

In a shift from AI hype to AI realism, organizations are increasing their AI investments with a focus on long-term value

- *Priorities in 2026 will be on infrastructure, data, governance, and workforce upskilling*
- *Measures of AI success broaden beyond productivity to growth, risk management, and customer experience*
- *Two-thirds of CXOs say that clearer governance and accountability frameworks would help them better leverage AI in decision-making*

Paris, January 15, 2026 – New research shows that after an era of ‘AI hype’, business leaders are now increasingly realistic and pragmatic about their AI strategies, and have started using it in their decision-making. The Capgemini Research Institute publishes today a report on AI perspectives, [The multi-year AI advantage: Building the enterprise of tomorrow](#), along with a spotlight report on AI and decision-making, [How AI is quietly reshaping executive decisions](#). As organizations enter 2026, the research suggests that organizations and their leaders will need to be more deliberate about governance, skills, accountability and human-AI chemistry to realize the full transformative value of AI.

As AI adoption is growing, businesses are accelerating AI investments for competitiveness and long-term value creation

According to [The multi-year AI advantage: Building the enterprise of tomorrow](#), which surveyed 1,505 executives at large organizations globally, 38% of organizations already operationalize generative AI use cases, while six in ten organizations are now exploring agentic AI applications. Nearly half of Chinese organizations are piloting or deploying agentic AI, ahead of US and European ones. Two thirds of business leaders believe that if they fail to scale AI as rapidly as their competitors, they risk missing strategic opportunities and losing their competitive edge.

Meanwhile, the way organizations measure AI success is evolving. Operational efficiency and cost reduction are no longer the sole benchmarks: new measures of ROI include revenue growth, risk management and compliance, knowledge management and customer experience and personalization. Business leaders globally are more mindful than ever of the need to maintain control over their critical assets. More than half of organizations now prioritize data sovereignty, ensuring that sensitive or regulated data remains under their control.

Looking ahead, organizations are planning to accelerate AI investments, prioritizing functions with well-defined processes and measurable outcomes, and signaling a shift from experimentation towards long-term value creation. Nearly two thirds say they have started pausing lower-value AI projects to redirect their efforts toward high-impact areas. On average, they expect to allocate 5% of their annual business budget¹ to AI initiatives in 2026, up from 3% in 2025, and aim to focus on infrastructure, data, governance, and workforce upskilling, laying a strong foundation for AI adoption and impact.

“We have now entered a new, more pragmatic and realistic era of AI-driven transformation, focused on longer-term, enterprise-wide implementations, to improve not just productivity, but revenue, customer experience, risk management, innovation, or decision-making,” says Pascal Brier, Chief Innovation Officer at Capgemini and Member of the Group Executive Committee. *“AI has now crossed a critical threshold: the question is no longer whether to pursue AI, but how to embed it into the fabric of the enterprise. As we enter 2026, many organizations are rightly prioritizing strong AI foundations – data, governance, and human-AI chemistry – but one other area stands out as a critical factor in successful AI deployments*

¹ Business budget refers to an organization’s total spending across all functions



– leadership readiness. AI use is also now informing strategic decision-making. How leaders set a clear vision for its use across the enterprise and take responsibility for it will be key to effectively harness its transformative power.”

AI is reshaping decision-making

In addition, a spotlight report on decision-making, [How AI is quietly reshaping executive decisions](#), surveyed 500 CXOs including 100 CEOs. It finds that more than half of CXOs are using AI to support or inform their strategic decision-making today, either “actively” – a trend expected to more than double within the next three years – or “selectively”, with close to another third currently “experimenting” with it. If these CXOs are currently mostly using AI to help with emails, meeting notes and documents, and research and analysis, in 3 years they expect to use it primarily to augment and challenge strategic thinking.

Early adoption is already delivering value. More than half of CXOs report reduced time and cost to make decisions, and improvements in creativity and foresight through the use of AI. At the same time, leaders are clear that AI remains an input rather than a replacement for human judgment. Just 1% of CXOs believe AI could autonomously make certain strategic decisions in the next one to three years.

CEOs, CFOs and COOs are also mindful of the ramifications of AI-driven decision making. Just 41% of them report an above-average level of trust in AI for executive decision-making, with the main concerns for all CXOs being legal and security risks as well as difficulty to explain AI-influenced decisions. In addition, many senior leaders remain reluctant to discuss their own use of AI publicly. Only 11% of CXOs say they currently highlight or plan to highlight the use of AI in business decisions. Those who prefer not to disclose AI use cite concerns about reputational risk if AI-influenced decisions go wrong and uncertainty around how clients, partners and the public perceive AI use.

Methodology of the reports

For *The multi-year AI advantage: Building the enterprise of tomorrow* report, 1,505 executives at organizations with more than \$1 billion in annual revenue across 15 industries in North America, Europe, APAC, and Latin America were surveyed. All these organizations have already deployed AI at limited or full scale and executives surveyed were director-level and above. The survey was conducted in November 2025.

For the *How AI is quietly reshaping executive decisions* report, the Capgemini Research Institute conducted a quantitative survey of 500 C-suite executives, including 100 CEOs. Executives surveyed were employed at organizations with annual revenue exceeding \$10 billion, spanning 16 countries and 13 industries. The survey was conducted in August and September 2025. The survey findings were complemented with insights from in-depth interviews with 6 C-level executives.

To access the AI perspectives report: <https://www.capgemini.com/insights/research-library/AI-perspectives-2026>

To access the report on AI and decision-making: <https://www.capgemini.com/insights/research-library/ai-and-decision-making/>

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