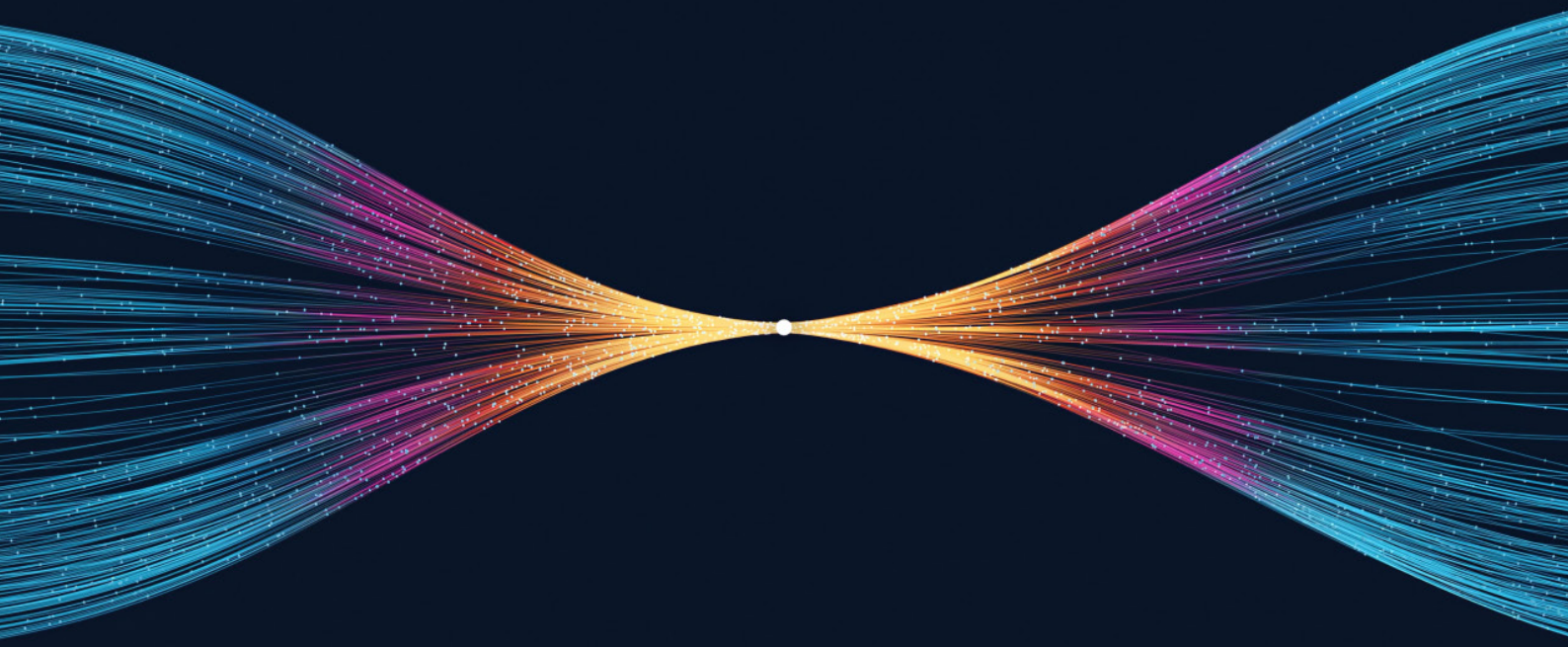
Realising the Value of AI

Cisco AI Readiness Index 2025



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Executive Summary

Now in its third year, the **Cisco AI Readiness Index** shows that while ambition continues to surge, a small but consistent group of companies – **the Pacesetters** – outperform their peers across every measure of AI value. Of the organisations we survey worldwide, they've consistently represented 13% to 14% for the last three years. But far from stagnation, the Pacesetters are a persistent reminder that readiness isn't a one-time achievement, but rather the ongoing work required to stay competitive as AI keeps evolving.



Pacesetters adopt a disciplined, system-level approach that balances strategy, infrastructure, data, governance, people and culture. They plan ahead, invest early and embed AI into the core of how they operate to help them keep pace with AI's accelerating evolution and deliver lasting value.

- **Value ready:** Around three-quarters (77%) have finalised their AI use cases – 4x higher than the global average among survey respondents.
- **Value managed:** They are 3x more likely to track and measure the impact of their AI investments (95% vs 32% overall).
- **Value realised:** Pacesetters are 1.5x more likely to report gains in profitability, productivity and innovation (90%+ vs ~60% overall).

AI agents raise the stakes, but ambition outpaces readiness

The Index highlights a tension between the 83% of companies that plan to deploy agents and mounting pressures on enterprise foundations that struggle to scale for the complexity agents introduce. Pacesetters are once again the exception, with almost all of them (98%) designing their infrastructure for future demands.

Giving the strain on readiness a name

The report also introduces a new concept – **AI Infrastructure Debt** – the modern evolution of technical and digital debt that held back prior transformation efforts. It's the often silent accumulation of compromises, deferred upgrades and underfunded architecture that gets costlier the longer it's ignored – slowing innovation, inflating costs and eroding returns. The Index makes some of the early warning signs visible: the need to upgrade, rising costs, GPU capacity, budget constraints and emerging threats.

Pacesetters aren't immune to AI Infrastructure Debt – but they're better positioned to act. With strong governance, financial foresight and cross-functional coordination, they have the resilience to help address AI Infrastructure Debt before it compounds into costlier risks.

The Pacesetters have made readiness their competitive advantage

AI readiness has become the ultimate differentiator – not because it guarantees innovation, but because it makes innovation repeatable. As agentic systems and autonomous AI push organisations into an era of constant compute demand, the lesson from this year's AI Readiness Index is clear: value follows readiness. And it's the most AI-ready organisations who are setting the pace.

Third edition overview:
AI readiness is a journey, not a destination

Now in its third year, the 2025 Cisco Readiness Index shows where the companies we surveyed stand on their journey to AI readiness and what it will take for them to stay competitive.



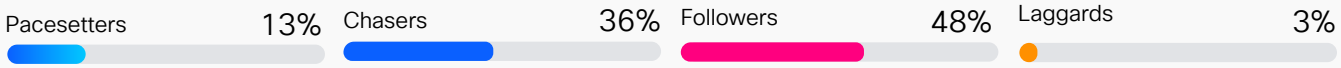
The Index measures AI readiness of companies across six pillars: Strategy, Infrastructure, Data, Governance, Talent and Culture. Based on their readiness scores, organisations are categorised into four levels:

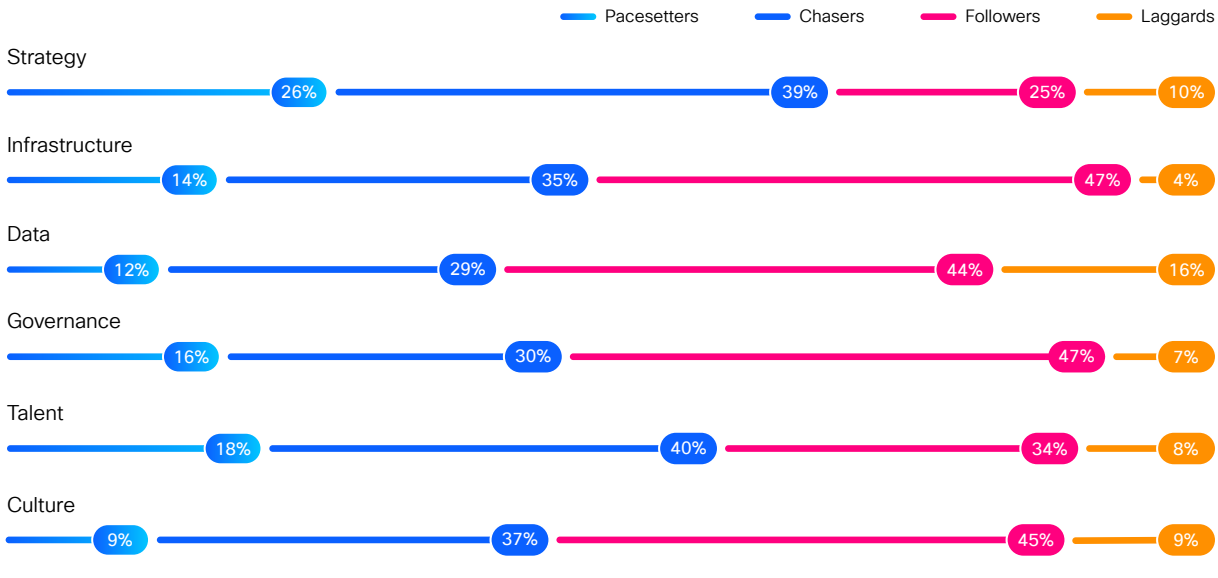
1. Pacesetters (fully prepared)
2. Chasers (moderately prepared)
3. Followers (limited preparedness)
4. Laggards (unprepared)

A familiar pattern with a twist

Despite continued investment and focus on AI, readiness among respondents fails to keep up with rising demand. Compared to last year's report, movement across the four categories of readiness is minimal. But this year's Index looks more closely at the small but consistent group of companies – the 'Pacesetters', about 13% of organisations surveyed worldwide over the last three years – to understand how they outperform their peers across every measure of AI value. Their sustained advantage suggests it's their disciplined, system-level readiness that balances strategic drivers with the data and infrastructure, helping them keep pace with AI's accelerating evolution and deliver real, tangible value.

Overall Readiness



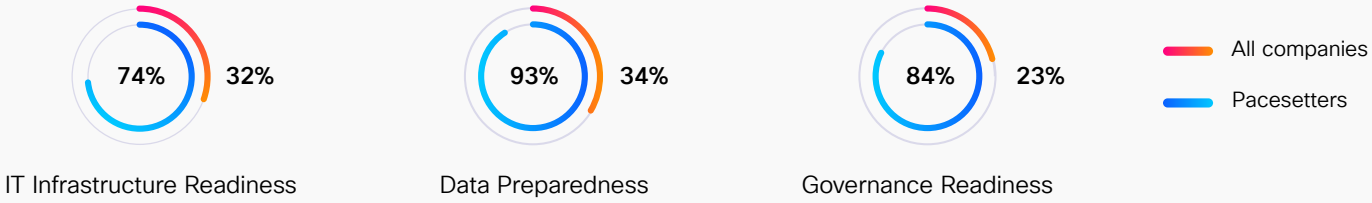


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Surging workloads put pressure on readiness while ambition races ahead

As the pattern holds, the stakes continue to soar. The rise of AI agents is ushering in a new era in which companies adopting AI will need to share their digital infrastructure with resource-intensive models. Systems must now operate on a different scale and deliver new kinds of value. Yet companies' confidence about their infrastructure's ability to handle the new demands remains modest. AI workloads are expected to grow rapidly over the next few years, creating significant demand on enterprise infrastructure. **Just a third of organisations surveyed (34%) feel their IT infrastructure is fully adaptable and scalable to accommodate the evolving computational needs of AI projects.** The industry is moving fast, but the infrastructure can't keep up.

Percentage of companies rating high/full readiness to adopt and leverage AI technologies



Value delivered is the new benchmark

Despite a lack of readiness for most companies, the conversation has shifted. Like many transformations, AI is now judged on the value it can deliver to the businesses investing in it. The AI Readiness Index proves that those who keep on top of readiness can keep pace with innovation and translate AI into measurable impact: profitability, new revenue streams and competitive advantage.



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Most chase value. The Pacesetters capture it.

The question isn't whether to invest in AI or not, but how quickly that investment can deliver measurable business gains. Eight in ten organisations say the urgency to demonstrate tangible ROI has risen sharply in the past six months, driven by CEOs, CFOs, IT leaders and growing pressure from competitors.



The answer to the value question remains elusive for many

The majority of organisations surveyed are flying blind on whether their efforts are paying off: only one in three organisations (32%) has a process to measure the impact of its AI initiatives. And confidence in monetising AI isn't much better: 34% feel very confident, with 43% somewhat confident about monetising their AI use cases. Without clear metrics and paths to market, value stalls between pilots and production.

High expectations, shaky foundations

Ambition and investment in AI are also accelerating without important mechanisms to support the digital transformation underway. Nearly seven in ten companies (69%) rank AI as a top IT budget priority, more than half (58%) have a well-defined strategy, and 81% report a clear owner for AI within the business – showing that accountability and structure are emerging.

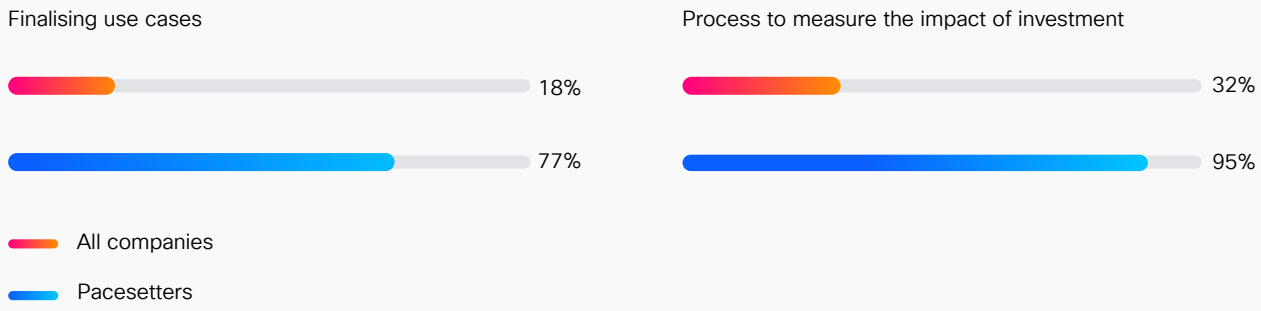
At the same time, only one in three companies has a formal change management plan to guide employees through AI adoption. Without that planning, investments, strategy and ownership may not fully translate into real-world value. Teams may resist new processes, struggle to integrate AI into workflows or fail to adopt tools effectively – meaning much of the potential ROI could remain untapped.

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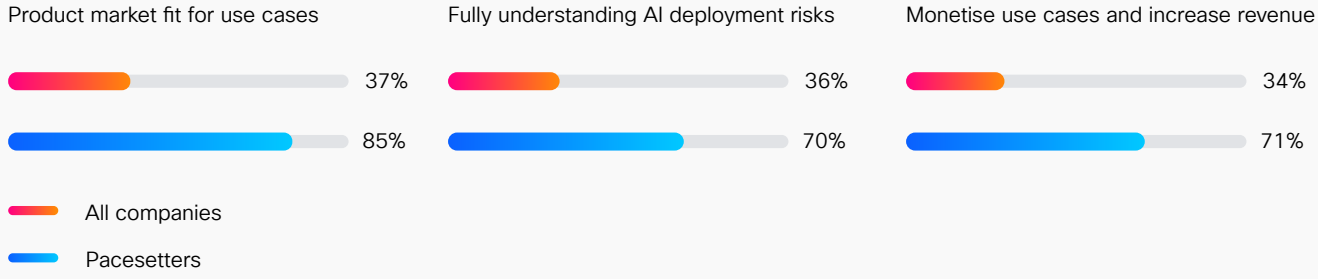
Readiness is the path to value. The proof is in the Pacesetters.

This is where Pacesetters stand apart. They treat readiness as an ongoing discipline, and that's what allows them to move further, faster. By building the right infrastructure, governance, skills and ways of working, they develop and deploy AI in ways that allow them to move those use cases into production where they can deliver revenue and broader impact.

Progress in identifying practical AI use cases



Confidence levels in AI deployment for identified use cases



High confidence can translate into stronger returns

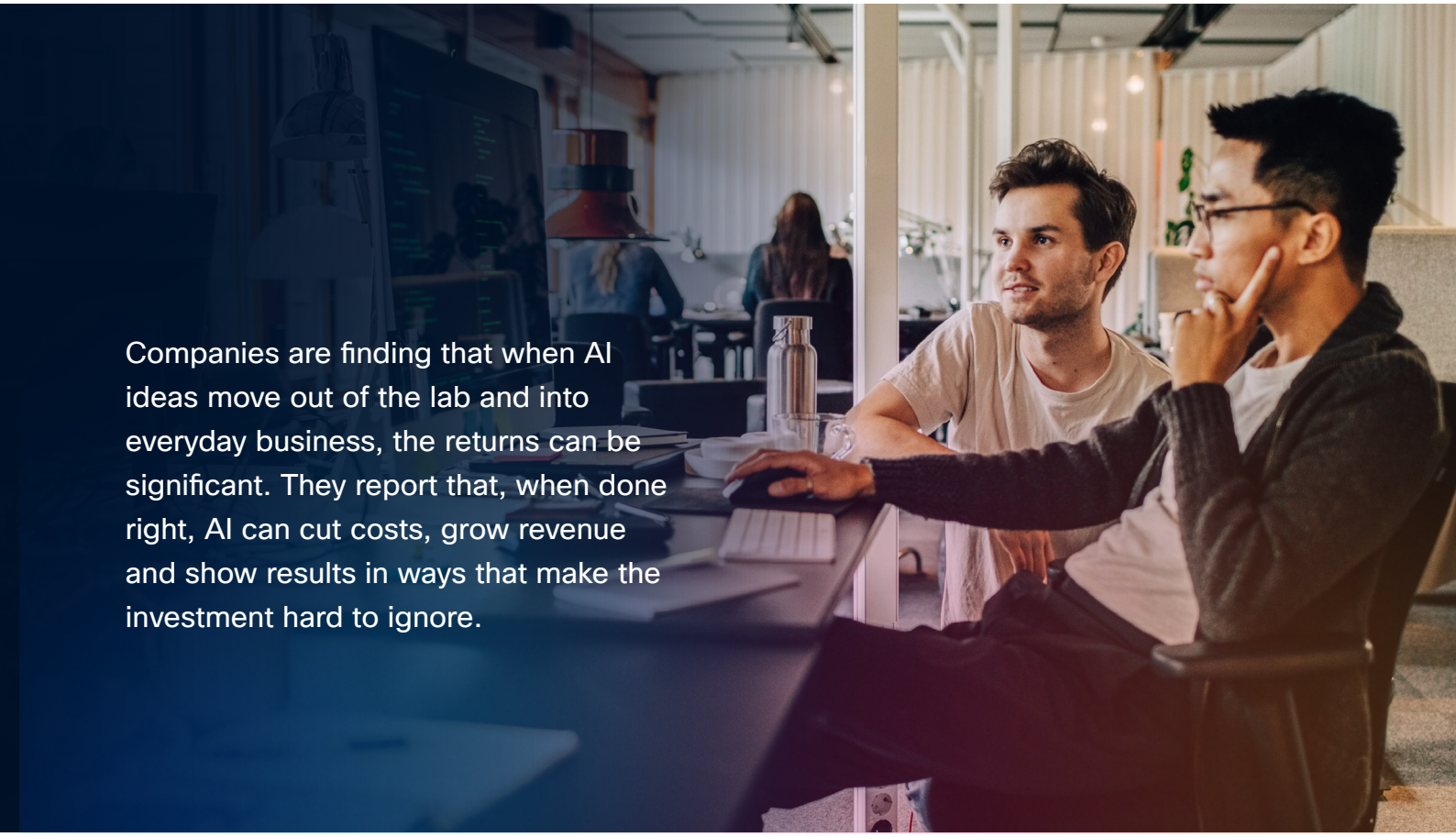
Pacesetters are more likely to report higher revenue, cost savings and overall profitability. But the impact doesn't stop at the bottom line. Companies are telling us that AI is also enhancing customer experiences, boosting team productivity, automating processes and driving innovation, proving that true value comes from both measurable outcomes and strategic advantages.

The incentive for AI readiness

Companies that haven't reached this level of readiness risk missed market opportunities, slowed growth and unrealised revenue. Pacesetters show that AI readiness is the engine that transforms ambition into measurable, repeatable success. Those who build the infrastructure, governance and operational muscle to deploy AI at scale are capturing the most value, while the rest risk being left behind.

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Chapter 1
Value is money



Companies are finding that when AI ideas move out of the lab and into everyday business, the returns can be significant. They report that, when done right, AI can cut costs, grow revenue and show results in ways that make the investment hard to ignore.

The promise is clear, but results are still coming into focus

Most organisations are already seeing tangible financial benefits from their AI investments. Among companies that have deployed AI so far, nearly two-thirds report that it has met or exceeded expectations in multiple areas: boosting profitability, generating revenue from existing business lines, supporting new product or service launches, and creating entirely new revenue streams. More than half report gains of significant magnitude.

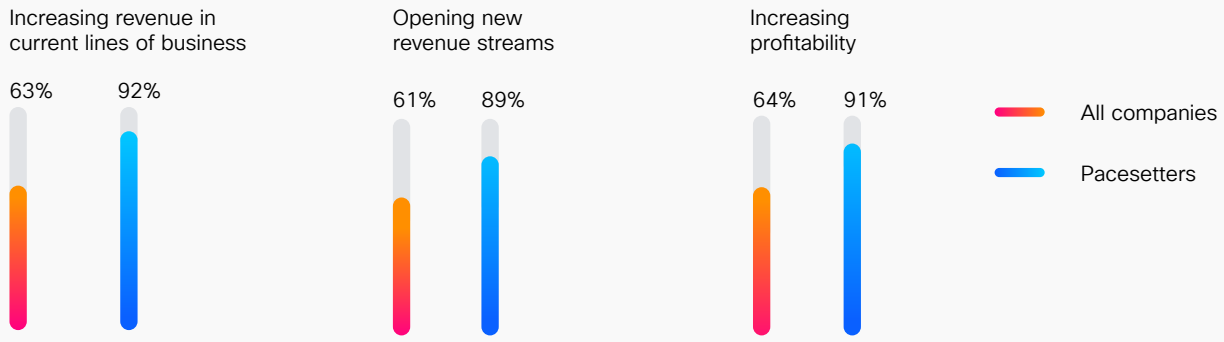
For a technology still in its early chapters, that's an impressive start. But with only 32% systematically assessing the impact of AI investments, reported gains are unevenly quantified.

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Pacesetters get more value for their money

Pacesetters are demonstrating AI's financial impact – turning pilots into bottom-line results with strong gains in profitability and revenue.

Investment impact: meeting or exceeding expectations



The timing of expected value depends on the goal

When asked what they hope to see in the months ahead, companies put growth at the top of the list. More than half (53%) expect AI to help them expand revenues through new product features, upselling or entering new markets within the year.

Cost reduction, by contrast, is viewed as more of a long game, with just 37% prioritising savings this year but the majority (51%) looking for those operational efficiency gains within two to three years. Time savings, measured in faster product cycles or quicker speed to market, remain consistently important in the next 12 months and the two-to-three-year time frame. The financial ambition is there, but the timing depends on the goal.

Overall, 30% of companies surveyed expect 50–100% ROI within the next year – among Pacesetters, nearly half (48%) anticipate returns at that level.



All companies
30%

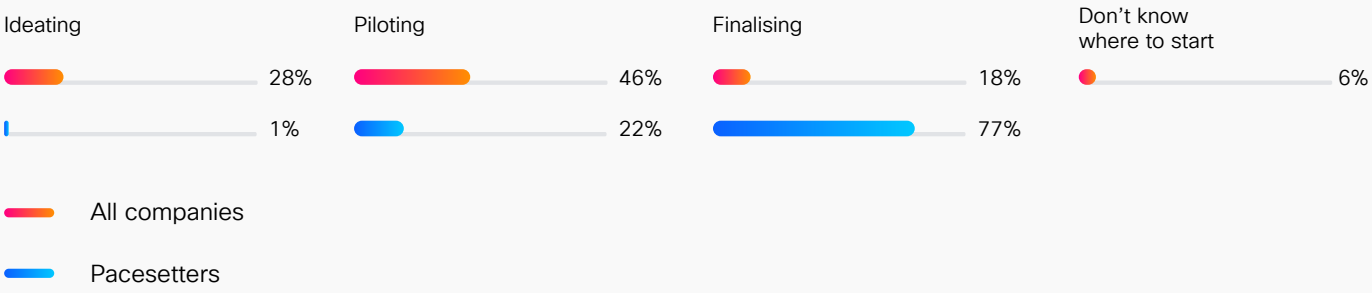


Pacesetters
48%



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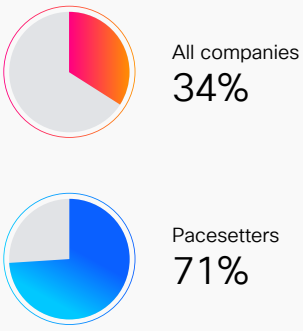
Even in cases where AI is driving returns, most organisations are still experimenting.



Confidence is building, but it isn't universal

At the same time, companies surveyed continue to invest, even without the measurement frameworks to track progress. Nearly seven in ten (69%) now rank AI as a top budget priority, and AI's share of IT budgets continues to climb.

Pacesetters show greater confidence in monetising AI



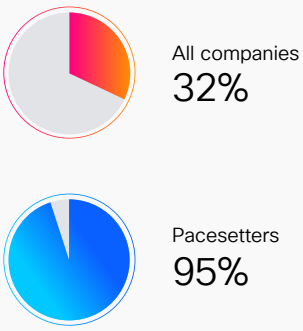
The financial value of AI isn't in doubt – it's in motion

Our results show that AI can be a powerful growth engine, but it has not yet become a repeatable business outcome for all companies surveyed. Most are chasing growth first, with cost savings treated as a longer play. The potential is real, but the discipline to lock it in is still missing.

Pacesetters, who are almost four times as likely to have moved their use cases into production, are showing that AI delivers real business value, from revenue growth to faster innovation. The opportunity now is to accelerate the shift from pilots and ideas to predictable, repeatable outcomes.

AI alone may not deliver value. But AI readiness can. And the Pacesetters prove it.

Pacesetters are more likely to have a process and clearly defined metrics to measure the impact of AI



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Chapter 2
Value is more than money

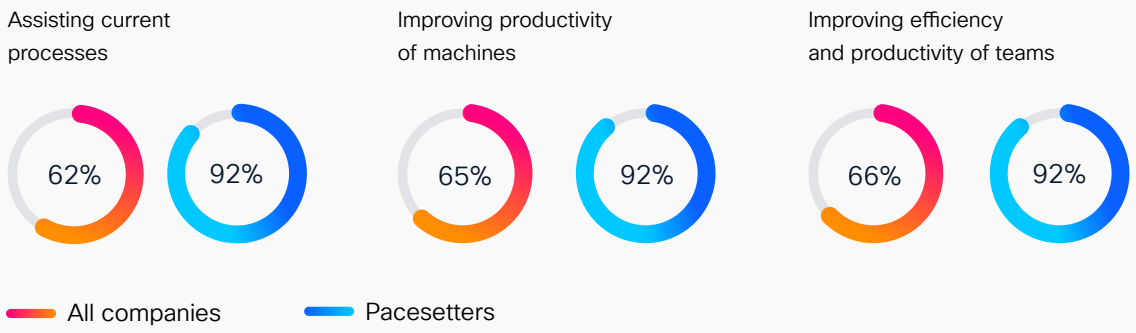


Not every return from AI shows up in cash on day one. Some of the biggest benefits come in how organisations work, how they serve customers and how they unlock ideas that lead to bigger gains over time. These advantages are already being felt, and most companies expect them to accelerate in the months ahead.

Teams are already working smarter and faster with AI

AI is already reshaping how people work day-to-day. Whether AI is taking over repetitive tasks, supporting specific workflows or automating entire processes, companies are seeing tangible improvements. A majority tells us that AI is meeting or exceeding expectations in these areas, with the Pacesetters pushing ahead of everyone else.

AI's impact on efficiency and productivity is matching or exceeding expectations



The outlook is even stronger: within the next three years, almost all (86%) organisations expect AI use cases to deliver noticeable productivity improvements for employees.

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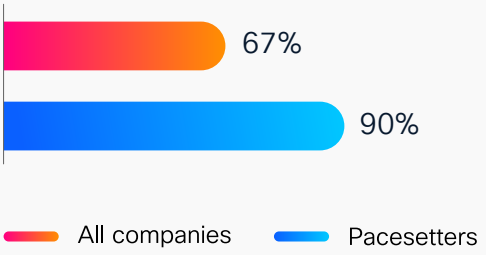
AI is reshaping the front line

For many companies, AI's most visible impact happens for the customer.

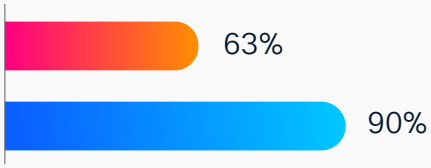
AI is the spark for new processes, capabilities and products

AI's role isn't limited to making existing work more efficient; it's also creating entirely new ways of working and innovating.

AI's impact on customer experience is meeting or exceeding expectations.



AI's impact on new processes, capabilities and product launches is meeting or exceeding expectations.



Looking ahead, almost half of businesses surveyed predict further breakthroughs in customer experience in the next 12 months, confirming that the front line continues to be the place where value is generated.

Most companies are measuring AI value in months, not years

The picture is similar in other areas of strategic importance. Over a third of organisations surveyed expect AI to improve risk mitigation, compliance and brand positioning within the year, with nearly half projecting these gains within two to three years. Similar advances are expected in how AI agents augment and assist teams, underscoring how fast organisations expect change to unfold.

In other words, AI isn't about a payoff somewhere down the line. Most companies expect the next 12 to 36 months to be the critical window where value beyond money becomes visible and transformative.



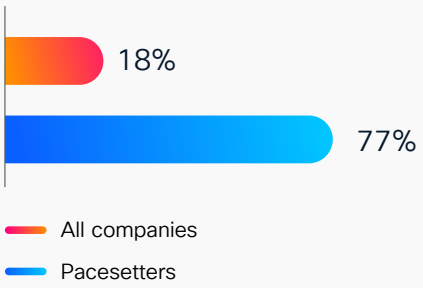
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Spotlight:
The value of use cases

From ideas to action, AI is delivering real-world results across sectors. Organisations are doing more than just thinking about where AI could fit. They're actively piloting and finalising the solutions that will define their next wave of growth.

Most organisations are past the starting line
Although a small fraction admit they haven't yet started, most organisations surveyed are already shaping their AI journey, 64% have moved beyond conceptual planning.

Organisations advancing with finalised AI use cases



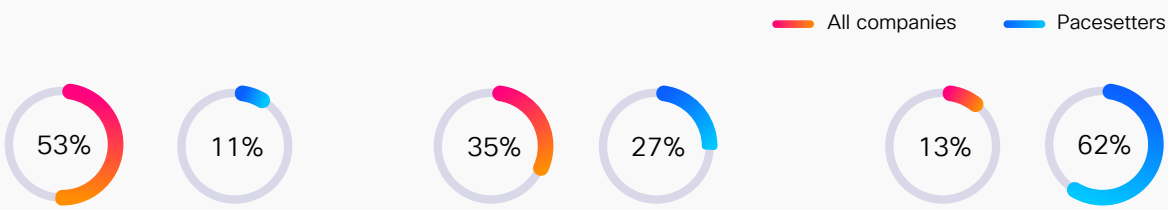
Many are still refining strategies and laying foundations, but Pacesetters stand apart: the majority have gone beyond ideation and pilots, with most moving their AI use cases into production where they can generate real value.

Most industries are focusing their efforts on their operational efficiency

	Technology	Retail	Property	Manufacturing	Healthcare	Financial Services	Education	Construction	Business Services	Natural Resources
Customer Experience and Service	48%	47%	42%	44%	43%	47%	45%	44%	42%	44%
Operational Efficiency and Automation	55%	50%	48%	57%	49%	54%	48%	50%	51%	53%
Product Service Innovation and Enhancement	56%	49%	44%	51%	45%	48%	49%	49%	47%	53%
Cybersecurity	49%	43%	44%	51%	43%	47%	41%	48%	41%	42%
Risk Management and Fraud Detection	44%	39%	37%	42%	36%	44%	36%	39%	38%	48%
Compliance, Monitoring and Enablement	28%	21%	27%	29%	22%	28%	23%	29%	23%	28%
Marketing and Sales Optimisation	43%	47%	45%	44%	40%	48%	40%	40%	43%	42%
Human Resource and Workforce Management	44%	42%	43%	46%	44%	45%	44%	45%	45%	43%
Research and Development / Scientific Discovery	45%	35%	35%	47%	42%	41%	45%	39%	41%	42%

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How companies develop their use cases



Still experimenting with AI in silos, relying on ad-hoc initiatives and opportunistic use-case adoption.

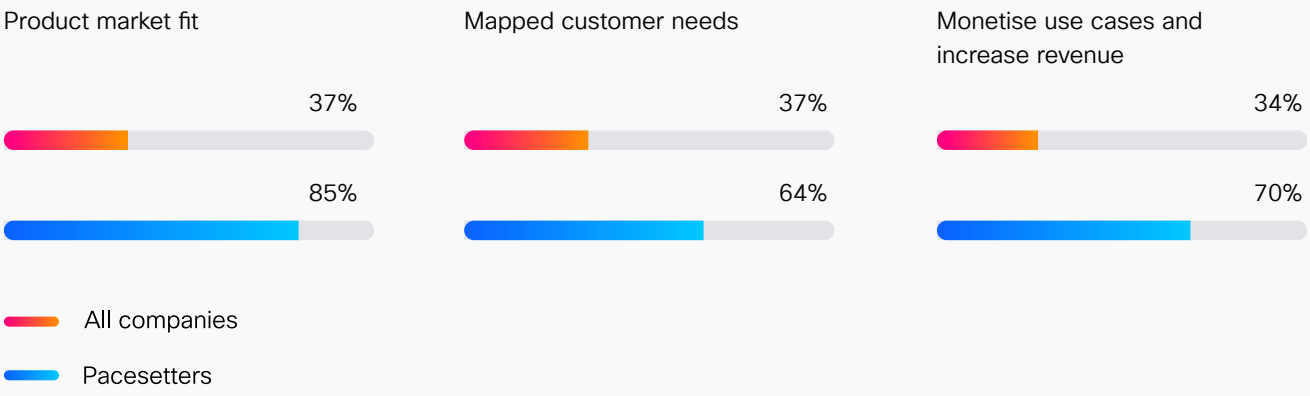
Built centralised or integrated governance to systematically identify and prioritise opportunities.

Have a mature, repeatable innovation cycle that spans ideation, piloting, scaling and impact measurement

Emerging use cases are broad, but confidence remains cautious

The enterprises we surveyed are taking a pragmatic approach to AI adoption. Instead of betting on a single breakthrough, most are piloting multiple use cases to identify where AI delivers the strongest advantage. The top applications today span customer experience, cybersecurity, operational efficiency, marketing and sales, HR and product innovation. Just over half of organisations tell us the AI models supporting their use cases are accurate at least 75% of the time. 93% of Pacesetters report the same levels of accuracy.

Confidence in the commercial value of AI use cases



This pattern suggests a dual reality. On one hand, most companies surveyed are piloting and refining AI use cases across multiple functions. On the other hand, the confidence and discipline to turn use cases into results is still developing.

Agents are coming. But are organisations ready?

Even the best-designed use cases can run into friction. Strategy, silos, hidden costs and more can get in the way. But these challenges reflect more than execution hurdles. Without strong alignment, governance and scalable infrastructure, even promising use cases can struggle to move beyond proof of concept and deliver long-term value. And as AI agents start to work alongside us in the digital world, the stakes may only get higher.

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Chapter 3
AI Agents can give us more if we build for more



AI that analyses. And then acts.

The next wave of AI is moving beyond predictive models and chat-based assistants. Agentic AI systems don't simply provide answers; as shown in the chart below, they take action by navigating tasks, workflows and even business decisions autonomously. Companies are already setting their sights on Agentic AI: 83% plan to develop or deploy AI agents.

What sort of agents are companies building?

Instead of AI being a tool for insights, businesses expect it to become an operational partner that supports teams, interacts directly with customers, detects threats and automates industrial processes.

Top Agentic AI use cases

Now	Next 12 Months	Next 2–3 Years
40%	46%	31%
Autonomous Software Engineering: AI agents that write, debug, test and deploy code with minimal human input.	Personal and professional productivity agents: AI personal assistants that manage schedules, emails and task prioritisation.	Industrial and Robotics Control Agents: Real-world agentic systems that control drones, autonomous vehicles or warehouse robots.
63%	45%	20%
Autonomous Software Engineering: AI agents that write, debug, test and deploy code with minimal human input.	Simulated Humans for Testing or Training: Autonomous agents in virtual environments for gaming, product testing or user behaviour simulation.	Industrial and Robotics Control Agents: Real-world agentic systems that control drones, autonomous vehicles or warehouse robots.

All companies Pacesetters

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Is everyone really waiting two to three years to develop robots?

Although industrial and robotics control aren't at the top of the use case list for another couple of years, that doesn't mean they're not part of the plan. Within the next 12 months, 71% of Pacesetters and 53% of all companies are telling us they'll be developing these kinds of real-world agentic use cases.

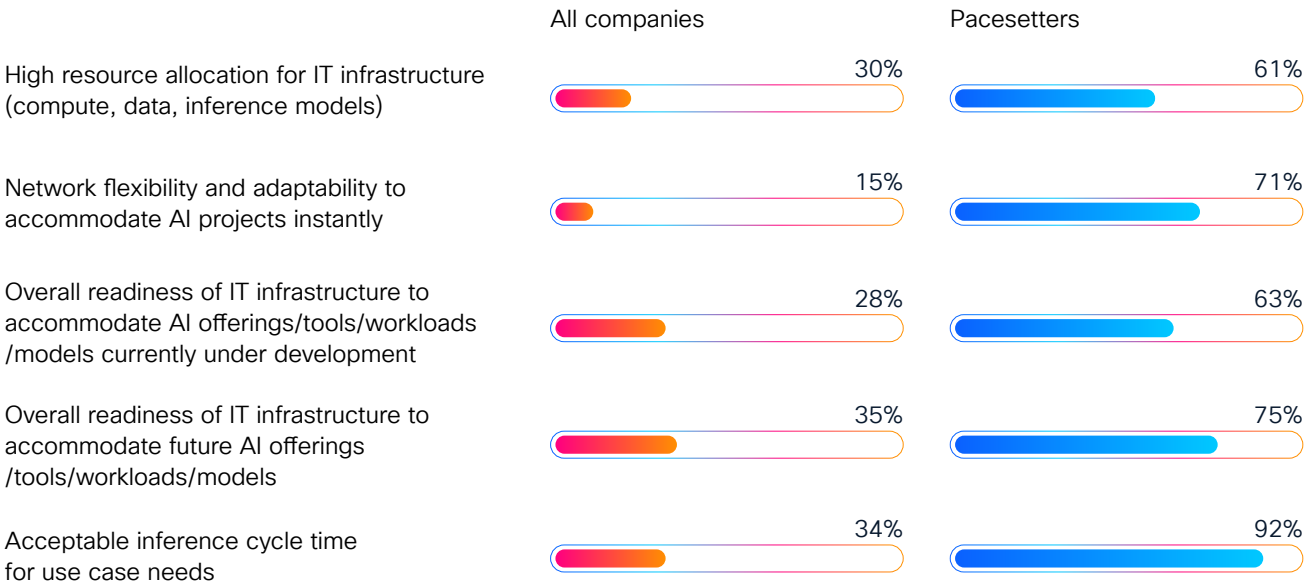
The workloads surge and the costs of ambition multiply

Scaling AI workloads is already stretching IT capacity, and agentic AI is expected to multiply that strain. 62% of companies expect workloads to increase by more than 30% within two to three years, and just over half expect they'll rise by 1.5 times within five years. Unlike traditional automation that merely processes data, agentic systems act on it, which means networks, compute and storage need to handle continuous, adaptive cycles.

Use cases point to a new operating model that puts AI agents alongside humans

The survey shows organisations aren't simply experimenting; they're aiming for tangible change. Almost 40% of companies expect agents to augment or assist their teams in the next 12 months. Customer support, cybersecurity and business process automation are key focus areas. This could mean a future workplace where agents work alongside employees, take over repetitive functions, autonomously detect security threats and unlock new productivity baselines.

The infrastructure gap



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The security gap

Beyond compute and networking, the question of security and control remains. Less than a third (31%) of organisations surveyed say they're fully equipped to control and secure agentic AI systems, rising to 72% that are at least moderately prepared. Given that most respondents plan to deploy AI agents, that will act autonomously and connect with other business applications, the stakes are high. A misaligned or breached agent presents both a data risk and an operational one.

The workforce planning gap

While companies are bullish about deploying agents, only 32% say they've already identified which human tasks will be handled by AI and factored that into workforce planning. This lack of clarity risks leaving organisations unprepared, both for reskilling and for the creation of entirely new AI governance, monitoring and safety roles.

Companies are racing towards an agentic future. But they need stronger infrastructure.

Taken together, the data shows a contradiction between ambition and infrastructure. Organisations know their infrastructure isn't ready for the surging workloads. They acknowledge that their security measures are still fragile, and their workforce plans are out of sync with the technology. Nevertheless, they are pushing ahead.

If companies achieve their ambition, the world will look very different within a few years, with organisations weaving agents into the fabric of work, industry and even decision-making.

But they must first shore up the invisible backbone: **networks, compute, data management and security.**



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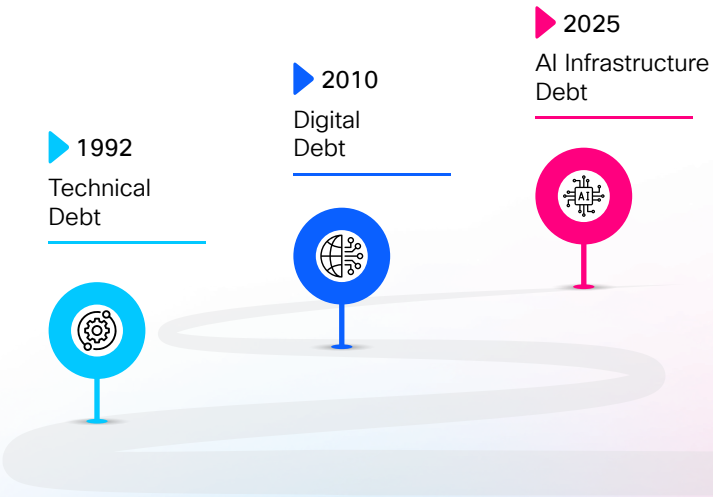
Chapter 4
AI Infrastructure Debt is a real risk to value

What is AI Infrastructure Debt?

A wave of technology can leave behind a trail of shortcuts, compromises and underinvestment that later become bottlenecks. In the software world, this became known as technical debt: code written quickly to meet deadlines that eventually slows innovation. In the AI era, a similar phenomenon is emerging: AI Infrastructure Debt.

AI Infrastructure Debt is the accumulation of gaps, trade-offs, short-cuts and lags in compute, networking, data management, security and talent that compound as companies rush to deploy AI.

But as history with technical debt shows, what looks like an acceptable compromise in the early phases can snowball into systemic drag. With 83% of companies surveyed planning to deploy AI agents, workloads rising and readiness levels stalling, AI Infrastructure Debt could quickly become the silent bottleneck preventing companies from realising the value they expect.





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Why it's not necessarily a problem (yet)

Pressure to prove AI's financial impact is growing. Stakeholders from boards to business units expect visible returns, and fast. As a result, companies are channelling their focus into bringing use cases to market and demonstrating returns.

This optimism creates a buffer. Leaders in AI deployment can point to pilots delivering results, engaged employees and more satisfied customers. But in the rush to deliver, critical steps like modernising infrastructure, tightening governance or addressing security gaps may be skipped or postponed. While these shortcuts might not harm companies at first, they risk accumulating as AI Infrastructure Debt threatens to slow innovation and limit long-term value realisation.



What does AI Infrastructure debt look like?

Firstly, it doesn't announce itself with a single failure. Instead, it accumulates in patterns. And even Pacesetters aren't immune to AI Infrastructure Debt.

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Here are the early warning signs from the organisations we surveyed:



Rising costs

AI is becoming increasingly expensive relative to the value delivered. Pacesetters also face high compute costs, which grow as they scale advanced deployments.

Ranking high compute costs as a top hurdle to ROI

54% 58%

Unpredictable hybrid infrastructure costs

51% 55%

AI compensation expectations are outpacing their budgets

72% 84%

Recurring delays

Most companies struggle to move projects from pilot to production. Pacesetters scale deployments faster, with fewer procedural delays and near-instant updates for many.

Deployments are at sufficient speed and scale

41% 97%

Near instant updates with zero downtime

12% 38%

Long procurement or decision-making cycles

23% 34%

Resource strain

Talent and infrastructure gaps slow AI adoption. Pacesetters have more robust infrastructure and integrated networks, reducing bottlenecks.

Have robust GPU infrastructure available for current and future workloads

26% 62%

Have fully integrated networks to support AI deployments

34% 79%

Talent gaps are most acute in infrastructure management, cybersecurity for AI and AI tools/technologies

60% ~65%

Readiness gaps

Outdated systems and fragmented data block scaling. Pacesetters benefit from scalable infrastructure and centralised data, enabling smoother deployments.

Admit infrastructure cannot support deployments at scale

28% 41%

Network performance optimal: Minimal issues and tailored for the most demanding AI workloads

22% 81%

Have their in-house data fully centralised, facilitating easy access for AI initiatives

19% 76%

Mounting workloads

Rising AI workloads are expected to stretch infrastructure for all. Pacesetters are better prepared but still anticipate significant increases, underscoring the need for ongoing readiness investments.

Expect workloads to rise more than 30% in the next 2–3 years

63% 75%

Expect workloads to rise more than 50% in the next 3–5 years

51% 69%

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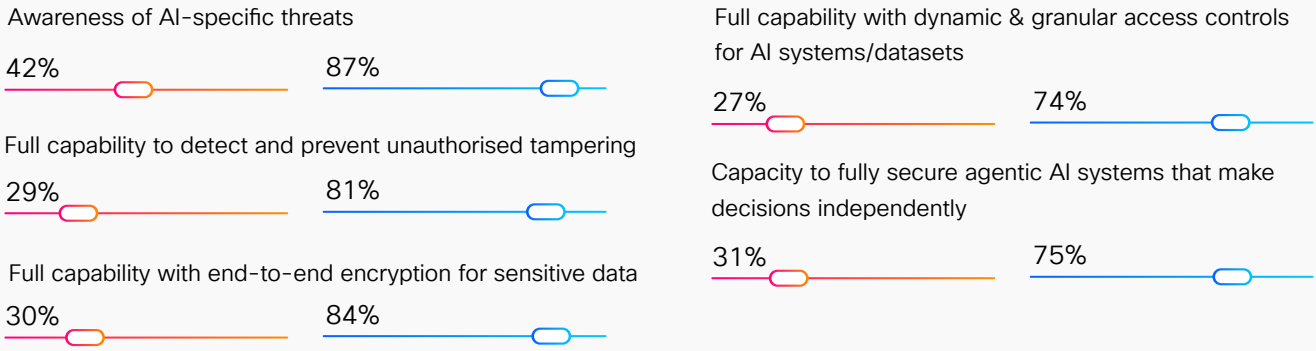


Security is where AI Infrastructure Debt can become dangerous

While ambition and workloads rise rapidly, security sits as a critical, often underappreciated aspect of AI readiness. The Index shows that only 31% of organisations feel fully capable of securing agentic AI systems, and fewer than half feel confident in safeguarding sensitive data or preventing unauthorised access. Without robust security embedded into infrastructure, every new AI deployment can add risk, potentially exposing organisations to data breaches, compliance failures or operational disruptions.

Emerging security risks

Security and compliance challenges are common and can compound AI Infrastructure Debt. Pacesetters are better equipped, with stronger threat detection, access controls and encryption.



Organisations are taking action. Security tops the AI infrastructure priority list: 55% of organisations surveyed prioritise defending models and data from tampering, while 51% focus on recruiting the right talent to manage AI-specific cybersecurity threats. It consistently appears as both a top priority and a top blocker – a clear signal that leaders recognise the critical importance of embedding security into the strategy, not bolting it on later

AI Infrastructure Debt could become a crisis – but it doesn't need to

While awareness is the first step, deliberate planning and investment are critical second steps. The conversation about AI Infrastructure Debt must begin early, with organisations actively tracking the early warning signs. These are vital clues to hidden debt that, if left unchecked, could become the very thing that prevents companies from realising the transformative benefits they're chasing.

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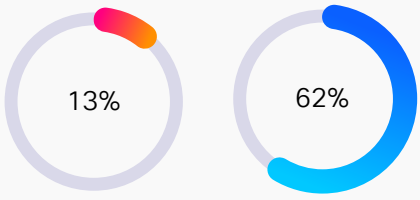
Conclusion:
Follow the Pacesetters



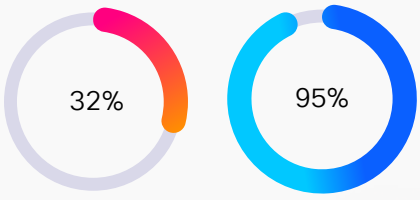
Across the enterprise AI landscape, many are talking about value, but it's the Pacesetters – the 13% of surveyed organisations globally that are fully ready for AI – who are capturing it. Here's what they do differently from everyone else we surveyed.

They are more disciplined

Mature, repeatable innovation process for generating, piloting and scaling AI use cases



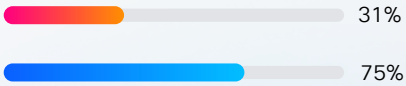
Process to measure the impact of AI with clearly defined metrics



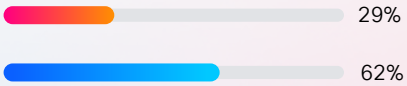
All companies
Pacesetters

More secure...

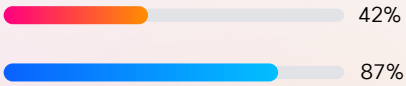
Fully equipped to control & secure AI agents



Fully integrated AI into security and identity systems

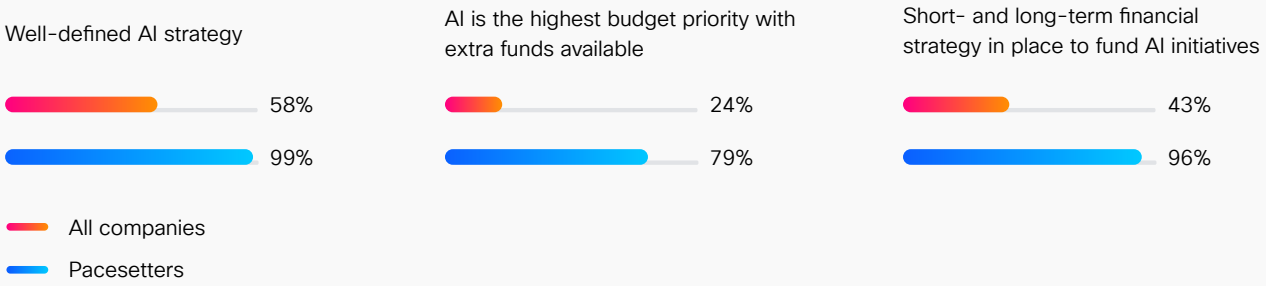


Highly aware of AI/ML-specific threats

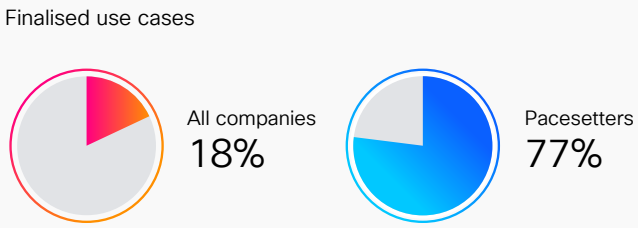


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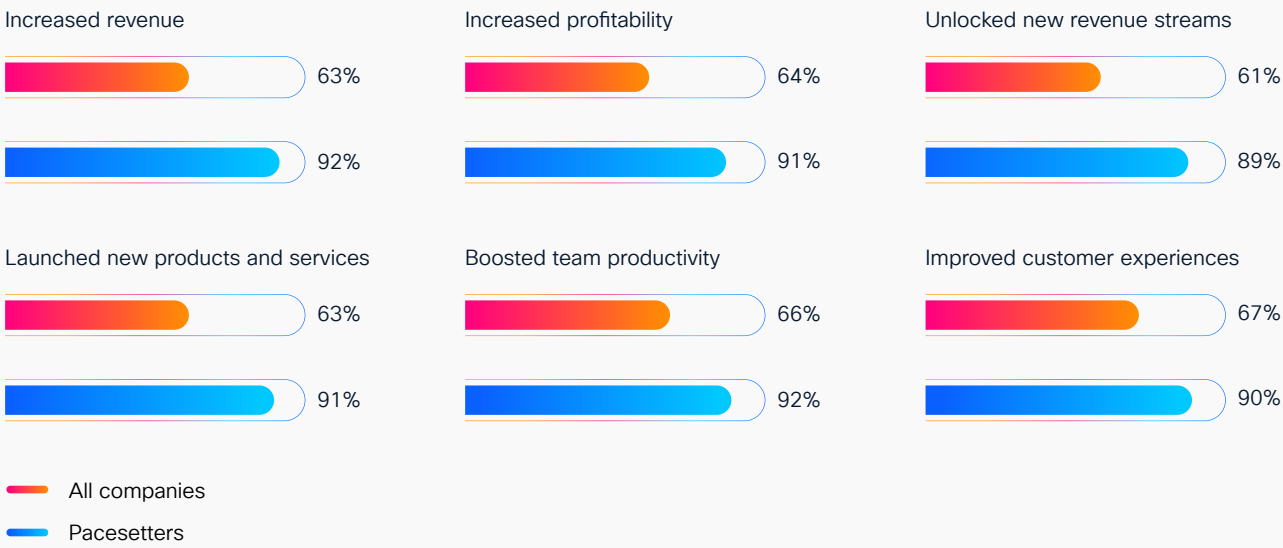
With more strategic resilience to do something about AI Infrastructure Debt



That translates into clearer action



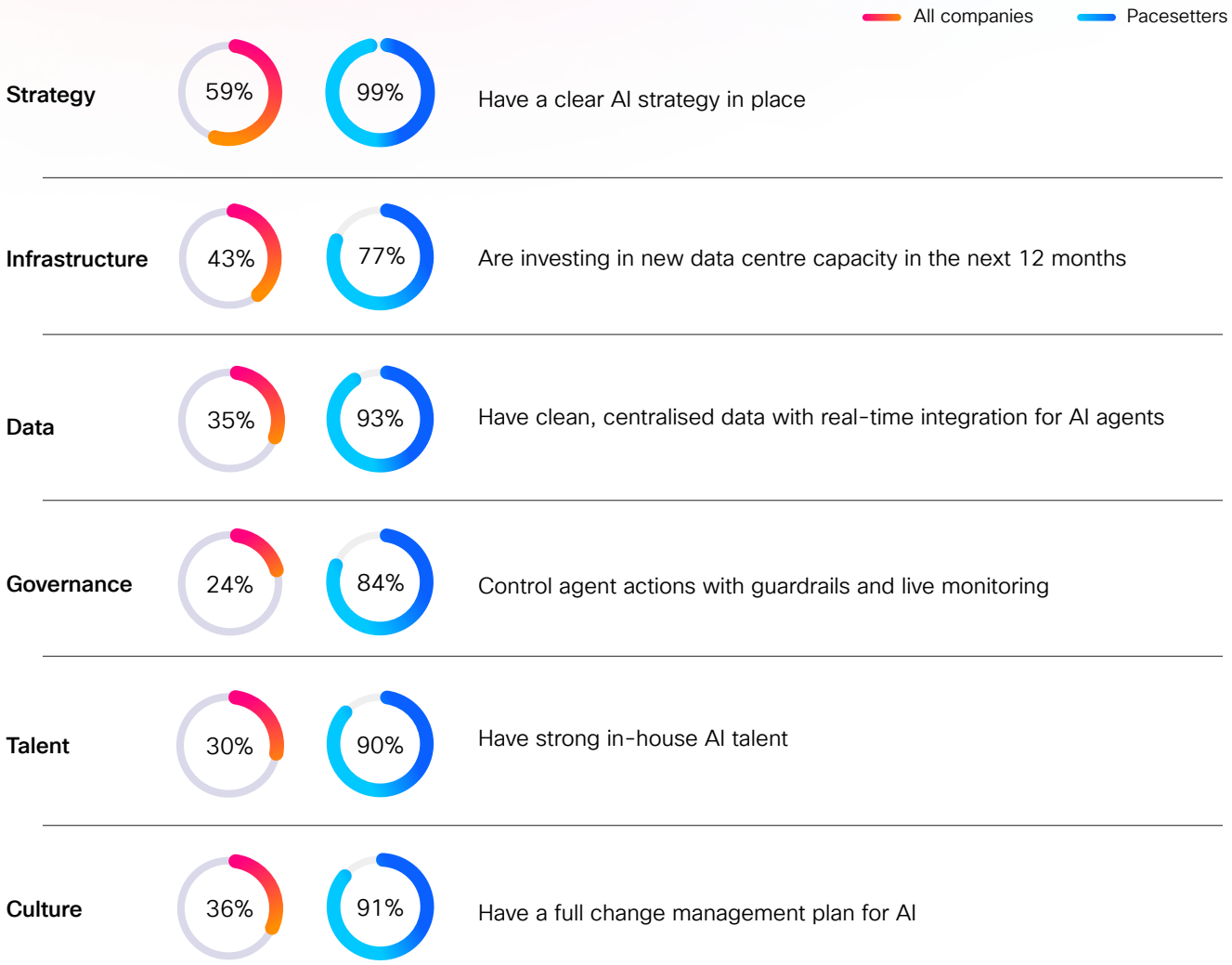
And stronger results.



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But value doesn't come by accident. Value follows readiness.

Pacesetters consistently invest across all six pillars of AI readiness. Here is just one example of how they do this for each of the pillars:





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Follow the Pacesetters

As the Index shows, organisations that adopt a holistic approach to AI readiness are more likely to reap the benefits of those investments. By following the Pacesetters' example and building robust foundations, companies can turn their AI ambitions into tangible, sustainable outcomes, helping ensure each investment, use case and AI agent drives maximum impact.



Plan and act with clarity

Pacesetters have an AI strategy. And they act on it. Clear priorities mean less time stuck in pilots and more progress in real-world use cases.



Invest in infrastructure early

Instead of waiting for bottlenecks, they build capacity for scale from the start. That preparation means AI becomes an enabler, not a strain.



Treat data as a discipline, not a hurdle

Their data is clean, centralised and ready to integrate – so AI doesn't get tripped up by silos or patchwork fixes.



Lead transformation, not just technology

Change management is built in, which brings people with them. Pacesetters recognise that full support turns ambition into action and value.



Balance innovation with guardrails

Pacesetters embrace agents, growth and new use cases – but with governance, security and monitoring in place. That balance is what keeps value scalable and responsible for them.

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Methodology

This study draws on insights from 8,039 senior business leaders responsible for AI integration and deployment in organisations with 500 or more employees. Respondents represent 30 markets across Asia-Pacific, Japan and Greater China; North America; Latin America; and Europe, the Middle East and Africa, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, Mainland China, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Philippines, Poland, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United States and Vietnam.

The Cisco AI Readiness Index assesses organisations against six pillars of readiness – Strategy, Infrastructure, Data, Governance, Talent and Culture – measured across 49 indicators. Each indicator was weighted based on its importance to readiness. Scores were assigned by level of deployment: 25–50% for partial deployment, 100% for full deployment. Pillar scores were then combined to calculate an overall AI readiness score for each organisation. The pillar weightings are as follows: Strategy (15%); Infrastructure (25%); Data (20%); Governance (15%); Talent (15%); and Culture (10%).

Respondents came from 26 industries, including Business Services, Financial Services, Healthcare, Manufacturing, Retail, Technology Services, and Media & Communications, among others.

With a global sample of this scale, results are statistically significant to within approximately +1% at the 95% confidence level. Differences of 2% or more year-on-year represent a true change.

The research was conducted through a double-blind online survey in August 2025 and the analysis carried out by an independent third party, Satori Experience.

- Australia
- Brazil
- Canada
- Mainland China
- France
- Germany
- Hong Kong
- India
- Indonesia
- Italy
- Japan
- Malaysia
- Mexico
- The Netherlands
- New Zealand
- The Philippines
- Poland
- Singapore
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- South Africa
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