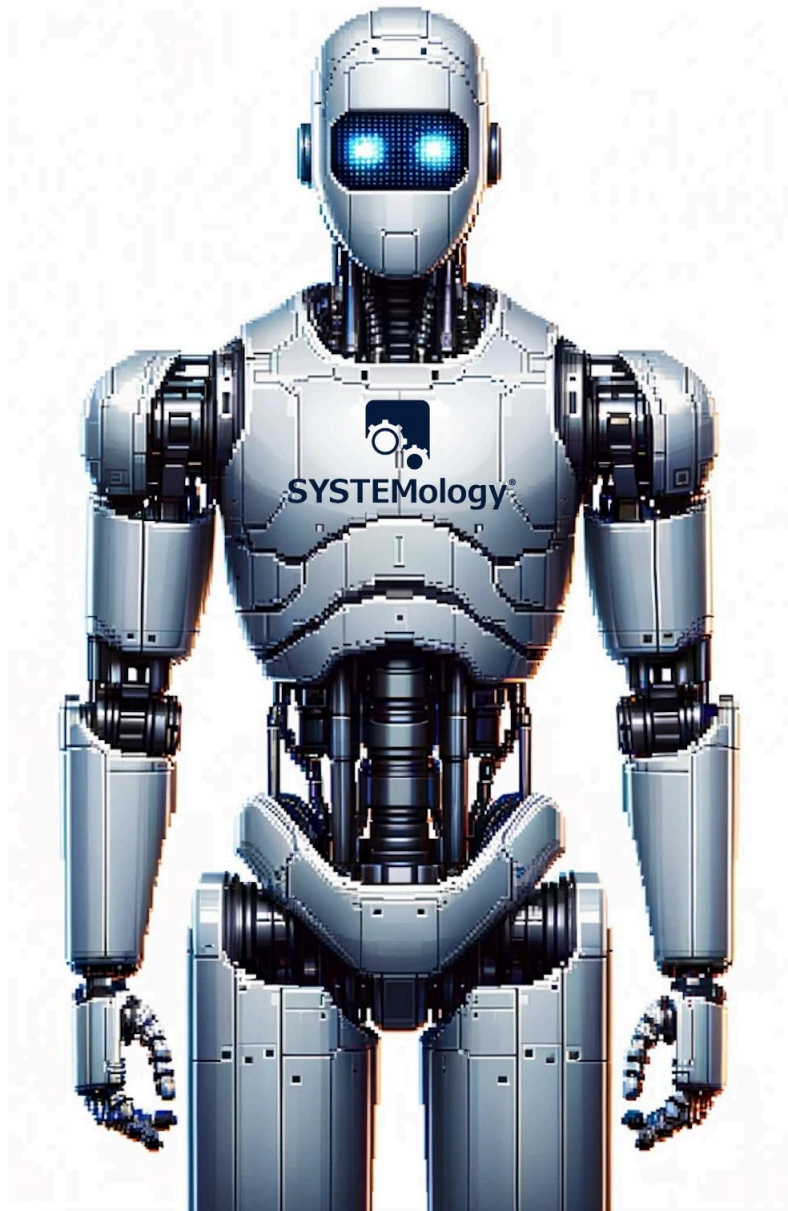


# The AI-First Company

*A Blueprint for Small Business Change*



**By David Jenyns**

***Founder SYSTEMology***

# Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Unprecedented Opportunity.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Nature of the AI Revolution.....	4
Why Small Businesses Are Poised to Benefit.....	5
The SYSTEMology Approach to Leveraging AI.....	5
<b>Most Small Businesses Will Miss This.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Resistance to Change.....	5
Lack of Knowledge & Expertise.....	6
Resource Constraints.....	6
Overwhelm & Prioritization.....	6
Fear of Implementation Failure.....	6
Finding the Right Partners.....	6
<b>The Cost Of Inaction.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Becoming An AI-First Company.....</b>	<b>7</b>
Step 1: Identify Your Systems & AI Champion.....	8
Step 2: Document & Analyze Current Processes.....	8
Step 3: Identify High-Impact Areas for AI Integration.....	8
Step 4: Re-engineer, Test, and Iterate.....	9
<b>Practical &amp; Real World Applications.....</b>	<b>9</b>
AI & Customer Support.....	9
AI & Content Marketing.....	10
AI & Sales.....	11
AI & Recruitment.....	12
<b>Culture of Innovation.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>References.....</b>	<b>15</b>

## Introduction

In an age where the speed of technological advancements is accelerating at breakneck speeds, there is one development which stands in a league of its own: AI (artificial intelligence). The impact AI will have on you and your business cannot be emphasized enough. If you don't heed this call, then the writing is on the wall...

Take the recent example of Klarna (an ecommerce solutions provider) who, in a recent press release, stated their AI assistant handled two-thirds of their customer service chats in its first month. The AI assistant had 2.3 million conversations, doing the work of 700 full-time agents.

What's more, it's on par with (one could argue it's even better than) human agents in regard to customer satisfaction. Customer issues are now resolved in less than 2 minutes compared to 11 minutes previously. The AI assistant is available in 23 markets, 24/7 and communicates in more than 35 languages.

It's estimated to drive a USD\$40 million profit improvement to Klarna in 2024.

*"Klarna is at the very forefront among our partners in AI adoption and practical application."* said Brad Lightcap, COO of OpenAI. *"Together we are unlocking the vast potential for AI to boost productivity and improve our day-to-day lives."*

Sebastian Siemiatkowski, co-founder and CEO of Klarna, said *"We are incredibly excited about this launch, but it also underscores the profound impact on society that AI will have."*

[Read full press release](#)

While this application demonstrates AI's impact for a larger player like Klarna, it marks the first time in history that technology has leveled the playing field for everyone. The opportunity for small businesses to leverage AI for unprecedented growth and efficiency is more significant than ever. Now is the time to grasp this opportunity and run with it—not a time to shy away.

I'm David Jenyns, author of the best-selling book [SYSTEMology](#), and a serial entrepreneur whose mission is to help small businesses build systems-driven operations. In this whitepaper, we explore the heart of the AI revolution, its

implications for small businesses, and actionable steps owners can take to harness its potential.

Drawing from decades of experience in systemizing businesses for scalability and efficiency, my aim is to demystify AI and guide you through becoming an AI-first company—a journey promising not just survival but thriving success in the new digital era. This document isn't just a call to action; it's a blueprint for transformation.

## **Unprecedented Opportunity**

The AI revolution is not merely another technological trend; it represents a paradigm shift with the power to redefine the essence of conducting business. For agile, small businesses, this shift offers an unprecedented chance to bypass traditional growth barriers and outpace competitors.

Similarly, to how emerging economies embraced global commerce and communication with the advent of the internet, cellular networks, and smartphones, small businesses that adopt an AI-first, systems-driven approach now stand on equal footing with major market players.

Employing AI-first, systems-driven methods enables small businesses to deliver their solutions more swiftly, affordably, and effectively than those slow to embrace change. This presents the most significant opportunity to get ahead and surpass your competition.

### **Nature of the AI Revolution**

Unlike previous technological advancements, AI's impact is vast and varied, touching on everything from customer service to product development, marketing, and more. It serves as a tool that can enhance human capabilities, automate mundane tasks, and open new paths for innovation and efficiency.

The revolutionary aspect of AI lies in its ability to transform what was once expensive and time-consuming into processes that are infinitely more affordable and efficient. This shift has already begun transforming business models, creating new value propositions, and redefining market dynamics.

## **Why Small Businesses Are Poised to Benefit**

Historically, the advantages offered by AI were accessible only to those with deep pockets. However, with the public release of technologies like OpenAI's ChatGPT, small businesses now have access to powerful tools at a fraction of the cost.

Why is this significant? Small businesses, with their agility and capacity for rapid adaptation, are uniquely positioned to harness this revolution. Free from the cumbersome legacy behaviors and bureaucratic inertia plaguing larger corporations, small businesses can pivot quickly, adopting and utilizing AI solutions before their slower-moving counterparts even start to react. This agility gives small businesses a competitive edge in an era where speed and innovation are crucial.

## **The SYSTEMology Approach to Leveraging AI**

SYSTEMology offers a framework for identifying, documenting, and optimizing business processes. When coupled with AI, this methodology is enhanced, allowing for quick wins by applying AI to streamline existing processes, achieving faster, more cost-effective, and superior outcomes.

## **Most Small Businesses Will Miss This**

Despite the enormous opportunities AI presents for small businesses, the sad reality is that the vast majority will not recognize or take advantage of them. Some will believe the changes won't affect them, others will claim they don't have the time, and many will get in their own way by failing to act.

The reasons are multifaceted and deeply rooted in human nature...

### **Resistance to Change**

It's in our evolutionary nature to seek familiarity and establish routines. This resistance to change is not just about adopting new technology but also about the fear of disrupting the status quo that has been in place for years.

## **Lack of Knowledge & Expertise**

For many small business owners, the gap between understanding how AI can help them and how to actually use it is a big one. Without clear guidance and expertise, the path to AI adoption seems fraught with challenges that many feel ill-equipped to navigate.

## **Resource Constraints**

Investing in AI requires not just a financial outlay but also a commitment to training and possibly expanding a team to include systems and AI specialists. Small businesses, with their limited budgets and lean teams, often find it difficult to justify or allocate resources towards something that they think won't deliver immediate, tangible benefits.

## **Overwhelm & Prioritization**

For small business owners, the day-to-day demands of running their business can make it difficult to focus on long-term strategic thinking - let alone contemplate where AI sits in their wheelhouse.

## **Fear of Implementation Failure**

There are numerous tales of technology implementations gone wrong, leading to wasted resources, both time and money. For a small business, such failures can have significant repercussions. This fear of failure, coupled with the lack of a clear roadmap for AI integration, leads many to “wait-and-see”, hoping to learn from the successes and mistakes of others.

## **Finding the Right Partners**

Navigating the AI landscape requires finding the right partners and solutions that are actually valuable for a small business. The market is flooded with AI tools and services, each promising transformative results. Deciphering which ones are truly beneficial and align with their business goals is a daunting task for small business owners.

Unfortunately, the gap between recognizing the potential of what AI offers and how to integrate it into a small business is wide. Just remember, while change can be challenging the rewards will far exceed the effort required.

## The Cost Of Inaction

While the reluctance to embrace change is real, especially when faced with the rapid advancements in AI, it's critical to understand the true costs here.

***The cost of inaction is greater than you realise.***

This goes far beyond short-term missed financial gains. Failure to embrace this change opens the risk of becoming obsolete.

The digital age is replete with cautionary tales of businesses that failed to adapt to technological shifts. Blockbuster's decline in the face of streaming services and Kodak's late embrace of digital photography underscore the peril of ignoring innovation. These examples illustrate the stark reality: inaction can lead to extinction.

The fact is, businesses who don't adopt change will see their competition using AI to increase their productivity while lowering their costs - leaving them with a distinct disadvantage which will ultimately hurt their bottom line.

The message is clear: you cannot afford the cost of inaction. The transition to AI is not just about adopting new technology; it's about securing a future in an increasingly digital world.

Let's take a closer look at how to become a success story here.

## Becoming An AI-First Company

There are a lot of things to consider when starting anything new, let alone beginning a journey with such a revolutionary thing as AI. So where do you start? Where should you apply AI first? Do you need special software? How will you get your team onboard?

Don't stress; I'm going to give you a step-by-step system to follow. Buckle up...

## **Step 1: Identify Your Systems & AI Champion**

First things first, you need to identify who in your team will lead this initiative. Your organization needs a dedicated AI and Systems Champion, a role crucial for maintaining momentum and focus on your AI-first transformation.

Select someone who is:

- Detail-oriented,
- Passionate about learning new technologies,
- Enjoys a challenge,
- Has capacity in their workday. Note: this often excludes the business owner, as owners rarely have the capacity and ability to follow through.

For more help on recruiting for this role, [click here](#).

## **Step 2: Document & Analyze Current Processes**

Remember the old adage “You can only improve what you measure.” Before you can enhance your operations with AI, you need a clear understanding of your existing processes. This involves simple systems documentation.

Following the SYSTEMology approach, have your Systems & AI Champion work with your team to record, transcribe and create simple documented processes. The best news is, this is easier than ever with AI - [find out more](#).

By documenting your current workflows, you can identify inefficiencies and areas ripe for AI-enhanced optimization.

## **Step 3: Identify High-Impact Areas for AI Integration**

Pinpoint where AI can make the most significant impact. How do you do that? Your Systems & AI Champion will begin exploring different AI and automation tools with your existing processes in mind. Some areas will be more obvious than others. To start, look for repetitive tasks, data-heavy processes, and customer interactions that can be automated or improved.



In the next section, I'll provide some practical examples to get your mind going. That said, remember to look in all departments of your business - marketing, sales, operations, and finance.

You can even ask AI to make suggestions for your business. Use the prompt:

*I have a <add your business type here>, can you please suggest some high-impact areas where AI and automation can improve my business?*

#### **Step 4: Re-engineer, Test, and Iterate**

Using one of the high-impact areas, and one where it is obvious to your Systems Champion which AI solution will help improve your outcomes, begin to re-engineer your processes. Do this in isolation from your existing processes so as not to disrupt what's currently working.

Where needed, allow the Systems Champion to work with any knowledgeable team members to reimagine your new process utilizing AI and/or automation tools. Run small tests to confirm your hypothesis and measure outcomes.

Focus on reducing turnaround times and increasing throughput, lowering operational and per-unit costs, and enhancing customer satisfaction and reducing defect rates. Regularly track these metrics before and after implementing changes to observe improvements.

The goal is to achieve the quickest wins to create immediate value and build momentum for wider AI adoption. It's important for the team to recognize how these changes benefit not only the company but also themselves.

## **Practical & Real World Applications**

Let's look at a few concrete examples to get you started. From customer service, to content creation, to sales training, and recruitment processes, here are some ideas that you can implement immediately.

### **AI & Customer Support**

Incorporating AI into customer service isn't just a futuristic concept; it's a tangible strategy, as demonstrated by Klarna's groundbreaking use of AI at the

start of this paper. Klarna's AI assistant has shown that, with the right approach, AI can handle a significant portion of customer service interactions, providing outcomes that are on par with, or superior to, human agents.

Here's a simplified breakdown of how you can replicate Klarna's success on a smaller scale:

- Start by searching for “programmable chatbots” (e.g., [chatbase.co](https://chatbase.co), [liveperson.com](https://liveperson.com), [sendbird.com](https://sendbird.com)) to find solutions that allow you to preload your customer service data for interaction with a Large Language Model (LLM).
- Train your AI assistant with data from your website, company white papers, chat logs, email conversations, and any other customer communication.
- Initially, have the AI assist your existing customer service team by speeding up response times and improving response quality, starting with a limited scope to ensure effectiveness.
- Monitor its performance closely and use your learnings to fine-tune the AI's responses and capabilities.
- As the AI assistant proves effective, gradually scale its responsibilities to allow direct engagement with your clients."

## **AI & Content Marketing**

AI's application in marketing opens a new frontier for content creation, allowing businesses to amplify their voice and reach with unprecedented efficiency.

Imagine leveraging AI to distill insights from client interviews, customer feedback, and market research. This data, rich in nuances about customer preferences, pain points, and desires, becomes the foundation for an AI system designed to generate compelling marketing content.

- Tools such as [Jasper.io](https://jasper.io), [copy.ai](https://copy.ai), and [ChatGPT](https://chatgpt.com), for example, are out-of-the-box solutions to solve many of your marketing challenges. The secret to getting the best output is to feed and pre-train them with your own data.

- Gather data from client interviews, customer interactions, and other relevant sources. This pool should capture the diverse customer experiences, expectations, and interactions with your brand.
- Use this dataset to train an AI model, teaching it the language, tone, and style that resonate with your audience.
- Once trained, the AI can assist in generating various marketing materials, from captivating video scripts and converting email campaigns to community-building social media posts and action-driving landing page copy.

The AI, drawing from the depths of learned customer interactions, produces content that feels personal, relevant, and timely.

Rather than replacing human creativity, AI serves as a powerful tool to augment the capabilities of your marketing team. Writers can leverage AI-generated drafts as a foundation, refining and infusing them with human insight and creativity. This collaboration between AI and human talent accelerates content production, allowing for a more dynamic and responsive marketing strategy.

This approach not only streamlines content creation but also ensures that every piece of content is data-driven, customer-focused, and aligned with your brand's voice. The result is a marketing strategy that can adapt quickly to market changes, deliver personalized content at scale, and ultimately drive more effective customer engagement and conversions.

To see the real world application of this, be sure to check out the [systemHUB & SYSTEMology YouTube channel here](#). Within a few short weeks from embracing AI we have been able to increase the output of our content by a factor of 5 while also improving the quality and reducing the time spent.

## **AI & Sales**

Another quick win for many organizations is within sales, as AI revolutionizes how businesses understand, engage, and close deals with customers. Let's take a closer look at how it works...

- By using platforms like [gong.io](#), [chorus.ai](#), and [salesloft.com](#)

- Recording and transcribing sales calls and client interactions allow businesses to amass a wealth of information. This includes common objections, frequently asked questions, successful closing techniques, and more. This data becomes the training material for AI models designed to understand and predict customer behavior and needs.
- With this dataset, AI algorithms can be trained to recognize patterns and insights that may not be immediately apparent to sales teams. This includes identifying language that tends to lead to a successful sale, pinpointing areas where customers seem to hesitate, and uncovering the most effective responses to common objections.

Incorporating AI doesn't stop with analysis. By continuously feeding the AI system feedback from sales outcomes, the model becomes increasingly adept at predicting which leads are most likely to convert, the next best steps for nurturing specific leads, and even recommending personalized outreach strategies.

This approach doesn't replace the human touch in sales; instead, it augments it, allowing sales teams to focus on what they do best—building relationships and closing deals—while AI handles the heavy lifting of data analysis and personalization.

### **AI & Recruitment**

AI can transform your traditional HR processes - from recruitment to onboarding and performance management. Remember these are not just nice ideas of what's to come, but rather ideas you can execute today with existing tools. Here's how it works...

- Ask chatGPT to draft your position descriptions, suggest KPIs and write your job advertisements.
- Have it analyze successful past listings and identify key elements that resonate with top candidates.
- Allow AI to suggest improvements or variations based on industry trends, ensuring that your listings stand out and attract the right talent.
- Then let AI formulate interview questions by analyzing the job description and required competencies, ensuring that questions are relevant,

challenging, and tailored to the role.

- Use tools such as [talenteria.com](https://talenteria.com) , [sparkhire.com](https://sparkhire.com) to allow AI to conduct interviews, review the collected data against success criteria to rank candidates, suggesting which ones warrant further consideration.

Depending on your recruitment volume you can only imagine how much time could be saved when compared to manual screening. This time saving could then be reinvested into further engaging with top-tier candidates.

And that's just the beginning! By automating and enhancing tasks with AI, HR professionals can focus on strategic decision-making and human engagement.

Remember these are just generalised applications for AI. You and your business are unique. With the right approach, and by empowering your Systems & AI Champion, you'll be able to identify the highest impact areas that can immediately solve your current biggest pain points.

## **Culture of Innovation**

Change starts at the top. As a leader, your commitment to embracing AI and desire to improve processes sets the tone for the entire organization. Share your vision, the reasons behind the shift towards AI, and the impact you believe it will have on the business.

Then demonstrate how these initiatives are closely aligned with your business goals and objectives. This alignment ensures that the technology serves a clear purpose and contributes to the overall success of the organization.

The next important step is to identify and empower a Systems & AI Champion within your organization. This individual will lead the AI implementation efforts, acting as a bridge between the technology and its practical application in your business processes.

Start documenting your existing processes! Process documentation will form the basis of re-engineering them with AI. And once AI agents become more powerful, your processes documentation will become the programming for the machines,

meaning an ever-evolving improvement to squeeze the most efficiency and profitability out of each system your business undertakes.

Give your Systems & AI Champion support to offer training sessions and workshops that demystify AI and showcase its practical applications within your operations.

It's also important to foster an environment where questions, concerns, and ideas about AI integration can be openly discussed. Regularly update your team on the progress and learnings from AI initiatives, and encourage feedback and suggestions.

Last but definitely not least, remember to recognize and celebrate successes, even the small ones, to build momentum and demonstrate the benefits of AI integration. Equally, when things don't go as planned, openly discuss what went wrong and what can be learned from the experience. This approach encourages a growth mindset and resilience in the face of challenges.

## **Conclusion**

Driving change to become an AI-first company is a journey that involves leadership, education, and a culture shift towards embracing innovation. Remember, the goal is not just to adopt AI but to weave it into the fabric of your business operations, making it a cornerstone of your strategy for growth and success.

[Finding and hiring Systems & AI Champion](#) is now more critical than ever. Throughout this white paper, we've explored the seismic shifts AI has already brought to the market (not to mention what's yet to come!), the unique position small businesses hold to leverage it, and the practical steps required to transform the most common departments – which form the backbone of an AI-first company.

Businesses that move first will secure a competitive edge, drive innovation, and ensure long-term success. The cost of inaction is too great, and the time to act is now.

## References

27 Feb 2024 - Klarna AI assistant handles two-thirds of customer service chats in its first month - [here](#)

SYSTEMology: Create time, reduce errors and scale your profits with proven business systems - [here](#)

Find & Hire a Systems & AI Champion Masterclass - [here](#)

Systems & AI Certification Program - [here](#)

Automate Your Process Documentation with ChatGPT Masterclass - [here](#)