“*Most agentic AI propositions lack significant value or return on investment, as current models do not have the maturity and agency to autonomously achieve complex business goals or follow nuanced instructions over time.*”

**Anushree Verma, Senior Director Analyst (Gartner)**

Leaders are deploying AI at an unprecedented rate, but are they managing it correctly? What happens when your AI scales faster than the rules you have in place? What if your new AI platform is not capable of scaling with your enterprise?

It all sounds like the ingredients for a potential AI storm in your enterprise, especially if you have no control over it. It’s creating a stark choice for leaders: **embed compliance now or scramble later.**

## The US Regulatory Wave

AI has caught many people off guard. It’s not only leaders who are asking themselves tough questions. Regulators are also struggling to catch up. Unlike Europe’s [EU AI Act](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/topics/en/article/20230601STO93804/eu-ai-act-first-regulation-on-artificial-intelligence), the US does not have a single federal law governing AI.

So what’s the background on all this?

White House [executive orders have recently shifted](https://www.reuters.com/technology/artificial-intelligence/trump-revokes-biden-executive-order-addressing-ai-risks-2025/). First, as a risk management framework under President Biden, there is now a focus on competitiveness and innovation under President Trump.

Currently, the [NIST AI Risk Management Framework](https://www.nist.gov/itl/ai-risk-management-framework) serves as the de facto standard for responsible AI adoption in the US. However, additional AI regulations will not be far away as the industry continues to march forward.

Indeed, only last year, the Commerce Department proposed [more detailed reporting requirements](https://www.reuters.com/technology/us-proposes-requiring-reporting-advanced-ai-cloud-providers-2024-09-09/?utm_source=chatgpt.com) for AI developers and cloud computing providers. The overall intention is to ensure technologies are safe and can handle cyberattacks.

But the systems some enterprises are setting up will not work. Gartner has forecast that [over 40% of agentic AI projects may be scrapped](https://www.reuters.com/business/over-40-agentic-ai-projects-will-be-scrapped-by-2027) by 2027 due to cost overruns, unclear ROI, and poor governance.

**For US enterprises, this isn’t about *if* regulation will arrive; it’s about *when*.**

\*\*\* If you would like to find out more about this, in our last article, we took a deep dive into the governance gap and [why Agentic AI projects collapse without governance.](https://readyai.dev/insights/agentic-AI-in-the-enterprise) \*\*\*

## Compliance or Chaos: The Enterprise Reality of AI Regulation

In McKinsey’s research, [“The State of AI: How Organizations are Rewiring to Capture Value”](https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/quantumblack/our-insights/the-state-of-ai), organizations with mature AI governance capture value faster and with fewer risks, while laggards will lose ground.

As it stands, there are two main camps in enterprises. Here’s the reality on the ground:

* **Compliance-First Enterprises** - these are audit-ready, trusted by boards, and able to scale AI with confidence.
* **Chaos-First Enterprises** - these will be blindsided by regulators, and will scramble to respond, and will see projects stall.

The difference isn’t luck. It’s leadership.

## Five Moves Every US Enterprise Must Make Now

As a leader, to stay ahead of AI regulations, we recommend implementing these five things in your enterprise. These actions will distinguish leaders who manage AI risk from those who get caught in regulatory crossfire.

### **Run a Compliance Readiness Check**

Similar to an “AI readiness” assessment, your enterprise should start with a **compliance readiness audit.** You can do this by mapping out existing governance, infrastructure, and documentation against NIST and industry standards. It will help you identify any blind spots before the regulators do it for you.

### **Prioritize Use Cases by Regulatory Risk**

Remember, not all AI projects are equal. For example, finance, healthcare, and HR carry higher regulatory exposure. Choose pilots that will enable you to demonstrate both ROI and compliance simultaneously. It will help keep the board confident and reduce downside risk.

### **Turn PoCs Into Compliance Trials**

A proof of concept is not a proof of compliance. Start building compliance-aware pilots with explainability, audit logs, and escalation triggers built in. These controlled trials can help you catch governance issues early on, which is critical before AI is embedded enterprise-wide.

### **Decide to Build vs. Buy With Compliance in Mind**

Compliance must guide your decision here. Building gives you total control over everything, but if you buy, you must have vendor accountability. If you decide to build, ensure your governance and audit structures are embedded at every point. If you buy, demand contractual SLAs, audit rights, and transparency from vendors.

### **Institutionalize Oversight Across Risk, HR, and Legal**

CIOs and CAIOs must lead, but compliance, HR, and legal must have equal seats at the table. Test your resilience by conducting **regulatory fire drills** that simulate audits from:

* FTC
* SEC
* EEOC

For more context and to prepare yourself even further, borrow lessons from the EU AI Act’s risk tiers to prepare for global operations.

## Compliance as a Competitive Advantage

**It’s about taking a step back as a leader and looking at the bigger picture when it comes to compliance.**

Many executives view compliance as a cost to the company. In reality, it is a bridge to growth for the entire organization. The McKinsey research also found that enterprises with strong AI governance scale initiatives **1.5x faster.**

**There’s a distinct change in the air.**

Investors, customers, and talent want to work with companies that can demonstrate transparent, trustworthy AI practices. For enterprises seeking consistent business investment and the best talent available, AI compliance is essential.

## Your Next Step Before AI Regulation

US enterprises are currently facing a defining decision: compliance or chaos. The choice should be crystal clear by now. It’s time to think differently and turn your AI compliance from an obstacle into an opportunity.

**The leaders who embrace governance today won’t just survive; they will thrive.**

These enterprises will scale responsibly, protect their reputation, and position themselves ahead of the competition. Those leaders who wait to see what happens will be left scrambling under the scrutiny of the regulators.

At [ReadyAI.dev](https://readyai.dev/), we help CIOs, CTOs, HR leaders, and CAIOs build secure, regulation-ready AI ecosystems.

Take action and now and future-proof your enterprise. [Book an Executive Evaluation](https://readyai.dev/plans-and-enterprise-options) to learn how we can help you stay competitive and compliant.

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