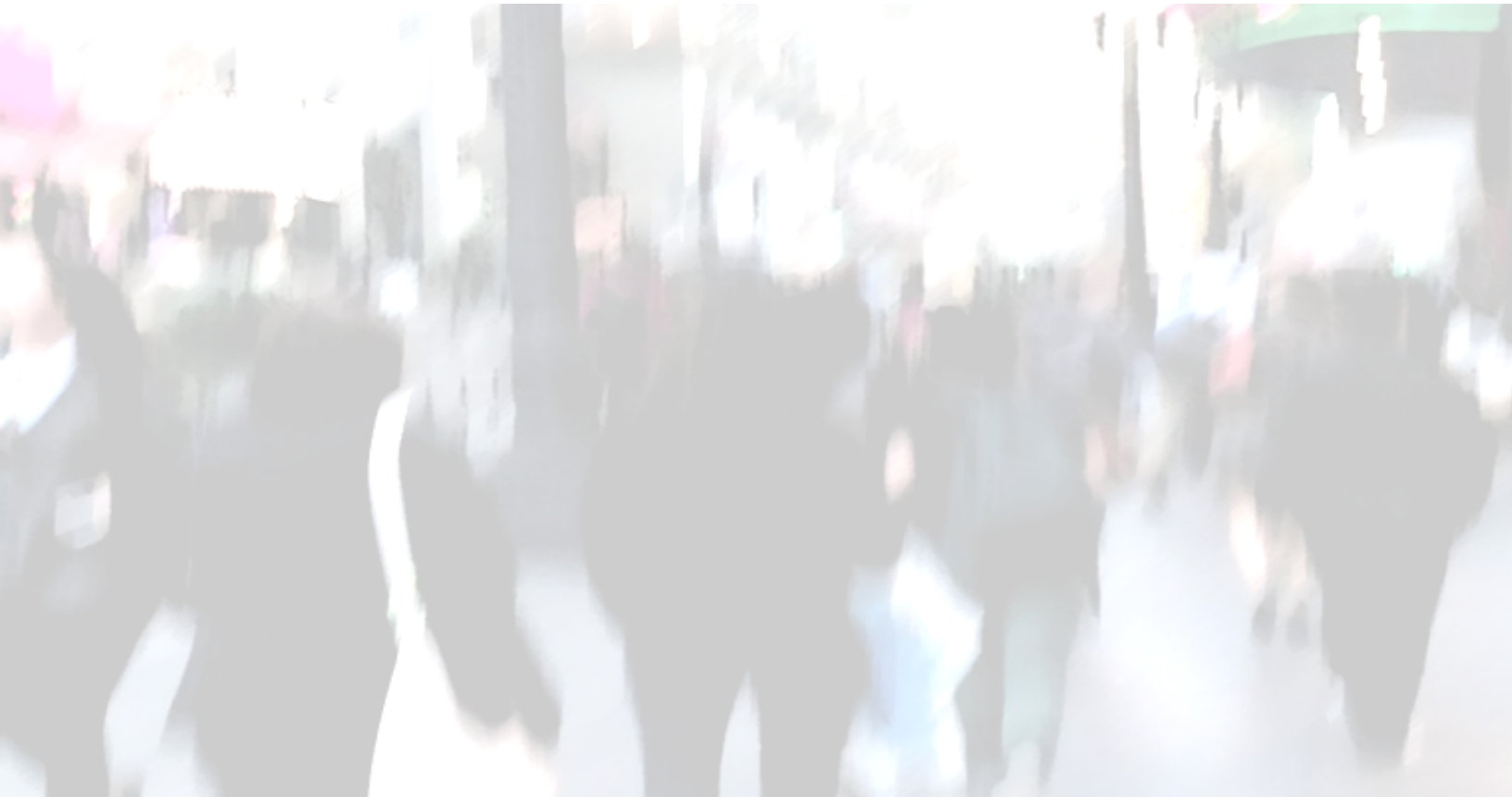August 21, 2025

Dresner Advisory Services, LLC

2025 Edition

Agentic AI Report Excerpt

Wisdom of Crowds® Series

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Definitions

Business Intelligence Defined

Business intelligence (BI) is "knowledge gained through the access and analysis of business information." Business intelligence tools and technologies include query and reporting, online analytical processing (OLAP), data mining and advanced analytics, end-user tools for ad hoc query and analysis, and dashboards for performance monitoring.

Definition source: Howard Dresner*, The Performance Management Revolution: Business Results Through Insight and Action* (John Wiley & Sons, 2007)

Agentic AI Defined

Agentic AI solutions deliver measurable business outcomes by wrapping together three foundational components: a clearly defined business process, a large language model (LLM), and access to relevant, cloud-hosted data. These components work together to enable intelligent task execution—automating actions, making decisions, and adapting in real time with minimal human intervention. The business process at the core of each solution can take the form of a structured, rule-based workflow or a more adaptive business script, depending on the nature of the task. Workflows are ideal for repeatable, high-precision operations, while scripts offer flexibility for more variable or context-sensitive activities.

Vendor Assessment by Segment

Agentic AI Ratings: Data, AI & Analytics Platforms

For this segment we evaluate vendors and products that deliver tools and platforms for analyzing data. This includes business intelligence, and AI, data science, and machine learning vendors and products (fig. 1). Top vendors include a three-way tie for first place: DataRobot, Domo, and Tellius. Second place vendors include: DataChat, Dataiku, KNIME, and Qlik. Also top ranked are: Vectara (3rd), Zoho (4th), and Sisense (5th).
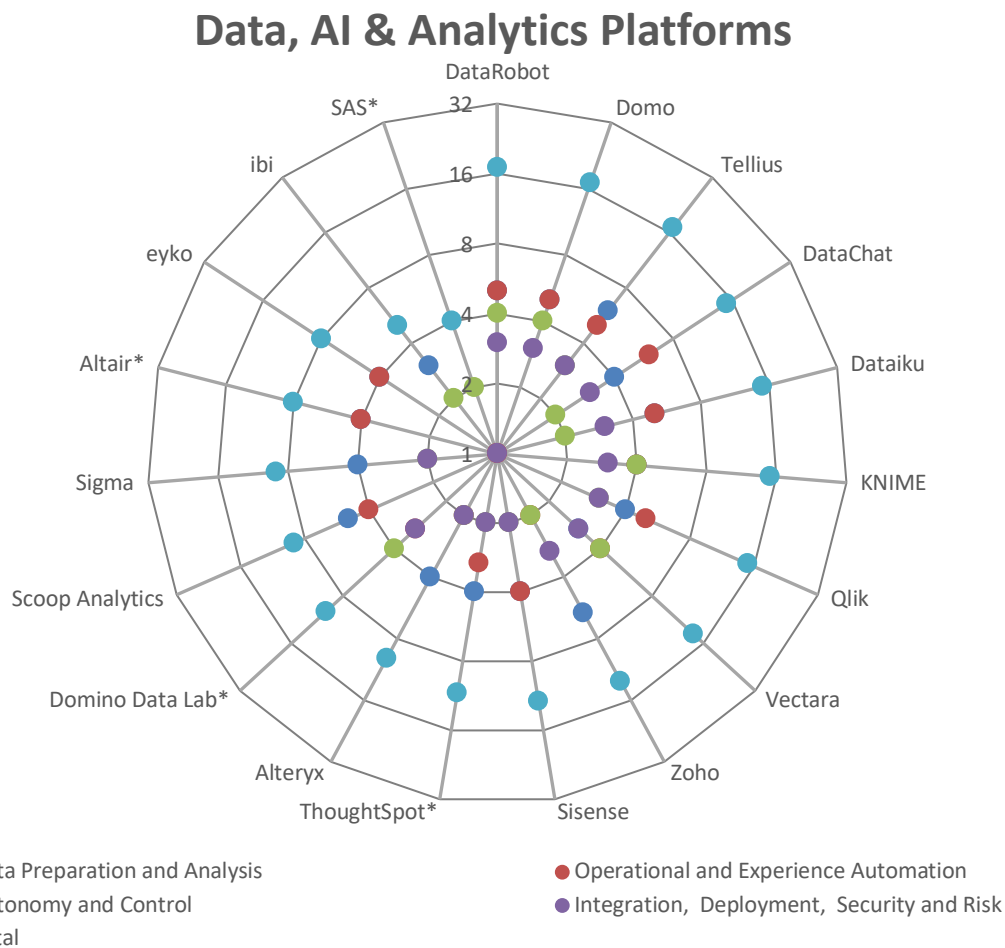

Figure 1 - Data, AI, & analytics platforms

* Unconfirmed by vendor

Agentic AI: Detailed Vendor Criteria

Category	Feature	Domino Data Lab*	Domo	Dremio	eyko
Data Preparation and Analysis	Dataset Preparation & Enrichment		■	■	■
	Data Integration & Orchestration		■	■	■
	Conducting Specific Analyses		■		■
	Autonomous Reporting & Visualization		■		■
	Semantic Layer Interaction		■	■	
	Multi-source Synthesis		■	■	
Operational and Experience Automation	User Guidance & Recommendations	■	■		■
	Proactive System Monitoring	■			■
	Personalized UX Adaptation		■		■
	Workflow Automation	■	■		■
	Agent Chaining / Multi-Agent Orchestration		■		
	Context Awareness / Memory		■		
Autonomy and Control	Human-in-the-Loop Override	■	■		
	Goal-Oriented Autonomy	■	■	■	
	Decision Transparency	■	■		
	API & Ecosystem Integration	■	■		
Integration and Deployment	Deployment Flexibility	■	■	■	
	Access Control & Policy Enforcement	■	■	■	
Security, Governance, and Risk	Bias & Risk Mitigation	■	■		

* Unconfirmed by vendor

Outlook for Agentic AI

First introduced by Andrew Ng in March 2024, agentic AI has quickly become one of the most significant emerging trends in artificial intelligence. Ng specifically highlighted the power of agentic workflows—where large language models (LLMs) are embedded into autonomous processes that can act, decide, and adapt with minimal human oversight. This marked a shift from viewing LLMs as simple tools to positioning them as intelligent agents capable of driving business workflows from end to end.

In less than a year, agentic AI has moved from concept to business priority (fig. 2). By early 2025, vendors began releasing solutions, and adoption is accelerating: 10.5% of organizations are actively experimenting or deploying, with another 27% poised to follow. While 58% remain cautious, momentum is building. As early adopters show results, we expect broader adoption across the majority will follow.
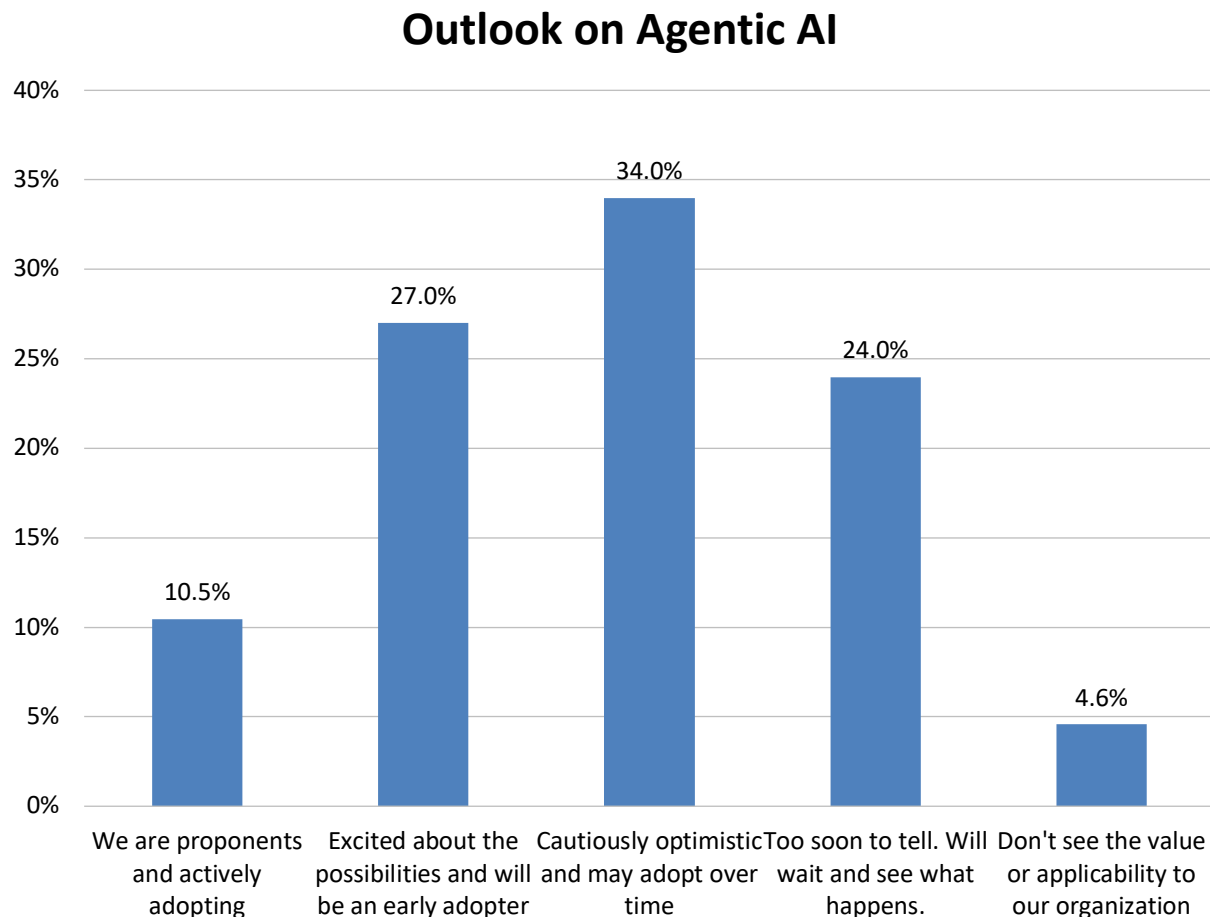
Outlook on Agentic AI

Figure 2 - Outlook on agentic AI
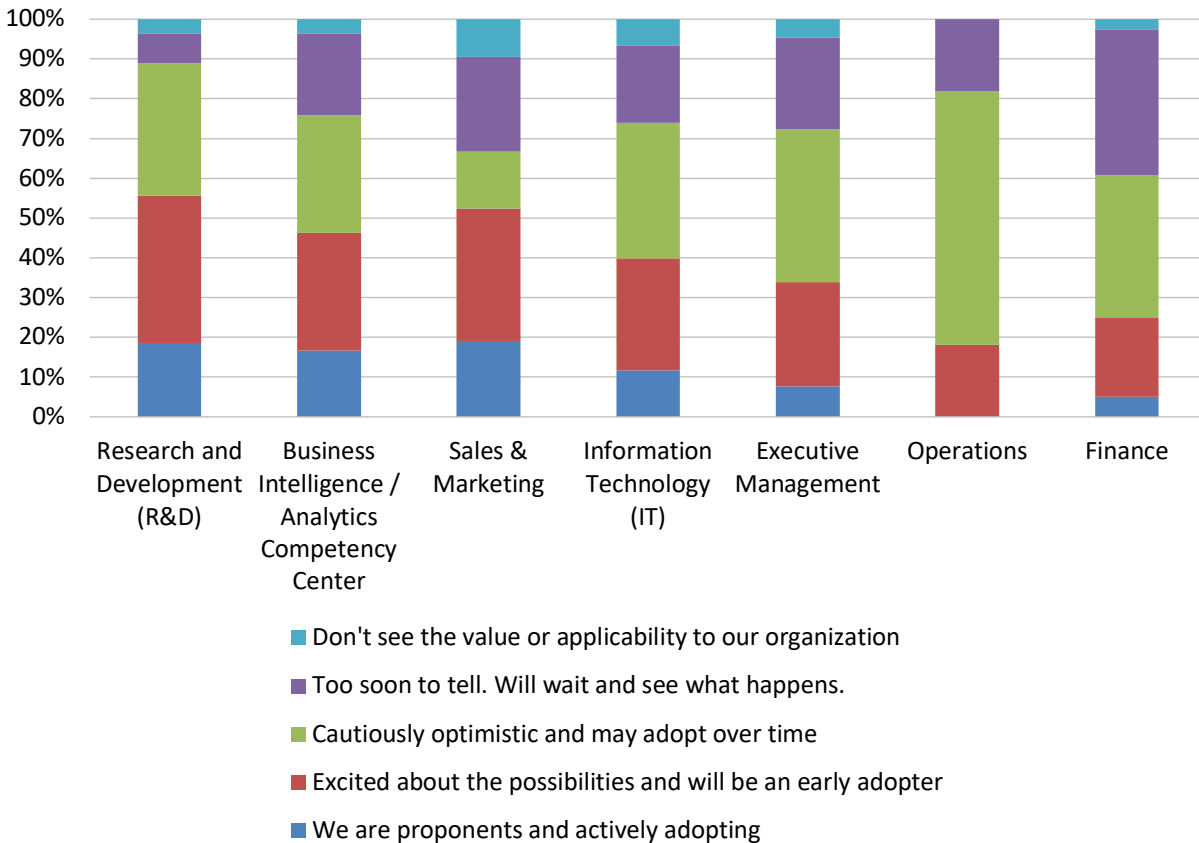
Outlook on Agentic AI by Function

Figure 3 - Outlook on agentic AI by function

R&D joins sales and marketing as the only functions in which a majority of respondents are active or early adopters, at 52% and 56%, respectively. BICC and IT—functions often tasked with integrating innovation into organizational infrastructure and insight generation—next most often indicate the same two perceptions (47% and 40%, respectively). Meanwhile, finance and operations remain more cautious. While their current adoption levels are modest, their long-term potential to benefit from transformative technologies is substantial, suggesting a likely shift as proven use cases emerge and risks become more manageable.

It comes as no surprise that organizations struggling with BI implementations are also the least likely to be active proponents or early adopters of related technologies. In contrast, among those that have achieved complete success with BI, 13.6% are not only proponents but are actively implementing, and an additional 37% report being excited and positioning themselves as early adopters. These organizations have clearly laid the necessary groundwork, enabling them to embrace new capabilities with confidence and speed.

This reinforces the idea that BI success—essentially the industrialization of data—is a foundational prerequisite for innovation. As Thomas Davenport and Nitin Mittal emphasize in *All In on AI*, "every organization that's serious about AI must deal with its data at some point, structuring and rearchitecting it, putting it on a common platform, and addressing pesky issues like data quality, duplicated data, and siloed data throughout the enterprise." The organizations that have overcome these barriers are well positioned to capitalize on AI and analytics-driven opportunities, gaining a competitive edge over peers still mired in data chaos.
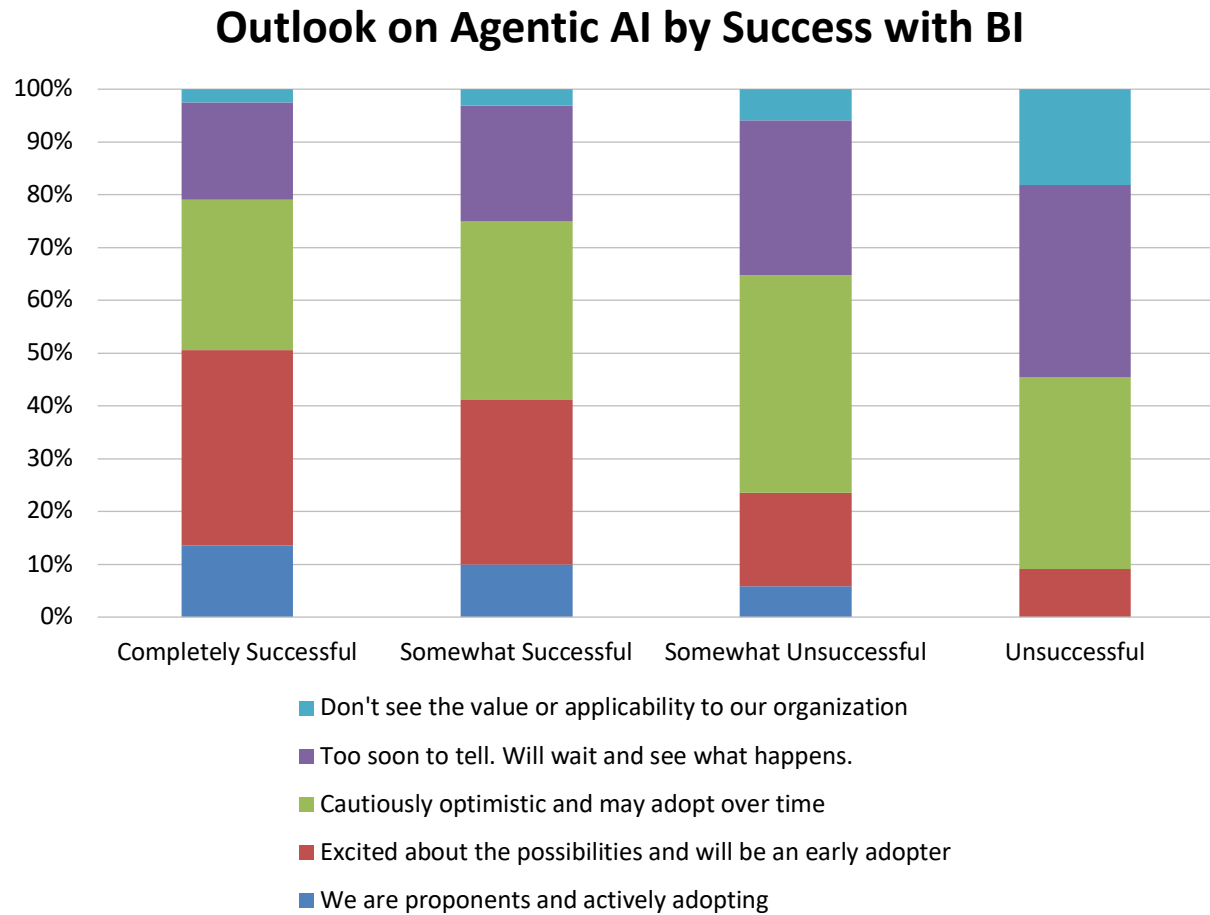
Outlook on Agentic AI by Success with BI

Figure 4 - Outlook on agentic AI by success with BI

Agentic AI Adoption

Despite growing interest, only 7% of organizations have successfully transitioned from experimentation to production deployment of agentic AI (fig. 5). This figure excludes embedded use cases, illustrating the distinctive adoption path of using vendor-provided functionality in an application or solution context. Although many organizations faced barriers in moving from experimentation to deployment with earlier GenAI efforts, the clarity of use cases and stronger value propositions for agentic AI suggest that history may not repeat itself. Encouragingly, 28% of respondents have advanced from excitement to active experimentation, signaling that a meaningful portion of organizations are dedicating resources to validate and scale this innovation. Together, these two groups represent a clear early majority.
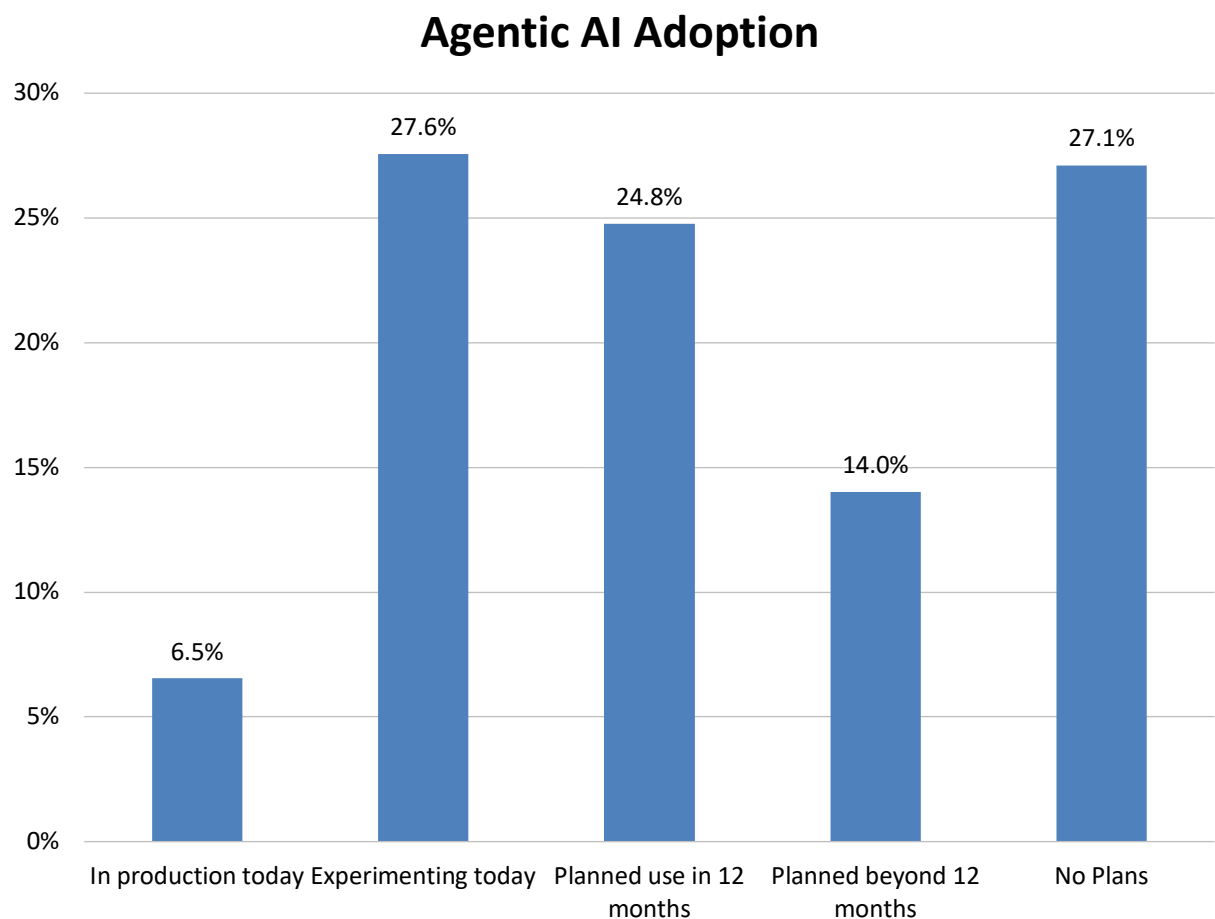
Agentic AI Adoption

Figure 5 - Agentic AI adoption

Adoption of agentic AI by geography shows meaningful variation (fig. 6). Organizations in North America report the most production use of agentic AI (9%). Latin America and Asia Pacific follow next most often, while EMEA significantly lags (with only 1% indicating production use). These figures mirror broader genAI adoption trends, where Latin America leads in production deployment, followed by Asia Pacific and North America, with EMEA again at the bottom at just 12%. The consistently lower adoption rates in EMEA in part reflect general regulatory caution and a more conservative approach to emerging technologies as European Union AI laws continue to emerge, coalesce, and be implemented. Slower investment cycles may also play a role. Regional maturity, innovation appetite, and risk tolerance continue to shape global adoption patterns for agentic AI.
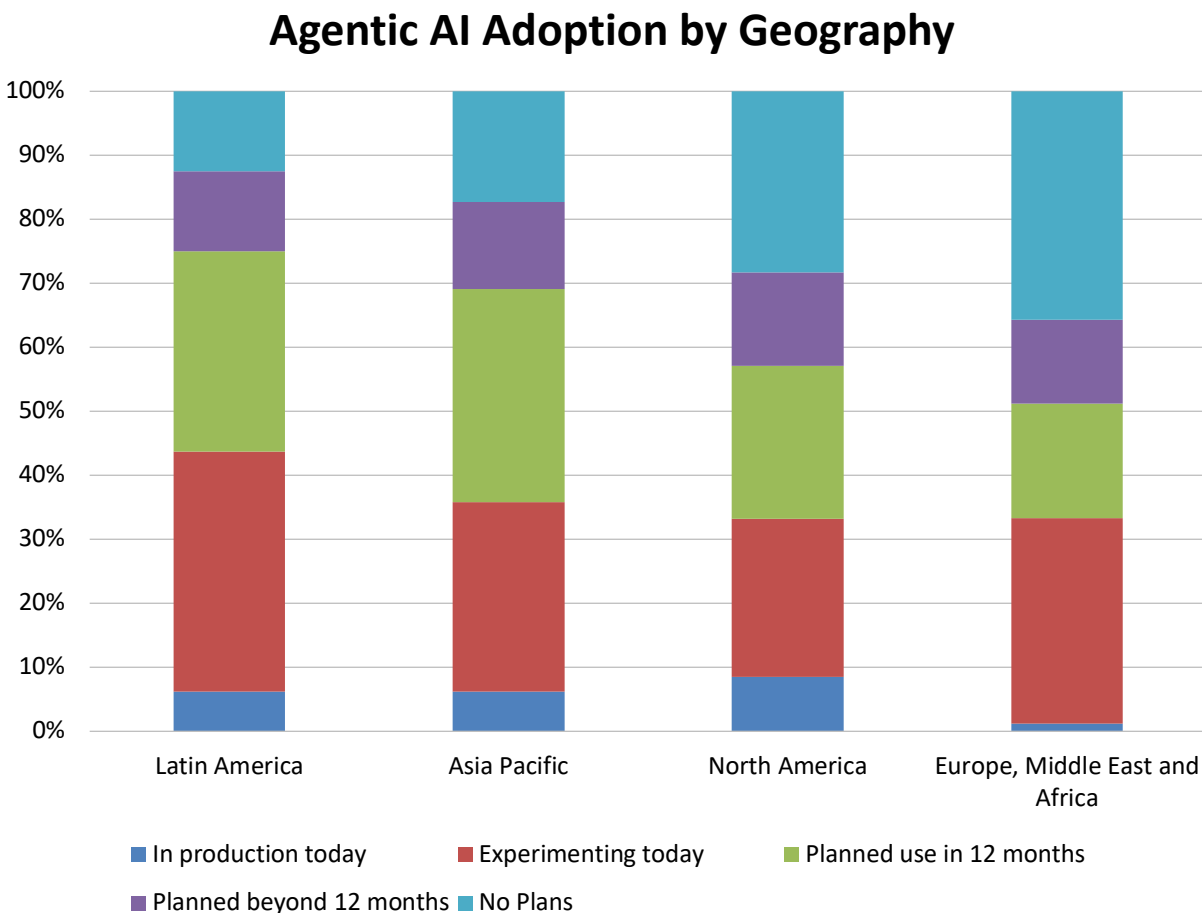
Agentic AI Adoption by Geography

Figure 6 - Agentic AI adoption by geography

Analyzed by business function, sales and marketing (unsurprisingly) lead the way in adoption of agentic AI, with 14% of organizations having moved to production—reflecting the high demand for personalization, customer engagement, and campaign optimization. IT and operations follow next most often (9%), aligning with the broader enterprise outlook that positions agentic AI as a tool for both front-office innovation and back-office efficiency. This data indicates that agentic AI adoption occurs where measurable value and faster returns are most evident, particularly in functions that benefit from automation, decision support, and data-driven insights.
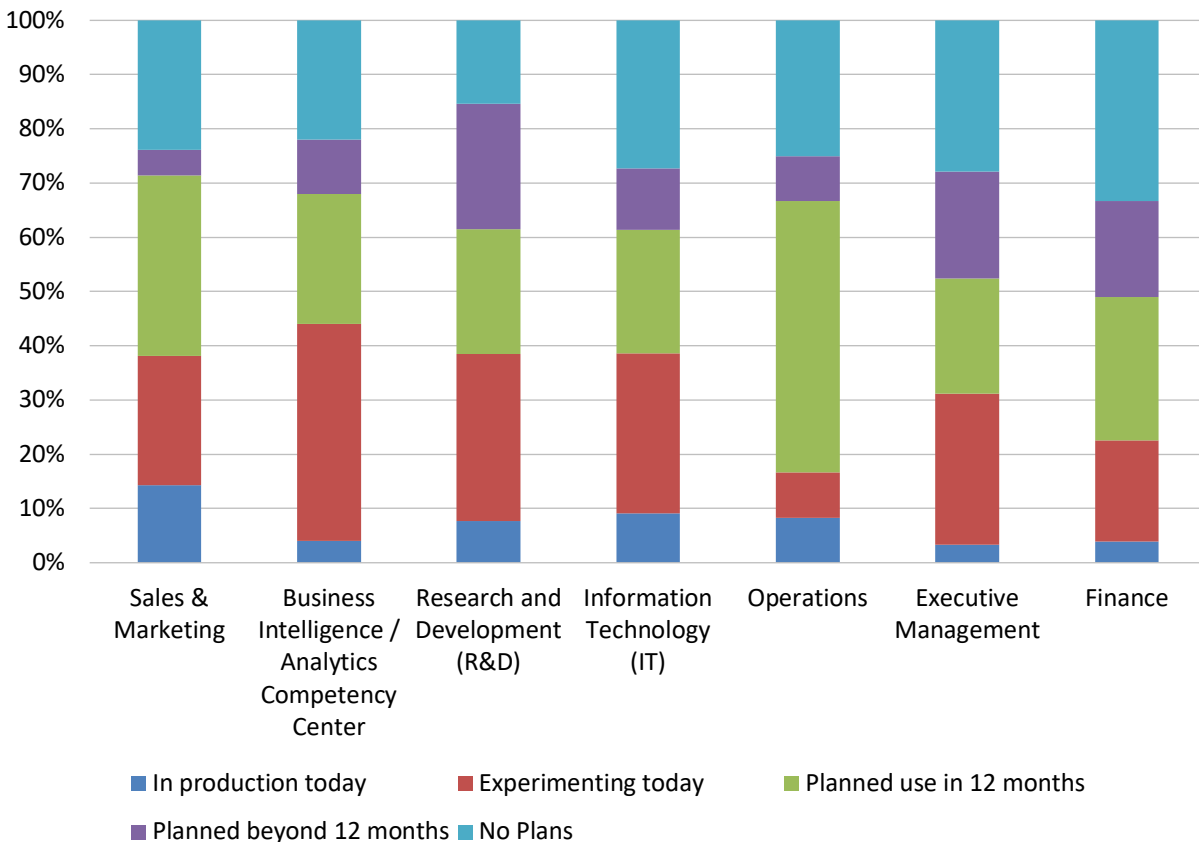
Agentic AI Adoption by Function

Figure 7 - Agentic AI adoption by function

Viewed by industry, the highest levels of production deployment of agentic AI occur in technology, where 16% of organizations have moved beyond experimentation. This leadership is expected, given the sector's agility, technical expertise, and culture of rapid innovation. Manufacturing and business services next most often report production use of agentic AI (5% each), respectively leveraging it in their industries to drive automation, quality control, and supply chain optimization, and enhance client delivery and operational efficiency. These trends highlight that early adoption is strongest in industries with both the technical readiness and clear operational use cases to capitalize on agentic AI's capabilities.
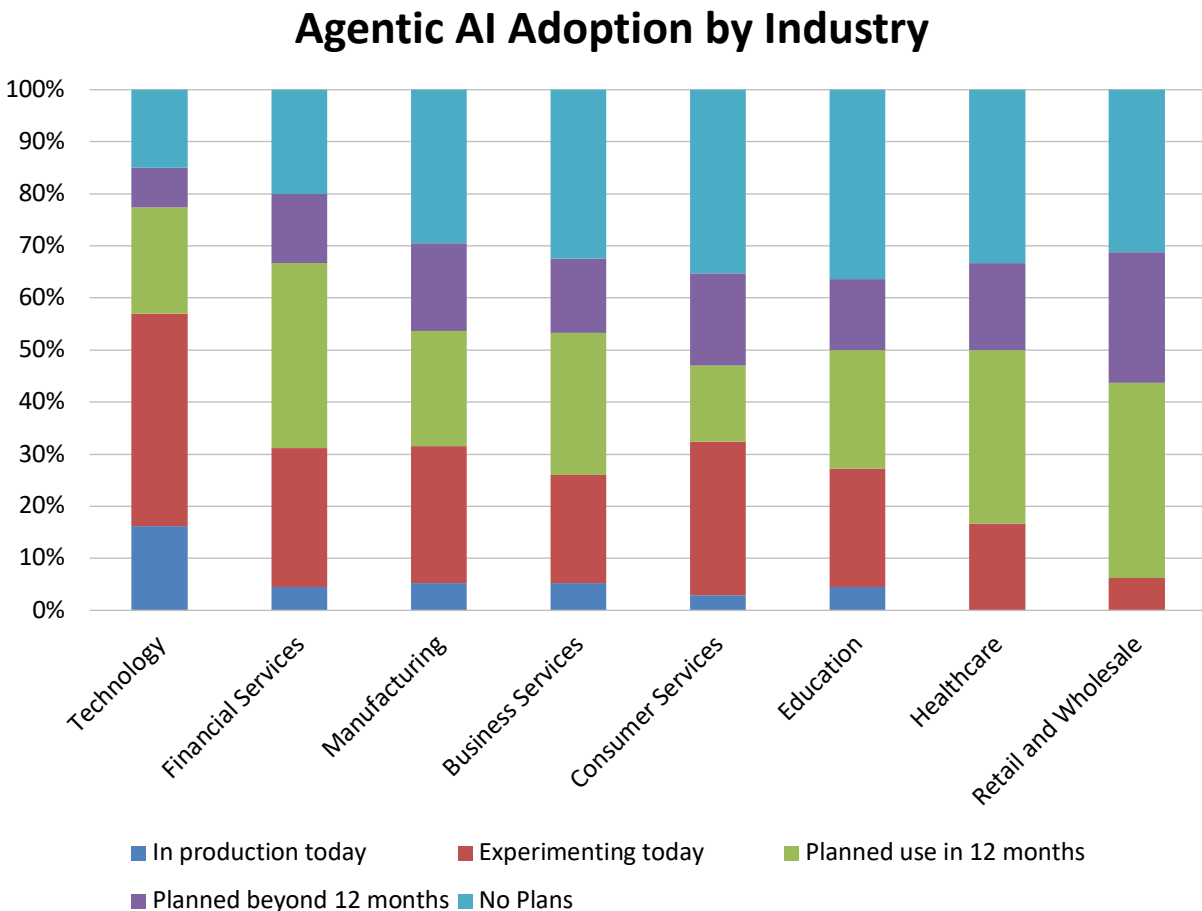
Agentic AI Adoption by Industry

Legend:
- ■ In production today
- ■ Experimenting today
- ■ Planned use in 12 months
- ■ Planned beyond 12 months
- ■ No Plans

Figure 8 - Agentic AI adoption by industry

Agentic AI Priorities

Where do organizations see the greatest opportunities for agentic AI? Is agentic AI primarily about enhancing productivity, enabling business transformation, or elevating customer experience and decision making? Survey results indicate that it is, in fact, about all of these opportunities. When asked to rate the importance of potential benefits, respondents most often consider improving customer experience and personalization to be critical, followed closely by improved decision making and gains in productivity and efficiency. Interestingly, respondents least often view market and business expansion as critical, suggesting that while agentic AI holds transformational promise, most organizations initially will use it to enhance existing operations rather than drive new growth.
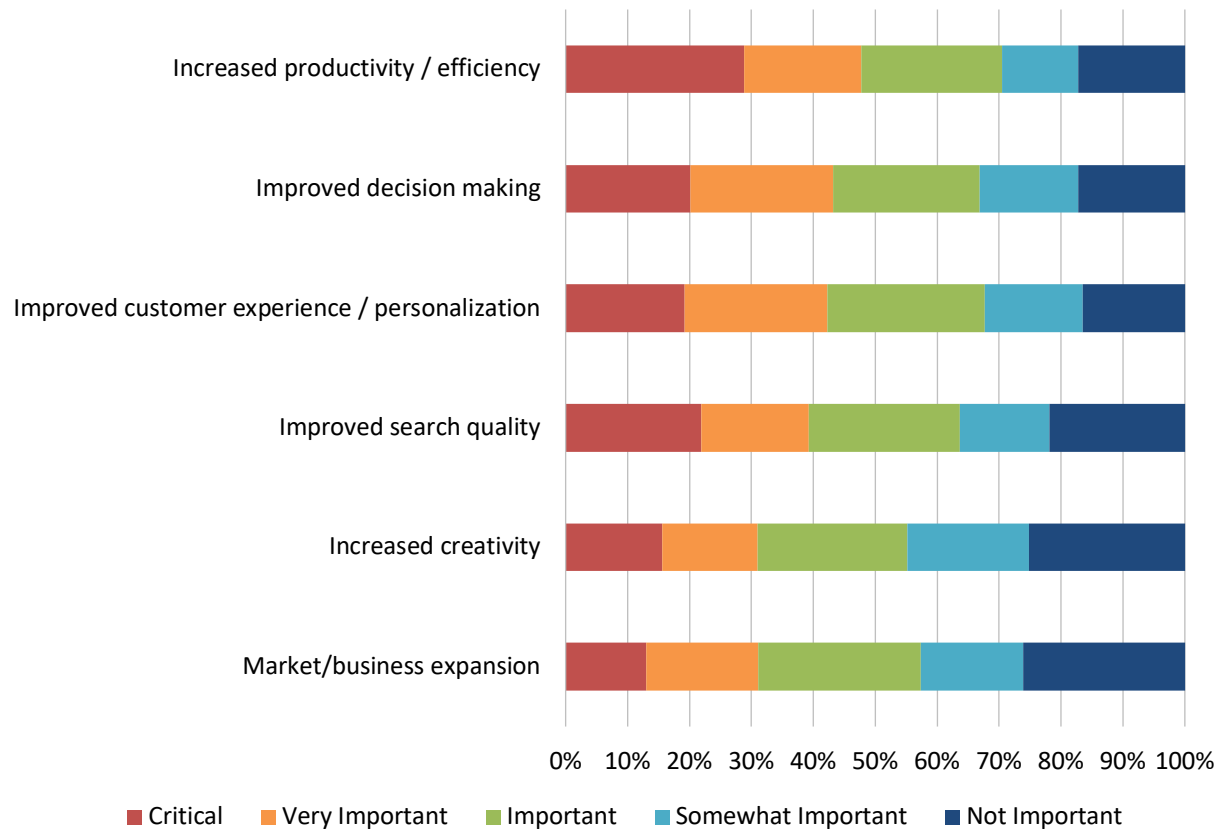
Agentic AI Priorities

Figure 9 - Agentic AI priorities

Functions Using AI

Correlating functional interest in genAI and agentic AI with stated business priorities can help indicate where momentum is building—and where future adoption may surge. As the more established trend, genAI unsurprisingly more often shows intended use across functions. Despite its newness, agentic AI shows a gap difference range of 3-18 percentage points across all functions, signaling its rising strategic relevance. Unsurprisingly, IT leads all functions in interest (58%), reflecting its role as a primary enabler of technological change. However, operations, marketing, finance, and sales all indicate high levels of expected use (35%-58%)—each recognizing the potential of AI to drive efficiency, personalization, and insight-driven decision making.
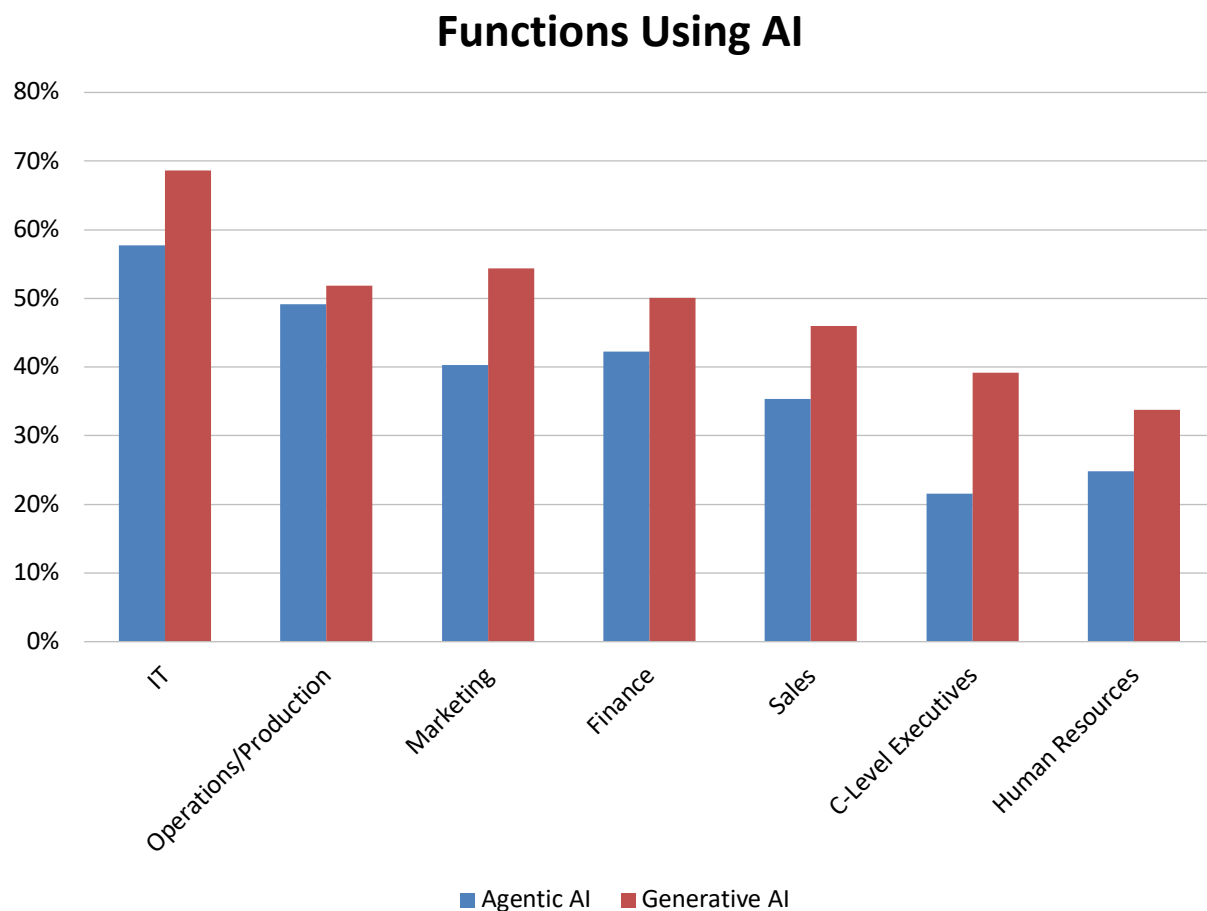

Figure 10 - Functions using AI

Interestingly, C-level expected use of agentic AI appears somewhat more tempered at this stage, suggesting that while executive leadership may be monitoring developments, they have not yet fully prioritized agentic AI as a core driver of transformation. This is likely to shift as agentic AI moves from experimentation to embedded, transformative impact—particularly as early use cases demonstrate measurable business value. As strategic alignment increases, executive-level engagement will accelerate, bringing greater organizational cohesion to AI adoption.

Agentic AI Obstacles

Risks have unquestionably muted the production rollout of genAI, and many of these same concerns apply to agentic AI, which is built on similar foundational technologies. Data security and privacy emerge most often as critical issues, cited by 42% of respondents. While other concerns such as response quality and accuracy, implementation costs, talent shortages, and regulatory compliance rank lower individually, they collectively represent substantial barriers. When aggregated, issues related to data security, privacy, legal and regulatory compliance, ethics, and bias form a formidable cluster of risk factors—clearly indicating that trust and governance remain top priorities for scaling AI adoption.
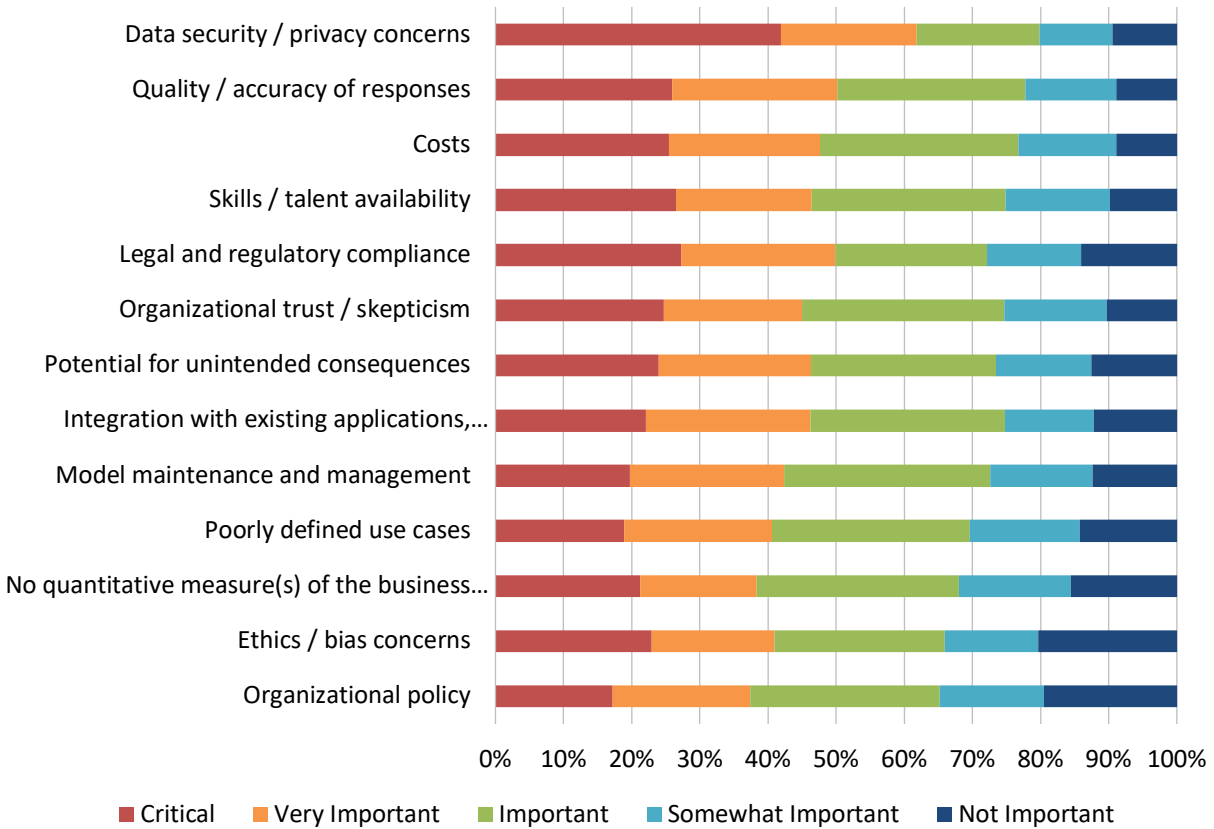
Agentic AI Obstacles

Figure 11 - Agentic AI obstacles

About Howard Dresner and Dresner Advisory Services

The Dresner Advisory Services Agentic AI Report was conceived, designed, and executed by Dresner Advisory Services, LLC—an independent advisory firm—and Howard Dresner, its president, founder and chief research officer.

Howard Dresner is one of the foremost thought leaders in business intelligence and performance management, having coined the term "business intelligence" in 1989. He has published two books on the subject, *The Performance Management Revolution – Business Results through Insight and Action* (John Wiley & Sons, Nov. 2007) and *Profiles in Performance – Business Intelligence Journeys and the Roadmap for Change* (John Wiley & Sons, Nov. 2009). He lectures at forums around the world and is often cited by the business and trade press.

Prior to Dresner Advisory Services, Howard served as chief strategy officer at Hyperion Solutions and was a research fellow at Gartner, where he led its business intelligence research practice for 13 years.

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About Myles Suer

Myles Suer is a research director at Dresner Advisory Services. He is also a technology journalist, and is the #1 CIO influencer, according to LeadTail. He facilitates the #CIOChat, connecting CIOs and senior leaders across industries worldwide. Recognized as a top 100 digital influencer, his thought leadership is featured in ComputerWorld, CIO Magazine, Cutter Business Technology Journal, Datamation, eWeek, CMSWire, and VKTR.

Suer's career spans startups and major tech organizations, including Alation, Privacera, Informatica, HP, and Peregrine. At Informatica, he led product marketing for the Intelligent Data Platform. At HP and Peregrine, he directed product teams that applied analytics and AI to IT management, creating innovations like the CIO Scorecard and AI-driven service ticket optimization.

In addition to his professional accomplishments, Suer is a prolific reviewer of books on AI, technology, and strategy for leading publishers such as Harvard Business Review Press, MIT Press, and Columbia University Press. He holds a masters of science degree from UC Irvine and a second masters degree in business in strategic planning from the University of Southern California.