A FORJANCE ARTICLE

Most owners who use AI say it paid off. Most who haven’t started say they haven’t seen a need.

A new survey of 691 small business owners shows what owners who use AI report.

WHAT OWNERS WHO USE AI REPORT

Heartland Forward and Echelon Insights surveyed 691 small business owners in September 2026. 43% use AI. Among those who do:

70% say it has had a net-positive effect on their finances

93% say it saves them time

81% say it lets them do more with the same staff

WHERE THE TIME GOES

93% of owners who use AI say it saves them time.

5+ hrs a week: more than half save five or more hours a week

1 in 5 say AI-driven growth has helped them afford to hire new employees

Heartland Forward says owners are putting the time back into growing their businesses.

WHY SOME OWNERS HAVEN’T STARTED

Of the 57% of owners not yet using AI:

52% say they haven’t seen a need for it

6% cite cost as the obstacle

6% cite complexity

Price and difficulty are rarely the problem. Relevance is.

WHAT FORJANCE IS DOING

83% of owners who use AI taught themselves by trying it. You don’t have to. At Forjance:

1. We set it up around your business

Your company, your words, your way of working.

2. Start with one real task

Bring something you’ve been meaning to get done to a walkthrough and see what the team produces.

3. You stay in control

Private to your business. Nothing goes out until a person on your side approves it.

Seeing a need starts with seeing it work on your own business.

Most owners who use it say it helped.

Learn more at forjance.com

FORGED, NOT FOUND.

Source: Heartland Forward, “AI on Main Street” (October 1, 2026), survey by Echelon Insights of 691 small business owners, September 3-11, 2026. Online, non-probability sample; margin of sampling error ±5.2 points.