



MACHINES, MARGINS, AND MULTIPLES

AI in Private Equity Value Creation

By Sinan Erhan, Daniel Soujon, Sebastian Klötzel, Jonathan Klonowski, Cameron Hulett, Naresh Kumar

OMMAX, a pan-European tech, data, and AI strategy consultancy, and **Actum Group** dive into a handful of recent successful use cases to demonstrate the power of AI in value creation.

The scale of growth in the use of AI in recent years has been relentless. According to the Work Trend Index Annual Report, **82% of leaders expect AI agents to become digital team members**, expanding their workforce within the next 12–18 months. This signals a structural shift: AI is no longer viewed as experimental technology, but as a core component of the operating model.

The advancements in AI are allowing private equity firms to take vast steps in their value creation plans. There are plenty of potential AI use cases; however, this abundance puts sponsors at risk of inertia, ultimately costing firms time and money.

To unlock the full potential of agentic AI, OMMAX highlights two key factors that determine whether firms can successfully roll out and scale up AI solutions:

- **Organizational readiness**
- **Technological readiness**

On the **organizational side**, the successful adoption of such capabilities depends heavily on aligning the portfolio company so everyone can move forward in unison. This involves building AI literacy and refining AI knowledge through upskilling, as well as establishing robust AI governance frameworks to ensure decision-making and responsibilities are clearly defined.

From a **technology perspective**, organizations should focus on integrating their existing technological landscape with agentic AI features. This way, tools are easier to access, scale, and secure, and they rely on high-quality, accessible, and timely data.

Naresh Kumar, Operating Executive at KKR-backed Ostrra, states that they have evolved from “strategy theatre” to “hands-on execution” to adopt and scale Agentic-AI systems.

“We are now building an autonomous enterprise at pace by orchestrating collaborative partnerships among shareholders, management and vendors. Unlike past digital transformations, the ‘leader-leader’ focused change paradigm is essential to realise AI value, with a mix of top-down push and bottom-up pull,” Kumar says.

For legacy businesses, this means gradually building confidence, starting with automation and progressing toward AI-enabled decision-making. This requires selecting a few value-creation processes, mapping the end-to-end workflow, and rebuilding them for “human + AI” execution.

To systematically identify and prioritize high-impact opportunities, OMMAX applies a structured assessment framework evaluating business impact against implementation complexity.

With an ever-growing number of potential AI options available to companies, determining the correct path forward is a new challenge businesses now face.

The following three use cases showcase proven ways forward to address these challenges.

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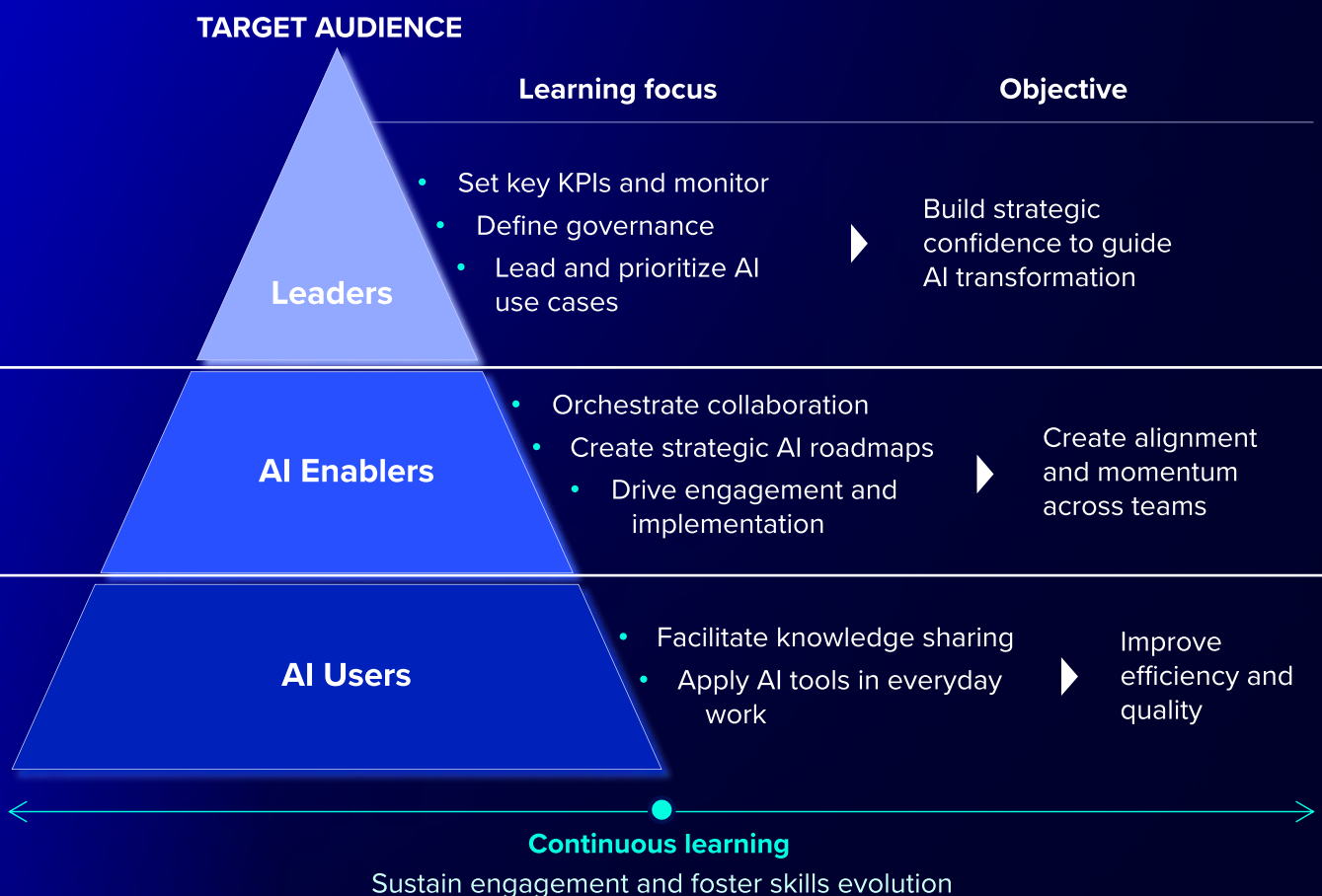
“To integrate AI into day-to-day work, you need to treat it as an operating model redesign, not an IT install.”

CAMERON HULETT
Managing Director and Head of AI & Digital
BC Partners

DEEP DIVE ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS AND UPSKILLING

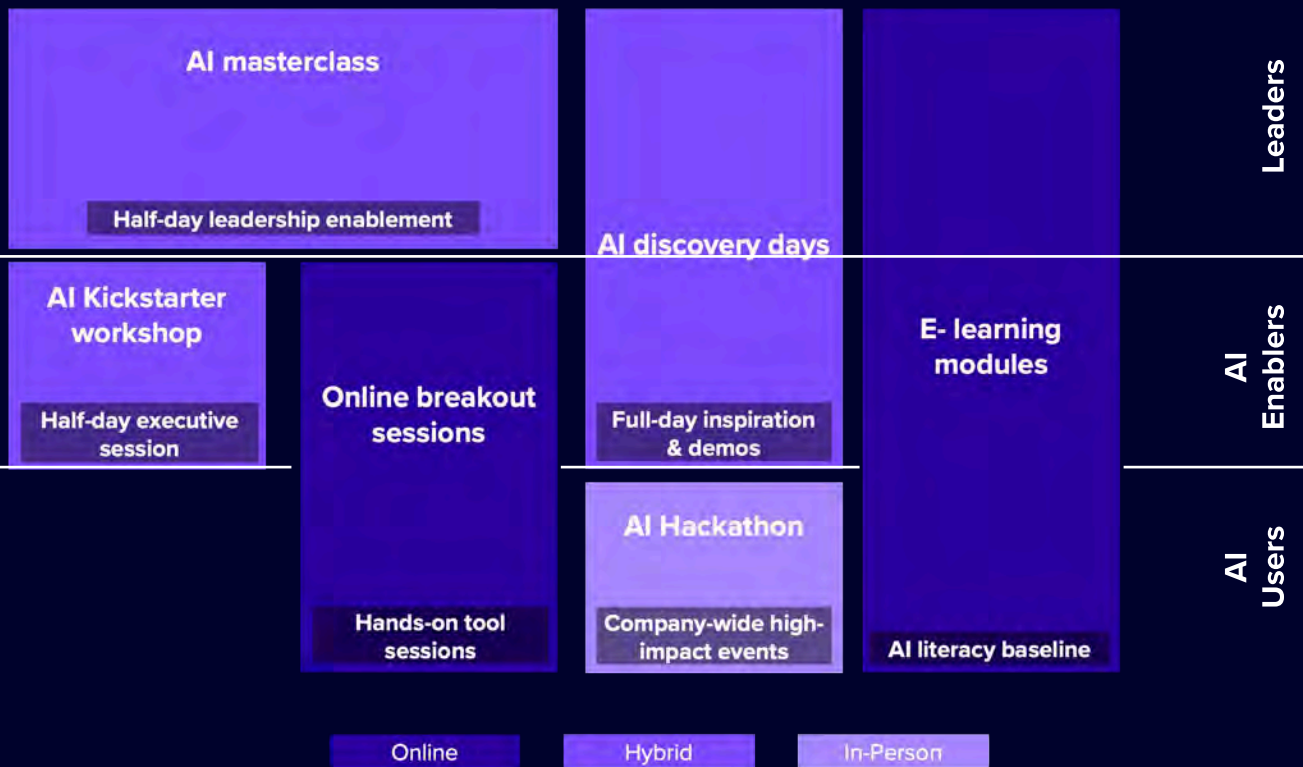
Agentic solutions require an upskilled workforce,
across all levels

APPROACH

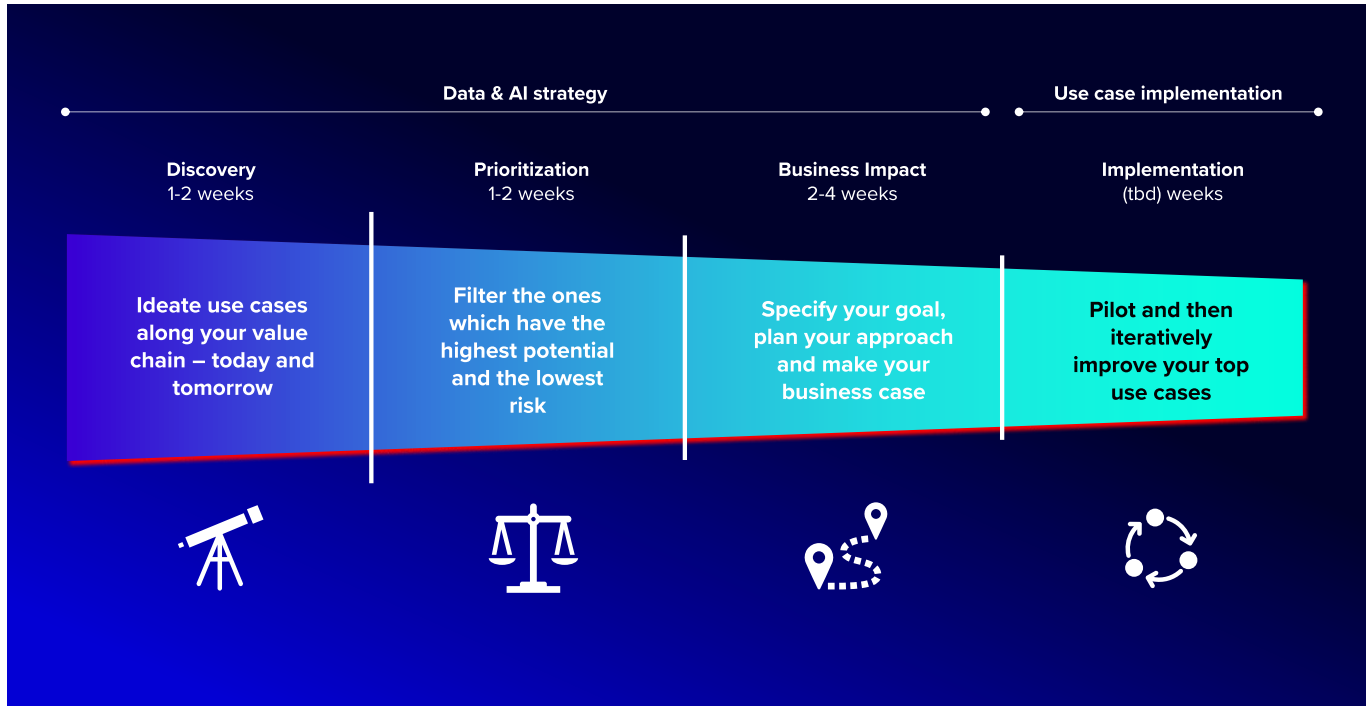


SUGGESTED ACTIONS

Recommendation per audiences' group, detailed paths to be defined:



Proven OMMAX approach for data and AI value creation use cases



Source: OMMAX

Use case identification along the value chain



Source: OMMAX

Use Case 2: Agentic AI Lead and Sales Automation

Sebastian Klötzel, Partner Data & AI at OMMAX, provides the example of the firm working with a German private university that provided high-quality online teaching with a strong international focus.

The university received around 40,000 new leads each month.

Klötzel explains that OMMAX sought to create an **AI agent system capable of personalizing each approach**. The system determined the type of content required for each individual and assessed how that content was received.

OMMAX validated lead interactions through a data-backed pilot program, including granular A/B testing setups across the entire customer journey. OMMAX subsequently helped develop and deploy AI outreach agents for **real-time interaction optimization**, adjusting delivery method, timing, and content to maximize conversion rates and customer response quality.

The firm also established **central security and control mechanisms**, including integrated consent management, content guardrails, and feedback loops to ensure the AI-generated content was compliant, brand-aligned, and continuously improving.

The result, Klötzel says, was a **50% increase in the monthly conversion rate** and 1.3 million personalized messages sent across 100 days. The analysis suggests that **more than 100 sales representatives** would have been required to achieve the same level of personalization manually.

“Agentic AI changes the economics of growth. Instead of linear scaling – hiring more sales reps for more leads – you create a scalable intelligence layer. Personalization at this level was previously impossible without massive headcount. Now it becomes a structural competitive advantage.”

SEBASTIAN KLÖTZEL

Partner Data & AI
OMMAX

Use Case 3: Process Automation

Finally, Klötzel notes the work completed with a **power tools and equipment manufacturer**. The firm operates worldwide and is known for its high-quality products.

OMMAX supported the company in a multi-year partnership to **execute substantial cost savings across the value chain**. This involved identifying and implementing **more than 15 use cases** across product management, sales, and global services.

One example, Klötzel explains, was the **AI-driven automation of customer service requests**. The firm received a large volume of unstructured tickets requiring classification, prioritization, and routing to the appropriate support agent.

By streamlining the ticketing process through **natural language processing to extract key details**, the company saved an average of **one minute per service ticket**. As customer service operations were outsourced and charged per minute, this translated into **six-figure efficiency gains**.

“In process automation, marginal gains compound quickly. Saving one minute per ticket sounds incremental – until you apply it to high ticket volumes. That’s when AI moves from operational improvement to meaningful EBITDA expansion.”

SEBASTIAN KLÖTZEL

Partner Data & AI
OMMAX

A Fast-Changing World

There are difficult conversations required with boards to fully capture AI opportunities. It is about presenting concrete use cases that are feasible with available technology, have a clear business owner outside the technology team, and are tied to metrics aligned with business outcomes.

Ultimately, the focus must remain on what will truly drive value. For individuals, this means deeply understanding the task they are attempting to automate and building solutions the business genuinely needs.

Sinan Erhan concludes: **“AI will not replace leadership judgment, but it will expose it. The firms that thrive will be those that act decisively, prioritize ruthlessly, and embed AI where it drives measurable value. In private equity, speed and discipline have always mattered. With AI, they matter even more.”**

“This fast-changing world requires forward thinkers,” Hulett says. **“In this turbulent environment, you can’t drive by looking in the rearview mirror; you have to look ahead. This means hiring pioneer profiles rather than guardian profiles.”**

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In private equity, **AI is a lever for multiple expansion**. The winners are not those running pilots, but those **embedding AI** into the commercial engine of the business.”



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Partner & Head of UK
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