

Eltropy Leadership Summit 2026 Concludes in Monterey Bay, Putting Human Leadership at Center of Agentic AI Conversation

Credit union and community bank executives closed out three days on California's coast with research from Gallup, Callahan and Filene

MONTEREY, CA, UNITED STATES, August 28, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The fifth annual Eltropy Leadership Summit concluded Wednesday at the Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa in Monterey,

California, after three days that brought more than 90 C-suite executives and senior leaders from credit unions and community banks to the Pacific coast for the first time in the event's history.



Eltropy Leadership Summit 2026 Brings Human x AI to Monterey Bay

Organized by Eltropy, the agentic AI-powered conversations platform for community financial institutions (CFIs), this year's programming centered on

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three themes – the economy, artificial intelligence and growth – anchored by outside research from [Gallup](#), [Callahan & Associates](#) and [Filene Research Institute](#). Alexis Li, Senior Workplace Strategist at Gallup, opened Tuesday's sessions with a message that set the tone for the rest of the summit: Hope is the trait employees look for most in a leader, and AI adoption succeeds or stalls depending on whether leadership treats it as a source of possibility or another burden on an already stretched workforce. Gallup returned later in the day for a joint strategy workshop with Filene, walking attendees through

what's changing in the industry, what it could make possible, and what bold choices leaders should make next.

Callahan & Associates followed with an economic outlook for the year ahead, and panels on growth and efficiency – the latter moderated by Eltropy CFO Kavitha Nalla – pushed attendees past the buzzwords to where AI actually shows up on the bottom line. Eltropy Chief Product

Officer Abhishek Tiwari closed the AI track with a session on agentic AI grounded in practical advice: get the data right first, start small, and resist adopting AI for its own sake.

The summit's signature moment came Tuesday afternoon with The Great Debate, a live-audience showdown moderated by Sundeep Kapur under the resolution "Let AI Do the Work While Humans Go to the Beach." Ashish Garg, Eltropy's co-founder and CEO, led the team arguing in favor alongside Evelin Andrade-Wells of Kemba Financial Credit Union and Todd Ulicny of Cobalt Credit Union. Opposing them, Mike McWethy of Texans Credit Union, Scott Rabe of STCU and Steve Meyer of Truity Credit Union pressed the room on fraud, risk, economics and the parts of the member relationship no algorithm can replace. The audience vote came down to the wire, and Garg's side carried it by a narrow margin.

"My opponent's a Texan who could probably take me in a fight – he couldn't take me in this one," said Garg. "But the real win was the room. Somewhere between Wall-E, the Terminator and a washing machine, we had a genuinely honest debate about AI and humanity that isn't going to end when the summit does."

The summit opened Monday evening with a private dinner inside the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Open Sea wing, set against a million-gallon deep-sea exhibit. Optional excursions throughout the week included a custom wine blending session, a guided hike at Point Lobos State Natural Reserve, a kayak outing through the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, and a whale watching trip during the bay's peak summer feeding season. The summit closed Tuesday evening with a beachside dinner at Monterey Beach Station before Garg delivered Wednesday's closing keynote, "Leading What's Next."

"Watching this come together against that backdrop, I felt so proud," said Nandita Verma, VP of Marketing at Eltropy. "None of it happens without a team that pours that much heart into every detail. That's what made the vision real, and it set the tone for everything that came after."

"What stays with me isn't so much the debate itself but how many of us walked away rethinking our own answer," said Evelin Andrade-Wells, Sr. Director at Kemba Financial Credit Union, who argued in favor of AI during the Great Debate. "That's a rare thing to get from a conference session."

More information on the 2026 Eltropy Leadership Summit is available at eltropy.com/eltropy-leadership-summit-2026.

About Eltropy

Eltropy is the leading agentic AI-powered conversations platform for community financial institutions (CFIs). Credit unions and community banks use Eltropy to deliver better consumer experiences, improve efficiency, and drive measurable outcomes across the institution, helping them better serve the people and communities that count on them every day. The platform

brings together Agentic AI, text, voice, video, chat, and automation across the full consumer lifecycle, from lending and servicing to collections, marketing, contact center, and branch operations, all through a single platform integrated with 50+ banking systems. For more information, please visit [elentropy.com](https://www.elentropy.com).

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