Rackspace Study Reveals AI Leaders Are Scaling Agents at 3x the Rate of Their Peers

June 12, 2025

New research indicates that early adopters with integrated AI strategies are outperforming their peers in terms of productivity, innovation, and business impact

SAN ANTONIO, TX, June 12, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Rackspace Technology (NASDAQ: RXT), a leading hybrid cloud and AI solutions company, today released a global report, The AI Acceleration Gap: Why Some Enterprises are Surging Ahead, revealing a widening divide between organizations leading in AI adoption and those still formulating their strategy. Among the 1,400 IT decision-makers surveyed, just 13% are identified as "AI Leaders" whose organizations are ahead in both AI investment and implementation. Notably, 64% of these leaders report realizing substantial benefits from AI, compared to only 32% of all other respondents. AI Leaders are also three times more likely to be scaling deployments and running AI agents in production.

'AI Leaders', who are defined as those who have embedded AI into their business strategy, are outpacing their peers across every key metric, from enhancing the customer experience and launching new products to boosting employee productivity. They also lead in overall AI readiness, with 95% achieving strategic alignment on AI across the organization, and three-quarters reporting that their workforce has been fully trained to utilize their AI tools and solutions.

"While most organizations are still debating AI adoption, a new class of leaders has moved beyond experimentation to embedding AI directly into business operations - and they're already capturing double the return on investment of their peers," said Srini Koushik, President of AI, Technology and Sustainability at Rackspace Technology. "By weaving AI into their business fabric from the start, these companies have cultivated the institutional knowledge, refined processes, and proven architectures that enable them to scale rapidly while others remain stuck in pilot purgatory."

AI Investments Surging
The report shows that AI investment continues to accelerate, with the average business investment in AI surging nearly 250% from 2024 to 2025, from $2.5 million to $8.7 million. 83% of respondents also expect their organizations to increase their AI investments over the next five years. These investments are being evenly divided between the development of in-house solutions and the adoption of third-party products. The research also shows that new investments are aimed at scaling AI initiatives, with organizations expecting a 33% increase in the average number of AI projects in production by the end of 2025. In addition, two-thirds of respondents anticipate a positive return on their AI investments within the next two years, while an additional 26% expect returns within three to five years.

"Despite economic uncertainty, companies are not pulling back on their investments in AI, in fact, they're doubling down," said Nirmal Ranganathan, CTO, Public Cloud at Rackspace Technology. "AI is no longer a novelty but a transformative force that will have a lasting impact on how businesses operate. These investments reflect growing confidence in AI's ability to help organizations navigate today's complex economic landscape, with use cases spanning customer service, marketing, human resources, and beyond."

Beyond Optimization: The Expanding Role of AI Across the Business
The report also reveals a shift in how organizations perceive AI. It's no longer seen as just a tool for internal optimization and automation, but instead a strategic asset with broader business value. 90% of respondents identified customer experience and productivity as the top AI use case. When measuring the success of AI initiatives, customer experience is the most commonly tracked KPI at 48%, surpassing revenue and profitability. Additionally, the research findings indicate that businesses are increasingly applying AI to enhance their products.

Cybersecurity Plays a Key Role in AI Adoption
Cybersecurity remains a top-three risk factor for AI adoption, consistent with findings from Rackspace's previous AI report. However, this year's data suggests a shift in mindset. Rather than viewing security solely as a risk, more organizations now see AI as a tool to strengthen cybersecurity itself. Cybersecurity was ranked as the most transformative AI application over the next three to five years, with process optimization as a close second. The AI Leaders are addressing cybersecurity challenges by embedding defenses at the source, for example, building security protocols and procedures into AI applications.

Scaling AI Remains a Challenge
Despite the increase in AI deployments, respondents still find that their businesses struggle to scale the technology properly, with 68% of respondents indicating that the implementation and scalability of AI remain challenging. 71% agree that investing in infrastructure is crucial for enabling the scalability and flexibility needed for AI initiatives. Furthermore, across all industries, a majority of respondents say ensuring their AI systems comply with increasingly strict data privacy regulations is a challenge they will have to contend with over the next three to five years. In addition, the AI Leaders are significantly more likely than their peers to leverage hybrid cloud strategies when scaling their initiatives. The report also found that the remaining respondents relied on a mix of different cloud strategies.

AI Leaders Accelerate ROI and Competitive Advantage
AI Leaders are not just maintaining but widening their advantage over other organizations, with 87% viewing AI as a fundamental competitive driver rather than just an automation tool. This gap is significant as two-thirds of the AI Leaders reported substantial benefits from AI in the past year, compared to only one-third of other companies. The faster businesses enter this positive feedback loop of AI-driven efficiency and capability, the greater their potential for exponential growth and sustained return on AI (RoAI).

For the full report, visit https://fair.rackspace.com/lp/2025-ai-research-report/

Survey Methodology:
Commissioned by Rackspace Technology, the survey was conducted by Coleman Parkes Research in March and April 2025. Findings are based on the responses of 1,420 IT decision-makers across manufacturing/logistics, retail, hospitality/travel, energy, healthcare/pharma/biomedical,

government, media/entertainment, and financial service sectors in the Americas, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Most companies and organizations polled have between 1,000 and 10,000 employees and annual revenue between $50 million and $15 billion.

About Foundry for AI by Rackspace (FAIR):
FAIR is a groundbreaking global practice dedicated to advancing business transformation, improving customer experience, increasing the quality of service, and accelerating value creation through the secure and responsible use of AI technologies. FAIR has identified over 500 use cases across multiple industries and is working on numerous industry-leading implementations for our customers across the globe.

About Rackspace Technology:
Rackspace Technology is a leading provider of end-to-end hybrid cloud and AI solutions. We can design, build, and operate our customers' cloud environments across all major technology platforms, irrespective of technology stack or deployment model. We partner with our customers at every stage of their cloud journey, enabling them to modernize applications, build new products, and adopt innovative technologies.

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