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NTT DATA's Salesforce Agentic Enterprise Report

From AI ambition to
enterprise-scale execution



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Introduction

Scaling AI: The execution model is the constraint

The most revealing numbers in this report are not about AI adoption. They're about a gap in enterprise execution, and how that gap can prevent organizations from creating value from AI.

Our data shows that **98%** of organizations are using AI within Salesforce, but only **47%** have connected or coordinated AI workflows across multiple functions, and just **21%** have progressed to coordinated enterprise execution systems.

This is the central finding of our research: Deploying AI is now commonplace, but turning it into coordinated enterprise execution at scale is difficult. There is still a great distance to cover between using AI in Salesforce and redesigning the business so AI can create value throughout and across all processes.



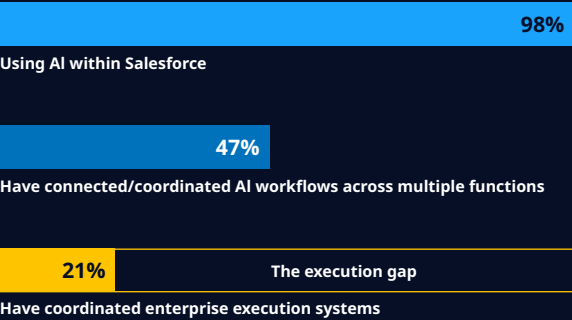
We surveyed 1,525 executives and decision-makers at Salesforce-enabled organizations in 18 countries, spanning 11 industries.

Salesforce is moving beyond customer relationship management (CRM) to support AI-powered workflows, making one operational reality clear: AI strategy is increasingly inseparable from business strategy. As organizations transform into agentic enterprises, where AI increasingly acts and makes decisions across business processes, value will depend on redesigning how work and decisions flow across the organization.

This will require the integration of systems, the use of trusted data, and the enterprise governance, workforce readiness and operating models that will allow organizations to redesign high-value business domains from end to end and turn deployed AI into consistent business outcomes.

Almost everyone is using AI within Salesforce

Most organizations struggle to connect AI workflows across functions and very few have coordinated enterprise execution systems.



So what?

This gap is not a technology problem — it's an operational one. The distance between deployment and coordination is where competitive advantage is being decided.



Access to AI isn't a competitive advantage

As Salesforce advances Agentforce and other technology providers expand their AI platforms, access to capable AI is becoming less of a differentiator. Instead, competitive advantage lies in the ability to redesign high-value business domains and operationalize AI across the applications, data and workflows in those domains so that people can make better decisions and create value consistently.

Throughout this report, a number of seemingly counterintuitive findings emerge, including:



The path to more AI runs through everything that isn't AI.



Organizations are about to run a fleet of AI agents they can't manage — and every action will have a price.



The fastest path to the agentic enterprise is also the most cautious.



Salesforce becomes more strategically important by becoming less self-contained.

Taking these findings on board will be critical to moving AI beyond experimentation and making it part of how an organization operates in order to deliver value. The Salesforce AI leaders in our report have already made this leap.

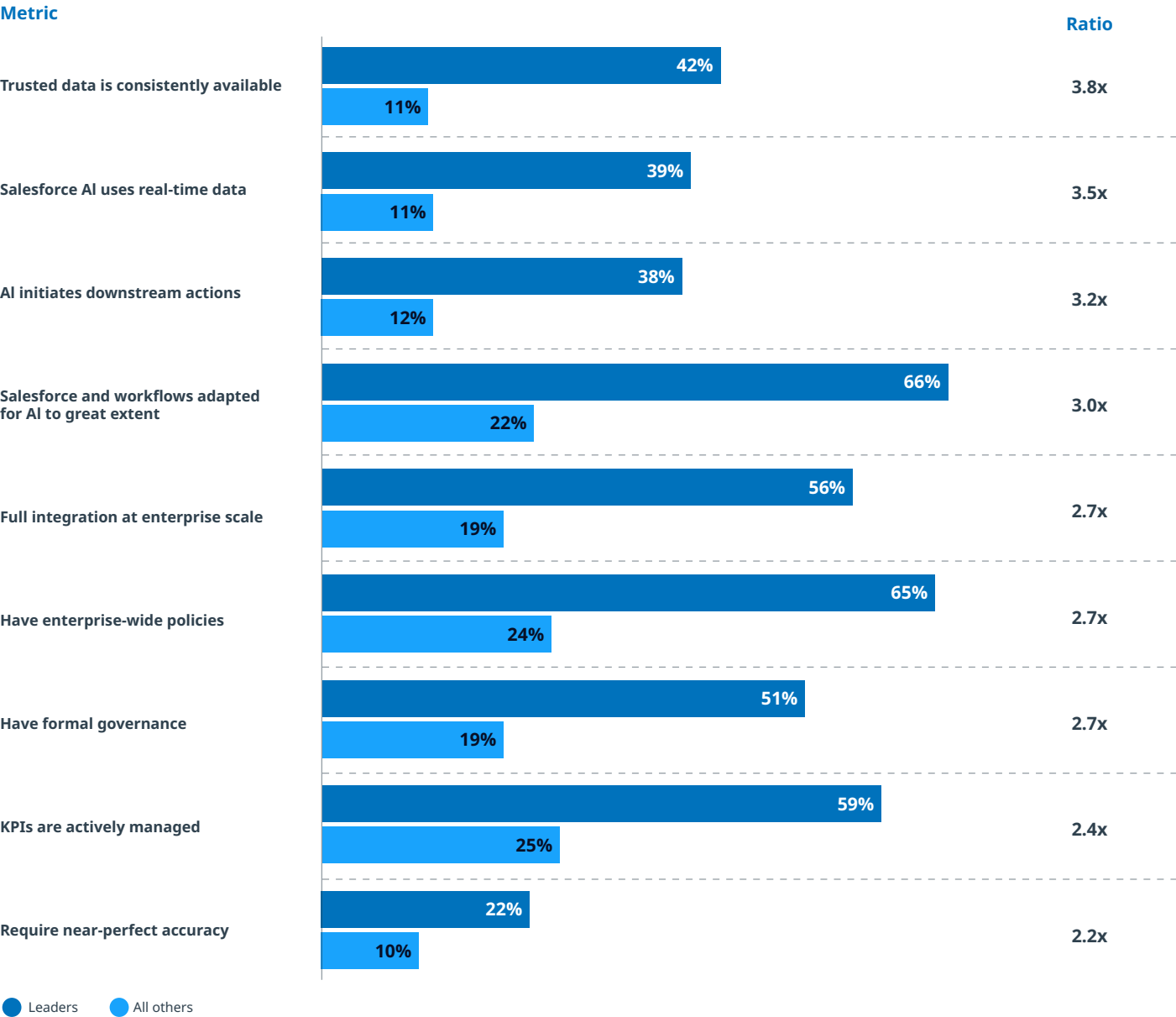
What separates Salesforce AI leaders from the rest

In our research, an organization is classified as a Salesforce AI leader if all of the following are true:

- Their Salesforce AI workflows are connected across multiple functions, or AI is part of a coordinated execution system connecting workflows, systems and decisions throughout the organization.
- AI is embedded enterprise-wide with governance and at scale, or is fundamentally transforming how the organization operates.
- Trusted data needed to support AI decisions and workflows across Salesforce and connected systems is consistently available across the organization, or is available in most areas, with only minor gaps.

Leaders consistently outperform on every foundation that matters

All 9 foundation metrics show a clear separation between leaders and all others.



What it takes to scale AI with Salesforce

AI is deployed, the gains are real and ambition is rising.

Organizations surveyed for our report expect customer-facing workflows that are actively automated by AI to nearly double within the next two years, from **22%** today to **41%**. They also envisage a broader role for Salesforce as a business process automation platform (**60%**), an integration layer (**59%**) and an AI platform supporting intelligent decisions and actions (**59%**) within the next one to two years. AI-orchestrated and AI-native workflows are set to grow by **19** and **18 percentage points**, respectively, over the same period.

However, that ambition is running ahead of ecosystem readiness.

Almost two-thirds of organizations (**62%**) say scaling a Salesforce AI use case in production typically takes six months or more. Another **2 in 3** identify gaps in trusted data, governance and integration — the operational foundations that affect an organization's ability to move from pilot to enterprise scale.

These issues become evident when organizations try to embed AI into how they operate. For AI to work in Salesforce, it also has to work across departments, connect to multiple enterprise systems, use trusted data, respect governance policies, escalate when necessary and consistently produce outcomes that employees can rely on. This requires the close coordination and integration of technology, data and business teams.

Nearly 3 in 4 organizations (73%) say operationalizing AI within Salesforce will be critical or very important for maintaining their competitive advantage over the next two years.

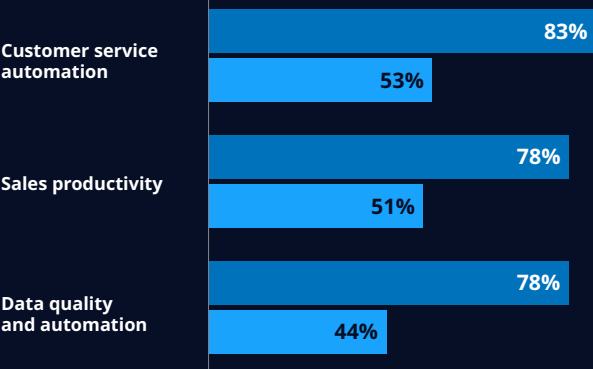
For organizations already using Salesforce AI, the benefits are becoming clear: More than half report major gains in Salesforce effectiveness and efficiency for customer service automation (**59%**), predictive analytics (**57%**), sales productivity (**56%**), and data quality and automation (**51%**).

Those results are also translating into investment plans. Salesforce AI capabilities are now the primary driver of Salesforce investment, and **7 in 10** organizations (**69%**) expect significant increases in spending.

Salesforce AI leaders see more significant impact, automation and speed

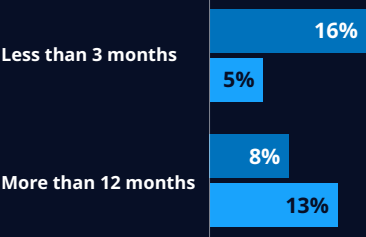
Leaders work more efficiently

Impact of AI-driven capabilities on improving effectiveness and efficiency of Salesforce environment in:



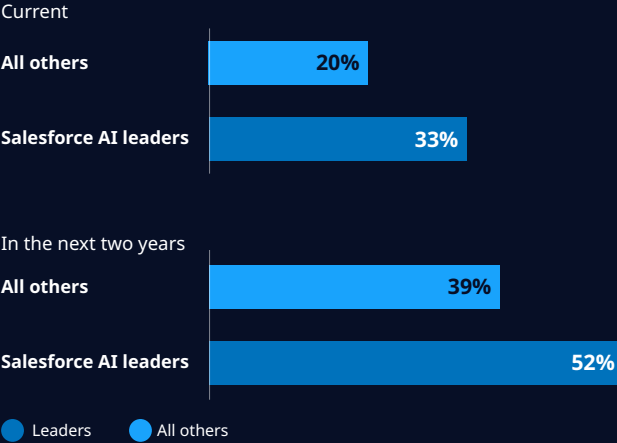
Leaders scale faster

Time taken to move Salesforce AI use case from pilot to scaled deployment



Leaders automate more

Average portion of customer-facing workflows automated by AI



Operationalizing AI: Escaping the execution trap

It's easy to assume enterprise AI has arrived, but our research tells another story.

Nearly **2 in 3** organizations (**64%**) report successful Salesforce AI pilots but struggle to scale them across the enterprise, while **62%** cite problems with enterprise readiness, saying that scaling a Salesforce AI use case typically takes six months or longer.

Caught in the execution trap

Nearly

98%

of organizations are using AI in Salesforce.

Only

47%

have connected or coordinated AI workflows across multiple business functions.

Just

21%

have progressed to coordinated enterprise execution systems that allow AI to operate consistently across the organization.

This is an operational challenge, not a technology challenge. Competitive advantage comes from narrowing the distance between deployment and coordination.

AI deployment is not the finish line

Traditional enterprise software projects followed a familiar path: Define the requirements, configure a platform for testing, then deploy the software and move on to the next project.

AI requires a different approach. Organizations that treat Agentforce like a conventional Salesforce implementation soon discover that deployment is only the beginning. To remain reliable, AI agents need ongoing lifecycle management after go-live: 24x7 monitoring, tuning, governance, feedback loops and operational oversight.



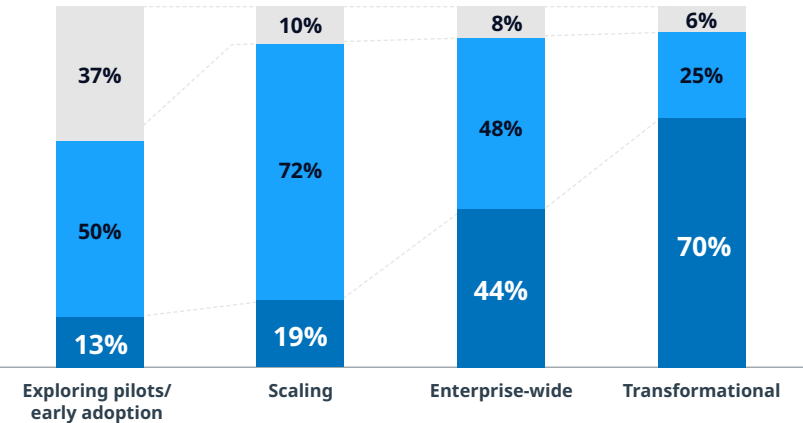
Redesigning domains from end to end for AI at enterprise scale

Leading organizations think differently. Instead of starting with an AI feature or viewing Salesforce in isolation, they identify high-value business journeys — from lead to cash, customer service to fulfillment, sales to finance — and redesign the flow of work from end to end to integrate AI into decision-making and task execution.

This approach moves Salesforce AI beyond a collection of disconnected assistants and makes it part of an enterprise execution system that connects AI agents, workflows, governance, trusted data and operating models so they can coordinate work across the enterprise and deliver consistent business outcomes.

Redesign is not an afterthought — it's how mature organizations scale

Extent to which organizations have adapted Salesforce, workflows and operating models to support AI at scale



13% versus 70%: As organizations mature, they redesign how they work more extensively

- To a great extent (actively redesigning)
- To a moderate extent (targeted changes)
- To little or no extent (using existing structures)

To what extent has your organization adapted Salesforce, workflows and operating models to support AI at scale?
Base: All respondents, excluding "Don't know" responses (n=1,523)

70%

of transformational organizations (those that say AI is fundamentally changing how they operate) are actively redesigning around AI, compared with just 13% of those still stuck in pilots.

Organizations that treat Salesforce as a system of record stay in pilots. Those that redesign around it move to enterprise-wide execution and transformational modernization.



An AI agent that drafts an email is useful. An AI execution system that coordinates customer interactions across sales, service, finance and fulfillment creates business value.

Operationalizing Salesforce AI means moving beyond individual pilots to repeatable, governed execution. In our research, the top five barriers to scaling Salesforce AI, in order of prominence, are organizational limitations and challenges related to:

- 01 Trusted data
- 02 Governance
- 03 Integration
- 04 Skills
- 05 Change management

Yet when we compare organizations that scale Salesforce AI with those that remain in pilot mode, integration emerges as one of the clearest differentiators. Issues with trusted data and governance may be the most visible barrier, but integration is a structural foundation that helps organizations address these issues across processes, from end to end.

“When there’s a top-down approach, proper alignment across the business and technology functions, and a clear focus on business value, that’s when we see successful implementations.”

Mohit Prabhat Tyagi, Senior Director,
Salesforce and MuleSoft Services, NTT DATA

Integration is a clear indicator of ability to scale

Integration maturity is one of the clearest indicators of an organization's ability to scale AI, with a particularly stark divide between those that have moved beyond isolated pilots and those that have yet to put AI into production.

Our data shows that organizations with advanced integrations between Salesforce and other enterprise systems are more likely than others to automate a significant share of their customer-facing workflows.

As AI evolves from generating recommendations to executing actions, the architecture around it becomes increasingly important. This challenges the conventional logic of AI investment: Once organizations have access to capable AI, adding more AI tools will not necessarily help them scale.

What matters is whether those tools can work effectively across the business. That depends on a strong integration foundation that connects AI to systems, data and workflows.

Well-developed integrations nearly double the maturity of AI scale

2.3x

Those with full or well-developed Salesforce integrations into broader enterprise systems are **2.3** times more likely to automate more than a quarter of customer-facing workflows.

2.6x

Those without strong integration are **2.6** times more likely to remain stuck in pilot mode.

3.2x

Salesforce AI leaders are **3.2** times more likely to move from pilot to scaled deployment in under 3 months, with strong integration.

So what?

The next dollar spent connecting the enterprise around AI may create more value than another dollar spent adding AI capability.

Limited systems integration constrains AI scale

When a customer contacts a service center about a delayed delivery, resolving the issue may require Salesforce to connect with enterprise resource planning (ERP), logistics and other enterprise systems. For the customer, it's one conversation, but behind the scenes, the AI agent's ability to make the right decision depends on how effectively those systems work together.

Salesforce agents must retrieve information in real time, understand which systems are authoritative, automatically activate workflows across platforms, and complete actions without forcing employees to manually stitch everything together.

Integration platforms such as MuleSoft can provide this connective layer, enabling Salesforce agents and workflows to securely access data and initiate actions across enterprise systems.

“

The quality of your agent is basically capped by the quality of your integration.”

Amey Kulkarni, Salesforce Director, Digital Solutions, NTT DATA

Our research shows how much integration work is still to be done. While **75%** of organizations now have APIs and integrations that fully or mostly support AI-driven workflows and actions across systems, the extent of these integrations is limited: Only **22%** report that Salesforce is fully integrated with their broader enterprise systems.

Leaders, on the other hand, are 2.3 times more likely than other organizations to have APIs and integrations that fully support these workflows and actions, and this contributes to shortening the time it takes to move from pilot to scaled deployment.

For organizations that have not integrated Salesforce with other business systems, AI quickly runs into barriers. It cannot complete customer requests because it cannot retrieve the information it needs, and it cannot confidently execute actions because the business context isn't clear.

The result is predictable: Individual AI use cases succeed, but the organization fails to scale beyond them.

Transitioning from workflow automation to enterprise orchestration

AI orchestration fundamentally changes how agentic enterprises operate. An AI agent evaluates the context available in a given moment, chooses a course of action within defined guardrails, then adapts dynamically as new information becomes available. The architecture supporting the agent must therefore also be dynamic.

Instead of simply connecting applications, integration now enables intelligent decision-making across them.

Salesforce AI leaders therefore focus less on individual platforms and more on orchestrating the full business journey. Salesforce remains central, but it becomes one component of a broader execution architecture that spans ERP systems, finance platforms, customer service systems and operational applications.

Our research reveals that 36% of organizations surveyed have deployed a hybrid mix of Salesforce AI capabilities and other AI, and 47% plan to do so within two years. As these heterogeneous AI environments expand, capabilities such as MuleSoft Agent Fabric can help organizations discover, connect and orchestrate agents across Salesforce and other AI platforms while maintaining governance and visibility throughout the agent ecosystem.

Trusted data enables governed decisions

For years, organizations invested heavily in collecting, storing and consolidating information, often with a focus on building ever-larger data estates. But having a large data estate does not necessarily make an organization more AI-ready. Some of the most data-intensive industries in our research — including insurance, healthcare and financial services — rank among the lowest for real-time data availability. The logistics, travel and technology industries perform better.

The problem, then, is not a shortage of data but a shortage of data that organizations and their AI systems can rely on. Our research suggests the focus is shifting away from the size of the data estate to an emphasis on whether organizations have trusted, authoritative data available for AI.

Access to trusted data, not more data — with a focus on data quality and decision context — separates Salesforce AI leaders from the rest

Only

17%

have trusted data consistently available for AI-driven decisions.

2–4x

Organizations that have consistently available and clearly defined trusted data to support AI-driven decisions are **2 to 4** times more likely to report enterprise-scaled maturity across AI capabilities.

58%

of all organizations have identified Salesforce AI use cases but lack the data to scale.



The importance of data authority

Organizations getting the most value from Salesforce AI have data authority: They know which data should be trusted, when it should be trusted and who is responsible for it.

Increasingly, ontology matters too — that is, giving AI a shared understanding of what that data means and how it relates across the enterprise.

Trusted data does not require creating a single, perfect version of every customer record. AI agents need the right information from the right source when making a decision. That means providing the necessary business context while keeping systems of record intact.

Salesforce Data 360 supports this approach by connecting enterprise data rather than replacing its source systems. Identity resolution links related records across applications while maintaining their original ownership, giving AI agents reliable context without unnecessarily duplicating data.

Top 5 data barriers to scaling AI-driven workflows in Salesforce

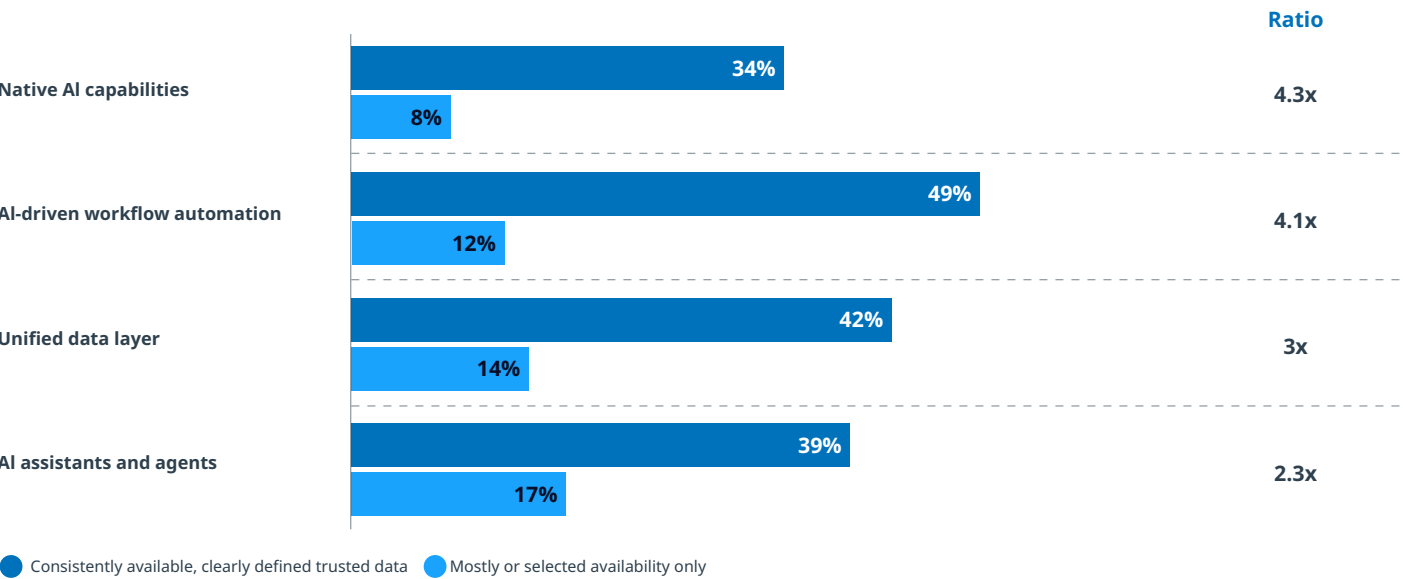
- 01 Incomplete, inaccurate or duplicate data
- 02 Poor integration across systems
- 03 Delays in real-time data availability
- 04 Inconsistent data validation across teams or systems
- 05 Difficulty accessing or using data effectively

Why more data doesn't necessarily improve AI

Organizations with clearly defined data authority are 2 to 4 times more likely than others to report enterprise-scale AI maturity across multiple capabilities. This makes clearly defined data authority one of the strongest markers of AI readiness in our research.



Trusted data is a hallmark of scaled AI maturity

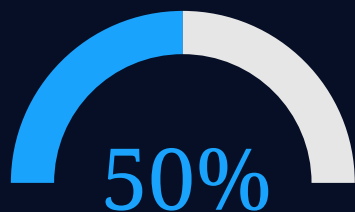


The gap is widest where AI is most advanced: native AI capabilities and workflow automation.

To what extent does your organization have the trusted data needed to support AI-driven decisions and workflows across Salesforce and connected systems?
How mature are the following AI capabilities within your Salesforce environment?
Base: All IT respondents using AI in Salesforce currently, excluding "Don't know" responses (n=553)

Governance and context are vital to decision-making

Organizations acknowledge their governance shortcomings, but most do not have the structures in place to meet the governance demands of their AI ambitions.



say they have the ambition to scale Salesforce AI, but not the governance.



have formal governance and oversight of AI-driven decisions within Salesforce, with a further **33%** having defined policies and controls.



define AI decision-making through enterprise-wide policies, while **43%** do so at the function or business-unit level.

Trusted data and decision-making governance have become inseparable. Governance is no longer solely about protecting information but also about helping AI reach the right conclusions, consistently and transparently. This requires clear ownership, defined systems of record, and governance frameworks built into day-to-day operations.



There's a misconception that Salesforce AI needs access to everything. In fact, it needs only what's relevant. Semantic context, identity resolution and intelligent retrieval are becoming increasingly important as AI takes on more responsibility for customer-facing and operational activities.

As AI consumption becomes increasingly usage-based, that precision also has an economic dimension: Giving agents the right context will reduce unnecessary processing and actions, helping organizations manage the cost of AI at scale.

Our data shows that, rather than having AI agents search through enterprise data indiscriminately, organizations are designing architectures that give agents the context they need for each decision. Leaders are **2.3** times more likely than other organizations to have a fully embedded and scaled unified data layer (such as Salesforce Data 360 or similar) that combines structured and unstructured data for AI use.

This approach also strengthens governance, as organizations know where information originated from, why it was used and how decisions were reached.

The rise of digital labor

Salesforce AI is no longer just helping employees make decisions. It's increasingly making decisions itself — resolving customer inquiries, qualifying leads, recommending next-best actions and coordinating activities across multiple systems, with limited human involvement.

This fundamentally changes what organizations need to manage, as deploying AI now goes hand in hand with managing a growing network of AI agents.

Our research shows how quickly the transition is happening, whether or not organizations are adequately prepared for it. Two-thirds of organizations (**67%**) expect agentic AI platforms, such as Salesforce Agentforce, to play a strategic role over the next two years, supporting multiple business functions. Yet only **33%** have established clear cross-functional accountability for AI-driven outcomes.

In addition, **44%** identify the pressure to scale autonomous systems before the organization is operationally ready as their biggest concern.



What is digital labor?

In the Salesforce context, the term “digital labor” refers to AI-enabled work carried out or supported by intelligent agents. This includes analyzing data, making recommendations, initiating workflows or completing defined tasks across customer and business processes. Human expertise and judgment are central to every process, with people setting direction, overseeing outcomes and remaining accountable for decisions.

Digital labor is arriving faster than organizations can deploy the operating model to manage it

33% have clear cross-functional accountability for AI-driven outcomes.

32% actively manage agent performance through defined KPIs and monitoring.

Leaders are 2.4 times more likely to actively manage agent performance, focusing on business outcomes, customer satisfaction and decision quality.

So what?

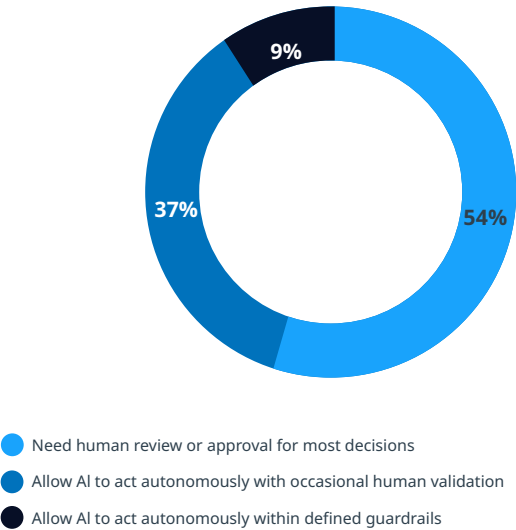
AI agents are becoming part of the workforce, but most organizations lack the accountability, KPIs and oversight to manage them.

Managing AI is an operational discipline. It is tempting to think of Salesforce AI agents as another software feature, but leaders already view them as being integral to how work gets done.

AI agents need clearly defined responsibilities, access rights, performance expectations, supervision and ongoing improvement, which means managing AI becomes an ongoing operational discipline that must continuously balance business outcomes, reliability, risk and the economics of AI agent use.

Workplace readiness and role design alongside data quality are the two main areas affecting the organization's ability to implement more autonomous execution. Our research also reveals that just **17%** of employees have been adequately prepared to work alongside AI systems and agents.

Human involvement in AI actions



When AI takes actions within Salesforce workflows, how much human involvement is typically required?
Base: All respondents using AI in Salesforce currently, excluding “Don't know” and “AI is rarely used to take action” responses (n=1,453)

Accountability is an essential layer — but where does it reside?

With traditional software, accountability is often reasonably straightforward. If a workflow behaves incorrectly, developers fix the code. With Salesforce AI, accountability is not as straightforward. Who owns an AI agent? Who updates its prompts and instructions? Who investigates incorrect recommendations and monitors performance drift? Who decides when an agent is ready to act autonomously?

Right now, there is little consensus among business functions about who should take responsibility for scaling AI-enabled Salesforce. Our research indicates that some organizations assign ownership to a single function — IT (**31%**), data and AI leadership (**24%**) or business leadership (**16%**) — while others opt for shared ownership across functions (**26%**).

And when it comes to measuring performance, much of the conversation still focuses on productivity, such as hours saved by using AI, or the number of tasks automated with AI — measures that are no longer sufficient by themselves. AI should ultimately be judged by business value, not technical metrics or time saved. Technical KPIs need to connect directly to outcomes such as customer response times, conversion, service quality, revenue, cost to serve and decision quality.

Another issue is that organizations are scaling AI agents faster than they're building systems to manage them. As they do this, they will need to manage both the performance and economics of AI.

Only 32% of all organizations actively manage the performance of AI systems and agents within Salesforce-driven processes through defined KPIs, monitoring and accountability mechanisms.

Leaders are more than twice as likely as other organizations to do so, focusing on whether AI is improving business outcomes, customer satisfaction and decision-making.

Usage-based pricing makes cost another component of performance management, as every unnecessary agent action can have an economic consequence.

According to our data, around half the organizations surveyed (**51%**) expect consumption pricing models to increase their focus on data quality in order to reduce unnecessary agent actions, while **48%** anticipate it will require improved ROI measurement and cost modeling.

The economics of AI agents reinforces the disciplines needed to scale agentic AI successfully. Better data helps reduce wasted actions, stronger governance keeps agent activity under control, and better measurement connects the cost of AI agents to the business value they create.

“

If you want to run AI at scale, simplify your business systems first. By all means go for pockets of tactical interventions, but the value is going to be very short-lived.”

Nick Cheesman, CIO, NTT DATA, Inc.

Responsibility grows alongside autonomy

When AI within the Salesforce environment begins interacting directly with customers — approving transactions or initiating operational workflows — mistakes can become serious business events.

Across the market, caution in this regard is evident: Only **17%** of organizations currently allow AI functions in Salesforce to automatically start downstream actions, and more than three-quarters (**78%**) require human validation or manual handoff to other systems once an AI-driven decision is made.

Our research found that **48%** of organizations require “near-perfect accuracy and reliability” or “higher reliability than current human-led processes” before allowing AI to act autonomously. Salesforce AI leaders are **2.2** times as likely as other organizations to require near-perfect accuracy and reliability.

The organizations moving fastest with AI — and getting it right — are often the most cautious about autonomy.

Salesforce AI leaders are not less ambitious about autonomy, but they are more disciplined about the conditions required to earn it. They recognize that greater autonomy requires greater confidence in the systems, controls and people around it. They can trust their AI systems to act because they hold these systems to higher standards.

Salesforce AI leaders are the most cautious

2.2x

Leaders are **2.2** times more likely than others to require near-perfect accuracy.

1.9x

They are also **1.9** times more likely to have fully established and clearly assigned accountability for AI-driven outcomes.

As a result,

2.3x

They are **2.3** times more likely to allow AI to automatically initiate downstream actions.

So what?

AI maturity isn't about moving fast — it's about putting the controls, roles and processes in place that make autonomy possible.

Trust is built through continuous monitoring and demonstrated performance

Governance cannot be limited to a one-time approval process. Organizations must continuously observe agent behavior, measure outcomes, validate value and ensure AI keeps delivering enough value to justify its cost.

This represents a shift in enterprise management — from governing software to governing AI-enabled execution.

Redesigning work for a hybrid workforce

Salesforce AI leaders are going beyond automating existing work to redesigning how humans and AI collaborate across business processes.

Leaders are nearly twice as likely as other organizations to have fully established mechanisms for preparing employees to work alongside AI systems or agents, including clearly defined escalation paths, exception-handling processes, and roles and responsibilities for both humans and AI.

In other words, AI maturity involves more than moving faster. It's also about putting the controls, roles and processes in place that make greater autonomy possible.

And if AI is increasingly coordinating work across people, systems and business processes, what does that mean for Salesforce itself?



From CRM to customer execution layer: The future of Salesforce

For more than two decades, Salesforce has been synonymous with CRM, helping organizations manage customer information, automate their sales processes and improve service interactions.

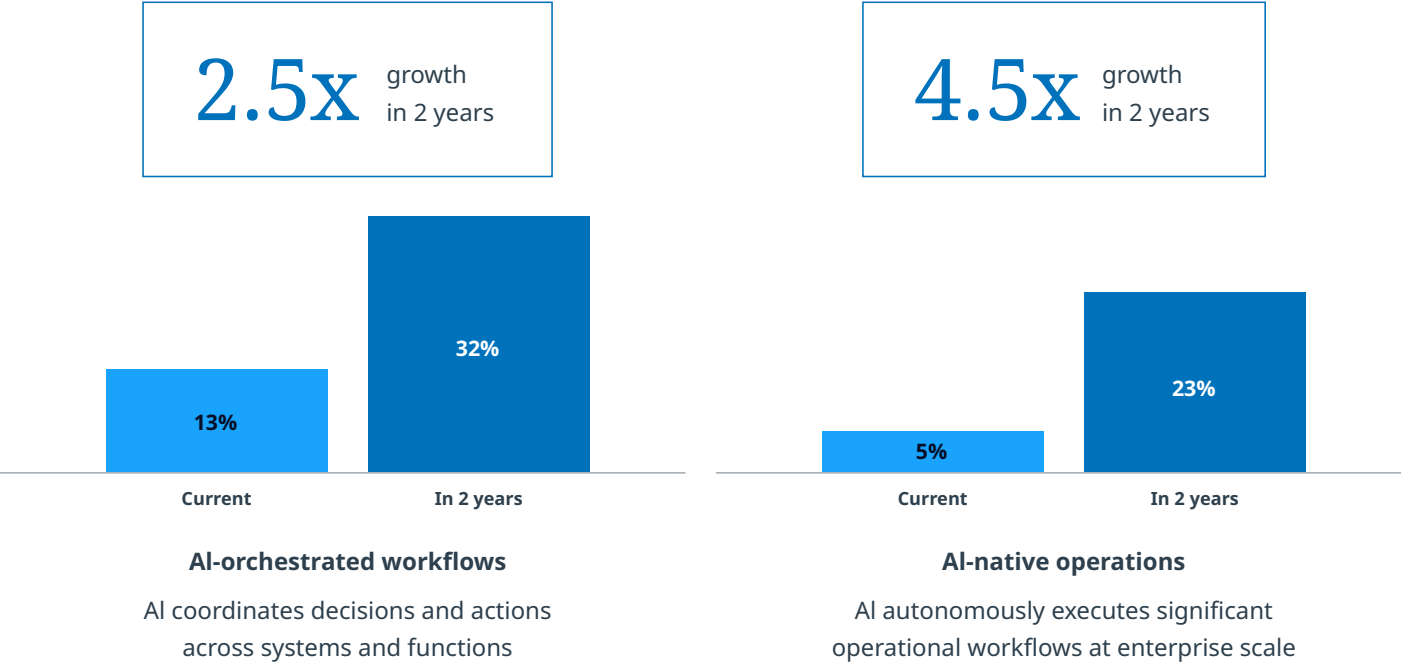
That role is expanding as AI becomes more deeply embedded in the enterprise. Salesforce is evolving beyond its traditional role as a system of record to become a platform for orchestrating AI-driven decisions and workflows throughout the business.

Our data indicates that, over the next two years, AI-orchestrated workflows are expected to more than double, and AI-native operations to more than quadruple.

AI-orchestrated workflows use AI to coordinate decisions and actions across systems and functions, while AI-native operations use AI to autonomously execute significant operational workflows at enterprise scale.

From assistance to orchestration: The shift is happening fast

AI-orchestrated workflows and AI-native operations are set to grow dramatically within Salesforce-enabled workflows over the next two years.



So what?

Salesforce is moving from recording what happened to orchestrating what happens next, and the shift to autonomous execution is happening faster than most organizations are ready for.

Which best describes your organization's current and projected use of AI within Salesforce-enabled workflows and operations?
Base: All respondents using AI in Salesforce currently, excluding "Don't know" responses (n=1,473/1,465)



A customer execution layer for AI-driven decisions and actions

As organizations deploy more AI agents, they will need to manage how those agents access and use data, coordinate agent activity across workflows and systems, and ensure clear and consistent governance. In this regard, Salesforce can become a critical customer execution and orchestration layer, coordinating customer-facing agents, business rules, workflows and decisions while connecting into the broader enterprise AI architecture.



Enterprise execution increasingly depends on orchestrating Salesforce with ERP, finance and other systems.

This means the role of Salesforce now extends well beyond traditional CRM. It can connect customer engagement with execution across the enterprise, enable autonomous work within defined guardrails, and provide visibility of increasingly complex interactions between people and AI.

In this environment, Salesforce does not replace the wider enterprise architecture. It operates within a broad ecosystem of applications, data platforms, models and agents to coordinate customer-facing workflows and AI, while integration and broader AI orchestration connect those experiences to the rest of the enterprise ecosystem. Capabilities such as MuleSoft and Agent Fabric can provide the connectivity and orchestration needed to extend that customer execution layer across heterogeneous enterprise systems and agent ecosystems.

From managing customers to managing decisions

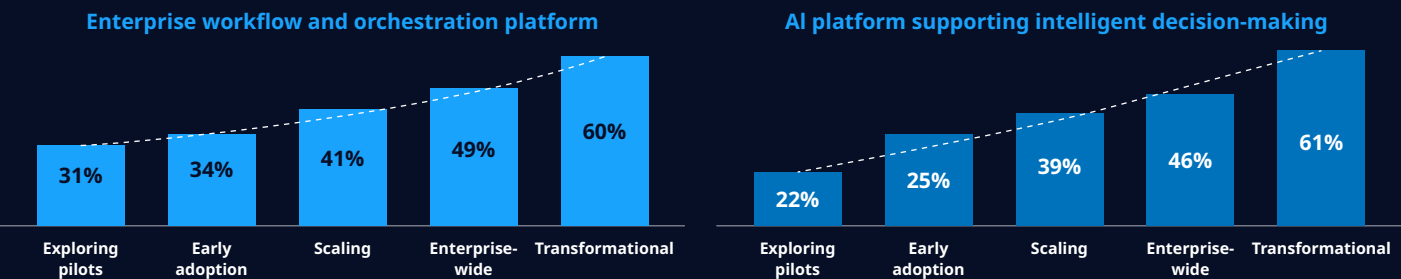
Our research shows that organizations are now just as likely to use Salesforce as a customer and operational data platform as they are to use it as a platform for sales, service and marketing workflows.

More than half of organizations (59%) expect to use Salesforce as a platform supporting AI-driven decisions and actions within the next one to two years, up from 40% at present.

Salesforce is also expected to play a broader role in business process automation and integration over the next one to two years.

As AI matures, Salesforce becomes progressively more strategic

Current role of Salesforce as orchestration and decision platform, by maturity



What role does Salesforce play in your organization today? S6. What is your organization's overall level of AI adoption?
Base: All respondents, excluding "Don't know" responses (n=1,514)

This transition reflects a broader change taking place across enterprise technology: Competitive advantage is moving from systems of record to systems of execution.

“

Organizations can no longer think about Salesforce as only a CRM. It is becoming a critical enterprise AI execution layer for customer decisions — connected to the broader systems, data and agents that make those decisions actionable.”

Megan Piccininni, Senior Vice President and
Global Salesforce Practice Leader, NTT DATA

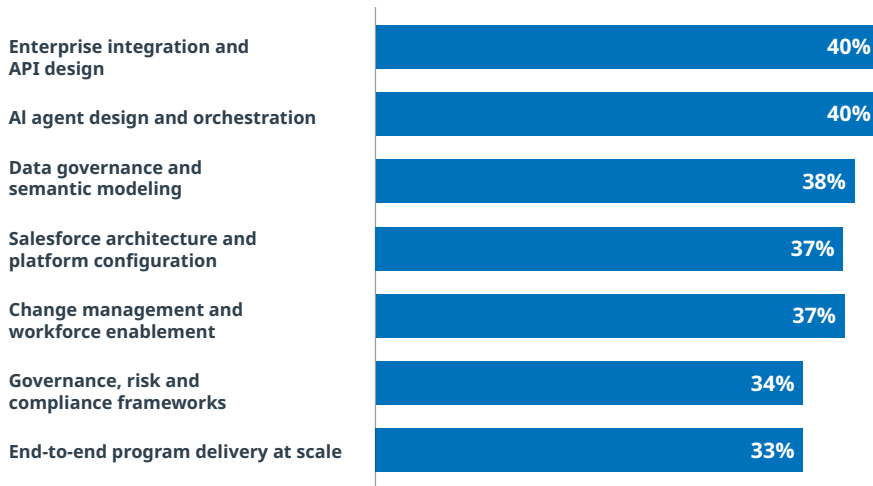
Execution becomes a competitive advantage

As AI models continue to improve and new capabilities become widely available, the ability to integrate and operationalize AI consistently across the enterprise will become a differentiator and an advantage. This capability must be carefully designed, governed and measured, and made central to the organization's operating model.

That is what separates the leaders in our research from the rest: For them, Salesforce is not a destination but part of the architecture that enables enterprise execution.

Operationalizing and accelerating AI at scale will require help

Organizations need expert help most where it matters most



In which of the following areas do you most frequently need help from external transformation partners?
Base: All respondents, excluding "Don't know" responses (n=1,518)

69%

expect to rely on
external partners.

The capabilities organizations need most require deep cross-domain expertise — integration, orchestration and governance — not just Salesforce implementation.

Our research shows that organizations are increasingly constrained by operational readiness rather than technical capability. Scaling AI requires changes to the operating model. The pace of deploying agents matters less than whether the organization is prepared to manage them efficiently over time.

For many organizations, building that operational readiness will require external expertise. Most expect to look beyond their own teams for the skills needed to support their investment in Salesforce AI. **More than two-thirds (69%) expect to rely on external partners, particularly those that are strong in enterprise integration and API design (40%) and AI agent design and orchestration (40%).**

Take the next step in large-scale AI ambition

Our research makes it clear that much of the Salesforce ecosystem is no longer debating whether to adopt AI. Instead, organizations are questioning whether they are, in fact, ready to operate with AI. And when they do, they discover they need stronger execution systems, better-connected operations, authoritative data they can trust, clearer governance, and operating models built for hybrid human-AI workforces.

These capabilities characterize the next generation of enterprise leaders, with Salesforce playing a key role.

5 priorities for operationalizing Salesforce AI



Rebalance the AI budget, from tools to execution foundations

Integration maturity is one of the strongest enablers of scale. Before adding more AI capabilities, invest in reusable integration, APIs and orchestration that connect AI to the systems and processes where work is actually executed.



Redesign domains, not individual use cases

Identify high-value business journeys and redesign the flow of work around AI-enabled decisions and execution, rather than deploying AI features in isolation.



Build data infrastructure, not data estates

Define data authority, governance structures and decision context. Trusted data — not more data — enables governed AI decisions at scale.



Govern digital labor before you deploy it

Accountability, performance management and escalation protocols are not brakes on autonomy. They support safe, scalable autonomous execution.



Reframe Salesforce from CRM to customer execution layer

The opportunity is to move from recording customer activity to orchestrating AI-enabled customer decisions and actions across a broader enterprise ecosystem.

These five priorities share a common thread: AI strategy is increasingly inseparable from business strategy. The differentiator is not access to AI technology but the ability to identify high-value business domains, redesign them end to end around AI-enabled work and decisions, and build the foundations, governance and operating model required to turn that redesign into measurable business value.

This finding echoes a broader conclusion from NTT DATA's **2026 Global AI Report: A Playbook for AI Leaders**: Organizations create greater value when AI transformation starts with the business domains and outcomes they want to reinvent, rather than the technology they want to deploy.

NTT DATA operationalizes the agentic enterprise, with Salesforce at the center of customer execution

The agentic enterprise requires more than implementing AI. It requires redesigning how work gets done — taking into account the people, processes, data, applications and AI involved in that work — and operating that new model continuously at enterprise scale.

NTT DATA combines deep Salesforce expertise with proficiency in enterprise AI, data, integration, industry and process transformation, and managed operations, as well as our extensive knowledge of leading hyperscaler and AI ecosystems. We help organizations redesign high-value business domains, connect Salesforce and Agentforce with heterogeneous AI and enterprise environments, orchestrate intelligent agents across platforms, and establish the governance and operating models required to turn AI-enabled execution into measurable business outcomes.

Our differentiation is the ability to take transformation from strategy through to execution and ongoing operations. As a Salesforce Outsourcing Service Provider and member of the Salesforce Forward Deployed Engineering (FDE) Partner Network, we combine Salesforce capabilities with NTT DATA's broader AI and engineering ecosystem — including the AI-native innovation of NTT DATA AIVista — to help enterprises continuously govern, optimize and scale AI as the technology landscape evolves.

[Read more on our website](#)



About this report

Research methodology

All content is based on independently sourced research data. Primary research fieldwork was conducted for NTT DATA by STRAT7 Jigsaw. Participants were prescreened and selected via random sampling on the basis that they were Salesforce users with influence over or decision-making authority for their organization's Salesforce and/or AI strategy. The research findings were gathered via online questionnaires that ran from the end of June to July 2026. The data is presented at a 99% confidence level with a 3% margin of error.

The survey drew on a balanced sample of 1,525 Salesforce users (organizations already using or adopting AI within Salesforce). Coverage spans 18 countries in five regions and 11 industries. 90% of respondents were from organizations with more than 10,000 employees. 71% were from the C-suite, with 10% in CEO or CAIO roles; 24% were at Senior Vice President, Vice President, Head of or Director level; and 5% were Senior Managers or Specialists. 29% were from IT business functions, 23% from commercial/sales, 16% from operations, 10% from digital, and 23% from business support (including legal, compliance, risk, marketing, finance and HR functions).

Visit nttdata.com to learn more.

NTT DATA is a \$30+ billion business and technology services leader in AI and digital infrastructure. We accelerate client success and positively impact society through responsible innovation. As a Global Top Employer, we have experts in more than 70 countries. NTT DATA is part of NTT Group.



