

Research report

Enterprise automation index 2025

Trends, benchmarks and insights
on automation and AI readiness

Contents

Executive snapshot	1
Automation is business-critical and delivers results	2
Investment is rising fast	3
Priorities are clear	4
Where progress stalls	5
Automation potential is still untapped	6
Most haven't achieved end-to-end automation	7
Wins and challenges: Industry snapshot	8
Automation perspectives by role	9
AI is here — and many aren't ready	10
Who's doing it right?	11
What's next?	12

Executive snapshot


Who's behind the data:

All data in this report was collected by Redwood Software in partnership with Leger Opinion, a third-party research firm whose panel was used exclusively for data collection. The survey included 285 professionals with direct experience in automation tools and processes, representing industries such as manufacturing, retail and software. From individual contributors to C-level executives, these respondents work with automation every day.

Automation investment is up — but maturity and AI readiness are lagging


68.8%
say automation is mission-critical or very important

Less than
40%
feel prepared for AI-driven automation


61.3%
report underutilization of automation tools



Redwood customers report stronger ROI and higher automation maturity than those who use other automation software.

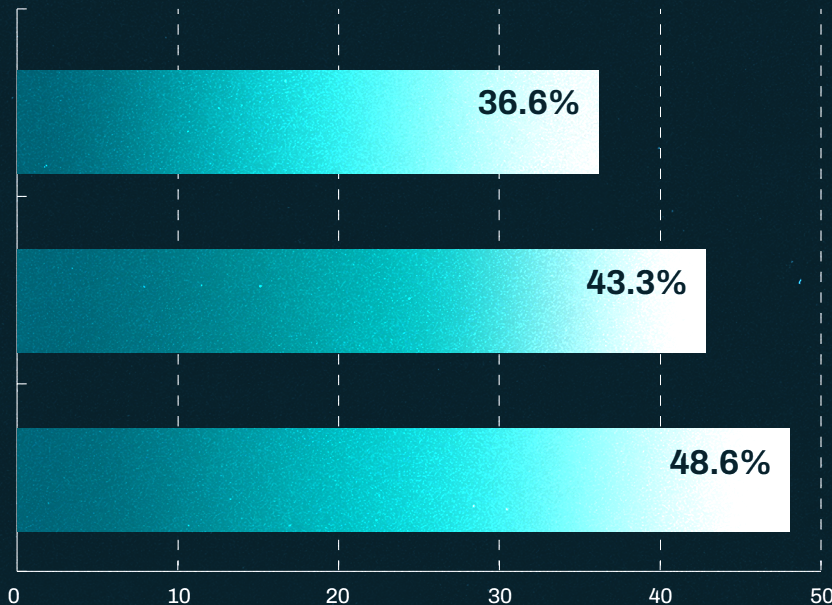
Automation is seen as business-critical ... and it delivers results

Across all industries and roles, **68.8%** say automation is critical to business success. The overall top priority for businesses in 2025 is to reduce costs. Automation helps them achieve this — and more — by significant margins.

Top unexpected benefits of automation

1. Discovery of hidden process inefficiencies
2. Better compliance and audit-readiness
3. Improved cross-functional collaboration

Measurable impact of automation



- 36.6% say automation has **reduced costs** by at least **25%**, and **12.7%** say it's reduced costs by more than 50%.
- 43.3% say automation has **decreased manual workloads** by at least **25%**.
- 48.6% say automation has **increased efficiency** by at least **25%**.

Investment in automation is rising *fast*



73.2%

increased automation
spend over the past year

30%

plan to invest more in
the year ahead

Priorities are clear

- **1. Cost reduction**

Motivated by the range of tangible benefits, enterprise teams are heavily investing in automation across functions.

- **2. Product innovation**

Top 4 areas of automation investment

The leading areas of automation investment align with the most commonly reported automation benefits: lower costs, greater efficiency and reduced manual work.

- **3. Data visibility**

- Automation directly drives these outcomes, and then some.

→ IT operations

→ Customer support

→ Workload automation

→ HR and workforce automation

Adoption is where progress stalls

Despite clear ROI, only **1 in 10** prioritize automation adoption.

What's driving (and delaying) automation adoption

Performance

Driver	Improving efficiency and productivity: 16.6%
Barrier	Complexity of workflows: 19.7%

Costs

Driver	Cost reduction: 15.2%
Barrier	Cost of implementation and maintenance: 11.7%

Manual work

Driver	Reducing human error: 12.2%
Barrier	Lack of skilled personnel/expertise: 8.8%

Workflow agility

Driver	Compliance or regulatory requirements: 9.3%
Barrier	Integration with existing systems: 13.9%

Data accuracy

Driver	Reducing data errors: 12.2%
Barrier	Security and compliance concerns: 13.1%

Strategy

Driver	Competitive pressure or market demands: 7.2%
Barrier	Lack of clear strategy and governance: 11.0%

Organizational readiness

Driver	Business growth or scalability: 13.0%
Barrier	Resistance to change: 9.5%

Takeaway: Adoption — not access — is the real gap. Without a focus on rollout, enablement and scale, the benefits of automation stay siloed.

Automation potential is still untapped

61.3% say their current automation tools are somewhat or greatly underutilized.

73.2%

Increased investment
in automation



68.8%

Perceived automation
as mission-critical



27.5%

Utilized automation
tools fully



<6.0%

Achieved autonomous
automation

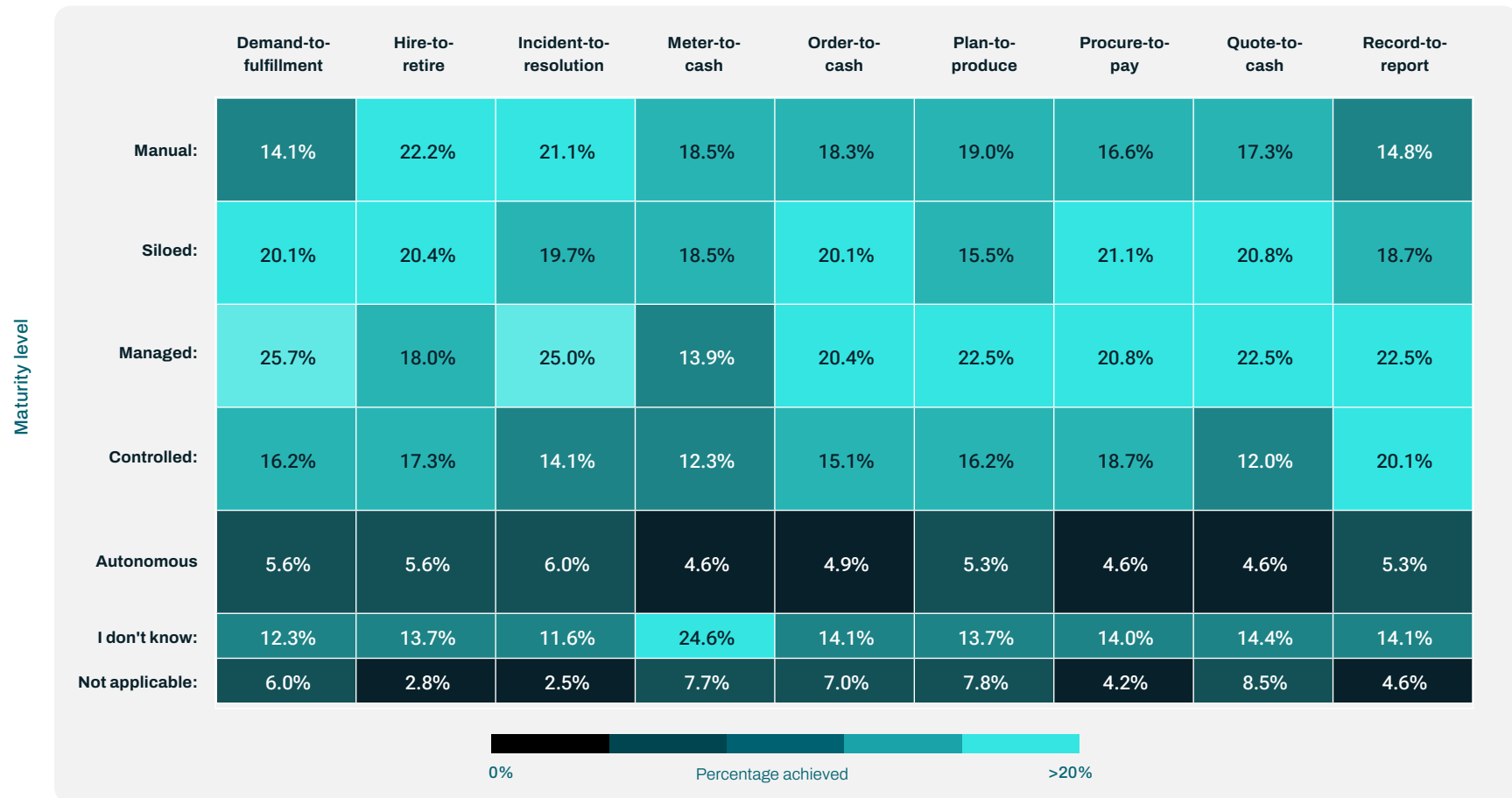


Redwood customers are 1.3x as likely to fully utilize their automation solutions.

Most haven't achieved end-to-end automation

Autonomous process automation is still rare (<6% in all major business processes). Most say their business-critical processes require human oversight.

Automation maturity in core business processes



Takeaway: You can't reduce costs, accelerate innovation or scale data pipelines and AI without modern orchestration.

Automation wins and challenges: An industry snapshot

Sectors are automating at different speeds and seeing distinct benefits.

Finance

64.7%

say automation increased efficiency by 25% or more

The challenge:
Difficulty orchestrating across business functions

Healthcare

66.7%

say automation reduced manual workloads

The challenge:
Legacy systems and cautious adoption hinder utilization

Retail

62%

cite efficiency gains of at least 10%

The challenge: Slow adoption due to lighter technical resourcing

Manufacturing

45.5%

report a 10-25% productivity increase, and 13.6% report over 50%

The challenge: Slower AI adoption due to infrastructure complexity

Software

70.6%

say automation cut costs by at least 25%

The challenge: Orchestration gaps remain despite AI optimism

Automation perspectives by role

C-suite and senior leaders are most likely to call automation mission-critical. Management sees the difficulty of connecting automation to business outcomes, while those who use automation tools daily understand more of the technical challenges.

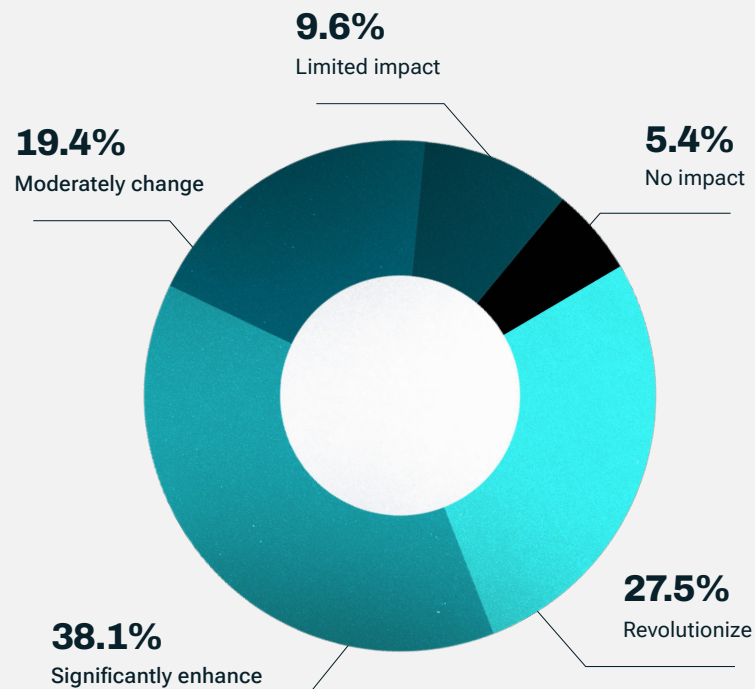
Role	What they see		How can they help
C-suite and senior leaders	Automation is a strategic enabler to AI, innovation and efficiency	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritize automation adoption as a business objective, not an IT task• Sponsor cross-functional orchestration projects• Tie automation maturity to business KPIs
Directors and managers	Acknowledge the importance of automation but face pressure on ROI and implementation	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify high-impact, low-friction automation opportunities• Build cross-team automation roadmaps• Advocate for better tooling and integration support
Team leads and individual contributors	Report the most tactical blockers, workflow complexity and underutilized tools	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share on-the-ground insights about automation pain points with leadership• Participate in pilot programs and onboarding feedback• Push for low-code, user-friendly automation tools

Takeaway: Automation maturity is a team sport. Every role plays a part, from top-down vision to usability.

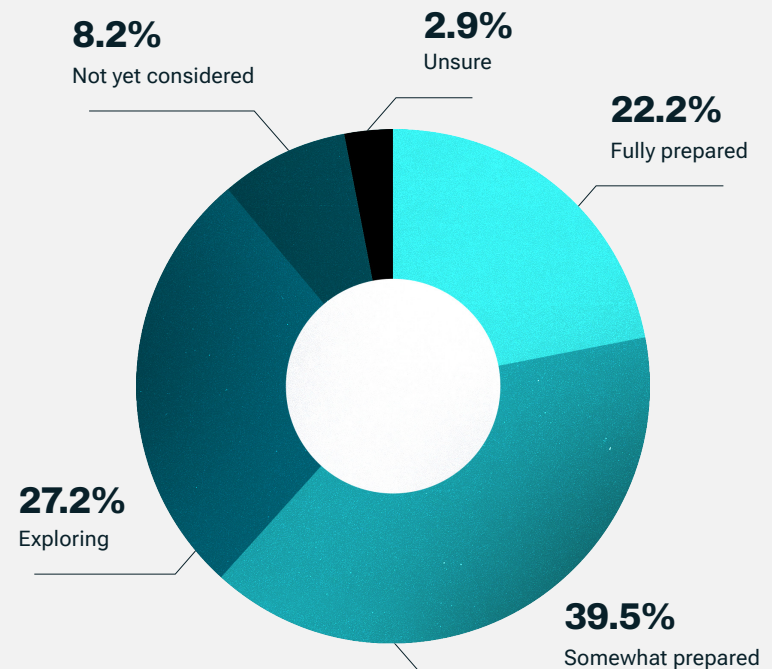
AI is here — and many aren't ready

65.6% believe AI will significantly enhance or revolutionize automation, but nearly 40% do not feel ready to adopt it.

Anticipation of AI's impact on automation



Readiness to adopt AI



Redwood customers are more likely to feel AI-ready and are better positioned to operationalize it.

Who's doing it right?

Redwood Software is the leader in automation fabric solutions, holding a place in automation history with 30+ years of automation expertise. 28% of the Fortune 500 and 40% of the Fortune 50 rely on Redwood to orchestrate their mission-critical processes. Redwood has two of the world's leading technology investors, Vista Equity Partners and Warburg Pincus, behind its mission.



Redwood customers are:

More likely to cut costs by over

50%

with automation

2x

as likely to cut manual
workloads by half

**More
confident**

in their AI readiness

1.6x

as likely to increase efficiency

**More
likely**

to call automation
mission-critical

1.3x

as likely to fully utilize
automation solutions

What's next? It's time for modern orchestration

Most organizations aren't getting the full value from their automation — and they're not ready for AI. The opportunity? Prioritize automation maturity and lay the groundwork for real AI outcomes with orchestration rather than experimentation.

The data is clear

Organizations that use Redwood automation fabric solutions see faster results, higher ROI and greater AI readiness.

[Book a demo](#)

All data represented in this report was gathered by Redwood Software and Leger Opinion, a third party whose panel was used in whole for data collection.

