



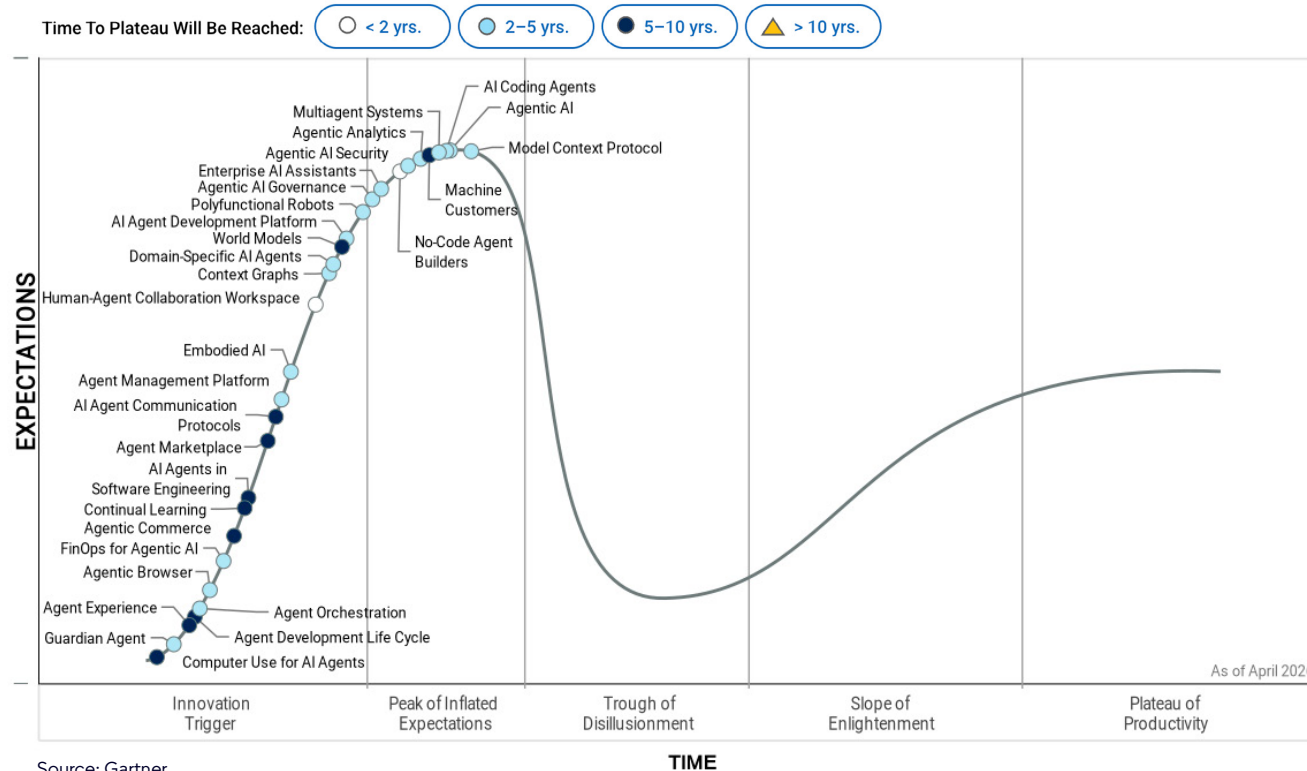
Sneak Peek

See 3 of the Most Popular Gartner Hype Cycles

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Hype Cycle for Agentic AI



About this Hype Cycle

Agentic AI promises powerful automation capabilities in varied domains, driving extreme interest and substantial investments. Yet, rapid progress in agentic AI is exceeded by hype and confusion. Grasping the core innovations and their progress is crucial to realize business value and avoid missteps.

Our top 3 positions

1. AI Agent Adoption

Only 17% of organizations have deployed AI agents so far, but 42% expect to do so in the next 12 months, and another 22% within the following year. The focus remains on incremental automation, not yet on transformative change.

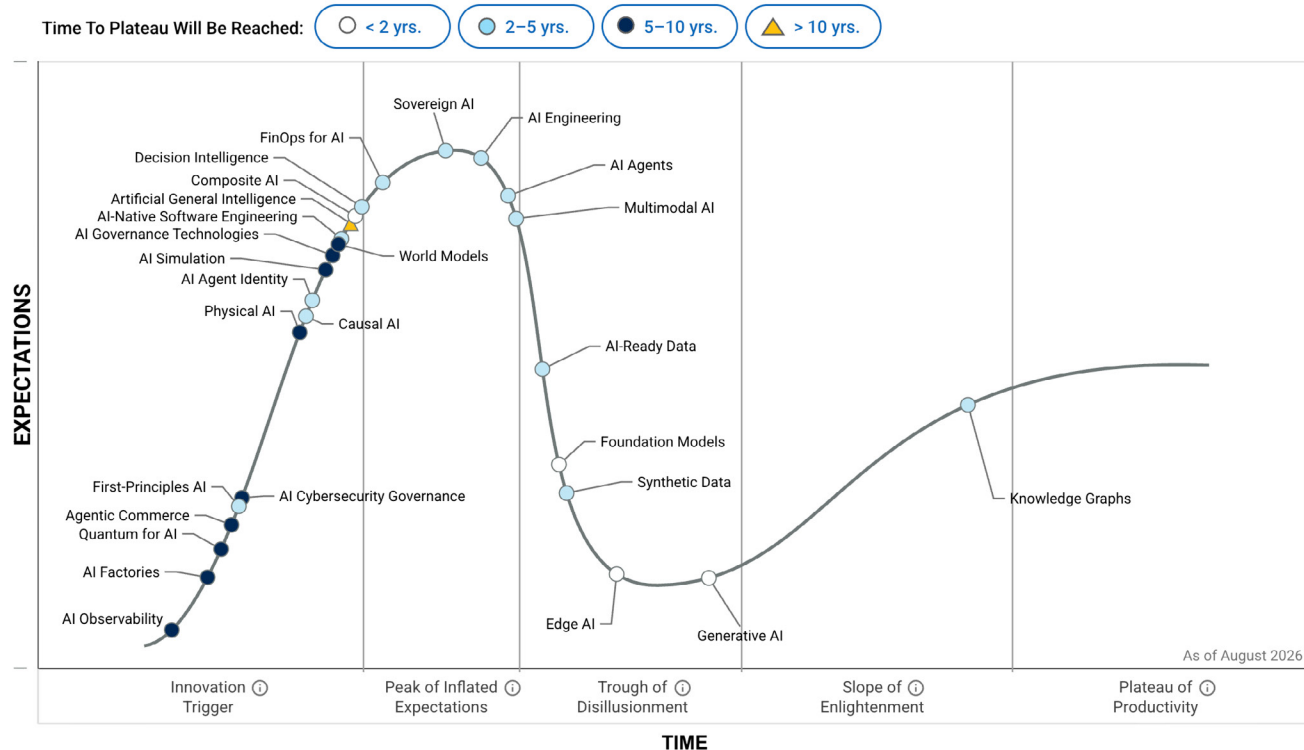
2. Semi-Autonomous Deployment

In practice, fully autonomous agents are not ready for most enterprise use cases, and human oversight remains essential. Semi-autonomous deployments, where there is some human supervision of the work of AI agents, are what enterprises must plan for.

3. Agent Washing

Thanks to “agent washing,” legacy automation tools and robotic process automation (RPA) solutions have been rebranded as AI agent building platforms. This shift muddies the market, making it harder for buyers to distinguish between genuine agentic AI capabilities and traditional automation technologies dressed up with new terminology.

Hype Cycle for Artificial Intelligence, 2026



Source: Gartner

About this Hype Cycle

AI investment remains strong, but uneven value realization means organizations must cut through the hype and focus on practical outcomes. This year, the priority has shifted from building AI to understanding what it does and what it costs. The 2026 Hype Cycle helps leaders recalibrate expectations, prioritize scalable AI techniques, and address regulatory, economic and operational pressures.

What you need to know

• AI Agents

Despite aggressive adoption plans, only 17% of organizations have deployed AI agents. Over 40% of projects are expected to be canceled by 2027 due to cost, unclear value and risk management gaps.

• Physical and Edge AI

Physical AI is moving from experimentation to real business value, with the market projected to reach \$1.6 trillion by 2040. Edge AI is essential for real-time, autonomous operations but introduces new safety and regulatory risks.

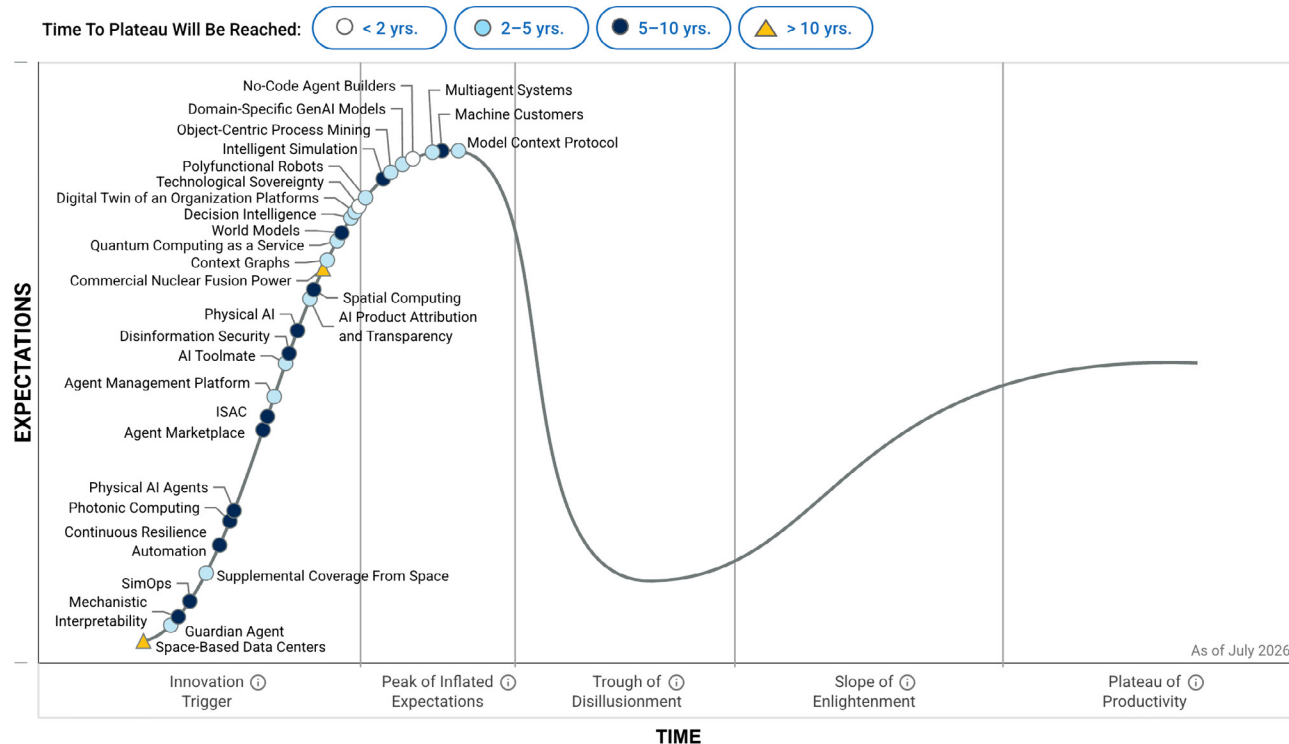
• Sovereign AI and Regionalization

Sovereign AI is central to national strategy, driving data localization and regional tech stacks. By 2030, over 75% of policies will require costly course corrections to maximize AI value.

• Governance and Cost Controls

Rapid adoption exposes gaps in governance and cost management. Organizations must prioritize observability, cybersecurity and proactive cost controls, even as mature solutions remain limited.

Hype Cycle for Emerging Technologies, 2026



Source: Gartner

About this Hype Cycle

Thirty emerging technologies are shaping four priorities for CIOs: distributing decisions between humans and autonomous machines, combining physical and digital worlds, establishing new technical foundations and building human-centered trust. The 2026 Hype Cycle helps leaders identify high-impact opportunities, and capture early value and time innovation investments according to organizational readiness and risk appetite.

What you need to know

- Autonomous Machines**
 Agents, robots and machine clients are shifting decision making from centralized teams to distributed autonomous systems. Organizations must redesign operations to orchestrate autonomous processes safely and effectively.
- Phygitl Convergence**
 Physical assets enhanced with digital intelligence enable enterprises to simulate, predict and optimize complex operations before execution. This convergence supports safer, faster and more efficient real-world decision making.
- New Technical Infrastructure**
 Standardized integration, orbital data centers, quantum cloud access and zero-emission energy are creating more resilient and connected technology foundations. These advances can turn infrastructure from a scaling constraint into a platform for growth.
- Human-Centered Trust and Oversight**
 Ubiquitous verification, cognitive partnership and strategic autonomy are enabling more governed and resilient technology adoption. Leaders should balance innovation with human oversight, organizational readiness and the ability to manage unproven systems.

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The 2026 Hype Cycle for Agentic AI: What Leaders Need to Know

What it is, why it matters and how leaders can separate hype from noise.



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