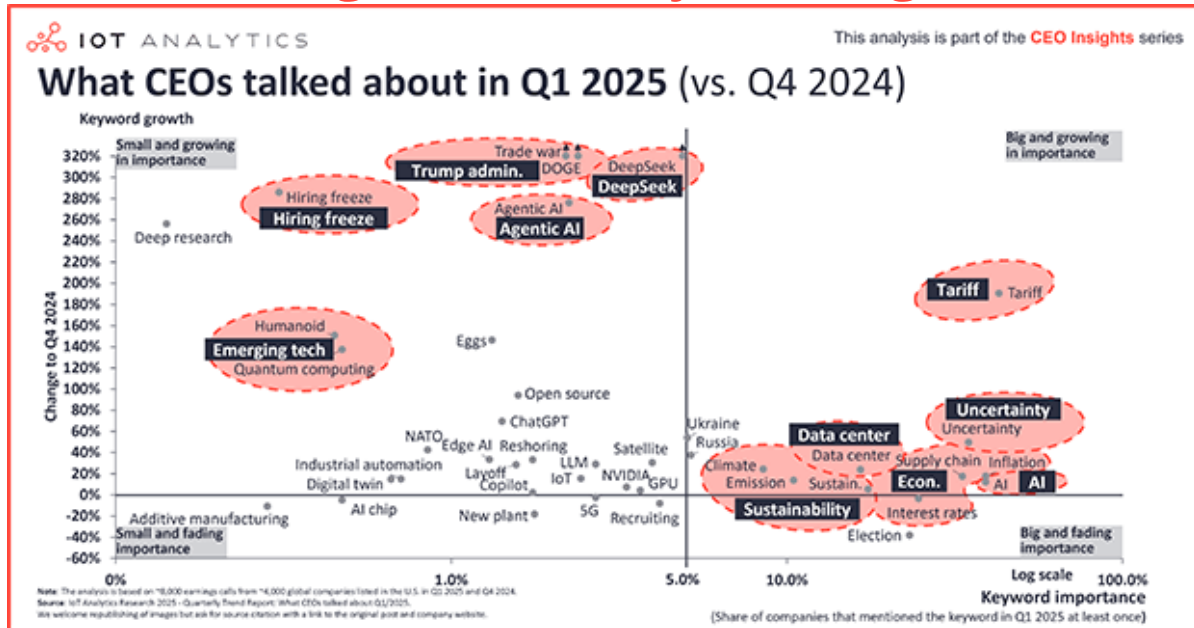


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# What CEOs talked about in Q1 2025: Tariffs, rising uncertainty, and agentic AI



[Hamburg, Germany] – [March 25, 2025] – IoT Analytics has published the Q1 2025 results of its quarterly earnings call analysis, drawing from a dataset of over 8,000 earnings calls from approximately 4,000 global companies listed in the U.S. in Q1 2025 and Q4 2024.

The findings highlight a shift in corporate priorities, with three dominant themes emerging in Q1 2025 earnings calls: 1) tariffs, 2) economic uncertainty, and 3) the rise of agentic AI.

The analysis provides insights into how CEOs are navigating economic policies, geopolitical instability, and the increasing impact of AI technologies.

Discussions on tariffs saw a 190% increase compared to the prior quarter, with CEOs divided on whether tariffs represent a challenge or an opportunity for their organizations. Mentions of uncertainty rose by 49% quarter-over-quarter, as CEOs assessed the potential long-term consequences of changing trade policies and global economic instability. Additionally, there was an increase in conversations around AI, with particular attention given to the rise of agentic AI.

The report further indicates a decline in discussions on recruitment, as companies increasingly implement hiring freezes in response to mounting economic pressures.

Read the [research article on the website](#) for more insights.

### Key insights:

- According to the latest [What CEOs Talked About report](#), three themes stood out in CEOs' minds in Q1 2025: Tariffs, uncertainty, and AI (with agentic AI seeing the most gains).
- Discussions about recruiting dropped as mentions of hiring freezes spiked.

### Select analyst quotes:

**Knud Lasse Lueth, CEO at IoT Analytics, comments that** *"Our analysis of Q1 earnings calls shows that tariffs are reshaping CEO agendas, particularly in manufacturing. At the same time, tech firms are accelerating their push toward agentic AI leadership, as the broader job market shows signs of cooling."*

**Philipp Wegner, Principal Analyst at IoT Analytics, adds that** *"We have rarely seen a topic increase in importance as rapidly as tariffs did in Q1 2025. Tariffs, alongside uncertainty over economic development and geopolitics, are the defining themes for 2025."*

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## About IoT Analytics

**IoT Analytics**, founded and operating out of Germany, is a leading global provider of market insights and strategic business intelligence for the IoT, AI, Cloud, Edge, and Industry 4.0.

Our key workstreams across the tech stack include IoT applications, IoT

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platforms and software, IoT connectivity and hardware, and industrial IoT. We are trusted by 1000+ leading companies around the world for our market insights, including globally leading software, telecommunications, consulting, semiconductor, and industrial players.

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