

Five Best Practices To Drive Financial Return from Artificial Intelligence

There is a lot to comprehend when it comes to the possibilities of Artificial Intelligence (AI). AI is expected to drive some paradigm shifts across all industries and like any other major technological innovation, it will also rewire how healthcare functions.

Based on a recent power panel survey of nations top healthcare CEOs, conducted by Modern healthcare, almost 80% of surveyed CEOs indicated that AI was likely to drive innovation during the next year, with most saying they are already seeing AI innovation in clinical practice and consumerism¹. From Robotic assisted surgeries to automated administrative workflows, AI promises new prospects every passing minute. Such key clinical health AI applications, one study notes, can potentially create \$150 billion in combined annual savings for the United States healthcare economy by 2026², a full point reduction in healthcare's GDP burden. However, the use of predictive analytics and AI impacting administrative workflows has been a closer reality than directly in care/service provision.

So as leaders making investment decisions around implementing AI, how do you separate the hype from reality? What are some key considerations to ensuring financial success with your AI implementations and investments? While there is a lot of consulting and advisory out there to assist with this, leaders can consider a simple framework to help them think through this.

Why: Build an AI investment strategy

Why is implementing and investing in AI crucial to the success of your organization? Is it growth or automation or competition that is driving the need for it? Is it new revenue to be found or administrative savings? Like with any other undertaking, identify the hypothesis and value you expect from deploying AI. The use case and financial opportunity associated with it needs to be clear, and AI should be determined as the right tool for the use case.

What: Scrutinize data and resources

With AI, as a data driven solution, it is imperative to scrutinize what data and other resources are required. When considering data, evaluate for four key attributes, the 4 Vs: Variety, Velocity, Volume, Validity. The idea that bigger is better when it comes to data is somewhat of a myth. The 4 Vs of data should align with the use case(s) you have identified and also your overall strategy. The bigger and better the data, better the outcomes from AI. Validity (integrity and quality) of the data would however trump all the other attributes.

¹ ceo-power-panel-patient-access-next-frontier-health-systems (Modern Healthcare)

²Source: Accenture's ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: Healthcare's New Nervous System

In addition to data, your organizational readiness on infrastructure, governance, operational and data science expertise, should be incorporated with utmost planning within your AI strategy.

Who: Engage and empower operating teams

If you are in the business of delivering care, building AI capability within the organization may not be your highest priority or be within the scope of your expertise and experience. Perhaps the needed data to solve the use case isn't easily available within your environment. In such scenarios, you may consider outsourcing the AI build and implementation to a vendor partner or buy off the shelf products. Whatever your approach, it is imperative to engage and empower teams and people closest to the job to be done or use case to help understand, evaluate and finally implement the solution. User experience is a key component of how your solution will be received by your users and hence workflow integration of AI should be at a forefront in your agenda. Evaluate the vendor partner on the same aspects you would when implementing a solution inhouse - how well do they fair on the 4Vs of the data, infrastructure, data science and industry expertise and finally their cultural alignment with your goals.

How: Lay a foundation for accountability and risk management

To deploy a new strategic initiative and then sustain it over the long run, set a clear accountability matrix that includes a timeline, responsible entities and success criteria.

With any data and technology, especially in a highly regulated industry like healthcare, leaders need to ensure privacy, security, confidentiality and plan to mitigate the associated risks.

Ensure your tactical plan accounts and mitigates for other risks such as Training Bias, (a bias associated with data selection to train the machine, yielding predisposed outcomes) especially when combined with sophistication of AI tools that make rationalization or logic unfathomable by humans to further explain the results.

Where: Ensure the right cultural incentives exist

Ever heard of "Culture eats Strategy for Dinner"? Let's look at the last but the biggest success determinant --the culture of your organization. Modern Healthcare's power panel survey of nations top healthcare CEOs³, recognizes culture as the top threat to innovation with even federal regulations trailing behind it.

When employees and leaders have tech-phobia, mainly associated with what that could mean to their jobs and existing skills, it is key to actively address resistance and create positive momentum towards the use of AI. Proactive communication, education and training can help

³ ceo-power-panel-patient-access-next-frontier-health-systems (Modern Healthcare)

with reinforcement but organically developing a culture of innovation can go a long way in leading change. Employees will take comfort in knowing that technological innovations, including AI, will not necessarily displace the jobs to be done, but displace people not using the new tools to do the jobs.

As leaders deciding on your AI strategy and investment, all these considerations may seem daunting but with clear set of expectations and upfront ground work, what you can achieve could be game-changing for your operations and your bottom line – whether you choose to do this inhouse with your resources or invest in partnering with an outside expert.

Machines are using experience to represent the world at/above levels of human performance at dramatically greater speed and/or reduced cost. Provider organizations should capitalize on benefits via targeted consumer engagement, enhanced revenue integrity, and/or reduced costs—while building organizational competency and acceptance.

Clearly the promise of AI is here to stay and can soon transform the way we deliver care. The hope is that as healthcare providers you can then focus on what you do the best -provide the right care at the right place and right time.

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This Article is an extract of a Seminar offered at an ACHE cluster event and ACHE webinar of the same title presented by Jason Williams, VP Analytics and Growth Strategy and Vindali Vartak, Senior Director, Advanced Analytics of Change Healthcare. Their expertise in AI and advanced analytics solutions comes through deep knowledge of the industry and practical experience in implementing applications in the industry. Their most recent venture involved developing Charge Capture Advisor, an AI infused SAAS product that predicts missing charges to facilitate provider billing teams to proactively create a more complete claim to increase and accelerate revenue. You can reach them at Jason.williams@changehealthcare.com & vindali.vartak@changehealthcare.com