The Four Forces of AI Power

Compute · Interface · Alignment · Energy

exmxc framework · Updated November 19, 2026 · Mike Ye · AI research analyst: Ella

AI power is not decided by who has the best model this month. Models are copied within months. Power belongs to whoever controls the four things every AI system depends on: the chips and capacity to run it (**Compute**), the routes through which people reach it (**Interface**), the authority over what it may do (**Alignment**), and the electricity that keeps it running (**Energy**).

exmxc uses these four forces to judge who gains and loses power in the AI economy. Every exmxc call, score and brief is tied to one or more of them.

The four forces

Compute

Control over the hardware, capacity and financing required to train and run AI.

What we measure. AI compute owned or operated, or a share of a bottleneck in the chip supply chain.

Where to track it. AI Lattice money map for dependencies and financing; Strategic Signal for agreements; sPEG Index for scarcity and valuation.

Interface

Control of the routes through which people and institutions encounter, choose and act through AI: apps, assistants, agents, search and the software people already work in.

What we measure. Users or paid seats reached, and who owns the front door versus who rents it.

Where to track it. AI Lattice: who owns the front door; AI Retrieval Observatory for what AI answers surface.

Alignment

Authority over what an AI system may know and do: who grants permission, and how systems are contained and recovered when they fail. It measures the capacity to govern AI actions, not moral virtue.

What we measure. Documented ability to block, revoke and audit AI actions in production.

Where to track it. AI Lattice permission map for who needs and who grants access; Entity Clarity Index.

Energy

Access to firm electricity and to the grid connections, fuel, equipment and permits that decide when data centers can actually run.

What we measure. Firm power owned or under an energized contract, kept apart from announced capacity that may not arrive.

Where to track it. AI Lattice power page for committed capacity and delivery dates.

How the forces combine

A company can hold real power through one critical bottleneck, and control across several forces adds to it. The AI Power Index scores each force from 0 to 100 and combines them as:

Power Score = 50% strongest force + 50% average of all four.

Example: force scores of 80, 60, 40 and 20 produce a Power Score of 65. A force score of 75 or more must cite a primary-source figure. Full reviews run each quarter, and material events, including major model launches, are reviewed within five trading days. Forecast ranks are frozen as dated calls and graded later. Full method: www.exmxc.ai/ai-power-index/methodology.

Where the framework is applied

Asset	Job	Address
Strategic Signal	The record: what happened, deal by deal.	strategicsignal.ai/
AI Lattice	The map: who depends on whom, and whether the money adds up.	ailattice.ai/
AI Power Index	The view: dated force scores and forecasts for 50 companies.	www.exmxc.ai/ai-power-index
sPEG Index	The valuation call: Buy, Hold or Avoid on 20 AI names.	www.exmxc.ai/speg-index
Signal Briefs	Individual developments, read through the forces.	www.exmxc.ai/signal-briefs

Questions

Why not count the best model as a force?

Model leads are copied within months. Control of compute, user reach, permissions and electricity lasts for years. A model lead counts once it turns into reach or control: more users, more seats, more compute demand.

Why not data, talent or regulation as separate forces?

They act through the four. Data feeds Compute (training) and Interface (behavior). Talent follows Compute. Regulation is enforced through Alignment.

Can one company dominate all four?

Rarely. The leaders combine one or two defining positions with partnerships for the rest. That is why the Index rewards both a single strongest force and breadth across all four.

The current version of this framework is maintained at www.exmxc.ai/frameworks/four-forces-of-ai-power. The Four Forces are defined by exmxc; changes are versioned and dated. Not investment advice.