Welcome to the CIO Hour!

February 2026

How Agentic AI Can Impact Your Events

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Today's Panel

CHRISTOPHER BONIFATI
Director of Marketing Operations & Analytics
APPA/Global Pet Expo
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Chris Bonifati, CEM, boasts an extensive career within the Pet Industry, notably serving as a key Trade Show organizer for APPA/Global Pet Expo. Renowned for his adeptness in data-driven decision-making, Chris leverages his skills to craft compelling narratives that resonate with his audience, ensuring optimal experiences at events.

JOE COLANGELO
Chief Executive Officer & Co-Founder, Bear Analytics
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Joe Colangelo Co-Founder and CEO of Bear Analytics, a data analytics firm focused on delivering solutions to event professionals that help them derive more insights from the data they're collecting. Formerly the principal strategist behind the strategic development of BIO's One-on-One Partnering System, a web-based, SaaS platform, focused on providing biotech and pharma companies an efficient system for engaging in face-to-face interactions at an international portfolio of events.

JAMES C. MARQUIS
Chief Information Officer, 501Works
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James C. Marquis is a seasoned senior executive with more than 30 years of experience working in technology with a wide variety of associations and nonprofits. James' work experience includes serving as CIO for a large medical association, CEO of a technology consulting organization and senior roles in product development and business consulting with for-profit and nonprofit clients. He also has designed and built multiple Internet-based business applications including Mojo Middleware™.

THE CIOHOUR™

The CIO Hour: How Agentic AI Can Impact Your Event Success

- Tackling the problems and questions that are on your mind with real-world technology advice

- Featuring experts in their field with decades of real-world experience

- Usually the first Thursday of every month

Visit www.theCIOHour.com for upcoming topics and events.

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Ground rules…

- No question is off limits!
- If the question is too specific to a particular situation, we may defer it but are happy to talk to you offline or after the event.
- This is a safe space, but we understand if you wish to remain anonymous.
- You may claim 1 CAE credit – details will be emailed tomorrow

Agenda

- In the News – A few highlights that might interest you
- Q & A – 45 min – Discussion with our experts and taking your questions
- The CIO _after_ Hour – 30 minutes of open mic discussion

In the News…

1. This common security measure is draining your workforce

    https://www.fastcompany.com/91473333/this-common-security-measure-is-draining-your-workforce

2. Deleting Data Just Got Easier for Californians, but It's Just One Piece of the Larger Cybersecurity Puzzle

    https://www.cnet.com/tech/services-and-software/deleting-data-just-got-easier-for-californians-but-its-just-one-piece-of-the-larger-cybersecurity-puzzle/

3. 18 of the best AI courses you can take online for free

    https://mashable.com/article/free-ai-courses-january-2026

4. The Best Chocolate Boxes of 2026 for Valentine's Day Delivery

    https://www.wired.com/story/best-chocolate-boxes-delivery-2026/

Please help! Take the AMS/CRM Software Selection Survey

- This is the 3rd edition of this survey project.

- 501Works and Branching Knowledge are conducting the survey to better understand the individual and collective experiences around AMS/CRM Software selection, including what worked well and what caused pain points.

- Association staff, AMCs, software vendors and consultants are all invited to respond.

Visit https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2025_AMS_CRM_Selection_Survey

Thinking about a new technology project in 2026?

- Presented by the League of Association Technologists.

- Features leading AMS consultants and vendors with decades of experience.

- Our experts will share the critical strategies, common pitfalls to avoid, and proven best practices that separate successful implementations from costly mistakes.
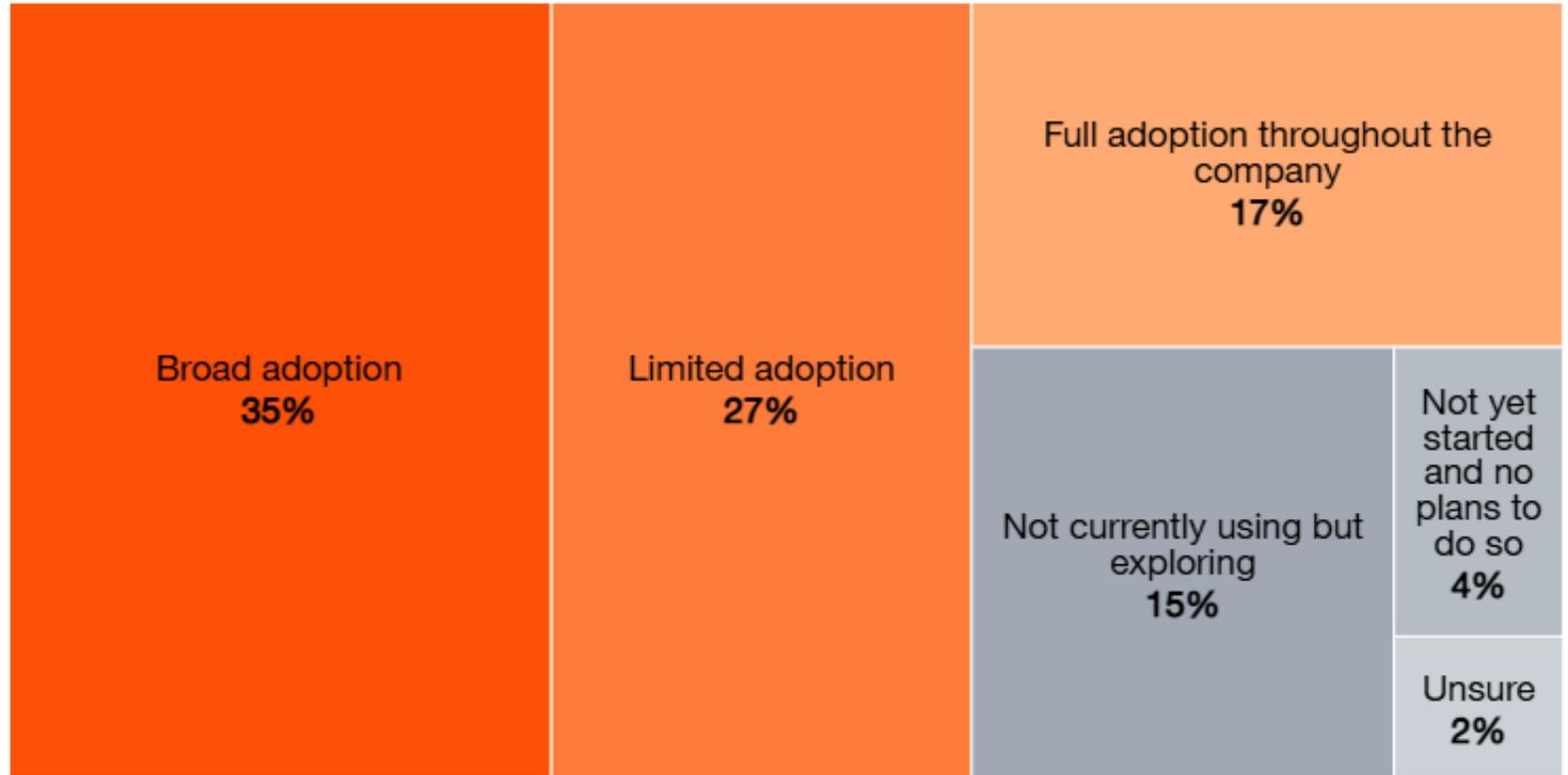
Register: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/invest-wisely-getting-the-best-from-a-new-ams-tickets-1781925249389?aff=oddtdtcreator

Today's Topic:

How Agentic AI Can Impact Your Event Success

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AI agent adoption

Broad adoption
35%

Limited adoption
27%

Full adoption throughout the company
17%

Not currently using but exploring
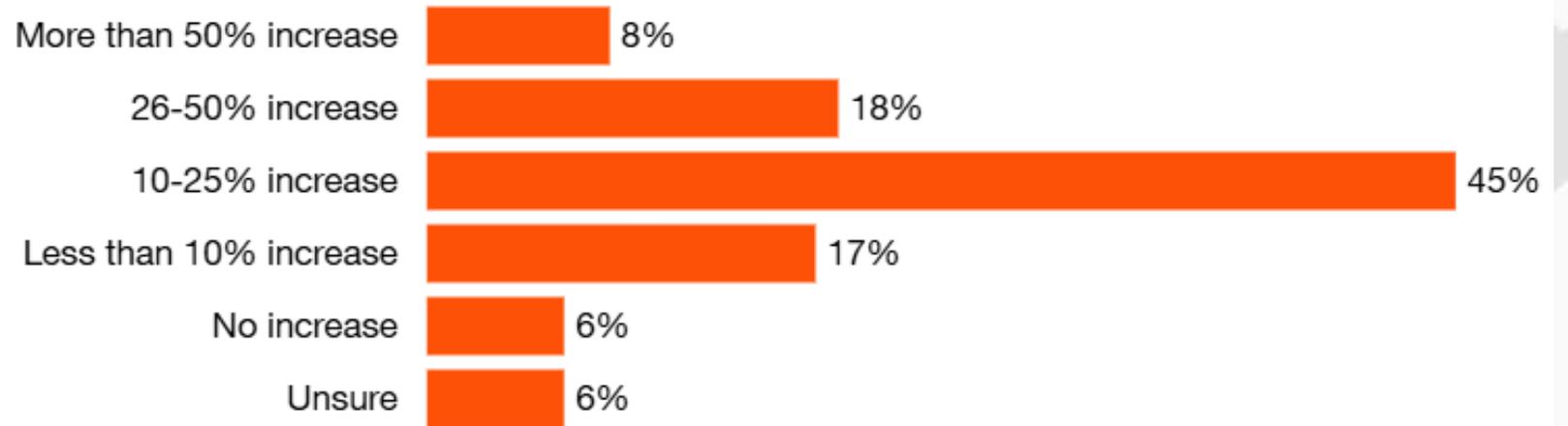15%

Not yet started and no plans to do so
4%

Unsure
2%

Q: Which of the following best describes how AI agents are being adopted across your company? (Select one.)
Source: PwC's AI Agent Survey, May 2025, base of 308

Quick Facts from PwC's AI Agent Survey

SOURCE: PwC's AI Agent Survey - https://www.pwc.com/us/en/tech-effect/ai-analytics/ai-agent-survey.html

Budgets are on the rise

AI budget increases due to agentic AI

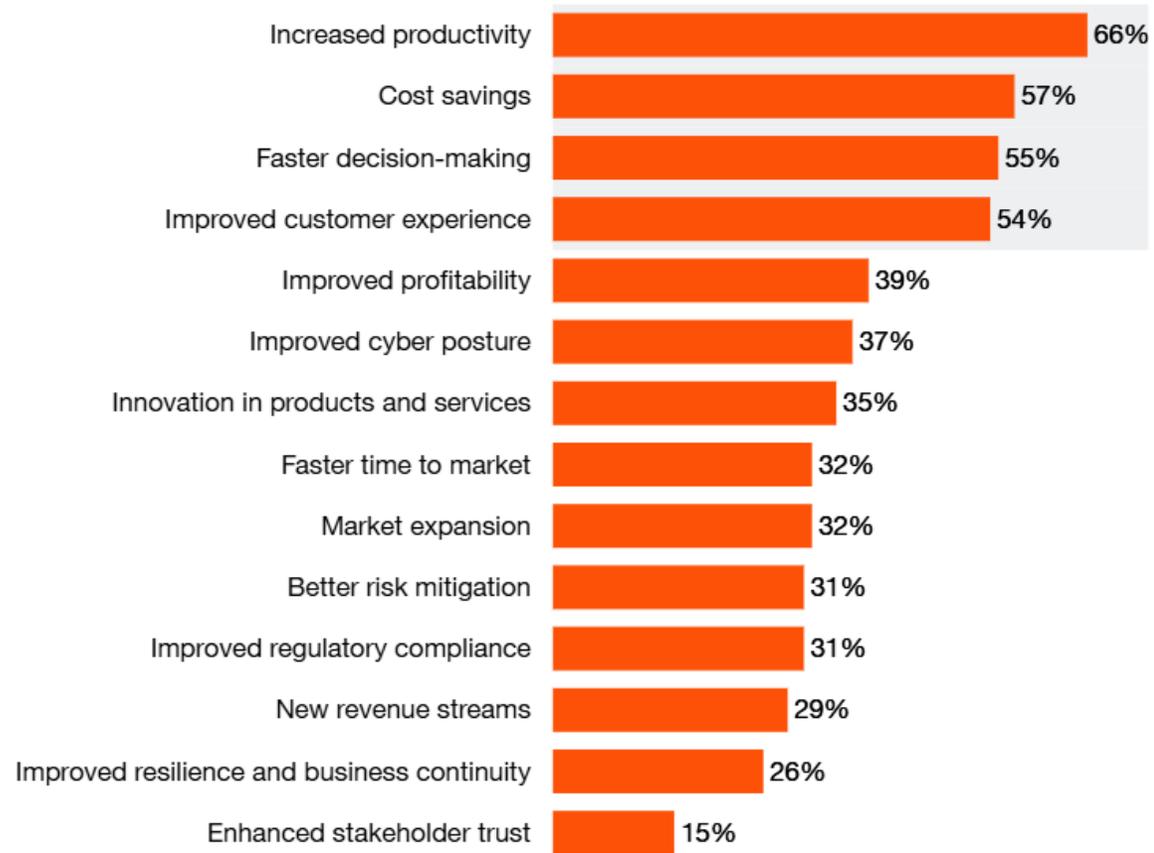| Category	Percent
More than 50% increase	8%
26-50% increase	18%
10-25% increase	45%
Less than 10% increase	17%
No increase	6%
Unsure	6%

Q: Over the next 12 months, how much is your team or business function planning to increase its AI-related budget due to interest in agentic AI? (Select one.)
Source: PwC's AI Agent Survey, May 2025, base of 308
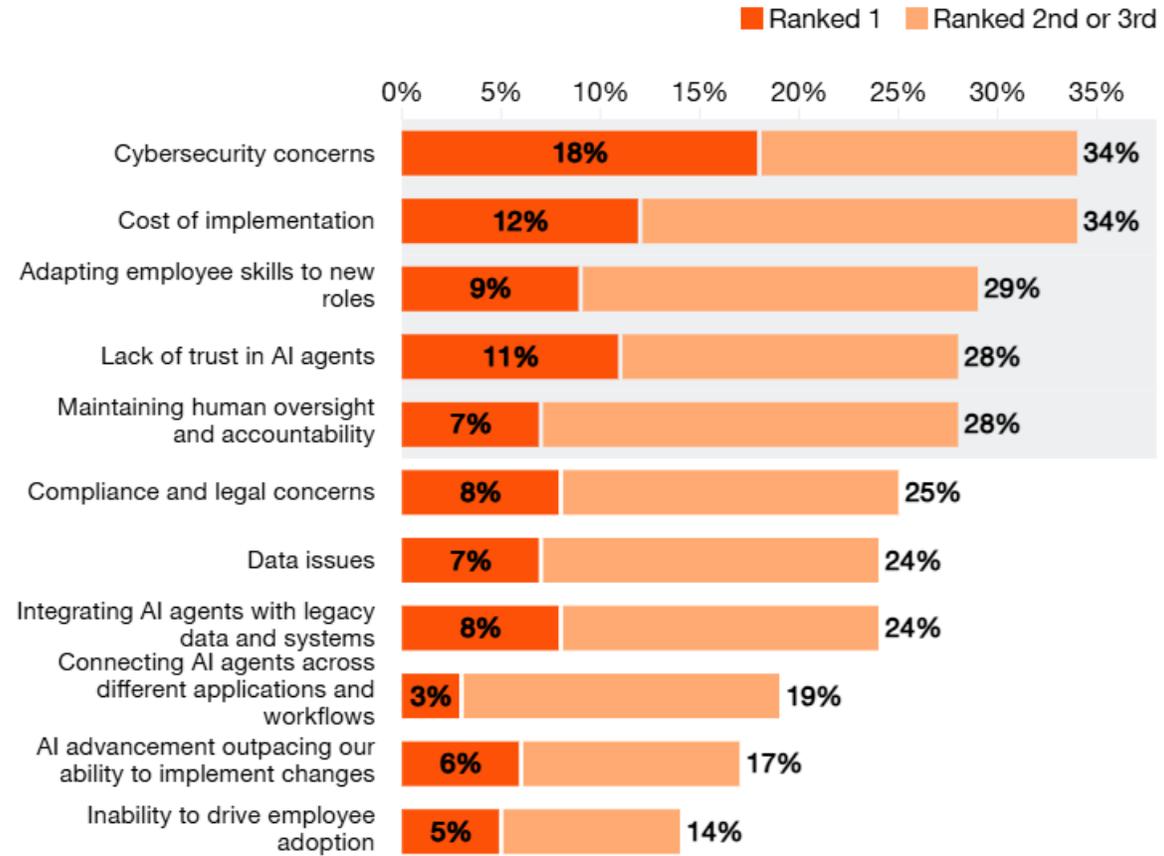
SOURCE: PwC's AI Agent Survey - https://www.pwc.com/us/en/tech-effect/ai-analytics/ai-agent-survey.html

How AI agents are already delivering value

Increased productivity	66%
Cost savings	57%
Faster decision-making	55%
Improved customer experience	54%
Improved profitability	39%
Improved cyber posture	37%
Innovation in products and services	35%
Faster time to market	32%
Market expansion	32%
Better risk mitigation	31%
Improved regulatory compliance	31%
New revenue streams	29%
Improved resilience and business continuity	26%
Enhanced stakeholder trust	15%

*Note: Asked only to respondents who are currently using AI agents.
Q: How are AI agents delivering measurable value in your company today? (Select all that apply.)
Source: PwC's AI Agent Survey, May 2025, base: 245

How are AI Agents delivering value

SOURCE: PwC's AI Agent Survey - https://www.pwc.com/us/en/tech-effect/ai-analytics/ai-agent-survey.html

Challenges to realizing value

SOURCE: PwC's AI Agent Survey - https://www.pwc.com/us/en/tech-effect/ai-analytics/ai-agent-survey.html

On to Your Questions...

Walk us through a few of the challenges you need help solving?

Help set the baseline,
what is "Agentic AI?"

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Help set the baseline, what is "Agentic AI?"

Traditional LLMs = Reactive

You ask a question, you get an answer. The AI waits for your next prompt.

"Show me exhibitors who haven't renewed."

Agentic AI = Proactive

The AI monitors, reasons, and acts autonomously toward a goal you define.

"Watch for at-risk exhibitors. When renewal drops below 70% likelihood, draft a personalized outreach and alert the sales rep."

The shift: From "answer my question" to "go solve this problem."

Agentic AI in Event-Adjacent Sectors: Travel Planning

Travel planning agents that feel like "attendee journey designers"

Mindtrip – End-to-end trip planning with maps/cards and "events features" in recent product expansion. Adjacency: "Plan my trip around the conference" (flights, hotel, agenda-aware suggestions, nearby experiences).

Layla – AI trip planner focused on itinerary generation and recommendations via app/chatbot. Adjacency: Personalizing add-on experiences (restaurants, neighborhoods, day trips) based on attendee profile.

GuideGeek (Matador Network) – Consumer assistant on WhatsApp/Instagram/Messenger plus a "for brands" angle with customized agents. Adjacency: An "event city concierge" embedded in channels attendees already use.

The pattern: These agents don't just answer questions—they proactively build complete travel plans around your event dates and preferences.

Agentic AI in Event-Adjacent Sectors: Hospitality

Hospitality "concierge agents" that mirror on-site event support

HiJiffy – Guest communications hub used by thousands of hotels; automates guest comms and reduces operational load.
Adjacency: Automating repetitive attendee questions (shuttles, check-in, venue navigation).

Asksuite – AI reservation assistant + omnichannel communication for hotels; oriented to bookings and conversion.
Adjacency: "Book it for me" flows—dining reservations, local experiences, upsell packages..

Hoteza AI Concierge – AI concierge integrated across channels (mobile/TV/WhatsApp) to reduce front-desk workload.
Adjacency: "Digital concierge everywhere" pattern for large venues or multiple hotels.

The pattern: These agents handle high-volume, repetitive interactions so your team can focus on high-touch moments that matter.

How have you improved your data ecosystem since we last talked?

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So, no more humans?

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As a vendor, how has this impacted your customer service delivery?

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How are you leveraging AI to actually impact your marketing budget?

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Where do you see AI going in the meeting and event space over the next 12 – 18 months?

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![The CIO Hour logo]

Hallucinations are real – how are you working to minimize them?

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YES!

- Super hard to get AI to figure out events – *because context matters*

  - *Ex: Registrants, Attendees, exhibiting vs. buying attendees or are they called "buyers"*

- Jargon is not ubiquitous in the events industry

  - *Ex: ticketing events vs. b2b events*

  - *Ex: weeks out*

  - *Talking about it in closed forums Ex: closed forums – IAEE and ASAE*

Any last parting advice,
especially for smaller organizations...

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Chris:

- **DO NOT be risk adverse**
- Focus on areas where you can be risky and non-essential tech
- *Ex: mobile app, chat system, AI buddy – low bar on expectations*
- **Use it yourself** – get an account and use it yourself. Use it personally.
  - Then think about your customer and the challenges they're having…

Joe:

The tools of business are being rewritten. Right now.

AI-native tools aren't coming—they're here. How you engage with them in the next 12 months will define your trajectory.

The force multiplier in front of you is unprecedented.

But most people are underindexing on one thing: understanding how these tools create *actual business value*.

Build your toolbox.

Get fluent with Claude, ChatGPT, Gamma. Not someday—now.

Other Questions?

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Thank you to our panel of experts!

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Slide 29 - February 2026

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THE CIOHOUR™

Delivering technology that WORKS for your association.

CONSULTING

501 WORKS

- IT Consulting Services – vCIO Service
- Software Selection & Implementation Services
- Customized Software Solutions and Integrations

INTEGRATION

MOJO MIDDLEWARE

Mojo Middleware™ - Easily integrate your different association software packages with over 40 available connectors.

SOFTWARE

software Mage

Software Mage™ – Online tools helping you navigate the AMS/CRM selection process, gather requirements, draft your RFP, and evaluate vendor responses.

We are here to help!
Call or email us for a **30 minute free** consulting session

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Final Thoughts

- Join us March 5th for **There's Gold in Them There Content!**

- An archive of this presentation and today's Webinar will be posted on theCIOHour.com in a few days.

- Any suggestions for future programs? Topics you would like to see covered? Please email us: theCIOHour@501works.com

- For CAE credit – you will receive a link via email tomorrow so you can claim your credit and receive your certificate.

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