

GBTEC Global Research Finds Only 1 in 5 Organizations Ready for Automation and AI, Highlighting Process Excellence as the Missing Link

GBTEC's new global research reveals a readiness gap: while 78% of organizations plan major AI and automation initiatives over the next two years, fewer than 20% have the operational foundation to succeed. The report identifies process excellence as the missing key for sustainable transformation and marks the first in GBTEC's global series on AI readiness.

Bochum, Germany, August 28, 2025 – Despite heavy investment in AI and automation, most organizations lack the operational maturity needed for success. GBTEC's newly published landmark research, *The 2025 Process Excellence and AI-Readiness Report*, reveals the critical role of process excellence in enabling successful business transformation powered by automation and AI. Drawing on insights from 600 senior business and operations leaders across ANZ, Europe, and North America, the report identifies challenges, opportunities, and best practices for organizations seeking to thrive in the era of automation and agentic AI.

The research shows that while nearly all organizations are investing in AI and automation, only a minority have the operational foundations necessary to fully realize their transformation ambitions. Less than 20% of organizations have reached the highest level of process maturity, described as "AI-powered," with proactive process management, collaborative AI, and human-machine interaction.

"More and more companies are buying into the concept of process-based transformation – understanding their current state before they start to transform," noted Scott Leddy, Vice President, North America, GBTEC. "But many organizations overlook their processes and are surprised when automation and AI projects don't deliver the expected results."

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Process Excellence as the Missing Foundation

The report identifies six key factors for achieving process excellence:

- Process maturity
- Process governance
- Enterprise architecture alignment
- Integrated governance, risk and compliance
- Automation readiness
- AI enablement

Among these, aligning processes with enterprise architecture stands out as critical. Enterprise architecture refers to the structured framework that connects an organization's business processes with its IT systems and applications, ensuring they work together effectively. In fact, 83% of business and operations leaders agree that enterprise architecture without process alignment is "just expensive guesswork," while 85% say transformation efforts fail without clear, end-to-end process visibility.

AI Ambitions Exceed Operational Readiness

The research also emphasizes the growing importance of AI. Over the next two years, 61% of leaders plan to integrate agentic AI – self-directed, task-aware AI agents – into operations, with 32% aiming to deploy them across end-to-end processes. Yet less than half of organizations currently have processes mature enough for seamless AI integration.

Alexander Trail, Senior Account Executive, Northern Europe, GBTEC, emphasized: "Automation programs that aren't aligned to process management are essentially flying blind. Leaders can only achieve the efficiencies AI promises if their processes are fully documented, visible, and strategically governed."

This report is the first in GBTEC's global series on process excellence and AI readiness, offering organizations insights on sustainable transformation and to maximizing the value of automation and AI.

For further information or to download the full report, please visit <https://www.gbtec.com/whitepaper/global-process-excellence-and-ai-readiness-report-2025/>.

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