Gartner AI Opportunity Radar: Set Your Enterprise's AI Ambition

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> How far does your enterprise want to go with artificial intelligence? Deciding this is what we call an "AI ambition." Executive leaders and their teams can use the Gartner AI Opportunity Radar to investigate possible use cases and transformational opportunities for their enterprise.

More on This Topic

This is part of 2 in-depth collections of research. See the collections:

- Scenario Guide to AI Essentials for Digital Leaders
- AI Leaders: Maturity Guide for AI Strategy

Overview

Key Findings

- Enterprises can pursue AI opportunistically at first. But, given that AI is much more than just a technology, we recommend that enterprise leaders collectively agree on how AI should be pursued.
- This collective intention is what Gartner calls an "AI ambition." It states if the enterprise intends to go beyond everyday AI productivity gains and seek game-changing impact and disruption, and whether the enterprise is willing to put its AI in front of customers and/or keep it behind the scenes to super-charge operations.
- The Gartner AI Opportunity Radar provides a framework to establish an AI ambition. It helps clients explore and make commitments to AI opportunities in four areas that make up the enterprise: (1) products/services, (2) core capabilities, (3) CX/front office and (4) back office.

Recommendations

Executive leaders should establish their enterprise's AI ambition as soon as possible:

- Start by letting your enterprise continue to experiment. Make sure that pilots and small implementations unearth opportunities enterprisewide, not just in the back and front office.
- Get a pulse on how customers, citizens and partners react to being served by your AI (e.g., a chatbot). How AI impacts your outward perception matters a lot.
- Provide top-down strategic guidance on how AI should support enterprise goals and public/market perception. Letting the enterprise pursue small implementations is fine, but they will eventually need to be reconciled with strategic guidance such as growth goals, AI no-go zones and acceptable risk. AI is more than just a technology. It impacts competitiveness and brand/perception, and can drain investment pools — making it the responsibility of the most senior business leaders.

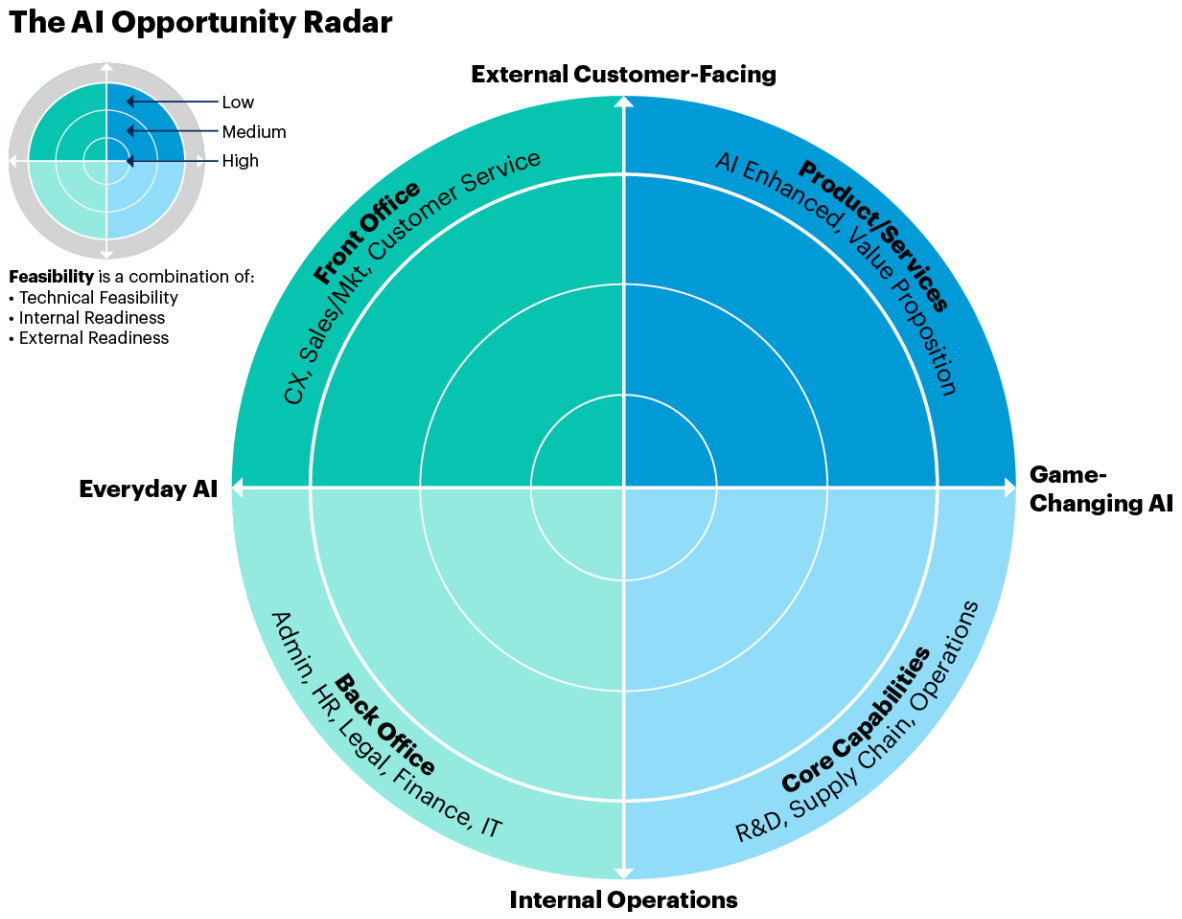
Introduction

In a world where artificial intelligence (AI) can do everything from converse with customers to discover proteins, executive leaders need to determine where they will and will not use AI in their enterprise. This is called their "AI ambition." Mastering AI enterprise fluency starts with a clear scope on the ambition of the AI journey:

- Is the enterprise leveraging AI just to improve its front-/back-end operations, or also to create new products and services?
- How will AI affect competitive posture?
- Will AI be used as a competitive advantage, or will it be used to defend against one?

Executive leaders and their teams must answer as early as possible, revisiting this question frequently as the AI business opportunity landscape changes. Gartner has created a framework to both explore AI opportunities and establish the enterprise's AI ambition (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: The AI Opportunity Radar



Source: Gartner
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Analysis

Navigate the AI Opportunity Radar

The AI Opportunity Radar is made up of a central x-axis that represents the AI impact type (everyday vs. game-changing), a y-axis that represents the zones of an organization in which AI is used (external, customer-facing vs. internal, employee-facing) and four opportunity zones.

X-Axis: Everyday AI vs. Game-Changing AI

Litmus test: Does this primarily improve existing business and operating models, or does it create fundamentally new ones?

Everyday AI is focused on productivity, aiding enterprises to operate faster and more efficiently. This is where your software engineers write code faster, and where marketing generates copy in minutes through generative AI (GenAI) tools. Chatbots handle customer enquiries and HR can get GenAI to write job descriptions. Currently, the everyday AI side of the radar is where 80% of enterprises play. We expect that most enterprises in all industries will use everyday AI … and that is what makes it "everyday" and everywhere.

Technology for this type of AI can essentially be purchased "off the shelf" and leverages the work of large models already trained on public data. This type of AI is unlikely to grant enterprises market differentiation. The reality is that everyday AI will go from dazzling to ordinary with outrageous speed.

Game-changing AI adds creativity, discovery and innovation on top of AI's productivity improvements. It is also applied in core parts of an enterprise (for example, diagnosis in healthcare) or built into products to take them to the next level (for example, autonomous vehicles).

These AI opportunities can result in significant competitive advantage and have a profound customer and societal impact. Think of AI being used to help cure diseases, design incredible machines, teach children and adults, and avoid weather disasters. It's where products, services, business models and even whole industries will be reshaped, created or destroyed. But it comes at the cost, requiring sophisticated AI technologies, environmental impact and custom models that need to be trained on large, tailored sets of proprietary and public data.

Y-Axis: External Customer-Facing vs. Internal Operations

Litmus test: Is the generated artifact first delivered to an employee or asset of the organization or an external stakeholder?

External customer-facing — The upper two opportunity zones are where AI is used directly in customer interactions or embedded in the products and services sold to customers.

Internal operations — The lower two opportunity zones represent enterprises that infuse their internal operations and core capabilities with AI. Here, AI is used behind the scenes by employees.

Internal versus external AI matters, because the latter means putting AI in front of your customers or citizens. That's an important strategic choice that all public and private sector executive leaders must consider.

Four Opportunity Zones

The X and Y axes create four opportunity zones. Establishing your AI ambition means deciding in which of these zones your enterprise will use AI.

Front Office

In the top-left zone, we find opportunities that are customer-facing and lead to everyday AI improvements. Since the launch of ChatGPT in late 2022, the areas that make up the front office (such as marketing, sales and customer service) have been keen to see how GenAI can improve their areas and customer interactions. Here, productivity, creative help and problem solving are the areas where AI will be deployed most, thus supercharging the front office and customer experience (CX).

Key considerations for investing in AI in the front office:

- Is providing the best CX important in your industry, and does AI offer a boost to CXs?
- Are your citizens/customers willing to interact with AI chatbots and receive AI-generated communications?
- Is scaling to handle front-office volume and personalizing content and offers best handled by AI-based automation?

- Will you benefit significantly from using AI to better understand and predict sales demand, customer needs and customer service habits? Are they better than the tools you have today?

> **Octopus Energy**
>
> U.K.-based energy supplier Octopus Energy has been using GenAI to reply to a third of customer emails. According to CEO Greg Jackson, "Emails written by AI delivered 80% customer satisfaction — comfortably better than the 65% achieved by skilled, trained people." [1]

Product/Services

The top-right zone encompasses enterprises that infuse their products/services with AI or enhance their value proposition (as in, customer offer) because of AI. This can include embedding AI into existing products and services (for example, adding AI to a power generator) or creating net new classes of products (such as autonomous ships or virtual health assistants). AI can also be used to change the customer's offer, making what was once expensive very well-priced or even free.

Banks have used, and continue to use, AI to create increasingly better robo-advisors that manage our wealth (often costing less than one-tenth the cost of regular wealth management services). Some aspects of education may become free or near-free with AI.

AI-enabled chatbots for mental health and counseling exemplify both the opportunities and risks of game-changing, customer-facing use cases. Technology vendors have used conventional NLP and new large language models (LLMs) to embed common counseling techniques like cognitive behavioral therapy into a patient chat experience. This has tremendous potential to overcome patient discomfort with seeking care, inequities in access to care and long wait times for getting counseling appointments as demand for services continues to grow. However, putting AI in charge of sensitive and high-impact encounters introduces new challenges, risks and ethical considerations.

Key considerations for investing in AI in products/services/value propositions:

- Will winning in the market require AI-enhanced products and services?
- Will AI-enhanced products and services make "regular" products/services obsolete, or are they simply an adjacent product/service category?

- How will you compete against competitors who launch AI-enhanced products/services?
- Will someone in your industry drastically change the offer on core products/services (e.g., make them free)?

> **T. Rowe Price**
>
> Investment management firm T. Rowe Price has created an AI-enhanced app called Waysaver that helps its employee customers build an emergency savings fund. [2] AI-driven algorithms understand income and spending patterns and determine a daily saving amount. Employees can opt to automatically save the recommended amount. Over 90% of users are actively saving toward goals, and there has been an increase in retirement savings (see 2022 Gartner Eye on Innovation Winners for Financial Services Focused on Apps, AI and APIs).

Core Capabilities

In the bottom-right zone, we find AI-driven core capabilities. These are strategic capabilities that define an enterprise. When AI is employed to improve these core capabilities, it often leads to substantial competitive advantages:

- Healthcare providers diagnosing better with AI
- Banks using AI to underwrite with improved risk positions
- Life sciences using AI to speed up the discovery process of new medicines
- Logistics companies improving forecast accuracy and optimization of their supply chain networks

Every industry has key core capabilities — and boosting them with AI can lead to game-changing results.

Key considerations for investing in AI in core capabilities:

- Can AI turn a core capability into a competitive differentiator (e.g., can it supercharge drug discovery or drastically reduce the cost of manufacturing compared to peers)?
- Is creativity, better science, or the ability to generate large volumes of prototypes important in your industry and can AI help?

- Can AI boost the "clock speed" of your enterprise by accelerating core capabilities (e.g., faster R&D, faster operations, faster recovery/resolution from challenges)?
- Does human error exact a particularly harsh penalty in your core capabilities and can AI augment and help humans with this (e.g., AI visually scanning defects, medical diagnosis/image scan, financial risk/investment decisions)?

> **Swedbank**
>
> Nordic-Baltic banking group Swedbank trained generative adversarial neural networks (GANs) as part of its fraud and money-laundering prevention strategy. Swedbank has developed new solutions to these problems using combinations of deep learning techniques, producing new state-of-the-art solutions for identifying suspicious activities. The approach is to model problems in a semi-supervised fashion using anomaly detection via GANs. [3,4] AI and other analytical approaches have reduced Swedbank's total gross fraud by 55% over the past three years. [5]

Back Office

In the bottom-left zone, we find internal employee usage in everyday AI situations. These are areas that run the business, often called back-office functions, such as finance, HR, legal, IT and other administrative functions. AI opportunities exist to improve productivity by augmenting employees and automating tasks. For example:

- IT coders can employ AI-fueled tools that write code.
- Finance can have AI find fraud, augment the process of closing the books, and run audits.
- Legal can audit for compliance in contracts, or even augment lawyers in writing them.

Key considerations for investing in AI in the back office:

- Are there opportunities for further automation in your internal functions (GenAI assistants for contract drafting, invoice processing) where you can capture increased speed, efficiency and productivity?
- Does enterprise profitability rely heavily on improving productivity and cost in the back office?

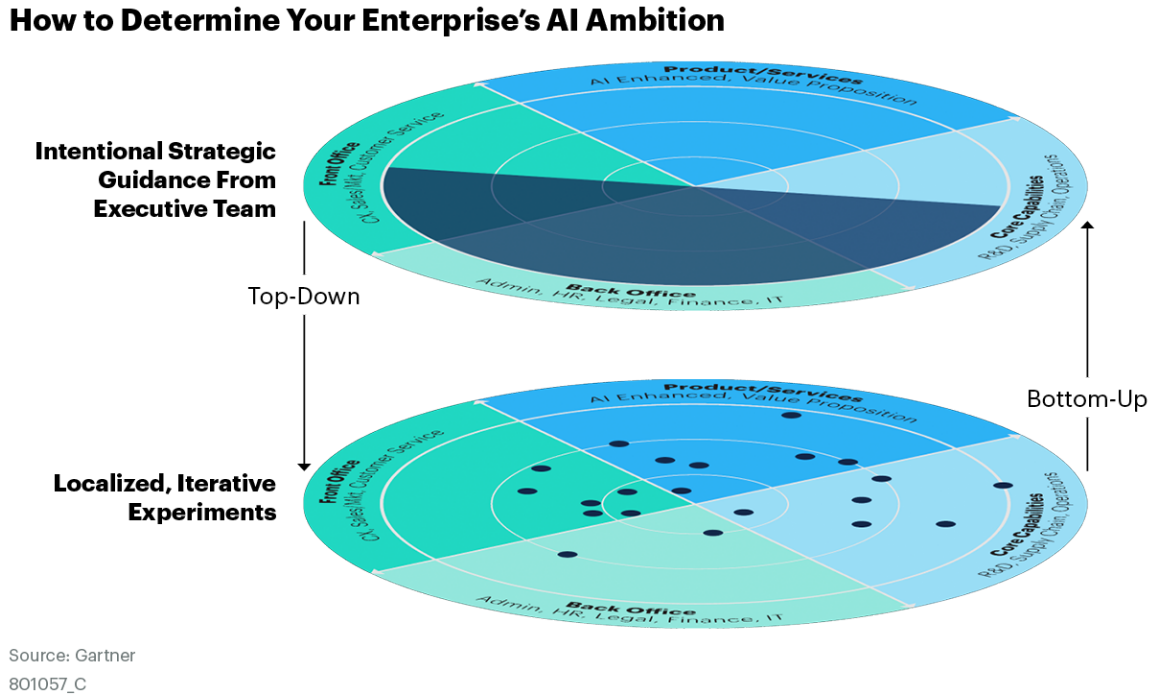
- Is lack of speed or flexibility in the back office negatively affecting all other parts of your enterprise (including the customer/citizen), and can AI help?
- Can AI improve the analytics to detect internal patterns or opportunities, such as electricity/lighting usage or expense management anomalies?

> **Banks and GenAI**
>
> Ally Bank has piloted an AI-powered program that transcribes and summarizes customer service calls, a job previously done manually by contact center representatives. SouthState Bank in Winter Haven, Florida, trained an enterprise version of ChatGPT that allows employees to use it to query on bank policies, draft emails and summarize meetings. [6]

Determine Your Enterprise's AI Ambition

Determining your enterprise's AI ambition starts with your business strategy or your organization's public mandate. This provides the intentional, strategic planning for where AI will be best utilized. However, the nature of AI is also one that is very much experimental. These two approaches should be converged (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: How to Determine Your Enterprise's AI Ambition



Source: Gartner
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Intentional Strategic Planning

AI is not just a productivity tool. It is a critical growth engine that enables enterprises to compete and transform in the medium-to-long term. As such, executive leaders should make decisions on how AI might create new competitive differentiators.

For example, your leadership team may want to use AI to help win the R&D race, or launch AI-enhanced products/services to win in the market. Conversely, your leadership team may declare that the enterprise will lose competitive positioning if you introduce AI-enhanced products/services too early.

Public sector leaders also have the responsibility to explore and decide how AI could transform the way their organization delivers on its public mandate. Some public sector leaders may feel that the technology removes the human touch necessary to fulfill their public mandate. Other public leaders may feel that AI is exactly what's required to deal with the volumes they are facing.

Top-down intentions represent how AI can be used to change your competitive stance or transform public mandate delivery, and form an important part of an AI ambition.

Routine Experimental Discovery

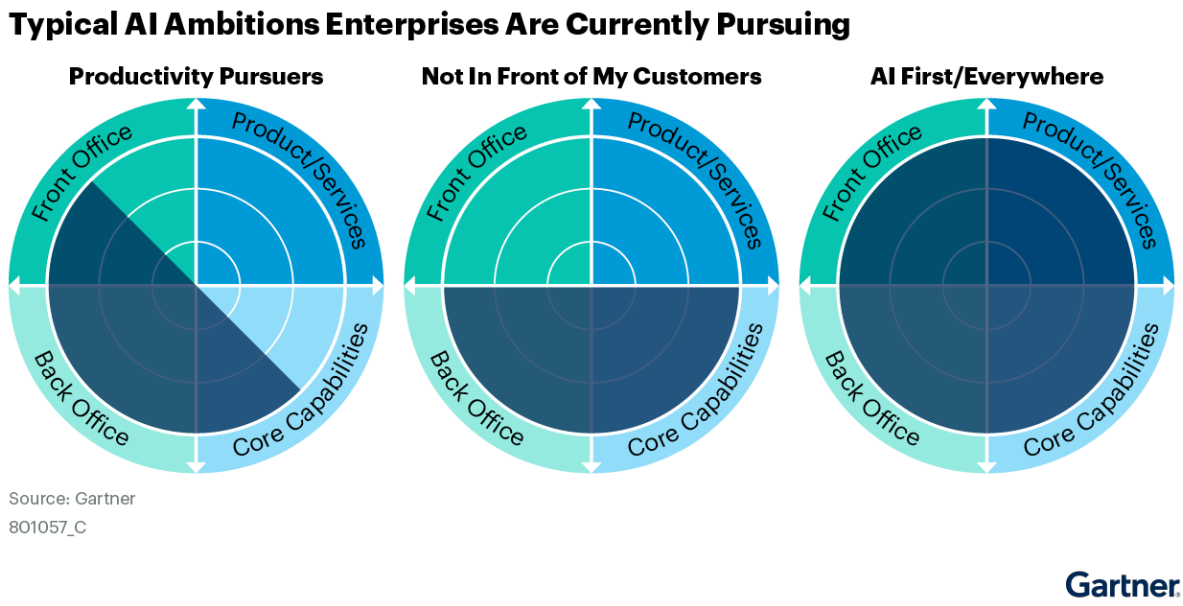
At first, enterprises will experiment with AI to make improvements and solve problems. They will learn from these experiments, leading to interest and greater confidence in trialing AI in multiple other areas. Each department will want to see how AI can help their own area. Most of these AI initiatives will be short term in nature and will seek out more immediate returns.

Collectively, this set of AI initiatives forms a bottom-up perspective, and will likely populate many zones of the AI Opportunity Radar. Some will succeed in creating enterprisewide strategic value — growth, profitability, efficiency — and achieve sufficient scale to the point of informing a more intentional long-term strategy.

It is the combination of these discovery-driven and more intentional strategic planning approaches that helps an enterprise solidify its AI ambition. We expect that most enterprises will naturally start with a discovery-driven approach and then focus, or codify, it with more durable strategic guidance from executive leaders. The AI ambition sets the direction that investment, technology and business models will take.

Figure 3 shows a good way to visualize an AI ambition. These three charts demonstrate typical current enterprise AI ambitions: productivity pursuers, "Not in front of my customers," and AI first and everywhere. The most popular AI ambition type is productivity pursuers — enterprises that mainly seek productivity from AI — but there are many variations (see Executive Pulse: GenAI Initiatives Take Shape Across the Enterprise).

Figure 3: Typical AI Ambitions Enterprises Are Currently Pursuing



Productivity Pursuers

This ambition is for enterprises that perceive AI as a productivity improvement tool to augment and automate. Enterprises with this ambition feel that it is best used in front and back offices but are careful to not use AI in certain critical areas. For example, they don't want AI to be involved in important customer interactions, but will use AI for less-complex interactions. They will also use AI in certain core capability areas like operations and supply chain — mainly for productivity purposes. Their investment appetite is basic, opting to use publicly available AI tools that meet their productivity-centric business case.

Not In Front of My Customers

Some enterprises will make the strategic decision not to play in the top two zones, as having customer-facing AI may not be in line with their values or could damage their brand if their competitive differentiator is, in fact, to provide human interactions ("When you work with us, you work with real humans"). Behind the scenes, however, executive leaders will want to use AI in their internal core capabilities and back office (the bottom two zones).

AI First/Everywhere

Some executive leaders will want their enterprises to leverage AI in all areas. Productivity is not the only goal; AI is also expected to lead to creativity, discovery and innovation internally and in the external interactions and products/services of the enterprise. These leaders have the appetite to invest heavily in AI in both time and money — often seeking customized AI solutions for their competitive differentiators.

Every AI journey is unique, and your enterprise may be a variation or combination of these three example ambitions. We recommend that enterprise leaders declare an AI ambition as soon as possible to guide AI investments and interest that has often been frenetic and dispersed since late 2022.

Populate the AI Opportunity Radar With Use Cases

The AI Opportunity Radar can be used at a high level as shown in Figure 3. Or, maybe an initial team could pursue a handful of use cases in each quadrant. The radar was also designed to be used in a more detailed way to explore many opportunities before even piloting.

Potential opportunities, which we refer to as use cases, can be mapped into each of the four opportunity zones. The radar is designed to put your enterprise at the center, looking for opportunities that are within reach and feasible. The three rings of the radar represent the levels of feasibility and are a combination of three dimensions:

- **Technical feasibility:** The organization's ability to obtain and implement the technology
- **Internal readiness:** The organization's ability and openness to utilize and incorporate the use case
- **External readiness:** The extent to which customers/partners and any external parties are accepting of AI

Combining these three dimensions translates to high, medium and low feasibility rings on the AI Opportunity Radar:

1. **High feasibility, inner ring:**

   - The technology is ready, relatively inexpensive and blends nicely into the existing workflow, making it easy for employees to adopt.
   - These use cases have a low barrier to adoption and are, therefore, a good starting point but won't provide a competitive advantage.

2. **Medium feasibility, middle ring:**

   - The technology is not as mature and often comparatively more expensive.
   - Some enterprises will choose to pursue these because of an early-adopter/fast-follower competitive desire.

3. **Low feasibility, outer ring:**

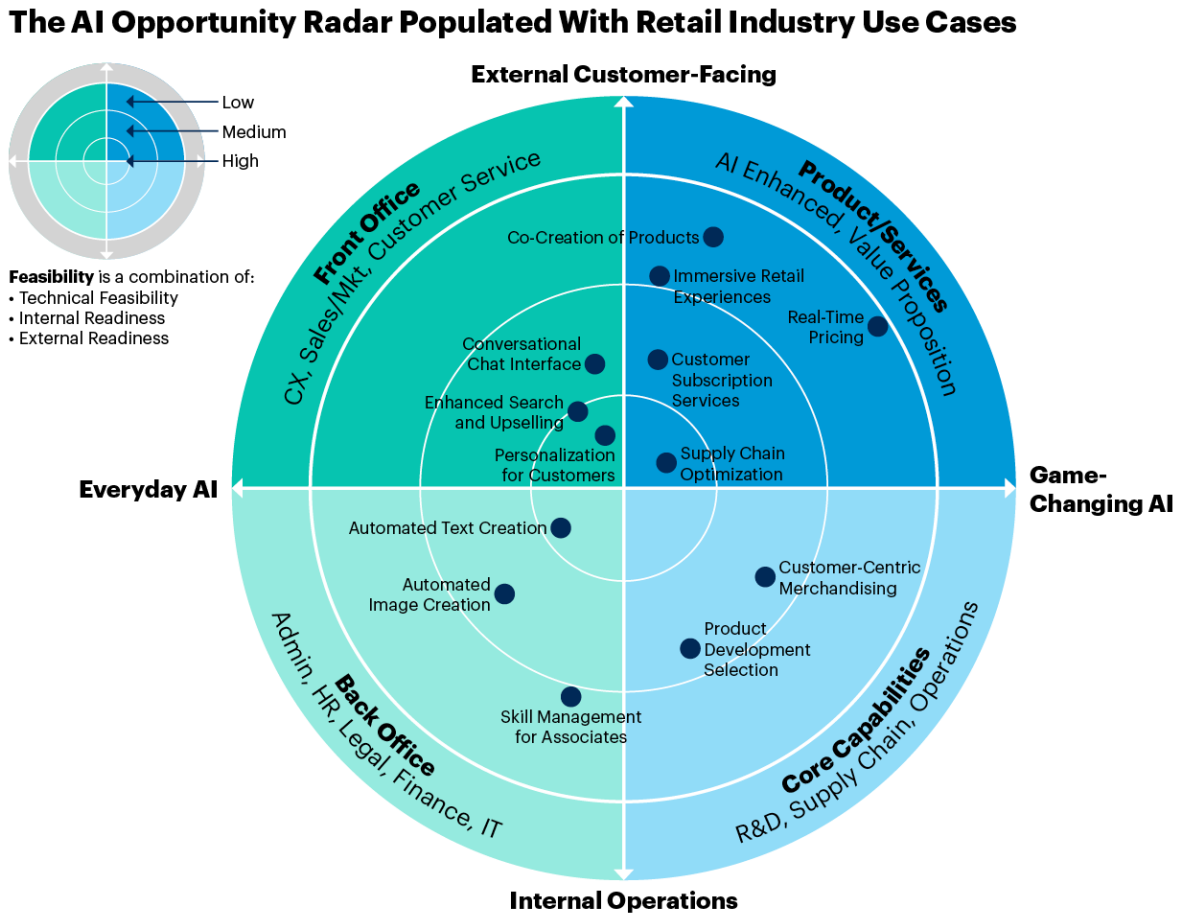
   - The technology is unproven — markets and employees will need much convincing.
   - Competitively aggressive enterprises that want to drastically transform the whole (or parts of the) enterprise and/or disrupt the industry before others will seek to implement a few of these use cases.

Gartner has done extensive research into AI use cases. We've populated the AI Opportunity Radar with use cases for three different industries:

- Retail (see Figure 4)
- Banking (see Figure 5)
- Healthcare (see Figure 6)

Executive leaders' teams can utilize these radars to target specific industry AI use cases (see downloadable attachment for PowerPoint template and more industry radars). Additionally, cross-industry use cases in areas like finance, HR, legal, IT and supply chain are available on Gartner.com. All of these use cases come from our Use-Case Prism collection, and details for each (such as description and feasibility ratings) can be found in the Use-Case Prism reports. For an overview of all the industries, see Use-Case Prisms for Generative AI: A Guide to Emerging Opportunities in Industries.

Figure 4: The AI Opportunity Radar Populated With Retail Industry Use Cases



Source: Gartner
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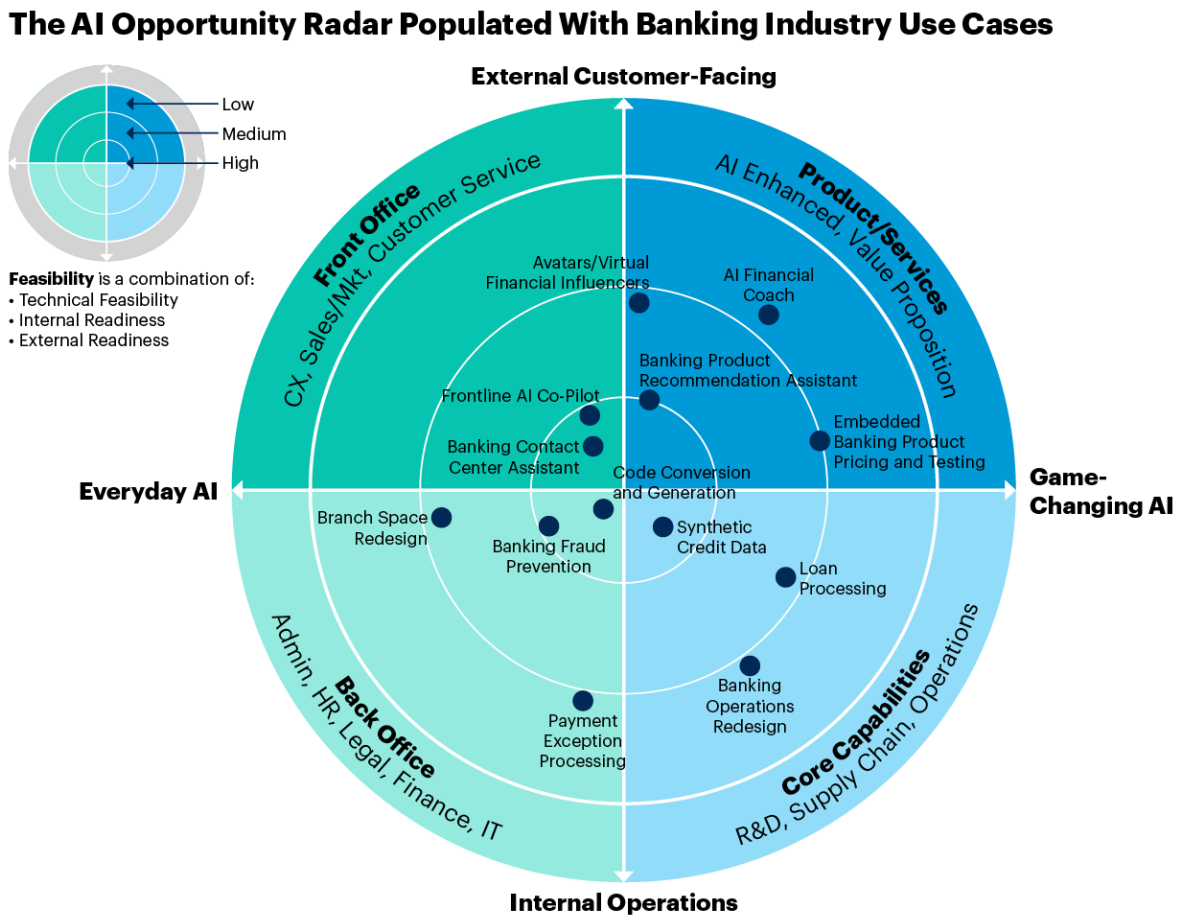
See Use-Case Prism: Generative AI for Retail.

Figure 5: The AI Opportunity Radar Populated With Banking Industry Use Cases



Source: Gartner
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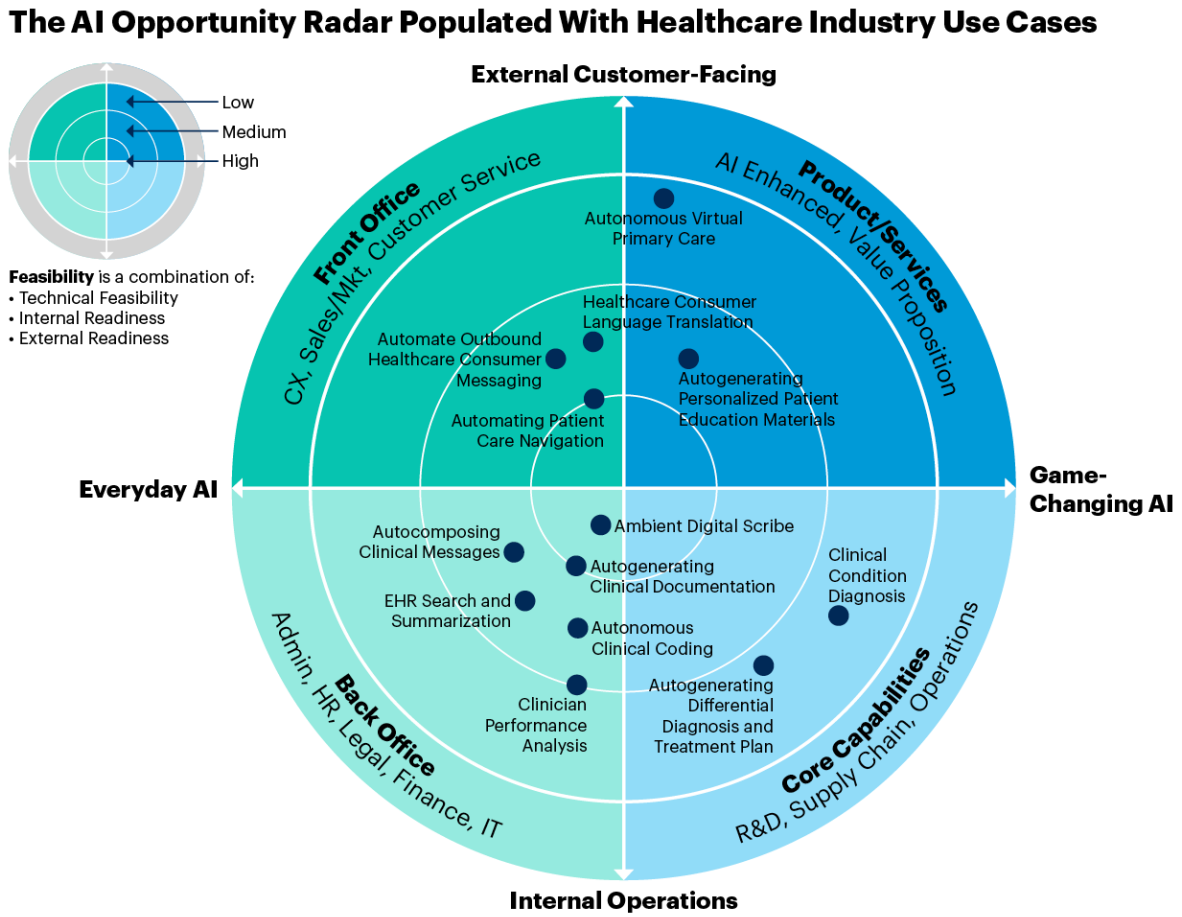
See Use-Case Prism: Generative AI for Banking.

Figure 6: The AI Opportunity Radar Populated With Healthcare Industry Use Cases



Source: Gartner
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See Use-Case Prism: Generative AI for Healthcare Providers.

These are just three AI Opportunity Radar industry examples; this downloadable PowerPoint contains more industry radars and a customizable template to create your own AI Opportunity Radar:

AI Opportunity Radar: Template and Examples by Industry

Evidence

[1] AI Is Doing the Work of 250 People at an Energy Company and Satisfying Customers Better Than Trained Workers, CEO Says, Business Insider.

[2] T. Rowe Price's Waysaver emergency savings app.

[3] Detecting Financial Fraud Using GANs at Swedbank With Hopsworks and NVIDIA GPUs, NVIDIA Developer.

[4] You GAN Do Whatever You Want, DatatechVibe.

[5] Swedbank Goes Beyond SCA to Protect Customers, ACI Worldwide.

[6] How Banks Can Adopt Generative AI, American Banker.

Recommended by the Authors

Some documents may not be available as part of your current Gartner subscription.

Uncovering Artificial Intelligence Business Opportunities in Over 20 Industries and Business Domains

Executive Pulse: GenAI Initiatives Take Shape Across the Enterprise

Toolkit: Discover and Prioritize Your Best AI Use Cases With a Gartner Prism

How to Calculate Business Value and Cost for Generative AI Use Cases

The 3 Business Cases of Generative AI Value