New TTEC Digital study finds that while AI adoption is nearly universal, most models, processes, and teams aren't ready to realize ROI

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A study of 150 CX and IT leaders found no organization achieved meaningful AI-driven cost reductions, prompting companies to plan data, governance, and operating model updates for 2027

AUSTIN, Texas, Aug. 17, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- TTEC, a leading global consulting, technology, and managed services company delivering solutions at the intersection of data, AI, and customer experience (CX), today released new research by TTEC Digital showing that despite widespread enterprise AI adoption, many organizations are struggling to realize noticeable financial returns due to outdated operating models, fragmented data, and weak governance.

The report, ***"The great CX reset: Why outdated operating models are stalling AI's payoff ,"*** was conducted in partnership with CX Dive. Its findings reveal a stark disconnect between widespread AI adoption and realized financial return for many companies, prompting corporate leaders to rethink how they operationalize AI across the enterprise. Surveying 150 CX, contact center, and IT leaders, the study found that zero respondents achieved cost reductions through AI, while two-thirds reported that operational costs have risen.

The research points to the practice of bolting advanced AI infrastructure onto rigid, pre-AI operating models as the primary reason for stalling ROI. Further, only 1% of executives describe their current operating model as highly adaptive and built for continuous change.

"Companies can no longer afford to buy into tech that fails to move the bottom line," said **Marcy Riordan, vice president of data & analytics at TTEC Digital**. "The great CX reset is about rebuilding on the timeless fundamentals of great service operations, clean data, skilled teams, and clear internal workflows. That's the foundation that makes AI pay off."

Three reasons AI isn't delivering ROI

The report identifies three core areas where the gap between AI adoption and AI readiness is widest:

- **Connected systems, blind workflows:** Tech stack complexity is high, with 60% of organizations using seven or more distinct platforms. While leaders describe their systems as technically connected, only 43% express high confidence that they can clearly account for where AI is being used across the customer journey, leading to ungoverned automations and redundant tools.
- **The AI skills void:** While 90% of leaders feel generally confident in their ability to deploy AI, not a single respondent (0%) reported having no internal skills gaps. The data shows that highly confident teams maintain internal ownership over AI strategy and governance, while leveraging external partners to accelerate technical delivery.
- **The governance stumbling block:** Data quality is improving, with only 15% citing unreliable data. However, governance remains a major hurdle: only 29% of organizations use a formal, cross-functional governance process consistently, while 64% apply policies inconsistently across the enterprise.

Where companies are investing next

As organizations move beyond AI experimentation, executives are increasingly shifting attention from deploying new tools to proving measurable business value.

The top investment priorities for 2027 include:

1. **Modernizing data foundations (43%):** Resolving insufficient reporting tools, inconsistent governance, and lack of real-time data access.
2. **Improving cross-functional coordination (41%):** Breaking down legacy silos across operations, IT, data, and compliance.
3. **Connecting CX to business outcomes (38%):** Creating clearer measurement frameworks to directly tie CX performance to the corporate balance sheet.

Download the full report to explore the complete findings, benchmark your organization's AI maturity, and learn how leading enterprises are redesigning operating models to improve AI ROI: ***www.ttecdigital.com/resources/the-great-cx-reset***.

About TTEC

TTEC Holdings, Inc. (NASDAQ: TTEC) is a leading global consulting, technology, and managed services company delivering solutions at the intersection of data, AI, and customer experience. Serving iconic and disruptive brands, TTEC's outcome-based solutions span the entire enterprise, touch every virtual interaction channel, and improve each step of the customer journey. Leveraging next-generation digital technology, the Company's TTEC Digital business designs, builds, and operates omnichannel contact center technology, CRM, AI, and analytics solutions. The Company also delivers AI-enhanced customer engagement, customer acquisition and growth, tech support, back-office, and fraud prevention services. Founded in 1982, TTEC's singular obsession with CX excellence has earned it leading client, customer, and employee satisfaction scores across the globe. The Company's employees operate on six continents and bring technology and humanity together to deliver happy customers and differentiated business results. To learn more, visit https://ttec.com.

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