

Trust-Driven Growth in the Age of AI: Carolina Nucci Brings a Human-Centric Lens at Web Summit Rio

Rio de Janeiro, April 2025 – As AI continues to reshape how we interact, consume, and make decisions, a critical question emerges: Can we scale technology without sacrificing our humanity? For her third appearance at Web Summit Rio, Brazilian thought leader Carolina Nucci returns with a clear mission — not just to explore what technology can do, but to question what it should do.

“Technology without humanity is a growth illusion,” says Nucci.

With a non-linear career that spans journalism, engineering, marketing, and innovation, from corporates to startups, Nucci brings a rare combination of strategic clarity, human-centered leadership, and business pragmatism to one of the most urgent conversations in tech today.

Following her impactful 2024 talk “The Business Case for Kindness in Business”, Nucci expands the conversation this year from humanizing companies to humanizing technology itself. She joins three panels at Web Summit Rio 2025, including two that tackle the complex tension between automation, personalization, and authenticity in the age of AI.

In the first panel, *“Solving the Personalization Problem with AI”*, Nucci challenges the idea that personalization is about data precision. For her, it’s about emotional resonance and relevance.

“Hyperpersonalization can become noise when it’s not human-centered. People don’t want brands to know everything about them — they want brands to understand what really matters to them”.

She argues that the real challenge is not identifying the right person — it’s creating **interactions that feel human, meaningful and trustworthy**. She also questions the blind pursuit of optimization and instead calls for a more values-driven use of AI.

“AI is a powerful engine. But without human intention, it drives us in circles,” she says.

The second panel will be a good follow up to the first one. In the panel “Automation vs. Authenticity: How to Humanize Tech at Scale”, Nucci wants to explore the paradox between tech scale and real emotional connection. She argues that automation often confuses efficiency with connection:

“Personalization is not the same as emotional connection. Artificial empathy is still artificial – and people can tell the difference”. For her, the solution is not about taking tech out of the equation, but to use tech as a means to provide relevant experiences: ***“authenticity at scale starts by designing for emotional safety, not scripted emotion. It’s about worrying less with aesthetics and more with how we can build real trust with our customers”.***

In both panels, while many brands rush to optimize algorithms, Nucci wants to remind us that personalization is first and foremost a trust transaction. Without trust, even the most precise personalization can feel invasive or manipulative. It’s not enough to get the timing right — **emotional intelligence and context are now the real differentiators**. Nucci challenges companies to recognize that trust isn’t built once — it’s renewed at every interaction. What feels personalized today may feel intrusive tomorrow, if it doesn’t evolve with the user’s emotional context.

“Data gives you access. Trust gives you permission. The most powerful personalization doesn’t say: ‘We know you.’ It says: ‘You’re safe with us.’, says Nucci.

These ideas build on a global wave gaining traction since SXSW 2025, where the conversation around AI and humanity dominated headlines. During many panels, keynotes and discussions, experts are calling for a shift: a more ethical, emotionally intelligent approach to tech. Nucci’s participation at Web Summit Rio is part of this movement, reinforcing that innovation must be as human as it is intelligent.

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Carolina Nucci is a renowned expert in human-centric organizations and customer centricity. Passionate about inspiring people and organizations to succeed and grow without losing their humanity in the process. With almost 20 years experience driving human-centric businesses, from big corporates to startups, she brings a unique blend of marketing and business leadership, innovation, and human-centric business transformation. She also studied in relevant institutions like Unicamp, Stanford, Kellogg, USP and ESPM. Two years ago, Carolina left the corporate career to focus on her impact from “outside-in” as a thought leader, advisor for B2B growing companies, keynote speaker and professor in renowned executive programs at Startse, ESPM and PUC-RS.

Carolina is also a partner and director at Marketing de Gentileza, LinkedIn Top Voice, Web Summit Rio’s Women in Tech Program ambassador, co-author of two best-selling books on female leadership and empowerment (*Rise and Raise Others* and *Ensemble, from solo to Symphony*) and proud mother of Olivia.

Catch Carolina Nucci Live at Web Summit Rio

- **Panel: Automation vs. Authenticity: How to Humanize Tech at Scale**

→ April 28, 12:00pm – Community Stage. With Laura Sales (Plurie Br), Vanessa Poskus (Uppo), and Lisiane Lemos (State of Rio Grande do Sul).

- **Panel: Solving the Personalization Problem with AI**

→ April 28, 15:20pm – Marketing Summit. With Yash Reddy (MoEngage), Shelley Pursell (Hubspot)

- **Panel: Ensemble, from solo to symphony: The Feminine Manifest of Influence, Impact and growth.**

→ April 30, 11:30am – Creative Summit. With Maria Paula (actress and activist), and Maria Gal (TV actress and CEO of Move Maria).

Press Inquiries and Interview Requests

Nucci is available for interviews and commentary on themes such as customer-centricity, humanity-centric AI, innovation culture, and H2H humanized marketing and business strategy. She also wrote an exclusive white paper on trust-driven growth that is available to be published.

To connect or request an interview, contact her directly below:

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