



The State of AI in Enablement: 2023 Report

RESEARCH REPORT

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01 Introduction

Talk of artificial intelligence (AI) is practically inescapable these days. That's because, despite it being around for many years now, the emergence of what's called generative AI — essentially the ability for AI to generate proactive assistance to users, including contextually aware recommendations and the creation of net-new content, such as text, images, sounds, animation, and other types of media — has opened the door to a host of new use cases that can further streamline or even eliminate manual tasks, leading to unprecedented productivity and efficiency.

This phenomenon is especially true for enablement. For years, enablement technology has leveraged AI for a range of capabilities that drive greater go-to-market (GTM) effectiveness, including intelligent content curation based on a user's specified interests, smart search via auto-tagged content, immediate bot-delivered answers to any question based on crowd-sourced knowledge from across an organization, and scalable learning tasks such as auto-scoring quizzes and sentiment analysis of practice conversations.

As generative AI continues to proliferate, it has transformative implications for the future of enablement and GTM more broadly. It will proactively predict and recommend the best next steps for any seller, marketer, enabler, or trainer in any given scenario and, in some cases, follow through on those next steps on the user's behalf. This potential is exciting but also overwhelming, leading to a lot of uncertainty and speculation as to what exactly this transformation will look like.

The purpose of this study is to take stock of current AI familiarity, expectations, and challenges among organizations that use enablement technology, thereby getting a clear picture of just how fundamental AI is to those organizations' enablement efforts, how significantly it impacts their overall business outcomes, and how it's expected to bolster their success in the future.



WHAT IS ENABLEMENT TECHNOLOGY?

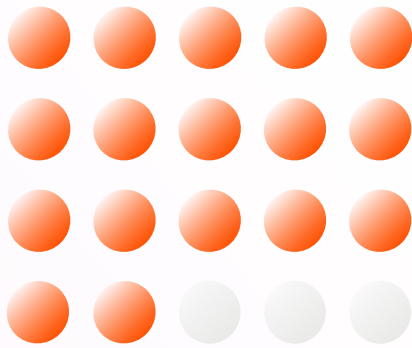
For the purposes of this study, enablement technology is defined as technology that reduces the workload on sales, marketing, and customer success professionals, streamlines their workflows, and/or provides teams with valuable insights for improved performance and revenue growth.

Enablement technology includes multiple capabilities and solutions, including sales content management and automation, training and coaching, buyer engagement, strategy and planning, and analytics and intelligence.

02 Executive Summary

This study sampled nearly **1,400** full-time sales, enablement, and customer success professionals in managerial and leadership roles throughout the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany, the majority of whom use enablement technology at work.

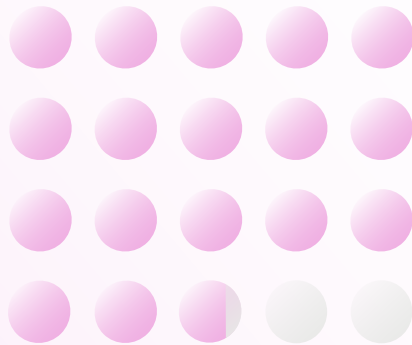
Of these enablement technology users,



85%

said enablement technology is mission-critical to their organization.

(US = 84%; UK = 77%; FR = 96%; DE = 84%)



89%

said their organizations plan to make further investments in enablement technology going into 2024.

(US = 89%; UK = 87%; FR = 91%; DE = 91%)

(US = United States of America; UK = United Kingdom; FR = France; DE = Germany)



93%



Of those who said their companies plan to make further investments in enablement technology, **93%** of them said advancements in AI are driving those investments.

(US = 93%; UK = 85%; FR = 98%; DE = 96%)

83%



In fact, **83%** of all respondents said that the fusion of AI and GTM strategy would lead to revenue growth for their organizations.

(US = 85%; UK = 80%; FR = 82%; DE = 79%)

22%



And when asked to estimate the rate of that growth over five years, the average answer amounted to a substantial **22%**.

(US = 23%; UK = 23%; FR = 21%; DE = 18%)

73%



Furthermore, **73%** of all respondents said they believe organizations that fail to effectively incorporate AI into their GTM processes will fall behind their competitors within the next three years.

(US = 73%; UK = 68%; FR = 78%; DE = 73%)

And yet, despite all these great expectations around how AI will enhance enablement technology and GTM more broadly, only half of respondents said they're certain they currently use AI in their enablement processes. When asked:



Does your organization currently utilize any AI-powered tools in its sales enablement processes?

50%

said yes

38%

said no

12%

said they weren't sure

But of those currently using AI, **82%** are clearly impressed with the results they're seeing because they plan to double down and implement more AI-powered solutions in just the next year.

(US = 83%; UK = 75%; FR = 86%; DE = 80%)

SYNOPSIS

To summarize the key findings of this study, enablement technology is commonly used among sales, enablement, and customer success professionals in all sampled countries, and they view it as crucial to achieving their revenue goals. They also believe that applying AI to their GTM strategies will lead to even greater revenue.

That said, only half of respondents currently use AI in their enablement efforts. But that half is keen to implement more AI—and fast—because, as discussed below, they've seen undeniably positive results, validating the near-universal optimism around AI among current and would-be users.

The remainder of this report takes a deep dive into what the respondents of our survey use enablement technology for, what those who are using AI have to say about their experiences applying it to their

enablement efforts, the outcomes they hoped to achieve versus what they actually achieved, and what they expect from their AI vendors to make those experiences better.



03 Methodology & Demographics

	UNITED STATES	EUROPE
Total Respondents	604 (64% men; 35% women; 1% non-binary)	617 (58% men; 42% women)
Representation	49/50 states (excluding Alaska)	United Kingdom (UK): 33%; France (FR): 34%; Germany (DE): 33%
Age Ranges	18-26: 8%; 27-42: 50%; 43-58: 32%; 59-68: 9%; 69-77: 1%	18-26: 5%; 27-42: 51%; 43-58: 35%; 59-68: 9%
Confidence	Survey conducted at 95% confidence, +/- 4% margin of error	Survey conducted at 95% confidence, +/- 4% margin of error
Timeframe	September 2 – 17, 2023	September 3 – 15, 2023

Industries sampled are wide-ranging, including both B2B and B2C organizations:

- Retail & Consumer Products: **16%**
- Healthcare & Medical: **8%**
- Manufacturing, Transport & Logistics: **8%**
- Sales: **8%**
- Information & Communication Technology: **5%**
- Construction: **5%**
- Hospitality & Tourism: **5%**
- Software & Technology: **4%**
- Other: **4%**
- Advertising, Arts & Media: **3%**
- Education & Training: **3%**
- Financial Services: Insurance: **3%**
- Accounting: **2%**
- Administration & Office Support: **2%**
- Call Center & Customer Service: **2%**
- Marketing & Communications: **2%**
- Real Estate & Property: **2%**
- Consulting & Strategy: **2%**
- Trades & Services: **2%**
- Financial Services: Banking: **2%**
- Government & Defense: **2%**
- Engineering: **2%**
- Financial Services: Wealth Management: **1%**
- Mining, Resources & Energy: **1%**
- Human Resources & Recruitment: **1%**
- Legal: **1%**
- Sport & Recreation: **1%**
- Community Services & Development: **1%**
- Farming, Animals & Conservation: **1%**
- Financial Services: Asset Management: **1%**



04 Usage of and familiarity with AI in enablement

Respondents are leveraging enablement technology for a variety of GTM processes and use cases, namely:

Learning (e.g., onboarding, training, coaching):

53% 

Content distribution (e.g., email, social media tools, etc.):

52% 

Content analytics (i.e., measuring content performance):

50% 

Content management (i.e., content storage and findability):

46% 

Content creation and editing (i.e., automation tools for content collaboration and personalization):

42% 

Other:

1% 



And of those who are currently using AI in their enablement efforts, they're applying it to the above use cases in nearly identical proportions, suggesting they see AI as a **means of improving everything they're already doing** rather than something that only impacts one or two particular use cases:

Learning:



Content distribution:



Content analytics:



Content management:



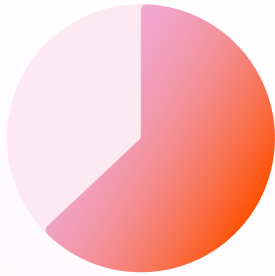
Content creation and editing:



Other:



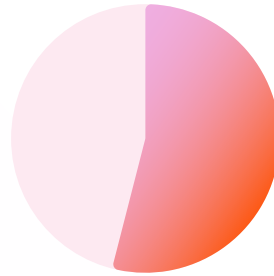
In terms of what respondents said they hope to achieve by implementing AI into their enablement efforts, there's yet again a relatively even representation across several outcomes:



63%

Operational optimization

(i.e., higher enablement efficiency/ROI, improved content usage, and tech stack consolidation)



54%

Enhanced buyer experience

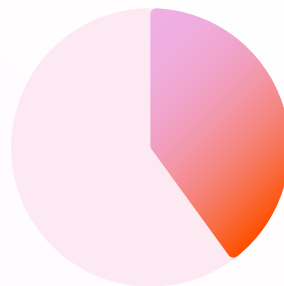
(i.e., increased deal size, better win/renewal rates, and decreased sales cycle times)



48%

Improved agility/speed to market

(i.e., time to market, adaptability to changes, GTM alignment)



40%

GTM efficiency

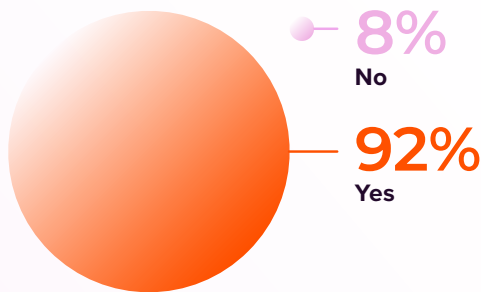
(i.e., faster seller ramp times, higher quota attainment, and more time spent on high-value activities)



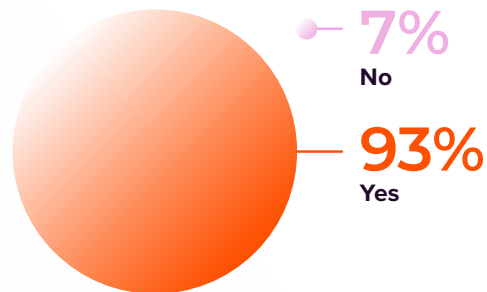
So, have they achieved the outcomes they wanted?
The results are overwhelmingly affirmative:

"You said you were hoping to achieve the following outcomes by implementing AI-powered tools in your enablement processes. Were you able to achieve the outcomes you intended?"

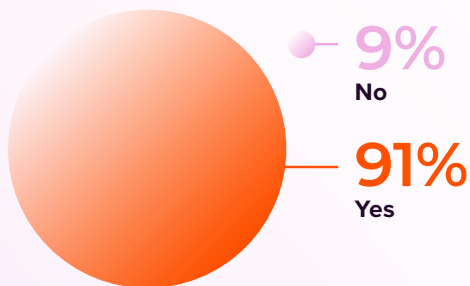
Operational optimization



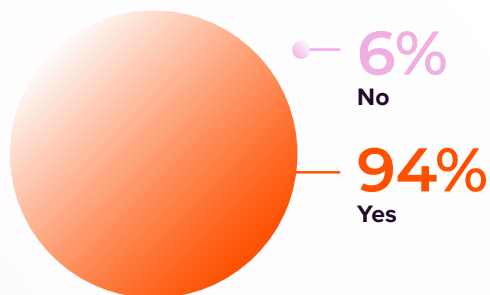
Enhanced buyer experience



Improved agility/speed to market



GTM efficiency



Furthermore, since implementing AI,

88%

said they saw an increase in their customers' satisfaction.

(US = 91%; UK = 76%; FR = 95%; DE = 83%)

+

86%

said they saw an increase in brand engagement.

(US = 89%; UK = 83%; FR = 89%; DE = 75%)

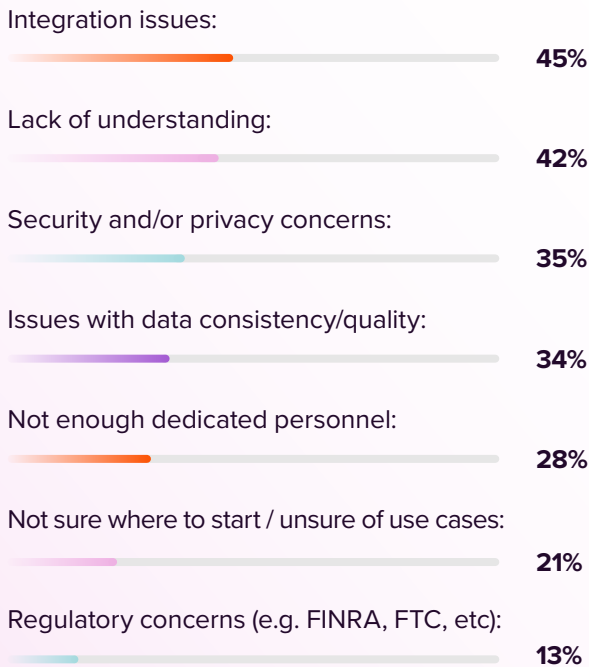


IMPLEMENTING AND ADOPTING AI IS NOT WITHOUT ITS CHALLENGES

While AI is extraordinarily promising, there is still a range of issues that need to be worked out, including privacy/security concerns, authenticity and plagiarism considerations, as well as hallucinations (i.e., when outdated or insufficient data leads to false AI-generated assertions), among others.

We must also acknowledge that generative AI is relatively new to the market and respondents’ familiarity with the technology is still growing. In fact, **67%** of respondents said they’re only “somewhat familiar” or “not very familiar” with how AI applies to enablement processes. And, as with any new technology, it can take time to realize the benefits once implemented. This partially explains why **65%** of those using AI for enablement said it took time to get to the stellar results they saw, having initially encountered several implementation and adoption hurdles in the following proportions:

AI implementation hurdles



AI adoption hurdles



It’s clear, however, that a lack of experience with AI isn’t the only culprit here. When asked what could be done to help overcome or avoid these hurdles, much of it came down to what respondents said they expect from their AI vendors.



05 What AI users expect from their vendors

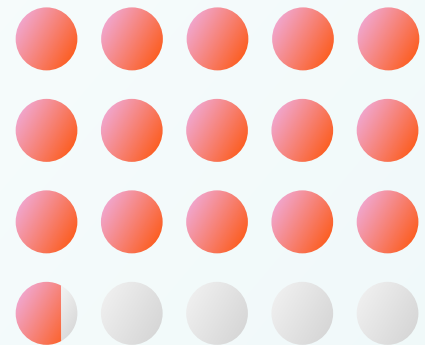
88%

of respondents agree that technology vendors should provide guidance and support during AI implementation.

(US = 90%; UK = 90%; FR = 82%; DE = 83%)

Additionally, **79%** of respondents agree that poor implementation support from vendors would drastically reduce their organizations' ROI in AI, which would lead to a proportional reduction in AI spend.

(US = 77%; UK = 86%; FR = 86%; DE = 73%)

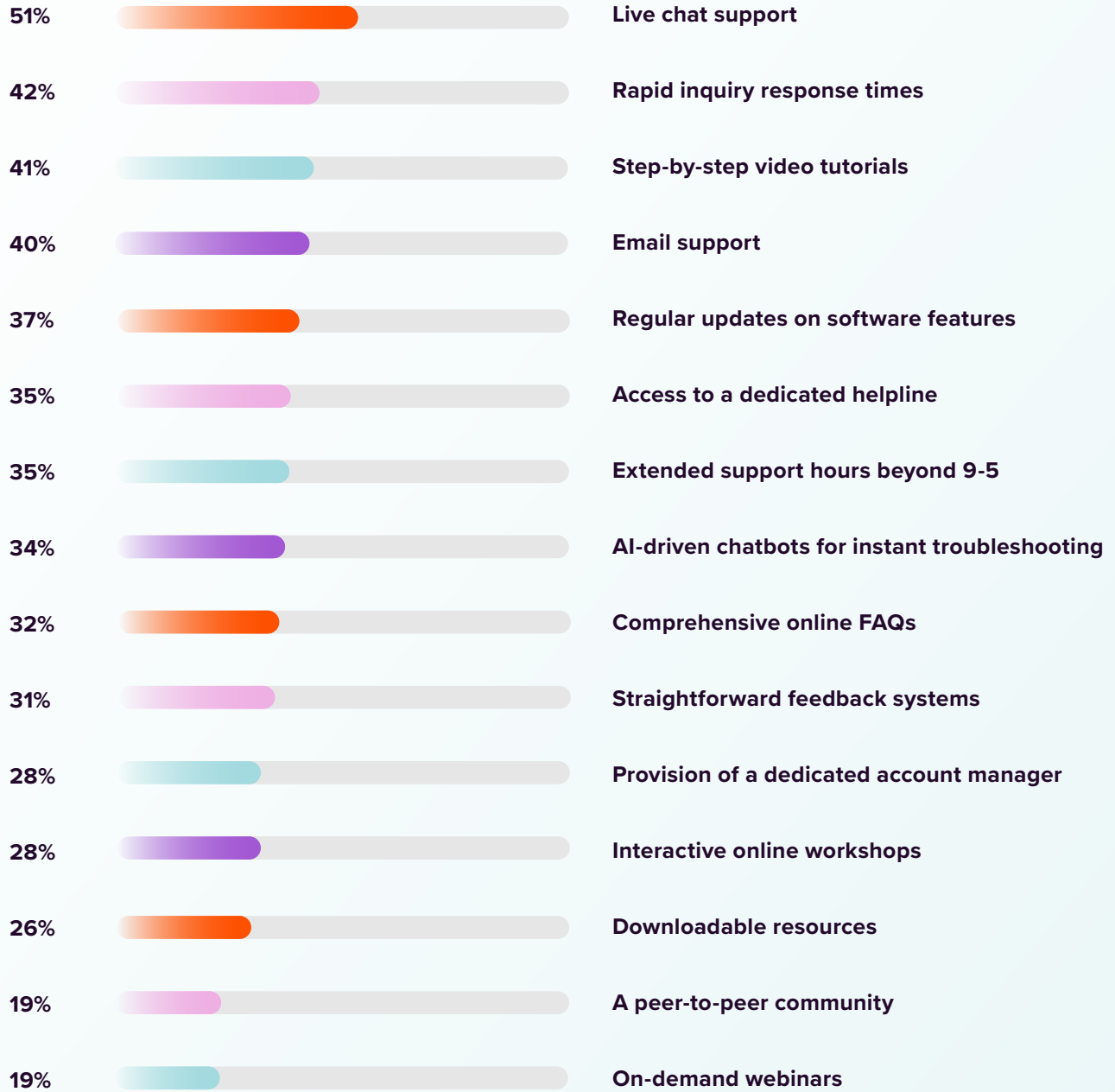


Therefore, vendors offering AI solutions – especially enablement technology providers – risk significant revenue loss if they don't offer effective implementation support to their customers. Likewise, organizations

that recognize the potential benefits of AI won't hesitate to pull back their investments in it if their vendors don't offer sufficient guidance on how to get AI up and running.

HOW AI USERS WANT TO BE SUPPORTED

When asked how they think vendors should provide support, respondents were open to a variety of methods, with live chat support being the most popular.



06 Conclusion

Sales, enablement, and customer success professionals on both sides of the Atlantic recognize that advancements in AI are transforming GTM as we know it. They're overwhelmingly excited about its implications, not only with regard to how it will make them more efficient, productive, and effective, but also how it enhances the customer experience in terms of satisfaction and engagement.

However, a significant majority of respondents have limited familiarity with precisely how AI can apply to their enablement and GTM efforts, and only half of them are currently using it. And while those who are using AI have overwhelmingly cited its benefits, they had to overcome implementation and adoption challenges they strongly feel could have been mitigated by their AI vendors.

These findings underscore how vital it is that organizations choose an enablement technology provider with a combination of deep experience in implementing AI-powered solutions and offering end-to-end guidance with a view to true customer success and positive business outcomes.

Since 2015, Seismic has made repeated and progressive investments in AI technology to provide the evolving capabilities that make us the global leader in enablement and GTM transformation. We're the perfect partner to guide you on your AI journey.

[Click here](#) to learn more about how Seismic is leveraging AI to evolve the world of enablement.

Ready to get started?

SPEAK WITH OUR TEAM TODAY



About Seismic

Seismic is the global leader in enablement, helping organizations engage customers, enable teams, and ignite revenue growth. The Seismic Enablement Cloud™ is the most powerful, unified enablement platform that equips customer-facing teams with the right skills, content, tools, and insights to grow and win. From the world's largest enterprises to startups and small businesses, more than 2,000 organizations around the globe trust Seismic for their enablement needs. Seismic is headquartered in San Diego with offices across North America, Europe, and Australia.

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