

WHITEPAPER

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make data matter

Building a strategic AI Roadmap



This Whitepaper provides a concise yet comprehensive guide to building a strategic AI Roadmap. Outlining the critical steps to achieve a successful AI deployment, the value each step delivers, and how **Keyrus** can assist throughout the journey. As AI begins to transform every industry, only organizations that systematically assess, deploy, and scale AI will capture real and lasting value.

“The potential for value creation through an effective AI deployment is indeed considerable: the adoption of generative AI could increase global wealth by 7%, or nearly \$7,000 billion, and boost productivity by 1.5% over the next ten years.”
~ Goldman Sachs.

Importance of an AI Roadmap

Artificial intelligence is ushering in a new era of operational efficiency, innovation, and customer-centricity. However, many organizations falter - moving from pilot projects and POCs to true business-wide impact eludes most.

This gap likely comes from:

- **Lack of clarity around relevant use cases and value levers**
- **Technology, data, and integration challenges**
- **Skills shortages and cultural resistance**
- **Difficulty mapping AI results to business KPIs**
- **Governance, ethics, and compliance hurdles**

Without a strategic Roadmap, efforts are fragmented, investment is diluted, and progress stalls at experimentation. A clear Roadmap aligns AI with business priorities, builds solid foundations, manages risks, and delivers measurable results.



Benefits of a clear AI strategy

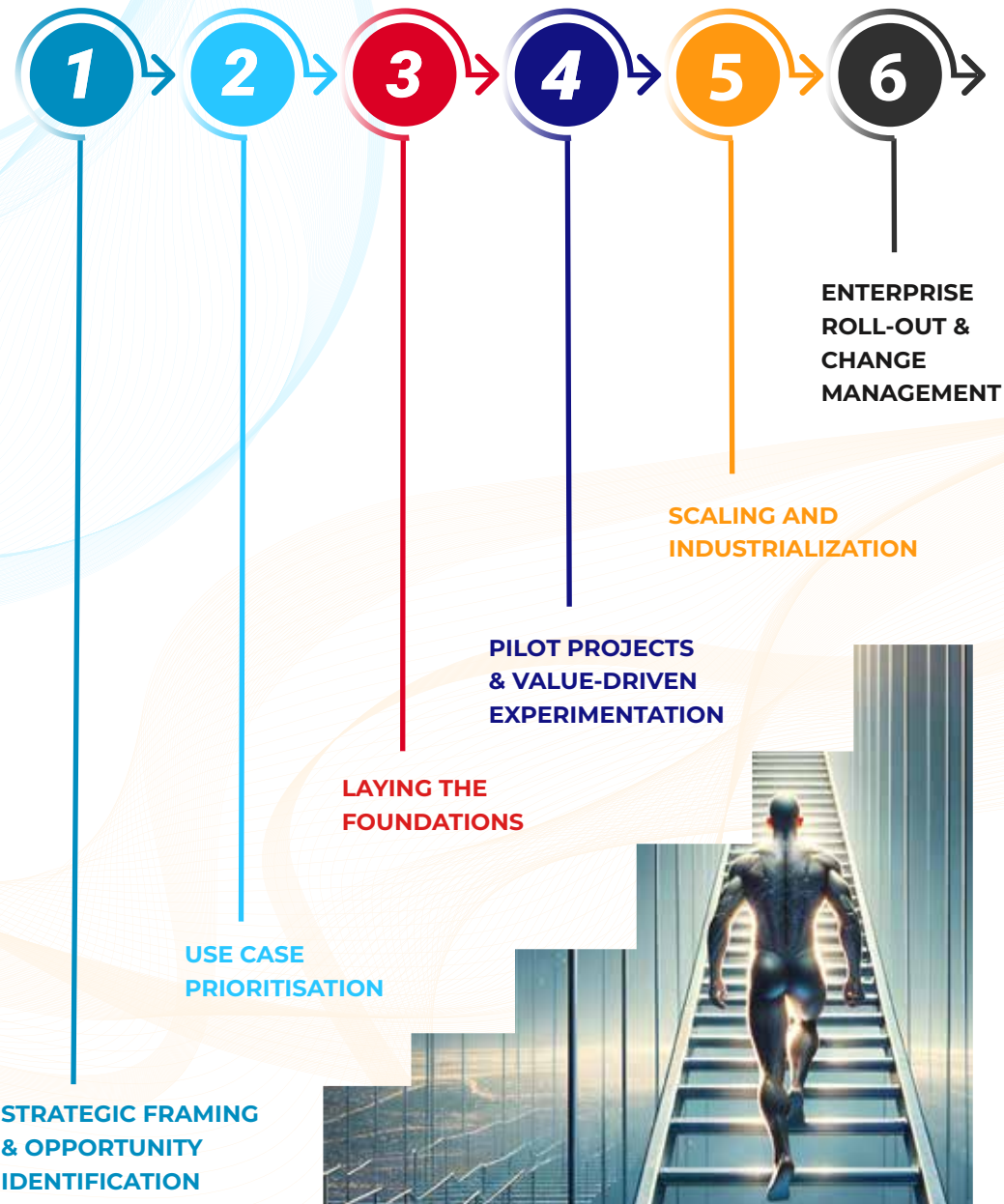
- ✓ Operational efficiency: AI automates low-value tasks, enhances productivity, and reduces cost.
- ✓ Superior decision-making: Predictive analytics and real-time insights.
- ✓ Enhanced customer experience: Personalization, rapid response, new value propositions, satisfaction and customer loyalty boost.
- ✓ Employee engagement: Automation removes routine work, empowering teams.
- ✓ Innovation & competitiveness: AI-driven solutions, new revenue streams, and a culture of experimentation.



“The success of an artificial intelligence deployment project depends first and foremost on a rigorous strategic framework. The challenge is to avoid the frequent pitfall of isolated experiments, disconnected from business objectives, which dilute investment and compromise value creation.”



6 critical steps of AI Roadmap





STRATEGIC FRAMING & OPPORTUNITY IDENTIFICATION

What & why:

Define your AI ambition, align it to business goals, and set a realistic vision based on organisational maturity.

Benefits:

Avoids scattered experimentation; ensures AI is relevant to core strategy; unites stakeholders; identifies high-potential areas.

Keyrus role:

Facilitates workshops for executives and deploys structured diagnostics to identify opportunities and risks. Brings domain expertise to clarify vision and outline a long-term strategic plan.



Defining a clear ambition and aligning AI with corporate priorities is the first structuring step in the roadmap. This framing work must be supported by senior management and integrated into the organization's overall strategy. This clarification of the AI vision is essential to federate all stakeholders and avoid scattered initiatives. The organization's maturity on the subject must also be measured right from this phase. assessment of the level of AI literacy by the teams, the skills available, the existing infrastructures and the use cases already tried out will enable the ambition to be realistically calibrated. The AI roadmap will draw on this initial snapshot to build a progressive, tailored program.





USE CASE PRIORITIZATION

What & why:

Analyze and score potential use cases by impact and feasibility from perspective of:

Technological readiness - level of complexity to integrate AI solution into existing systems.

Data quality and accessibility - availability and quality of data needed to learn the models.

Change management and regulatory risks - level of acceptance by teams and customers and well as compliance with regulatory or ethical constraints.

Once the ambition has been set, the priority is to identify the areas where AI can create the greatest value. This requires an analysis of the company's activities in terms of their economic and strategic levers. The formulation of use cases must be based on a rigorous, methodical approach. The identification of AI opportunities is accompanied by a dual assessment: operational teams contribute their knowledge of processes and challenges in the field, while AI experts assess technical feasibility and data requirements. This cross-functional collaboration guarantees the relevance of the scenarios identified and their alignment with realities on the ground. Value analysis consists in estimating the impact of the use case on the company's main performance indicators: financial gains, improved customer satisfaction, process optimization or risk reduction.

Benefits:

Focuses limited resources on quick-win and high-value projects; sets a scalable foundation for future initiatives.

Keyrus support:

Leads cost/benefit analysis to select the best use case pipeline. Identifies focused prioritization sprints to pinpoint value, feasibility, data readiness, and speed to impact.





LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS

What & why:

Establish the critical technical, organizational, and governance enablers for AI. Ensure high-quality data, scalable and secure IT architecture, clear AI governance, and cross-functional structures needed to successfully support and scale AI use cases.

Benefits:

Reliable and compliant data - accelerates model development and reduces risk.

Modern, secure infrastructure - prevents IT bottlenecks and safeguards sensitive assets.

Strong governance - streamlines resource allocation, boosts adoption, and ensures regulatory compliance.

Keyrus Support:

Keyrus aligns your data architecture, governance, MLOps/LLMOps, and cloud strategy, delivering a future-ready, integrated foundation for seamless and scalable AI adoption.

The deployment of artificial intelligence cannot produce lasting effects without solid foundations. These technical, organizational and human prerequisites determine the success of projects and their scaling-up. At this stage, the company must focus on structuring three essential pillars: data, technological infrastructure and operational models. Here, data governance becomes a strategic lever. The principles of ethics, security and compliance must structure every use of data by AI. Neglecting this preparation can lead to costly failures, disappointing results, or even make it impossible to scale-up the identified use cases





PILOT PROJECTS & VALUE-DRIVEN EXPERIMENTATION

What & why:

Launch limited-scope, agile pilot projects to test, learn, and refine AI solutions before broad deployment.

Benefits:

Minimizes risk; validates real-world impact; involves end users for better adoption.

Keyrus support:

Co-delivers focused pilots to prove business value, measure performance and adoption, drives business engagement, and sets up feedback loops for rapid iteration.

A structured experimentation phase is essential to validate hypotheses, refine models, and secure investments. This approach helps demonstrate the real value of selected use cases while preparing for their gradual scaling. Each pilot project should follow an agile methodology, relying on short cycles of experimentation, evaluation, and adjustment. This method allows for rapid testing of initial hypotheses and necessary refinements. Establishing structured feedback loops facilitates model improvement and ensures that the real needs are addressed. The lessons learned from pilot projects form a valuable foundation for the rest of the Roadmap.





SCALING & INDUSTRIALIZATION

What & why:

Move proven AI solutions from pilot to production using robust MLOps practices, model monitoring, and process rewiring.

Benefits:

Ensures long-term relevance, reliability, and ROI; prevents drift and supports business transformation.

Keyrus support:

Industrializes model workflows that standardize pipelines, monitoring, deployment, and governance, and design reusable components for effortless scaling of AI across the organization..

Scaling requires transferring validated AI models and solutions into a production environment. This industrialization goes beyond simply replicating pilots across different functional or geographical areas. It necessitates revision of processes, automation of workflows, and enhancement of technical infrastructure robustness. This stage requires rigor, method, and enhanced governance.

“The scaling-up phase marks the real tipping point for an artificial intelligence program: it transforms promising experiments into robust solutions, permanently integrated into operations.”





ENTERPRISE ROLL-OUT & CHANGE MANAGEMENT

What & why:

Extend successful AI solutions across business units and processes, using structured change and communication programs.

The widespread integration of AI across all areas of the enterprise; customer relations, production, supply chain, finance, and human resources, leads to lasting transformation of operations and significantly enhances the organization's capacity for innovation.

Benefits:

Achieves sustainable, organisation-wide value; accelerates data-driven culture.

Keyrus support:

Leads change management, oversees scaling, ensures regulatory/adoption compliance, and supports continuous user training and improvement.



The AI Roadmap at a glance

AI transformation roadmap

Step	Core Activities	Benefits Delievered	Keyrus' Role
Strategic Framing & Vision	Set ambition, align vision, stakeholder buy-in	Coherence, focus, clarity	Executive AI strategy facilitation and opportunity framing
Use Case Selection	Score & prioritize, align on value	Value-driven, low-risk portfolio	Value-based use case analysis and prioritization sprints
Foundations	Data clean-up, IT upgrades, governance, training	Reliable, future-proof, compliant setup	Data, platform & governance blueprinting with implementation support
Pilots/ Experimentation	Design, run, and monitor pilots, gather feedback	Early wins, learning, stakeholder trust	Co-delivery of AI pilots, coaching and codification of reusable patterns
Scaling & Industrialization	Deploy at scale, enable MLOps, monitor, improve	Sustainable, repeatable impact	Framework design, standardization and process rewiring across teams
Organisation Roll-out	Widespread adoption, change management	Cultural change, ongoing innovation	Enterprise change programs, targeted training and AI adoption support

Deploying AI successfully at scale cannot be improvised - it is the result of strategic framing, prioritised execution, robust foundations, and targeted scaling. **Keyrus** guides clients confidently through each phase, accelerating adoption, managing risks, and ensuring that AI becomes a true performance and competitiveness driver.



Embark on your AI journey with Keyrus, your reputable partner.

- ✓ We have extensive experience in data strategy, analytics, and AI in implementation for African and global organizations.
- ✓ We use proven methodologies for the assessment, design, piloting, and scaling of AI initiatives.
- ✓ We have deep technical and industry expertise to anticipate obstacles, maximize ROI, and de-risk investments.
- ✓ We apply a pragmatic, co-created approach, helping organizations accelerate transformation, while aligning with governance and regulatory requirements.

Contact Keyrus for expert support in building a strategic AI Roadmap and turning artificial intelligence into a sustainable advantage.



Craig Andrew
Head of Business Development



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Whether you are modernising legacy environments or building new AI capabilities, **Keyrus** provides hands-on support with pipeline audits, tool implementation, team alignment, and regulatory readiness. By working alongside your technical and business stakeholders, we make your AI initiatives both trustworthy and future-ready.

Contact us today

www.keyrus.com/za

