

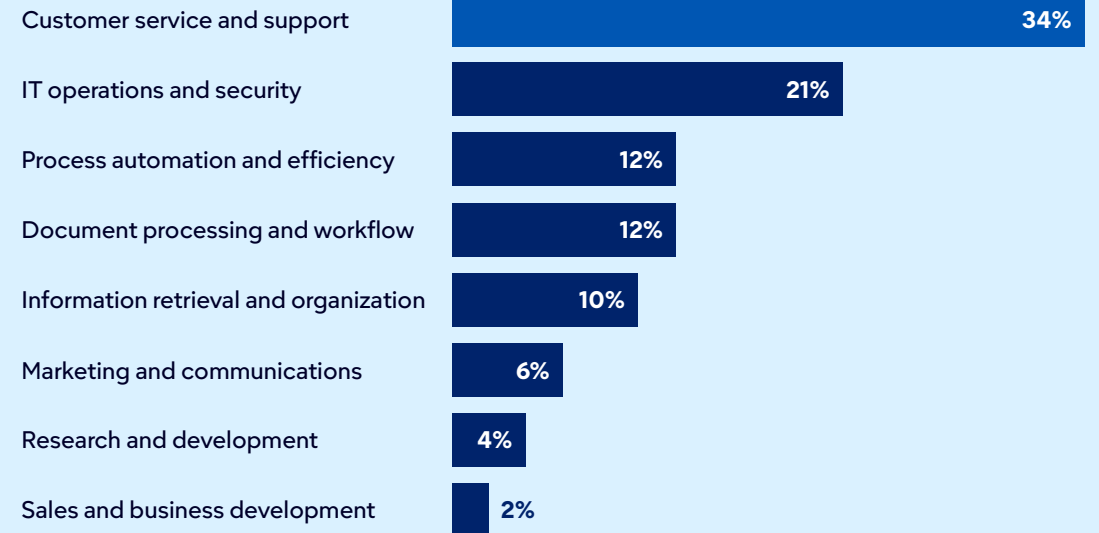
The Current State of Agentic AI in Service and Support

Customer service is the top enterprise use case for agentic AI

In a short span of time, agentic AI has moved from a theoretical discussion to one of the most active areas of investment and exploration in customer service and support. Customer service has emerged as the leading enterprise use case, budgets are rising and service leaders are under pressure to act. Eighty percent of customer service leaders report plans to increase budgets for agentic AI in 2026, and 59% say they are pursuing or will pursue agentic AI in the next 12 months.

Yet, the current state remains immature: **Production-scale deployment is rare, financial returns remain limited and even advanced deployments still rely on human oversight.**

Top enterprise use cases for agentic AI



n = 197 AI leaders, who have deployed at least one agentic AI use case
Source: Gartner

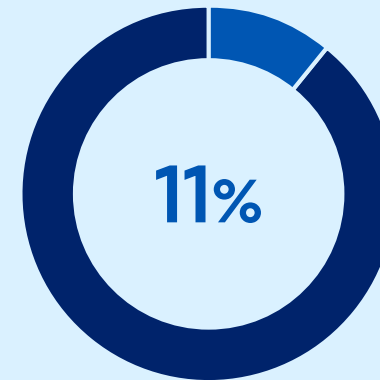
Customer service and support has emerged as the most common enterprise use case for agentic AI.

Agentic AI is delivering productivity gains, but financial returns remain elusive

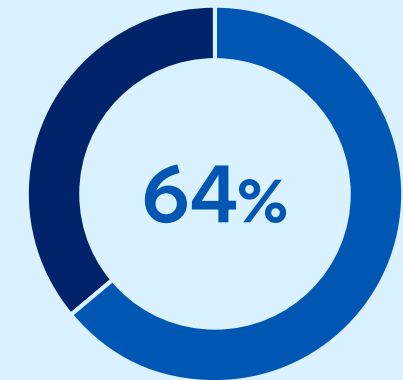
Cost reduction is the leading reason customer service and support organizations are pursuing agentic AI. While the market narrative, mostly derived from vendor-provided case studies, presents an optimistic picture of agentic AI's near-term impact, the reality for most organizations to date has been less flattering.

In 2025, only 11% of CFOs said their organization had realized financial value from AI at all, and agentic AI represents only a fraction of that total. In customer service specifically, many leaders (64%) reported productivity gains from AI, but far fewer (26%) reported having successfully delivered workforce reduction.

A significant gap remains between productivity gained through AI and financial returns realized. While many are now looking to agentic AI to close this gap, there is little evidence yet to demonstrate success at scale.



CFOs who said their organizations realized financial value



Customer service leaders who reported productivity gains

Success with agentic AI depends on two conditions

Agentic AI in customer service is advancing quickly, but technical progress alone will not determine success. AI agents may perform well in controlled demonstrations, yet production environments are far more complex — with fragmented data, variable workflows and low tolerance for error.

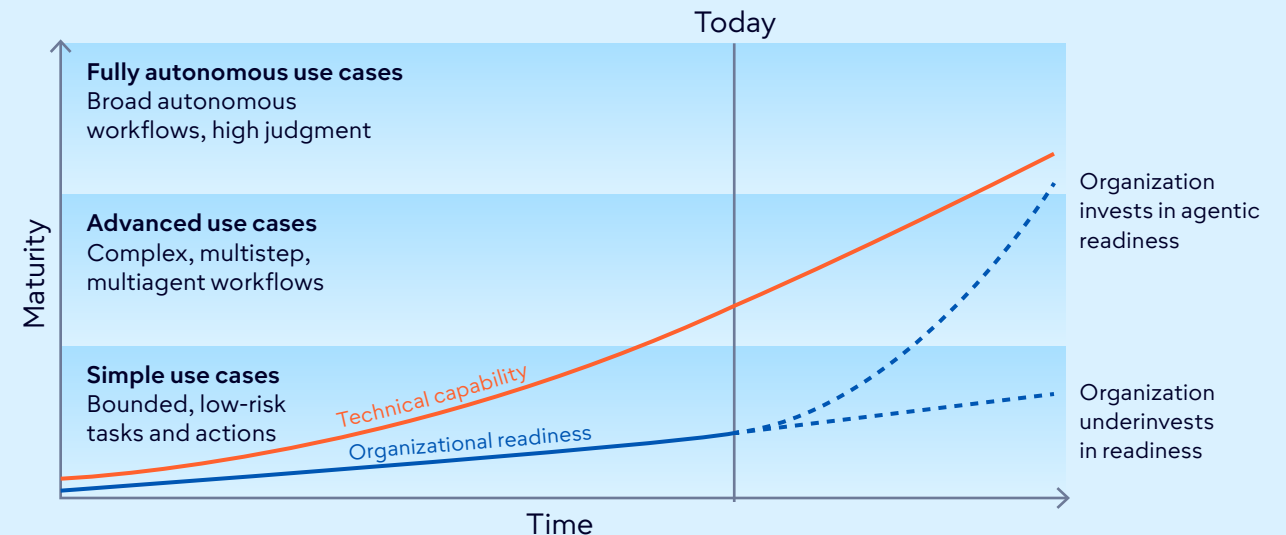
Success depends on two interconnected conditions:

- **Technical capability.** The capacity of AI agents (models and supporting software) to reason over context, read enterprise data and maintain reliability at an acceptable cost.
- **Organizational readiness and deployability.** The necessary data quality, system integration, workflow clarity and governance required to deploy AI agents safely and reliably.

While the technical capability has evolved quickly, many organizations remain unprepared for deployment. Gartner predicts that more than 40% of agentic AI projects will be canceled by 2028 due to rising costs, unclear value or inadequate risk controls.

Current-state maturity of agentic AI in customer service and support

Technical capability is moving faster than organizational readiness



A use case is only deployable when both the technical capability and organizational readiness meet the required maturity level.

Source: Gartner

The biggest barrier to agentic AI is organizational readiness, not technology

Over the past 18 months, the technology has advanced significantly through the introduction of improved models, better integration mechanisms and new no-code agent builder tools. However, for many service and support organizations, the key limiting factor is not the technology itself but its deployability: whether AI agents can be safely connected to the data, the systems, the workflows and the governance needed to operate successfully in production.

Success depends heavily on organizational context. In environments with reliable data, connected systems and clear workflows, agents can operate more safely and effectively. In fragmented or inconsistent environments, the same agent can become risky, costly or ineffective.

Customer service is a leading use case, but not an easy one

Customer service is often treated as a target for agentic AI because it is high volume and cost-sensitive, and the work is viewed as “simple” or “low-skilled.” This can create the false impression that it is easy to automate.

In reality, customer-facing service is a demanding environment for agentic AI. Customer queries can be unpredictable, context is often fragmented and exceptions are common. The tolerance for slow or inaccurate action is extremely low, and the data handled is typically sensitive and often highly regulated.

Contrast this with software engineering, which seems like a more complex use case. Here, outputs from AI are constantly reviewed, longer response times are tolerated, context is typically constrained to a documented codebase and occasional errors are viewed simply as part of the process.



How agentic AI is being used today

Real today: Simple use cases

The most productive deployments today are narrow, bounded and designed to operate alongside human workers. These are generally not new categories of work. Here, agentic AI extends existing automation and AI techniques by interpreting variable inputs, reasoning over diverse context and taking action.

- Human agent augmentation, such as case preparation, postresolution wrap-up and real-time guidance
- Workflow and back-office automation, such as triage routing, case enrichment and automated follow-ups
- Constrained self-service for policy-bound interactions with clear escalation paths, such as order status appointment changes and simple billing queries

Use cases are emerging, but risk remains high

Some organizations are exploring more complex automation involving multistep workflows and multiagent architectures. The risk-reward profile here becomes significantly higher. Categories include:

- Complex workflows that require chaining read and write actions across multiple systems (CRM, billing, fulfillment) in pursuit of complex multistep resolution, such as handling a refund end to end
- Proactive issue resolution, where an AI agent identifies an issue based on telemetry and initiates remediation without human verification or customer confirmation
- Multiagent orchestration where specialized AI agents collaborate on complex work; for example, one agent investigates security signals, one checks the customer's history and another executes the response

Remains aspirational: Fully autonomous use cases

Vendors are often incentivized to humanize AI agents, presenting the promise of AI agents that can serve as catchall replacements for existing roles. Caution is required for any vendor promise related to:

- Broad, unconstrained resolution across complex or messy use cases without clear boundaries
- High-judgment interactions requiring negotiation, empathy or accountability across exceptions
- Full role replacement in which an AI agent is presented as a digital worker, capable of working across all the contexts, decisions and edge cases that a human role involves

Actionable, objective insights

Explore these additional complimentary resources and tools for customer service and support leaders:

 Report Transform Service & Support With the Human-AI Workforce Access actionable recommendations to lead your organization through the human-AI workforce evolution. Access the Report	 Webinar Redesign the Frontline Role for AI's Impact Learn how customer service leaders are redefining roles and preparing agents for an AI-enabled future. Watch Now	 Article The Value-Centered Service Model Discover how value-centered service helps organizations drive customer outcomes, boost retention and turn support into a growth engine. Learn More	 Webpage Gartner for Customer Service & Support Insights, guidance and tools to enable faster, smarter decisions and stronger performance on your mission-critical customer service and support priorities. Explore More
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