

eBook

Enterprise AI for IBM i: Your Strategic Guide to AI-Powered Transformation and Growth

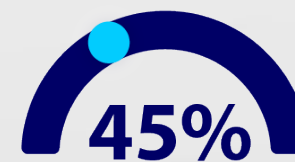


FRESCHÉ
SOLUTIONS

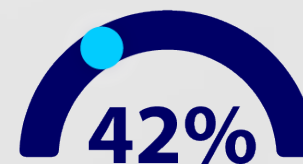
Artificial intelligence (AI) has rapidly evolved from a futuristic concept to a transformative force driving innovation across industries. For IBM i organizations, the potential to leverage AI for growth and efficiency has never been greater. According to the [2024 McKinsey State of AI Global Survey](#), AI adoption has increased dramatically in the past year, marking a pivotal moment for businesses around the world ready to embrace this technology.

What's fueling this rapid adoption? Businesses are increasingly drawn to AI's ability to simplify complex processes, reduce costs through automation, and seamlessly integrate into mainstream business applications. These advancements are making AI more accessible and practical than ever, empowering organizations to enhance efficiency, drive innovation, and unlock new opportunities for growth.

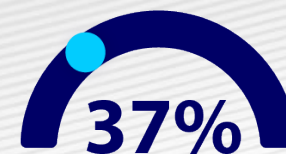
This eBook is your guide to navigating the AI transformation journey. You'll explore why IBM i organizations are uniquely positioned for AI adoption, how AI is reshaping industries like healthcare, finance, and manufacturing, and where your business stands in the AI maturity curve. With actionable insights and practical steps, you'll learn how to build scalable intelligent systems that adapt and evolve with your business.



Improved AI tools that offer greater accessibility and ease of use²



Cost reduction and process automation to enhance efficiency²



Wider integration of AI into mainstream business applications²

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The next wave of AI will move beyond augmenting human processes to enabling autonomous decision-making, transforming how businesses operate and compete. This eBook will equip you with the knowledge and strategies to lead your organization into this new era of intelligent transformation.

Here's what you'll discover in this eBook:

5 | **Chapter 1**
Why IBM i Organizations Are Ripe for AI Transformation

7 | **Chapter 2**
How AI is Driving Innovation Across Industries

9 | **Chapter 3**
AI Maturity Stages - Where Does Your Business Stand?

14 | **Chapter 4**
Actionable Steps to Start Your AI Journey Today

19 | **Chapter 5**
The AI-Powered Approach: Your Roadmap to AI Success

22 | **Start Your AI Journey**



Why IBM i Organizations are Ripe for AI Transformation

AI thrives on data, and IBM i environments are uniquely positioned to deliver. With decades of rich, historical transactional data, IBM i organizations have a goldmine of information that can power transformative AI initiatives. Whether it's predictive maintenance in manufacturing, customer churn analysis in retail, or inventory optimization across supply chains, IBM i's robust data processing capabilities make it an ideal platform for data-centric AI applications.

As Monica Sanchez, VP of Strategic Transformation at Fresche Solutions, explains: "IBM i supports the data-centric needs of AI initiatives, particularly for companies with significant data assets. Its powerful data processing capabilities, scalability, and real-time analytics allow businesses to unlock AI-driven insights from their extensive datasets, enabling innovation and informed decision-making—all within a secure and reliable environment crucial for leveraging AI's full potential."

This potential, however, comes with a challenge. While IBM i organizations sit on decades of valuable data, many lack the strategy to fully harness it for AI-driven business improvements. The key lies in transforming IBM i's vast data repositories into actionable insights by ensuring the data feeds AI models in ways that unlock predictive power. For example, a banking AI model analyzing IBM i (formerly AS/400) transactional data for fraud detection must first correlate that data with other systems across the organization to deliver meaningful results.

The Data Challenge: From Storage to Usability

IBM i organizations must go beyond simply storing data—they need to make it usable for AI. A strategic approach to data preparation is essential to ensure only the most valuable data contributes to AI processes. Poor-quality or irrelevant data can inflate costs, distort AI models, and hinder business outcomes.

Data quality is critical for two key reasons: Cost Efficiency means high-quality data reduces the expense of data engineering and ensures AI initiatives remain commercially viable. Competitive Advantage means reusable, high-quality data builds a strong competitive position over time. Organizations that leverage the same datasets across multiple use cases can achieve economies of scale and drive greater value from their data assets.

To control costs and improve effectiveness, businesses must focus on curating useful data while eliminating irrelevant or harmful data. This includes Hurtful Data such as subjective corner cases, ambiguous outliers, and mislabeled data that distort AI model development, as well as Useless Data like low-quality images, duplicates, or pseudo-duplicates that consume resources without adding value. By focusing on data quality, IBM i organizations can ensure their AI initiatives are built on a solid foundation.



The Integration Challenge

One of the most significant hurdles in preparing IBM i data for AI is integration. Data must be accurately mapped to ensure consistency between IBM i systems and external AI platforms. For example, when AI uses IBM i data for predictive maintenance, it must interpret equipment performance data correctly and link it with other operational sources across the organization.

While data mapping and integration require time and expertise, they are critical for AI success. Organizations that streamline this effort can make their data more actionable, enabling AI engines to deliver insights that drive real business outcomes.

A Strategic Approach to AI and IBM i Data

To unlock the full potential of AI, IBM i organizations must adopt a strategic approach to their data. Fresche recommends the following best practices:

- **Leverage IBM i as a secure, scalable data repository:** IBM i's reliability and scalability make it an ideal foundation for AI initiatives.
- **Focus on high-quality, actionable data:** Prioritize data that adds value while eliminating irrelevant or harmful data to reduce costs and improve AI model performance.
- **Invest in data integration and mapping:** Ensure IBM i data can be seamlessly consumed by AI platforms to enable accurate insights and actionable results.

By taking these steps, IBM i organizations can transform their data into a powerful asset, fueling AI initiatives that drive innovation, efficiency, and growth.



**AI Adoption for IBM i Environments:
What Industry Leaders Know That You Don't**

[Learn More](#)

How AI is Driving Innovation Across Industries

AI is changing industries that depend on vast amounts of data and real-time decision-making. From healthcare and finance to manufacturing and beyond, organizations are leveraging AI to unlock new revenue streams, reduce costs, and anticipate market shifts before they occur. A recent Accenture survey of 1,600 C-suite executives reveals that 75% of companies have integrated AI into their strategies, with 42% reporting better-than-expected returns on their investments. These results include faster R&D cycles, enhanced customer experiences, and improved operational efficiency.

Across key industries, AI is delivering measurable outcomes:

Financial Services



Predictive fraud detection, personalized customer experiences, and smarter risk management through real-time transaction analysis

Healthcare



Accelerated drug discovery, improved patient outcomes, and optimized treatment plans using machine learning for medical imaging and disease prediction

Manufacturing



AI-powered predictive maintenance and quality control reducing downtime while optimizing supply chains and automating production

Retail



Enhanced customer experiences through personalized recommendations, dynamic pricing, and inventory optimization based on demand prediction

Government



Streamlined public services, improved citizen engagement, and enhanced cybersecurity through data analysis and fraud detection



- AI pilot projects scale to deliver significant results, such as speeding up R&D and improving customer experiences
- Reporting better-than-expected returns, Accenture predicts AI transformation will occur 16 months faster than digital transformation.⁴

The Shift Toward Autonomous Operations

As AI adoption accelerates, industries are moving beyond traditional applications toward autonomous operations where AI systems make decisions and take actions in real time. Healthcare AI could autonomously monitor patient vitals and adjust treatments, manufacturing robots could adapt production lines based on real-time demand, and financial AI systems could execute trades and manage portfolios independently. This shift toward autonomy enables organizations to innovate faster, respond to market changes more effectively, and maintain competitive advantage in an increasingly dynamic business environment.



AI Maturity Stages - Where Does Your Business Stand?

Not all organizations are at the same stage of AI adoption, and the journey to AI maturity is rarely linear. Understanding where your business stands is critical to taking the right steps toward successful AI integration. By identifying your current stage, you can focus on the challenges and opportunities that will help you move forward strategically.

01. AI Exploration

At this stage, organizations are exploring AI conceptually. Discussions often center around AI's potential, but no projects have been implemented yet. The primary focus is on identifying opportunities where AI can solve specific business problems.

Challenge

- Define use cases that align with business goals.

Goal

- Identify areas where AI can deliver the highest impact.

Organizations in this phase should prioritize education and collaboration across teams to build a shared understanding of AI's potential.





02. AI Experimentation

In this phase, companies have identified key use cases and are experimenting with AI through prototype projects. The focus is on testing AI's feasibility and proving its return on investment (ROI). However, scaling these small-scale tests across the business remains a significant hurdle.

Challenge

- Prove the ROI of AI initiatives.

Goal

- Validate AI use cases with small-scale pilots.

According to IBM's Global AI Adoption Index 2023, 40% of organizations remain in the exploration or experimentation phases, often due to limited AI skills and expertise.

03. AI Expansion

After successful experimentation, organizations move into the AI Expansion stage. Here, AI becomes an integral part of operations, driving efficiencies across multiple departments. The focus shifts to refining AI strategies, ensuring scalability, and fostering a culture of continuous innovation.

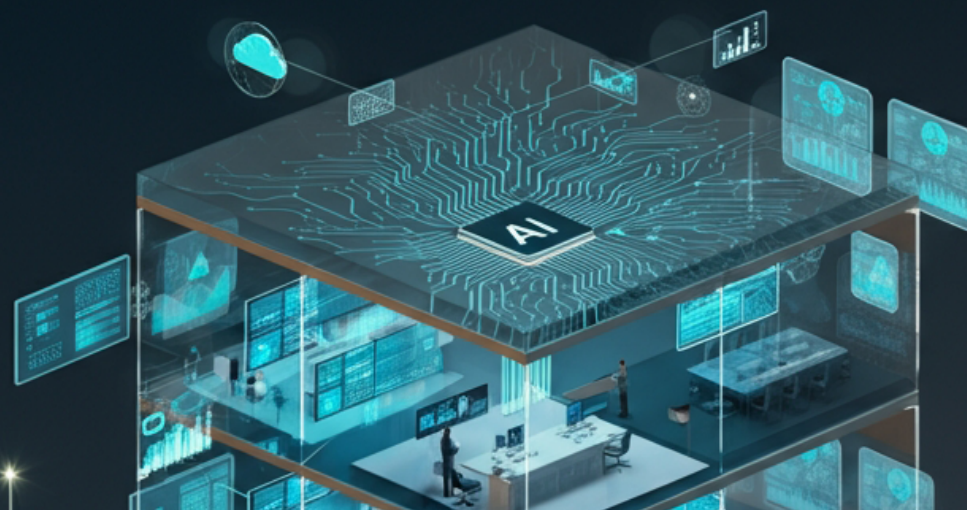
Challenge

- Scale AI solutions across the business.

Goal

- Embed AI into daily operations and drive continuous innovation.

At this stage, organizations focus on creating robust data pipelines, integrating AI into existing workflows, and ensuring cross-departmental collaboration to maximize the impact of AI initiatives.



04. AI Institutionalization

In the final stage, AI is fully embedded into every aspect of the business. It is no longer viewed as a separate initiative but as a core driver of decision-making, innovation, and competitive advantage. Organizations have transformed AI from experimental technology into business-critical infrastructure.

Challenge

- Maintain AI system flexibility while ensuring ethical, responsible deployment.

Goal

- Drive continuous innovation and competitive advantage through fully integrated AI capabilities.

Organizations at this stage are industry leaders, using AI to set standards for ethical use and create long-term value.





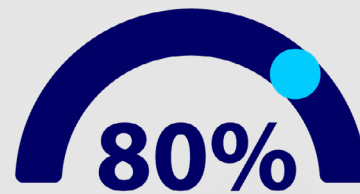
Where Does Your Business Stand?

Understanding your organization's current stage of AI maturity is the first step toward building a roadmap for success. Whether you're just beginning to explore AI or are working to scale and institutionalize it, each stage presents unique challenges and opportunities. By taking a strategic approach, you can ensure that your AI initiatives deliver measurable results and position your business for long-term success.

The key is knowing where you are today and taking the right next steps to move forward. Regardless of your current AI maturity level, there are specific actions you can take right now to accelerate your progress and maximize your chances of success. Let's explore the practical steps that can help you advance your AI journey, no matter where you're starting from.

Actionable Steps to Start Your AI Journey Today

AI has the potential to transform businesses, but the journey to success is not without challenges. With 80% of AI projects failing and costing companies billions in wasted resources, the issue often lies not with AI itself, but with how businesses approach it. Common pitfalls include a lack of clear strategy, insufficient data readiness, and failure to scale AI effectively. Organizations that succeed with AI ensure every decision fits into a larger, strategic framework aligned with their key goals.



of AI projects fail and cost companies
billions in wasted resources.⁷



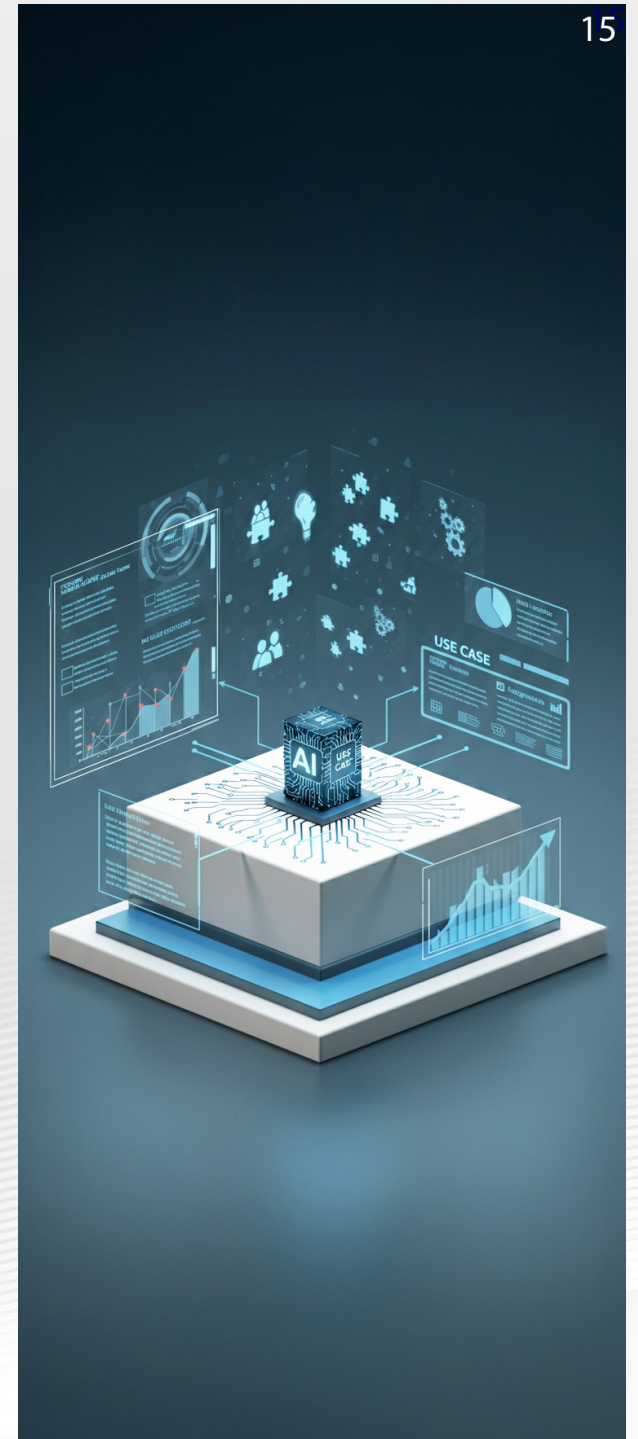
Here are five actionable steps to help your business start its AI journey on the right foot:

01. Identify High-Impact Use Cases

The foundation of any successful AI initiative is a well-defined use case. Organizations that understand which problems AI can solve—and which are beyond its current capabilities—avoid costly missteps. A clear use case aligns AI with business goals, guides resource allocation, and enables accurate ROI projections.

A strong use case also sets measurable objectives and metrics, making it easier to track progress and demonstrate value to stakeholders. For example, a retail business might use AI to optimize inventory management, while a healthcare organization could focus on predictive patient care. Without this clarity, AI projects risk becoming scattered, inefficient, and ultimately unsuccessful.

By prioritizing use cases that offer the greatest competitive advantage, businesses can focus their efforts on initiatives that deliver real value and build momentum for future AI adoption.





02. Assess Readiness

Once high-impact use cases are identified, it's essential to evaluate your organization's readiness for AI. Success depends on reliable data, robust infrastructure, technical expertise, and organizational alignment. For businesses running IBM i, the platform often provides a strong foundation, but readiness also requires:

- High-quality, well-organized data.
- Scalable systems and infrastructure.
- Skilled teams with AI and data expertise.

A thorough readiness assessment helps identify gaps in these areas, ensuring your organization is prepared to support AI initiatives and scale them effectively. Addressing these gaps early reduces risks and sets the stage for long-term success.

03. Start Small with Focused Wins

AI adoption doesn't have to begin with large, complex projects. In fact, AI is most successful when it begins with targeted, manageable projects that deliver quick, measurable wins. These early successes help build momentum, foster organizational buy-in, and provide valuable insights for scaling AI across the business. For example, a healthcare provider might use AI to streamline appointment scheduling before expanding into predictive patient care, or a manufacturer could pilot AI for predictive maintenance on a single production line.

Starting small allows teams to gain hands-on experience, refine AI models, and understand how AI delivers value in practice. By focusing on specific, high-impact areas, businesses can reduce risk, demonstrate ROI, and create a strong foundation for broader AI adoption. These focused wins not only build confidence but also set the stage for scalable AI systems that grow and evolve alongside the organization.

AI Success for IBM i Organizations: Small Beginnings, Big Benefits

[Read Now](#)



04. Build a Scalable Roadmap

AI works best when it scales, and a well-structured roadmap is essential for guiding adoption and integration. An AI roadmap aligns efforts with business goals and provides a clear path for growth and innovation. It should include:

- Immediate steps and long-term objectives.
- Milestones, timelines, and resource requirements.
- Risk assessments and mitigation strategies.

A scalable roadmap ensures that AI initiatives remain aligned with organizational priorities and adapt to future growth. It also helps secure the right budget, team, and technology at every stage, keeping projects on track and delivering measurable results.

05. Secure Leadership Buy-in

Leadership alignment is critical to the success of any AI initiative. To secure buy-in, the case for AI must align with broader business goals and demonstrate clear value. When leaders share a cohesive vision, AI projects are more likely to receive the necessary resources—time, talent, and budget—and gain cross-departmental support.

Leadership buy-in also drives accountability and risk management. By setting clear metrics and KPIs, leaders can rigorously evaluate AI's performance and ensure responsible use. A shared strategic vision helps anticipate challenges, mitigate risks, and embed AI into the organization's long-term strategy.

When leadership is aligned, AI initiatives are more likely to be sustainable, scalable, and impactful.



The AI Powered Approach: Your Roadmap to AI Success

How do organizations turn AI from an idea into a tangible business outcome? Many businesses get stuck at this point, either overwhelmed by the complexity of AI implementation or lost in endless experimentation that never delivers. The difference between AI success and failure comes from having a clear, structured process that moves from exploration to action.

Fresche's AI-Powered Framework is a focused, 12-week program, designed to take the guesswork out of AI adoption and ensure AI initiatives align with business objectives. We help enterprises uncover opportunities, define strategic AI use cases, and prepare a compelling business case to secure leadership buy-in.



With the expert guidance from our IBM i experts, here's what you get:



Strategic AI Use Case Identification

We identify the AI use cases that align with business goals and deliver the most value, ensuring a focus on initiatives that drive real results and support organizational digital ambitions.



Risk Mitigation and Challenge Anticipation

Understand potential risks and challenges—technical, operational, and strategic—before they arise, along with recommendations to overcome them to ensure a smooth adoption process.



Tailored AI Roadmap

Get a clear, actionable roadmap that outlines strategic steps for AI implementation and ensure seamless integration with current initiatives and future scalability goals.



Business Case for Executive Buy-In

Executives need more than promises; they need numbers. Obtain a compelling business case, complete with data and insights, to secure leadership approval and confidently move forward with AI initiatives.



ROI and Effort Estimation

Get a realistic assessment of the potential return on investment (ROI), estimated costs, and effort required to implement AI initiatives—building the foundation for a solid business case.



Implementation Readiness and Success Framework

Beyond planning, we prepare your organization for successful execution by defining key performance indicators, establishing success metrics, and creating a structured approach to monitor progress and measure impact throughout your AI implementation journey.



From Guesswork to Enterprise AI: Navigate Your AI Journey with Confidence

Discover actionable strategies to unlock AI's potential, avoid common pitfalls, and drive measurable results for your business.

On Demand Webinar

[Watch Now](#)

The Fresche Advantage: Your Trusted Partner for AI Success

AI adoption isn't an option anymore; it's the key to staying competitive, driving down costs, and uncovering new opportunities for growth. With decades of experience, Fresche is uniquely positioned to guide IBM i organizations through AI transformation. Here's what makes us different:



Unmatched IBM i Expertise

AI integration within IBM i environments demands deep knowledge of its unique architecture, data systems, and capabilities. Fresche brings decades of specialized IBM i expertise, ensuring your systems are optimized to support AI initiatives. We leverage IBM i's robust data processing power to unlock valuable insights, reduce costs, and deliver long-term business value.



A Strategic, Unbiased Approach

In a crowded AI marketplace, the challenge isn't finding a solution—it's finding the right one. Fresche takes an unbiased, strategic approach, focusing on what works best for your business. We don't push specific platforms or technologies. Instead, we guide you to make informed decisions, ensuring seamless AI integration with your IBM i systems and broader business strategy.



Customized Solutions for Every Budget

No two businesses are the same, and one-size-fits-all solutions rarely deliver results. Fresche provides tailored AI assessments and strategic roadmaps designed to fit your unique goals, challenges, and budget. Whether you're starting small or scaling enterprise-wide, we deliver phased, practical solutions that align with your priorities and resources—ensuring measurable ROI at every step.



A Partner You Can Trust

Fresche isn't just a service provider; we're a partner invested in your success. From initial ideation to implementation and beyond, we work alongside your team to ensure your AI initiatives deliver real, measurable outcomes. Our collaborative approach, combined with our breadth and depth of IBM i expertise, makes us the trusted partner for businesses ready to embrace AI.



Transparent Pricing, Proven ROI

We believe in building trust through transparency. Fresche offers clear, upfront pricing with no hidden costs, so you know exactly what to expect. Our phased delivery approach ensures you see value early and often, with proven ROI that demonstrates the impact of your AI initiatives.



Comprehensive Support and Future-Ready Solutions

Enterprise AI success extends far beyond initial implementation. Fresche provides ongoing support, monitoring, and optimization to ensure your AI solutions continue delivering value as your business evolves. Our future-ready approach keeps your IBM i systems at the forefront of AI innovation, with scalable architectures and continuous updates that protect your investment and adapt to emerging technologies.

About Fresche

Why Wait? Start Your AI Journey with Fresche Today

Every day you delay AI adoption, competitors gain ground. With Fresche's proven expertise, transparent pricing, and comprehensive support, you can confidently accelerate your AI journey from strategy to implementation and beyond. Our IBM i specialization and unbiased approach ensure you get solutions that work, not just promises that sound good.

[Book an AI Strategy Session](#)

Innovators in AI-powered IT modernization, Fresche manages and maximizes the value of IBM i and Microsoft business-critical systems. Our market-leading IP and proven solutions in Modernization, Managed Services, Data Analytics and AI, and Software have earned the trust of global leaders from more than 2,200 companies.

Reimagine your IT challenges into future growth and innovation with Fresche. Learn more at www.freschesolutions.com.

FRESCHÉ
SOLUTIONS

freschesolutions.com

Montreal, Quebec
995 Wellington, Suite 220
Montreal, QC H3C 1V3
+1 800-361-6782

Franklin, Massachusetts
124 Grove Street, Suite 309
Franklin, MA 02038
+1 800-669-7076

info@freschesolutions.com
support@freschesolutions.com