

The AI Impact Guide.

aiimi

How to move your AI use cases from hype to ROI

What's inside?

Real-world examples of AI improving time-to-value and reducing costs:

- 5,000 uses of a new AI tool in 1 month
- AI that's reduced the risk of £1M fines
- 5x faster access to fault resolutions on the production line

Case Study: How The Insolvency Service turned 88 AI use cases into 5 high-value opportunities

The Challenge

Identifying AI use cases that prove ROI.

Business leaders want to use AI strategically, but it can be difficult to know where to start or how to guarantee value.

The first hurdle is demonstrating exactly where to invest in AI and why. Data quality and internal skills gaps are common barriers, and traditional approaches to strategy simply aren't cut out for AI – the technology is evolving too rapidly.

Aiimi's AI Now report in 2024 found only **32% of companies** understood how to measure ROI on AI projects. Since then, a recent report by Wavestone has found that **nearly half** of businesses still lack structured ROI frameworks.

To unlock the value of AI in the enterprise, the most effective starting point isn't technology or data – it's questions. When you start with, "What questions does my organisation want to answer with AI?", you can focus your efforts on the data that truly matters, narrowing your field of vision to what will drive the most impact.

“

“Our biggest barrier is choosing the right things to adopt and where.”

Risk & Compliance Leader
Insurance firm

“

“Senior leadership buy-in is our biggest barrier.”

Risk & Compliance Leader
Retailer

Quotations from Aiimi's 2025-2026 AI Now Leadership Survey.

Where will AI-powered automation deliver value?

These are the questions that leading organisations told us they want to answer with AI and automation - from accessing insights at scale, to leveraging historical data and surpassing human accuracy.



Water & Utilities

For every live burst or pollution event, can we identify the root cause and best next actions as quickly as possible, using insights from previous incidents? Better yet, can we predict the next event and recommend preventative actions, or optimise resource deployment?



Manufacturing

How do we fix a faulty machine for a customer, leveraging knowledge from every previous fault and fix? Even better, can we predict failures, adjust servicing schedules, and recommend maintenance to avoid breakdowns altogether?



Local Authorities

When a resident or employee initiates a Data Subject Access Request, can we automatically collect all relevant data, redact sensitive information, and route it for review?



“Before weighing up the value of any AI solution or initiative, the critical question is: what needs to change? From pilot through to scale, the focus should stay on delivering measurable, business-relevant results. This creates a golden thread of value, connecting AI initiatives directly to meaningful impact.”

Paul Sliwinski
Aimi Customer Success Director

Making a go/no-go decision on AI use cases.

When AI opportunities are everywhere, we recommend three simple questions to guide your decision-making:

- 1 Does the necessary data to answer the question actually exist?
- 2 Have we got engagement from users to progress this use case?
- 3 Is the use case truly aligned to strategic value?

Data availability decides your next step.

Armed with valuable questions like these, you can begin to identify the data needed to answer them. This is where due diligence comes in: does the necessary data exist, and is this a worthwhile experiment? If the answer is 'yes', you've found your first opportunity for a manageable data governance experiment that aligns directly to value. This approach also challenges the notion that data governance means lengthy, costly transformation projects with uncertain returns.

Engaging people, not just adding technology.

The only way to get real value from AI right now is to experiment safely and learn quickly; the best approaches are agile, iterative, and action focused. By identifying, evaluating, and prioritising the best AI use cases that will release value quickly, you're able to win over stakeholders for greater investment in AI. For example,

when an alternative fuel provider worked with us to create their foundational AI strategy, focusing on value and safety enabled them to secure the trust and buy-in needed from senior leaders to pursue further AI opportunities. For some organisations, the focus of AI strategy might be on ethics, especially for those in the public sector or dealing with sensitive data. For others, it might be more about scaling internal AI capability or getting a grip on fragmented AI initiatives that are already underway. Whatever the desired outcomes, the process should start with engaging your users. Proven Discovery techniques, such as workshops, interviews, and exploration, enable you to surface the all-important questions your people need answers to and the decisions they need to make. This helps build an inventory of AI use cases clearly aligned to strategic value, alongside early insights into technical, ethical, and operational considerations.



Good data + human judgement = AI success.

The importance of data quality.

No AI use case will deliver value without complete, high-quality data, and poor data is often the biggest stumbling block in the adoption of AI and automation. The promise of AI can be a powerful motivator for tackling data governance, to improve data quality in preparation for strategic AI initiatives. Fortunately, AI is also a tool that helps us to improve data quality, faster. It accelerates data discovery, classification, and governance at scale, to give a clear picture of AI project feasibility upfront and deliver better results in implementation.

It's crucial to remember that responsible AI must underpin any AI strategy or project, to ensure its use is ethical and compliant. AI outputs must be transparent and traceable, enabled by citation, explainability, and the capability to continuously monitor and audit model use, sentiment, accuracy, and toxicity.

Humans – the next big thing in AI?

Despite predictions of AI replacing humans, the reality is that successful enterprise AI depends heavily on human expertise – not just in managing implementation, but in pinpointing the right use cases where AI can deliver real value. This shift towards 'humans-as-a-service' is evident in OpenAI's \$10m investment in a new AI consulting arm and Synechron's \$1bn valuation. These moves point to a growing recognition that AI is not plug-and-play; it requires strategic guidance, contextual understanding, and human judgement to align its use with complex business needs. In practice, it's not about AI replacing humans, but about humans enabling AI – and AI enabling humans.

“

“For our organisation, the biggest barrier to AI adoption is the underlying quality of our data, and reluctance to invest in improving foundational data maturity.”

Senior Data Leader
Utilities industry

“

“We need to be sure that our data is properly managed before letting AI loose on it.”

IT Manager
Professional Services firm

“

“The complex, siloed nature of our business is the biggest barrier to adopting AI at scale.”

Senior IT Leader
Professional Services firm

Gartner predicts 60% of AI projects will be abandoned due to a lack of AI-ready data.

Hype does not equal ROI.

This approach is about shifting the focus from shiny new AI use cases to outcome-led use cases. AI should be contextualised so that it is directly relevant to the business, ensuring every innovation or AI idea is firmly rooted in the organisation's specific context and needs. The process begins with a clear understanding of the problem – asking why it exists and how it can be resolved – before jumping to solutions. Being KPI-led is essential,

with a focus on core business metrics and quantifiable impact. Solutions should be framed in terms of the value they can deliver; rather than setting out to “build a chatbot,” the real goal might be to “reduce 20% of inbound service calls through intelligent triage” – with a chatbot being just one possible option. Ultimately, it's about choosing the right tool for the job, rather than defaulting to AI just for the sake of it.

“

“As Customer Success Director, my focus is on enabling organisations to realise tangible, measurable value from their investments in data and AI. It's important to remember that AI is not the end game in itself, but a tool and enabler. To get true value from it, AI must be directly tied to business needs and outcomes. The real success story is not “we've rolled out AI” but “we've reduced accidents, costs, or time to market by X%.”

Paul Sliwinski
Aiimi Customer Success Director



Defining value for AI.

AI initiatives should always be referenced against business problems and value drivers; identifying the value you're targeting, understanding how the business realises that value, and establishing clear success measures to ensure you're on the right track.

Key categories of value driver:

- **Commercial** (baseline, business case, contractual obligations)
- **Productivity** (output improvements)
- **Efficiency** (speed, time saved, automation)
- **Performance** (system and human impact)
- **Social** (safety, confidence, wellbeing)
- **Risk** (reduction of accident or operational risks)
- **Economic** (cost reduction, revenue generation)
- **Strategic** (alignment with outcomes and goals)

Benefit realisation must be considered from the outset: how will the benefits be achieved, and is AI truly the best solution, or might something else be more appropriate? It's also vital to consider who is impacted, who influences success, and to recognise that different business areas will prioritise different factors – such as risk versus growth. Alongside this, organisations must weigh up considerations like data quality, risk mitigation, and AI readiness – remembering that AI will be a cost centre until it starts enabling better decisions and delivering measurable impact.

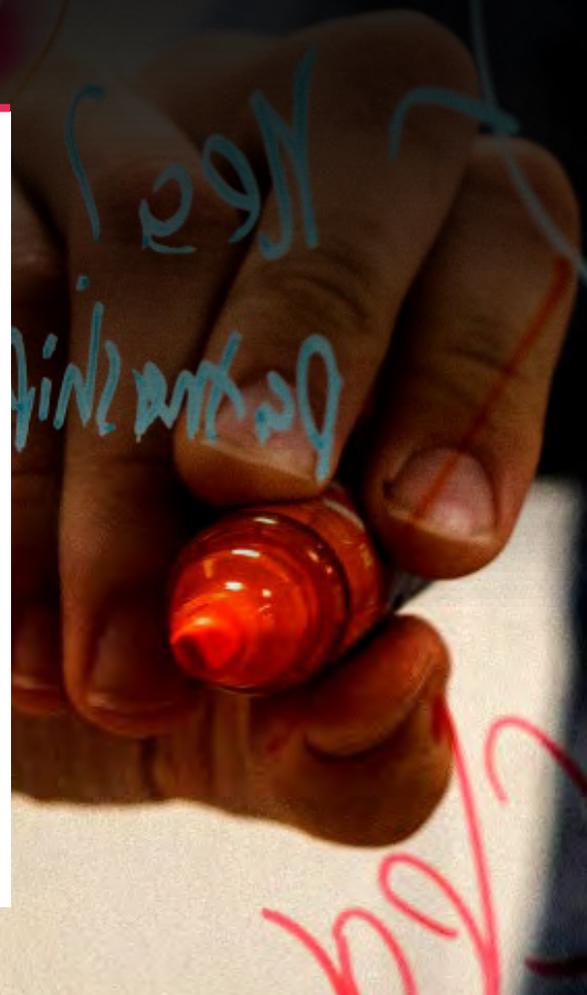
Real-world AI impact: Water Industry

The TacOps AI tool with 5,000 uses in just one month.

A major UK water company needed AI to support their TacOps team managing live pollutions events. Aiimi set up AI agents to safely bring together data from varied corporate systems, providing summaries that bring teams up to speed fast and save 2+ hours on each shift handover.

The Impact?

The TacOps team handles priority events faster, improving service to customers and reducing the business' risk of incurring regulator fines of up to £1M.



Metrics for AI impact.

Tracking the right success metrics is critical.



Non-functional metrics, such as the number of data sources integrated, accuracy percentages, or data throughput, are typically the focus of technical or data teams and should be designed to support functional outcomes.



Functional metrics, on the other hand, directly reflect business impact – such as percentage reduction in safety events, increases in productivity, or hours saved.



Opportunity cost is key: what new value is unlocked by freeing up resources to focus on strategic priorities? What opportunities will AI enable by improving speed to access insights, or improving data accuracy?

Ultimately, benefit realisation should underpin your business case – whether that's revenue increase, cost reduction, risk mitigation, safety improvements, innovation, or strategic alignment. The key is to choose metrics that best relate to your business drivers and value realisation.

Real-world AI impact: Manufacturing

5x faster access to fault resolutions on the production line.

A UK manufacturer saw the opportunity to equip technicians on their production line with an AI chatbot to speed up diagnosis and fixing of both known and unknown faults. Aiimi built a system designed for service users, connecting to their fault database and complex investigations data sets.

The Impact?

An 80% reduction in speed-to-answer for technicians searching for known fault resolutions - and an 87% improvement in the success rate for faults without a known resolution - means the business can get products to market faster, meet customer demand, and enhance productivity.

Evolution of value.

Value from AI evolves over time. In the short term, the focus should be on evidencing that the proof of concept (PoC) works. Over the longer term, it's about operationalising the solution, driving adoption, and realising sustained benefits. Continuous improvement is essential: define what needs to be included in the benefits case, establish how you'll track it, and be ready to adjust your approach to maximise value as you learn and grow.

It's easy to get stuck in a cycle of building endless pilots to test the art of the possible, celebrating demos over outcomes, and burning budget without a

clear path to ROI. In these scenarios, hype often drowns out strategy. The most common gaps include a lack of focus on real business challenges, an absence of scaling strategies, and no clear ownership of ROI or accountability for impact.

Winning with AI means solving real business problems at scale, with measurable outcomes. The golden thread of value must run through every initiative: start with a real business problem, map the impact on KPIs and ROI, quantify value early and often, assign ownership for outcomes, and plan for success and scale from day one.

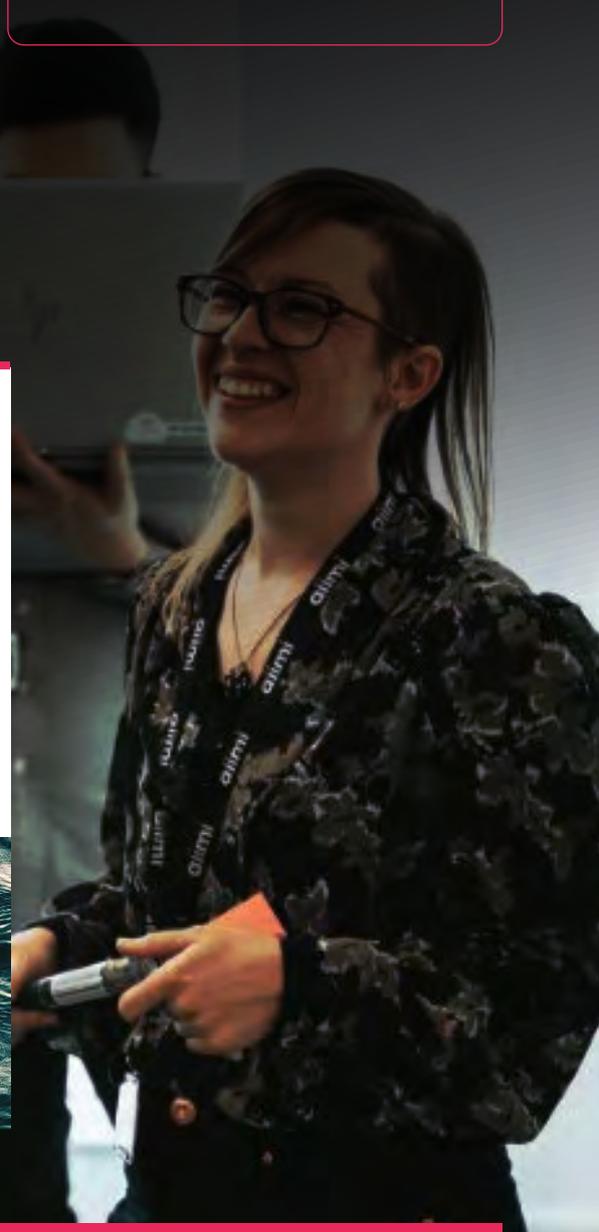
Key principles for success:

- Measure value in ways that matter to the business (not vanity metrics).
- Prioritise initiatives based on their value and start measuring early.
- Plan for long-term benefit realisation (e.g., ROI ratio over multiple years).
- Drive economies of scale to ensure AI capability is sustainable.

Real-world AI impact

The 'snowball effect' of AI value at Anglian Water.

As AI success stories spread through teams at Anglian Water, the wider business continues to raise new use cases for consideration. Our joint team are already prioritising 25 new AI problem statements, looking for the next impactful opportunity to pursue.



Best next steps for AI use cases:

The best enterprise AI use cases start with the right questions, align with business value, and are delivered through agile, experiment-led approaches. By engaging users, fixing data quality, and embedding responsible AI, organisations can quickly start releasing demonstrable value from AI, fuelling the appetite for further AI projects.



Identify impactful business challenges and frame clear questions to guide your AI initiatives



Involve users early, improve data quality, and prioritise responsible practices to accelerate value



Use agile, experiment-based methods to deliver quick wins and build momentum for more AI projects



“If you want to successfully embed AI, you’ve got to focus on use cases that are repeatable, high-value, and verifiable. Avoid overhyped catch-alls like ‘mega chatbots’ and focus on delivering more problem-solving AI successes.”

Paul Maker
Aiimi CTO



CASE STUDY

Creating a three-year AI roadmap for the Government's Insolvency Service.

The Insolvency Service knew AI could supercharge its work supporting the UK economy. But with so many potential applications, it was difficult to know where to start.

Through extensive research, we worked with their users to identify the best AI use cases, then applied our four-part framework (below) to evaluate and prioritise this list and develop a three-year AI roadmap featuring five high-value use cases.

The Aiimi AI Value Framework



Value.

AI should unlock better decisions, productivity gains, cost reduction, safety improvements, or something new. We plan how to measure impact and benchmark the current state, so you can see the difference AI makes.



Data.

AI needs good data to succeed. We work out whether the right data exists to make this use case fly - and what kind of data governance work might be needed.



Risk.

All AI comes with considerations - regulatory, compliance, or ethical. Risk could mean physical safety, IP exposure, or brand damage. We consider what guardrails you'd need to progress an AI use case.



Feasibility & Cost.

What would it actually take to go from AI prototype to AI that thousands of users can adopt safely and securely? We stay grounded in AI that's going to make an impact.

[Read more about this case study](#) →





Book a free 60-minute 'AI Impact' Discovery Call.

with an Aiimi expert



Paul Maker
CTO



Jordan Slater
Principal Consultant
(Business Partner)



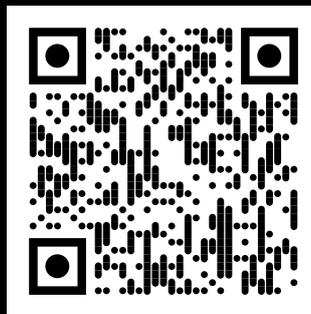
Reece Cook
Principal Consultant
(Data Scientist)



Josh Swords
Head of Data &
AI Engineering

Take 1 hour with an expert to discuss your AI priorities, topics could include:

- Selecting and validating high-impact AI use cases
- Benchmarking your approach against industry examples
- Managing cloud costs as AI adoption grows
- AI governance, ethics, and data privacy
- Integrating traditional data science with new AI capabilities
- Understanding emerging trends in AI
- Measuring impact and proving ROI to an executive team.



Request a Discovery session

We'll match you with an Aiimi expert based on your top priorities.

Sessions are suitable for large-scale or enterprise organisations only. Please note that sessions are delivered according to availability. Requesting a session does not guarantee you will be offered one. Sessions will be offered at Aiimi's total discretion based on whether we believe Aiimi can add value to your organisation. If we are unable to offer you a session, we will signpost you to alternative resources.

Trusted by the trusted.

Aiimi is the data, digital, and AI partner to world-leading organisations.



What our customers say.



“Aiimi has given us the strongest possible footing to start our AI journey. Their research has helped us identify key areas that would benefit from AI and automation. But they've also given us broader insights into the way we manage data, which is crucial to our wider work.”

Nathan Marsh
Digital Innovation Lead at The Insolvency Service



Meet the platform that powers AI success.

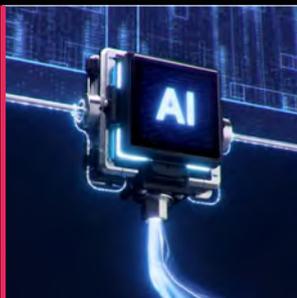
We're not just data and AI experts; our AI platform is built to bring AI capabilities to every corner of the enterprise. It enables your organisation to not just find information, but analyse results, make informed decisions, automate processes, and take action.



Connect and govern your data to unlock value

Aiimi connects to all enterprise data – structured and unstructured, from documents, systems, and databases to messages, emails, and web content – to give you the entire data picture.

[Find out more](#) →



Activate unstructured data for AI

Transform messy, inconsistent enterprise data into a trusted asset, ready to power AI. Aiimi uses AI and ML to automate the classification and management of data.

[Find out more](#) →



Extend copilots beyond native systems

Aiimi extends the reach of your existing AI tools, maximising the value of your investment – and providing accuracy, explainability, and confidence in AI outputs.

[Find out more](#) →



Extend the value of tools like Databricks

Aiimi acts as a 'data services layer', securely connecting structured data in platforms like Databricks with unstructured content, to give you more complete, accurate answers to power decisions.

[Find out more](#) →