their respective fields.

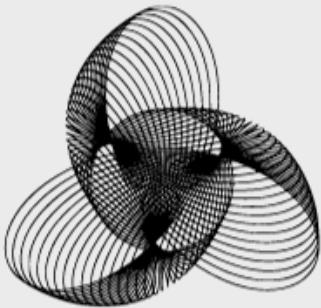
Billings' current focus involves a thorough exploration of modern work cultures, with a special emphasis on identifying and remedying toxic workplace environments. Through this research, he aims to publish his findings and establish a practice dedicated to helping organizations create, engineer, and sustain resilient and thriving cultures.



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Theia Institute's editorial board boasts experts in AI Ethics, Cybersecurity, and Risk Management, including **Dr. Todd A. Jacobs, Barak Engel, Doug Shannon, Wade Billings, Dr. Lisa Palmer, and Jim Desmond**.

The collective expertise of these individuals ensures that Theia Institute stays at the forefront of AI and cybersecurity research and policy advocacy. Their diverse backgrounds enable Theia to approach issues from multiple angles, ensuring well-rounded and effective solutions. The advisory panel's guidance is instrumental in fulfilling Theia's mission to educate and influence policy in the realms of AI and cybersecurity, positioning it as a leader in these critical and rapidly evolving fields.



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Theia Institute's advisory panel plays a crucial role in shaping its strategic direction and ensuring the effectiveness of its initiatives in AI and cybersecurity. The panel comprises a distinguished group of experts with extensive experience in AI Ethics, Cybersecurity, Governance, and Risk Management.

Dr. Todd A. Jacobs, Theia's Executive Director: Dr. Jacobs is a standout member, bringing his rich experience as President and Principal Consultant at CodeGnome Consulting, LTD., he is also an Amazon best-seller ranked published author and leader in Maryland Mensa. His background includes invaluable insights into CIO advisory and DevOps transformations. Dr. Jacobs balances his professional achievements with personal interests in gaming, fine dining, and movies. His leadership and expertise, alongside the Panel's diverse proficiency, fortify Theia's mission in shaping AI governance and cybersecurity.

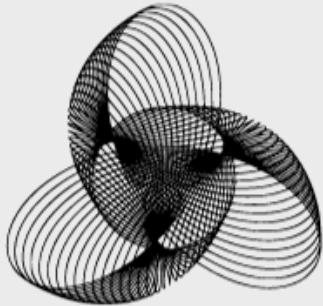
Barak Engel: As an expert in cybersecurity, Engel brings a wealth of knowledge in protecting digital assets and infrastructure. His insights are particularly valuable in developing strategies to mitigate cyber threats and in formulating policies that balance security with innovation.

Doug Shannon: Recognized by MSN, as a Top 10 AI leader in 2026, and a member of Forbes Technology Council. Specializing in Governance and Risk Management, Shannon's expertise is essential in guiding Theia on how to navigate the complex regulatory and ethical landscapes of AI and cybersecurity. His experience helps in crafting frameworks that ensure compliance while fostering technological advancement.

Wade Billings: With a background in advanced technology implementations, Billings contributes significantly to Theia's understanding of the practical aspects of cybersecurity. His experience in applying technology solutions in real-world scenarios is invaluable for Theia's research and educational programs.

Dr. Lisa Palmer: An expert in AI Ethics, Dr. Palmer's role is pivotal in ensuring that Theia's initiatives in AI are aligned with ethical standards and societal values. Her contribution is key in addressing the moral implications of AI and in advocating for responsible AI practices.

Jim Desmond: Desmond's expertise in both AI and cybersecurity provides a comprehensive perspective on the intersection of these fields. His knowledge aids in addressing the complex challenges that arise when deploying AI in cybersecurity contexts, ensuring that Theia's strategies are robust and forward-thinking.



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Theia Institute, a DC-based cybersecurity & AI governance think tank

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<https://linkedin.com/in/todd-a-jacobs/>
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