



The truth about agentic AI success

What it takes to scale AI from experimentation to real business outcomes.



Agentic AI adoption is accelerating. But consistent value is not.

New research from Pega, conducted with Savanta, surveyed 500+ global business and IT leaders who have already implemented agentic AI.

It reveals a clear pattern: success is not determined by the technology alone, but by how organizations redesign work around it.

We've reached a tipping point. Adoption is high. Maturity is not.

Many organizations report successful deployments. Yet outcomes remain uneven – fragmented across systems, teams, and use cases. It's not a gap of capability. It's one of execution.

Leading organizations approach agentic AI as a business transformation – not a set of tools.

The research shows that those achieving meaningful results take a fundamentally different path:

- They rethink existing processes, rather than layering AI onto legacy ways of working
- They align business and IT around shared outcomes, not isolated use cases
- They design for consistency, predictability, and reduced complexity from the start

This shift is what turns adoption into impact

Agentic AI only delivers value when it changes how the business runs.

Organizations that treat AI as incremental see incremental results. Those that use it to reimagine how work gets done – across workflows, decisions, and systems – unlock measurable, scalable outcomes.

The leaders in the agentic era won't be those who deploy more AI. They will be those who operationalize it – with clarity, control, and consistency.

AI is not failing. It's being applied in the wrong place.

Agentic AI is moving fast. But for most enterprises, progress stops at the same place: the pilot phase. This is not a technology problem. It's a system design problem.

Most AI is being deployed to fix tasks, not to run the business.

Independent research into agentic AI outcomes shows a clear pattern: success is not driven by model capability – it's driven by how work is designed, governed, and run.

The organizations seeing real results aren't experimenting more. They are architecting differently.

- They define how work should operate
- They align around outcomes early
- They run AI inside systems built for consistency, not improvisation

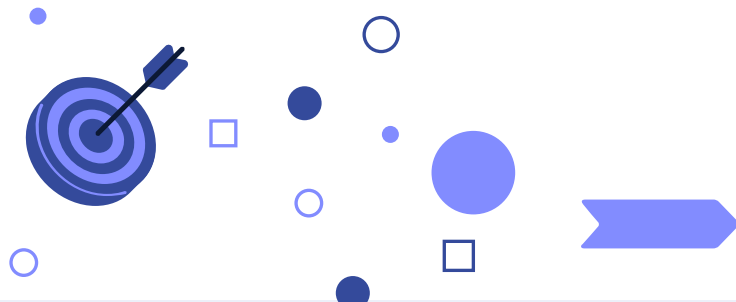
That's the shift underway:

- From experimentation to execution
- From activity to outcomes
- From isolated intelligence to orchestrated work

Across industries, AI is being applied in small, tactical ways – summarizing documents, answering questions, and automating isolated tasks.

These wins are real. But they are also **episodic**.

They improve moments, not outcomes. And they don't scale into systems that run the business.



Predictable outcomes define value. Not speed.

The market is already converging on a new definition of success.

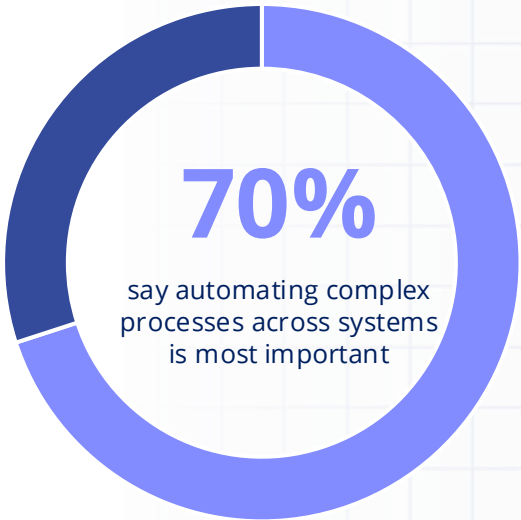
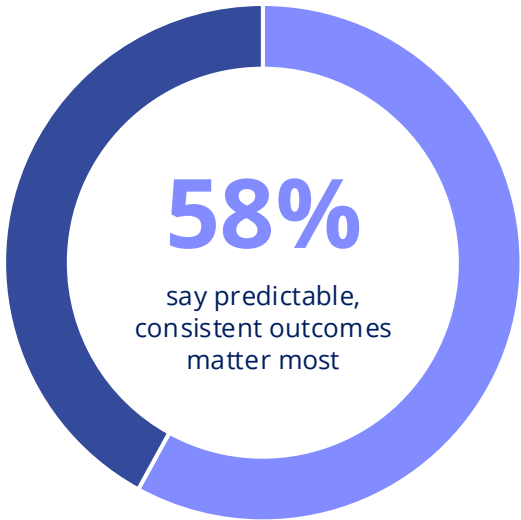
58% of organizations say the primary benefit of agentic AI is delivering **predictable outcomes** that reduce complexity and improve customer experience.

At the same time, 70% identify **end-to-end automation of complex processes across systems** as the most important outcome.

This is a clear signal:

- Speed matters, but only if it delivers consistent results
- Intelligence matters, but only if it drives measurable outcomes

What scales is predictability.



Measuring activity does not create value. Outcomes do.

Success is measured by outcomes, not activity

Organizations that succeed don't just deploy AI. They define success upfront.

The widespread adoption of AI chat interfaces is accelerating this shift. Enterprise access to tools like Copilot, Gemini, and Claude has become mainstream, making AI more accessible than ever.

But access does not equal impact. While chat-based AI drives productivity at the task level, it does not inherently deliver measurable business outcomes. That requires defining success upfront, and designing how AI operates across workflows, systems, and decisions.

The difference is simple: unsuccessful initiatives measure activity. Successful ones measure impact.

What it means: AI does not create value when it runs. It creates value when it delivers proven outcomes.

- 65% have **formal success metrics tied to business outcomes**
- 95% have a **clear enterprise-level strategy**

AI creates value when it delivers proven outcomes



65%

have formal success metrics tied to business outcomes



95%

have a clear enterprise-level strategy

Orchestration drives results. Not isolated agents.

If outcomes define success, execution defines whether you get there. AI success depends on execution across systems, not isolated tools.

The data shows what organizations are trying to achieve:

- **71% prioritize automating complex, multi-system processes**

Organizations are not trying to optimize individual tasks. They're trying to run end-to-end processes across systems, decisions, and workflows.

But most deployments don't start there. They start with individual agents:

- 86% rely on personal assistant-style agents
- 74% use custom agent interfaces

These are useful, but incomplete. Enterprise value does not break at the task level. It breaks at the handoff points between systems, decisions, and workflows.

When agents operate in isolation:

- Processes fragment
- Decisions lose context
- Execution becomes inconsistent

Isolated AI doesn't scale. Coordinated execution does.

Agents play a role, but only within a defined system of work. Not when they are left to figure it out at runtime.

Without structure, scaling AI creates a new problem: value scales faster, but so does complexity.

- Systems become harder to manage
- Risk becomes harder to contain
- Costs become harder to predict

The gap isn't AI capability. It's system-level orchestration.

What do successful organization have in common?

96%

have rethought their processes to maximize AI outcomes

53%

fundamentally reimagine how their business operates

Organization, readiness, and alignment are still superpowers

Organizational readiness and alignment are decisive

Even with the right ambition, execution still depends on the organization itself. Among successful implementations:

- 80% cite **business and IT alignment** as critical
- 61% share **ownership of outcomes and measurement**
- 96% have **rethought traditional processes** to unlock AI value

At the same time, failure is often driven by:

- Lack of understanding (77%)
- Insufficient resources (75%)

What this means

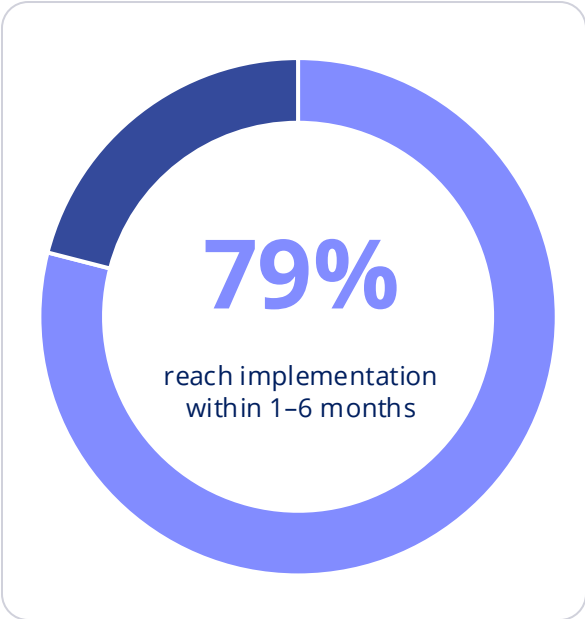
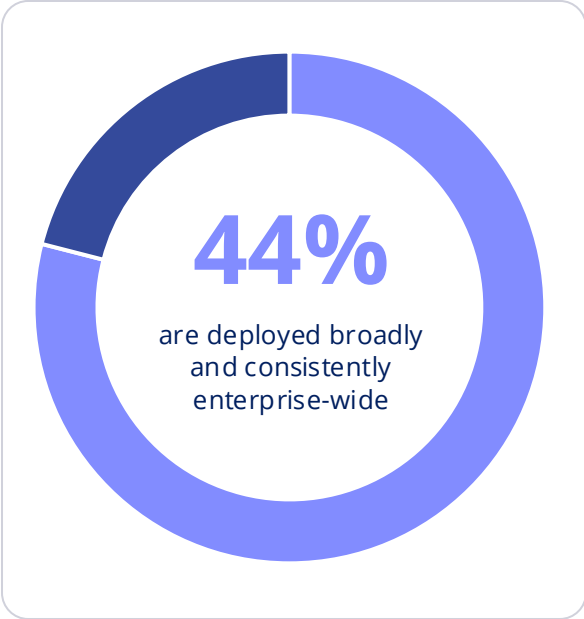
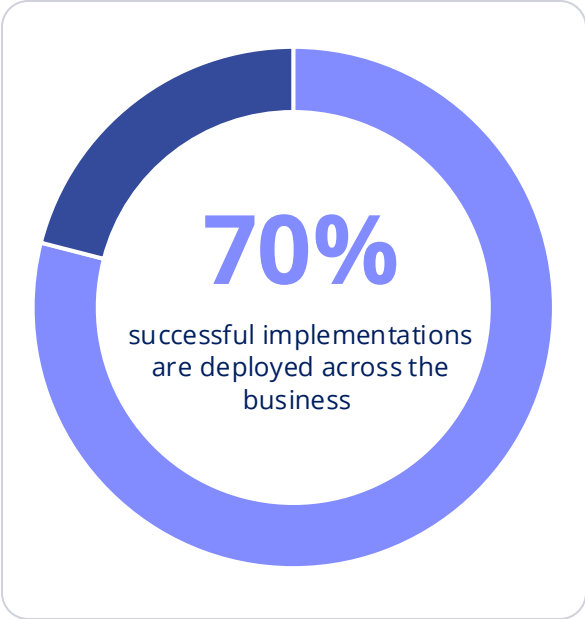
AI succeeds when organizations align teams, processes, and ownership models around how work is designed and measured.

Successful organizations understand that workflow and process matter just as much as the technology they deploy.



Scale defines real success. Not pilots.

Even when early progress is strong, many initiatives stall before real impact is achieved. Success is not about isolated wins.



What it means

Success comes from building for scale early, not from extending pilots indefinitely.

The pattern is consistent across every dimension:

Agentic AI succeeds when it's architected for execution, not layered onto existing systems.

Why most AI initiatives stall

So why do so many initiatives fail to reach that point?

Many organizations follow the same path: Start with tools. Add agents. Increase automation.

It works at first. Then it breaks. That's because AI does not fail at the edge, it fails in the system.

Most enterprises weren't designed for AI to run their operations. So, when AI is introduced:

- Decisions become inconsistent
- Workflows disconnect
- Governance weakens

This is the core dynamic:
More capability creates more complexity, unless the system is designed to hold it.

Most organizations are still applying AI in isolated, tactical ways, only improving moments, not outcomes. This prevents systems from scaling across the business.

In some cases, these isolated tactical uses can be valuable. But they are only episodic. They optimize parts of the process, not the system itself.

That's why so many initiatives struggle to scale. A small agent that saves time is useful, but it doesn't deliver meaningful business impact.

This creates a predictable failure pattern: AI looks effective in pilots, but breaks under scale, scrutiny, and real operational pressure. Not because the technology doesn't work, but because **the systems around it were not built to support it.**

What separates progress from stalled pilots?

The difference isn't effort. It's whether the system is designed upfront.

Across organizations:

95%

have enterprise-level AI strategy

61%

define success metrics tied to business outcomes

Among successful implementations:

96%

rethink how work operates before deploying AI

What successful enterprises do differently

The organizations that break through do not approach AI as a toolset. They approach it as a redesign of how the business operates.

They architect first. Then deploy.

They do not begin with models or tools. They begin with:

- How work should function
- What outcomes matter
- How decisions should behave

They design the system first then apply AI within it.

From insight to operating model

The research findings map to a clear shift:

What leaders prioritize	What it requires
Predictability	Structured execution
Outcomes	Outcome-based governance
End-to-end value	Process orchestration
Readiness	Architecture grounded in reality
Alignment	Shared design of work
Business transformation	Process Reimagination

The shift: governed autonomy

The future isn't unconstrained AI

It's autonomy with structure:

- Agents working inside defined processes
- Decisions governed by rules and context
- Outcomes that are visible, explainable, and repeatable

Autonomy without structure is just improvisation at scale.

Governed autonomy allows organizations to:

- Move faster without losing control
- Scale change without increasing risk
- Build confidence through consistent results

What this means for enterprise leaders

The market has already shifted. AI success is no longer defined by:

- Model performance
- Speed of deployment
- Number of use cases

It's defined by something simpler – and harder to get right:

Can your business run on it?

The organizations that succeed are building systems that:

- Deliver predictable outcomes
- Coordinate work across systems
- Scale without breaking
- Improve over time

They aren't just using AI. They're operating through it.

The bottom line

The data makes one thing clear: AI success is not about capability, experimentation, or speed. It's about execution.

The organizations that win will be those that stop deploying AI as tools and start designing how their business runs with it.

Because scale doesn't just require better AI. It requires predictable outcomes – delivered with control, consistency, and discipline.

A final question

Are you implementing AI? Or are you designing how your business runs with it?

LEARN WHAT IT TAKES TO SUCCEED

Explore how leading organizations are designing for predictable outcomes, governed autonomy, and enterprise-scale execution.

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About Pega

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