Agentic AI: A survey of industry readiness and adoption

November 2025

Foreword

As organisations transition from traditional AI to generative AI, and now to agentic AI, businesses are moving towards a new era where digital systems can act autonomously, adapt to context, and make decisions across complex workflows. This shift is a defining moment for business leaders to reimagine how their organisations operate, compete, and deliver value.

In September 2025, PwC India conducted the 'Agentic AI: A survey of industry readiness and adoption' to evaluate how Indian domestic organisations and global capability centres based in India are responding to this shift and where they stand today in their agentic AI adoption journey. The findings suggest that a growing number of organisations are gearing up for enterprise-wide adoption, while 55% are still in the early stages of experimentation with prototypes.

Although concerns around governance, data readiness, and scalability are impacting the pace of progress, the adoption of agentic AI is primarily being driven by factors such as productivity, cost efficiency, and customer experience. Successful adoption of agentic AI demands more than investment in technology. It requires the right ecosystem of partners, leadership vision, and responsible governance. 3 out of 4 respondents seek partner organisations who can create the blueprint during initial phases and take full accountability throughout the entire programme lifecycle.

In addition to outlining the factors that impact how agentic AI can scale across industries in the coming years, this report offers a benchmark of current readiness and key trends in adoption.

We hope you find the report engaging and can derive actionable insights from it.

Sumit Srivastav
Partner and Leader—Agentic Automation
PwC India

Contents

Introduction

Agentic AI marks the next step in enterprise transformation. It builds on generative AI and intelligent automation to develop autonomous and adaptive systems that can manage complex workflows, make smart decisions, and reimagine customer engagement.

In this context, the survey offers a timely assessment of how organisations are positioning themselves for this shift. It also highlights the priorities, barriers and strategies which could shape the adoption of agentic AI at scale. The insights from business and technology leaders across industries offer a cross-sector view of how their organisations are integrating agentic AI into their operating models. Beyond capturing the current state, this report reflects the strategic choices organisations are making to compete and grow in a market where agentic AI maturity is becoming a key differentiator.

The findings suggest that while organisations are at different stages of maturity, a common theme that has emerged is that agentic AI adoption is no longer experimental but a necessity. More than four out of ten respondents say they are aiming for enterprise-wide adoption in six to twelve months. This indicates a sense of urgency and commitment towards making the technology shift. Organisations are redirecting their focus from pilots and trials to enterprise-scale adoption, where success is determined by strategic vision, robust governance, and data readiness.

We structured our survey analysis around four key aspects:

- Current landscape of agentic AI—adoption trends and targets
- Key drivers and focus areas
- Perceptions and reality—challenges in agentic AI's adoption
- Key considerations for product and implementation partners

Taken together, these aspects aim to provide business leaders with a benchmark to evaluate their readiness, understand the market trends, and set the course for the responsible and scalable adoption of agentic AI.
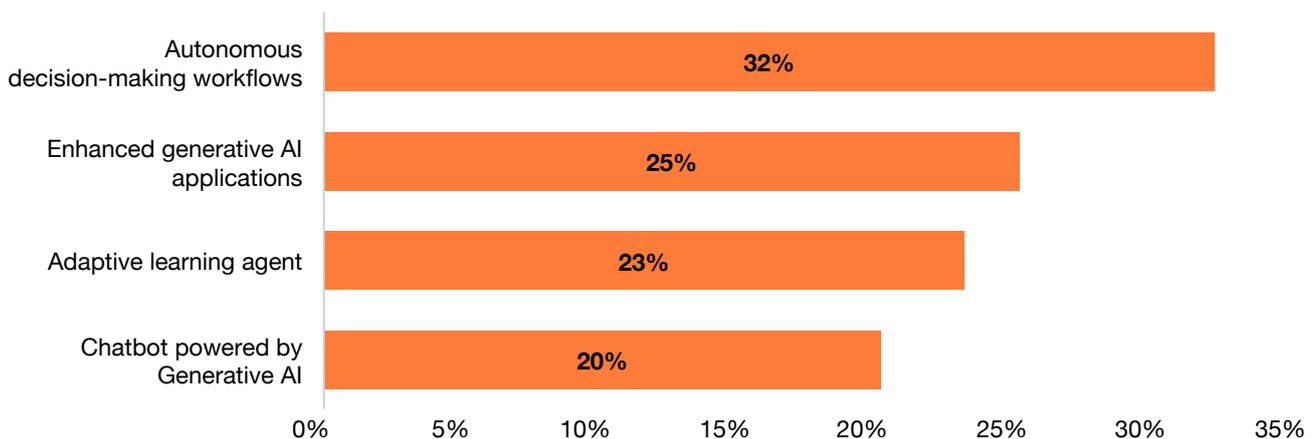
01

Agentic AI: Adoption trends and targets

The survey focuses on three aspects of agentic AI's adoption—general perceptions of agentic AI, the current maturity levels of organisations in their agentic AI adoption journey, and the timelines for achieving their targets for implementing the technology. It also highlights the momentum of agentic AI's adoption and the readiness gaps to achieve enterprise-wide scaling.

General perceptions about agentic AI

Question: When you think of AI agents, which of the following comes to your mind?

Category	Percentage
Autonomous decision-making workflows	32%
Enhanced generative AI applications	25%
Adaptive learning agent	23%
Chatbot powered by Generative AI	20%

A recent PwC report[1] highlighted the key characteristics of agentic AI such as autonomy, goal-oriented behaviour, learning capability, workflow orchestration and execution. These capabilities highlight the ability of agentic AI to coordinate with other AI agents and humans for completing various actions such as conducting multi-step planning, working with external systems, delivering auditable outcomes, and improving their capabilities with continuous learning.
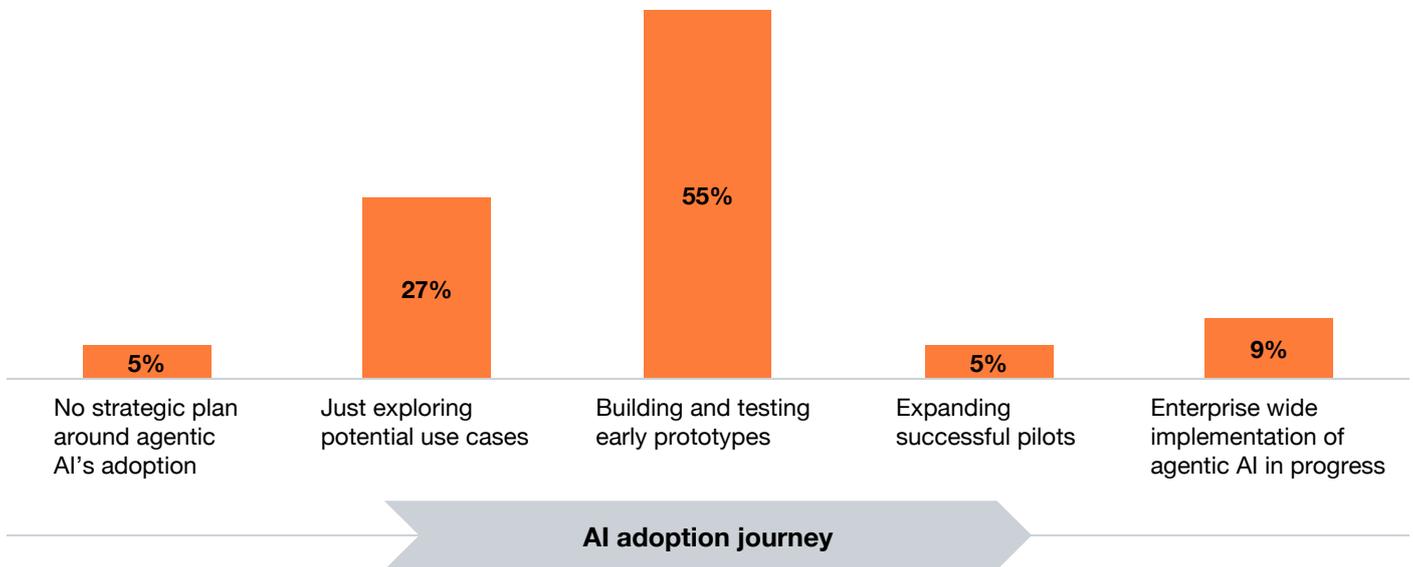
> **4 out of 5 respondents agree that agentic AI is much more than a GenAI chatbot and recognise its broader potential in orchestrating end-to-end workflows due to its decision-making and adaptive learning capabilities.**

While these are encouraging responses, it is important to look at where organisations currently stand in their agentic AI adoption journey.

---

1 https://www.pwc.in/assets/pdfs/consulting/technology/emerging-technologies/intelligent-automation/powering-automation-with-agents.pdf

Current state of adoption

Question: Where are you currently placed in your agentic AI journey?

		55%		
	27%			9%
5%			5%	
No strategic plan around agentic AI's adoption	Just exploring potential use cases	Building and testing early prototypes	Expanding successful pilots	Enterprise wide implementation of agentic AI in progress

AI adoption journey

The future growth trajectory of businesses will depend on how well they are able to embed agentic AI into the core of their business. According to the survey, 95% have begun their journey towards agentic AI adoption, yet only 14% have progressed beyond early validation to either expanding successful pilots (5%) or moving towards enterprise-wide implementation (9%). This indicates that though many organisations have commenced their agentic AI journey, there is still a long way for them to successfully complete the adoption process.

> **8 out of 10 businesses are still in the initial stages of agentic AI adoption and are either exploring potential use cases or building early prototypes. Though most organisations are at the starting point of their adoption journey, the ones who choose to ride the agentic AI wave now will be well-positioned to stay ahead of the curve and reap long-term benefits in the future.**

The next step for these organisations is to implement lighthouse processes, set up a cross functional agentic AI squads to deliver production grade agents in time-bound, phased increments. This strategy of scaling quickly while ensuring security could distinguish short-term experiments from sustainable competitive advantages.

Expected timelines to achieve enterprise-wide adoption

Question: By when do you think your organisation will achieve enterprise-wide adoption of agentic AI?

16%	42%	21%	16%	5%
3–6 months	6–12 months	12–18 months	18–24 months	24+ months

Expectations around timelines to achieve enterprise-wide adoption remain ambitious, signalling that agentic AI adoption is a priority for CEOs.

6 out of 10 respondents expect to achieve enterprise-wide adoption within a span of 12 months. The minimal long tail (5% expecting to go beyond 24 months) suggests that very few respondents expect structural or regulatory barriers severe enough to prevent scaling.

Most organisations which are in the early stages of their agentic AI journey seek near-term broad deployment which could create an expectation maturity gap. Closing this gap requires clarity on what enterprise-wide adoption means and where AI agents are integrated into critical operational workflows for reliable agent performance by establishing strong guardrails in place.
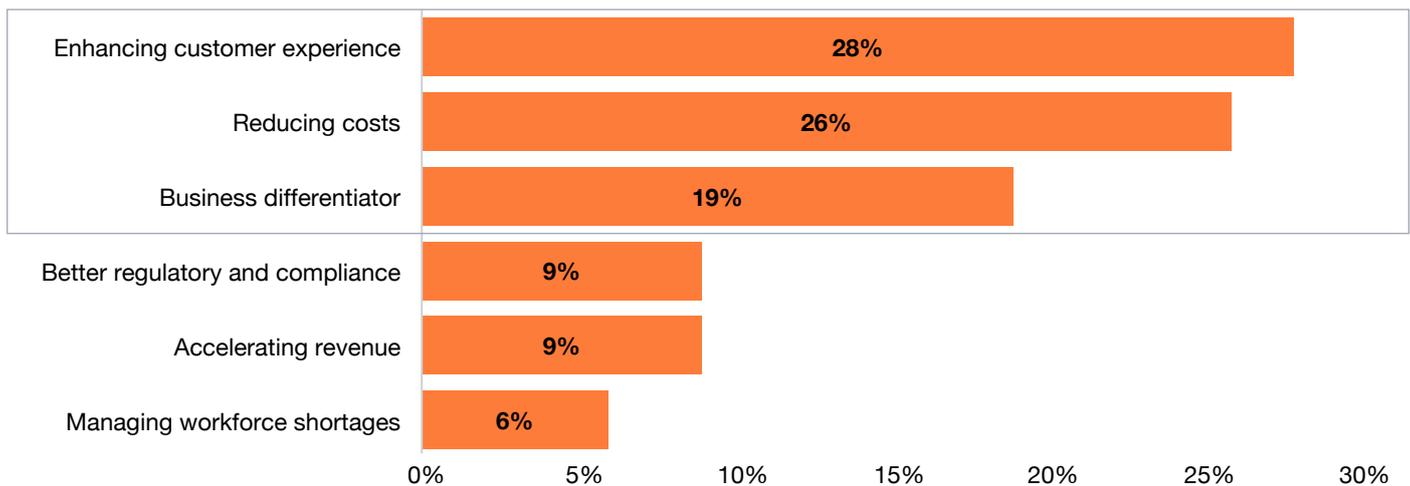
02

Agentic AI's adoption: Key drivers and focus areas

Agentic AI can be a crucial business differentiator due to its ability to analyse data and make strategic business decisions autonomously which reduces dependency on manual oversight.

Key drivers for agentic AI adoption

Question: What are the top three drivers for your Agentic AI adoption?

Driver	Percentage
Enhancing customer experience	28%
Reducing costs	26%
Business differentiator	19%
Better regulatory and compliance	9%
Accelerating revenue	9%
Managing workforce shortages	6%

The key benefit of agentic AI is its ability to redesign business goals—from operational efficiency to customer-centric development.

> **3 out of 4 respondents selected enhancing customer experience, reducing costs and agentic AI being a business differentiator as the key drivers for its adoption.**

9% of respondents are looking at AI agents for better regulatory compliance and to fulfil workforce shortages to address global macro-economic challenges. Surprisingly, only 9% respondents are looking to leverage AI agents for accelerating revenues.

As agentic AI's adoption intensifies, the technology is also gearing towards transcending traditional roles—from driving revenue growth to becoming an adaptive orchestrator of workforce dynamics and innovation. With its ability to understand the context of the tasks assigned rather than merely executing them based on set instructions, they execute tasks with minimal human oversight, thereby enabling them to significantly reduce their turnaround time. This could also help organisations to engage the workforce in strategic tasks.

Function-wise strategic priorities

Question: Which departments are your initial target areas for Agentic AI? Rank the following as per your organisation's focus.
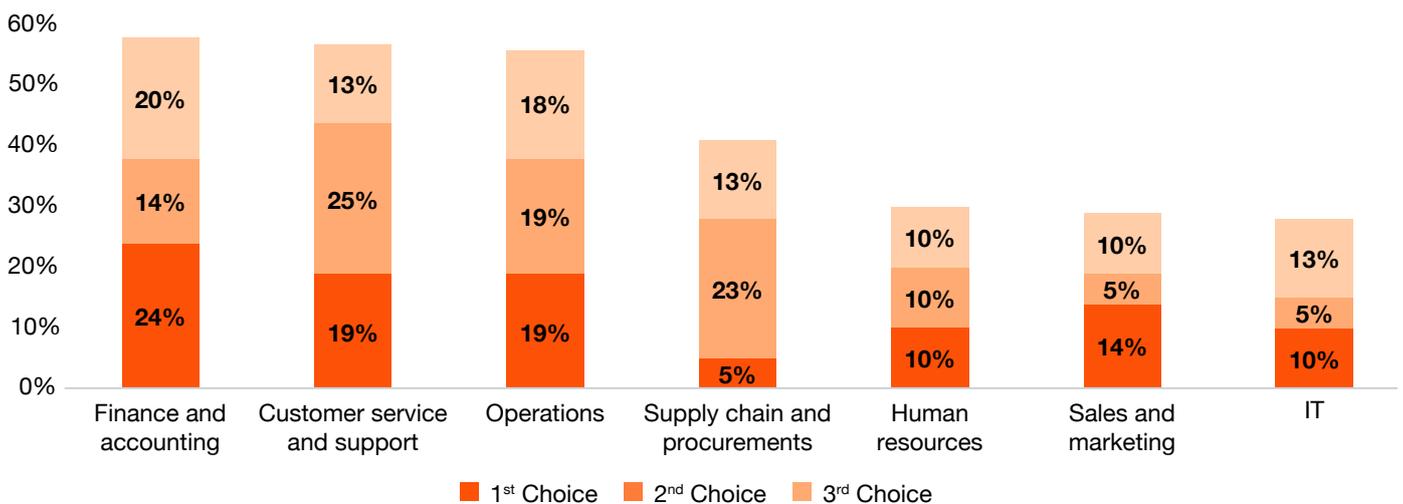
Organisations are focusing on investing in agentic AI to streamline standardise functions, and to enhance customer focus and organisational adaptability.

> **Nearly 6 out of 10 respondents chose finance and accounting, customer service and support and operations as their initial target areas for deploying agentic AI. Organisations are focusing on utilising the tools where work is high-volume, rule bound and multi-system where AI agents can act autonomously.**
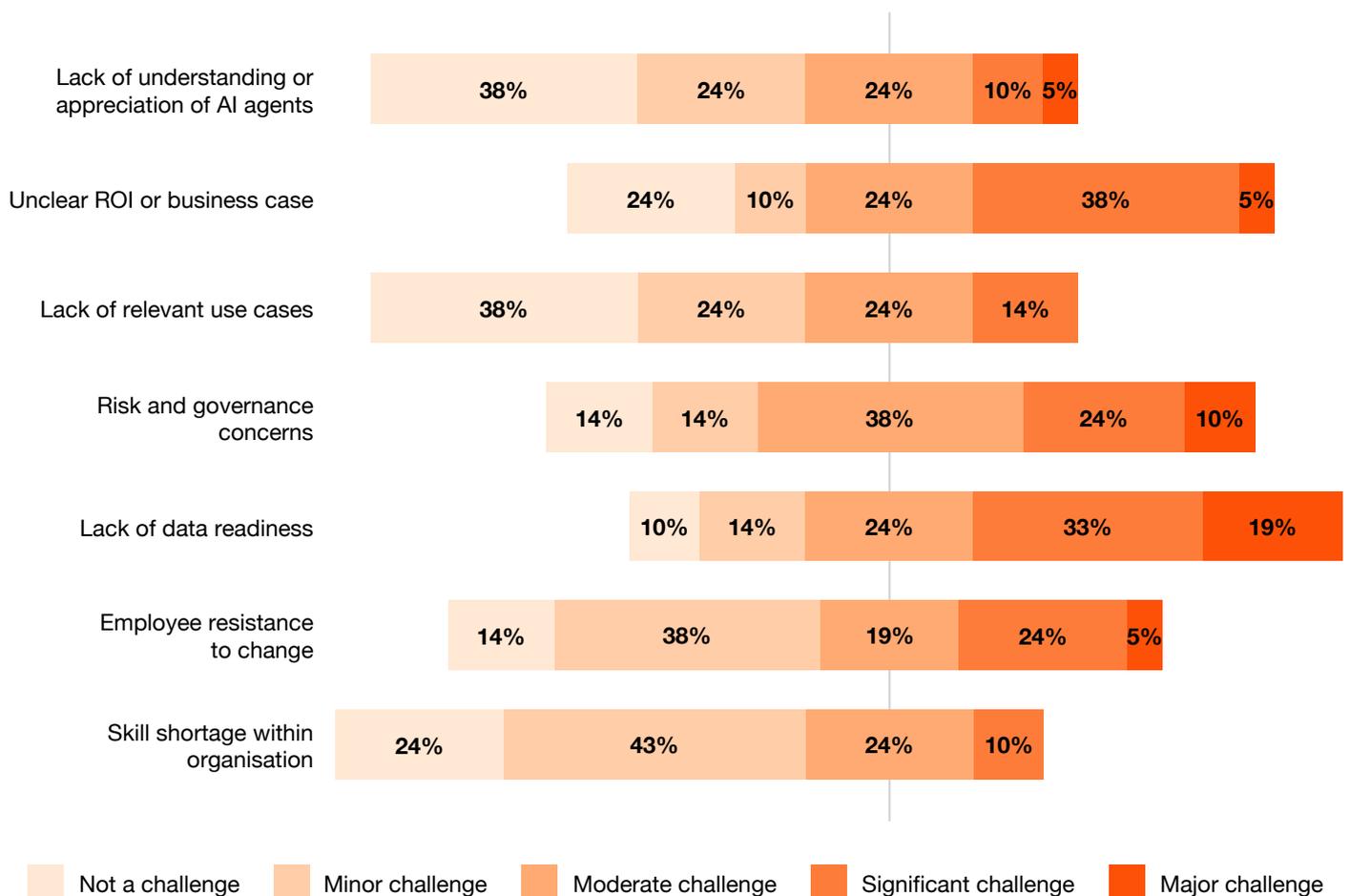
Another focus area for the respondents is supply chain and procurement as 40% ranked it in their top three choice. This signals a strong trust in agentic AI's potential to optimise supply chains. Organisations are prioritising agentic AI to achieve fast, measurable wins and improving customer and employee experience while stripping out cycle time, errors, and cost.

03

Perceptions and reality— what the survey reveals about challenges in agentic AI adoption

When asked to rank the challenges they face in adopting AI agents, most respondents cited ROI clarity, data readiness and governance as major challenges for their organisations.

Question: What challenges are you facing in adopting agentic AI in your organisation? Please rank below options from 'not a challenge' to 'major challenge' as applicable for your organisation.

Challenge	Not a challenge	Minor challenge	Moderate challenge	Significant challenge	Major challenge
Lack of understanding or appreciation of AI agents	38%	24%	24%	10%	5%
Unclear ROI or business case	24%	10%	24%	38%	5%
Lack of relevant use cases	38%	24%	24%	14%	
Risk and governance concerns	14%	14%	38%	24%	10%
Lack of data readiness	10%	14%	24%	33%	19%
Employee resistance to change	14%	38%	19%	24%	5%
Skill shortage within organisation	24%	43%	24%	10%	

Legend:
- Not a challenge
- Minor challenge
- Moderate challenge
- Significant challenge
- Major challenge

Sr. No.	Perceptions	Reality
1	Lack of understanding is no longer relevant as decision-makers already understand what AI agents bring to the table	While 38% of respondents say lack of understanding is not a challenge, almost one in three (34%) still view it as a moderate to significant issue, and 5% call it a major challenge. The divide suggests that though some firms are moving ahead confidently, others are still grappling with the basics of what AI agents can do. There is still room for CXO-level training and boardroom-level workshops to increase the overall understanding of the capabilities of AI agents.
2	ROI concerns will fade once pilots begin.	Value realisation from AI agents' investments is not yet clear as 43% of leaders identify unclear ROI as a significant or major challenge, with another 24% calling it moderate. Only 24% say it is not a challenge at all. This reinforces the fact that agentic AI adoption depends less on the availability and technology but more on proving tangible value. Building long-term value tracking and realisation mechanisms during ideation phase can put CXOs at ease.
3	Relevant use cases are easy to find. There is no separate need for an agentic-specific discovery.	38% of respondents dismiss lack of use cases as a challenge, while the same percentage consider it to be a moderate to significant challenge. This split highlights sectoral maturity where industries such as BFSI and tech are advancing with defined scenarios, while others are still struggling to link AI agents to clear business outcomes.
4	Risk and governance are viewed as regulatory hurdles	72% respondents rank risk and governance as at least a moderate challenge, including 24% who consider it to be a significant challenge and 10% consider it as a major challenge. Leaders are wary of the compliance, accountability, observability and explainability challenges associated with the AI agents.
5	Data readiness is already in place for digital-first organisations	Data readiness is one of the most pressing issues with 2 out of 3 respondents identifying it as a moderate to significant challenge, and 5% considering it as a major challenge. Only 24% of respondents feel fully ready to adopt agentic AI. For most organisations, fragmented systems and inconsistent data quality remain the primary challenges for scaling the technology.
6	Employee resistance is a major hurdle for the change related to agentic ways of working	Almost 40% of respondents say resistance to change is not a challenge and only 14% identify it as a significant hurdle. The survey's findings suggest that employees are more willing to adapt if they are empowered by a comprehensive communication strategy and an effective change management programme.
7	Skill shortages make agentic AI's adoption difficult	Skills within the organisation are a challenge but not an insurmountable barrier. 72% of respondents place it in the moderate to significant range with 10% citing it as a major concern. Organisations are addressing this through re-skilling and up-skilling programmes, integrating agentic AI courses as part of learning and development packages, and ecosystem partnerships.

Adopting agentic AI is less about the technology and more about building the right foundations in data, governance, and talent.

AI agents are steadily being adopted in organisations through pilots and proof of concepts. However, for enterprise-wide adoption, the focus must now shift towards translating initial promises into practice. The survey findings reveal that 43% of leaders struggle with ROI clarity, 67% with data readiness and 72% with governance concerns, further cementing the fact that adoption is constrained by fundamental problems and not intent alone. By addressing these gaps early on, CXOs can shift from isolated pilots to enterprise-wide transformation that delivers measurable business impact.

04

Key considerations for product and implementation partners

Platform choices stay diverse in the initial stages of the agentic AI's adoption

Question: What kind of technology setup are you using or considering?
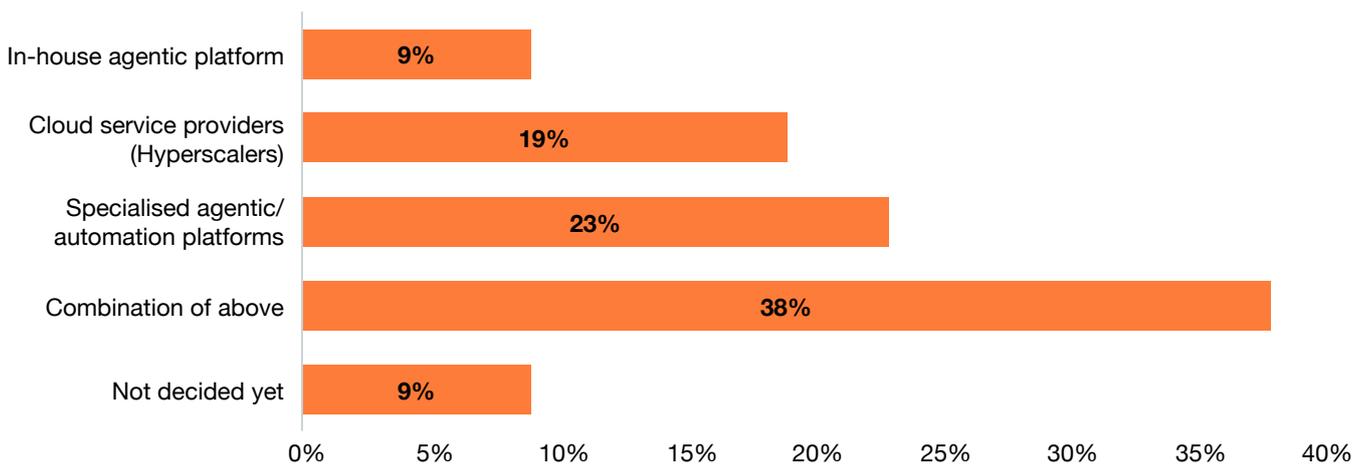
The survey findings reveal that though there is no unanimous choice amongst the respondents, a popular choice is a platform-focused approach with 8 out of 10 preferring to use large-scale cloud providers (hyperscalers), specialised automation platforms or a hybrid approach, combining multiple setups to balance flexibility with the scale. A smaller share of respondents (9%) is considering building agents in-house entirely, seeking greater control over design, development, and governance.

The preference for a hybrid approach for selecting agentic platforms reflects a clear need for flexibility which enables organisations to explore various capabilities as per their business needs.

Leaders are seeking a balance between control, scalability and innovation when selecting agentic platform. Over time, as business cases and governance models strengthen, the technology and platform strategies would also be consolidated.

Firms have begun embedding agentic AI into their organisational structure

Question: How is your organisation currently integrating agentic AI as the AI landscape changes?
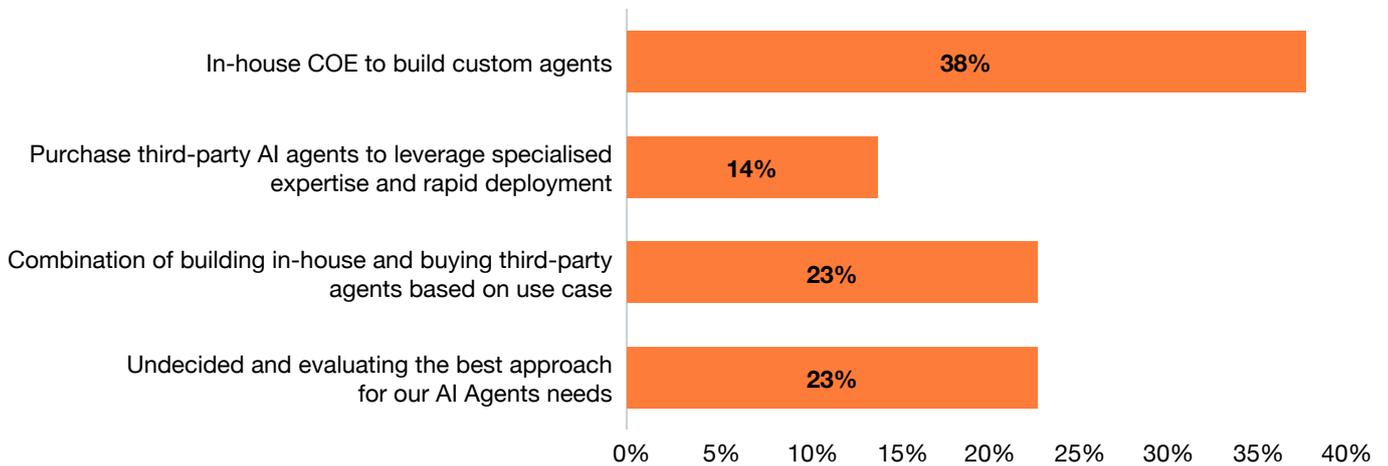
A majority of respondents, nearly three quarters, are determined to build AI agents either in-house or through a hybrid model.

These findings reveal that organisations are not only focusing on quick implementation of agentic AI but also seek holistic adoption which integrates the technology with the long-term goals of the business.

Organisations should adopt a blended portfolio approach to balance in-house innovation control and ecosystem partnerships for shaping a sustainable AI strategy.

In which aspects of agentic AI adoption journey do organisations seek external support?

A pressing need which emerges from the survey's findings is bridging the gap between the organisation's ambition and the actual execution of the implementation strategy. Many organisations are aiming to move from prototypes to enterprise-wide adoption of AI agents, which requires support from their partner ecosystems, including technology providers, startups, industry collaborations, and professional service providers.

Question: What kind of support do you expect from your partner ecosystems?
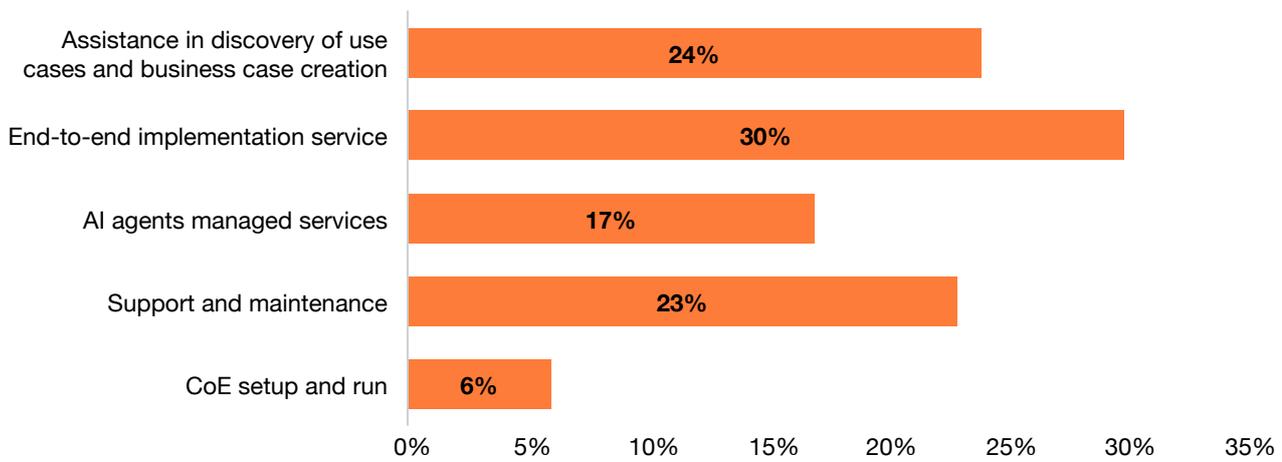
3 out of 4 respondents are looking for partners who can develop the blueprint in the initial stages and shoulder accountability across the complete lifecycle of the programme. Only 6% of organisations are currently focusing on setting up and operationalising COEs for agentic AI. This number could increase as more organisations recognise the need for establishing a strong foundational layer to drive sustainable innovation.

Organisations are looking for more collaborative partnerships across the agentic lifecycle from strategy to execution to ensure that their AI agents remain resilient over a significant period of time.

The survey highlights another emerging trend—almost one in five respondents expressed their intent to adopt AI agents for managed services, indicating that firms are seeking scalability without adding internal complexity. This space is likely to observe growth as businesses want to redirect their focus to other higher-order business priorities.

05

Conclusion and recommendations

The survey results reveal that Indian organisations are at an inflection point in their agentic AI adoption journey. They are being ambitious yet cautious when it comes to shaping their agentic AI adoption strategies and addressing the challenges. Although many organisations are still in the early stages of implementing agentic AI, there is a clear intent to scale the technology. However, to transition from experimentation to enterprise-wide adoption, businesses must keep four priorities in mind:

- **Foundational investments:** To speed up scaling, organisations will need to define value metrics, integrate risk and compliance, and ensure consistent investments in infrastructure, integration capabilities, and data. The transition from pilots to scale will be affected without solid foundations.

- **Lighthouse use cases:** Early adopters of agentic AI include core functions such as finance, operations, supply chain, and customer service. Organisations that align agentic AI use cases with enterprise priorities such as cost effectiveness and customer engagement are best positioned to achieve measurable outcomes from the adoption.

- **Responsible scaling:** To scale enterprise-wide adoption, organisations need to focus on three major aspects— commitment at the C-suite level, integration of the technology into core business functions, and robust governance frameworks that balance innovation with accountability.

- **Strategic partnerships:** Organisations should focus on building trusted partnerships to ensure that the adoption is sustainable and in alignment with their strategic goals. They must choose vendors and partners who bring in their technical expertise together with industry knowledge and demonstrate higher delivery capabilities.

Agentic AI has become a strategic enabler rather than an optional investment. The right time to act is now and scaling the technology responsibly is essential to grab the early mover advantage, achieve long-term trust, and build competitive resilience.

06

Research methodology

This report is a result of both primary and secondary research methods. Primary research was conducted through first hand interviews and a survey that was opened to 250+ organisations in India, of which 110 leaders responded to our survey. The respondents included automation COE leads, transformation leaders and other senior decision-makers who are directly involved in shaping the business and technology strategies. Secondary research involved collation and analysis of industry data and reports to provide a comprehensive view.

The survey covered a wide range of industries, including both domestic businesses and global capability centres, thus offering a cross-sector perspective on agentic AI's adoption. Healthcare, pharmaceuticals and life sciences accounted for the largest share of respondents (21%), whereas retail, consumer goods and e-commerce accounted for 18%. Financial services, banking and insurance represented 17% of the respondents. 14% of the responses came from technology, media, and telecommunications. Manufacturing and industrial products made up 12% of the responses. Respondents from energy and natural resources and the government and public sector comprised 8% and 6% of the total number, respectively.

Industry-level bifurcation of the survey's respondents

| Industry	Percentage
Healthcare/pharmaceuticals and life sciences	21%
Retail and consumer goods/e-commerce	18%
Financial services/banking/insurance	17%
Technology/media and telecommunications	14%
Manufacturing/industrial products	12%
Energy/utilities/natural resources	8%
Government/Public Sector	6%
Others	4%
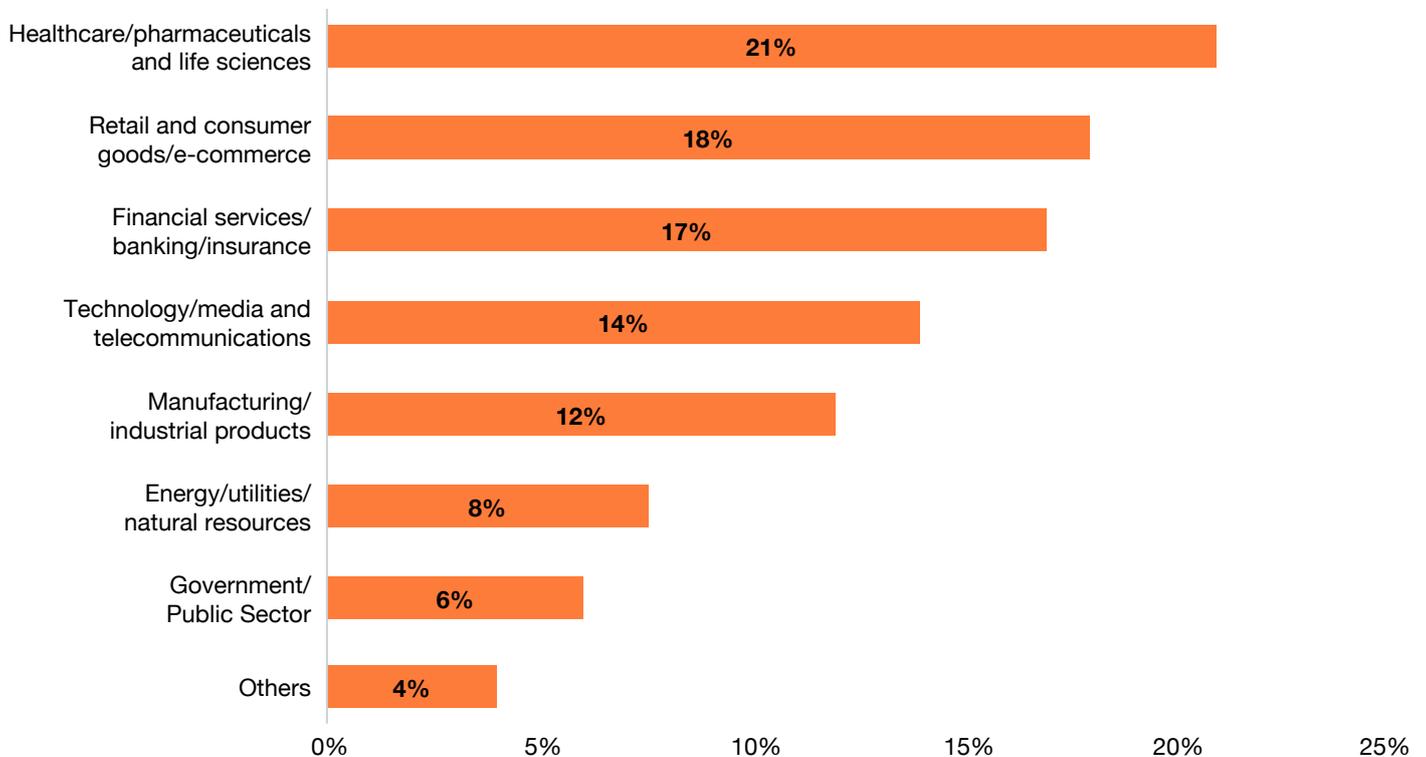
In addition to industry coverage, the survey also captured the scale and revenue profile of participating organisations to understand how organisations of various sizes and maturity levels are approaching agentic AI's adoption.

Dimension	Revenue/size	% of respondents
Respondent organisation's revenue (in USD)	Up to $100 million	4%
	$100–500 million	13%
	$500–1 billion	9%
	$1–5 billion	13%
	>$5 billion	59%
Respondent organisation's workforce strength	<1,000	13%
	1,000-10,000	27%
	10,001-50,000	36%
	>50,000	22%

This combined view of revenue and workforce distribution reinforces our conclusion that organisations of all sizes and scales are taking agentic AI adoption into consideration. When considered collectively, the segmentation shows that adoption priorities and readiness for agentic AI are not limited to large organisations but are shaping strategies across different levels of organisational maturity.

Note: Percentages in charts may not add up to 100%—a result of rounding percentages; multi-selection answer options; and the decision in certain cases to exclude the display of certain responses, including 'Other' and 'Not applicable'.
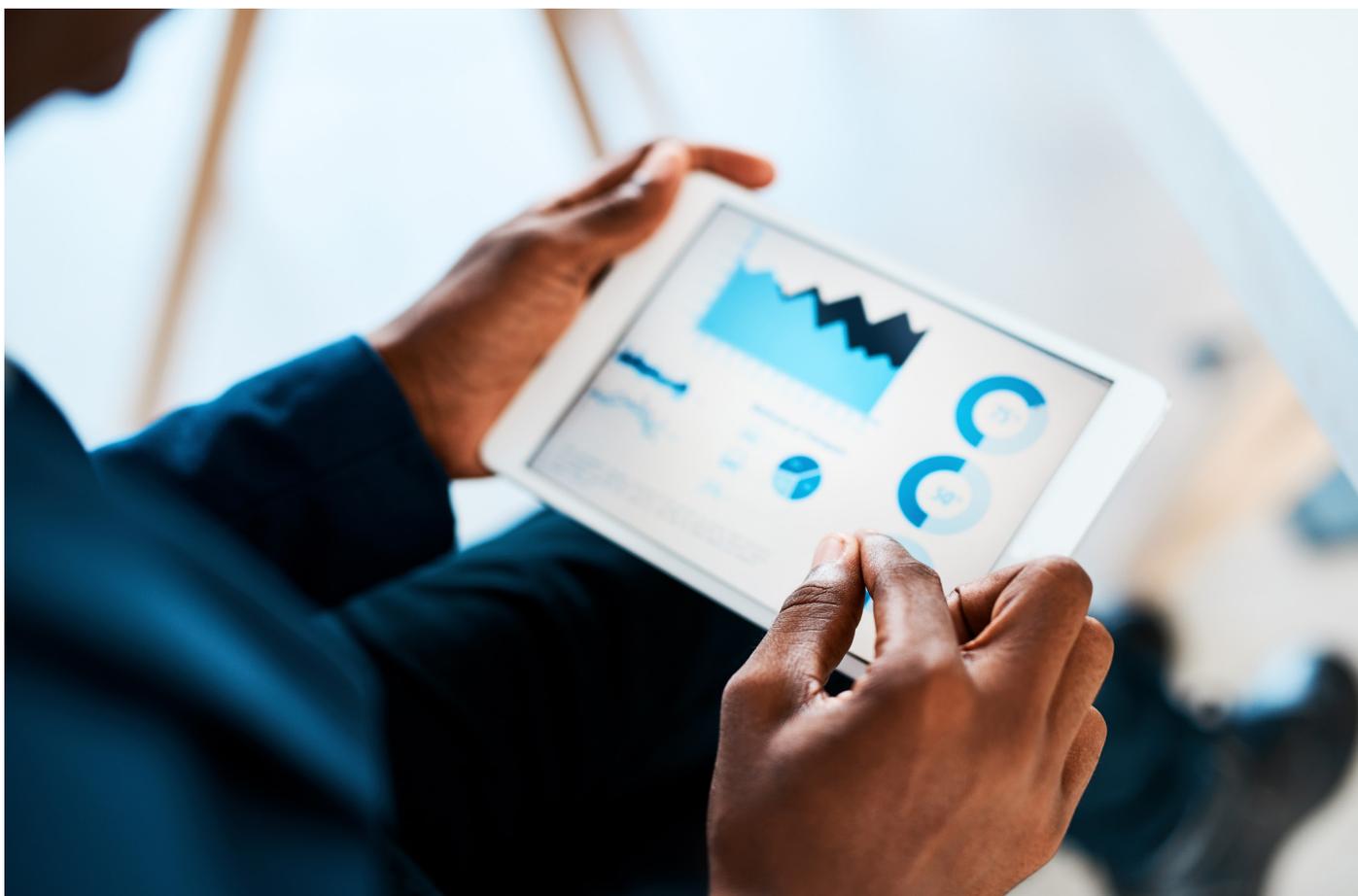
Contact us

Sumit Srivastav
Partner and Leader–Agentic Automation
PwC India
sumit.srivastav@pwc.com

Ritesh Jain
Partner–Agentic Automation
PwC India
ritesh.k.jain@pwc.com

Hariprasad Gajapathy
Managing Director–Agentic Automation
PwC India
hariprasad.gajapathy@pwc.com

Mahesh Parab
Partner–Agentic Automation
PwC India
mahesh.parab@pwc.com

Sagar Kothe
Managing Director–Agentic Automation
PwC India
sagar.kothe@pwc.com

Authors

Disha Thadani
Shardul Raut

Piyush Bule
Manik Kakkar

Aman Gupta
Arunima A.

Contributors

Ashwin Guptha, Surjit Panigrahi, Shrinath Gadiyar, Abhishek Vijayaraghvan, Neha Arya, Akhilesh Shinde, Abhishek Seth, Saurabh Jitendra, Paras Shah and **Jasnain Singh**

Editor

Rubina Malhotra

Design

Akshay Wadhawan

About PwC

We help you build trust so you can boldly reinvent

At PwC, we help clients build trust and reinvent so they can turn complexity into competitive advantage. We're a tech-forward, people-empowered network with more than 364,000 people in 136 countries and 137 territories. Across audit and assurance, tax and legal, deals and consulting, we help clients build, accelerate, and sustain momentum. Find out more at www.pwc.com.

PwC refers to the PwC network and/or one or more of its member firms, each of which is a separate legal entity. Please see www.pwc.com/structure for further details.

pwc.in