




1. IBM



The promise of such technology is that it frees up staff from repetitive manual tasks, enabling them to spend more time on purposeful and value-added pursuits. These include activities that drive strategic growth, but also in areas such as environmental, social, and governance (ESG) priorities.


“The quick win is that humans have limited capacity to process all the information available to us, and AI can do that faster,” says Tomoko Yokoi, a Digital Technology Expert at the Swiss business school IMD. “The biggest gain is speed of decision making, with a reduction of costs as you delegate the process of making that decision to the AI.”

The most data-driven organisations have already embraced that speed. Automation tools enable them to create feedback loops so that they constantly iterate products, services, and their approach to the market. This agility is particularly valuable in the current landscape of ongoing market disruption and volatility. It enables businesses to scale up or down at speed as the landscape changes.

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Tim Lebel, VP and Head of Spend Products at
SAP Concur





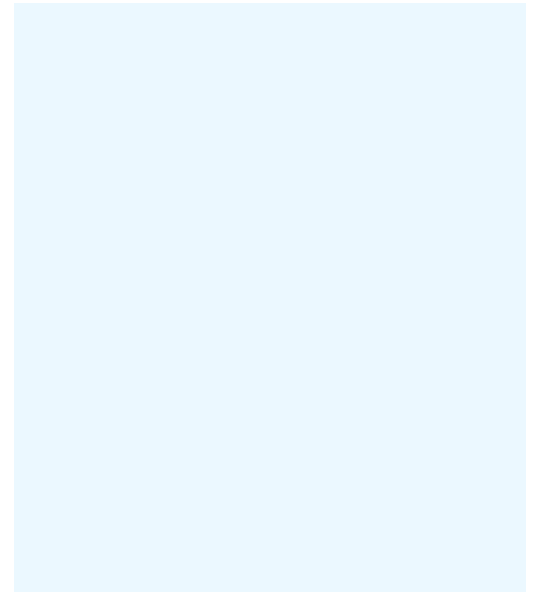
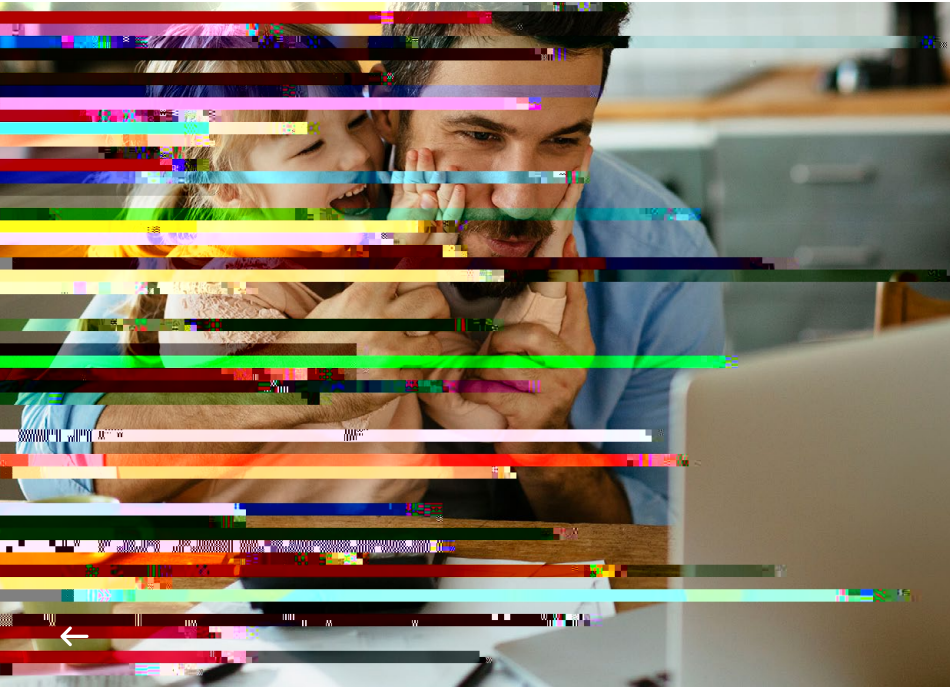
How, then, do business leaders move forward with AI and automation? The idea may be daunting, but their competitors will certainly be looking at their options. A [survey](#) conducted by Forbes shows that 56 per cent of businesses are already using AI to improve customer service. Other common use cases include production process improvements, process automation and cyber security.

The key to making progress, says Tim Lebel, VP and Head of Spend Products at SAP Concur, is to think about the end goals for your business rather than starting with the technology. "Focus on the outcome your business is looking for and then explore the technology solutions that might get you there more quickly and cost-effectively," he says. "That outcome might be an internal business challenge, or it might be something that is customer-facing."

Many technology experts advocate starting with small projects where a setback would be disappointing rather than disastrous. The idea is to learn on the job as the business moves on to larger deployments. Experimentation can be a good way to proceed, says Tomoko Yokoi. "Digital projects often start as pilot schemes before they go corporate wide," she says. "Building a centre of excellence that directs and scales these projects can work well."

One mistake some organisations make is to lean too heavily on the IT department. "There was a time when IT would make every technology decision, but with AI and automation, the adoption process needs to be much more collaborative," argues Lebel. "Business leaders from multiple functions need to work together to identify business use cases and potential solutions."

It will also be important to monitor results closely. Companies should be



Finally, while it's important not to be blown off course by hype over emerging technologies, new advances should not be ignored either. Leibel says: "Generative AI is a technology that is going to accelerate so



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