5 Things Companies Get Wrong About Agentic AI — Are You Making the Same Mistakes?

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Key Takeaways

- The efficacy of agentic AI heavily relies on the quality of data it receives, necessitating clean, well-organized data for precise insights, and it still requires human oversight to refine and guide its functionality.
- Despite common misconceptions, agentic AI is currently active and influential within organizations, aiding in real-time analysis and decision-making, and is integral for businesses looking to stay competitive.

Agentic AI isn't smarter AI — it's an autonomous decision-maker that's completely transforming how businesses operate and how employees work. Its impact rivals the rise of the internet in the 1990s or the launch of the iPhone in the 2000s. But like every major innovation, especially when it first goes mainstream, there's a lot of confusion about what agentic AI actually is. Some think it's an advanced version of ChatGPT, while others assume it's a type of chatbot.

Misunderstanding around agentic AI is often caused by oversimplified explanations, marketing buzz or a lack of hands-on experience. But it also stems from common perceptions around automation, especially the chatbots that people regularly rely on for things like customer support, order tracking or making appointments. And inside organizations,

agentic AI is often confused with internal systems that handle routine tasks, like chatbots designed to respond to IT support requests, track the status of purchase approvals or update employee records. While useful for simple tasks, these chatbots don't drive outcomes on their own.

Agentic AI acts more like an autonomous digital coworker. It can analyze complex data, interpret trends, surface opportunities and proactively recommend next steps to help teams make smarter decisions. Compared to a traditional AI, which is reactive and responds to instructions, agentic AI acts independently and thinks ahead.

As CEO of Infragistics, I'm constantly speaking with leaders from established enterprises to emerging, high-growth companies about the impact of AI. The misconception that agentic AI is a chatbot can keep companies from realizing its true potential.

Here are four other common myths to watch out for.

Related: Your AI Initiatives Will Fail If You Don't Address This Crucial Component First

1. Agentic AI is the newest version of tools like ChatGPT

Similar to the chatbot misconception, many understand agentic AI to be a more advanced version of traditional AI. While both can handle repetitive tasks and streamline day-to-day workflows, the difference between the two tools depends on what they do after that.

Tools like ChatGPT, Gemini and Grok can generate responses from data based on very specific inputs. For example, a marketing team can ask their AI tool for a subject line for an email for an upcoming campaign. The traditional tools they use will offer a few different variations of subject lines — but

nothing more. Agentic AI can go a step further, analyzing what's worked in the past, taking into account the audience they're targeting and understanding product and shopping trends to recommend subject lines that will perform.

Or, while traditional AI tools could summarize a 30-page marketing campaign performance report, agentic AI can analyze the data, pinpoint what elements in the campaign drove the most performance (and what fell flat) and identify ways to improve future campaigns.

Both of these AI tools drive efficiencies within an organization — but agentic AI has the power to drive more meaningful impact.

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2. Any data is good data for agentic AI

AI runs on data, but not all data is created equally. Another misconception about agentic AI — and AI overall — is that the more information you give it, the better the insights. The quality, organization and accessibility of that data actually matter much more than the quantity of it. If the data you're feeding into AI is bad, the results are going to be bad too.

Agentic AI is only as smart as the data it receives. When companies' data exists in silos, scattered across disconnected CRMs, analytics tools and platforms, AI can't see the full picture. That, paired with unclean or inaccurate data, will limit AI's effectiveness.

The next wave of AI isn't solely about adoption; it's about data readiness. Organizations are quickly realizing that to unlock the full potential of agentic AI, they need more than the tools—they need centralized, clean and continuously

updated data. Once that foundation is in place, agentic AI can power companies to make faster, smarter decisions – like where to allocate budgets, how to create go-to-market strategies or which initiatives will drive the best business outcomes.

3. There's no need for human oversight

Many assume that once data is clean and centralized, AI agents can work without oversight. While AI agents are proactive and work autonomously, they need ongoing human input and feedback to be effective.

Agentic AI depends on continuous learning and refinement – guided by humans who review outcomes, correct errors and ensure recommendations remain aligned with evolving business goals. When data, direction or objectives become out of sync, even the best AI tools can start producing results that miss the mark.

AI should be treated as a collaborative partner, not a replacement for human judgment. When teams strike that balance, they're able to sustain long-term performance, reduce risk and stay agile as markets and customer expectations evolve.

Related: Don't Waste Money on AI. Unlock Its True Potential By Treating It Like a New Hire.

4. Agentic AI is a technology of the future

Because it still may sound futuristic, it's easy to think agentic AI is still years away from making a real impact. But it's already here – and already driving results.

Agentic AI is helping teams to analyze performance data in

real time, identify areas for improvement and growth and make smarter decisions, without having to manually scroll through dashboards or reports. Data-driven work management platforms like Slingshot offer organizations the ability to centralize their data and workflows into one place, so AI can empower teams to easily garner insights, uncover trends and accelerate decision-making based on data.

Of course, agentic AI will continue to evolve, but it’s not something companies will have to wait to use. In fact, if they’re not using it now within their organization, they’re already behind.

Agentic AI isn’t a chatbot or a smarter automation tool; it’s the foundation for a new way of working. The organizations that understand this distinction, invest in their data and treat AI as a collaborative partner will be the ones that turn its potential into performance.

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