AI: Build or Buy Self-Assessment

By Rotational Labs: AI Engineering for Business Impact

Q1 How effective has your organization been at identifying use cases for automation, efficiency or agility?

- **A** We haven't identified concrete use cases yet.
- **B** We've identified a few use cases but need to asses their feasibility & viability.
- **C** We're working through a healthy backlog of concrete & vetted use cases.

Q2 How much control does your organization need to have over data sourcing, privacy, and governance?

- **A** Our data are not sensitive / we do not have proprietary data.
- **B** We care about privacy, but can entrust governance to a 3rd party software solution.
- **C** We work with highly sensitive data & need to maintain full control for strategic or compliance reasons.

Q3 How much data can your organization leverage to build a solution that automates some proprietary process?

- **A** We have a knowledge base (SharePoint, Confluence, Google Drive, etc.) of SOPs and meeting minutes.
- **B** Our data is siloed and messy, but we'd be willing to dedicate people-hours to annotation.
- **C** We have years worth of artifacts of human-driven decision making for our business processes.

Q4 How specialized is your organization's vocabulary and workflows? Do they only make sense to insiders?

- **A** Our language is pretty generic aside from a few acronyms.
- **B** New employees usually need a few months to fully understand what people are talking about.
- **C** Our vocab and workflows would be difficult for an outsider to interpret without meaningful context.

Q5 How experienced and collaborative is your team working on machine learning projects?

- **A** We don't have an in house technical team.
- **B** We have a data science team building models, but they aren't part of the engineering team.
- **C** We have our own end-to-end team for research, engineering, design, and product.

Q6 How much do you expect to be able to audit the AI solution and interpret its predictions and decisions?

- **A** If a solution could really automate these decisions, we'd be happy to fully delegate them to an AI.
- **B** If something looked off, we'd want to be able to double-check the AI from time-to-time.
- **C** We need to be able to look into how the AI is "reasoning" about the problem.

Q7 How important is automation to your organization? Be honest.

- **A** We need to be able to say we have a solution.
- **B** We are totally maxed out on bandwidth & need to start automating ASAP.
- **C** Our leadership team sees automation as an investment in the future growth of the company.

Q8 How important is time to market for your organization?

- **A** We need a solution now or our competitors will eat our lunch.
- **B** Speed is important but not a priority. We have 1-2 years to figure this out.
- **C** We have an economic moat, but we're exploring how AI could deepen it over the next 3-5 years.

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8 TO 12 POINTS

BUY!

Off-the-shelf AI works best when the tasks to automate aren't especially high-stakes or differentiated.

Still, read the fine print to avoid lock-in!

13 TO 18 POINTS

TRY BUY, PLAN TO BUILD.

You're right to be skeptical about the value of generic AI solutions given the unique workflows and problems at your business.

19 TO 24 POINTS

BUILD!

The best way to capitalize on your data/team assets, not to mention de-risk your AI investment, is to do-it-yourself.

Scoring:

Sum your scores, for each answer add:

A: 1 point
B: 2 points
C: 3 points

My Score