



# From Hype to Habit

Exploring the value of generative AI at work

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# WORK WILL NEVER BE THE SAME.

om yesterday's  
meeting notes|



MICROSOFT

FROM HYPE TO HABIT

Generative AI (GenAI) has changed how people approach work and the tasks they spend their time on. Since its launch in Australia and New Zealand (ANZ), organisations have experimented with GenAI, discovered meaningful use cases and explored ways to articulate its value. This report highlights their adoption journeys and learnings along the way.

Microsoft interviewed leaders from more than 20 organisations who were early adopters of Microsoft 365 (M365) Copilot to uncover best practice approaches to articulating value and return-on-investment (ROI), development of skills and culture. These insights were combined with data from surveying 470 decision makers to explore the state of GenAI at work across ANZ. So, what does the research show?

In short, there's no going back.

99% of survey respondents say AI-driven tools are already widely used in their organisations. They help decision makers and their teams repurpose time – an hour a day, or more in many cases – to improve the quality of work, enhance customer satisfaction and boost employee wellbeing.

Whether organisations are ready or not, it's clear AI is here to stay and is reshaping how we work.

1

# Value beyond time saved




The data shows we are at a tipping point, with 100% of surveyed decision makers reporting GenAI saves them time at work.

In November 2023, Microsoft reported on perceived productivity gains of the earliest M365 Copilot users where 22% were saving more than 30 minutes a day. Our recent survey data shows that 51% of Copilot users say GenAI is saving people across their organisation more than an hour a day, and 21% are saving more than two hours.

Leaders seeing strong Copilot adoption shared the importance of helping users find their 'ah-ha' moments through regular use.

This is the point where users go beyond foundational use cases such as recapping meetings and summarising documents, and use GenAI to challenge their thinking and experiment with use cases that change their workday.

Greater use increases the amount of time saved, creating a domino effect as these employees become champions of the technology and share their approaches with peers.



100%

of decision makers say they  
save time at work

*Brisbane Catholic Education trialled Copilot within a school and found that teachers saved more than 9 hours per week on administrative tasks, lesson and curriculum planning, and searching for information.*

*The Australian Government's independent evaluation of M365 Copilot in the public service revealed users saved one hour per day, on average.*

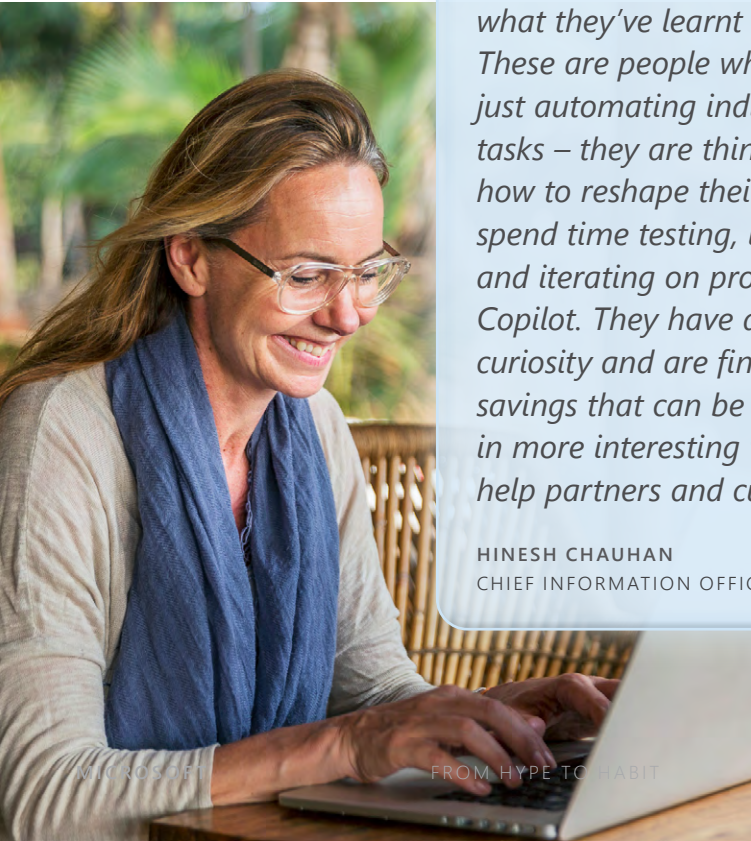
However, not all roles are created equal. Some early adopters revealed that not everyone experiences the same productivity gains. The most gains are within roles that involve performing repetitive, administrative or content-generating tasks such as in executive support, projects and enterprise functions like finance or communications. These types of roles are seeing the most change, with employees able to focus on the work that is more strategic and valuable to the organisation.

*“Our power users are those who are pushing the technology further than basic use cases or what they’ve learnt in training. These are people who aren’t just automating individual tasks – they are thinking about how to reshape their work, and spend time testing, learning and iterating on prompts in Copilot. They have a sense of curiosity and are finding time-savings that can be reinvested in more interesting work to help partners and customers.”*

HINESH CHAUHAN  
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER, TAL






## CORE FUNCTIONS RANKED BY AMOUNT OF TIME BEING SAVED

- 1<sup>ST</sup>** **Executive support**  
*Administrative intensive, assistant-focused activities*
- 2<sup>ND</sup>** **Project delivery**  
*Portfolio, program and project management*
- 3<sup>RD</sup>** **Enterprise functions**  
*Accounting, finance, administration, communications & marketing and HR*
- 4<sup>TH</sup>** **Managers & leaders**  
*Meeting heavy positions, aiding in drafting, analysing and communicating*
- 5<sup>TH</sup>** **Technology & digital solutions**  
*Aiding in meetings, collaboration, case management & assessing technical information*
- 6<sup>TH</sup>** **Regulation, policy & compliance**  
*Aiding in technical content reviews, communication and meetings*
- 7<sup>TH</sup>** **Senior executives**  
*Executive / director level – meetings with limited day-to-day content development*



## HOW AI IS CHANGING WHAT WE SPEND TIME ON AT WORK

### Respondents say they spend less time:

- 1  Generating visuals
- 2  Conducting data analysis
- 3  Coaching to improve colleague's writing/meeting participation
- 4  Analysing documents, contracts or reports
- 5  Time management/planning

### How time saved is being redeployed:

- 1  Focusing more on core responsibilities and tasks
- 2  Researching industry trends and best practices
- 3  Being more creative/innovative
- 4  More active participation in meetings
- 5  Seeking new business opportunities

## 5 WAYS TO HELP EMPLOYEES REACH THEIR 'AH-HA' MOMENT



1

Run promptathons specific to roles and functions.



2

Find your champions, particularly among leaders who actively advocate and empower employees to use GenAI.



3

Create communities to share best practice both inside and outside your organisation.



4

Use customised, personal learning pathways like LinkedIn Learning to enable people to practice and further build GenAI habits and skills.



5

Keep it fun and share weekly idea igniters, whether work-related or not.

*"We brought our people along on the AI journey by initially approaching it in a fun and simple way. Exploring fun use cases at work helped to overcome fear of AI and start to build AI literacy."*

ANYA FITZGIBBON  
HEAD OF DATA GOVERNANCE & DELIVERY, ENDEAVOUR ENERGY

2

# From personal productivity to business value





## Early in their deployment journey, organisations often ask, ‘what else do I need to measure to understand business value and ROI?’.

In the short term, one indicator is individual time saved – as reported by users and through tools such as Viva Dashboard. For many early adopters, this helped articulate initial value to leadership teams and boards to guide decisions to scale deployment beyond trials.

However, as AI adoption has increased, the focus has shifted to how personal productivity gains translate into broader organisational value.

Organisations that are thriving are not creating new metrics to articulate value. They are looking equally at time saved and how

their existing metrics – those that are already meaningful to their organisation – are changing over time.

Recently launched at Ignite 2024, Copilot Analytics will take this further by combining usage data with information about Copilot’s impact on organisational KPIs, to provide deeper insight into ROI and business value.

*UniSuper has saved 30 minutes per Teams interaction with members for comprehensive advice, allowing advisers to spend more time with members and less time on administrative tasks. The time saved has translated to a 7% increase in the number of members being advised, which improves more member outcomes and is estimated to accumulate to approximately 1,700 hours per year.*



71%

of survey respondents  
report increased customer  
satisfaction

## TOP 5 WAYS ORGANISATIONS ARE MEASURING GENAI EFFECTIVENESS



## Move from silos to wider groups of employees

Early adopters found that deploying licences in isolated pockets made it difficult to see ROI beyond individual time savings. However, deploying GenAI across an entire function, or around a process, or scaling it across the organisation can offer a clearer view of how its use can change metrics over time.

## Your approach to driving adoption shapes the results you can achieve

34% of survey respondents say they adopt a 'use it or lose it' approach, which could inhibit the ability to articulate business value. Conversely, organisations that view GenAI as a fundamentally new way of working and invest in supporting their teams to realise their 'ah-ha' moments, seem to more clearly articulate value from their investment.

*"Our initial approach was to spread our trial licences across the organisation to understand where Copilot could be most valuable. Over time we moved our licences to support entire teams, and this was where we saw a significant uptick in adoption and our ability to realise and articulate business value."*

BERNADETTE DEMASI  
HEAD OF PARTNER PROGRAMS, BANK OF QUEENSLAND

3

# Leading with change drives adoption



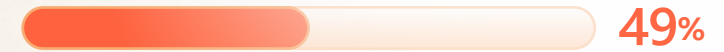
## Deploying new tools and helping employees develop the right skillset requires the right people to lead the change.

In our survey ANZ business leaders most commonly ranked their organisation's IT department as the most responsible (36%) for GenAI implementation. But should IT do it alone? Driving GenAI implementation from IT alone may not enable the culture and skills development required for high levels of adoption. Fostering a culture of experimentation and helping employees create new habits takes time. This can be accelerated through the following approaches:

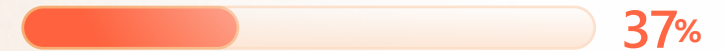
- Leading with a change agent, in partnership with IT,** to drive the organisation's culture of learning, adaptation and experimentation. Survey respondents agree with this sentiment, with 32% saying they have noticed more hands-on training and change management actions with GenAI adoption compared to other technologies.
- Ensuring leaders model adaptive leadership principles,** to show employees they use AI themselves and sharing how they are learning and iterating as they go.
- Creating a community of champions and a place to share use cases,** such as an internal chat platform. At Microsoft, our most active Teams channel is the one in which our champions share GenAI news, use cases and hacks.
- Scaling beyond trial cohorts** to bring AI to larger group numbers, particularly around a process or within a function. This can result in a huge uptick in adoption, which is likely due to a ripple effect of more people sharing use cases with colleagues.

### BUSINESS LEADERS ARE MORE LIKELY TO SAY

Their organisations want employees to become more familiar with GenAI and actively encourage them to use these tools



Copilot users

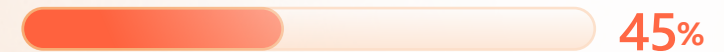


Non Copilot users

Their organisation is open to experimentation and innovation and is willing to try new tools

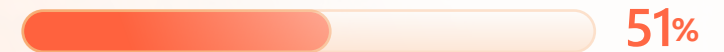


Copilot users



Non Copilot users

They can now spend more time on things that would not have been possible before, such as personal learning and skills development



Copilot users



Non Copilot users

*"Initially, we had an IT project manager and business analyst driving implementation. We weren't seeing the usage we needed, so we brought an experienced change manager on board to partner with them, and now it's the most successful project we've had. That's because it's not a technology project; it's a business culture and adoption one. It's about teaching and empowering people, communicating how to use the tools in ways that work for them."*

PUBLIC SECTOR AGENCY

*AustralianSuper wants to take every employee along on the journey to a new way of working with AI, so the rollout has focused on driving high adoption and not leaving anyone behind. This includes building a community of AI champions to foster a culture of innovation and continuous learning around Copilot for Microsoft 365 and other AI tools.*



4

## AI mastery: Balancing exploration with structured training



## With AI evolving rapidly, there is a delicate balance to strike between instruction and experimentation.

The Australian Government trial of Microsoft 365 Copilot highlighted that participants who received three or more forms of training were 28 percentage points more likely to report high levels of confidence using Copilot than those who received one form of training.

However structured, role specific training should not inhibit an employee's time and licence to experiment. Encouraging experimentation can transform AI use, moving beyond assistance with basic tasks to role-specific use cases.

As this transition occurs, it allows individuals to think more strategically and translate time saved into meaningful business value.

*"We have taken a team-based approach, onboarding job functions in cohorts to enable us to realise the greatest value and tailor our training. Our 6-week onboarding program guides each cohort on how to best use Copilot for their role and we couple this with a Viva Engage community to encourage sharing and learning from each other."*

HINESH CHAUHAN  
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER,  
TAL

*"Earlier this year, we ran dedicated GenAI Time, where we offered 12 hours of fee credit for every lawyer and consultant to invest in GenAI upskilling. We also launched a series of training sessions for our people, both face-to-face and online, called Digital Academy. We also know that our leaders have a key role to play in cultivating a culture ready to adopt changes in technology and AI, which is why we've created adoption KPIs for leaders."*

GARY ADLER CHIEF DIGITAL OFFICER, MINTERELLISON



# 32%

say their organisation provides adequate training in GenAI technologies

## Overcoming mental barriers to GenAI use

Removing guilt is also important as almost one fifth (19%) of survey respondents say they feel like they are cheating when they use GenAI to reach a final output and claim it as their own. With adaptive leadership, a change-led focus and empowerment to experiment, employees are less likely to feel bad about doing so and more likely to push the possibilities of AI.

*"Some of our people felt that using AI was 'cheating' because they aren't doing part of the work themselves. That mindset can create a barrier for broader adoption, so it is clear the importance of change management to enable the right behaviour and mindset change."*

KIM KROGH ANDERSON  
PRODUCT & TECHNOLOGY GROUP EXECUTIVE, TELSTRA

*"Important to Copilot adoption is team members who are more curious and open to trying new things. They experiment and are not afraid to fail and try again. We learnt that prompting experimentation and modelling is just as important as structured training on role-specific use cases."*

BERNADETTE DEMASI  
HEAD OF PARTNER PROGRAMS, BANK OF QUEENSLAND



1 in 5

say they feel like they are cheating when they use GenAI to reach a final output and claim it as their own



5

# Turning the tide on shadow AI



## Risks remain around data security and confidential information being fed into public tools, although change is afoot.

Of the surveyed decision makers, 25% say their organisation still uses public AI tools for work.

Microsoft's last Work Trend Index, found that 80% of the workforce in ANZ were bringing their own AI tools to work. While progress has been made, this highlights the importance of ongoing education around the risks of using public tools at work.

Nearly all survey respondents (96%) say they have faced data security and access challenges in their journey to adopt AI for work.

For some, however, surfacing data access issues that they were aware of but had yet to act on allowed them to accelerate their data governance and privacy efforts.



96%

say they have faced **data security and access challenges** in their AI journey



25%

say their organisation still uses **public AI tools** for work

*"One factor that moved us to roll out Microsoft 365 Copilot so early was that people were already using free versions or personal accounts for various generative AI tools. So, we wanted to be able to provide an enterprise-grade tool that was supported and secure for our employees to use."*

CAROLINE HUNGERFORD AI PROGRAM LEAD, UNSW

*"We involved our Privacy and Compliance Officers in the initial rollout to ensure that we were putting the right guardrails in place from the start. This enabled them to gain firsthand experience with the tool, which instilled confidence and trust that we were using AI safely and securely. They also started to reap the benefits of using Copilot and now they have become some of our biggest advocates."*

ELIZABETH BEATTIE  
AI CHANGE LEAD, UNSW

*"One thing we learned is the value of getting your cybersecurity, legal and HR teams involved as early as possible to address privacy and security concerns effectively."*

ANYA FITZGIBBON  
HEAD OF DATA GOVERNANCE & DELIVERY,  
ENDEAVOUR ENERGY





# FINDING YOUR UNIQUE PATH



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As adoption accelerates and trials inform decisions to scale deployment, the value of GenAI beyond personal productivity is becoming clearer. The earliest adopters are starting to see upticks in revenue, deeper customer engagement and higher levels of job satisfaction as people are free to focus on the work that matters most.

Almost every organisation – large or small – is engaging with GenAI and finding its own unique way forward. Realising the value of AI at work can look different for everyone. However, what's clear from the research is that those who see the most value are more likely to do these three things:

- **Adaptive leadership:** The pace of GenAI innovation requires leaders to empower employees to be comfortable with an experimentation mindset in exploring AI. It also requires an iterative and agile approach to continually strengthen policies, security and training.
- **Don't reinvent KPIs to measure ROI:** Organisations already know what matters most to them. They measure how the use of GenAI impacts these in short, medium and long term.
- **Evolve training in line with GenAI, supported by a strong culture:** Continuous training, in combination with a culture that enables experimentation and high usage without an accompanying feeling of guilt, drives better outcomes. A top-down, change-led program enables employees to find their own 'ah-ha' moment.

## About this study

This study combined quantitative and qualitative research to understand ANZ organisations' views on generative AI adoption in the workplace. The quantitative study was conducted online between 1-10 October 2024, through research provider, YouGov. The sample comprised a total of 471 ANZ business leaders/decision makers in businesses with 300+ employees. The study was run separately across each respective market with the same questionnaire run in both markets. The survey was sent to senior leaders and decision makers in 312 Australian businesses and 159 New Zealand businesses with 300+ employees. The qualitative study was conducted from August to October 2024 and included in-depth interviews with 20 large enterprises and/or public sector entities operating in Australia and/or New Zealand. The study considers 'most advanced organisations' to mean any organisation that has given Microsoft 365 Copilot to more than 70% of its workforce, which is seeing adoption upwards of 80% and an increased ability to articulate time saved and other ROI metrics, and how these are adding value to the organisation.



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