

Scaling agentic AI: workflow redesign, governance, token economics, and human oversight

Insights from the September 2026 Kyndryl AI Expert Exchange

kyndryl[®]



Contents

01

Overview

02

**Workflow
Transformation**

03

Scaled Innovation

04

Value Economics

05

Process Reinvention

06

**What is the Kyndryl AI
Expert Exchange?**

07

**Kyndryl AI and data
services**

01

Agentic AI: From Pilots to Value

Agentic AI is shifting the center of gravity from technology selection to management design. As adoption expands from personal productivity into business workflows, unresolved questions of ownership, governance, measurable value, and consumption economics stand between pilots and real returns.

Four priorities define the emerging model: redesign work around connected workflows rather than isolated agents, establish clear paths from experimentation to supported production, manage token spend as an investment tied to outcomes, and preserve human judgment for exceptions that automation cannot safely resolve.



02

AI Workflow Transformation

The next phase of AI adoption is not defined by adding more copilots or isolated automations. Value increasingly depends on how agents, data, systems, and people operate together across an end-to-end workflow. This changes the design question from where AI can be inserted to how work should be reorganized, who owns decisions, and what escalation pathways and criteria need to be defined.

Those operating-model choices must be resolved before deployment, not after a pilot succeeds. Escalation paths, functional ownership, performance measures, and human-in-the-loop roles are core solution requirements. Leaving them implicit risks technical progress without business value, as workflows may scale while accountability and value realization remain unclear.

“Seventy-five percent of artificial intelligence projects fail not because of limitations in the technology stack, but because of non-technical factors ranging from workforce culture to business process transformation.”

AI Expert Exchange participant

Business Workflow Transformation →



03

AI Innovation at scale needs a deliberate path from experimentation to production

Tiered operating models are emerging to balance broad access with production discipline. Personal productivity and low-impact experimentation can remain decentralized, while solutions that influence business processes move into managed environments with dedicated ownership, documentation, risk review, deployment standards, and ongoing support. The boundary matters because an agent that begins as a personal tool can quickly become shared infrastructure.

Certification provides the practical distinction between experimentation and enterprise dependency. Business units can continue to innovate, but production use requires clarity on approved data, accountable owners, maintenance expectations, and measurable outcomes. This model also protects against duplicate development and knowledge loss when citizen developers change roles, while preserving a route for high-value ideas to mature without forcing every experiment through the full enterprise-delivery process.

“Autonomous decisions require clear certification and governance standards.”

AI Expert Exchange participant



04

Token consumption must be governed as an investment, not minimized as a cost

AI economics invert the logic of many earlier technology transformations: successful adoption can increase consumption and therefore increase cost. The relevant question is not how to reduce token usage in isolation, but whether each workload produces enough revenue, cost reduction, risk mitigation, or operating capacity to justify the spend. Consumption controls should therefore distinguish strategic workloads from low-value activity rather than impose uniform limits.

A portfolio approach combines outcome-based funding, token budgets for experiments, executive visibility, and model routing based on task complexity. Less expensive or smaller models can handle bounded work, while frontier models are reserved for tasks that warrant their performance. Locally hosted models may serve sovereignty, compliance, or specialized domain needs, but cost alone is not a sufficient rationale once infrastructure and performance requirements are considered.

The durable governance model connects spend thresholds to a defined business outcome and stops or escalates activity when that connection weakens.



05

Process Reinvention

Operational AI exposes the weaknesses that experienced employees routinely work around. Data irregularities, hidden exceptions, fragmented systems, and tacit knowledge can cause agents to loop, consume tokens, or fail unpredictably. Automating the current process as-is often transfers that complexity directly into the new system instead of removing it.

The stronger approach begins by capturing institutional knowledge, identifying authoritative data and APIs, and redesigning the workflow around the minimum information an agent needs. Guardrails should limit retries and move unresolved exceptions to a person before consumption compounds. Human oversight can then evolve with evidence: close supervision during early deployment, followed by monitoring once performance is consistently reliable. This makes human involvement an explicit operating control rather than an undefined fallback.

Policy as code

Turn business policies and compliance requirements into AI guardrails that drive innovation without sacrificing control.

“Organizations frequently fail by automating legacy workflows directly instead of simplifying them first. Re-engineering processes allows systems to connect directly to core data interfaces rather than navigating complex user interfaces.”

AI Expert Exchange participant



06

What is the Kyndryl AI Expert Exchange?

The **Kyndryl AI Leaders Expert Exchange** is a quarterly, invite-only roundtable where senior leaders discuss tackling real AI challenges together. Each session delivers peer insights, practical lessons and proven ways to turn AI strategy into measurable outcomes. Attendees can participate in candid discussions with leaders actively applying AI across industries.

The September 2026 conversation was moderated by Chinh Vo, Global Practice Leader Cyber Resilience & Connectivity at Kyndryl.



Chinh Vo

VP of Innovation at Scale, Kyndryl Consult

Connect on LinkedIn



07

Kyndryl AI and data services

Gather business insights at scale with a robust data foundation, modernization, and platform management. Our global expertise—combined with the latest innovations from technology partners and hyperscalers—prepares your business for artificial intelligence. We integrate reliable, modular, and scalable solutions with your existing data architecture to accelerate your data modernization journey, enabling faster data preparation through automated workflows and a modern data fabric.

Learn more at [Kyndryl.com](https://www.kyndryl.com).





© Copyright Kyndryl Inc. 2026. All rights reserved.

Kyndryl is a trademark or registered trademark of Kyndryl, Inc. in the United States and/or other countries. Other product and service names may be trademarks of Kyndryl, Inc. or other companies.

This document is current as of the initial date of publication and may be changed by Kyndryl at any time without notice. Not all offerings are available in every country in which Kyndryl operates. Kyndryl products and services are warranted according to the terms and conditions of the agreements under which they are provided.

The performance data and client examples cited are presented for illustrative purposes only. Actual performance results may vary depending on specific configurations and operating conditions. Kyndryl products and services are warranted according to the terms and conditions of the agreements under which they are provided.