



Agentic AI Platforms

The lynchpin for deployment and new
competitive battleground

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Agentic AI is booming

Q: Regardless of overall IT spending plans, in which of the following areas do you expect to most significantly increase spending in 2026?

50%

Organizations say “building customized AI agents to automate business processes”



Why the fuss?

Closing the gap between AI aspiration and reality

34%

Organizations say AI's key value will be in driving business transformation

34%

Organizations say AI's key value will be in driving operational improvements

Vs.

“Over four weeks, we gained a 5,500 hour saving from 1,000 users...”

Using AI assistants is nice, but it only gets you so far.”

Business Change Leader, Local Government



AI Agents promise a vehicle for more lasting value

Commoditization

Productivity use cases

Task productivity and
operational efficiency

Lasting Value

Function-specific use cases

Contextualized
experiences, improved
decision making,
improved functional
effectiveness

Industry-specific use cases

Enabling new
business models,
products or services;
or creating industry-
specific moats



AI AGENTS

Agents bring sustained economic value across use cases

Developing AI moving from Trust Sandbox > Agent communication protocol > Digital Workforce measured on outcomes

1

The “AI assistant” era

What is it

The integration of "Assistive AI" where agents act as sidekicks, performing narrow tasks.

Why it's significant

It serves as the "Trust Sandbox" where the organization validate the accuracy of agentic logic before granting autonomous permissions.

What's happening now

Application vendors have begun to enable in-service AI assistants that can analyze historical data and provide recommended actions.. Vendors are adding reasoning to existing UIs to prove out AI's Chain of Thought to skeptical buyers.

Timing horizon: 0–6 months

2

The “agentic” pivot

What is it

The shift to "Role-Based" agents that own end-to-end workflows , alerting humans for high-value exceptions. Many agents are goal driven cutting across the functions.

Why it's significant

This shifts the value from ‘answering’ or what ‘gets done/used to doing’ to an outcome. The wins multiply with orchestration, reuse and automation at scale.

What's happening now

Leading vendors are adopting the Model Context Protocol (MCP) to ensure their agents can communicate.

Timing horizon: 6–18 months

3

The “autonomous” enterprise

What is it

Agentic orchestration of outcomes that go beyond data access or sharing to autonomously trigger workflows ultimately resulting in resolution, action, and value. Zero Latency....

Why it's significant

The primary buyer shifts entirely to X Systems Architect (XSA), who manages a "digital workforce" rather than a software subscription. Transformational use cases. Distribution shifts to agent marketplaces, connectors, and open protocols.

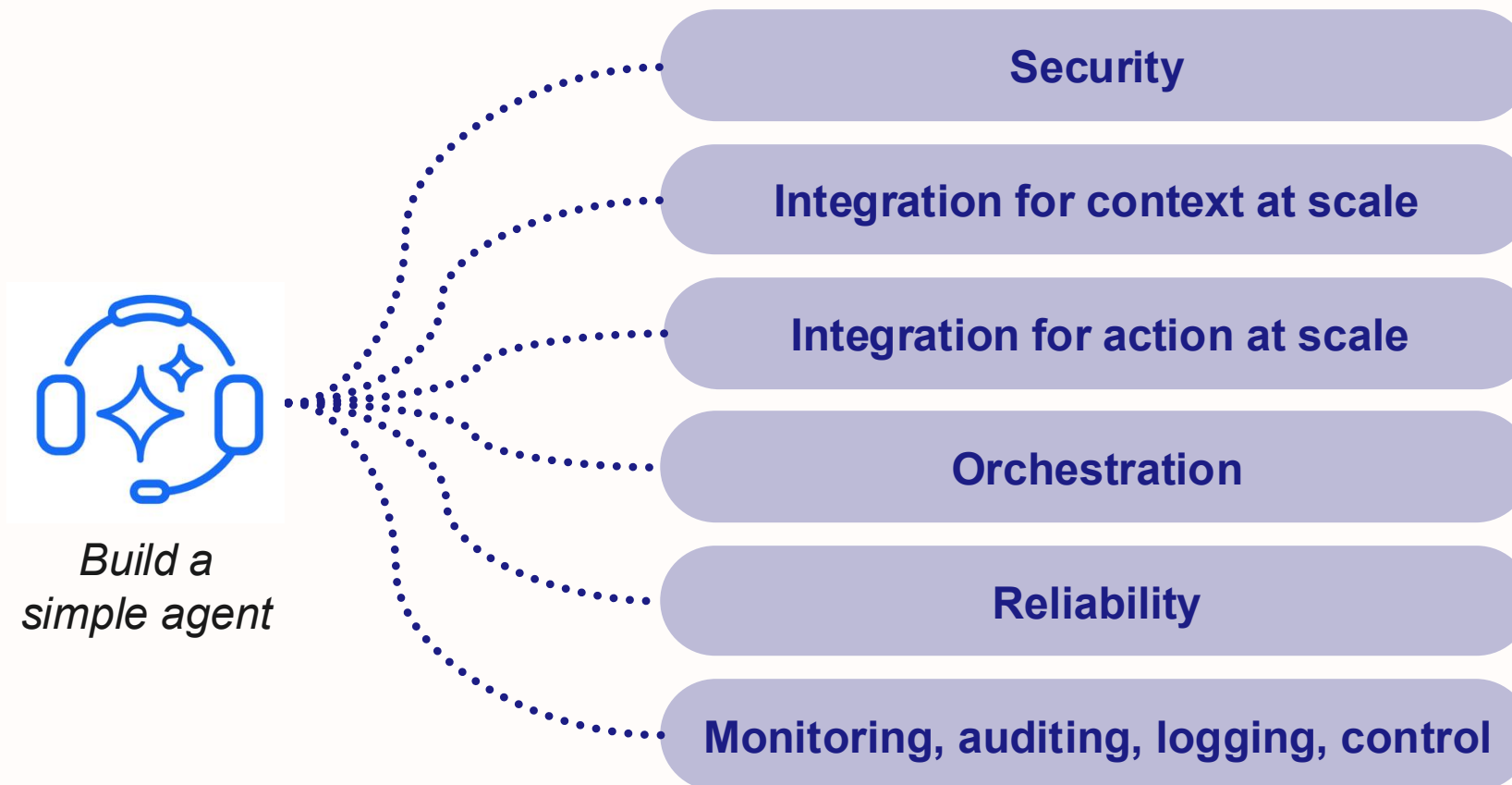
What's happening now

Strategies to restructure 2027 talent/labor strategies to hire "Agent Governors". Large suites position themselves as agent hubs Open connectivity standards (e.g., MCP) accelerate tool discovery & interoperability.

Timing horizon: 18–36 months

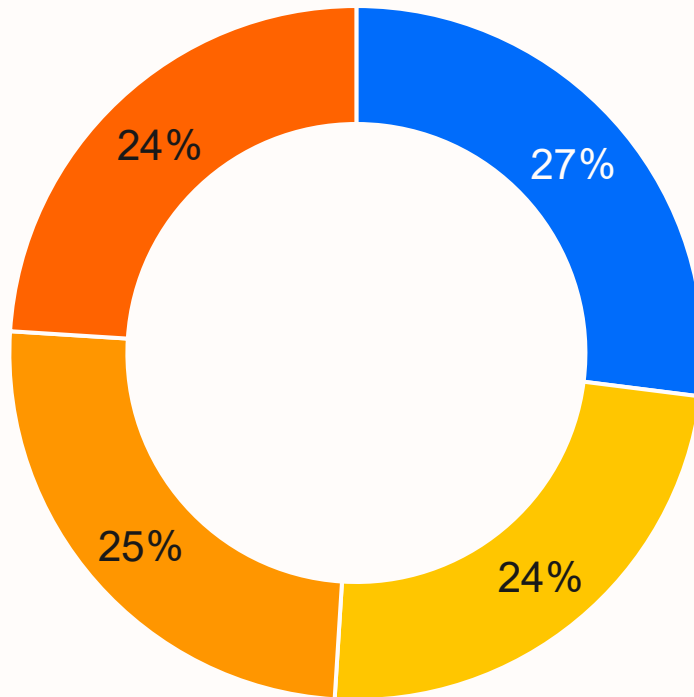


To make a serious impact, AI agents require more than five clicks and a prompt



Multiple pathways to the agentic enterprise

Q: What percentage of the agents your organization plans to use in 2026 are in each of these categories?



- In-app agents embedded directly in the apps we use
- Standalone third-party agents for a specific purpose, but outside of a single app
- Custom-configured agents we build with low-code/no-code agentic AI platforms
- Bespoke agents built / operated by our developers or contractors using agentic AI frameworks



Agentic AI platforms are the foundation for impactful change, regardless of the pathway

BUILD & DEPLOY

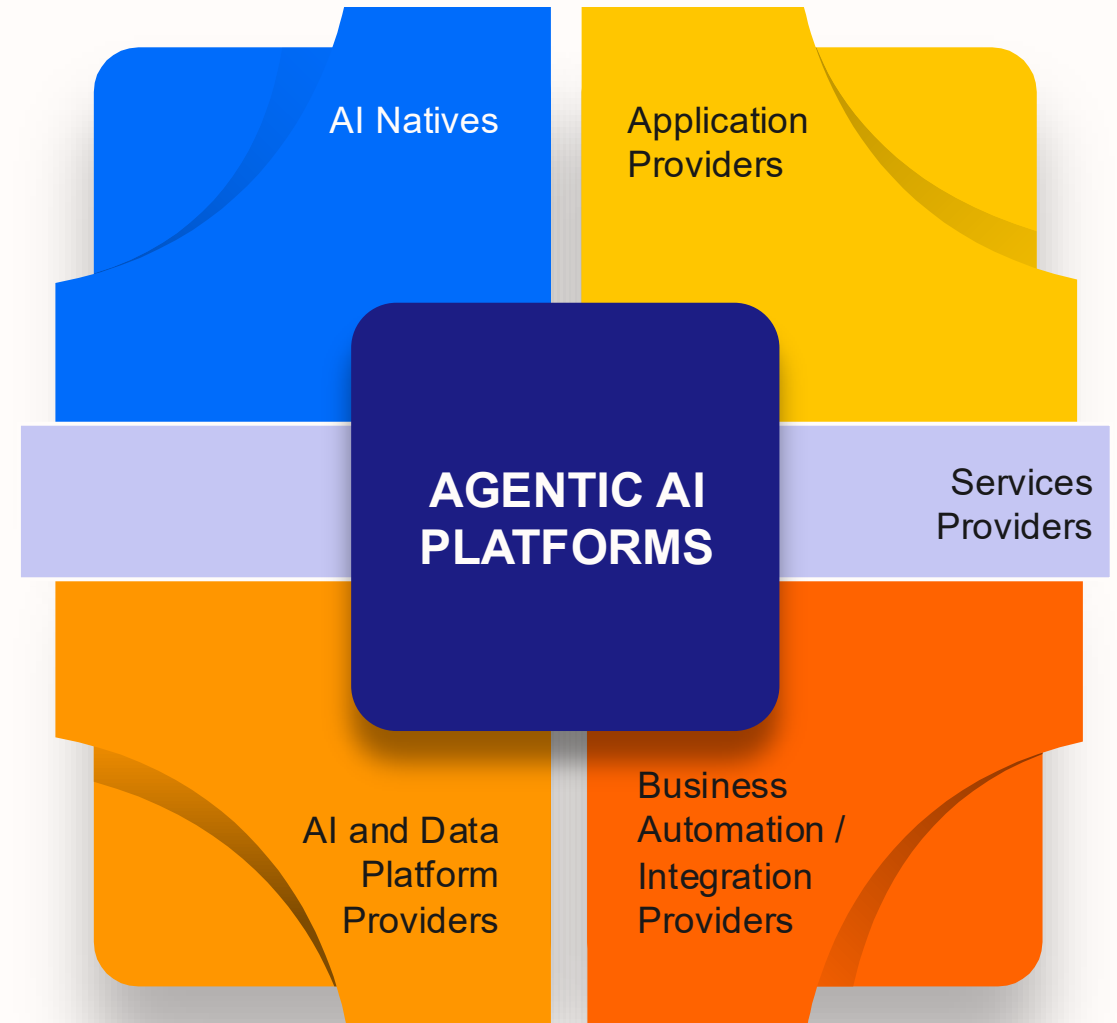
Build, customize and deploy
Integrate with agent tools (API & LLM config)
Model Routing/Orchestration
Context engineering

ORCHESTRATION

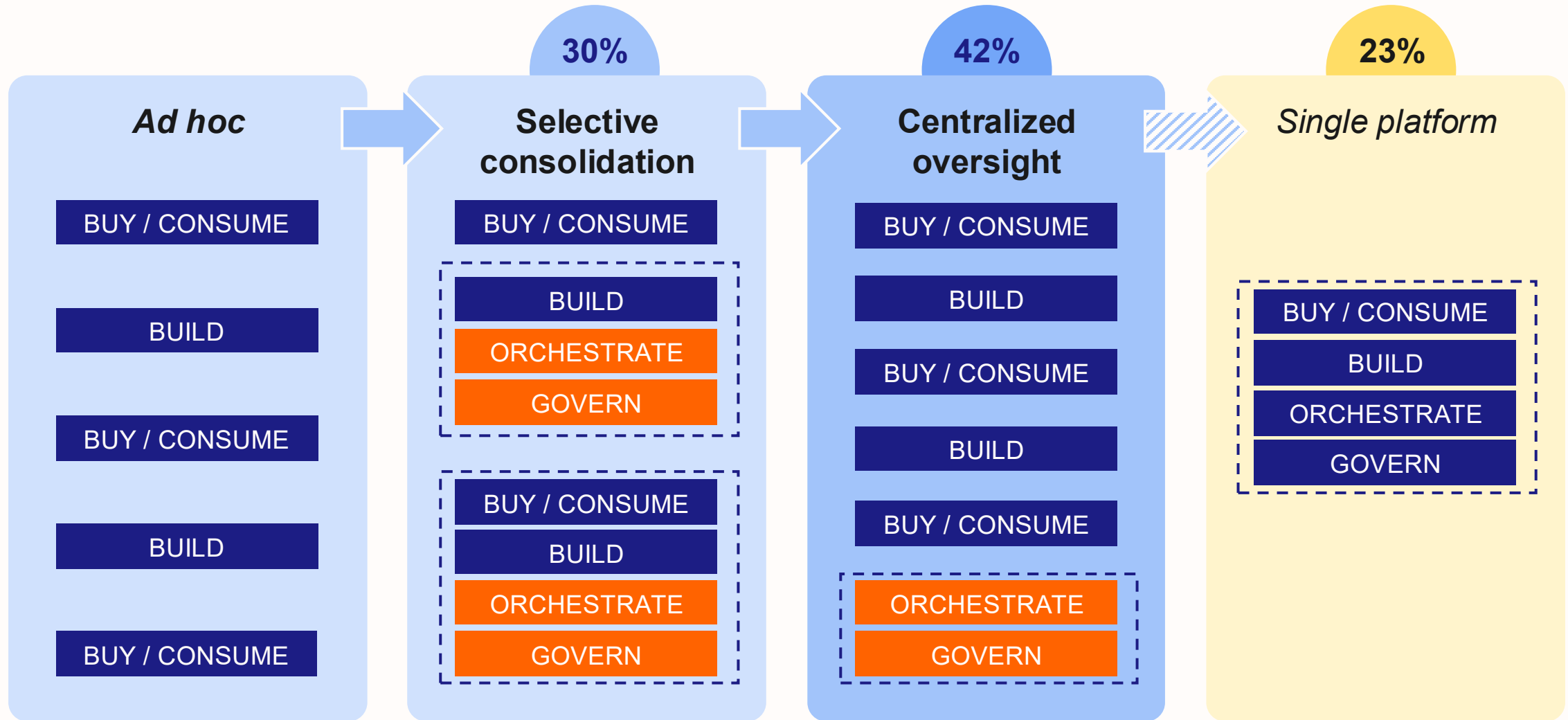
Interoperability (1st party and 3rd party agents)
Multi-agent & human-agent collaboration
Business automation
Workload distribution, management

GOVERNANCE & OPERATIONS

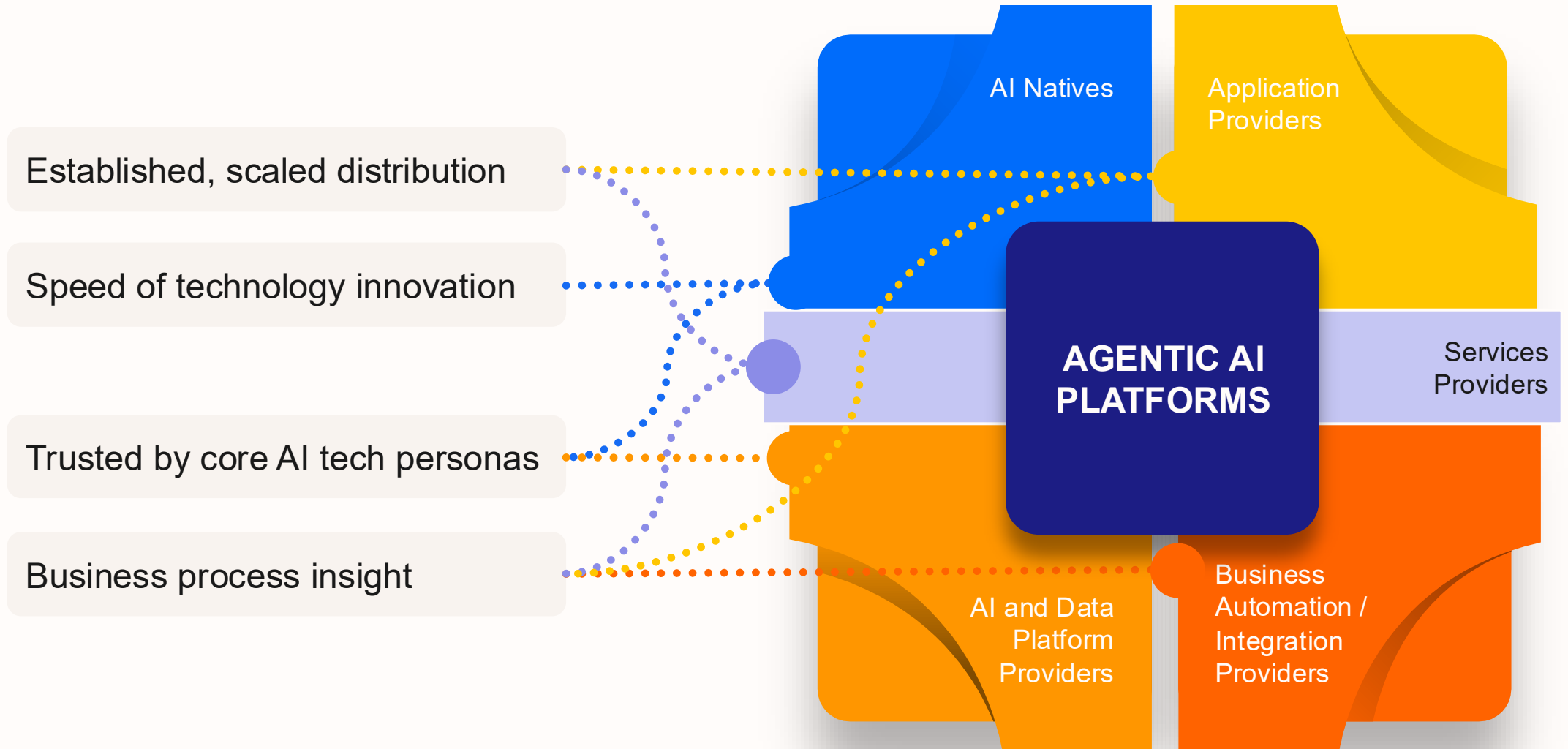
Agentic discovery & lifecycle	Agent Monitoring/evals
Agent Registration	Agentic identity & security
AI Observability	Agentic FinOps



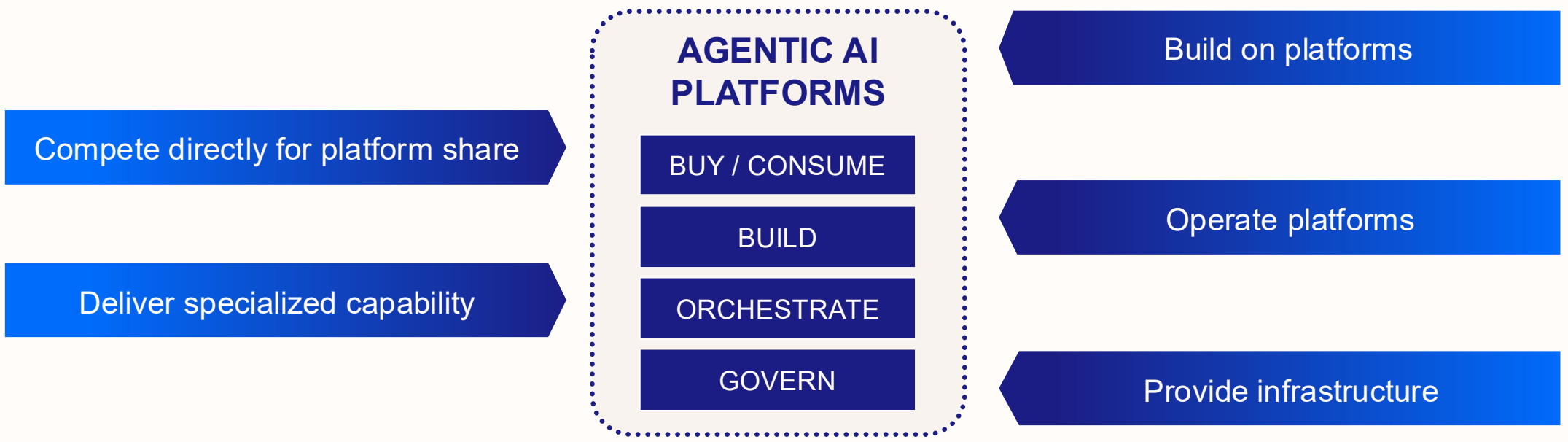
Evolving strategies will create a Battle Royale for “ownership” of orchestration, governance



Different providers bring different strengths



Where will you play in the new agentic AI economy?



How to prepare your customers for the agentic operating model?

Vendors must go beyond deploying AI agents and actively prepare customers to operate them

Topics vendors must educate customers on

Agent-ready operating models and human-agent collaboration

Workflow supervision and exception handling

Data readiness and enterprise knowledge grounding

Cross-application orchestration and API literacy

AI governance, lifecycle management, and guardrails

Ecosystem integration and agent interoperability

Security, identity, and agent permission models

Monitoring, evaluation, and continuous tuning of agents

Process redesign for autonomous workflows

Workforce enablement and change management

68% of companies lack a fully operational AI center of excellence, IDC - Automation, AI, and Agentic AI for FoW: Worldwide Tech Buyer Perspective

56% of IT Executives, 49% HR Executives, and 44% Line of Business leaders agree more in-house training is needed, IDC -Worldwide Future of Work Trends for 2026, Mar 2026

53% of AI POCs never reach production due to lack of adoption frameworks and unified guidelines, IDC -Automation, AI, and Agentic AI for FoW: Worldwide Tech Buyer Perspective, Feb 2026

Bottom Line: Vendors that win the agent era will not only ship agents — they will provide the playbooks and training that enable customers to operate an agent-driven enterprise.



Three key questions

What happens to enterprise software in all this?

→ How are customers going to realize the long-term value of the agentic shift? Who will capture the value?

If I'm not in the platform business, why should I care?



 IDC
The logo icon for IDC, consisting of five horizontal white bars of varying lengths, stacked vertically to form a stylized globe or sphere.

DIRECTIONS

The word "DIRECTIONS" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The letter "O" is replaced by a stylized globe icon, which is a yellow circle with a blue arrow pointing to the right, superimposed over a blue circle.

Related research

Document Title	Document Number	Publication Date
Tech Sector Transformation Series: The Agentic Evolution of Enterprise Applications, 2025	IDC # US53884225	November 2025
The Speed of AI Value Creation in Applications: What is Causing the Delay?	IDC # US54259725	February 2026
Pricing Strategies for Vertical AI Solutions, 2025	IDC # US53051325	December 2025
Building Outcome-Based Pricing Models for Financial Applications: Strategies and Best Practices	IDC # US53801725	October 2025
Is it Time to Replace Your Enterprise Software?	IDC # US53960425	December 2025
IDC FutureScope: Worldwide AI-enabled Enterprise Applications And Agents, 2026	IDC #US53855925	October 2025
AI Isn't Going to "Eat" Software: Agentic AI Needs the Authoritative Data and Rules Inside Enterprise Apps	IDC #US54377825	March 2026
To Be or Not To Be...Controlled: Architecture Design for Enterprises of the Agentic Era	IDC # US54378425	March 2026
Stress Testing the Digital Economy: War in the Middle East and the Global IT Outlook	IDC #US54431326	March 2026
IDC Survey: Goals, Benefits, and Barriers to Agentic AI Adoption in Software Development- Insights from IDC's Agentic Application Development and DevOps Survey	IDC # US54283526	March 2026
AI Adoption Across the DevOps Pipeline	IDC # US53861525	October 2025
CIO Peer Perspective – How Tech Leaders Can Use Agentic AI to Enable the Front Lines of Business	IDC # US53943225	December 2025

