



2026 State of AI in the Trades

Stop Operating. Start Automating.





Contractors recognize AI is coming, but path forward isn't yet clear to them

Contractors nationwide, across all trades, see the potential in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and expect the technology to impact their businesses soon – but aren't yet sure how that monumental change will play out for them.

That's the biggest takeaway from an industry survey, sponsored by ServiceTitan and conducted by Thrive Analytics.

The key numbers that outline the outlook on AI:

- Of the contractors surveyed, 60% said they were already familiar with AI.
- Despite the 60% familiarity rate, 72% believe AI is relevant to the industry, suggesting contractors view the technology as important but aren't yet confident in their own knowledge.
- And 66% say they see moderate or major transformation in 1-3 years because of Artificial Intelligence.
- The impact of AI is already measurable; survey data indicates that 62% of early adopters report gains in efficiency and productivity.
- 48% believe AI will help modernize the trades and improve perceptions of the industry.

ServiceTitan Senior Vice President, Product, Vincent Payen, who is among those leading the AI and automation charge at the company, thinks even those numbers aren't strong enough.

"The survey suggests too many still see AI as a discretionary, marginal thing to do in very targeted areas—customer support, for example—vs. something that's going to fundamentally reshape how their business functions," Payen says. "For some, there's still an underestimation of the magnitude of the shift that's about to happen. AI will enable businesses to shift from manual operations to automation, placing them well above their competition."

ServiceTitan surveyed, through Thrive Analytics, 1,032 contractors across the country – 70% of them from leadership, 20% in office roles and 10% from the field, across a variety of trades. The survey was conducted from Oct. 23 to Nov. 12, 2025.

This report examines the key findings and important takeaways from the survey, and puts them in context, to show how contractors of all sizes and across all trades collectively think about artificial intelligence and its impact.

It also features thoughts on the survey from Payen, who was part of the team that built Schedule Engine before that company was integrated into ServiceTitan. Payen is an expert in leveraging AI-powered automation in the trades.

Respondents by industry

 **234**
plumbing businesses **66**
garage door businesses **1,032**
total businesses **215**
HVAC businesses **107**
roofing businesses **139**
electrical businesses **154**
pest control businesses **117**
commercial landscaping
businesses

Key Findings

Based on survey data, ServiceTitan's study suggests that:

- **Adoption rate varies wildly.** Only 12% of businesses have embedded AI in their processes. And 35% haven't yet used AI in their business at all.
- **Businesses want partnership.** Rather than building AI processes on their own, most (59%) are using AI functionality built into software they already use.
- **Efficiency, productivity increase with AI.** Processes that increase efficiency and productivity see the most adoption, with 74% of respondents citing those improvements.
- **Contractors are already realizing gains.** Almost two-thirds of those surveyed who are at least experimenting with AI say they've recognized gains in efficiency and productivity already, saving three or more hours weekly through automation.
- **The strongest operational impacts are in the office.** Scheduling, dispatching, and administrative workflows—areas with clear ROI potential—have been the early focus.

Note: The survey results and observations presented in this paper are based on responses from a specific sample of participants and should not be interpreted as representative of the trades industry, broader populations or market conditions. This content is provided for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal, financial, or professional advice.

Survey methodologies, sample sizes, and response rates may affect the reliability and applicability of the results. ServiceTitan makes no representations or warranties regarding the accuracy, completeness, or reliability of the survey data or analysis presented. Readers are encouraged to conduct their own research and consult with qualified professionals before making decisions.

This content may contain forward-looking statements based on survey findings. Such statements are subject to risks, uncertainties and assumptions that may cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied.

01

Key Takeaway



Honestly, you have to be okay with some imperfection and stumbling early on; it's part of an accelerated path to success. The good news is, getting to those learnings faster is exactly what puts a business ahead of the curve."

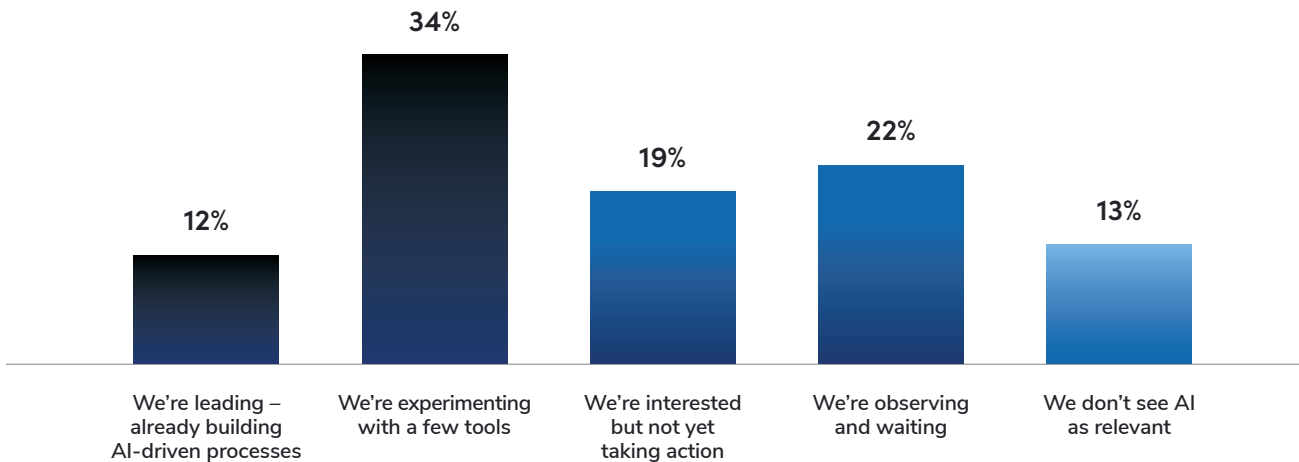
Vincent Payen,
Senior Vice President of Product,
ServiceTitan

Adoption is split between early doers and cautious observers.

AI adoption is still at the infant stage in the trades, and there are two clear schools of thought: Those who are actively experimenting with AI in their business, and a similar-sized group taking a wait-and-see approach.

- Only 12% of respondents report that they have already embedded AI in their processes.
- About a third (34%) of survey respondents say they are experimenting with AI.
- Another 41% are still on the sidelines, observing but not taking action, and 13% see AI as not very relevant to the industry.
- Interestingly, the subset of respondents who work for Commercial businesses (40%) are significantly more likely to be actively experimenting with AI tools, compared with the subset who work for Residential businesses (29%).

Which best describes your company's relationship with AI today?



Sample Size = 1,032

02

Key Takeaway



The smartest move for contractors today is using AI to capture demand and manage customer interactions. That's because it's the most mature, easiest-to-adopt AI out there, and it addresses a crucial need with immediate business impact."

Vincent Payen,
Senior Vice President of Product,
ServiceTitan

AI impact starts in the office, but is spreading quickly.

AI is not being used in just one part of the business, but it is being deployed primarily to solve immediate operational bottlenecks. Respondents indicate they are prioritizing AI to handle high-volume, repetitive workloads, effectively streamlining and automating core processes across administrative, marketing, and sales to improve overall efficiency. While the current focus is on optimizing office workflows, other areas, such as field operations and project planning, represent the next major opportunity for growth.

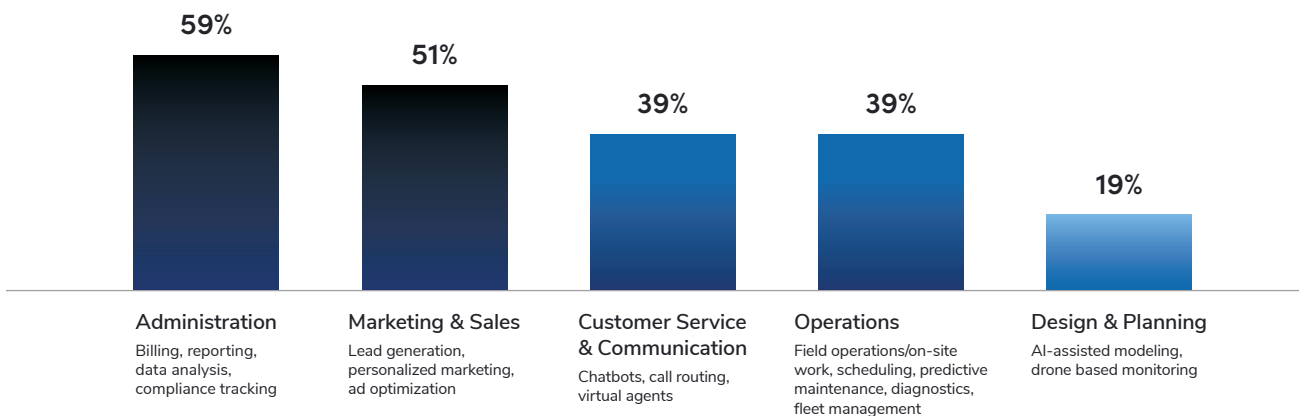
- **Administration leads current usage (59%),** with businesses leveraging AI for billing, reporting, data analysis, and compliance tracking.
- **Marketing & Sales (51%) follows,** applying AI to lead generation, personalization, and ad optimization.
- **Customer Service & Communication (39%) and Field Operations (39%) show equal traction,** utilizing tools for chatbots and call routing, alongside scheduling and predictive maintenance.
- **Design & Planning remains a niche use case (19%),** primarily utilized for commercial or larger projects involving AI-assisted modeling and drone-based monitoring.

AI in action

One HVAC company based in Florida, [Gulfshore Air Conditioning & Heating](#), has integrated AI throughout its operations to help automate jobs end-to-end achieving a year-over-year increase in close rates of 22%.

Note: Results are illustrative of certain customers' success; your individual results may vary.

In which areas of your business are you currently using AI?



Sample Size = 469

03

Key Takeaway



As AI augments human productivity and fills capacity gaps, the immediate impact is on operational efficiency. But this is only the first phase of a much deeper AI business optimization motion that will ultimately drive both top line and profitability transformation.”

Vincent Payen,
Senior Vice President of Product,
ServiceTitan

Top expected (and realized) benefit of AI so far? Efficiency.

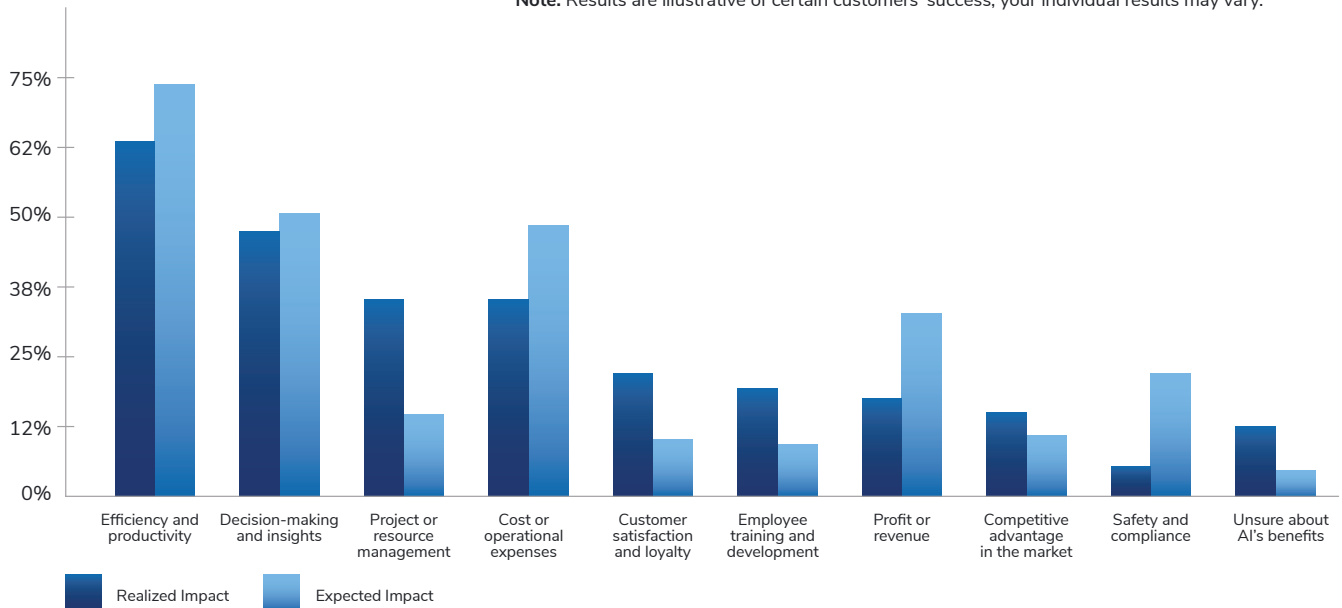
Survey respondents have a clear expectation for AI as it is integrated into their businesses: They see it as primarily an operational efficiency engine—and 62% are already seeing measured efficiency gains.

- Nearly three-quarters of respondents, 74%, say improved efficiency and productivity are a potential benefit, the most-cited benefit in the survey.
- Other expected benefits cited by respondents include enhanced decision-making and insights (51%), reducing costs (48%), and increased profitability (33%).
- Those mirror the top areas where respondents are already seeing gains, including better decision-making (47%), and cost reduction (36%).
- Profitability gains (18%) and improved customer satisfaction (22%) and a competitive advantage (16%) are mentioned as other already-measurable benefits among respondents.

AI in action

One Oklahoma-based HVAC company, [Above + Beyond Service Company](#), is using embedded AI to automate the matching process of assigning the best technicians to jobs, nearly doubling its average install ticket from \$8,500 to \$18,500.

Note: Results are illustrative of certain customers' success; your individual results may vary.



Sample Size = 469

04

Key Takeaway



The fear is understandable. But here's the reality: the evolution is non discretionary and, with the right tools, contractors get transformational results, all without needing to be an AI expert. The key is to decide when full AI automation can be trusted vs. when AI should be used to assist humans. The key is to stay pragmatic about applying AI to real world business problems without assuming it has to be all or nothing."

Vincent Payen,
Senior Vice President of Product,
ServiceTitan

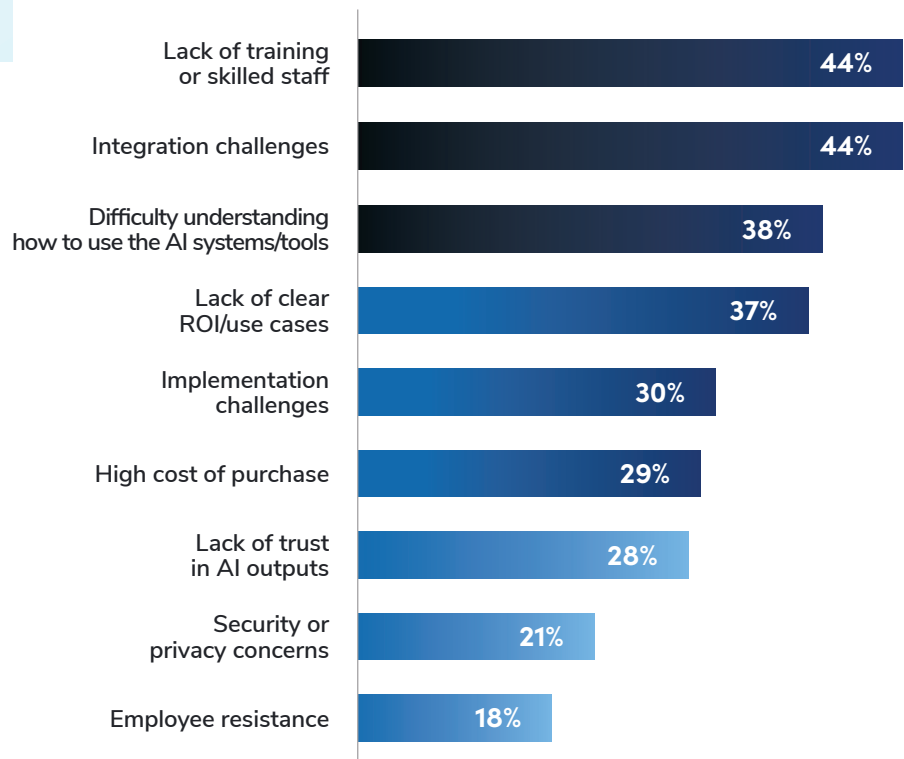
The biggest barriers are human and organizational, not technological.

As the high number of contractors on the sidelines suggests, the barriers to AI adoption are as much about people as they are about AI itself. As with anything new, change management is required, including reassuring the organization that automation through artificial intelligence is a benefit.

The top barriers to AI adoption, according to survey respondents, are:

- Lack of training (44%)
- Integration complexity (44%)
- Difficulty understanding how to use AI tools (38%); and
- Unclear ROI (37%)
- Interestingly, only 18% of respondents cited employee resistance as a barrier.

What challenges has your company faced implementing or using AI?



05

Key Takeaway



What contractors want is a central hub to orchestrate all their automations, and they absolutely need to avoid the friction or conflict between AI agents. They are learning that having their various AI automations integrate in a unified system is non-negotiable to deliver the proper customer experiences and business outcomes.”

Vincent Payen,
Senior Vice President of Product,
ServiceTitan

Embedded solutions are preferred over standalone AI.

Among those early adopters, the preference is for AI solutions already built into the platforms of trusted partners, suggesting that the market values the convenience and the seamless workflow such solutions provide.

- The majority of contractors (59%) already use AI features embedded in their existing software.
- 42% are leveraging tools outside their other softwares, such as language tools including ChatGPT, Claude, CoPilot, Google Gemini and others.
- Only 8% use custom tools, with the majority of those being larger, tech-forward contracting businesses.

AI in action

[Aire Serv® of Aggieland](#), a HVAC company based out of College Station, Texas, has utilized embedded AI to increase their average ticket by 94%, year-over-year.

Note: Results are illustrative of certain customers' success; your individual results may vary.



06

Key Takeaway

51%

of enterprise-level companies are already using AI, while

64%

of small to medium size businesses have yet to do so.

There are significant differences in realized benefits for different types of contractors.

AI's impact varies depending on the specialty of the contractor, the survey results show.

- Residential contractors see significantly greater cost reductions; Commercial contractors see significantly greater customer satisfaction gains.
- The largest companies are more likely to translate AI into profitability and customer satisfaction; midsized companies see the biggest lift in productivity.
- 51% of the largest companies included in the survey have already leveraged AI, compared with 36% of smaller businesses.
- Those bigger companies, at 58%, are also more likely to say they'll invest significantly in AI in the next 1-3 years than smaller companies (51%).



With AI, every part of your business will fall into one of three categories: fully automated, human with AI help, or just human. That mix is what we are seeing shift rapidly as the solutions improve and contractors expand their use of AI.

Vincent Payen,
Senior Vice President of Product, ServiceTitan

How ServiceTitan partners with the trades to implement AI.

As the established leader in the sector, ServiceTitan is delivering advanced AI capabilities for the trades, providing industry-specific solutions that cover the entire automation range, from first call to final invoice. Current offerings include both AI-assisted products and fully automated systems supported by specialized automation agents.

The impact is substantial. Gulfshore Air Conditioning and Heating, a Florida-based ServiceTitan customer, is already leveraging AI-powered, automated processes to fully manage end-to-end business operations. AI is now strategically generating demand, scheduling and dispatching jobs, and providing critical in-field support for technicians. This level of comprehensive automation results in a complete systematic workflow, where human involvement is confined solely to the technician's physical presence at the job site.

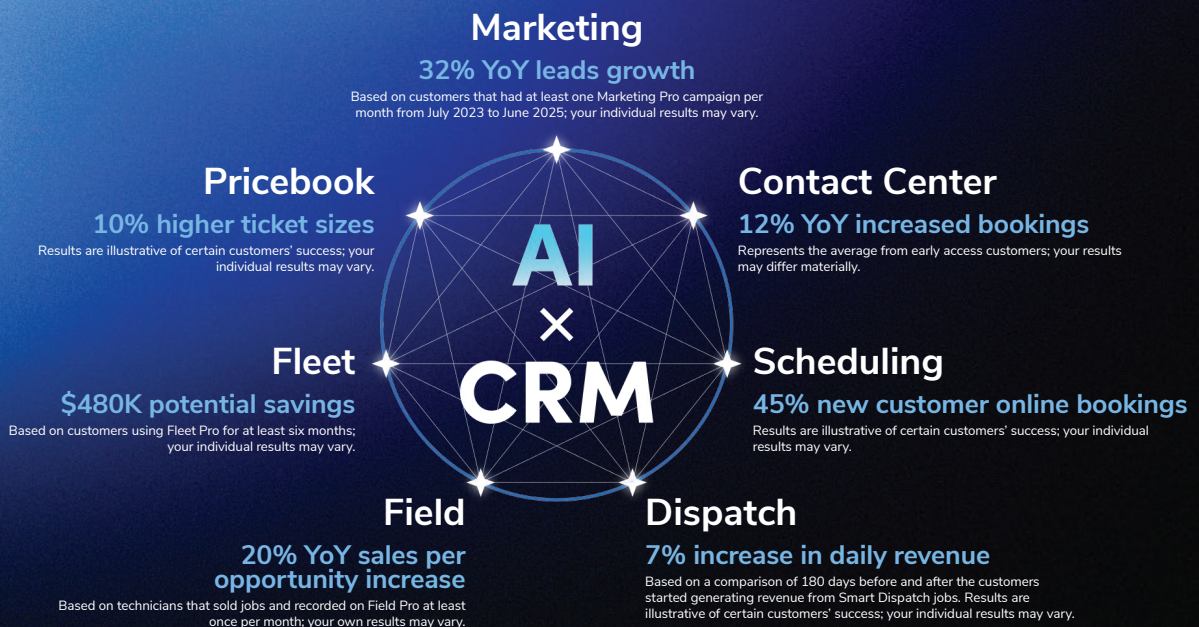
“We’re freeing contractors from administrative burdens so they can focus on craftsmanship, customer care, and solving the important problems their businesses face,” ServiceTitan President and Co-Founder Vahe Kuzoyan said. “The companies that thrive will be those that treat AI not as a threat, but as a force multiplier that elevates both their people and their performance.”

Internal data shows that AI automation and optimization is establishing a new standard for best-in-class trades businesses like Gulfshore. Full adoption of this technology could enable users to achieve a substantial uplift, with projections indicating significant potential increases in revenue and profitability.

ServiceTitan's commitment to AI innovation was reaffirmed at Pantheon 2025, the company's most recent user conference, where Kuzoyan and fellow Co-Founder Ara Mahdessian announced two key initiatives. The first is Atlas, a specialized AI assistant that operates within the ServiceTitan platform and utilizes proprietary native data to support contractor operations. The second is the Max program, a strategic offering designed to scale and accelerate end-to-end automation across the contractor's entire business.

“The future of ServiceTitan is unmistakably automation-first,” said Kuzoyan at Pantheon. “Let's go get the success we deserve, together.”

Automating success with ServiceTitan





Conclusion

Respondents to ServiceTitan's survey make three things clear:

- Contractors are curious and optimistic about the possibilities for AI in the trades.
- They want trade-tailored tools and proof of value to accelerate adoption. And,
- Clear value to their businesses is expected to be found in AI solutions built by trusted partners, such as ServiceTitan, not as one-off, custom solutions.

The current model of bottom-up, feature-based AI adoption of disconnected point solutions and general-purpose tools such as Gemini and ChatGPT, is indicative of the infancy of usage. The next step, ServiceTitan's Vincent Payen says, is enterprise-level deployment of AI solutions that enable automation across the business, in an integrated way.


That approach, he says, allows decisions to be made based on a contractor's individual needs, and provide a leap in intelligent functionality.

"Having all your AI solutions as part of the system of record—with access to real-time data and to everything that's pertinent to your business—is going to make a huge difference in performance," Payen says. "If you have more powerful products that are all connected, that understand each other, and that can take action across various areas of the product to get to outcomes, that should be the dream setup."

And ServiceTitan, Payen says, is well on the way to building that solution.



ServiceTitan is the leading cloud-based software platform powering commercial service and specialty contractors. Our all-in-one solution gives contractors complete control of their business by seamlessly integrating all operations in one place. By bringing an integrated SaaS platform to an industry historically underserved by technology, we are equipping tradespeople with the technology they need to keep the world running.

 Learn more at servicetitan.com