

• RESEARCH INSIGHTS

Welcome to the autonomous enterprise frontier

Al is rewriting the rules of transformation in real time. Modern enterprises are reaching a turning point. And no one is quite sure what comes next.

The familiar trails are overgrown. The old maps don't work here anymore.

And most organizations are camped at the perimeter, waiting for the path forward to reveal itself. Not because they lack vision, but because trudging ahead feels impossibly complex: Fragmented systems. Legacy infrastructure. Change that's costly, chaotic, and most of all unclear.

But we believe that within this uncertainty, there's unprecedented room for growth.

And we've discovered that in a small number of organizations, there's a new type of leader emerging. They aren't waiting for a perfect path. They're navigating forward with courage, insight, and intelligent tools.

This is the enterprise transformation frontier.

A place where decisioning, workflow, Al, and automation converge to create something more resilient: the autonomous enterprise. A new way of adapting, responding, and evolving; and a future in which people and Al will learn from and guide each other as organizations move from manual work to full autonomy.

To understand this emerging terrain, Pega and NewtonX surveyed 177 business leaders across various industries and countries across North America and Europe. Our findings reveal a landscape divided:

- 72% report a growing urgency to transform.
- Only 28% feel confident in their current path.
- And the gap is widening between those who've begun the climb and those still circling the base.

This research insights report is a compass for those ready to move.

It will help you benchmark your progress, uncover hidden barriers, and spot the patterns that set these leaders apart – all grounded in real-world data from enterprise executives like you navigating this same transformation frontier.

Because in this environment, hesitation doesn't keep you safe. It keeps you stuck.



CHAPTER 1

The overgrowth of urgency

The forest is thick with noise.

Everyone hears the call to transform. But most enterprises are tangled in undergrowth – trapped by legacy systems, misled by manual processes, and weighed down by complexity.

Our research confirms it:

- **72%** of enterprise leaders say the pace of change is accelerating
- **70%** admit they're struggling to keep up
- 28% feel confident in their current path

This type of organizational overwhelm will only continue to grow. Not because leaders lack tools, but because they're burdened with disconnected ones. As complexity compounds, the gap is widening between those improvising at runtime and those orchestrating with purpose.

The easy way forward won't appear out of nowhere

Too many are holding back. Not from lack of vision, but because moving forward means untangling years of legacy complexity. Implementing Al agents without addressing the systems underneath them risks adding to the problem. So they wait – for the right conditions, the right investment, the right path, for some breakthrough to cut through the trees on its own.

But here's the truth: The forest doesn't part for you. You forge your way through it.

Disruption isn't just blowing over. It's rooting itself deep – and only those who adapt will navigate through.

Our research shows that 54% of enterprises have experienced significant operational disruption due to external global volatility. 32% of leaders feel that their organizations are unprepared to adapt to these changes and 27% have little confidence in their organization's ability to adapt to new government policies. And this volatility is no longer the exception; it's the rule.

Leaders are being pulled in every direction:

- Cut costs.
- · Modernize operations.
- Launch new products.
- · Navigate regulation.
- Do more faster with less.

In this climate, the idea that we'll reach a perfect moment to transform?

It's a myth.



Lost in the overgrowth

Most enterprises know they need to move. But tangled roots hold them back.

- 67% say transformation efforts are delayed by uncertainty.
- **59%** are still burdened by technical debt.
- **62%** cite integration complexity as a major barrier.

And beneath those structural issues lies a deeper problem: culture.

- **45%** of frontline employees
- 41% of business leaders

...resist the shift to autonomy. Not because they don't believe in it – but because uncertainty creates fear. And fear creates inertia.

The result? A forest floor littered with false starts, abandoned pilots, and change programs that never quite broke through.

WELCOME TO THE AUTONOMOUS ENTERPRISE FRONTIER

Organizations' top challenges when adopting autonomous capabilities

How impactful, if at all, are each of the following sources of resistance to your organization becoming an autonomous enterprise? (n=177) (extremely or very impactful)



A way through

While most are still circling, some organizations have found a different approach.

They didn't wait for a perfect path.

They stopped clearing the brush and started scanning the horizon.

Among this group:

- 48% are using Al to improve decision-making.
- **49%** are building resilience directly into operations.
- And they're 3X more likely to succeed when guided by a research-backed roadmap.

The moment of decision

Every enterprise stands at a fork in the path.

One trail loops endlessly – more delays, more doubt, more drift.

The other leads forward – toward clarity, capability, and momentum.

The difference isn't just the tools. It's the mindset.

The bold have started moving.

Where do you stand?



A quick snapshot of the terrain enterprises are navigating today:

Change is accelerating **72%** of leaders say the pace of change is faster than ever.

Confidence is scarce **28%** feel confident in their current transformation path.

Transformation is stuck **67%** of efforts are delayed by uncertainty.

Technical debt persists **59%** still struggle with legacy systems.

Resistance is real **45%** of frontline employees and 41% of leaders resist autonomy.

Complexity is a barrier **62%** cite integration challenges as a major obstacle.



The forest floor is no longer flat.

The terrain is shifting – uneven, tangled, and unclear. But our research reveals something concrete: a path forward does exist – and 5% of enterprises are already on it.

These are the outliers. The pathfinders. The ones who saw through the trees and started moving.

The rest – the 95% – are just beginning to find their bearings. And while forging a path requires more than tools, it also opens the door to something far greater: a new way of thinking, working, and moving forward.

Out of the woods

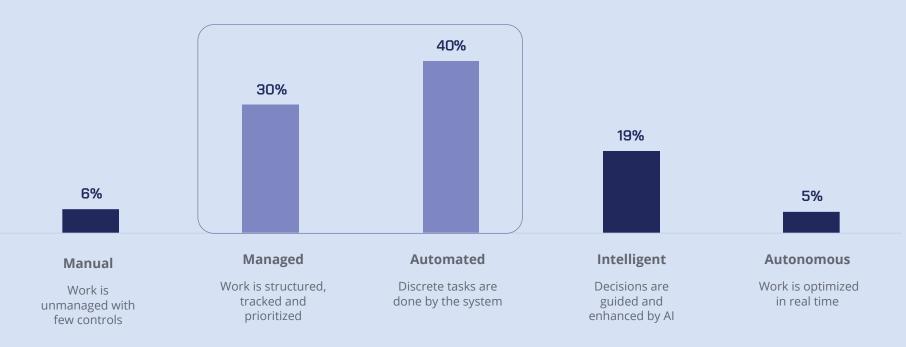
The bold few didn't just digitize outdated workflows or replicate legacy systems in the cloud. They rewrote the rules.

They've embraced the vision of the autonomous enterprise – systems that adapt, learn, and optimize in real time. Where Al agents, governed decisioning, and dynamic workflows don't just execute tasks, but help move strategy forward.

And they didn't get there by chance. Enterprises with research-backed strategies are 3X more likely to describe their organization as autonomous than those relying on instinct or inertia.

Buyers tend to see themselves in the managed or automated stages of their autonomous journey

Where would you place your organization on the journey to becoming an Autonomous Enterprise? (n=177)



Caught below the tree line

Most enterprises aren't idle. They've made progress.

But it's fragmented. Tactical. Partial.

They're caught between 40% automation and 30% managed states – a plateau that feels like motion, but lacks momentum.

Why can't they break through?

- **59%** still struggle with technical debt.
- **58%** face persistent security and compliance concerns.
- **53%** cite data quality, accessibility, and integration issues as major barriers.

These are the thorns in the trail. And while they may look purely technical, the real tangle is as much psychological as it is technical.

Not just integration hurdles or system debt, but hesitation.

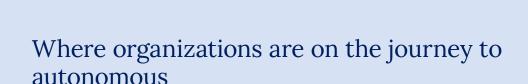
The fear of disruption.

The fear of making the wrong call.

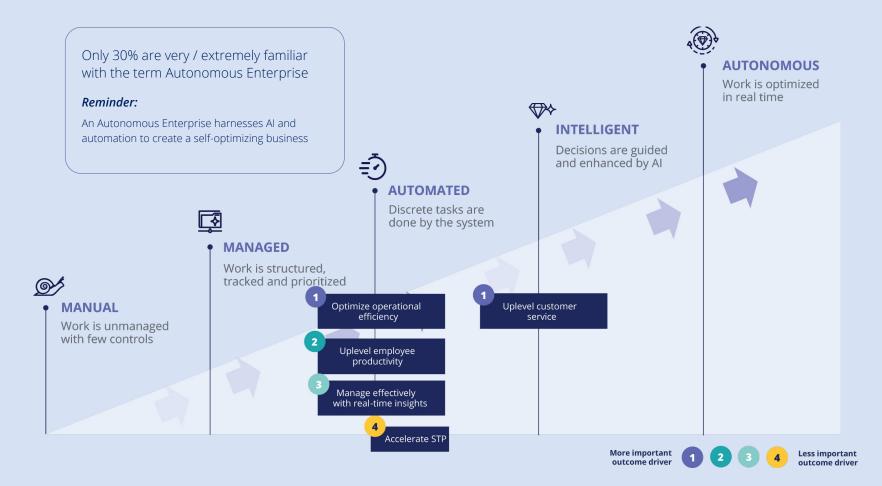
But in a landscape moving this fast, the better question isn't "What if we fail?"

It's "What if we don't try?"

Because the real risk isn't stepping forward. It's standing still while others gain ground.

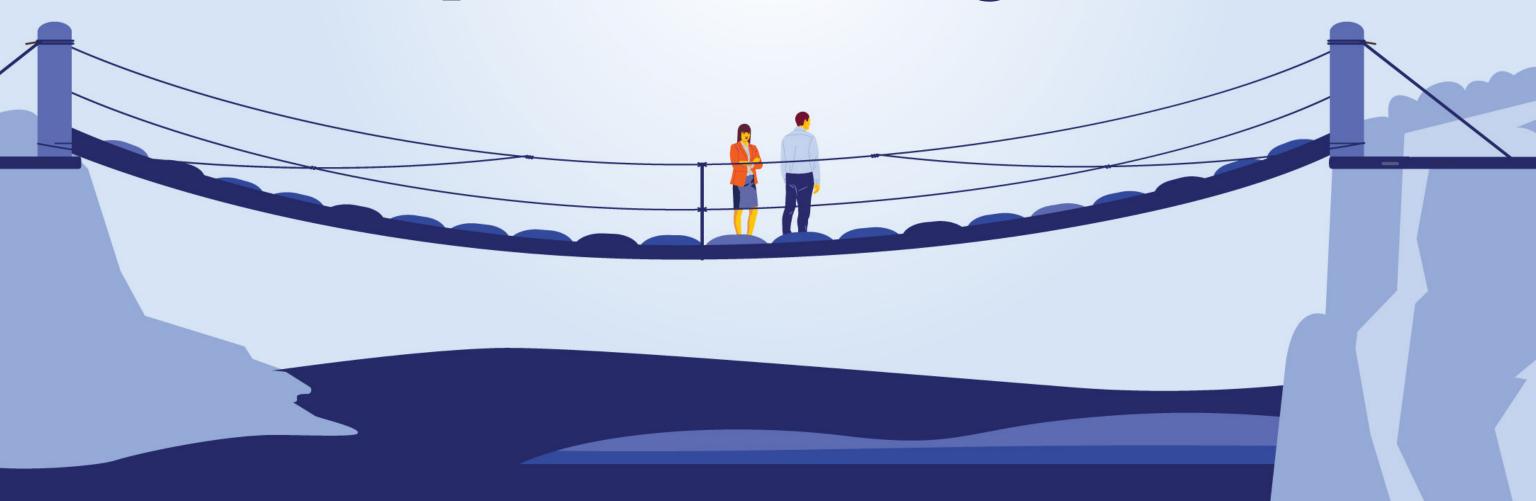


Pega Point of View: The proven path to self-optimizing processes & experiences



CHAPTER 3

The autonomous enterprise advantage



The clearing is real. And some enterprises have already stepped into it.

These organizations are embracing the autonomous enterprise not as a destination, but as a design principle, building intelligent ecosystems where AI agents, orchestrated workflows, and governed decisioning work in sync.

The journey forward

Organizations aren't just exploring the autonomous enterprise for its technical promise – they see it as key to unlocking real strategic impact:

- **68%** say improved operational efficiency is a top priority.
- 66% rank cost reduction as a critical benefit.
- **65%** consider better customer experience extremely important.
- **62%** cite competitive advantage as a core driver.

At this level:

- Workflows are dynamic and self-adjusting.
- Al doesn't displace people it **amplifies** their judgment.
- Decisions are predictive, governed, and aligned to enterprise strategy, business rules, and market requirements.

Decision makers see the value in the outcomes autonomous capabilities can deliver to their organization

Operational efficiency, reduced cost, better customer experience, & competitive advantages are seen as heavily important

How important is each of the following benefits of autonomous capabilities to your organization? (n=177) (extremely or very important)



Design, don't discover

Autonomous enterprises aren't found by accident. They're built with intention.

These organizations don't rely on isolated pilots or scattered tools. They architect systems that think, adapt, and scale.

They prioritize:

Orchestration over fragmentation

Predictability over improvisation

Governance over guesswork

Design over discovery

And the results bear this out:

- **79%** of business leaders say comprehensive workflow orchestration is a top priority, not point solutions.
- **73%** leverage AI agents not to replace human input, but to amplify human decision-making and unlock agility.

This is a strategic philosophy (and it's the same one Pega is built on).



In the forest, having a path is only the beginning. The tools you bring with you matter just as much.

The leaders in our study – that 5% who've reached maturity – share something in common:

They've traded patchwork fixes for platforms built to adapt, scale, and think.

Pega is that kind of platform. It's not a bolt-on solution. It's the Al-powered foundation for enterprise transformation – designed to unify decisioning, orchestration, and automation in one intelligent system. And its advantage is threefold:

- **Pega Blueprint™** reimagines how work gets done by combining the latest in gen Al with years of industry best practices so you can move fast without starting from scratch.
- **Pega Predictable AI™** merges AI agents with the predictability of structured workflows, ensuring transparency, auditability, and repeatability in the design phase.
- **End-to-end workflow orchestration and intelligent case management** replace legacy tech with scalable, adaptive systems so you can grow without growing complexity.

The enterprises at the top aren't using more tools. They're using the right ones – tools that build confidence in their Al journey ahead.

CHAPTER 4

Your roadmap to the autonomous enterprise

We've already seen that the clearing isn't reached by chance. It's mapped.

You can move there deliberately, with systems built to adapt and strategies shaped by evidence.

Phase 1: Blueprint your transformation

Before you scale, you need clarity and conviction.

Groundbreakers start by clearing the undergrowth – using Pega Blueprint to reimagine legacy systems and workflows and then quickly moving to bring those ideas to life.

Action items:

- Harness Blueprint to design future-ready, simplified processes.
- Align teams around a shared vision and measurable goals.
- Build the foundation for Al, orchestration, and automation.
- Unify data sources for visibility, control, and governance.
- Empower early champions across business and IT.

Key insight:

Only 18% of enterprise leaders believe their company has a well-defined roadmap to the autonomous enterprise.

Phase 2: Orchestrate the work that matters

This is where the path begins to clear.

Transformation shifts from tactical upgrades to strategic coordination. The autonomous enterprise is organized around the work that delivers outcomes rather than reinventing processes. Work becomes structured, tracked, and prioritized across the enterprise.

Action items:

- Use case management to coordinate complex, cross-functional work.
- Design workflows that are outcome-driven, not process-driven.
- Implement intelligent workflow automation across departments.
- Introduce real-time visibility into work status and performance.
- Embed Al into critical points within workflows.
- Prioritize orchestration over point-solution automation.

Key insight:

Only 30% of enterprise leaders say their company's work is structured, tracked, and prioritized – the "managed" stage of the autonomous enterprise journey.



Phase 3: Optimize with predictable AI

At this point, systems begin to self-improve.

Leaders shift from reacting to anticipating – embedding intelligence that learns, adapts, and unlocks human capacity. Predictability becomes the new currency. All agents should execute tasks with transparency, governance, and reliability.

Action items:

- Deploy Al agents to execute workflows and specific tasks.
- Monitor and refine in real time using feedback loops.
- Enable systems to adapt based on context, not just rules.
- Shift from static dashboards to predictive insights.
- Build governance frameworks to ensure AI is explainable

Key insight:

Only 53% of enterprise leaders are confident in their organization's ability to deploy Al agents.

Phase 4: Architect for reuse and scale

This is the promised land: the autonomous enterprise.

Here, work is optimized in real time. Systems orchestrate themselves. Human potential is unlocked for creativity, strategy, and innovation. Transformation becomes continuous (and scalable).

Action items:

- Build self-healing, self-optimizing systems.
- Institutionalize continuous learning and improvement loops.
- Expand orchestration across the full customer and employee lifecycle.
- Use AI to personalize experiences at scale.
- Architect reusable components and patterns to accelerate future transformation.
- Reinvest freed-up capacity into innovation and growth.

Key insight:

Only 5% of enterprises report that they believe they've reached the autonomous enterprise. For the other 95%, that's not a setback - it's an open field of opportunity.

Overcoming resistance: The human factor

Even the best systems alone won't move an organization forward.

Resistance is real:

45% of frontline employees

41% of business leaders

...still resist the shift to autonomy.

But resistance isn't permanent. It's a starting point. And if there's one thing humans excel at, it's adapting.

Action items:

- Use data transparency to build trust and demystify Al.
- Frame Al adoption as augmentation, not displacement.
- Create early wins that spark momentum and belief.
- Invest in upskilling and change management.
- Celebrate transformation champions across the org.



Groundbreakers are everywhere and they're essential to clearing the path. They just need room to thrive.

Your journey, powered by Pega

You don't have to navigate this alone. Even the most eager groundbreakers need a partner.

Pega brings more than 40 years of enterprise transformation expertise and an Al-powered platform purpose-built for the autonomous enterprise.

With AI and outcomes at the center, you can move faster, scale smarter, and lead with confidence. Pega helps you replace legacy complexity with orchestrated intelligence and automation – so you can stop reacting and start designing the future.

Here's how:

- Pega Blueprint™ reimagines application design by combining generative AI with decades of industry best practices – so you can spin up an app in minutes and go live in days.
- Predictable AI™ serves as your intelligent compass enabling you to use agentic AI to design and execute workflows that are transparent, governable, and future-ready.
- **End-to-end workflow orchestration and intelligent case management** replace legacy tech with scalable, adaptive systems so you can grow globally without local fragmentation.

With agentic Al and orchestrated intelligence, we help enterprises stop reacting and start leading. You don't need magic. Just systems built to move you forward. And the right partner to walk beside you.



About Pegasystems

Pega provides the leading Al-powered platform for enterprise transformation. The world's most influential organizations trust our technology to reimagine how work gets done by automating workflows, personalizing customer experiences, and modernizing legacy systems. Since 1983, our scalable, flexible architecture has fueled continuous innovation, helping clients accelerate their path to the autonomous enterprise.

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