

85% of Flemish professionals regularly use AI tools

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Wonka AI investigates adoption and challenges around GenAI tools in Flanders

"Tools like ChatGPT have opened the eyes of many. Our research shows that most organisations are significantly increasing their investments in GenAI. Most companies we spoke to aim to quickly integrate these technologies into their business operations - for example, for dealing with staff shortages in shortage occupations."
Cédric Gilissen, CEO and co-founder of Wonka AI

A year after the launch of ChatGPT, Large Language Models (LLMs) and Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) remain a key topic of discussion in strategic business meetings. While some organisations explicitly forbid their use, other companies actively embrace these technologies by setting up task forces. According to Wonka AI, a clear trend is emerging: the latest AI technology has now been established in many Flemish companies and there is increased investment in GenAI technology.

Wonka AI's research also shows that businesses are expecting a high return on investment (ROI) for GenAI: 52% of organisations expect concrete positive results within the first six months.

Five notable results from the research

1. 85% of participating organisations say they often use tools such as ChatGPT.
2. More than 50% of large organisations (1,001+ employees) restrict or ban GenAI tools like ChatGPT, while almost all smaller organisations do not. Furthermore, small businesses often encourage their use.
3. The importance of GenAI integration is uniformly high across organisations of different sizes and sectors.
4. More than 80% of organisations expect ROI from GenAI investments within the first year.
5. Organisations expect on average at least 20% cost savings from GenAI.

GenAI use

“65% of respondents use GenAI tools like Chat GPT every day, while 18% use them weekly”, the report said. “11% use these tools occasionally and only 6% have never used them, although every participant has experience with ChatGPT.” Cédric Gilissen from Wonka AI adds: “It is fascinating to see how quickly GenAI tools are being incorporated into daily operations. The initial success experience is crucial for rapid adoption. Tools that add immediate value are quickly becoming essential in modern business processes."

Limits on AI in practice

The report reveals that fewer than half of the respondents in large organisations (over 10,001 employees) have access to Chat GPT in their workplace. “That is a big difference with smaller organisations, where almost no one experiences restrictions on the use of these tools”, says Cédric Gilissen. "These organisations actively encourage the use of GenAI by organising workshops and expert sessions. This shows that small businesses are often more agile in adopting new technologies.”
From this result, you could wrongly assume that smaller organisations are less concerned about the security of their data, but the research shows that this is not necessarily the case. Almost all respondents expressed concerns about data protection and privacy. Small and large organisations are almost equally concerned about this, but we do see a difference in the extent to which this translates into a barrier to adopting new technologies.

GenAI integration

Most organisations expect a quick ROI from their GenAI investments, the report states. It turns out that 52% of respondents expect an ROI within the first six months, 30% of the organisations expect this return within one year and only 18% of companies are satisfied with a return on investment within a longer period of a year or more. Cédric Gilissen reflects: “This indicates a culture of quick results. Organisations expect GenAI to help them develop their tools faster and increase their operational efficiency.”

While there are slight differences in the importance placed on GenAI tools by companies of different sizes, it is often the largest and smallest companies that place the most value on them. Cédric Gilissen reflects: “This trend is attributed to the potential for economies of scale in larger companies and the need for resource optimisation in smaller companies. Smaller businesses welcome any help they can get due to their limited resources.”

Timeline of expectations

Most organisations aim for a quick return on their GenAI investments. A significant portion, 52%, expect to see ROI within the first six months, while 30% have a medium-term expectation of one year and 18% are more patient and expect returns after a year or more. Gilissen notes: “Many people have grown accustomed to the instant gratification that tools like ChatGPT and Midjourney provide for simple questions and expect the same from their customised solutions. Most organisations recognise that GenAI can also significantly accelerate the development of customised solutions and improve operational efficiency.”

Savings

In sectors such as financial services and human resources, significant cost savings are expected from GenAI. For example, they estimate the expected cost savings at 27% and 28% respectively. By contrast, companies in the consumer goods and services sectors expect lower savings, of around 13%. Gilissen adds: “While these figures vary, the average expected cost savings for most organisations is about 20%. Many respondents are optimistic about these savings. “Yet we note that precise forecasts are a challenge for many managers. Most say they would not be surprised if actual savings exceeded their current estimates.”

Conclusion

In summary, Gilissen says: "In Flanders, more and more organisations will increase their investments in GenAI. For many, this is an initiative to innovate their business practices for greater speed and efficiency. For others, the use of these technologies is essential for remaining competitive in their sector. Some companies use public GenAI tools, while others develop custom solutions. There is a clear trend emerging: as organisations experience tangible returns on their investments and understand the substantial impact these technologies have on operational efficiency and the quality of their work, their financial investment is expected to increase accordingly.”

About Wonka AI

Young tech company Wonka AI helps companies build secure, custom Gen AI solutions in their environment (e.g. Microsoft Azure) or on its own platform with a library of templates, to get a faster setup and reduce the CAPEX of Gen AI projects.

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