RingCentral

RingCentral Agentic AI Trends 2026

From siloed AI adoption
to orchestrated intelligence

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Introduction

Why AI agents, and Agentic Voice AI, are shaping the next phase of enterprise work

AI has been embedded in enterprise products and workflows for years, powering automation, recommendations, analytics, and customer engagement behind the scenes. More recently, advances in generative AI have made these capabilities far more visible in everyday work. AI now drafts content, summarizes meetings, supports customer interactions, and surfaces insights across business applications.

Many AI capabilities still live within individual tools or functions. Each delivers value where it's deployed, but there is a larger opportunity ahead: connecting these capabilities so work can move fluidly across teams, systems, and processes. This shift from isolated intelligence to coordinated systems is where AI agents come into focus. Unlike task-based automation, AI agents are designed to operate across workflows, coordinating steps, passing context, and collaborating alongside people and other agents.

With the proper governance in place, agents become dependable contributors to how work gets done, not just features embedded inside applications.

As organizations move toward orchestration, conversation becomes a critical input.

Work today spans multiple conversational channels, from calls and voice to video to chat, each playing a distinct role across customer-facing and employee experiences. Together, these channels capture intent, nuance, and exceptions that rarely appear in structured fields or dashboards. Within this omnichannel environment, voice stands out as the richest and most complex conversational signal, particularly in high-stakes customer interactions. Spoken conversations carry real-time intent, emotion, and ambiguity that other channels often abstract or lose.

“Voice captures intent and decision-making in real time, especially in moments where outcomes matter most. Agentic Voice AI is how we connect human conversation to automated execution at scale.”

Carson Hostetter

EVP & General Manager,
AI and CX Solutions RingCentral

This is why RingCentral believes Agentic Voice AI will play a foundational role within orchestrated AI systems. By listening to and interpreting voice interactions, AI agents can ask clarifying questions, adapt in real time, and transform live conversations into structured context that workflows and systems can act on, bridging the gap between how people communicate and how work actually gets done.

While AI adoption is already widespread and organizations are beginning to see meaningful impact, the next phase of AI will not be defined by how many intelligent tools organizations deploy. It will be determined by how effectively these systems work together at scale across channels, processes, and teams to power people, operations, and entire organizations.

About the study

RingCentral partnered with Opinium Research on a comprehensive study of business decision-makers in the United States and the United Kingdom.

The study surveyed 2,000 IT, HR, and CX leaders at the manager level and above across retail, technology, healthcare, legal, and financial services. Unless otherwise specified, findings reflect responses from decision-makers considering both customer-facing (CX) and employee-facing (EX) use cases within their organizations. Respondents represent a mix of small businesses, midmarket organizations, and large enterprises.

Fielded in Q4 2025, the research examines:

- How AI is being used across organizations today
- Where AI agents (digital workers) are gaining traction
- Which barriers are limiting broader integration and scale

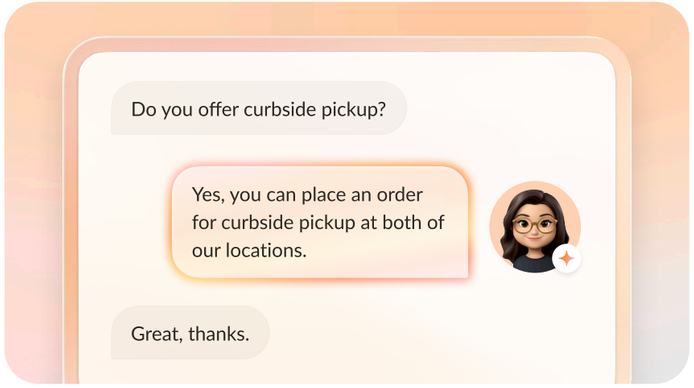
The findings reflect a market in transition, where AI adoption is accelerating and early value is emerging, while organizational structures, workflows, and governance models continue to evolve to support a long-term, positive impact.

Terms and concepts

Agentic AI

An operational model for AI in which agents can take initiative, make decisions within defined parameters, coordinate work, and operate across workflows. Unlike traditional AI, which typically optimizes individual tasks or features, agentic AI emphasizes autonomy, context sharing, and system-level orchestration.

AI agents (digital workers)



Autonomous, software-based workers designed to execute tasks, follow multi-step workflows, and collaborate with people or other agents across systems. Throughout this report, “AI agents” and “digital workers” refer to the same concept.

Orchestration

The coordination layer that enables AI agents, systems, and humans to share context, manage handoffs, and move work end-to-end across workflows, tools, and communication channels.

Conversational data

Human exchanges, spoken or written, that contain intent, nuance, constraints, and reasoning.

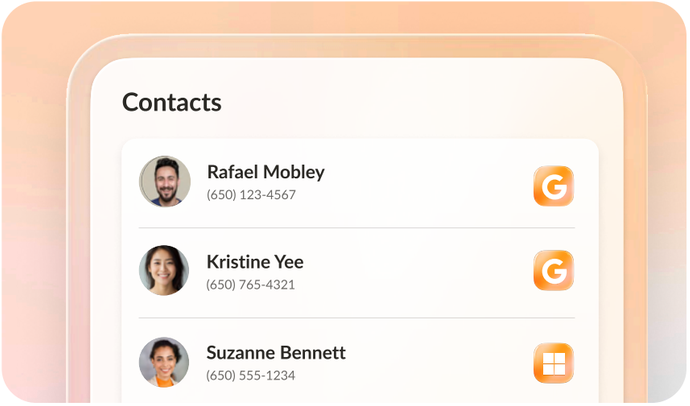
Trust and governance

Policies and oversight models that ensure AI operates transparently, predictably, and safely.

Deployment turbulence

Operational instability that occurs when AI rollout outpaces workflow readiness, integration, or governance.

Integration

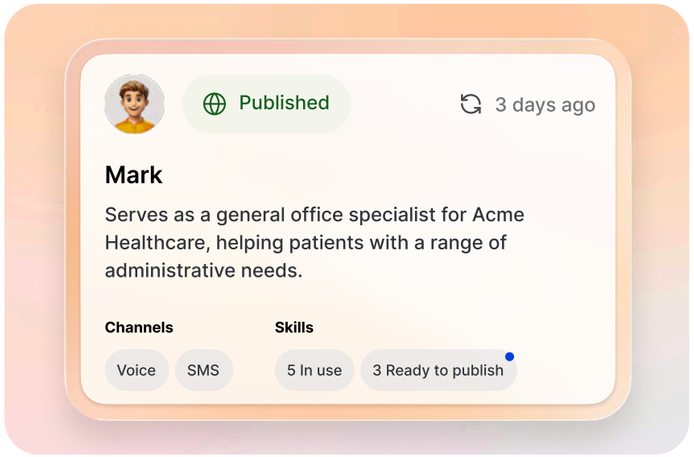


The ability of AI systems to connect across data sources, applications, communication channels, and workflow platforms.

AI maturity / AI agent maturity

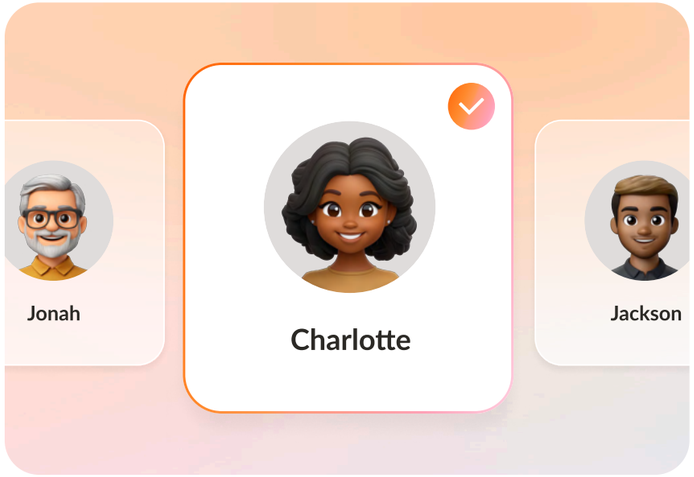
A measure of deployment stage rather than technical sophistication. In this report, maturity is defined by survey stages: not exploring, exploring, piloting, deploying, or fully embedded.

Agentic Voice AI



A class of agentic AI focused on spoken interaction, enabling systems to interpret voice conversations, understand conversational context, ask clarifying questions, and convert live dialogue into structured inputs that workflows and systems can act on.

Workflow readiness



The degree to which existing processes, systems, and roles can support AI agent execution.

Voice

Spoken, real-time communication conducted primarily through phone-based or telephony channels, distinct from video-based collaboration, and commonly used in customer-facing interactions where immediacy, nuance, and decision-making matter.

Fragmentation

Siloed data, tools, and workflows that limit an organization's ability to coordinate AI systems and scale impact across entire processes.

Context passing

The ability for agents and systems to transfer meaning so that workflows don't reset between steps.

Chapter 1

AI is here, alignment is not

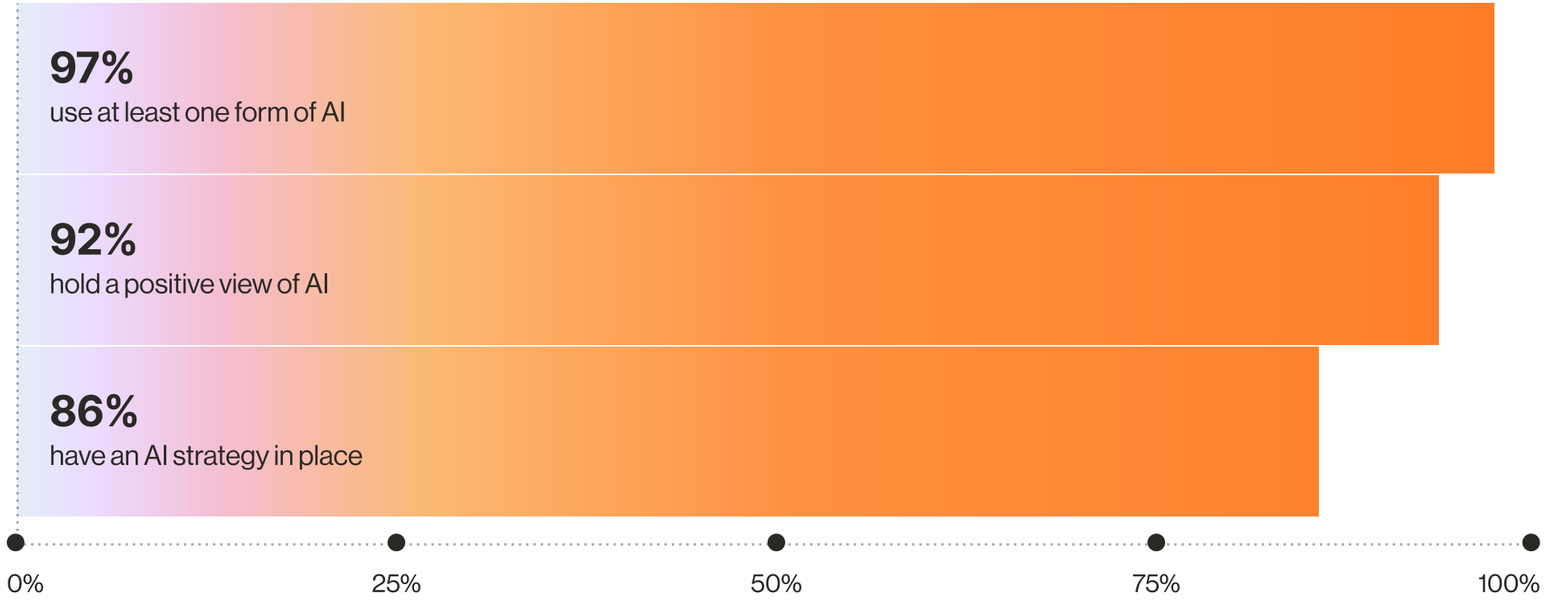
AI adoption is accelerating, and coordination is the next opportunity

AI is now a standard part of operations. Nearly all organizations surveyed (97%) report using at least one form of AI today, and leaders overwhelmingly view AI as a positive force for productivity, customer experience, and operational efficiency.

"AI has moved beyond experimentation and into daily use across business functions, suppporting content generation, forecasting, customer interactions, and workflow automation. At the same time, the way AI is deployed today reflects the pace of adoption. AI is often implemented within individual tools or teams, delivering targeted benefits where it is applied. The opportunity ahead is connecting those capabilities so AI can support work end-to-end."

Antonio Nucci
PhD, Chief AI Officer, RingCentral

Where organizations stand on AI

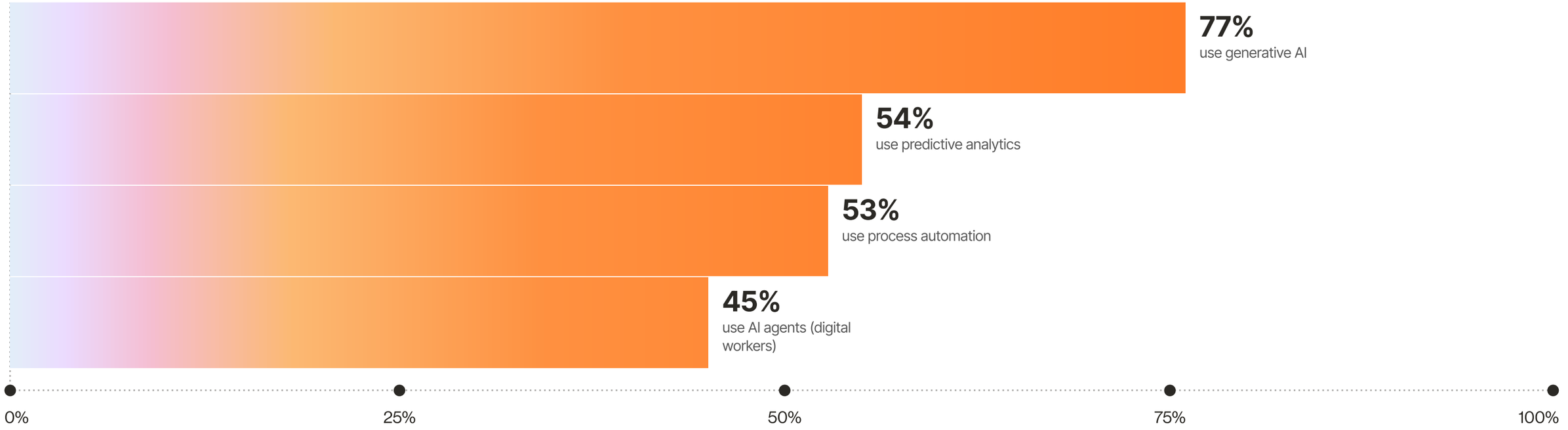


Speed, practicality, and immediate value are top priorities during AI adoption

The most commonly deployed AI capabilities today are those that integrate easily into existing workflows and deliver fast, tangible benefits. Generative AI (77%), predictive analytics (54%), and process automation (53%) are widely used across industries.

AI agents (digital workers) are also gaining traction (45% report using them today), reflecting growing interest in systems that can move beyond single tasks to support coordinated work across steps and functions.

AI adoption is broad, and AI agents are already entering the mix



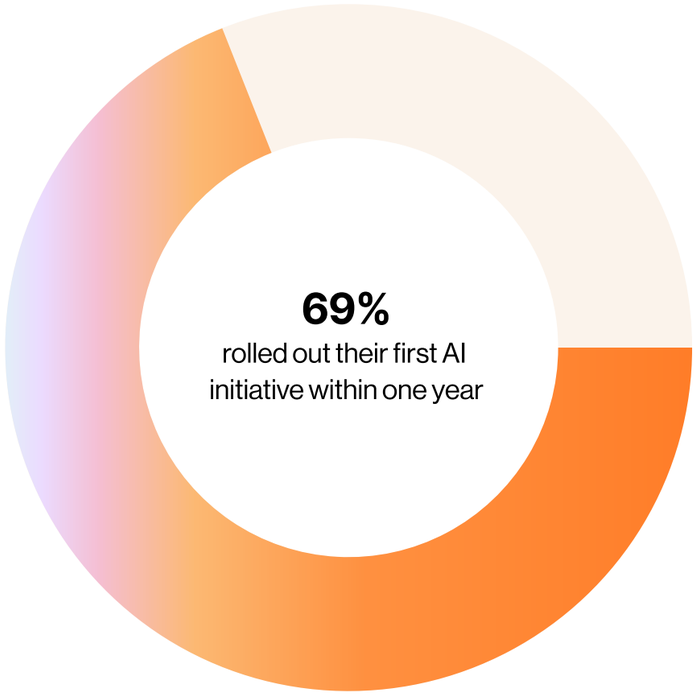
These patterns indicate that early AI initiatives tend to be fast-moving and highly targeted.

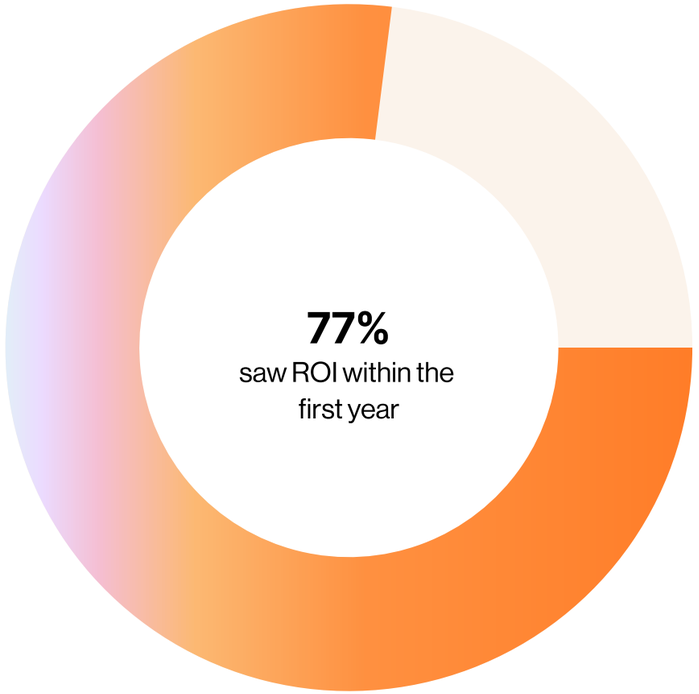
Early momentum is real, and returns come quickly

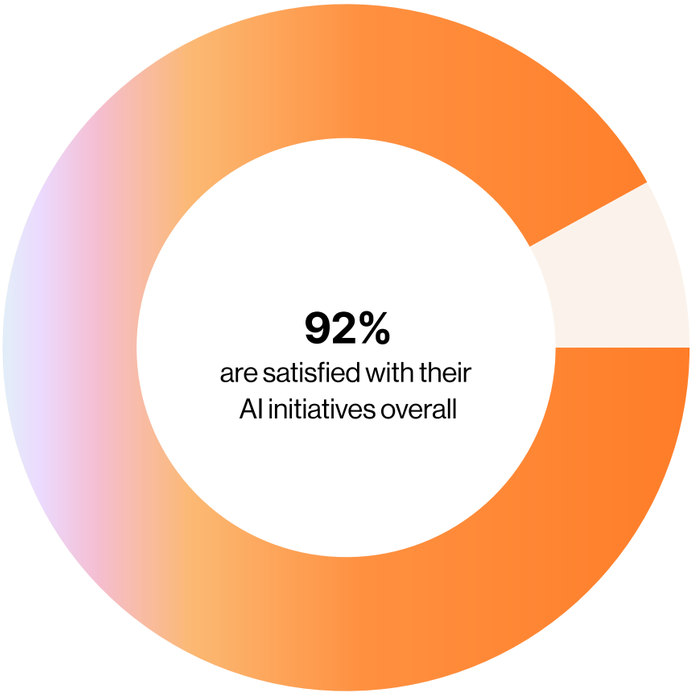
Across industries, organizations are moving quickly from experimentation to execution. Most leaders report that their first AI initiatives were rolled out within a year, and a similar share saw measurable returns in that same timeframe. Satisfaction levels are high, reinforcing confidence that AI is contributing real value.

Targeted, tool-level deployments often drive these early wins, making it easier to demonstrate value before broader coordination challenges emerge.

Where organizations stand on AI







Scaling AI introduces new coordination needs

The operational payoff of AI remains tactical. **More than half of organizations (52%) have implemented AI initiatives to improve productivity, and 90% say it's best used to automate specific workflows.** These benefits often appear early, even before systems fully mature: organizations using or testing digital workers report increased productivity (61%) and faster workflows (58%). However, as AI expands beyond isolated use cases, execution challenges emerge, with 40% of organizations reporting they have paused or cancelled at least one AI initiative. These adjustments are not signs of diminished confidence in AI. Instead, they reflect a natural recalibration as teams move beyond early, isolated successes and confront the practical realities of scaling across systems, data, and teams. In many cases, organizations pause because early wins reveal the need for stronger integration, governance, and coordination to sustain value at scale.

Of respondents who have paused or cancelled an AI project or initiative, one or more of the following reasons were cited

Businesses are no longer questioning whether to adopt AI. They're focused instead on how to connect, govern, and scale its capabilities across the organization.

“The data shows that organizational readiness, not technology, is the primary challenge to scaling AI. Integration complexity, inconsistent ROI measurement, and internal alignment slow progress. AI can deliver value quickly, but sustaining that value at scale requires stronger coordination and clearer connective frameworks.”

Jon Arnold

Principal Analyst, J Arnold & Associates

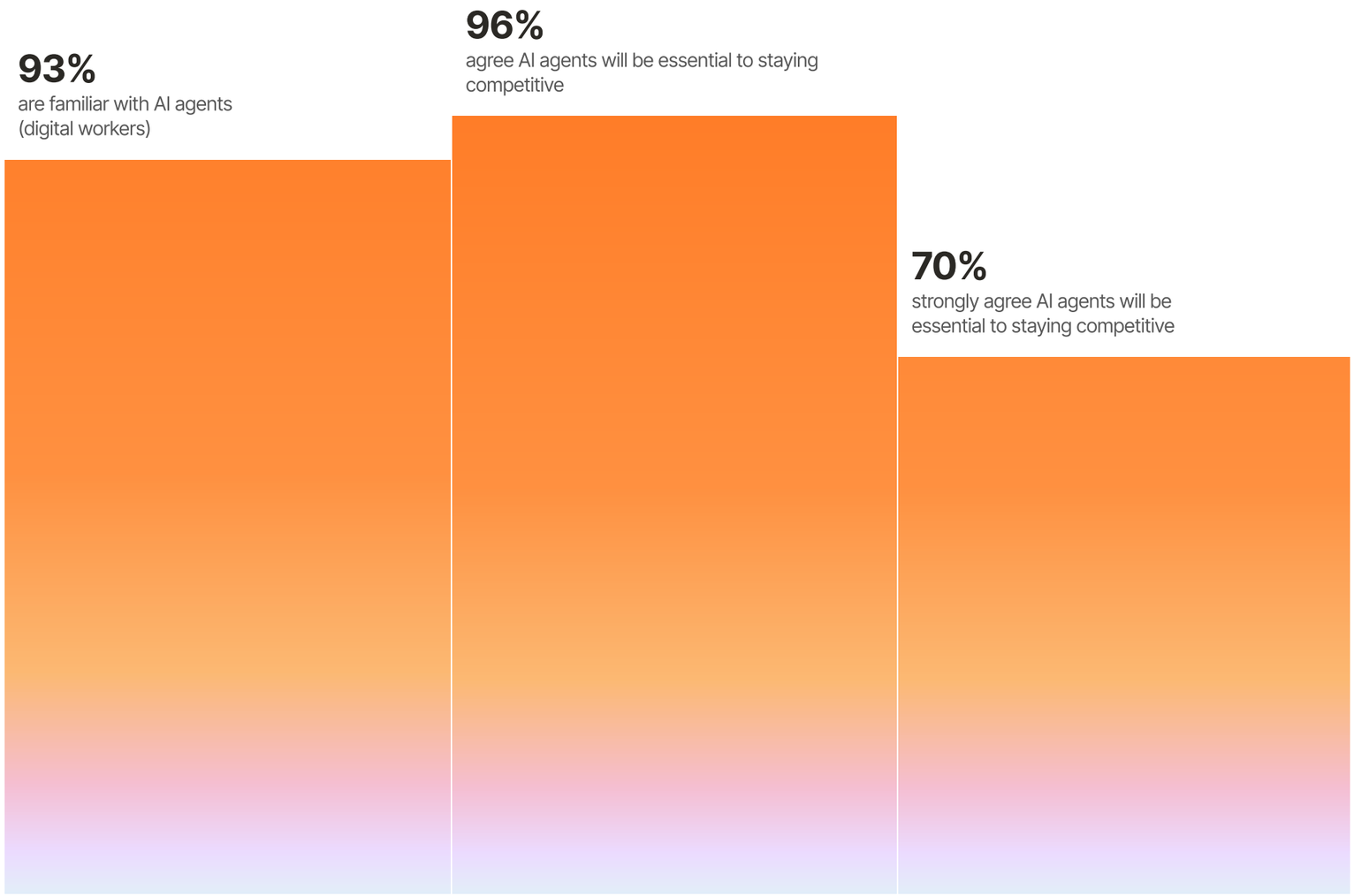
Chapter 2

The rise of AI agents and why orchestration matters

AI agent adoption accelerates and drives real impact

Familiarity with AI agents is widespread, and conviction in their importance is strong. Leaders increasingly view agents as a necessary capability for orchestrating work at scale.

AI agent maturity landscape

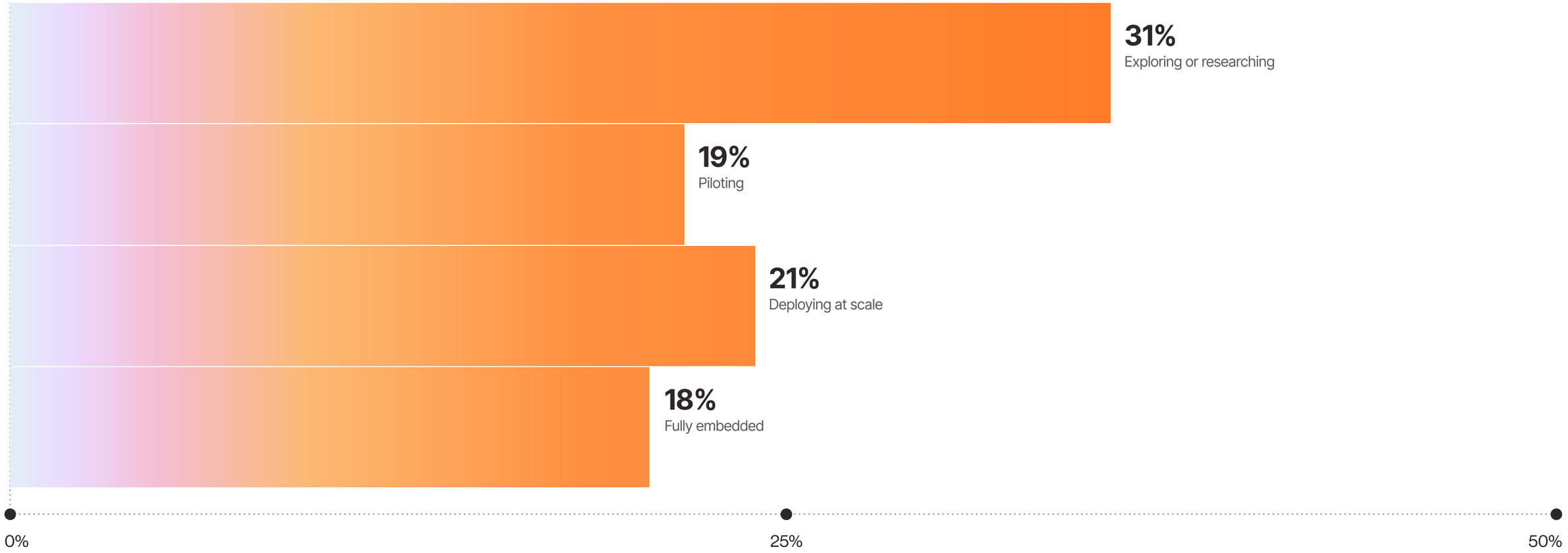


Progressing from experiment to core capability

More than half of organizations are already beyond early exporation with AI agents. Exploration and piloting remain common, but momentum is clearly moving toward deployment and embedding.

57% are now beyond the exploration and research stage with AI agents.

AI agent maturity landscape

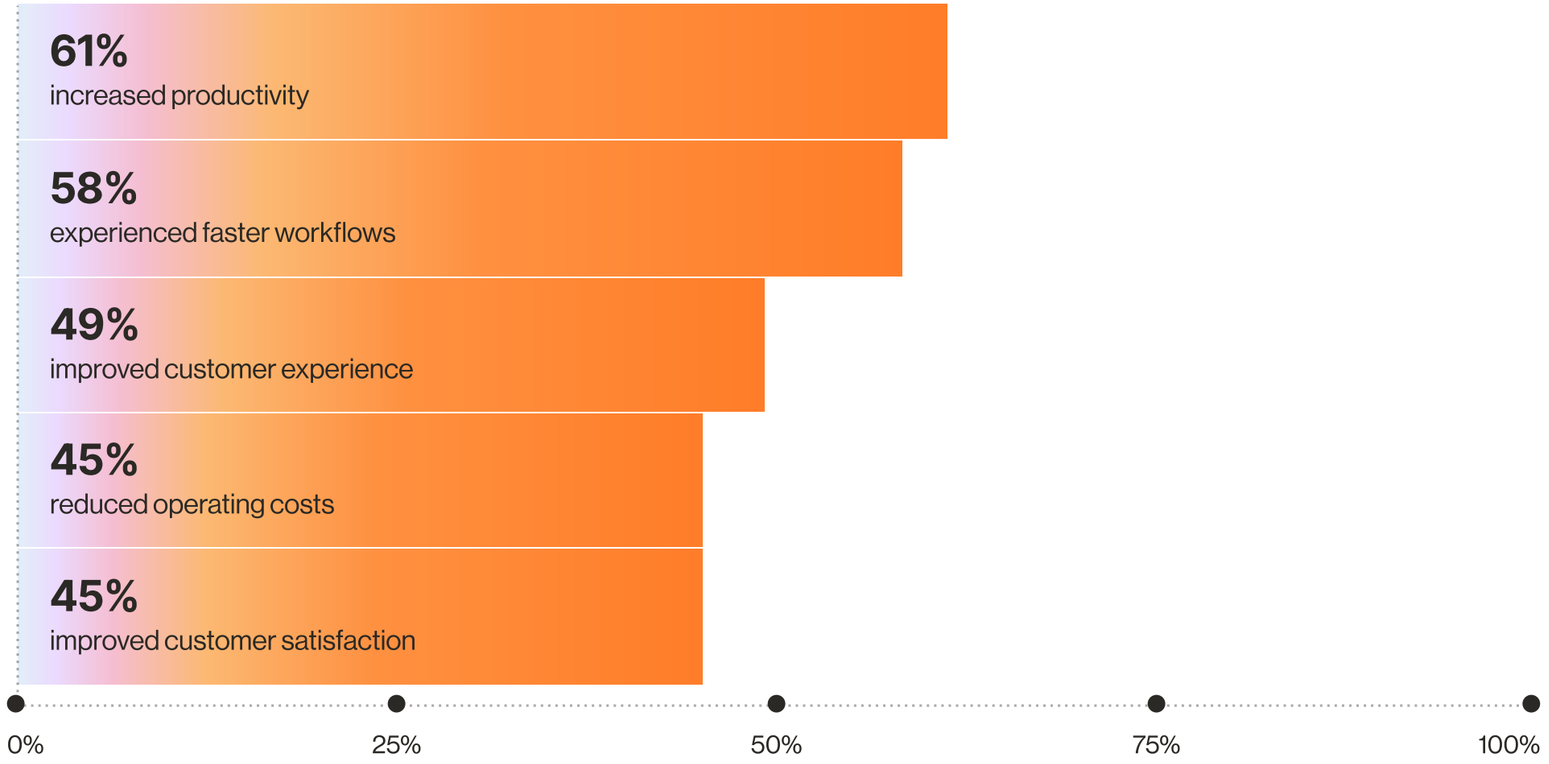


AI adoption is accelerating, and coordination is the next opportunity

“AI agents are delivering clear operational and customer-facing benefits. Their ability to move work through structured workflows and support employees in real time is transforming how teams operate.”

John Finch
VP, Product Marketing, RingCX (AI Customer Engagement), RingCentral

Organizations deploying or testing AI agents report

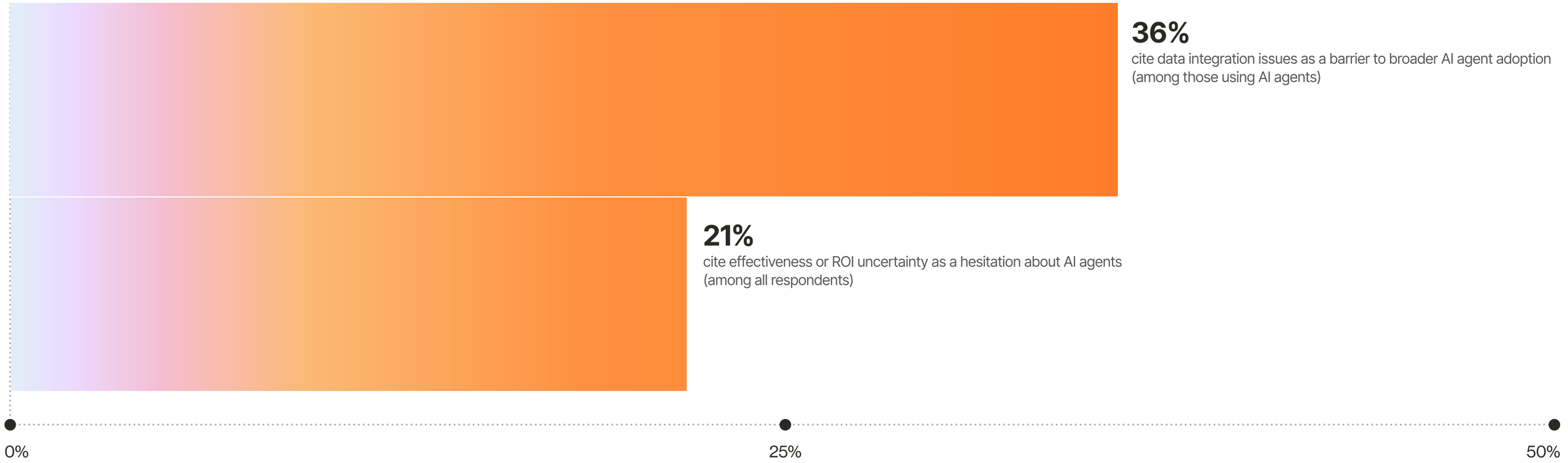


Early impact is clear. The next challenge is extending it across systems and teams.

The barrier is fragmentation, not intent

As AI agents take on more responsibility, organizations encounter a shared constraint: fragmented systems. Data, workflows, and decision logic often remain distributed across disconnected tools and platforms. That limits agents' ability to pass along crucial context and reduces the system-level impact many organizations expect as adoption grows.

Top barriers to broader AI agent adoption



As AI agents scale, coordinating systems, workflows, and context becomes the key to sustained impact.

Chapter 3

From siloed AI agents to coordinated, agentic systems

Orchestration turns AI agents into systems that can scale

AI agents are gaining traction because, unlike isolated AI tools, they can facilitate work across operational boundaries. But agents alone aren't enough.

Orchestration is the coordination layer that allows AI agents, people, and systems to work together from start to finish. It enables agents to pass context, manage handoffs, and adapt workflows dynamically, rather than operating as disconnected automations.

Most organizations already have the ingredients for orchestration

AI agents

Workflow automation

Communication platforms

Data signals across systems

What's missing is the connective tissue. With a coordinated operating model in place, AI agents stop executing isolated tasks and start supporting entire processes, turning early gains into repeatable, system-level performance.

AI wins when it works together

In practice, orchestrated AI systems share three defining characteristics:

Workflows adapt dynamically

Instead of breaking when exceptions occur, connected systems can:

- Adjust next steps
- Pull data from multiple systems
- Escalate to humans when judgment is required

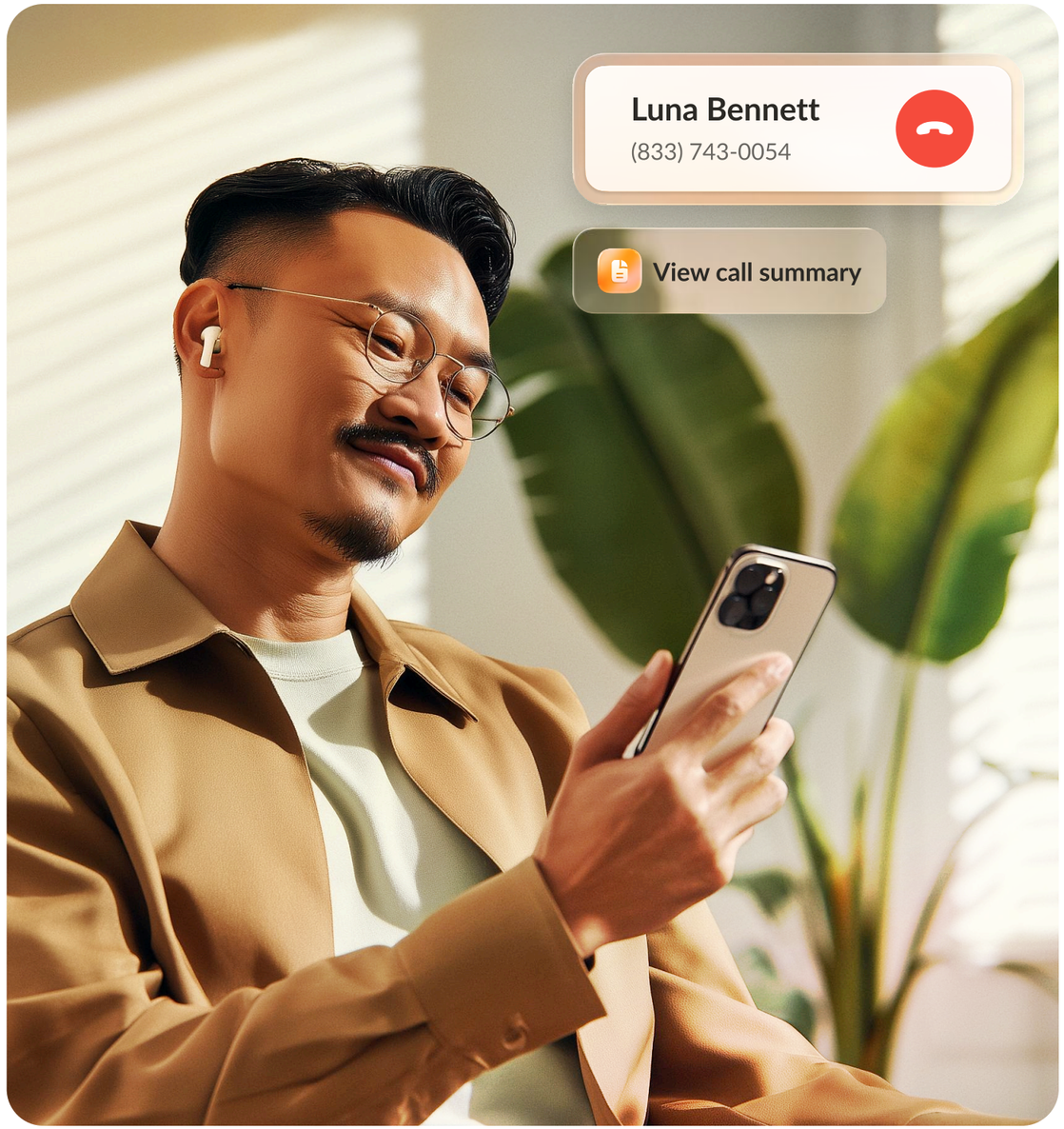
Systems understand context, not just triggers

Most automation relies on rigid inputs, such as forms, tickets, or predefined fields. Coordinated systems use AI agents that can interpret conversational signals, incomplete information, and real-world exceptions.

Agents collaborate instead of operating alone

Agents move work forward with shared context rather than duplicating effort. Example:

- A customer interaction agent captures intent and routes structured context to a fulfillment or billing agent.
- An HR agent escalates onboarding requests to IT with full background and dependencies attached.



Chapter 4

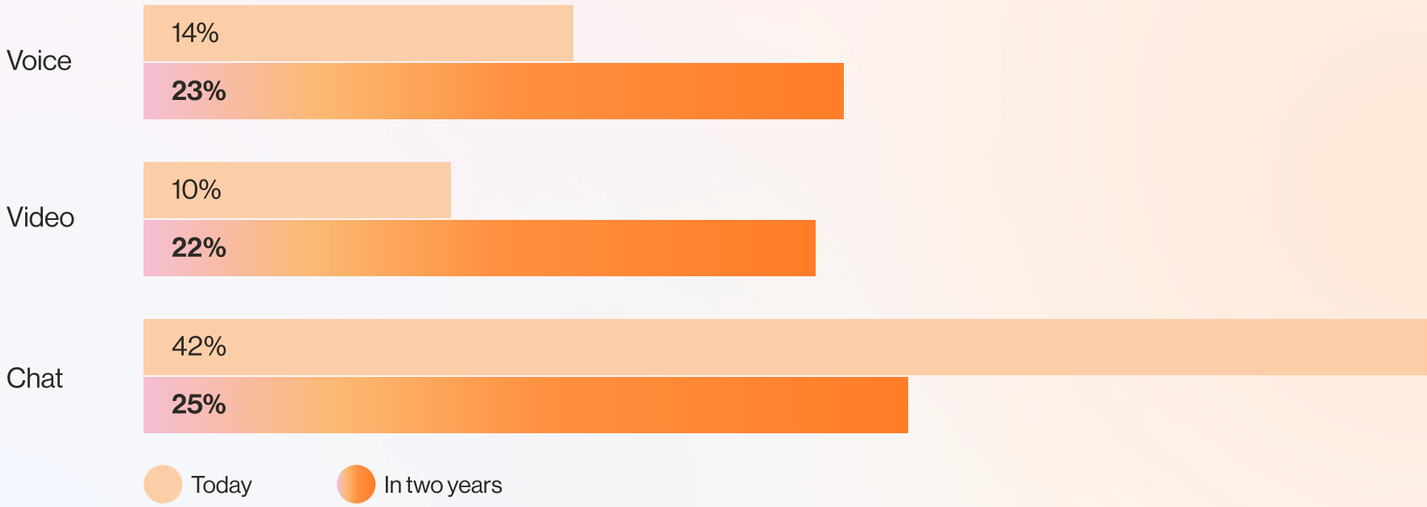
The human + AI agent interaction layer

As AI agents scale, interaction matters as much as capability

As AI agents become more embedded in workflows, expectations shift. People care less about novelty and more about usability. They're focused on how naturally agents communicate, how reliably they behave, and how much friction they remove from everyday work.

One clear shift is emerging: a growing expectation that AI agents communicate naturally across multiple conversational touchpoints (spanning voice, video, chat, and messaging), so work can continue seamlessly as interactions move between channels.

Respondents were asked to imagine interacting with an AI agent across customer-facing and employee contexts now and in two years. Here were their preferences:



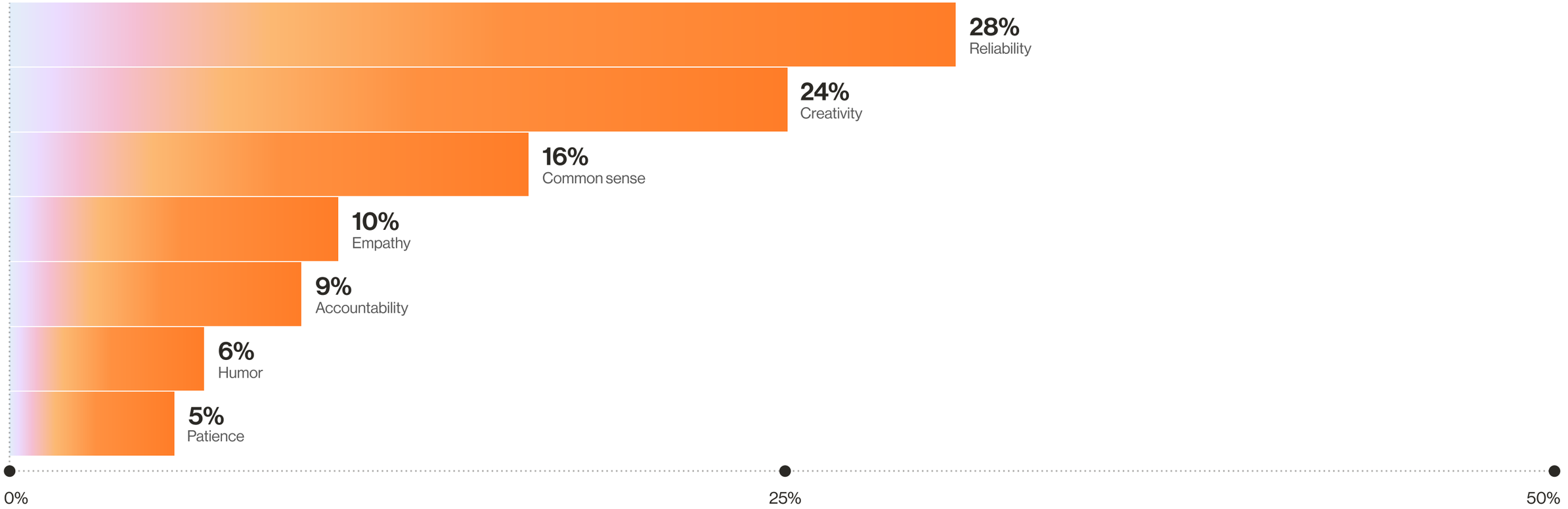
Voice and video grow in importance because conversation carries nuance that automation can't capture.

Conversation data captures the "why" behind behaviors, trends, and sentiment. Agentic Voice AI surfaces those insights and makes them actionable, equipping agents with the information they need to navigate everyday work.

Reliability matters more than personality

When asked which human traits they would give a digital worker, leaders overwhelmingly chose traits tied to correctness and clarity, not emotion.

The traits leaders want most in AI agents



The message is clear: people want agents that are dependable, able to route context across workflows, and capable of leveraging common sense and creativity to handle ambiguity. This preference directly reinforces the need for orchestration. Reliable agents are trusted to move work forward without constant supervision.

Building trust to reduce day-to-day friction

Among organizations already using AI agents, the biggest barriers to broader adoption are confidence and connectivity.

Those using AI agents experienced the following barriers

38%
Trust in outcomes

36%
Employee resistance

36%
Data integration issues

33%
Cost concerns

33%
Compliance or regulatory risk

Teams want AI agents that are predictable, well-governed, and clearly integrated into existing systems. Leveraging trustworthy agents that are easy to work with decreases resistance to agentic AI.

Conclusion

The next phase of AI is system-level, not tool-level

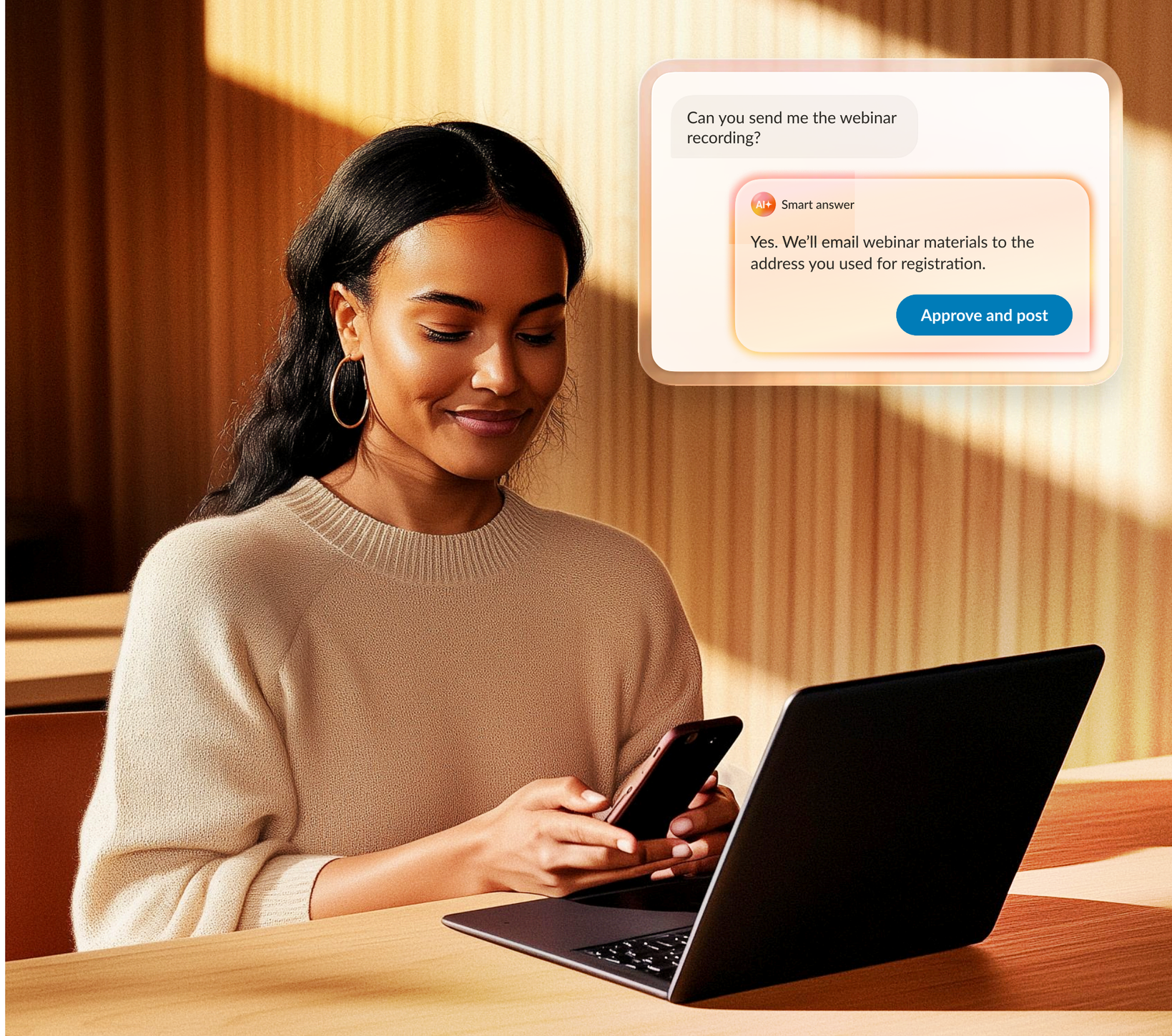
Organizations already have the components for successful agentic AI. What separates early adoption from long-term impact is how those elements are connected.

This research captures a moment of convergence:

- AI is widely adopted
- AI agents are moving into real workflows
- Early value is clear
- Fragmentation remains the primary constraint

The organizations that unlock the next phase of AI will be those that:

- Treat AI as core infrastructure, not temporary, one-off pilots
- Build trust, governance, and transparency into every deployment
- Shift from task-level automation to connected networks of AI agents
- Use conversational data as a core input for coordination between people, systems, and agents



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About RingCentral RingCentral is a leading provider of trusted AI communications, contact center, sales intelligence, video, and hybrid event solutions. RingCentral empowers businesses with conversation intelligence and unlocks rich customer and employee interactions to provide insights and improved business outcomes. With decades of expertise in reliable and secure cloud communications, RingCentral has earned the trust of hundreds of thousands of customers and millions of users worldwide. For more information, please contact a sales representative.

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