Transforming the future of work with AI

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Unleash the power of AI in the workplace

It's time to imagine a better experience for every employee, driven by AI.

This eBook explores the role of AI in the workplace, from the beliefs driving its adoption to the barriers faced and the path forward in building a future where AI shapes the way we work.

Drawing on insights from comprehensive research where business leaders shared their readiness for AI adoption, projected investments, and the impact on the employee experience, as well as firsthand accounts from early adopters of Webex AI[2], this exploration offers valuable perspectives on the intersection of AI and the modern workplace.

"The next era of AI will undoubtedly transform the way we work. AI has already empowered us all to reimagine how we connect and collaborate. Though we're still in the early days of exploring everything that's possible with AI, recent advancements in LLM (large language models) allow technology to better understand human intent and respond in natural language like never before possible."

Javed Khan

Senior Vice President and General Manager, Cisco Systems, Inc.

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Business leaders bet big on AI

AI investments.

Business leaders worldwide are placing significant bets on AI, recognizing its pivotal role in revolutionizing the employee experience and driving organizational success.

An overwhelming 84% of business leaders believe AI holds the key to enhancing the employee experience, with nearly a quarter of budgets being allocated to employee experience AI initiatives, according to a recent AI Index[1] which surveyed over 500 global business leaders.

Percentage of budget being allocated to AI, according to business leaders:

24% of human resources budget

23% of facilities budget

22% of IT budget

AI in the workplace.

The emphasis on the office experience is evident as organizations strive to attract talent back to physical workplaces.

C-level executives are leading the charge with 61% investing heavily in various workplace AI technologies, including AI-enabled video devices and environmental sensors. These investments underscore the prioritization of enhancing the office environment to meet evolving needs of the workforce.

AI's global impact.

With high expectations riding on AI's transformative potential, both leaders and employees alike are counting on AI to deliver significant wins across various business functions.

From improving communication to optimizing meeting effectiveness, the research highlights the big expectations surrounding AI adoption and how employees and leaders envision leveraging AI to drive positive outcomes in the workplace.

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Perceived benefits for employees

It's expected that AI will provide a significant boost to productivity and improve the collaboration experience for in-office, remote, and hybrid workers.

95%

of business leaders believe that AI enhances communication in the workplace.

97%

are confident that AI-enabled video conferencing devices will enhance meeting effectiveness, save time, and increase productivity in the office.

1 in 3

believe AI will help employees working from home feel more part of the team.

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Perceived benefits for businesses

With AI providing significant benefits to employees, it's not surprising that it's also expected to deliver tangible results for businesses.

The top business benefits that leaders predict AI will deliver include:

- Increased productivity
- Improved customer experiences
- Increased innovation
- Cost reduction
- Revenue growth

99%

believe AI will increase productivity with 56% saying it will increase it by 30% or more over the next 3 years.

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The office, powered by AI

Business leaders are ready for next-generation office experiences.

As noted earlier, 61% of C-level executives are investing heavily in AI technologies for the workplace to meet the evolving needs of the workforce. In fact, increasing office productivity ranked as the top benefit of AI adoption, ahead of enhanced communication and improved employee engagement.

95%

of leaders recognize the potential for AI to enhance the office experience.

The most in-demand areas for AI-enhancements include:

· Workspace monitoring and management
· Collaboration device troubleshooting
· Video conferencing devices

The top desired AI capabilities for video conferencing devices, according to business leaders, include:

52% in-room digital assistants

46% facial recognition with in-meeting name labels

45% speaker tracking

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Webex AI early adopters reap real rewards

Early adopters of Webex AI technologies and the AI Assistant are already seeing real benefits, experiencing significant improvements in productivity, efficiency, and customer satisfaction.

In a recent survey by Webex[2], users enrolled in the Early Access Program for Webex AI in Webex Suite, Webex Contact Center, and Cisco collaboration devices were asked about their experience and the tangible businesses benefits they were realizing.

Real experiences, real results.

Webex AI capabilities are helping companies accomplish more, work more efficiently, and improve customer satisfaction. From time-saving features to significantly more effective collaboration, early adopters are witnessing firsthand the transformative power of AI in driving business success and maximizing ROI (Return on Investment) in their organizations.

AI benefits all.

· Knowledge workers

· IT administrators

· Customer-facing personnel

The survey shows employees across the organization who have embraced Webex AI can streamline workflows, automate repetitive tasks, and deliver personalized experiences.

AI-powered collaboration tools are enhancing meeting effectiveness and improving wellbeing for remote and hybrid workers alike.

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The impact of AI on knowledge workers

The effectiveness of Webex AI features is evident among knowledge workers.
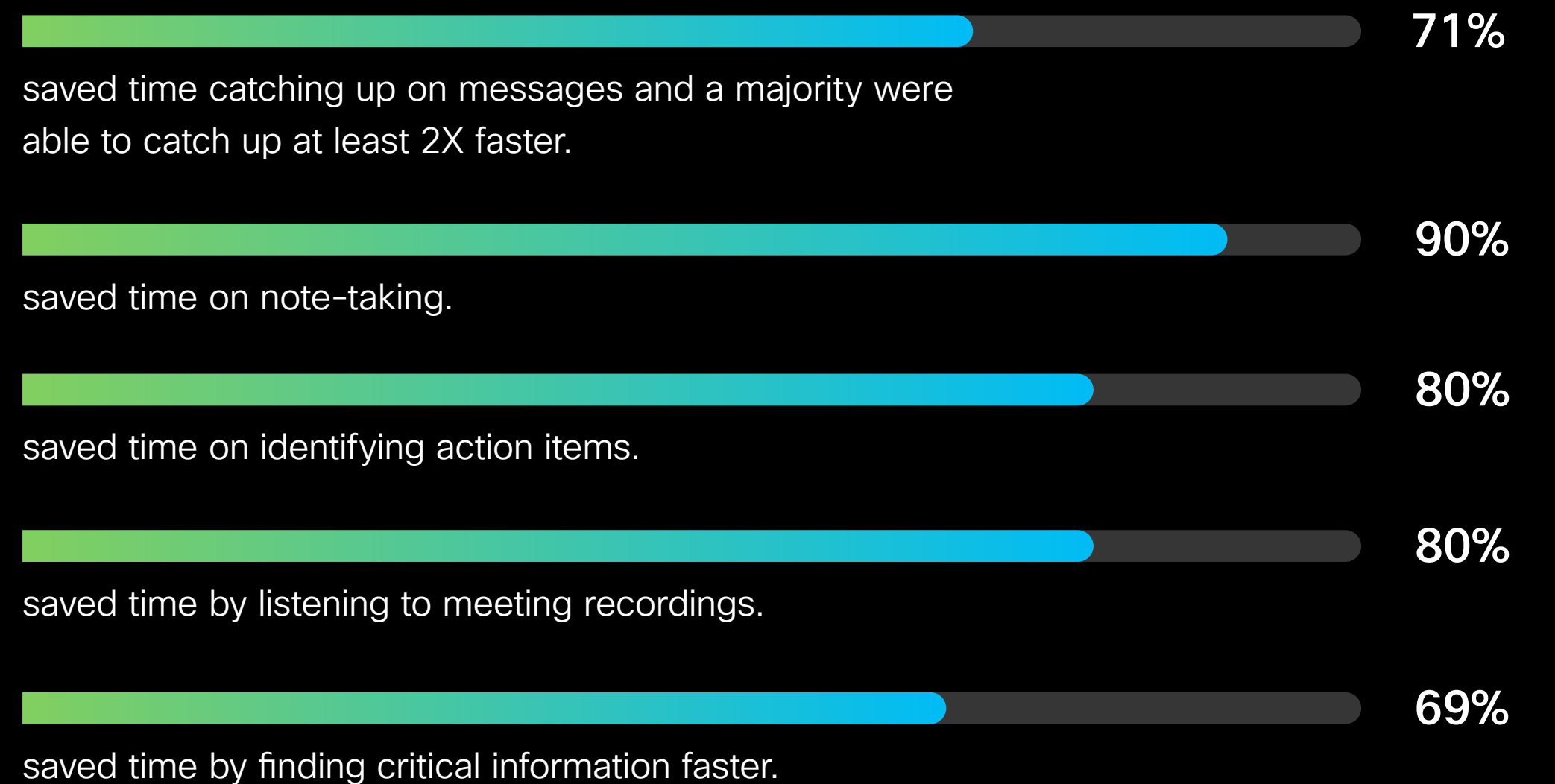
70%

of knowledge workers attested to saving

1–8 hours a week

with AI-enhanced experiences.

This additional time in the day can boost productivity and lead to better work-life balance.

Knowledge worker times savings:

71%
saved time catching up on messages and a majority were able to catch up at least 2X faster.

90%
saved time on note-taking.

80%
saved time on identifying action items.

80%
saved time by listening to meeting recordings.

69%
saved time by finding critical information faster.

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The benefits of AI beyond time savings

AI makes work from anywhere easier and move effective.

80%

say AI tools facilitate clearer, distraction-free conversations.

66%

report a reduction in communication barriers.

56%

experienced more effective collaboration across global time zones.

55%

experienced enhanced brainstorming and idea sharing.

AI-powered collaboration boosts meeting effectiveness for both remote and in-office workers.

80%

of hybrid workers reported improvements in collaboration and increased productivity, with nearly half finding hybrid meeting collaboration to be twice as effective.

71%

of hybrid workers acknowledge a greater sense of inclusion during hybrid meetings.

86%

experienced significant reduction in fatigue and enhanced focus during meetings involving remote, in-room, or on-the-go participants; for nearly half it exceptionally reduced fatigue and enhanced focus.

70%

noted exceptional improvements in meeting effectiveness, facilitated by the ability to clearly see and hear speakers in the office meeting room when they were working remotely.

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The impact of AI on IT

With IT playing a critical role in the employee experience, it's notable that:

73%

of employees in the IT administrator role indicated they save

2-8 hours a week

with AI-powered search.

These time savings could help shift the time IT spends on troubleshooting and problem-solving to the more strategic role of improving the employee experience.

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The impact of AI on customer-facing personnel

Customer service is critical for businesses, making it essential to keep both your customers and customer-facing personnel happy.

For customer-facing personnel, AI-driven wellness alerts have influenced agent wellbeing and company loyalty, as noted by 67% of respondents.

For customers, AI is improving the experience by providing faster time to issue resolution and improving engagement:

70%

anticipate three times faster agent response times with suggested responses.

85%

have observed improved customer interactions and engagement throughout the customer journey.

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Owning your AI journey

Moving beyond barriers.

The Webex AI Index research reveals that leaders are fully embracing AI, believing in its potential to bring significant business benefits. Results from the Webex Early Adopters Survey confirm this belief. However, the AI Index research also uncovers a key insight: many organizations face barriers to adopting AI technologies.

As organizations tackle the ins and outs of AI adoption, one thing is crystal clear: the future of work relies on AI. By smartly embracing AI and putting it where it matters most, businesses can unlock big benefits and lead the charge in digital innovation.

While AI is being embraced, many businesses are only just embarking on their AI journey. Currently, only a little over a quarter have implemented leading AI solutions such as predictive AI, generative AI, and conversational AI[1].

The top three concerns organizations have with adopting AI are:

· Security

· Integration

· Cost

Additionally, 74% of companies believe their teams are not fully prepared to adoption AI.

Due to these barriers, 64% of organizations are still developing their AI strategy.

To overcome these obstacles, organizations need to bring together AI stakeholders— such as those from customer experience, IT, human resources, and workspace management—to develop a comprehensive AI strategy focused on enhancing the employee experience.

It's crucial to create a targeted, company-wide plan for AI that zeroes in on areas with the greatest impact on business success. Achieving this requires organizations to embrace a clear path forward, taking ownership of their AI journey.

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The path forward with AI

Prioritize AI adoption where it counts.

How to overcome the top barriers to AI implementation and adoption.

- It's crucial for organizations to address key roadblocks such as security, integration across the organization, and cost considerations while ensuring transparency around responsible AI.

- Ensure that the AI platform you choose has robust security measures in place, offers seamless integration and scalability, and enables cost-effective implementation and management while also prioritizing transparency and responsible AI practices.

Embracing AI for hybrid work and workspaces.

- Employers and employees are eager to return to the office, but many workplaces aren't prepared[3]. It's crucial to leverage AI in the workplace to improve hybrid collaboration and the in-office experience.

- Recent findings from The Futurum Group's study on Hybrid Work in the Age of AI[4] underscore the urgency: workers juggle multiple hybrid meetings daily, losing almost two hours a week to tech issues and virtual meeting management. This results in significant productivity losses annually.

- To address this challenge, envision a future where AI seamlessly integrates into our work processes. Given this pressing need and the widespread belief in AI's potential, it's no surprise that Webex's 2024 Global Hybrid Work Study[3] reveals 68% of respondents feel current workspaces aren't prepared to support hybrid work, prompting plans to incorporate AI technologies by 2025.

Stay ahead in the industry with AI for customer excellence.

- To maximize AI's impact, businesses should focus on where it matters most: customer satisfaction. According to Webex AI Index Research[5] for customer experience, business leaders anticipate that AI will elevate the customer experience by quickening the time to issue resolution and enhancing self-service experiences.

- As AI evolves, businesses capable of addressing concerns and leveraging their full potential will lead in creating a world where every customer interaction delights. As organizations prepare to deliver exceptional customer experiences, they must strive to harness AI's full potential.

- Business leaders should explore platforms that redefine the contact center, where waiting is obsolete and efficiency prevails.

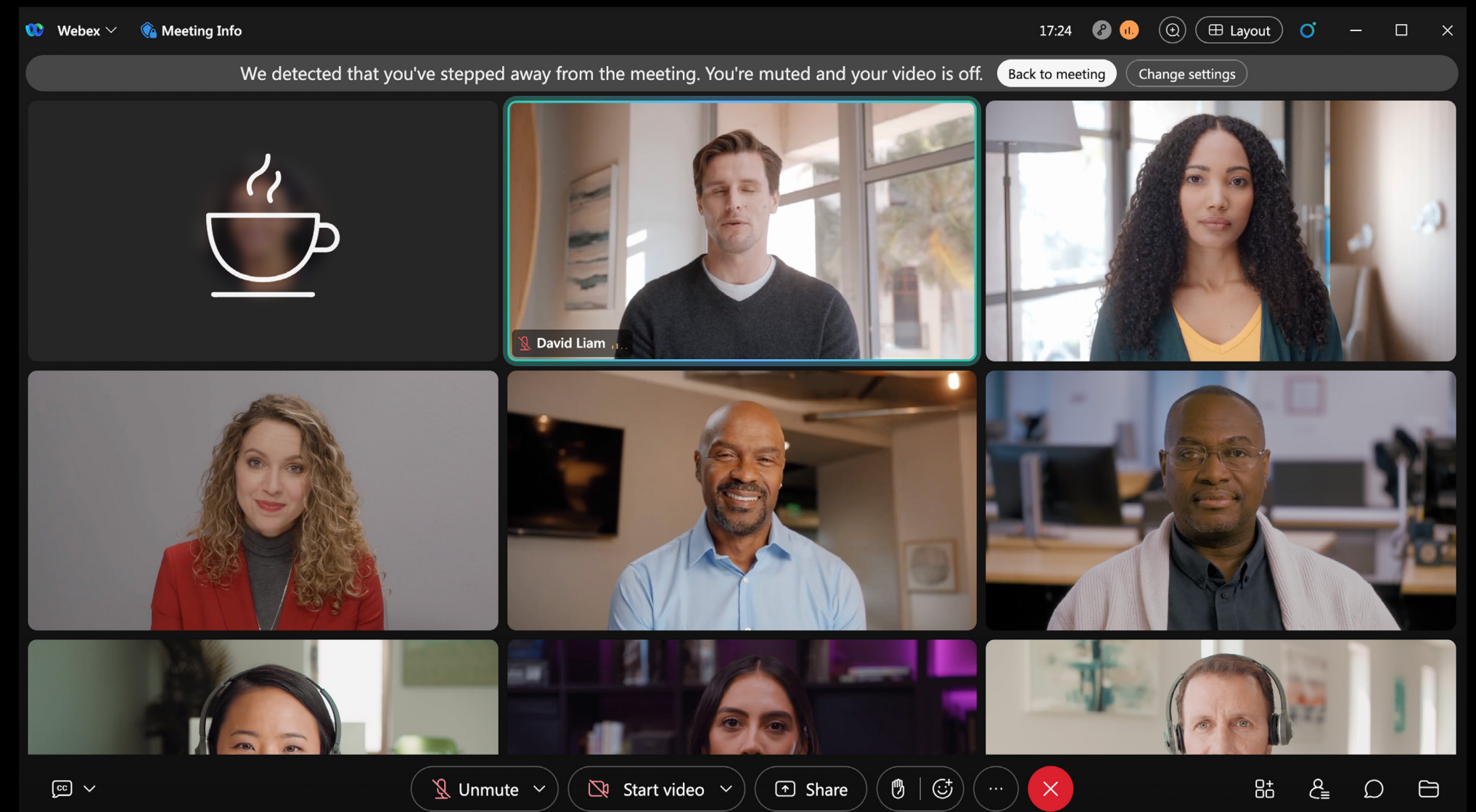**webex** by cisco

Webex powers the future of work

By aligning AI with your goals and focusing on what matters most, you can pave the way for growth and innovation.

As organizations navigate the complexities of AI adoption, one thing remains clear: the future of work is AI-driven.

By embracing AI strategically and prioritizing adoption efforts where it counts, businesses can unlock transformative benefits and drive innovation in the digital age.

Learn How

[1] Webex AI Index Research for Employee Experience by Dimensional Research, May 2024

[2] Webex AI Early Users Survey, May 2024

[3] Webex Global Hybrid Work Study, March 2024

[4] Hybrid Work in the Age of AI by The Futurum Group, February 2024

[5] Webex AI Index Research for Customer Experience by Dimensional Research, May 2024

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