

Press Release

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Generative AI: Swiss companies more cautious than their international competitors – potential left untapped

Demonstrating minimal investment, little expertise and hardly any practical applications, Swiss firms are tiptoeing around the subject of generative artificial intelligence rather than tackling it head-on. Meanwhile, their counterparts in Europe and the US are a few steps ahead when it comes to integrating this technology. These are some of the findings from Deloitte’s [State of Generative AI in the Enterprise](#) study.

Virtually overnight, artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT have become essential companions in our day-to-day lives. Most people are now using generative AI to make tasks easier. Businesses, however, need more time to adapt the technology to their needs. The latest AI study by the audit and consulting company Deloitte shows that they are taking longer to introduce it than initially anticipated. The euphoria expressed in earlier surveys has been replaced by a healthy dose of realism.

Compared to their counterparts in other countries, Swiss firms are taking a particularly cautious view of the trend. Half of the executives surveyed expect it to be one to three more years before generative AI brings about any far-reaching changes in their industry. And just under a third (30 per cent) believe that it will take even longer. Only 8 per cent believe that generative AI has already transformed their market environment, compared with 22 per cent in the US.

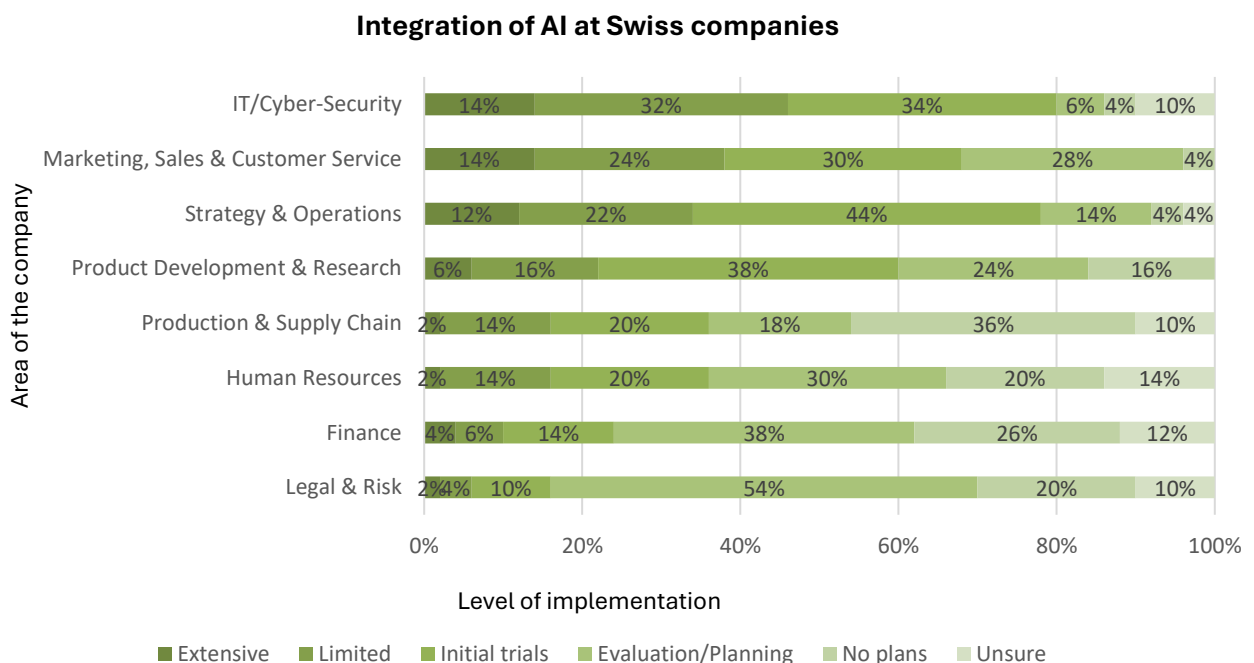


Figure 1: Where Swiss companies are deploying generative AI – and how much progress they have made with it

Switzerland lagging behind

US businesses are also making faster progress with integrating AI than Swiss firms. Almost half (45 per cent) have already prepared their technical infrastructure well or very well for its introduction, compared with not quite a third (32 per cent) in Switzerland. European companies are even further ahead: in terms of formulating their strategy, upskilling staff and managing data, they are well out in front of their US and Swiss counterparts.

“Swiss companies are still hesitant about adopting generative AI,” says Marc Beierschoder, Head of AI & Data at Deloitte Switzerland. “It’s something we’ve also noticed in our client work. However, we are already seeing highly promising use being made of generative AI in IT or marketing,” he adds. As the survey highlights, projects in the areas of IT and cyber-security, as well as in marketing, sales and customer service, are at the most advanced stages. However, when it comes to AI tools for the legal, HR or finance departments, most companies are still in the evaluation phase.

Minimal investment and little expertise

The survey offers several possible explanations as to why Switzerland is lagging behind other countries. For one thing, Swiss companies are investing relatively little in generative AI: half of respondents spend less than 20 per cent of their entire AI budget on the technology. Investment levels are much higher in the US and Europe. At the same time, Swiss businesses also lack the necessary expertise, with nearly a quarter (24 per cent) of them confessing to knowing little about

Pressure to introduce AI in Swiss companies

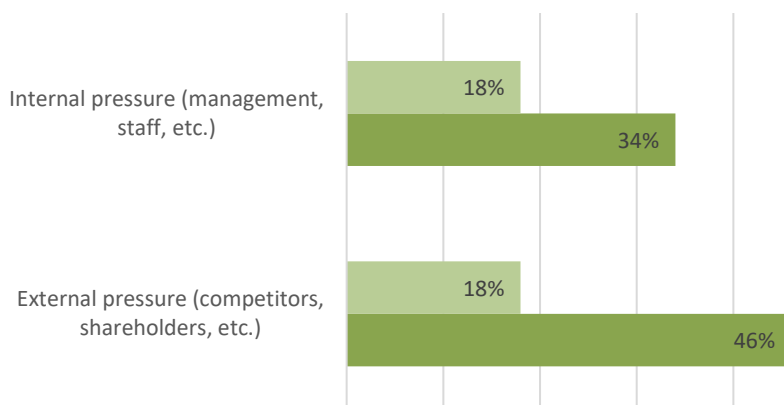


Figure 2: Internal and external pressure on Swiss companies to implement generative AI tools (year-on-year comparison)

how to use the technology. The equivalent figures for Europe and the US are a mere 13 and 7 per cent respectively. Furthermore, management teams in Switzerland tend to have little interest in generative AI. Most respondents agreed that it needs to be given more attention internally.

Growing pressure on Swiss firms

As far as Swiss companies are concerned, a lack of expertise and skilled staff is therefore one of the biggest hurdles to integrating the technology, alongside risk management and the complex legal

requirements. Compared to the situation in other countries, Swiss businesses are also facing stronger cultural resistance from their employees. “Companies will need to overcome internal resistance and invest more if they are to exploit the technology’s significant potential across the board,” says Deloitte’s Marc Beierschoder. “Time is of the essence, though, as the pressure on them is increasing,” he adds. Compared to last year’s survey, nearly twice as many Swiss firms are now being strongly urged to introduce generative AI tools by voices within the company; while just 18 per cent saw it as a priority a year ago, that figure has now risen to 34 per cent. However, the external pressure, such as from competitors or shareholders, is even greater: this figure has risen sharply over the course of a year, from 18 to 46 per cent.

About the study

[The State of Generative AI in the Enterprise study](#) used quarterly surveys to examine the extent to which businesses are using generative AI. For the fourth round of the study, which was conducted between July and September 2024, Deloitte interviewed 2,773 executives with AI experience in 14 countries, including 50 from Swiss companies.

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