

More Content, Less Control: How AI Is Rewriting The Rules Of The Digital Workplace

A Growing Gap Between The Promise And Reality Of AI

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Project Team:

Ana Brzezinska,
Principal Market Impact Consultant

Contributing Research:

Forrester's [Technology](#) research group

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Executive Summary

AI promised more: more productivity, more content, and more of a competitive edge for businesses. And on paper, it's delivered. Enterprises of all sizes are widely deploying AI and have made building AI capabilities a top business priority. Employees across functions now have more access to AI tools, and those whose roles involve content creation have gained the ability to make and scale it faster than ever before.

However, beneath this progress is a more complicated reality. The average employee now creates seven distinct pieces of content for seven different audiences per week, a scale that would have been unmanageable just a few years ago — yet only 44% can glean insights from it. Additionally, 65% of business decision-makers who contribute to the content lifecycle — creating managing, and approving content flow — said that 26% to 75% of their content is [content waste](#).¹ This is the AI productivity paradox: As AI helps create more content, it becomes harder to manage, understand, and trust its outputs.

Organizations are at an AI inflection point today: They face pressure from leadership to deploy AI and drive productivity gains, yet many still struggle to identify the right use cases and integrate AI seamlessly into everyday work. As AI investments scale and costs become more visible, organizations will face growing pressure to demonstrate measurable ROI, making the next year a pivotal moment for enterprise AI — including in the document and content workspace area.

In April 2026, Adobe commissioned Forrester Consulting to explore the changes that AI has made on the document and content workspace. Forrester conducted an online survey with 529 global respondents to explore this topic. We found that while AI is posed to further disrupt the document and content workspace, most organizations are still adapting to what that means in practice.



Key Findings

AI adoption is widespread, but workflows are broken. While most survey respondents' organizations have deployed AI-enabled document and content tools, nearly half still have manual operational processes. Disconnected tools, poor coordination across teams, and inconsistent sharing mean AI is accelerating individual tasks without improving — and often slowing — collective work.

Organizations produce more content but struggle to extract insights from it. AI has dramatically increased content volume, yet many organizations struggle to analyze documents at scale, leverage unstructured data, or verify that the insights they surface are accurate and traceable, highlighting a growing gap between content creation and comprehension.

The next phase of AI value depends on unified, intelligent workspaces, not just more tools. Early adopters of enhanced, unified AI-enabled workspaces are seeing better use of unstructured data, stronger cross-document insights, and simpler workflows. The opportunity is shifting from isolated productivity gains to connected systems that integrate collaboration, intelligence, and content control at scale.

The Breakdown: Why AI Adoption Isn't Translating Into Better Work

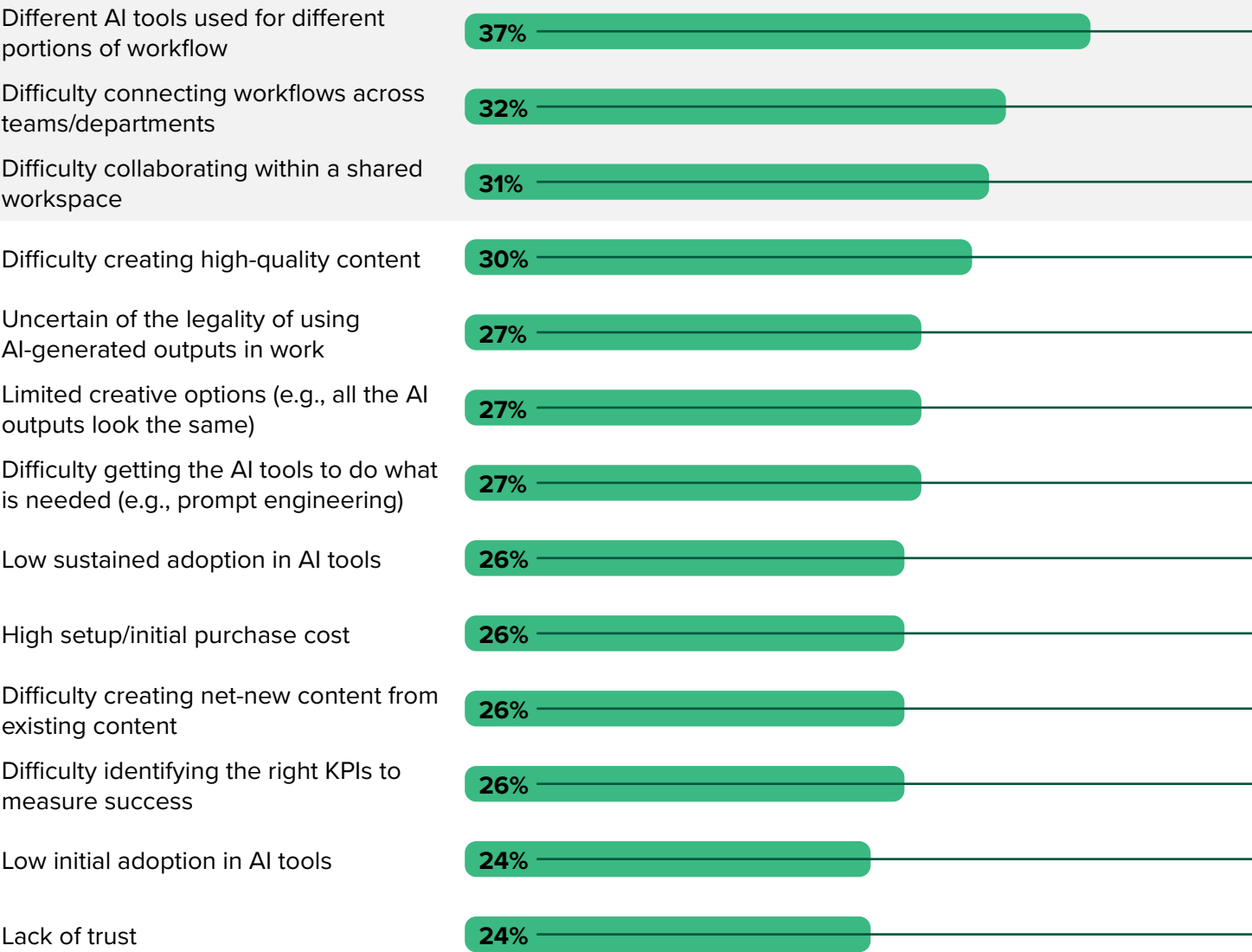
Despite rapid adoption, most AI-enabled workspaces are not delivering on their promise. Forrester's State Of AI Survey, 2025 reveals a surge in AI deployment across organizations: 78% of surveyed AI decision-makers report their organization already has generative or predictive AI in production.² And 67% of surveyed information workers report their organization has adopted at least one of five major genAI tools or an internal tool.³ And yet, nearly half of survey respondents noted that their operational processes are still very manual today. The issue isn't AI capability, it's how work actually happens across documents, teams, and tools. Three systemic breakdowns are emerging:

- **Insight gaps: Organizations are generating more content but extracting less value from it.** Despite the proliferation of AI tools, respondents said only half of their employees are using AI to analyze documents for trends, and even fewer (44%) are able to glean collective insights across multiple documents. At the same time, nearly half of survey respondents admitted that their organizations are not fully leveraging their unstructured data, leaving a large opportunity to unlock advanced understanding and more comprehension from documents beyond basic summaries or quick fact finding. However, insights are only as useful as they are accurate: Only 45% of respondents' organizations are tracking AI accuracy as a KPI to measure the impact of their AI-enabled document and content workspaces, and 32% or fewer consumers trust information provided by genAI.⁴ Critically, this lack of trust can have bottom-line implications: Ungoverned genAI in commercial applications is forecast to cost B2B companies more than \$10 billion in enterprise value from legal settlements, fines, and stock price declines.⁵
- **Coordination failures: Workflows are increasingly fragmented across tools, teams, and formats.** Fifty-seven percent of survey respondents noted that they have too many fragmented tools that support AI-enabled document and content creation tasks. As employees rely on separate AI tools for different parts of the workflow, content becomes harder to

share, distribute, and collaborate on across teams, creating siloed and inconsistent ways of working (see Figure 1). Workers also cite limited cross-team access, content sharing challenges, and lack of trust in AI-generated outputs among their top frustrations. The result is a growing coordination gap: AI is accelerating individual tasks but simultaneously slowing down collective work across the organization.

FIGURE 1

“Which of the following challenges does your organization face with its AI-enabled document and content workspaces?”



Base: 529 global workplace, collaboration, and document management solutions decision-makers
Source: Forrester’s Q2 2026 Workplace, Collaboration, And Document Management Solutions Survey

- **Control breakdowns: As content scales, consistency and trust erode.**

More than half of survey respondents noted that they struggle to maintain brand consistency across the content they create. And nearly half stated that they struggle to make documents/content consistent across customer channels as well as ensuring that the AI-generated content they do create is commercially safe to use (see Figure 2). Meanwhile, nearly one-third of respondents noted that they have an unacceptable number of errors in their current AI-enabled document and content creation processes. When multiplied across the volume of content being created, these inconsistencies become a systemic business risk.

AI adoption has reached critical mass. The majority of survey respondents' organizations have deployed AI-enabled document and content workspaces, and most of their employees are already using them. Additionally, nearly half of all operational processes are still manual. This is a disconnect that signals a turning point: Organizations have an AI workflow problem, not an AI capability problem.

FIGURE 2

“How much do you agree/disagree with the following statements?”

(Showing combined “Strongly agree” and “Agree” responses)

52%

We struggle to maintain brand consistency across the content we create

46%

We struggle to make the document/content consistent across customer channels

Respondents said that **“ensuring AI-generated content is commercially safe”** was the **top challenge** within their organization’s current AI-enabled document and content workspaces

Base: 529 global workplace, collaboration, and document management solutions decision-makers

Source: Forrester’s Q2 2026 Workplace, Collaboration, And Document Management Solutions Survey

The Realization: Tools Don't Fix Workflows

Overall, the survey found that document-based work processes are increasingly disconnected and stretched across too many disparate tools, a problem compounded by AI making content creation faster and cheaper than ever. In response to this workflow problem, survey respondents' organizations are increasing investment in their AI-enabled document and content workspaces (those that can work across multiple contexts and use cases, allowing employees across teams and departments to collaborate in one space): 51% of surveyed decision-makers say that investing is a critical priority, and 21% have already invested. But the goal isn't simply more tools, or even just better tools — it's to connect content, context, and collaboration into a single system.

- **Decision-makers are signaling what they need.** Seamless integration with existing systems, privacy controls, embedded AI, automation of complex document processes, and the ability to extract insights from large-scale content repositories are the top capabilities that decision makers look for in a unified AI-enabled workspace (see Figure 3).
- **At the same time, the advantages of AI are clear.** The challenge isn't investment appetite, it's investment direction. The default response to workflow friction has been to add another AI tool, but each new point solution creates a new handoff problem at its edges, compounding the fragmentation it was meant to fix. Closing the gap between content creation and comprehension requires a fundamentally different approach, where collaboration, intelligence, and content flow through a single connected environment rather than being stitched together across disconnected systems.

FIGURE 3

“When evaluating an AI-enabled, unified document and content workspace solution, which capabilities are most important to your organization?”



Base: 529 global workplace, collaboration, and document management solutions decision-makers
Source: Forrester’s Q2 2026 Workplace, Collaboration, And Document Management Solutions Survey

The Opportunity: From Disconnected Tools To Content Intelligence

The need for a fundamentally different model is emerging: a workspace that is not just a collection of tools, but a shared system of intelligence and action. These workspaces can connect document, data, and design across workflows, breaking down existing process silos and enabling real-time collaboration in a unified environment.

Organizations that have already invested in this model are seeing early indications of its impact. These respondents are more likely to agree that their organization is using its unstructured data to its full potential: only 38% of those who have invested agree that they are not using their unstructured data to its fullest potential, compared to nearly half (49%) of organization that are yet to invest. Additionally, respondents whose organizations have already invested reported a greater ability to generate insights across documents and more efficient and simplified workflows compared to those that have not invested yet (see Figure 4).

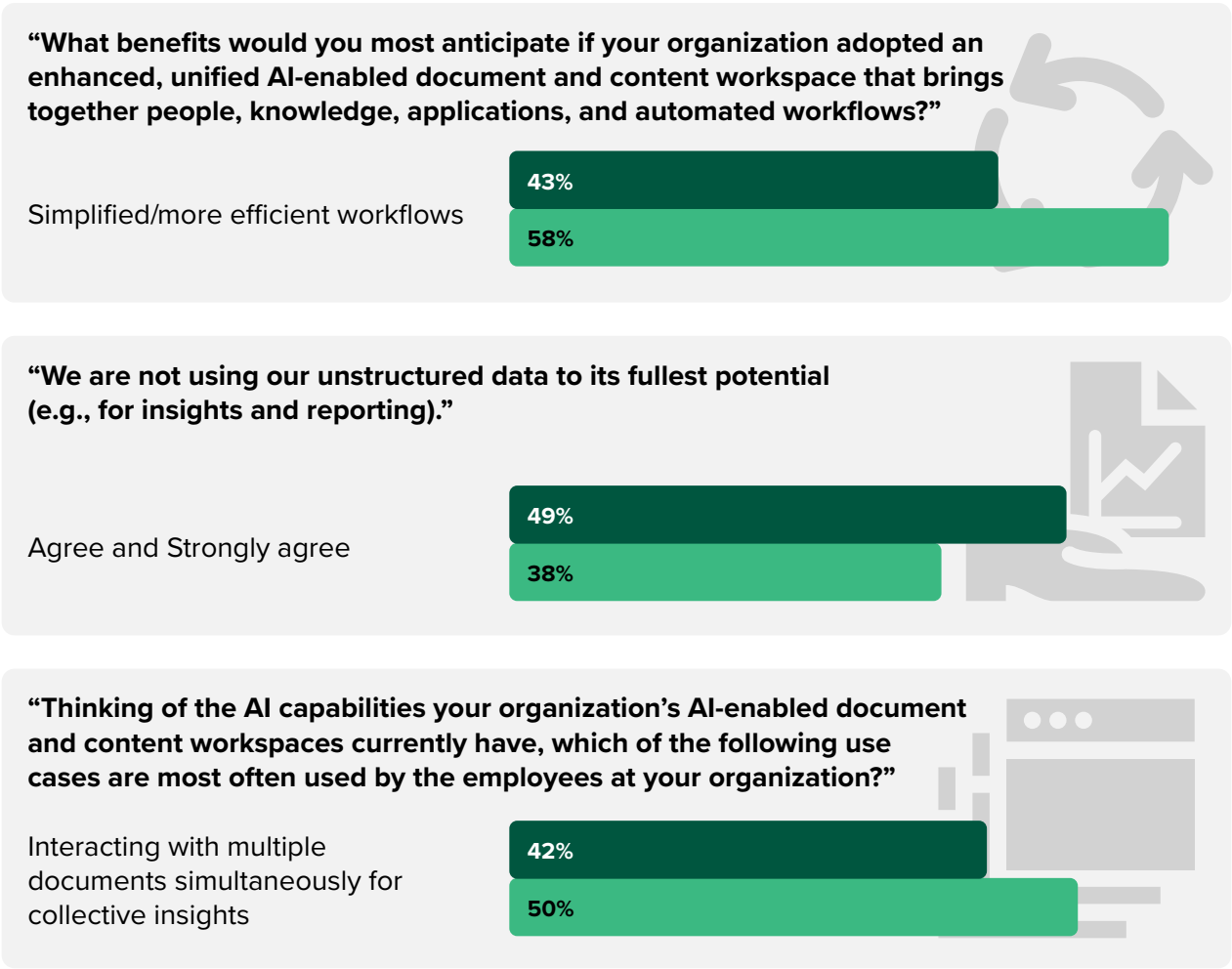
These respondents say their organizations are also more likely to prioritize creativity and innovation, not just efficiency — suggesting a shift from fixing problems to unlocking new value. This new value could look like querying across content types simultaneously and receiving a gap analysis on short falls, allowing teams to make prioritization decisions within minutes, not days.

When confronted with issues and error risks, the standard approach is to deploy point solutions, such as standalone AI copy-generation tools, isolated document repositories, or disconnected departmental workflows. Yet this fragmented approach ultimately exacerbates the problem, treating document production as a series of discrete, localized tasks rather than a continuous, integrated process. These solutions fail because they address the symptoms of content friction without fixing the underlying issues. AI is driving the cost and effort of creating content to near zero but is leaving significant problems in its wake. As the volume of content produced grows, so do the challenges of coordinating work across teams, extracting meaningful insights, and

maintaining content quality and consistency at scale. The next phase of AI transformation will not be defined by accelerating tasks, but by how well they can bring together collaboration, comprehension, and creation into a single, connected experience. This will require a new, enhanced AI-enabled document and content creation workspace that allows teams to collaborate seamlessly across content types and workflows, glean insights across documents, and produce consistent content across audiences and channels. Organizations that get this right will be better equipped to operate at scale without losing coordination, insight, or control.

FIGURE 4

● Investing is a critical or high priority ● Already invested



Base: 527 global workplace document management decision-makers
Source: Forrester’s Q2 2026 Workplace, Collaboration, And Document Management Solutions Survey

Key Recommendations

While AI is making content creation simpler in many ways, it is simultaneously introducing new complications into employees' workflows. Forrester's survey of 529 decision-makers about AI document and content workspaces yielded several important recommendations:

Invest in AI that can deliver verifiable intelligence across documents

and teams. While the promise of AI to generate insights across enterprise content is clear, the most common failure is deploying tools that produce outputs that cannot be verified or traced back to the precise source, eroding the trust needed to act on AI-generated insight at scale. To close this gap, organizations should focus on AI that reasons across large collections of documents simultaneously, surfacing cited, auditable insights that teams can validate and share across workflows, ensuring that connected intelligence becomes a reliable foundation for decisions rather than another source of content noise.

Prevent coordination failures with a unified, forward-looking process

approach. Although fragmented tools and disconnected workflows are the most visible symptoms of coordination failure, the root cause is that source documents, AI-generated insights, and team feedback rarely live in the same place, forcing teams to manually reconcile context across systems and formats at every step. To address this, organizations should coordinate document workflows where content, intelligence, and collaboration are connected end-to-end: from ingesting and querying source materials, through synthesizing and discussing findings as a team, to producing finished deliverables — without the handoffs that fragment context, introduce errors, and slow collective work.

Prevent control breakdown with embedded content and brand governance.

To mitigate the systemic risk of AI-driven content at scale, organizations must shift from reactive quality control to governance by design: embedding brand, legal, and accuracy guardrails directly into the content creation environment

so that every document produced is consistent with corporate identity and cleared for commercial use before it reaches a channel. In practice, this means prioritizing workspaces where branded templates, approved assets, and compliance controls are built into the creation experience itself, ensuring teams default to on-brand, commercially safe outputs rather than relying on downstream reviews to catch errors. This approach transforms AI-driven document content from a liability into a trusted, scalable asset.

Appendix A: Methodology

In this study, Forrester conducted an online survey of 529 global workplace, collaboration, and document management solutions decision-makers at organizations in North America, EMEA, and APAC to evaluate how organizations are using genAI to modernize document-centric workflows to accelerate business outcomes, improve productivity, and reduce risk. Survey participants included decision-makers in IT, sales, marketing, legal, HR, and finance. The study began and was completed in March 2026.

Appendix B: Demographics

GEOGRAPHY		COMPANY SIZE	
United States	23%	1,000 to 4,999 employees	61%
Canada	13%	5,000 to 19,999 employees	31%
Japan	10%	20,000 or more employees	8%
Germany	10%	DEPARTMENT	
France	10%	IT/procurement	20%
Australia/New Zealand	10%	Sales	16%
United Kingdom	9%	Marketing	16%
India	8%	Legal	16%
POSITION		HR/people operations	16%
C-level executive	16%	Finance accounting	16%
Vice president	32%	Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.	
Director	46%		
Manager	7%		

Appendix C: Endnotes

¹ Source: [To Survive The Content Apocalypse, Reinvent Your Content Operating Model Now](#), Forrester Research, Inc., January 29, 2026.

² Source: [Forrester’s State Of AI Survey, 2025](#).

³ Source: [Forrester’s Digital Workplace And Employee Technology Survey, 2025](#).

⁴ Source: [Forrester’s Consumer Benchmark Study, 2025](#).

⁵ Source: [Predictions 2026](#), Forrester Research, Inc., October 21, 2025.

A hand is shown typing on a laptop keyboard. The background is dark and filled with various digital icons floating in the air. These icons include a padlock, a folder with documents, a globe with a magnifying glass, a head with 'AI' inside, a group of people, a cloud with circular arrows, two interlocking gears, and a magnifying glass over binary code. The word 'FORRESTER' is centered in the middle of the image.

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