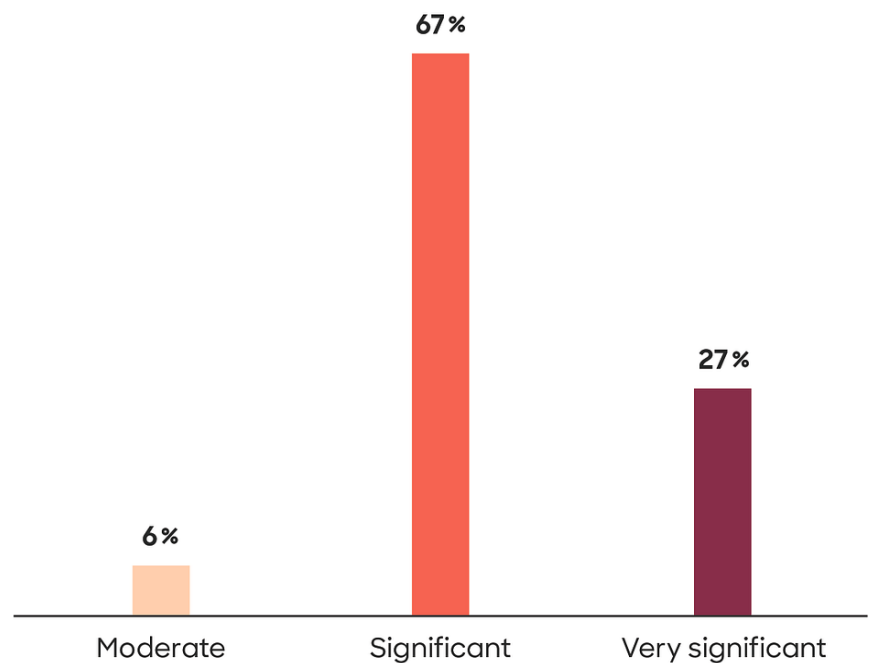


Executives think AI will have a significant impact on their company

How big an impact do you think advancements in AI will have on your company's future operations?



Source Roland Berger

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Artificial intelligence is drastically changing the healthcare sector – companies do not feel well prepared

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- Roland Berger survey of healthcare sector managers finds almost all (94%) expect AI to have a significant or very significant impact
- Three-quarters use AI regularly, but only 15 percent have integrated the technology into standard processes
- Companies are engaging with AI and investing in it, but only 29

percent feel well prepared to use GenAI for competitive advantage

Munich, November 2024: The global healthcare sector is beset by challenges such as cost pressure, a shortage of qualified staff and regulatory requirements. Artificial intelligence (AI), including generative artificial intelligence (GenAI), offers a solution. Executives in the industry share this view, as a survey of 100 company managers and other decision makers from healthcare companies conducted by Roland Berger for the study "Future of health – The AI (r)evolution" found: All of the respondents are already using AI, 74 percent of them regularly. But just 15 percent have integrated the technology into standard processes, at least partially. In the future, managers expect the importance of AI in the healthcare sector to continue to grow – especially in diagnostics and prevention. Almost all survey respondents (94%) expect the impact on their own organization to be significant or very significant, and 90 percent have already set up a dedicated AI division. Nevertheless, only 29 percent of respondents currently feel that their organization is well positioned to use AI.

"AI has well and truly arrived in the healthcare sector and is already causing major upheavals," says Ulrich Kleipafß, Partner at Roland Berger. "All players in the value chain are affected, from pharmaceutical and medtech companies whose business models are changing with AI, to health insurers that are using AI to improve their efficiency, to staff in hospitals, labs and physicians' offices who are adopting new AI-driven diagnostic and treatment methods. All companies in the sector need to address the issue, otherwise they risk being left behind on innovation and efficiency and becoming uncompetitive."

To date, AI in the healthcare sector has mainly been employed to help optimize processes and costs: 81 percent of respondents cite faster processes, 79 percent increased quality and 77 percent cost savings as benefits. As the technology advances, AI will likely become established throughout the patient journey and all along the healthcare value chain: AI-driven diagnostics – in radiology, for example – promise faster and more accurate results; the automation of routine tasks increases efficiency and helps free up human and financial resources; AI-driven data analysis in pharmaceutical and medtech companies accelerates clinical studies and increases efficiency in research and development.

A complex topic requiring technical expertise or the right partners

Market research company Grand View Research expects the global market volume for AI in the healthcare sector to stand at up to USD 190 billion by 2030. However, the Roland Berger study reveals a great deal of variation in terms of the actual use of AI within the sector currently. For example, the use of the technology in medical diagnostics is much more advanced than in the field of therapy.

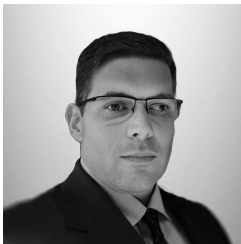
"Overall, the healthcare sector has recognized the fundamental importance of AI for the industry's future, as demonstrated by current investments and the commitment of top management – dedicated AI divisions are becoming more widespread, for example," says Karsten Neumann, Partner at Roland Berger. "But only 29 percent of executives consider their organization adequately prepared to gain competitive advantage by using GenAI. They are mainly worried about their lack of technical expertise, followed by concerns over other technical and infrastructure issues." Consequently, 87 percent of respondents indicated that they would prefer to collaborate with major tech companies rather than develop their own AI solutions – in spite of concerns around data security and other issues.

Where AI promises advantages, companies are quick to introduce it. The study authors derived three scenarios for the further development of AI in the sector: The most probable is the realistic scenario, a path of rapid evolution with partial adoption of AI, particularly in areas where it brings measurable benefits. In this case, the efficiency gains are uneven across the healthcare sector. A second, accelerated scenario describes the mass adoption of AI and transformation of the healthcare sector, while the third, conservative scenario assumes slow adoption of AI with limited impact.

"Regardless of which of the three scenarios materializes, healthcare companies should take a very careful look at how AI could have an impact on their business," says Thilo Kaltenbach, Partner at Roland Berger. "This ranges from thinking about strategy to identifying internal areas that can benefit the most from AI, to making targeted investments in the technology to gain a competitive advantage early on. It is important to take a long-term view and to keep your level of engagement with AI under review and continuously optimized in order to be prepared for both evolutionary and revolutionary developments."

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