(AI automation division)

Do I really need AI?

A practical non-technical guide for engineering led business.

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This is practical, non-technical summary written for engineering-led businesses, operators, and SMB owners who want a practical, low-risk way to understand whether AI adds real value. It is a very important question; and it starts with what value do you want to bring to your business, to your process, or to your customers?

Starting with the most important question, what value do I want to bring? If you are already functioning well and driving forward in your market and have systems and processes in place you may not need any further automation.

Sometimes the best customers can be the people who work for you. Is there a way to help and simplify what they do and provide tools that make it easy for them to do the work? If there can be a better way, by automating it, would it bring great value to them, to customers, and to your business? How would you measure this?

Automation and AI are built around knowing what you want your business to achieve and what you want your customers to experience and benefit from. AI and automation are tools to build the value you want to create.

When looking at AI for your business it is best to start with any small internal project before providing an external model to customers. Something you could see a return from in a short time frame. This allows your business and people to become familiar with the automation, and provides a rapid way to measure return on a system.

Below is how a framework of AI could look like in your business.

1.) Start with your value! What value do I want to bring, why? What am I trying to solve?

2.) Data:

This is gathered, prepared and checked, to be added into an AI model. Data could be customer feedback, operational manuals, technical sheets, data in many forms

including visual, voice and text. This can all be prepared and put together by an AI partner and team, you keep running your business.

3.) Modelling: This is the process of iterating the data for the required output. It could be working through a simple request for a technical manual or summary of manuals, or it could be a summary of the feedback and sentiment from a recent product launch. The type of modelling, its structure, and the type of data to be used, is dependent on the question of value for your business.

(There are many details that go on "inside" the machine. Preparing the data, test the data, validate the output, check the output for bias, remove bias, maybe in some cases bias needs to be added, continually check and validate the output, place safeguards in the system, protect with security, ensure governance and regulations are met, add new data, ensure interoperability with current systems, and many others) You keep running the business, an AI partner should do all of this.

4.) Output & Feedback: Provide a best-case predictive output with continual feedback and refinement.

When you work with an AI partner ask them for details on how they would implement a project. Ensure they are specific. They should include a summary of data, data protection, how they store data for privacy, how do they look at governance and policies? Governance and policy will also come from your business, and they must be aligned with your business. Ask them how they test the model, how do they remove bias, what bias would they anticipate in the value you are wanting to create. Whose system are they using, what about security of the model and cybersecurity, how would they look at interoperating with your current business systems? What problems or roadblocks do they foresee, how long would it take to implement, what "maintenance" needs to be done on the system, how is the data updated? Importantly they should be aware of local governance regulations. California has AI transparency laws and Europe has the General Data Protection Regulation, GDPR, that must be adhered to if you fall under these.

Remember AI is a tool to meet your business value. There are many tools out there.

About the author: *Scott White is the lead in GETEMON automation and an area within this is applying AI into business, and importantly if it suits a business. He is a not a programmer or developer; his work centres on strategy and governance and determining whether AI is appropriate and how it should be applied responsibly in the industrial and manufacturing environments.* info@getemon.com