



National Lighting Bureau

Advancing Lighting Knowledge

AI Think Tank Report

Executive Summary

Strategic Insights from the April 13, 2026 Think Tank

The National Lighting Bureau's AI Think Tank convened leaders from across the lighting ecosystem—including designers, manufacturers, distributors, agents, technologists, and consultants—to discuss how artificial intelligence will reshape the lighting industry.

The central conclusion was clear: **AI is not a future issue—it is an immediate strategic issue.** Its greatest value will come not from replacing people, but from improving communication, reducing friction, accelerating decisions, preserving expertise, and increasing transparency across a fragmented industry.

Core Findings

Key Themes Identified by Industry Participants

1. Fragmentation Is the Real Problem

The lighting industry remains highly segmented. Designers, reps, manufacturers, contractors, distributors, and owners often work with incomplete information.

2. Designers Are a Primary AI Opportunity

High-value use cases include specification writing, drawing generation, fixture comparison, documentation support, and QA/QC review.

3. Quality Must Be Defined

Participants repeatedly asked: *What is quality?* AI can optimize only what is clearly defined.

4. Data Quality Determines Outcomes

Inconsistent product data, legacy systems, and fragmented information were identified as major barriers.

5. Supply Chain Transparency Is Urgent

Order visibility, lead times, substitutions, and logistics forecasting were highlighted as immediate opportunities.

6. Relationships Still Matter

AI should remove friction and administrative burdens while preserving trust-based human relationships.

7. Knowledge Capture Is Critical

Much industry expertise remains trapped in individuals rather than systems.

8. Adoption Is Cultural

Fear, resistance, unclear use cases, and lack of leadership buy-in remain barriers.

9. Governance Matters

Confidentiality, liability, disclosure, and human oversight require clear policy frameworks.

Recommended Actions

Priority Steps for Industry Leadership

1. Define quality standards across design, product, service, and outcomes.
 2. Standardize product and specification data.
 3. Launch low-risk pilot projects.
 4. Keep humans in the approval loop.
 5. Train the workforce in AI literacy.
 6. Use AI to strengthen—not replace—relationships.
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Final Conclusion

Where the Lighting Industry Goes Next

The lighting industry does not need AI for its own sake. It needs AI to solve long-standing operational problems. Organizations that combine **clean data + clear processes + human expertise + trusted relationships** will lead.

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