

# Modernizing Finance with AI



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# In This InfoBrief

## AI is changing everything.

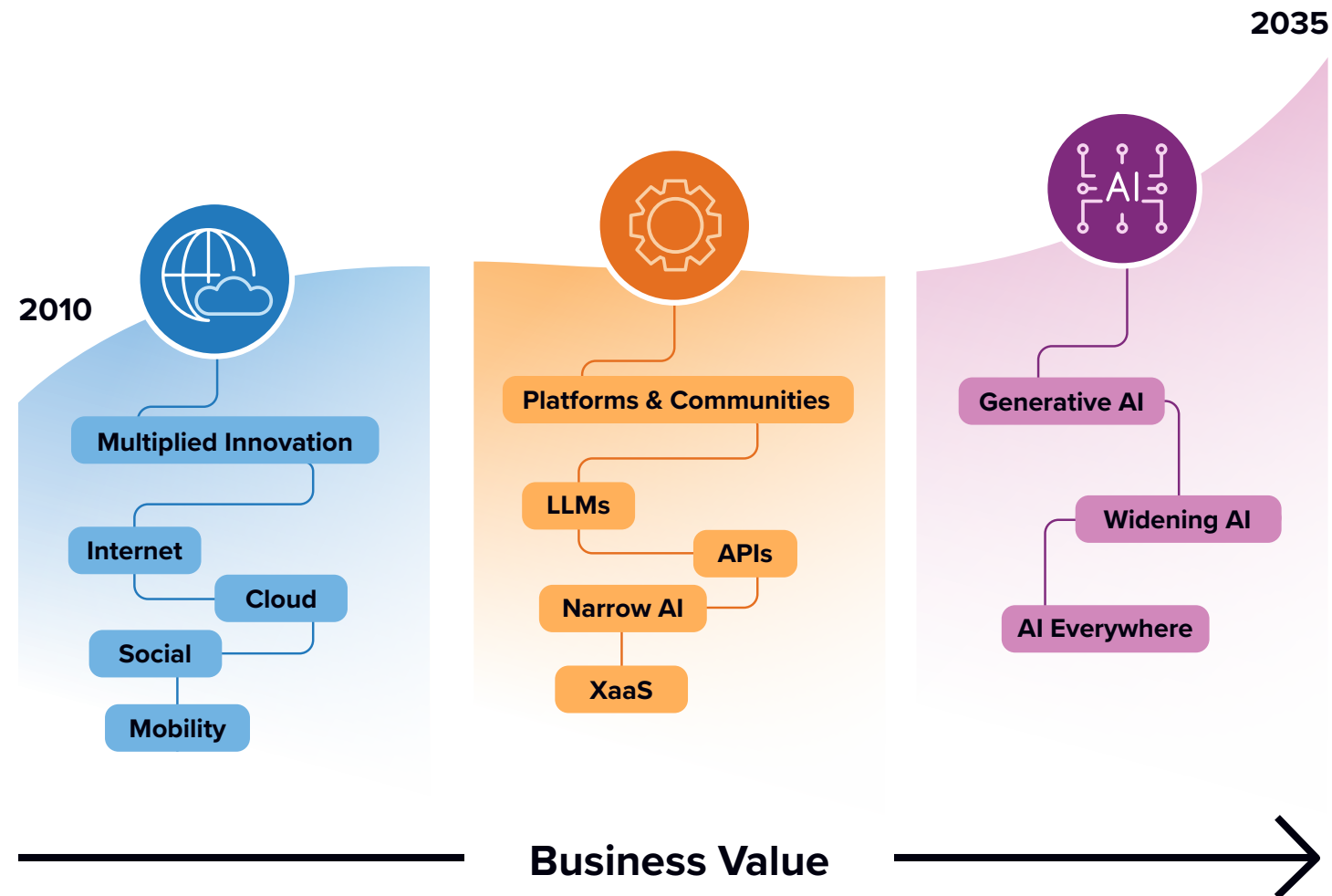
From consumer retail to supply logistics, predictive, prescriptive, and generative AI (GenAI) is changing the way enterprises approach and do business. The business of AI is becoming increasingly critical to organizations globally.

- ✓ The purpose of this InfoBrief is to **examine the business of AI and explain what is happening** in this important business transformation area and why.
- ✓ **IDC conducted an expansive survey of organizations worldwide to assess their approach to and use of AI.** IDC also conducted extensive interviews with organizations on this topic. The following pages outline its findings and conclusions about how the business of AI will change industries, organizations, and their business processes.

# AI Everywhere

IDC believes that the transition to **AI Everywhere** will continue to see the emergence of AI in ERP systems, enhancing the organization's ability to improve overall performance. This innovation will accelerate processes, optimize decisions, multiply productivity, and extend intelligence to business partners.

These intelligent cloud ERP systems will drive business performance and innovation quickly in this new age. Investing in business AI will allow an organization to analyze vast data sets, produce actionable insights, model future business scenarios, and optimize business processes.



# IDC FutureScape Predictions

“By mid-2025,

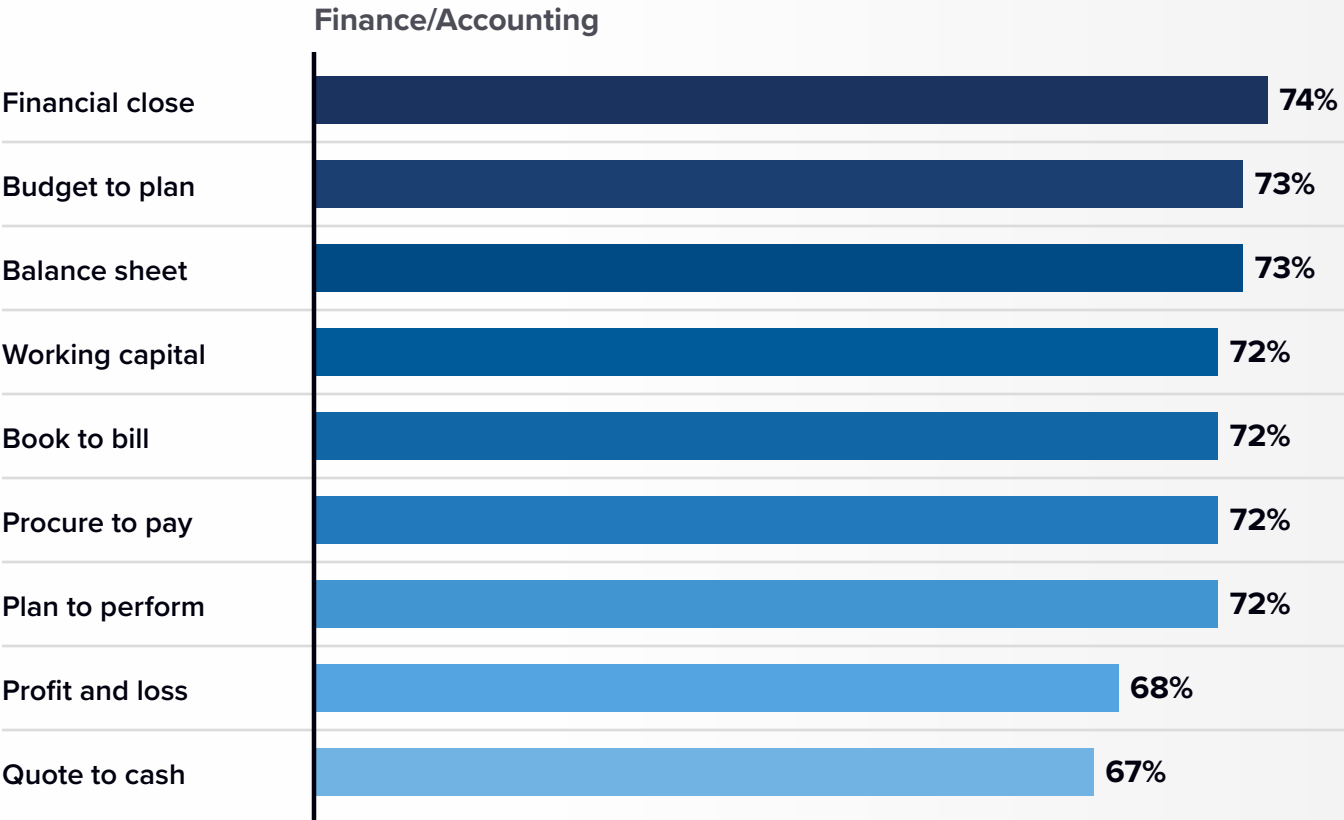


of end users will **leverage AI-infused applications**, moving from systems of record to **systems of intelligent planning**, providing a lens toward better outcomes.”

“By early 2025, organizations **still on legacy systems** will need to **modernize their applications immediately to survive and adapt** to the digital world already surpassing them.”

# Finance and Accounting Recognize the Importance of an AI Strategy

Which of the following best describes how your **organization’s overall AI strategy**, including traditional AI and GenAI, supports/will support your ERP business objectives?



***“GenAI has a role in preparing and indicating insights and analysis.”***

VP Accounting, Retailer

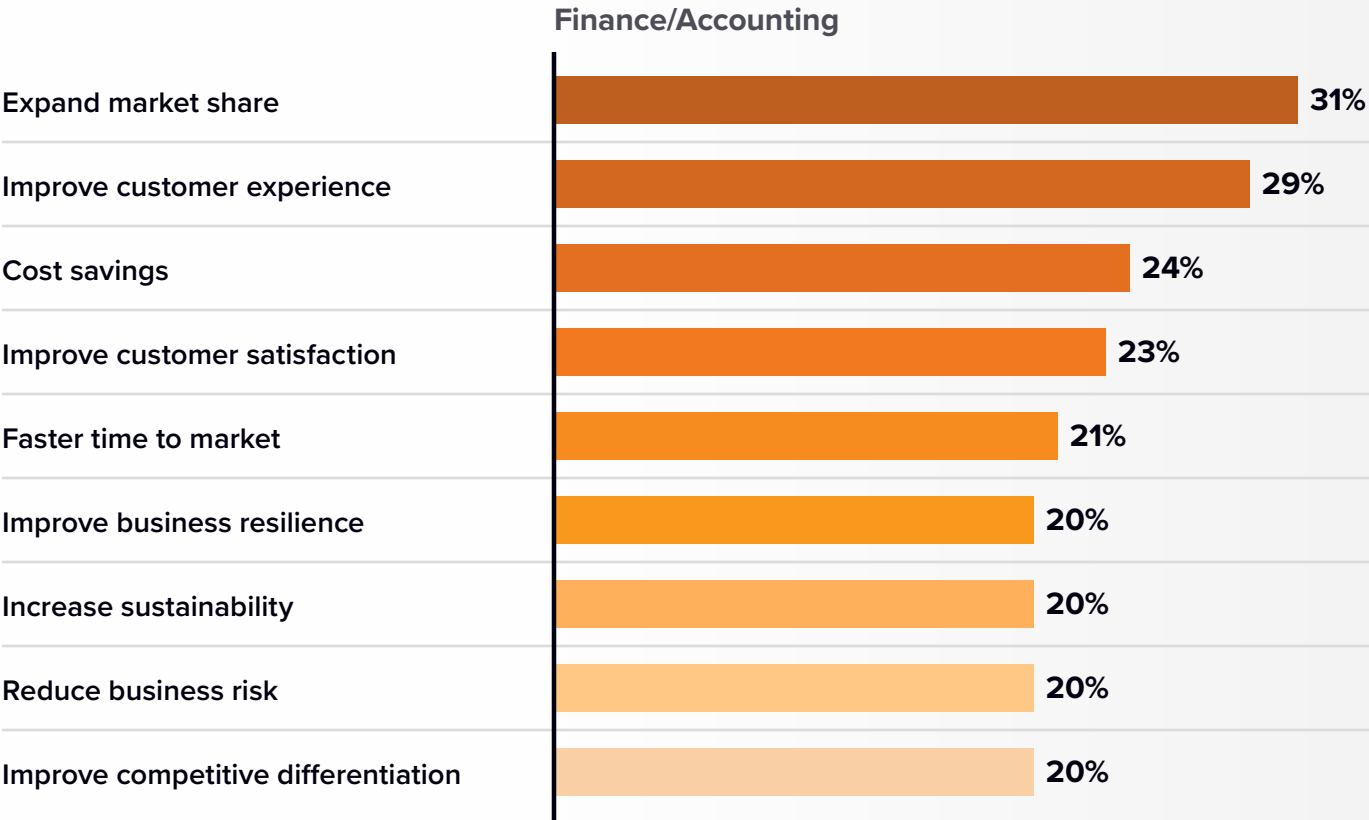


n = 1,205 (all respondents), n = 605 (IT), n = 600 (LOB), n = 132 (finance/accounting), n = 268 (operations), n = 200 (supply chain); Source: IDC’s ERP AI Selling Strategies & Messaging Study, November 2023



# Finance and Accounting Expect Business AI Benefits

Which of the following are the **three most important business outcomes** that your organization is trying to achieve from leveraging AI, including traditional AI and GenAI, for ERP?

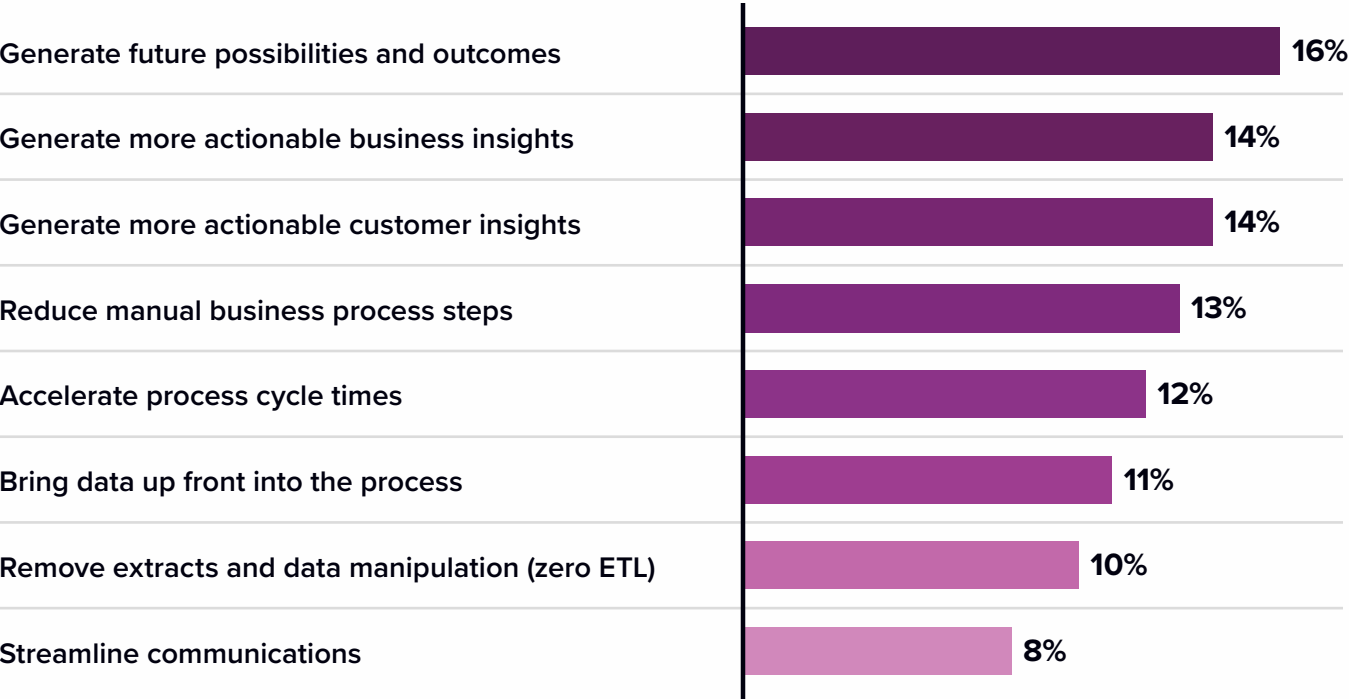


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# Organizations Are Expecting Business Process Changes from GenAI-Powered Applications in the Next 18 Months



## Top Innovative Business Process for GenAI



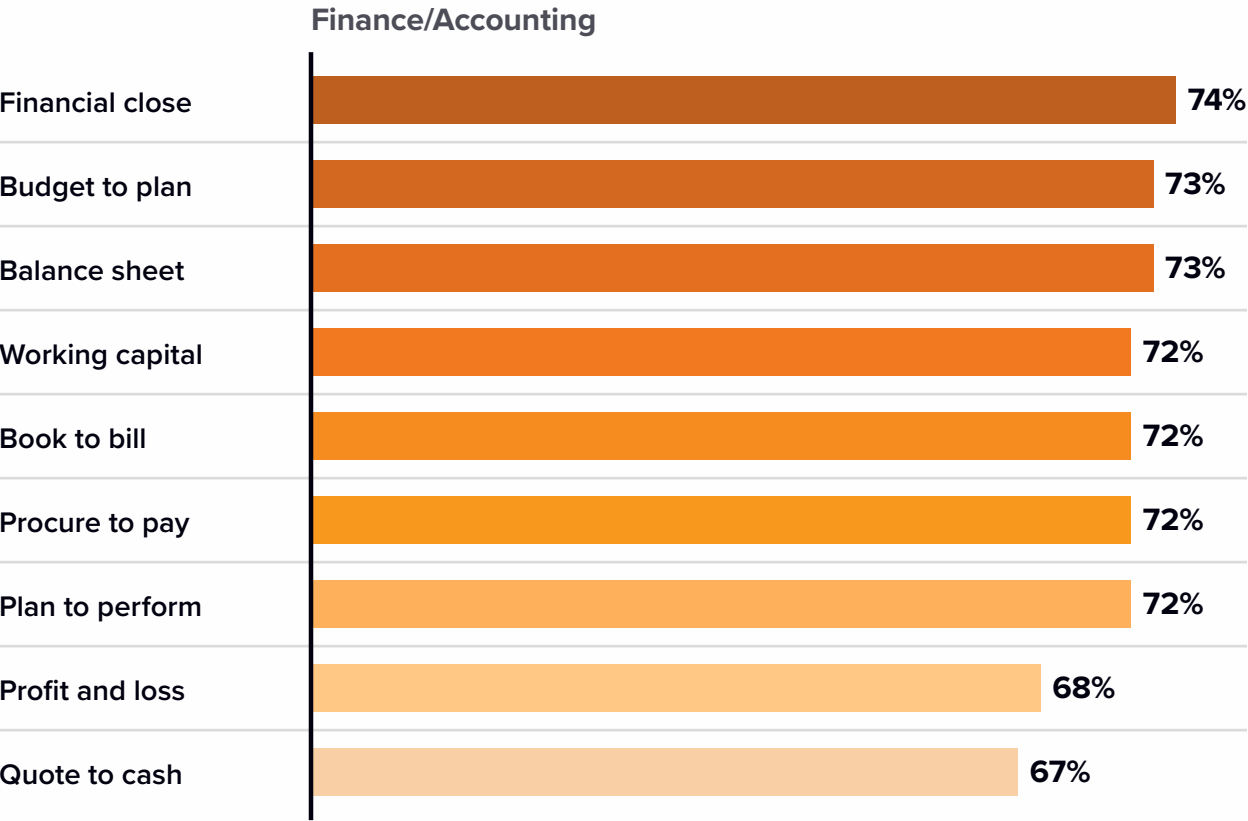
Source: IDC #US51945324, March 2024



# Finance and Accounting Realize that Embedded AI Is Critical to the Business



In your opinion, how important is AI to...?



n = 1,205 (all respondents), n = 605 (IT), n = 600 (LOB), n = 132 (finance/accounting), n = 268 (operations), n = 200 (supply chain);  
Source: IDC's ERP AI Selling Strategies & Messaging Study, November 2023

# Business AI Improves Financial Close Processes

Financial close: How has AI-powered ERP changed the business process and your engagement with it?



n = 1,205 (all respondents), n = 605 (IT), n = 600 (LOB), n = 132 (finance/accounting), n = 268 (operations), n = 200 (supply chain); Source: IDC's ERP AI Selling Strategies & Messaging Study, November 2023

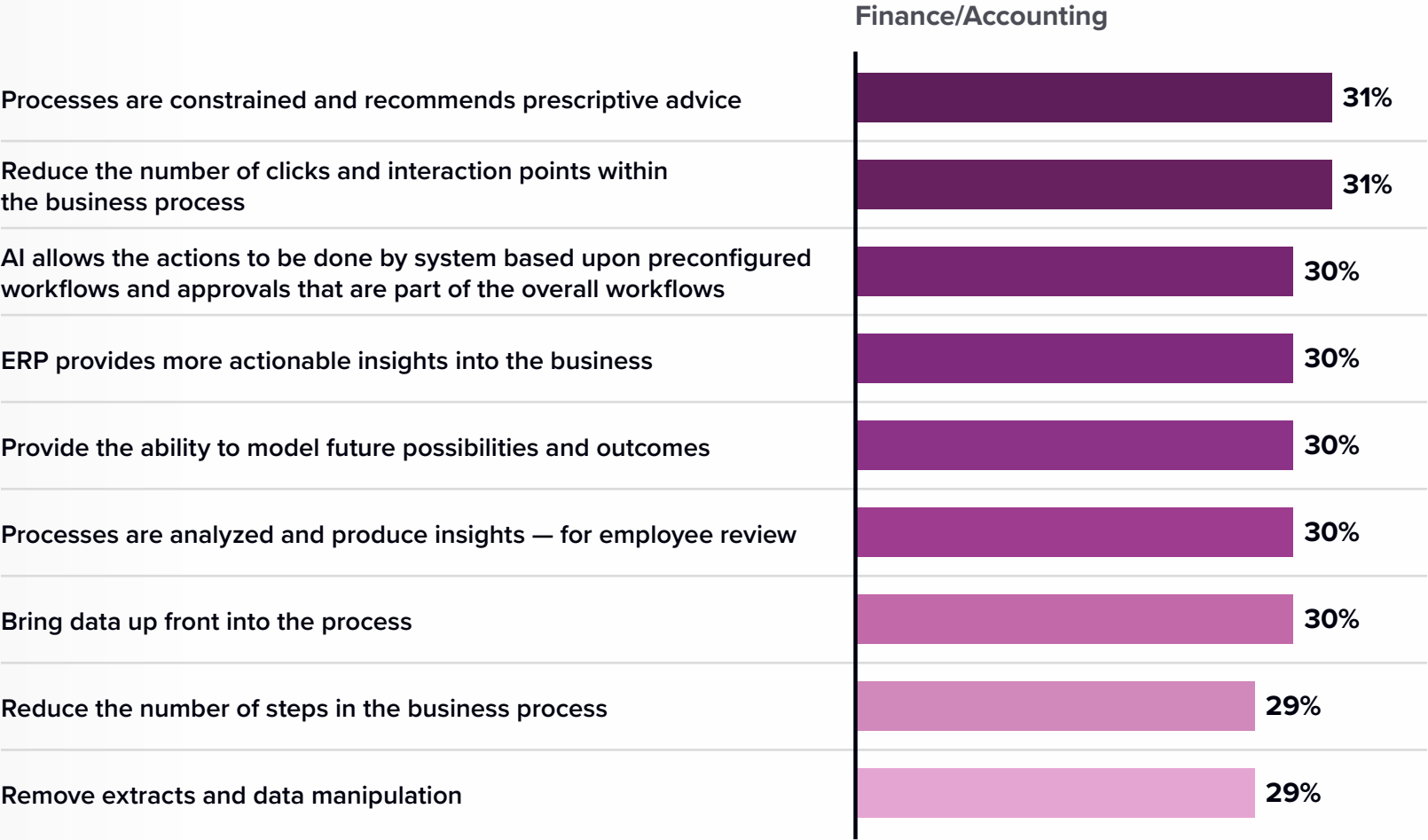


- ✓ Actionable insights
- ✓ Analyze and produce insights
- ✓ Prescriptive advice recommendations
- ✓ System actions by preconfigured workflows and approvals

# Business AI Improves Working Capital Processes



Working capital: How has AI-powered ERP changed the business process and your engagement with it?



n = 153 (all respondents), n = 55 (IT), n = 98 (LOB), n = 21 (finance/accounting), n = 45 (operations), n = 32 (supply chain);  
Source: IDC's Cloud as the Platform for AI Innovation Survey, November 2023



# GenAI Use Case: Cash Flow Forecasting

## Description

GenAI algorithms can analyze historical financial data, market trends, and relevant factors to generate more accurate and granular cash flow forecasts.

By considering multiple variables and complex relationships, GenAI can capture nuanced patterns and provide more precise predictions than traditional forecasting methods.

In addition, GenAI algorithms can detect anomalies, deviations, or patterns that indicate potential cash flow disruptions.

## Business Impact

More accurate forecasts and better cash management overall

## Improved Business Metrics



Cash forecasting accuracy



Time to determine daily cash balance

# GenAI Use Case: Predictive Liquidity Planning

## Description

GenAI can analyze supplier data and help treasurers identify patterns and trends so that they can make better-informed liquidity management decisions based on predictive insights, optimize working capital, and unlock cash to fund growth.

## Business Impact

Improved working capital management

## Improved Business Metrics



Working capital



Debt-to-cash ratio

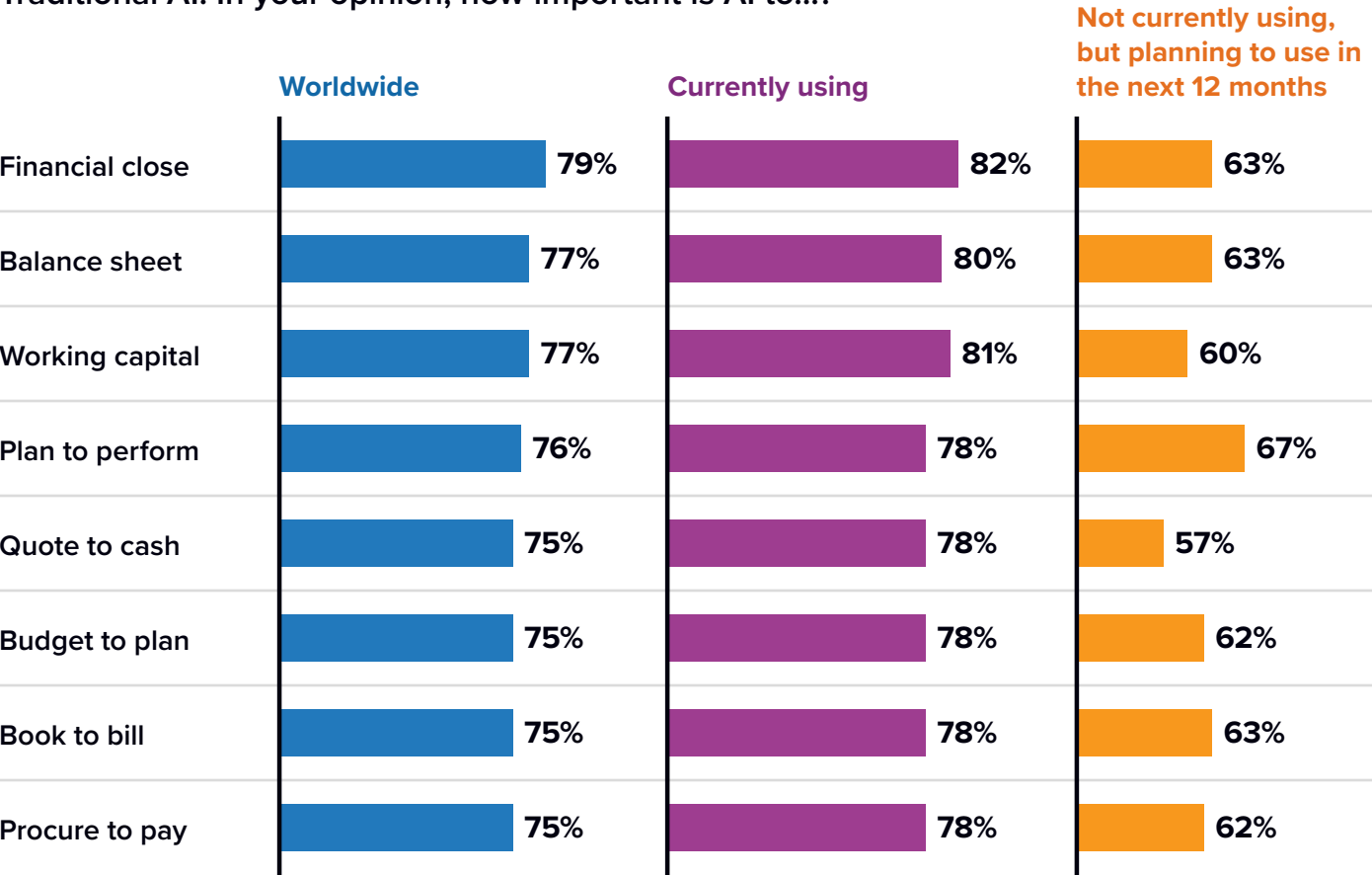


Cash balance

# Embedding AI in Business Processes

Organizations are using embedded AI in a variety of business processes.

Traditional AI: In your opinion, how important is AI to...?






Head of IT and data security for a large global software provider in the healthcare sector (30,000 staff worldwide), United States:

*“We see the biggest opportunities in **automating and speeding up the monthly close and anything where large-scale checking and verification is involved**, including our extensive intercompany accounting and reconciliation.”*




n = 1,205 (all respondents), n = 920 (currently using), n = 285 (not currently using but planning to use in the next 12 months); Source: IDC's *ERP AI Selling Strategies & Messaging Study*, November 2023  
For an accessible version of the data on this page, see [Supplemental Data](#) in the Appendix.






# GenAI Use Case: Accounts Payable

	Description	Business Impact	Improved Business Metrics
Data extraction: Invoices and receipts	Working in tandem with technologies such as OCR and machine learning, GenAI can find and extract patterns in business transaction documents, including purchase orders, invoices, supplier notes, and receipts.	More efficient invoice processing leads to faster payments.	 Invoices processed per FTE   Average cost per invoice
Supplier emails	AP departments are inundated with supplier emails. GenAI can read them and create summaries for AP staff and financial leaders.	AP teams can spend more time on value-added activities by reducing time answering supplier questions.	 Days payable outstanding

# GenAI Use Case: Accounts Receivable

	Description	Business Impact	Improved Business Metrics
Credit decisioning	GenAI can quickly provide more accurate credit decisions by combining structured (supplier payment history) and unstructured (relevant, new, or economic) data at speed and scale.	GenAI can make timely and accurate customer credit decisions to reduce bad debt while maximizing sales opportunities.	 Billing inquiries and dispute resolution  Non-payments and bad debt risk  Days sales outstanding
Customer communication	Using GenAI to offer prompt responses to customer billing and credit inquiries can reduce the burden on customer service reps.	Build customer loyalty while increasing the productivity of the customer service team.	

# GenAI Use Case: Corporate Tax and Audit

	Description	Business Impact	Improved Business Metrics
Digital regulatory assistant	GenAI can provide users with a real-time digital assistant that can quickly summarize complex tax and regulatory announcements so that they are easier to comprehend.	GenAI will result in faster analysis and compliance by reducing the time to summarize and analyze the ever-changing regulatory landscape.	 Compliance cost per incident  Number of violations and complaints  Recognition and resolution time frames
Assess and manage compliance risk	GenAI can mitigate compliance risks by identifying potential anomalies in current contracts, leases, tax filings, and other financial documents.	This reduces the risk of non compliance, penalties, and loss of business reputation.	



# Business AI Is Critical to Finance and Accounting

Finance organizations recognize the critical importance of AI to accelerate processes, optimize decisions, and maximize efficiency, enabling the business to:



**Automate finance processes** for more accurate and on-time reports



**Quickly interact and bring visibility** into other parts of the business



**Make users more efficient** so that they can work on strategic activities



**Improve decision velocity** to make the business more competitive



**Steer the business** with accurate, timely financial insights and analysis



**Enable the entire finance organization** to improve productivity

# Appendix: Supplemental Data

The table in this appendix provides an accessible version of the data for the complex figure in this document. Click “Return to original figure” below this table to get back to the original figure.

SUPPLEMENTAL DATA FROM PAGE 14

Traditional AI: In your opinion, how important is AI to...?

	Worldwide	Currently using	Not currently using, but planning to use in the next 12 months
Financial close	79%	82%	63%
Balance sheet	77%	80%	63%
Working capital	77%	81%	60%
Plan to perform	76%	78%	67%
Quote to cash	75%	78%	57%
Budget to plan	75%	78%	62%
Book to bill	75%	78%	63%
Procure to pay	75%	78%	62%

n = 1,205 (all respondents), n = 920 (currently using), n = 285 (not currently using but planning to use in the next 12 months); Source: IDC’s *ERP AI Selling Strategies & Messaging Study*, November 2023

[Return to original figure](#)

# About the IDC Analyst

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Mickey leads the Enterprise Applications and Strategies research service along with a team of analysts responsible for IDC's coverage of next generation of enterprise applications including digital commerce, employee experience, enterprise asset management and smart facilities, ERP, financial applications, HCM and payroll applications, procurement, professional services automation and related project-based solutions software, supply chain automation, and talent acquisition and strategies. In her role, Mickey and the team advises clients on these intelligent, modern, and modular enterprise applications for businesses of all sizes with an emphasis on the key trends, opportunities, innovation and the IT and Business Buyer concerns, requirements, and buyer behaviors.

[More about Mickey North Rizza](#)



# Message from the Sponsor



## **SAP Business AI and RISE with SAP**

SAP has embedded AI in many of its applications, with more than 24,000 customers already benefiting from SAP Business AI across various scenarios. This is underpinned by the core principles of being relevant, reliable, and responsible. SAP Business AI in RISE with SAP helps you increase performance across a range of financial activities, from payments, expense management, and financial close to invoice management, auditing, forecasting, and more. It helps companies accelerate business processes and empowers end users through personalized experiences and increased efficiency.

[Learn more about SAP Business AI](#)

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