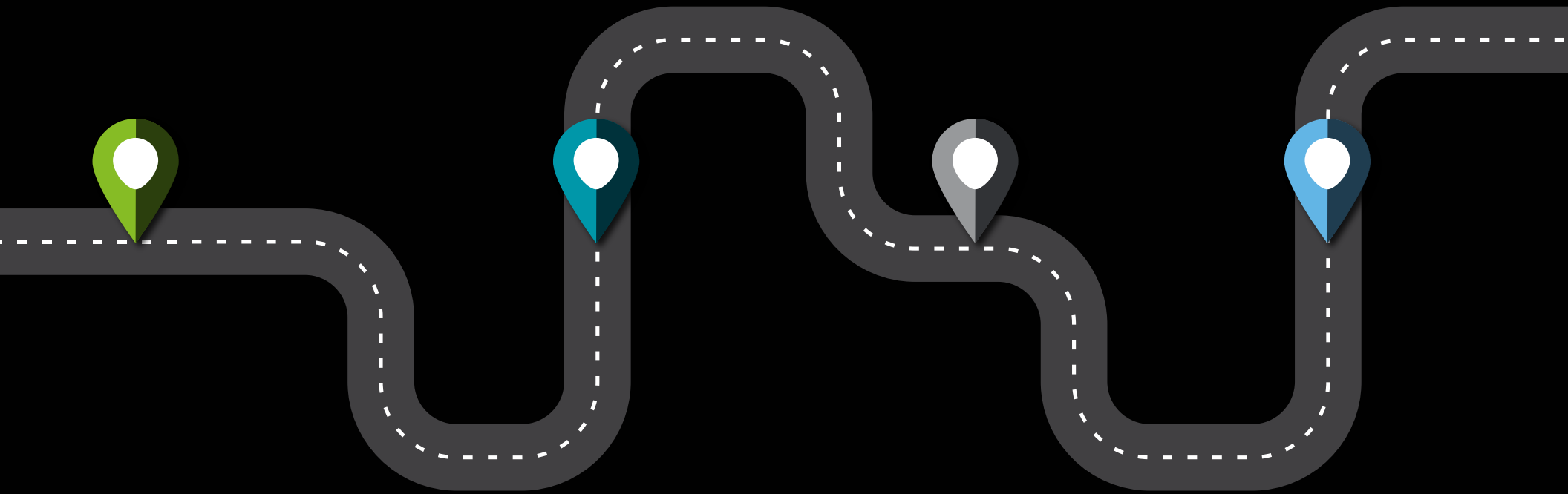




The Road Towards AI & Advanced Technology: the Federal CDO Journey

Insights from the most recent [survey](#) of Federal Chief Data Officers (CDOs)

Chief Data Officers (CDOs) and Statistical Officers (SOs) from federal departments, agencies, and bureaus participated in an annual Data Foundation & Deloitte survey to understand the evolving CDO role and CDO community needs. This marks the fifth iteration of the survey and corresponding report. The survey insights illustrate the five years of progress and the road ahead for AI & advanced technology. This details Deloitte's point of view on the major stops along this road.



Where are CDOs at in their AI “journey”?

While there are still more steps to take, CDOs are making significant strides at implementing AI in their organizations.

Most CDOs are using basic or advanced AI and are planning to build on these capabilities in the coming year, particularly in expanding accessibility of existing technology and adopting new technologies like GenAI.

- Up from 2023 (**55%**), **66%** of CDOs reported already using basic or advanced AI in their organizations in 2024.
- Over the next year, most CDOs are planning to adopt a variety of AI technologies (**90%**), including:
 - Enhancements to make data more accessible and useful (**73%**)
 - New technologies such as generative AI (**67%**)
 - Basic AI such as machine learning models (**60%**)
 - AI infrastructure advances (**50%**).



What are the top CDO priorities that “align their wheels” to advancing AI and analytics?

Building and modernizing data infrastructure is essential to developing AI and advanced technology applications.

The shift in the CDO mission towards infrastructure indicates progress in strategy and governance missions in the last year.

Data infrastructure was the top priority among CDOs in 2024. This is a shift from the 2023 survey results where data strategy/governance was the top priority.

- **70%** of CDOs said that data infrastructure was one of their top three priorities in achieving their CDO mission.
- While nearly all CDOs in 2023 (**85%**) said implementing data strategy/governance was one of their top three priorities, this priority stood at the top for **57%** of CDOs in 2024.
- A third of CDOs (**33%**) said preparing data for innovative technologies was among their top three mission priorities.



How can CDOs “navigate” their organization/agency toward advanced AI and analytics?

Distinguished roles and responsibilities that provide CDOs with clear authority and leadership support can help CDOs drive their organizations towards new analytics frontiers.

Insights from the survey indicate CDOs could build a more data-informed organization with a refresh to the federal data strategy and an increased clarity of roles and responsibilities, focus on data readiness, and support from leadership.

- Lack of authority within the CDO Office to implement improvements was a top roadblock to becoming a data-informed organization for most CDOs (**68%**).
- Financial and budgetary constraints was a top barrier to advancing AI for most CDOs (**66%**).
- Many CDOs (**43%**) also reported lack of AI guidance as a primary barrier to using AI in their organizations.



Who are the critical partners for CDOs to “rev up” AI adoption at the organization/agency level?

CAIOs will be critical partners to CDOs, aligning all cross-functional areas of their organization with strategic AI initiatives.

As of 2024, most organizations have established a CAIO role that compliments the CDO role.

- **97%** of CDOs collaborate with C-suite leadership (e.g., CIO, COO, CFO) and **83%** with AI leadership on at least a monthly basis.
- Most CDOs who work with CAIOs have found their working relationship to be highly complementary to achieving their CDO mission (**63%**).
- **66%** of CDOs reported at least some involvement in developing their organization’s AI Strategy.

For additional questions

Deloitte supports many Federal clients in the data and AI space. With best-in-class AI advice and capabilities, we can help at each stage of the race, providing Chief Data Officers with the CDO Services they need to navigate the role of the CDO.



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