

From AI ambition to measurable ROI.

Why the future of agentic AI demands AI-ready hardware.



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Agentic AI is gaining momentum, but where's the ROI?

Across the enterprise, agentic AI is moving quickly from exploration into implementation, but for IT leaders, adoption is only the beginning.

The bigger question is how to turn that momentum into measurable value. Where should agents be used? What processes can they improve? How can they be governed securely? And how will the business know they are delivering meaningful outcomes?

That value won't come from AI tools alone. It will also depend on the technology foundation around them—the devices, data, security controls and management processes that shape how AI is used every day.

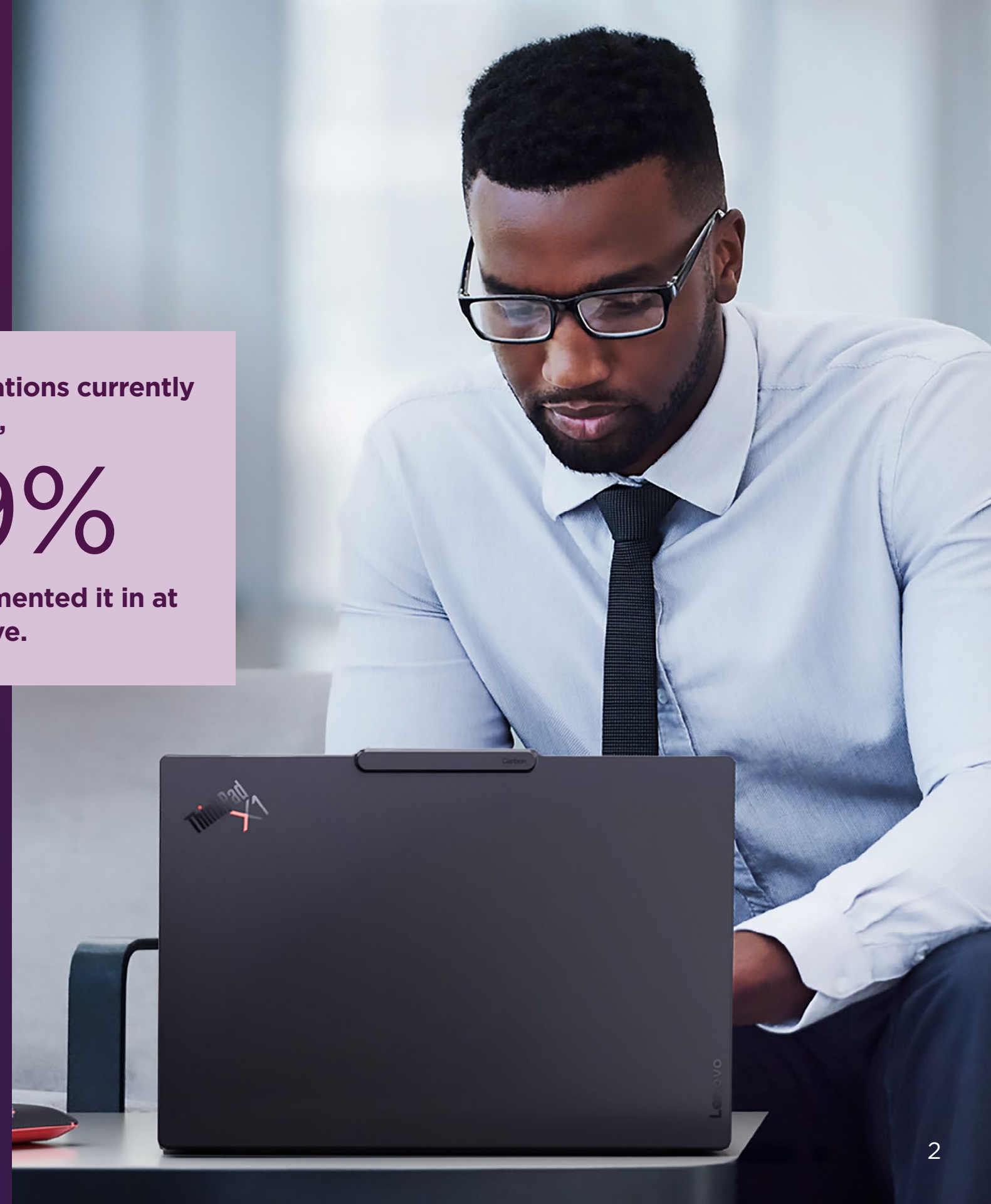
Hardware has a role to play in that foundation, but it's still often overlooked. AI is seen as something that's delivered through the cloud, with devices acting mainly as a way in.

This report explores why that view is changing, and how AI-ready hardware can help enterprises move from agentic AI ambition to measurable ROI.

Among organizations currently using agentic AI,

39%

have fully implemented it in at least one initiative.



Hardware is being overlooked in the AI value chain.

AI is becoming part of everyday work, enabling people to search faster, create content, summarize information, automate tasks and make decisions with more confidence.

Yet, the current experience often reinforces the idea that value lives in the cloud, platform or app—not in the device itself.

In a recent study, ITDMs said at least 70% of their AI solutions are still cloud-based. With so much intelligence delivered through cloud services, browsers and apps, devices are mostly seen as the way in, not as part of how AI is processed, protected or experienced.

Why this perception exists:

AI tools are often browser or app-based

Tools like ChatGPT and Gemini can be accessed from almost any device.

The experience feels device-agnostic

When the same AI tool works across devices, the hardware can feel interchangeable.

AI value is associated with the cloud

Large-scale AI capabilities are seen as coming from cloud platforms, models and services.

Hardware's role is less visible

The device becomes the place where AI is opened, rather than part of how performance, responsiveness and security are enabled.

As a result, hardware has become almost invisible in the AI value chain: essential to access but not always recognized for its role in processing, protection, latency or experience.

However, as agentic AI moves closer to everyday work, a shift is coming.

Agentic AI needs somewhere to act.

Agentic AI doesn't just generate outputs, it connects systems, supports decisions and triggers actions across workflows. Which changes the role of the technology around it.

As AI becomes more embedded in everyday work, enterprises won't need every agentic workflow to run in the same place. Cloud will continue to power large-scale intelligence, while more sensitive, specialized or time-critical tasks can benefit from running closer to the user, on AI-ready devices with dedicated processing and acceleration.

That's the promise of hybrid AI. Not replacing the cloud but giving organizations more flexibility and control over where AI runs, how quickly it responds, how data is handled and how actions are carried out.

Hybrid AI enables IT leaders to decide:

What stays in the cloud

Broad capability and large-scale AI processing.

What moves closer to the user

Smaller, specialized or sensitive workloads.

What runs locally

Tasks where privacy, latency, responsiveness or cost control are critical.

What IT orchestrates

Workload routing across cloud, device and edge based on the task, performance need and data sensitivity.

A simple way to think about it:



Agents

Understand goals, monitor signals and recommend or trigger actions.



Orchestration

Decides what runs in the cloud, on the device, at the edge or across systems.



Execution

Turns AI into action through devices, applications, data, permissions and workflows—supported by the performance, latency and local processing needed for real-time experiences.

For hardware, this creates a new role where devices become more than an access point. They become part of the execution layer, making sure agentic AI is delivered, accelerated, protected, governed and experienced in the flow of work.

The next step is to look at the value AI-ready devices can bring to that shift.

AI-ready hardware turns access into advantage.

Agentic AI needs more than a place to run. It needs a trusted environment where it can act securely, respond quickly and work within the right guardrails.

That's where AI-ready devices can create value. With on-device processing and AI acceleration across CPU, GPU and NPU, they can support workflows where privacy, responsiveness, personalization or real-time execution are more critical.



How it creates value:

1 A TRUSTED AI LAYER

For sensitive data, governed workflows and clearer guardrails.

- Keeps sensitive work closer to the user
- Supports hardware-level protections
- Gives you more control over where agents what they can access and when approval is needed

2 EMBEDDED AI EXPERIENCES

For more native, responsive and personal ways to work with AI.

- Supports workflows that need speed, context or local responsiveness
- Uses on-device processing to help reduce latency for time-critical tasks
- Designed with the device in mind
- Available even when connectivity is limited
- Can be shaped by device usage patterns and tasks

3 HYBRID COMPUTE ORCHESTRATION

For matching each workload to the right environment.

- Uses cloud for scale and local AI for focused, sensitive work or time-critical work
- Helps IT balance privacy, latency, performance and cost
- Supports governance through clearer workload decisions
- Allows AI acceleration to be used where it can improve responsiveness and efficiency

The business case

AI-ready hardware can help reduce risk, increase control over what agents can access and do, manage costs by matching workloads to the right environment and support governance through clearer policies, permissions and oversight. It also gives IT more ways to improve performance, reduce latency and support real-time AI experiences.

The next step is putting that to work in a practical, measurable use case.

How AI PC deployment brings agentic AI into action.

Deploying AI PCs is a practical place to start, to see how agentic AI, cloud intelligence and AI-ready hardware can work together.

An agentic workflow could help you connect the right employee to the right AI PC, setup, applications, access, policies and support, with the cloud, device and IT systems each playing a role.

What this could look like:



In the cloud. The agent can review employee role, device standards, software requirements, security policies and fleet data.



On the device. The AI PC can support local setup, security checks, app readiness, user-specific configuration and responsive AI experiences.



Across IT systems. Orchestration can help decide what can be automated, what needs approval and what should be escalated to IT.

Where hardware changes the outcome

- Faster onboarding through responsive local setup and configuration
- Improved consistency across device setup, applications and access
- Stronger control through device-level security checks and policy enforcement to mitigate risk
- Reduced IT overhead by automating routine setup and escalation steps
- Lower friction for employees from day one

This is where the Agents—Orchestration—Execution model becomes practical. The agent recommends, orchestration decides what happens next and the AI PC helps turn that decision into a secure, consistent employee experience.

So, how can Lenovo and Intel®, help you turn this opportunity into measurable value?



Lenovo and Intel bring that advantage to life.

Agentic AI creates value when it can act securely, consistently and at scale. Lenovo devices and solutions, powered by Intel®, help create the foundation for that—bringing together AI-ready performance, endpoint protection, manageability and ecosystem support.



Here's how to address the challenges you're facing:



Challenge: AI needs to work across the enterprise

Lenovo + Intel response: Intel® OpenVINO™ and a growing ISV ecosystem help organizations take advantage of optimized AI models and applications.

Outcome: A more practical path to scaling AI-enabled workflows.



Challenge: Workflows need stronger protection

Lenovo + Intel response: Windows 11 Pro, Lenovo ThinkShield and Intel security capabilities help protect devices, data and workflows.

Outcome: Stronger endpoint protection as agentic AI accesses more systems and information.



Challenge: IT needs governance and control

Lenovo + Intel response: Lenovo device management enables IT teams to secure, support and govern AI-ready devices across the business.

Outcome: More consistent control over how AI-ready devices are deployed, managed and supported.



Challenge: Agents need to act quickly

Lenovo + Intel response: AI processing across CPU, GPU and NPU helps support the right workload on the right compute engine.

Outcome: More responsive AI experiences closer to the user.



With Lenovo AI PCs, such as the ThinkPad X1 Carbon Aura Edition powered by Intel® Core™ Ultra X7 Series 3 processor with Intel vPro®, you can turn AI-ready hardware into a practical foundation for agentic AI.

That's the power of Lenovo with Intel Inside®

Scaling AI-ready devices across the business.

With the right foundation in place, you can start turning AI-ready hardware into everyday value.

Lenovo and Intel equip you with everything you need to connect devices, deployment, security, manageability and agentic AI use cases into a practical path forward—helping you move from AI-ready PCs to AI-ready work at scale.

Equip employees from day one	Configure around the workflow	Apply security and policy controls
Connect each employee to the AI-ready PC, setup, applications and access they need to work productively from the start.	Align devices, applications and policies to the way each employee works, so agentic AI can support relevant, role-specific tasks.	Reduce risk by putting the right protections, permissions and approval processes around the data and systems agents may access.
Support and govern at scale	Measure business impact	
Give IT teams the tools to update, manage and govern AI-ready devices across the business.	Use deployment as a practical starting point to reduce friction, improve consistency, identify high-value use cases and prove business value at speed.	

Make AI PCs part of your agentic AI strategy.

Agentic AI is moving quickly, but lasting ROI won't come from adoption alone. It'll come from building the right foundation around it.

That means thinking about the technology, processes and controls that make AI work in the real world:



Devices that can support more secure, responsive and personal AI experiences.



Deployment processes that connect the right people to the right tools from day one.



Security controls that help protect sensitive or time-critical work.



Management tools that give IT teams more control over how AI is delivered and supported.



With Lenovo and Intel, enterprises can put AI-ready PCs at the center of a more practical agentic AI strategy—one built to support secure action, stronger control and measurable ROI. That's the power of Lenovo with Intel Inside®.

Ready to realize value from agentic AI?

Explore how Lenovo Agentic AI can help you move from early use cases to scalable AI outcomes, with devices, solutions and services built to prove value faster.

[Get started](#)



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