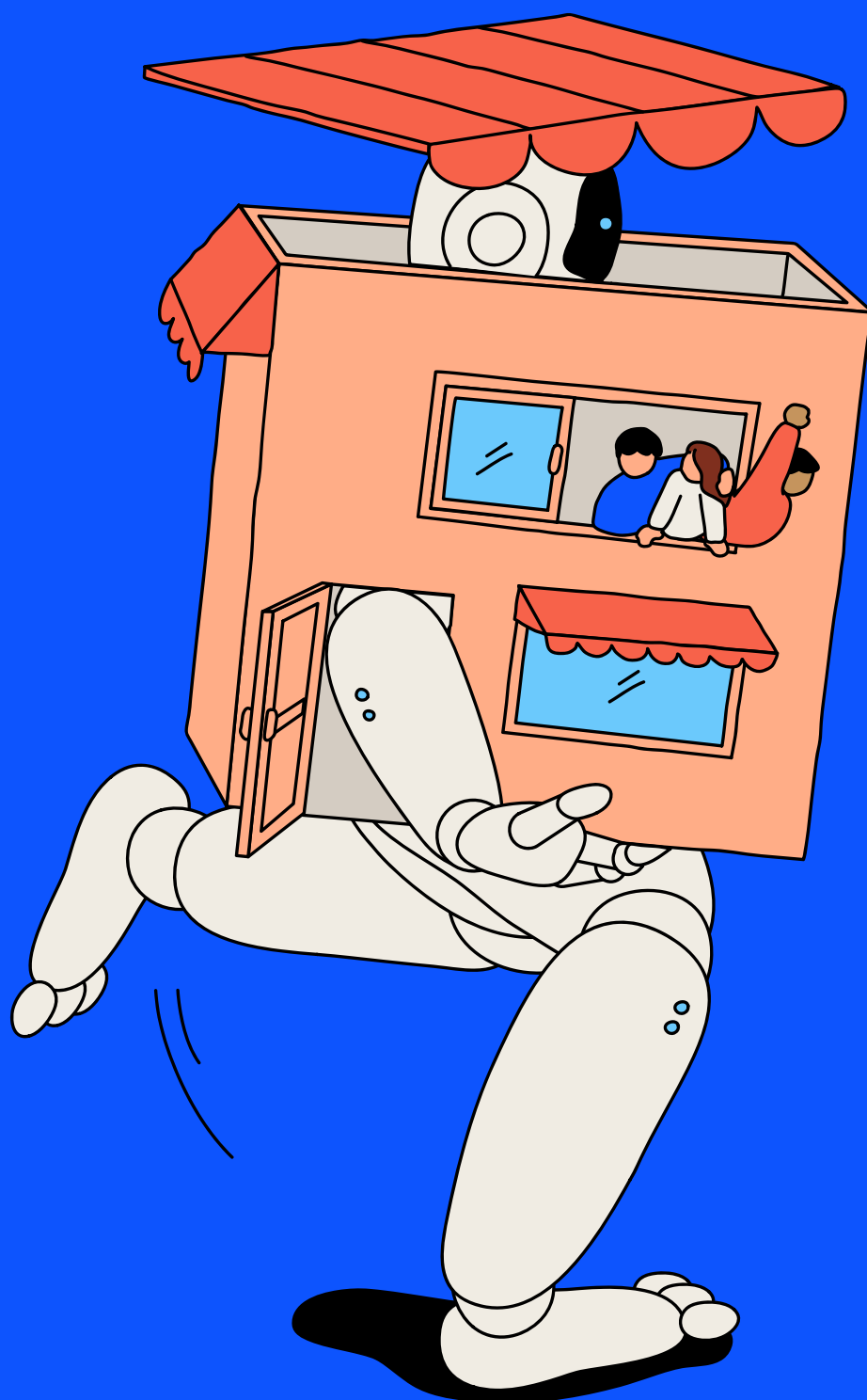


Tech State of Play

Put AI to work for
your business



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Insights in this report are taken from the **Business Tech State of Play** research study which surveyed 1,000 leaders from small and medium businesses (SMBs).

With an increase in concern around having the time to get everything done, it's no surprise that many SMBs are embracing new ways of harnessing AI at work. Almost half of SMBs surveyed in the *Tech State of Play* research study are willing to try new technology solutions to get ahead, now more than ever before. And the majority of SMBs already using AI tools view them as essential to future competitiveness.

SMBs striving for growth are most likely already embracing AI. But even if you're happy with the size of your business, don't overlook the potential of using AI to help fine tune your operations, empower staff and stay competitive.



64% of businesses already using AI believe that businesses that don't work with AI in the next 5 years will lose their ability to compete.

AI tools are primed to boost productivity, creativity and efficiency in the workplace. Many SMBs are ready to get on board if not already experimenting.

Business owners see the potential for AI to contribute positively across a range of areas. The starting point for many is content creation. The appeal of quickly moving past a blank page is easy to grasp. But AI tools can be used in a wide range of business functions. Data analytics is another of the top areas where business owners can see potential benefits.

Businesses of different sizes and types are thinking about AI in different ways, highlighting the broad opportunities presented by AI.

**Almost half of
SMBs are open
to, looking at,
or already using
AI solutions.**

Look beyond the obvious AI cases

Percent of SMB leaders who believe AI could contribute positively to different areas of business operations

Question: In what areas do you think AI could contribute positively to your business now or in the future?

| | |
|--|------------|
| 1 Content creation <small>(e.g. generating blog posts and website content)</small> | 43% |
| 2 Data analytics | 40% |
| 3 Marketing | 39% |
| 4 Customer service <small>(e.g. chatbots to answer FAQs)</small> | 33% |
| 5 Social media management | 29% |
| 6 Cyber security | 27% |
| 7 Customer experience <small>(e.g. virtual shopping assistants, augmented reality)</small> | 24% |
| 8 Financial management | 22% |
| 9 eCommerce | 17% |
| 10 HR, hiring & recruitment | 11% |

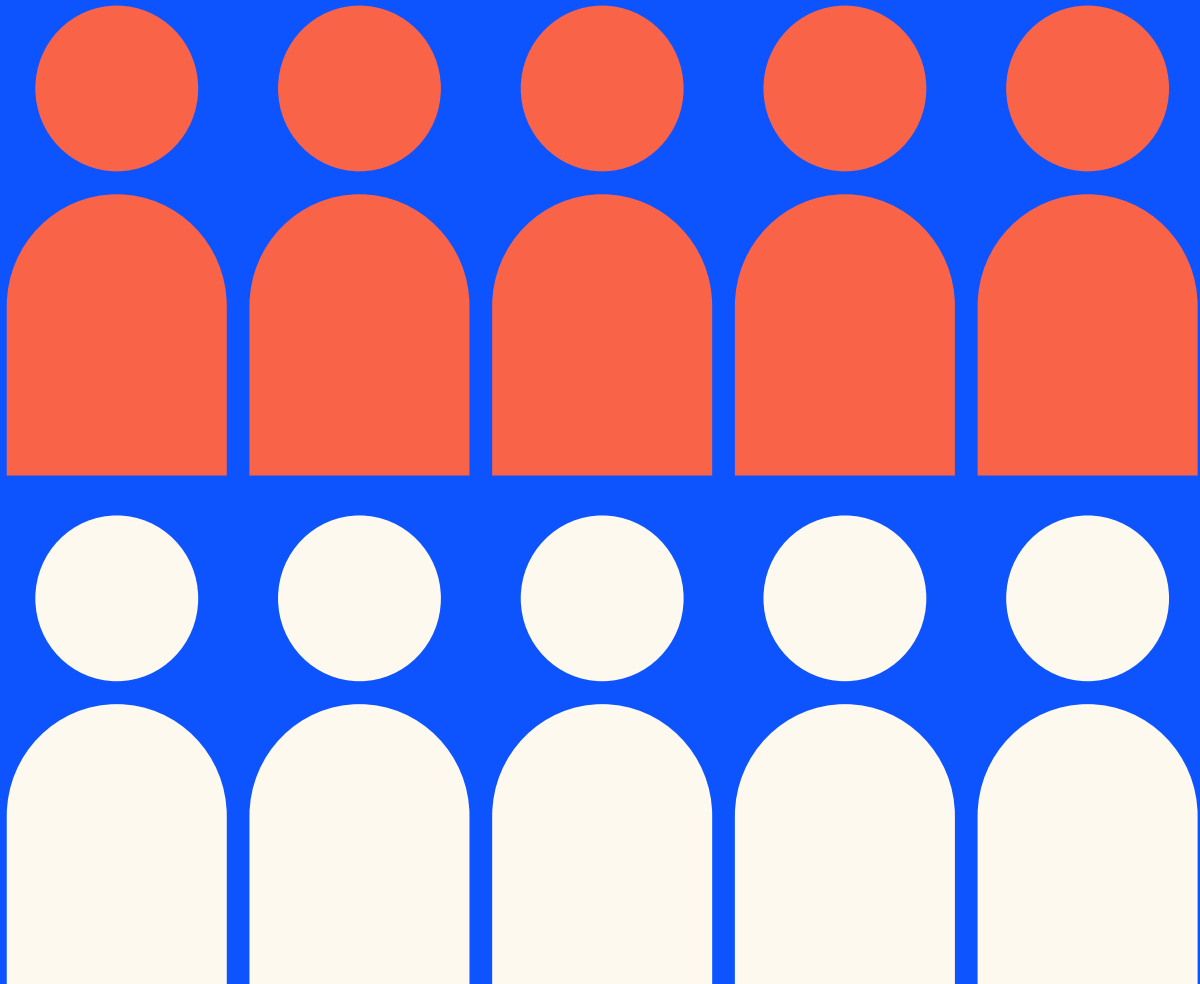
“We are already quite invested in AI technologies. We believe that technology is a tool that will help us advance the business.”

**TOURISM SECTOR BUSINESS OWNER,
11 EMPLOYEES**

AI is still a new area of technology for many businesses, and it's changing fast. Almost half of SMB owners think that businesses like theirs will need more support to really benefit from what AI can offer. But AI may be more accessible to your business than you think. Many large technology vendors are building new AI-driven features into solutions you may already be using.

It's important to implement AI in a considered and ethical way to avoid unintended consequences. Best practices are evolving, but the eight *AI Ethics Principles*, developed by the Government with input from Telstra, cover key areas to consider, such as fairness, privacy and security.

→ *AI Ethics Principles*



**51% of workers think
AI will help people be
more productive at
work in the future.**

Key takeaways

1

Explore content creation and data analytics, but also consider other areas where advances in AI could help you create new efficiencies or gain competitive advantage.

2

Think about how you can upskill and engage workers in new AI applications. Lean on resources from technology providers who can help.

3

Take a thoughtful approach to AI. Consider how and when you want to use it, in line with your values and position around privacy and security.



AI trends and tips
for your business.

It can be hard to know what to prioritise, especially when time is at a premium. By staying focused on customer expectations, the needs of your staff and potential risks to your business, you can identify what's important for you.

Being clear about how you want to use technology and the outcomes you expect to see, can help you develop a clear plan.

Ask yourself

- 1** What's not working as well as it could?
- 2** What are other businesses like ours doing?
- 3** What changes around us do we need to adapt to?

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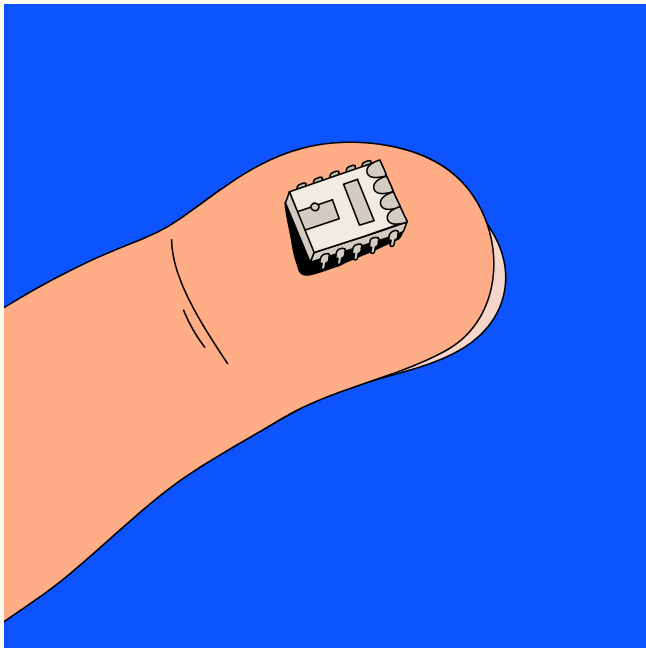
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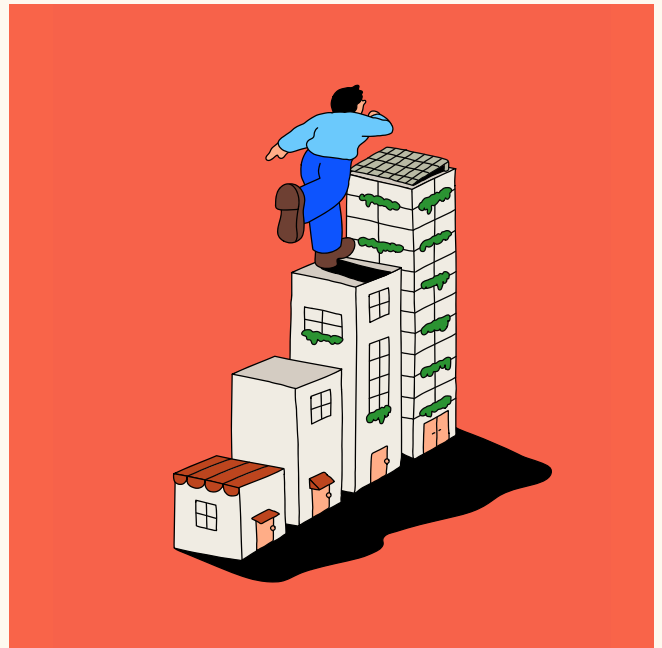
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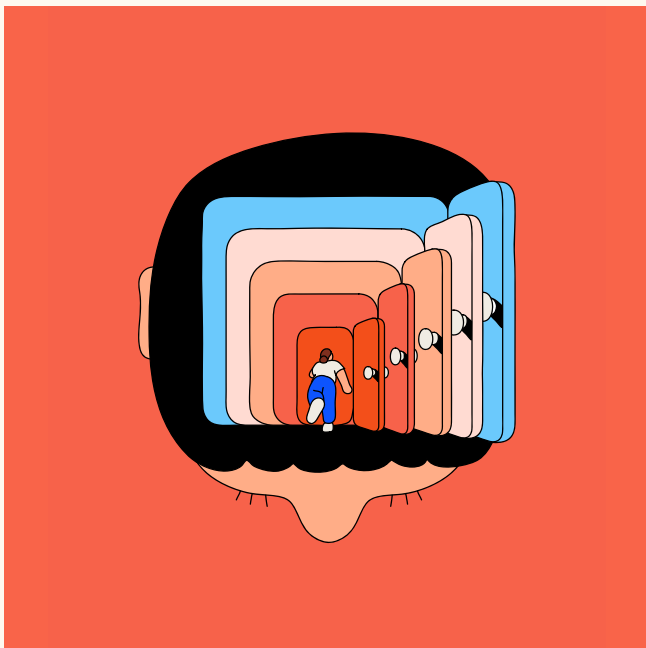
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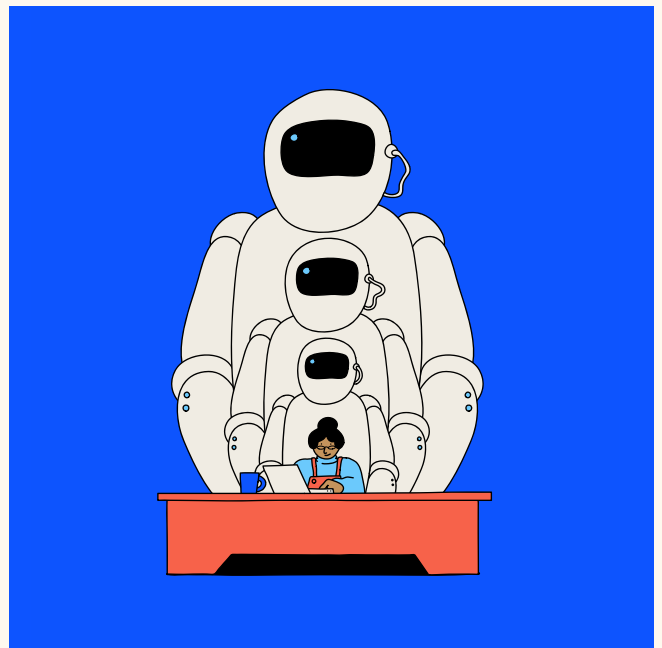
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