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A quarter of companies ban the use of AI

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More than a quarter of Australian companies have banned artificial intelligence tools in the workplace, citing privacy concerns, including the potential for corporate secrets to be shared with competitors, according to a new study.

Communications technology titan **_Cisco_** surveyed more than 2600 security and privacy professionals across 12 countries, which revealed businesses were unplugging the much-hyped technology - for now.

This is despite bigger businesses beginning to reap productivity gains from the much-hyped technology, which the Albanese government expects will inject up to $600bn a year into the national economy by 2030. But, **_Cisco_** ANZ's director of cybersecurity Corien Vermaak said trust remains a big hurdle in fuelling AI's widespread adoption. Ms Vermaak said 27 per cent of Australian companies surveyed had banned the use of generative AI applications due to privacy risks.

Of that number, 77 per cent were worried corporate information entered into AI apps could be shared publicly or with competitors, while 69 per cent were concerned it could hurt their legal or intellectual property rights.

"As we do security awareness training, we now need to focus on that narrative on AI as well," Ms Vermaak said.

The Productivity Commission also found low levels of public trust in AI technologies could pose a "significant barrier" to uptake. But, it said governments should act as "exemplars" to demonstrate the safe and effective uses of AI in service delivery.

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