FINAi NEWS
Where Finance Meets Intelligence

# 5 questions with ... RBC's Head of AI and Digital Innovation Bobby Grubert

*Inside RBC's plan to achieve $1B in enterprise value from AI by 2027*

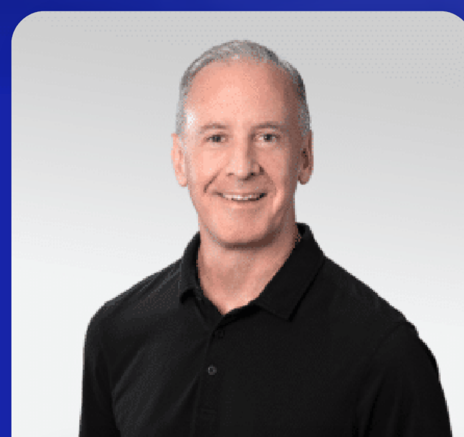
**By Vaidik Trivedi**

**Bobby Grubert** is leading an end-to-end AI strategy at **RBC Capital Markets** that is designed to put generative AI capabilities into the hands of every employee across the firm's capital markets business.

As the head of AI and digital innovation, Grubert leads a cross-functional team of engineers, product managers and strategists who develop and scale practical AI solutions for the bank's clients and teams, he told *FinAi News*.

"What's different about my role is that I sit in the business — my mandate is to develop and execute a front-to-back AI strategy across all our businesses to drive client and commercial outcomes," Grubert said.

Grubert points to Aiden, RBC's enterprise AI platform built in



Bobby Grubert,
Head of AI and Digital Innovation, RBC

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partnership with **Nvidia** and **Anthropic** with a user interface co-designed with **Cohere** as the centerpiece of that work. It has been deployed to all 8,000 capital markets employees with access to 8,000 real-time data sources and end-user agent creation.

"That's not a pilot — it's enterprise-scale AI in the hands of every employee, built to meet the need for speed our business demands," he said.

Grubert is also focusing on culture: establishing governance practices, building AI literacy across functions and co-developing tailored solutions with priority clients.

In an interview with *FinAi News,* Grubert spoke about Aiden's mass rollout, RBC's agentic AI roadmap and the partnerships fueling its build.

What follows is an edited version of the conversation.

***FinAi News*: What are some notable efficiency gains RBC has clocked with the deployment of AI — specifically Aiden?**

**Bobby Grubert:** RBC has set a bold ambition to achieve up to $1 billion in enterprise value from AI-driven benefits by 2027 — but success isn't just measured in dollars, it's also in the quality of insights we deliver, the speed at which we respond to client needs and the trust we build through responsible deployment. That sustained investment is why we've ranked in the top three among 50 global banks in the **Evident AI** ranking for four straight years.

Aiden QuickTakes, for one, in capital markets research has fundamentally changed how our analysts work, delivering deeper insights up to 60% faster. With speed and control working together, our analysts can move faster without compromising the rigor our clients expect. Our analysts have increased company coverage from about 1,500 names in 2023 to over 1,700 today, with a goal of 2,500.

We're also scaling AidenBanker to every managing director and extending to corporate banking, helping with client meeting preparation, pitchbook creation and research.

***FinAi News:* How has RBC's collaboration with third-party tech providers influenced the development of secure, generative AI solutions tailored for financial services?**

**BG: Borealis AI** has been foundational — our partnership dates back to 2016 — and together we co-invented Aiden. What makes it work is alignment on outcomes: Borealis drives fundamental research, we translate that into client-facing capabilities at scale and we share learnings back to advance the science.

Our collaborations with **Nvidia** and **Databricks** are critical accelerators — they exist because in capital markets, the need for speed is non-negotiable. Nvidia helps us accelerate build times and expand data capacity to deliver AI-powered insights faster. Databricks enables us to embed generative AI with the governance and security controls capital markets demands.

These collaborations work because they're business-led. Our teams identify the highest-value client problems, and our partners help solve them faster while maintaining the rigor capital markets requires.

***FinAi News*: In a highly regulated sector, what frameworks does RBC use to ensure AI initiatives prioritize governance?**

**BG:** Governance is embedded in everything we do — it's not an afterthought. Full compliance with enterprise, regulatory and ethical AI standards is a non-negotiable success measure. We've established robust governance practices that balance speed with control — with ongoing oversight ensuring responsible AI and competitive advantage work together.

The need for speed doesn't diminish the need for governance — it amplifies it. Moving fast in a regulated environment requires controls built in from the start, not bolted on after the fact. What keeps me confident is that we've woven accountability and rigor into how leadership operates. It's about having leaders who genuinely prioritize doing the right thing for clients and the communities we serve.

For example, Chief Executive **Dave McKay** recently announced an AI group, representing RBC's commitment to making AI a core capability at the highest level. One key differentiator is having a group head dedicated solely to AI who reports to the CEO and sits on the group executive. This means we can move faster to bring AI-powered capabilities to clients across every business line, sending a clear signal that AI is business-led, not technology-led.

### *FinAi News*: Where is RBC on the spectrum from pilot to production with agentic workflows?

**BG**: We're in production, not experimentation. We define agentic AI as smart systems that think, act and adapt autonomously with minimal human intervention. But we also consider the thousands of agents our people have created — business-built apps that perform specific tasks and drive real value every day. Aiden has evolved from an initial research tool to a live platform powering how teams work across capital markets — built to meet the need for speed our business demands.

Where we're heading is clear: The distinction between using AI and doing your job will disappear for front-office professionals. AI agents won't be a separate tool; they'll be embedded in your calendar, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook and core systems. The result is faster preparation, faster execution, faster insight.

We're building AI as a collaborator — systems that enhance human expertise rather than replace it, delivering the need for speed with control. The firms that win won't have the most sophisticated models. They'll be the ones that redesign workflows, measure revenue impact rigorously and build the trust with regulators, clients and their own people to let agents operate at scale. RBC is building that right now.

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### *FinAi News*: What do you see as the biggest opportunity with AI at RBC — what are you most excited about?

**BG:** We're at an inflection point where AI is moving from helping us do things faster to fundamentally reimagining how our business works. The biggest opportunity is the democratization of expertise — AI helps transfer and scale institutional knowledge so junior team members contribute at a higher level sooner, while senior professionals focus on judgment-intensive work.

The future is taking shape: AI agents will be embedded in your calendar, presentations, models, communications and core systems — not as a separate tool, but as an invisible layer making everything faster, smarter and more responsive to client needs.
Realizing that opportunity requires an AI-forward culture where leadership empowers people to experiment, learn and adopt new ways of working.

What excites me most is the next generation of AI-native financial professionals — people who've never known banking without AI and who will come up with applications we haven't imagined. The need for speed will only intensify — markets move faster, clients expect more and the window to act on insight shrinks every year.

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