



## Beyond Strategy: Competing in the Age of Autonomous Intelligence

AI has reached a turning point. Strategy now meets execution as autonomous agents and AI-first operations reshape how work gets done. The leaders who act decisively will set the pace for the next decade.

**Every industry will soon face rivals that have no employees.**

As capital, compute, and coordination capabilities advance, AI-only firms—entirely run by specialized agents—are moving from concept to credible threat. These firms will enjoy structural cost advantages, instant adaptability, and continuous learning loops. To compete, incumbents must evolve from AI-aware to AI-first—embedding AI as the operating core, not the bolt-on.

**More Than 100 Autonomous AI Startups Are Targeting Role Automation**

100+

Autonomous AI startups  
(founded since 2022)

\$41M

Average total funding

120+

Different lead investors

Source details available on [bcg.com](https://www.bcg.com)

#### PREPARE FOR AI-ONLY RIVALS

### Your next sales advantage may never sleep.

AI agents are redefining B2B sales execution by augmenting sellers, assisting in real time, and autonomously engaging customers across channels. Companies that master human-AI collaboration are achieving faster conversion, smarter pricing, and richer customer engagement.

A new generation of specialized AI agents is emerging to execute the sales journey end to end:



**Orchestration Agents**



**Lead Generation Agents**



**Qualification Agents**



**Deal Conversion & Pricing Agents**



**Customer Success Agents**

The result: scalable automation and personalization, powered by human judgment where it matters most.

#### FIVE IMPERATIVES FOR AI SALES

## The next wave of banking transformation will be agent-led.

BCG's Global Retail Banking Report identifies more than \$370 billion in annual profit potential from AI by 2030. Early movers are deploying AI agents to automate service and personalization—cutting costs by up to 40% and lifting ROI. The next frontier is the AI-first retail bank, which will be leaner, faster, and built for always-on engagement.

### LEARN FROM EARLY MOVERS



#### The AI-First Medtech Company

The next wave of medtech growth will be built on AI-first foundations. BCG analysis shows that by embedding AI across R&D, operations, and commercial functions, leaders can increase revenues by 10% and productivity by 50%. Those who scale AI today will define the industry's performance frontier tomorrow.

### CAPTURE AI VALUE

#### Further Reading

- **[Making AI Agents Safe for the World](#)**
- **[The AI-First Automotive Company: Reinventing the Customer Experience](#)**
- **[When Brands Meet AI Bots: Customer Experience in the Era of Agents](#)**

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