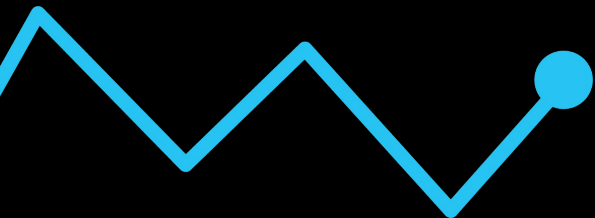




AI-Led Growth

Executive Insights May 2025

How GTM Leaders Are Driving Predictable Growth with AI



OVERVIEW

This report summarizes the findings from Winning by Design's AI-Led GTM Growth Survey, conducted in April 2025. The survey captured insights from 172 GTM leaders across SaaS and B2B industries, ranging from early-stage startups to billion-dollar enterprises.

The goal was to understand how organizations are investing in AI, where they're seeing impact, and what's holding them back.

The responses highlight trends in AI adoption across sales, marketing, customer success, and RevOps—and reveal how **89% of the GTM teams plan to increase AI investment** and turn AI from a buzzword into growth.



We're seeing a **seismic shift** in how GTM leaders are prioritizing AI. With 89% planning to increase their investment in the next year, it's clear that **AI isn't optional—it's becoming the backbone** of modern revenue teams. The organizations investing today are the ones building a competitive advantage that will be hard to catch.

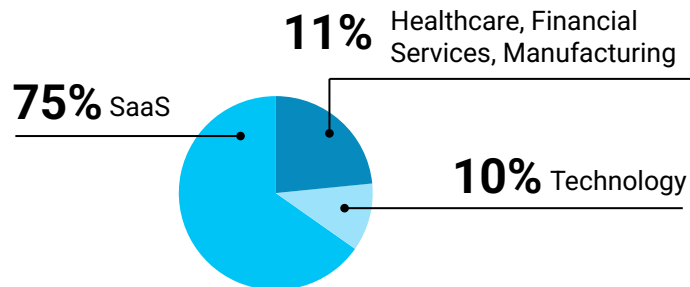
Shari Johnston

COO, Winning by Design

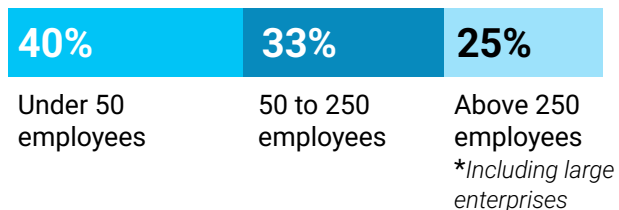


SURVEY RESULTS

INDUSTRIES REPRESENTED



COMPANY SIZE (EMPLOYEES)



RESPONDENTS ANNUAL REVENUE

Under \$50M	30%
\$50M to \$250M	27%
Over \$250M	10%

JOB TITLES

Majority are C-level leaders:

C-Level	42%
VP/Director	30%
Other GTM Leaders	27%

n=172 total respondents



WHAT GTM LEADERS ARE SAYING ABOUT AI ADOPTION

#1

GTM Teams Want Clearer Playbooks, Not More Hype

Respondents consistently asked for **practical, real-world guidance** on how to deploy AI effectively—not just thought leadership or vendor hype. They want **frameworks, benchmarks, and use case examples** that reflect measurable ROI.

#2

Tool Fragmentation and Integration Are Major Frustrations

Many leaders voiced frustration with **AI tools that don't integrate well with CRM or GTM workflows**. The market feels scattered, and respondents want more **end-to-end solutions** that unify sales, marketing, and customer success data.

#3

GTM Readiness Gaps Are Slowing Progress

Even when the tools exist, many GTM teams lack the **internal expertise or training** to adopt them effectively. There's a growing call for **AI fluency programs**, cross-functional GTM task forces, and operational support to bridge the gap.

THE AI INVESTMENT GAP

AI ADOPTION IS STILL IN AN EARLY STAGE

58% currently allocate less than **5%** of their GTM budget to AI.

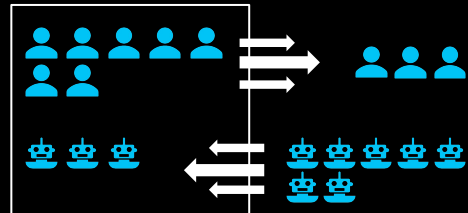
Immense potential for expansion

COMPANIES \$50M+ ARE LEADING AI INVESTMENT

Companies with **\$50M+** in revenue show a likelihood to invest **20%+** of their GTM budget in AI.



LARGE ENTERPRISE



Companies with 1,000+ employees are reallocating headcount budgets toward AI initiatives more aggressively.



TOP AI USE CASES PRIORITIZED

51%

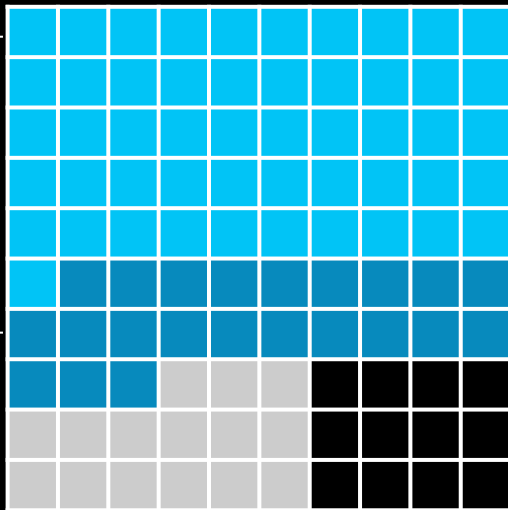
Sales Enablement is the primary focus, underscoring the need for increased productivity, scalability, and efficiency in sales organizations.

22%

Forecasting highlights a growing recognition of AI's role in driving predictability and confidence in pipeline management, crucial for strategic decision-making.

15%

Marketing Automation indicates an emerging focus on personalization to enhance customer engagement, signaling the era of broad, generic marketing is fading.



GTM leaders who apply AI to proven use cases aren't just optimizing—they're redefining how to compete.

EFFICIENCY IS THE GATEWAY

DRIVERS FOR AI BY ROLE



CRO / VP Sales

Focused on pipeline accuracy, deal velocity, and rep productivity



CMO / VP Marketing

Prioritize personalization, automation, and campaign efficiency



RevOps / Strategy

Focused on efficiency, integration, and driving unified GTM systems

GROWTH IS THE PRICE

TOP DRIVERS FOR AI INVESTMENT

1. Efficiency (lower cost) & Automation

GTM leaders prioritize AI to eliminate repetitive manual tasks, boosting productivity and freeing teams to focus on revenue growth.

2. Customer Experience

AI-driven personalization and seamless engagement are critical differentiators for leading companies.

3. Revenue Predictability

AI is increasingly vital for creating predictable pipelines, enabling accurate forecasting, strategic planning, and confident resource allocation.

4. Competitive Advantage

Early adopters are leveraging AI to not just compete but to redefine market dynamics in their favor.

“

GTM teams that embrace AI today aren't just gaining efficiency—**they're redefining the rules of hypergrowth.**

Companies over \$50M in revenue must lead— investing more, moving faster, and focusing on pipeline predictability as their new superpower. Those not investing in AI are already falling behind.



Jacco van der Kooij

Founder, Winning by Design

OVERVIEW OF SURVEY RESULTS

CURRENT AI SPEND IN GTM BUDGETS

Spend less than 5%	58%
Spend 11-20%	11%
Spend over 20%	4%

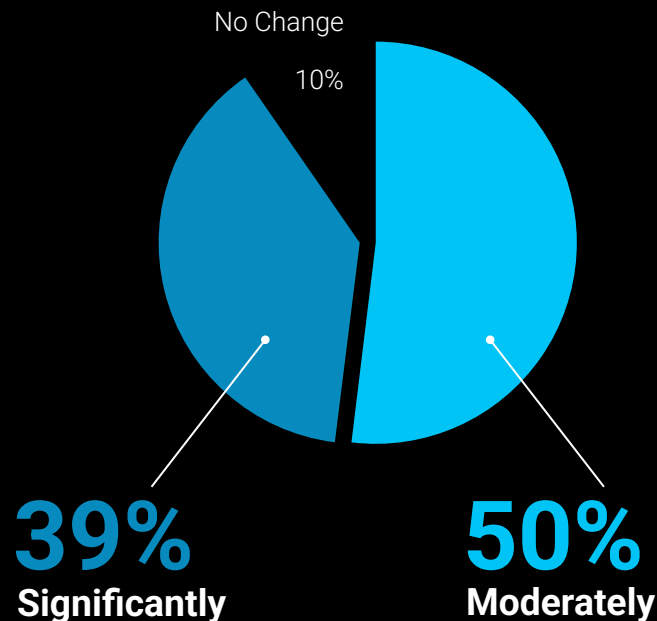
**Over \$50M companies are skewing higher*

INCREASE AI INVESTMENT

Significantly (20%+)	39%
Moderately (Up to 20%)	50%
No Change	10%
Decrease	0%



INCREASE IN AI INVESTMENT



AI investment is not slowing—it's accelerating to become part of the DNA of GTM strategy.

OVERVIEW OF SURVEY RESULTS

STATED TOP ADOPTION ISSUES (IN ORDER)

1. Budget constraints

Lack of budgets is slowing down AI adoption.

2. Lack of internal expertise

Teams lack the skills and training to effectively leverage AI.

3. System integration difficulties

Organizations struggle to integrate AI tools seamlessly with existing workflows and CRM systems.

4. Data quality issues

Inconsistent or incomplete data reduces AI effectiveness.

5. Unclear ROI

Challenges in quantifying the tangible returns from AI investments hinder obtaining commitment from the stakeholders within the company.

HEADCOUNT BUDGET REALLOCATION

40% have reallocated headcount budgets toward AI



50% in larger enterprises



Enterprises with over 1,000 employees are reallocating headcount budgets toward AI initiatives more aggressively.

INSIGHTS FOR COMPANIES OVER \$50M

1

Greater Budget Commitment

Organizations over \$50M in revenue are leading the charge, allocating larger portions (11-20%+) of their GTM budgets toward AI and significantly shifting headcount toward AI capabilities.

2

Forecasting as a Priority:

Larger firms see Revenue Forecasting & Pipeline Management as the key priority, linking AI investments directly to predictable, scalable growth.

3

Greater Complexity in AI Rollouts:

Bigger organizations face integration and expertise challenges, underlining the need for cross-functional collaboration and upskilling.

4

Scalable Efficiency Focus:

While smaller companies aim for efficiency gains, larger ones are combining efficiency with revenue predictability and competitive advantage.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO NEXT?

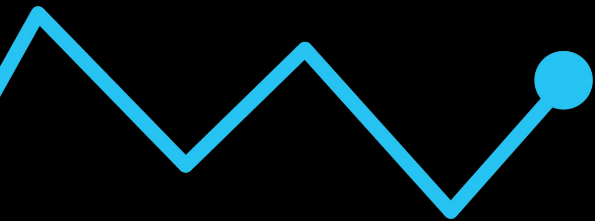
*The companies that win next aren't just investing in AI—
they're architecting GTM systems that turn AI into lasting
competitive advantage.*

STEP 1. Diagnose your GTM team's AI readiness

STEP 2. Prioritize use cases that impact both efficiency *and* predictability

STEP 3. Reallocate budget from headcount to AI capability

STEP 4. Establish AI not just as a tool—but as the core of your GTM strategy



AI is no longer about staying ahead—it's
about not being left behind.

Embrace it boldly, scale it strategically,
and watch your growth accelerate.

Characteristic

Classic SaaS

PLG Hybrid SaaS

AI-Native SaaS

Time to \$100M
(ARR)

10 Years
Salesforce (6yrs) , Workday (8yrs)

5 Years
DocuSign, Figma, Canva

1-2 Years
Cursor, Harvey, Typeface

Sales Motion

Field Sales (HLG)
Marketo, Sprinklr, ServiceNow

PLG → Inside sales
Dropbox, DocuSign, Gitlab

AiLG (→ HLG?)
Replit, Notion AI

Growth Engine

Inbound → Inside sales
Zendesk, HubSpot, Domo, Qualtrix

Viral-loop by users
Canva, DocuSign, Slack, Zoom

Organic growth loops
Perplexity, ElevenLabs

Monetization

Slow/steady MRR ramp
Asana, Box, Smartsheet, RingCentral

Volume- and usage-based tiers
DocuSign, Miro, HashiCorp

Consumption and API pricing
OpenAI API, Runway ((usage-based)

Infrastructure

SaaS Stack
HubSpot, Salesforce, Twilio

Browser-native, scalable PLG
Figma, Notion, Loom

LLM-native agent infrastructure
Rewind, Adept

Team Size
@ \$100M

300–400
Coupa, Snowflake, Okta

100–250
Loom, DocuSign

20–50
Inflection, Gamma.app

SaaS Business Models: Classic, PLG Hybrid, and AI-Native			
Characteristic	Classic SaaS	PLG Hybrid SaaS	AI-Native SaaS
Time to \$100M	10 Years	5 Years	1-2 Years
Sales Motion	Field Sales (HLG)	PLG → Inside sales	AiLG → HLG
Growth Engine	Inbound → Inside sales	Viral-loop by users	Organic growth loops
Monetization	Slow/steady MRR ramp	Volume- and usage-based tiers	Consumption and API pricing
Infrastructure	SaaS Stack	Browser-native, scalable PLG	LLM-native agent infrastructure
Team Size	300–400	100–250	20–50