

AITHENTIC

Authentic AI. Augmented Outcomes.
A venture of **HOFT Group**

AI VALUE METRICS / 2026

Everyone is buying AI. Nobody is banking it.

Fewer than one in six finance leaders have measured ROI.
Here are the five metrics that land in a boardroom, and what
each one looks like on a real finance floor.

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THE UNCOMFORTABLE NUMBER

Spending is certain. Proof is not.

1 in 6

Fewer than one in six finance leaders have successfully measured ROI on their AI investments

72%

of finance leaders expect AI investment to rise over the next two years

The gap is not capability. It is measurement.

Source: Gartner, Ten Value Metrics for CFOs to Assess AI's Financial Impact, November 2025.

THE PRESSURE ABOVE YOU

The mandate is loud. The evidence is silent.

76%

of CEOs believe AI will have the most significant impact on their industry

71%

of boards want their enterprise to take more technology risk with AI

Permission to spend is not permission to skip the maths.

Source: Gartner, AI Value Metrics.

Metrics that resonate across the C suite.

- 1 **Sales conversion rate**
Revenue, and it shows up in weeks
- 2 **Average labour cost per worker**
Cost, aimed straight at payroll
- 3 **Time to value**
Revenue and cost, moving together
- 4 **Collection efficiency index**
Cash and working capital
- 5 **Employee net promoter score**
Whether any of it lasts

Gartner lists ten. These five travel furthest outside finance.

01 Sales conversion rate

- WHY** Most AI promises returns later. This one shows up in **weeks**.
- HOW** AI reads customer communication for hesitation and confusion, then guides the seller to adjust the message in real time.
- DO** One segment. A/B against a control group. Track how often reps actually take the recommendation.

ILLUSTRATIVE

A property sales desk. The agent notices the buyer went quiet right after the service charge question, drafts a reworked payment plan line, and pushes it to the rep before the follow up call. **Same pipeline, different close rate.**

02

Average labour cost per worker

- WHY** It aims at the largest line item most organisations carry.
Payroll.
- HOW** Gartner calls it experience compression. A junior role performs like a seasoned one, so you reshape the workforce without losing quality.
- DO** Pick a standardised function where output is measurable. Pilot it against your own onboarding curve.

ILLUSTRATIVE

A first year AP analyst clears three way match exceptions like someone six years in, because the agent puts the clause and the precedent next to the invoice. **Ramp time collapses.**

03 Time to value

- WHY** It moves revenue and cost at the same time, which is rare.
- HOW** AI shortens the build and launch cycle, and speed compounds. **Earlier revenue, more iterations per year, a lead the competition has to chase.**
- DO** Mine two years of project data for the recurring bottlenecks, then build an acceleration map of the tasks worth automating.

ILLUSTRATIVE

A new entity joins the group. The old path to a first clean consolidated pack ran into months, most of it spent mapping accounts and chasing opening balances. Give that mapping to an agent and the pack lands in weeks. **Same finish line, a quarter earlier.**

04

Collection efficiency index

- WHY** Disputes, bespoke terms and billing errors stall cash and eat working capital.
- HOW** AI treats every exception individually but automatically, so the queue never swamps the team.
- DO** Draft chasers from each customer's payment history. Track **straight through processing rate** and time to clear an exception.

ILLUSTRATIVE

Four hundred open invoices. One note for the chronic late payer, another for the disputed retention, only the few that need a human get escalated. **DSO moves before headcount does.**

05 Employee net promoter score

- WHY** The first four pay this year. This one decides whether the value is still there in three.
- HOW** People using an AI assistant more than once a week report higher eNPS. That makes it a **retention lever**, not a soft metric.
- DO** Four week pilot in a team with high turnover. Put a monetary value on retention so it competes fairly with the hard returns.

ILLUSTRATIVE

Ask your close team what they would do with four nights back. If the answer is analysis, you automated the right step. **If the answer is nothing, you automated the wrong one.**

Adoption is advancing. Value is lagging.

66%

report productivity improved

63%

found implementation slower than
expected

Counting pilots proves motion. It does not prove impact.

Source: Gartner Finance Symposium/Xpo 2026, National Harbor. Forecasting and insight generation, the two areas with genuine upside, remain the hardest to move.

Four things every one of these metrics assumes you have.

01

A baseline

If you cannot say how many decisions the agent made unassisted last month, you have a demo. Capture close days, touch counts and rework rate **before** go live.

02

A closed loop

A draft your controller still has to verify and reformat did not remove the work. It moved it onto your best analyst. Value lands only when the agent owns the task end to end.

03

A cycle to hit

Days to close. DSO. Forecast accuracy. Audit query turnaround. Headcount avoided at the next scale up. Map every agent to one of them on day one.

04

A clean foundation

The model was never the constraint. The chart of accounts, the master data and the approval matrix were. Fix those and the metrics start moving on their own.

AITHENTIC, an agentic AI venture of HOFT Group.

AITHENTIC

Not "what have we deployed". "What changed in the numbers?"

START HERE

Pick one cycle metric. Capture the baseline this month.

Put one agent on it end to end, then report the delta, not the demo. That is the whole programme.

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Follow for the next build note

Found this useful? Repost it for the CFO who is about to be asked this question.