

# THE 2018 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TECHNOLOGY BUSINESS GUIDE

Debunking AI myths to arm decision makers with  
fresh investment perspectives



There's no denying artificial intelligence (AI) is a polarizing topic. More than 70 percent of Americans fear an automated future, according to Pew Research.<sup>1</sup> However, another report finds that the majority of people believe increased automation and AI will help society.<sup>2</sup>

So, what's the truth? Is AI a friend or foe? The answer is in how you've been taught to look at the technology.

As a business decision maker, it's your responsibility to rise above the noise and decide if AI solutions are right for your company's unique needs and users. Here's one piece of advice we hope you do follow: Approach AI with an open mind.

Too often, businesses explore AI with preconceived notions of what the technology offers them. Sometimes this version of AI is more nefarious than reality, reminiscent of Hollywood robots bent on taking over the world. In other cases, companies put too much faith in their AI investments and expect magical results with minimal effort.

Regardless of what ideas you and your team bring to the table, never limit your AI applications to just those that are loudest or most current. It's important to consider AI's full spectrum of benefits and narrow down from there to those that are relevant and helpful to your end users.

We know overcoming industry voices and trends is easier said than done – especially with the number of AI articles, podcasts, videos, etc. published daily. To better understand end-user perspectives in our complex world, we surveyed more than 650 senior-level decision makers and above on their current AI beliefs and goals. The following report debunks common AI myths among respondents and incorporates lessons from our new book, **Embracing the Power of AI**, to offer a modern perspective for how the technology can work best for your business.

**"IT'S IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER AI'S FULL SPECTRUM OF BENEFITS AND NARROW DOWN FROM THERE TO THOSE THAT ARE RELEVANT AND HELPFUL TO YOUR END USERS."**





## MYTH NO. 1:

### AI WILL REPLACE HUMANS

The most common objection to AI-powered solutions is that they threaten – and will eventually replace – human jobs.

Businesses are right to see AI as a way to improve operational efficiencies and intelligence. AI can help you scale to address new customer needs, boost sales, provide a consistent level of service and much more. **Human jobs are often perceived as the required tradeoff for these benefits, even though that's rarely ever the case today.**

For example, some dermatologists may fear AI-powered image recognition software could soon diagnose rashes by comparing patient-submitted pictures against online medical databases. Even though some health professionals wish they could cut down on routine check-ups and focus on research or higher-priority (and profit) cases, dermatologists are anxious that automating tasks will eventually mean automating jobs.

AI's journey to a mainstream business application contributes to this tension between people and machines. The branding of “artificial intelligence” itself is a bit of a misnomer, actually. The word “artificial” suggests a simple upgrade from human to robotic capabilities. In truth though, AI is more of an “**augmented intelligence**” – an intelligence different from what humans offer. AI's capabilities may give the impression of human intelligence and interactions in certain scenarios, but computers cannot match human capacity for emotional sensitivities, comforts and contextual understanding.

To put it another way, a squirrel can remember where it's buried hundreds of acorns in a forest while a human can find just a few. But a person could help grow that tree, swing from its branches and plant beautiful gardens around it. We all have our roles to play.

And thanks to AI, businesses can help employees focus on the roles and responsibilities that truly matter to them. Think back to our dermatologist. As AI automates more common interactions, our doctor can dedicate more time to critical cases and provide the human connection patients appreciate in emotionally charged situations. It's not just the biology of the skin that needs taking care of – people need people, too.

As you work with AI and not against it, you will discover where technology investments empower employees to offer human-to-human value and feel happier, more capable and fulfilled at work.



## MYTH NO. 2:

### AI CAN'T HELP MY BUSINESS

A second misconception businesses have about AI is that the technology simply can't help them.

In fact, **20 percent of businesses don't believe AI can immediately improve their operations**. There are many variations on this claim – AI isn't the right fit. Why change what's already working? Now just isn't a good time.

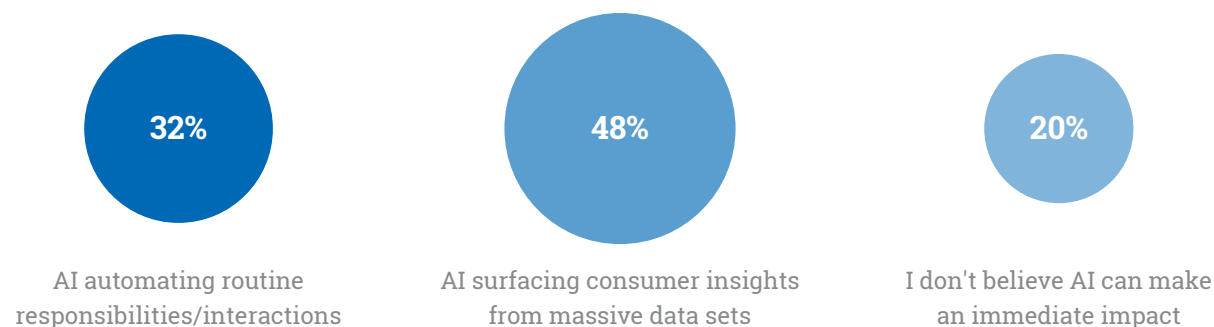
But all answers beg the same question – have you thought through AI on a personal level?

Can you recall an instance where you wished you could have worked faster or made a decision with less effort or pain? Got one (or a few, even)? Good, because now you see firsthand how AI would improve your day-to-day work life, as well as the lives of your peers.

Unfortunately, many businesses stop their AI considerations at “adding intelligence” to high-level business processes. It's of course great to work toward goals like converting earlier in the sales funnel, increasing operational efficiencies or decreasing fulfillment costs. In terms of coupling these objectives with AI capabilities and benefits, however, you must break away from strict business thinking and tap in emotionally.

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Which type of AI benefits would make the most immediate improvement in your business?



Don't brainstorm how AI can boost sales. Instead, imagine how and where the technology would offer your users easier engagement experiences and build loyalty. Pivoting your thinking in this way reveals unexpected applications where AI's strongest offerings may actually align with your business and end-user needs. Even the 80 percent of organizations that already value AI benefit when they broaden their perspectives and refresh AI ideas against current business goals.

Businesses can use AI to:

- **Extract maximum information from current and possible data sets**

AI adds layers of information to make your data smarter and more valuable. AI-powered features like speech processing and sentiment analysis software help make sense of large volumes of information – a task that's difficult for humans to replicate as quickly or as accurately.

For example, facial recognition software uses AI to determine if individual bits of information within a stream of video combine to make a face. The software can then make a prediction on who those bits represent and what actions it should take based on that assessment. A human security guard can make this decision as well, but AI takes on the responsibility and frees up the employee to add value elsewhere.

Among the 80 percent of businesses that think AI can make an immediate impact, 40 percent of decision makers are interested in AI enhancing tasks humans already do.

- **Make routine, information-heavy decisions**

Every business makes a lot of decisions all of the time. The more you can automate routine, low-risk operations, the more stamina you reserve to deliver on bigger needs and the lower your risk for error.

Bankers, for instance, grant many mortgage loans annually – an equally monotonous and challenging task. Employees have some information and models to lean on, but there are many complex variables involved in making the correct business decision. AI supports this task in a number of ways: it fills in information gaps, helps employees better understand probability and can even approve simple decisions on its own. Ultimately, AI removes doubt for bankers and ensures they don't backtrack and undo work.

A large majority of those who see the immediate potential impact of AI want the technology to add intelligence in ways that humans cannot. These capabilities complement humans and empower them to be their best selves.

**" DON'T BRAINSTORM HOW AI CAN BOOST SALES. INSTEAD, IMAGINE HOW AND WHERE THE TECHNOLOGY WOULD OFFER YOUR USERS EASIER ENGAGEMENT EXPERIENCES AND BUILD LOYALTY."**



```

    mirror_ob = "MIRROR_X":
        mirror_mod.use_x = True
        mirror_mod.use_y = False
        mirror_mod.use_z = False
    operation = "MIRROR_Y":
        mirror_mod.use_x = False
        mirror_mod.use_y = True
        mirror_mod.use_z = False
    operation = "MIRROR_Z":
        mirror_mod.use_x = False
        mirror_mod.use_y = False
        mirror_mod.use_z = True

    #selection at the end -add back the deselected
    mirror_ob.select= 1
    mirror_ob.select=1
    bpy.context.scene.objects.active = modifier_ob
    print("selected" + str(modifier_ob)) # modifier
    mirror_ob.select = 0
    one = bpy.context.selected_objects[0]
    bpy.data.objects[one.name].select = 1

    print("please select exactly two objects, we need two")

OPERATOR CLASSES -----

class MirrorOperator(bpy.types.Operator):
    """Mirror the selected object to the selected object"""
    bl_idname = "mirror_mirror_x"
    bl_label = "Mirror X"

```

In both of these use cases, many organizations still worry that their AI solutions won't be flawless at rollout, and this fear holds them back from moving forward at all. But AI doesn't have to be perfect to make a positive impact.

An iterative approach to AI offers benefits from day one. For example, when you bring on AI to help with fraud detection, the solution catches more errors than humans even if it cannot yet detect every case or type of fraud. If your requirement to launch is perfection, you will miss out on incremental performance improvements. You also pass up opportunities to earn valuable real-world data, learn from it and evolve your AI program over time. Experience compounds, meaning the sooner you get into the AI game, the faster you will gain a competitive edge.

If you still feel like AI is not right for your business or are overwhelmed by the solution, try breaking down your potential investments and applications into smaller questions. Here are a few variables you can think through first to prepare yourself for larger AI conversations and decision making down the road:

- **Consider your target customers' motivations for working with AI.** Will AI result in a faster or more enjoyable experience? Does the perceived value of the AI solution trump that of your current solution?
- **How much time and energy do you think your customers will have to invest in adopting a new AI-driven solution?** Would you be willing to put in the same amount of effort?
- **Where would your customers' feel most anxious to share personal data online?** Such reservations are immediate red flags and can help you determine where your organization's end users are ready for AI experiences, and where you may want to hold on AI.





### MYTH NO. 3:

## AI'S SOPHISTICATION LEADS TO MAGICAL REWARDS

It's great to see more businesses making room for AI now. However, a third misconception about AI is that its extreme sophistication means AI-powered solutions offer magical rewards with little effort. But that's hardly the case, and successful AI integrations require strategic planning and hard work.

Disillusionment happens when businesses think of AI strictly as a tool. In reality, AI works best when you treat it like a true business partner whose capabilities learn and improve with time. Advertisers are partially to blame for this confusion. In the early stages of AI, it was easier for vendors to sell the idea that customers could simply connect with an API and experience changes overnight. Such grandiose claims misled decision makers and meant they never developed the perspective that while change is hard, it's better in the long run.

Many businesses also fail to promote AI-capable company cultures where employees understand how they will work with AI solutions – a major oversight. Too often, decision makers message AI internally as a literal Deus Ex Machina that intervenes all on its own. But to effectively plan how you will work with an AI solution, you must define what a successful AI relationship looks like at your company. A successful relationship in this context means having an explicit business goal in mind and a clear idea of how AI will help achieve it.

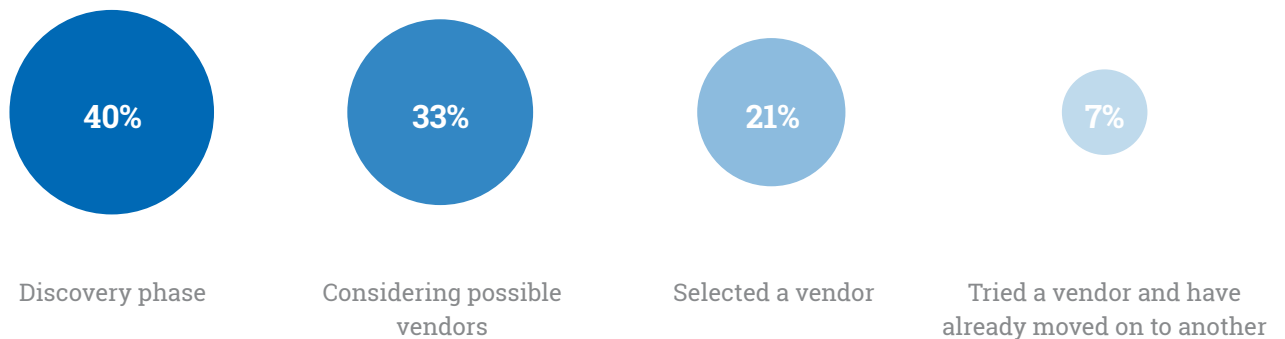
Again, it's not specific enough to say you want to make your product or business smarter. Maybe you mean you want AI to surface new information about your customers. But which customers, and what information? Do you have a smart way to measure against the problem you want AI to solve? You can't rely on AI to iron out these details for you.

To date, organizations are evenly split on whether they have a clear definition for what a successful relationship between humans and AI looks like. Even if you fall into the **50 percent of businesses that have a clear definition of how employees and AI will most productively work together**, it's worth reevaluating your conclusions in terms of what it means to be a consumer with access to many kinds of technologies today. A good litmus test is if you can explain which KPIs and tools you will use to measure your AI investment, and what results you're ideally looking for. If you struggle to answer these questions, that's a good sign you should reassess your goal and strategy for AI.

Critical thinking from day one is key, especially now that most businesses have plans to invest in AI this year. The majority of companies are still in the early discovery and considerations phases with AI, however.

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#### Where Organizations Exploring AI Technologies Sit Along the Buyer's Journey



**" THE MAJORITY OF COMPANIES ARE STILL IN THE EARLY DISCOVERY AND CONSIDERATIONS PHASES WITH AI."**



#### MYTH NO. 4:

### AI IS JUST FOR TECH EXPERTS

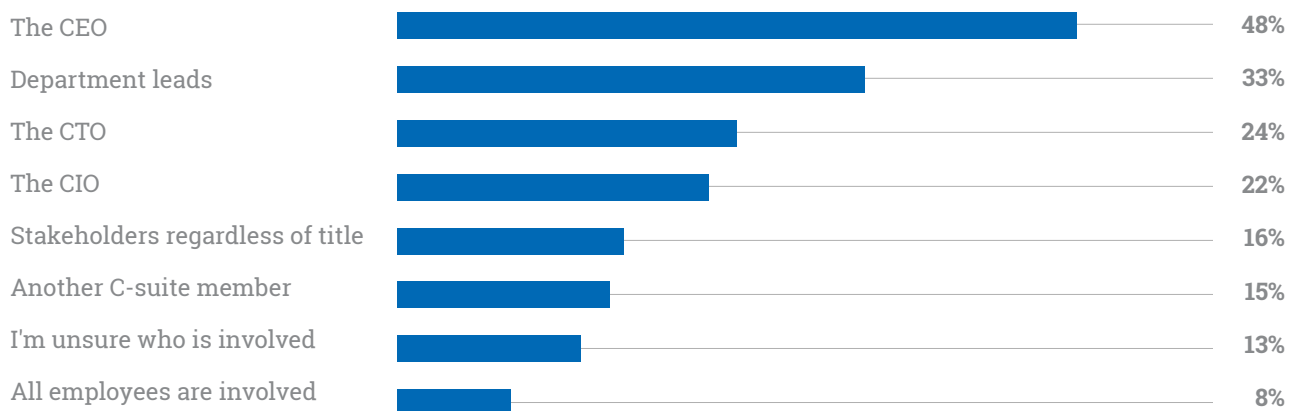
Many people feel AI is off limits, over their heads or best left to tech-specific roles like a CIO or CTO. However, as you assess your AI goals, it's important to share your plan and welcome organizational feedback from everywhere and at all levels.

Moving from the top down, **CEOs currently participate in AI conversations at half of businesses (48 percent)**. This is a good start, but this number should ideally be 100 percent. CEOs are the best fit to spearhead envisioning what organizations are capable of with AI and can be a big force in earning buy-in from employees.

It would also be good to see more involvement from department leads. Even if you have an overall company message that AI is here and now, this spirit will dilute over time if individual departments lack sponsors who make AI a lived reality. These believers should be people who are close to daily departmental tasks, but not so immersed that they will struggle to collaborate around big-picture ideas and share the responsibility of building a company culture that embraces AI.

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Who is involved in conversations about AI at your organization? Please select all that apply.



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It's also important to elevate more stakeholder voices – **just 16 percent of stakeholders are currently involved in their company's AI conversations.** If you don't bring those who will use AI tools to the table and consider their experiences – whether that's managers, customers or employees – you won't get the most out of your solution. As a business owner or decision maker, you're more likely to see opportunities in AI. But those who will work directly with the technology and feel its daily impact must understand how AI improves their worlds, too.

Organizational change is never about the tool that powers it. The tool (AI, in this case) is just an enabler of larger cultural updates that invite people to use technologies, take ownership of their roles and find greater joy in working digitally.

But none of those benefits are possible if stakeholders aren't on board – most of us can name a company where a huge ERP program failed. Technology mistakes like these often happen in large part because people didn't want to use new systems. In a worst-case scenario, employees will actually modify their behaviors to avoid technologies they don't like. Broaden your AI team to avoid this outcome and surface strategic goals that build enthusiasm toward AI post implementation.

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## DON'T LET YOUR AI RESERVATIONS HOLD YOU BACK

Like many other popular technologies, AI invites and rewards new ways of thinking. Successful AI integrations require a perspective and culture that enable truly useful experiences, not just trendy ones.

In addition to the four myths we walked through, consider this your opportunity to **let go of whatever other reservations stand in your organization's way from moving forward with AI**. While investments like blockchain or **voice-activated technologies** may benefit from elongated research and development stages, there's a greater need to experiment with AI now. The technology will transform businesses in ways we cannot grasp yet, which is why it's so important to start small with AI and grow from there.

Getting the ball rolling with AI can be daunting, but debunking common misconceptions about AI-powered solutions proves that it shouldn't be. AI won't hurt people, it will actually help them. AI may be flashy, but it offers real value to real businesses. AI is pretty magical, but ROI comes with hard work and an agile, data-driven approach. And although AI is sophisticated, it's still for everyone.

Most of all, remember that the AI investments you make impact you and your customers foremost. AI deserves your full attention and a viewpoint that accounts for your specific business needs.





## METHODOLOGY

The "2018 Artificial Intelligence Technology Business Guide" is based on a survey of 679 U.S. senior-level decision makers and above and was conducted online between Feb. 2–10, 2018. Respondents have responsibilities in marketing, IT or operations.

\*Note: Graphics are rounded to the nearest percentage and may not add up to exactly 100%

## CITATIONS

1. Arm Ltd. "AI Today, AI Tomorrow | Global AI Survey Results – Arm." Arm | The Architecture for the Digital World, [www.arm.com/markets/artificial-intelligence/ai-survey](http://www.arm.com/markets/artificial-intelligence/ai-survey).
2. Smith, Aaron, and Monica Anderson. "Automation in Everyday Life." Pew Research Center: Internet, Science & Tech, 4 Oct. 2017, [www.pewinternet.org/2017/10/04/automation-in-everyday-life/](http://www.pewinternet.org/2017/10/04/automation-in-everyday-life/).

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Globant's latest book, "**Embracing the Power of AI**," dives deeper into recent AI trends, advancements and opportunities. The book helps readers demystify deep learning, machine learning, AI and more, preparing decision makers across all industries to embrace – and benefit from – the augmented intelligence revolution ahead.

## ABOUT GLOBANT

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- Globant has more than 7,200 professionals in 12 countries working for companies like LinkedIn, BBVA, EA, and Coca Cola, among others.
- We were named a Worldwide Leader of Digital Strategy Consulting Services by IDC MarketScape report (2016 and 2017).
- We were also featured as a business case study at Harvard, MIT, and Stanford.

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