Gartner
FINANCE SYMPOSIUM | Xpo™

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2026 Executive Summary

Do you feel empowered to build a resilient, AI-driven, and value-centric enterprise? We look forward to working with you as you intentionally design and fund autonomous finance functions, where insights drive faster decisions, automation streamlines processes, and teams partner with the business.

We hope to see you at Gartner Finance Symposium/Xpo 2027.

Johanna Robinson,
Conference Chair and Practice Vice President, Gartner

Top takeaways

1 Win the AI race by creating a roadmap

Only 7% of finance organizations have seen a high impact from AI. To ensure success, develop a step-by-step roadmap for achieving your AI goals. Because AI moves quickly, that roadmap should be a living document that is continuously reviewed and refined.

"Your AI roadmap is not just a document – it's the operating plan that turns ambition into measurable impact."

Ash Mehta,
Sr Director Analyst, Gartner

2 Don't forget the human impact of AI-led efficiencies

There are eight forces reshaping finance in 2030, with one of the most interesting being 'the lonely enterprise.' AI-led efficiencies are driving increased isolation in employees and making teams smaller, eliminating naturally occurring connections that are critical to employee performance. Leaders must take agency back by leveraging connector manager techniques and engineering strategic friction among employees.

"The more connected we are, the better outcomes we see. Connectedness increases employee performance by up to 50% and retention by up to 36%."

Hakan Gunaydin,
Sr Director Analyst, Gartner

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Top takeaways

3 Reimagine accounting roles for an AI-enabled function

Take advantage of the dominant areas of AI-driven transformation in accounting by redesigning the department's jobs to be done. Redefine controllership roles as a blend of accounting expertise, advanced digital skills, analytical prowess, and a collaborative human-AI interface. Reposition traditional compliance and transactional accountants into enhanced business partners who deliver forward-looking analysis.

"Prepare for the AI-disruption potential in accounting roles and the opportunity to add technology-first roles."

Hilary Richards,
VP Analyst, Gartner

4 Start simple and iterate fast with profitability analysis

Standard reporting hides the real story behind margin performance. Use three powerful profitability analysis techniques — customer, channel and profit-volume-mix — to uncover hidden margin erosion and make smarter decisions. Start simple, iterate fast and embed these insights into planning and performance management, even with imperfect data.

"To get to 95% accuracy in profitability analysis, you have to start with ~70% accuracy. Use your model to drive conversation with the business to surface the right questions and improve the model together, not win the argument."

Michelle Carlsen,
Director Analyst, Gartner

5 Finance must set the standard for high-quality decision support

There are five stages in a decision support process that leads to high quality decisions: frame operational decisions in the context of enterprise strategy, build trust through transparent and reliable decision inputs, integrate diverse perspectives into a finite set of options, portray trade-offs to maximize business outcomes, and drive action through accountability. These five pillars are the foundations to drive high impact and each pillar is crucial for decision makers to make high quality decisions.

"Finance doesn't win by being right. It wins by making leaders better at deciding and that only happens when decision support is disciplined, transparent and repeatable."

Silvia Pontini,
Sr Principal Analyst, Gartner

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