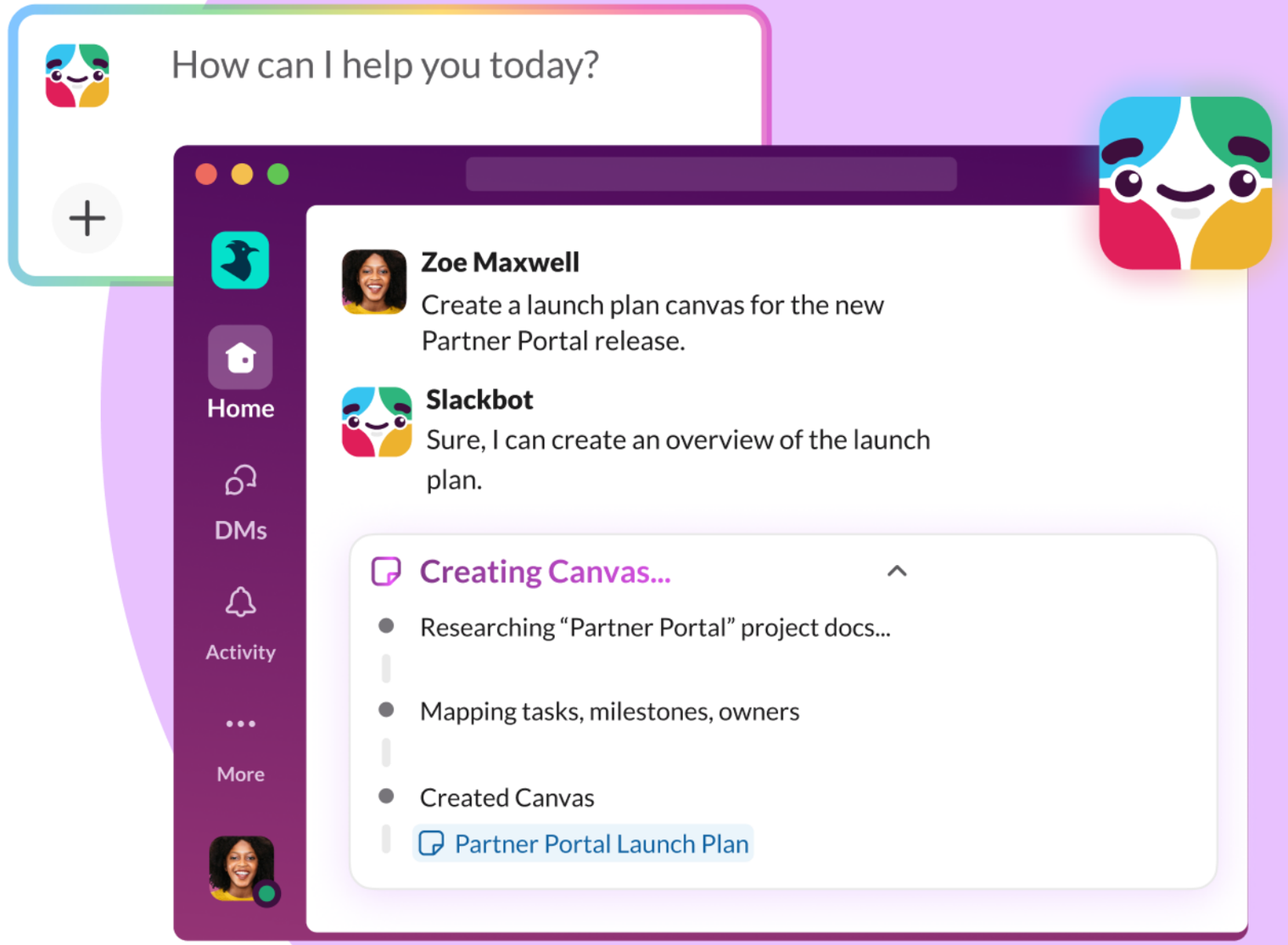
slack
from Salesforce

The Context Opportunity: Unlocking Agentic Productivity at Scale

Connected context is the key to turning intelligence into action.



Contents

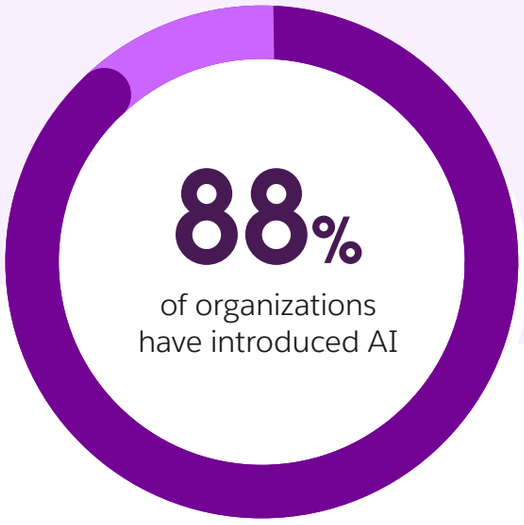
Introduction

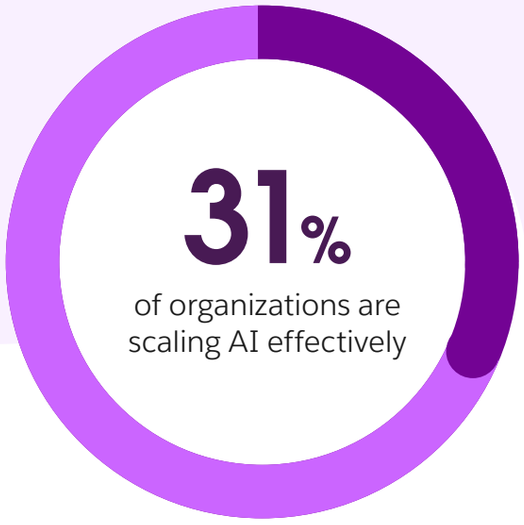
AI adoption is accelerating; while 88% of organizations have introduced AI, only 31%[1] are scaling it effectively.

The issue isn't access to intelligent tools. It's context. AI used inside organizations today often operates in isolation, living in a different tab, or even a different app altogether. Users are left to fill in the gaps: re-explaining their work, switching between tools, and reconstructing the full picture before AI can provide value. This creates friction, slows adoption, and limits ROI.

To be effective at scale, AI needs to operate in the same environment as the people doing the work – where it has access to data and the conversations, decisions, and relationships behind it. When AI is embedded in the flow of work, collaboration between people and agents feels natural.

In a unified system where conversations, data, workflows, and agents come together, AI shifts from a tool for ad hoc tasks to a consistent contributor – one that delivers real, reliable value.





[1]McKinsey & Company, The state of AI in 2025: Agents, innovation, and transformation (November 2025)

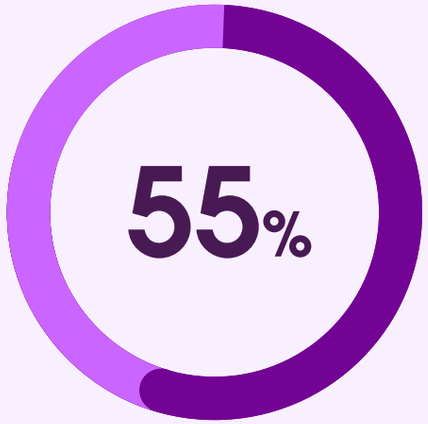
01

The context deficit: How to make your AI work for you

Standalone AI tools often struggle to deliver meaningful impact because they don't reflect how work happens inside an organization, where decisions unfold across conversations, documents, workflows, and teams over time. A single project may span multiple systems: conversations in messaging channels, documents in shared drives, and approvals that move through teams before action is taken.

The Context Gap:

55% of employees report that AI assistants require too much manual context[2]



If an AI tool only has partial access to data and not the full picture behind it, its effectiveness will be limited. This puts an added burden on employees who must continuously provide that missing context to get relevant results, which can erode trust over time.

The Discovery Tax:

Knowledge workers spend a median of 4.5 hours per week[3] (roughly 11% of their time) hunting for information across disconnected systems

4.5
Hours Per Week

[2]The GenAI Divide, Research by MIT in partnership with Slack (2025)

[3]IDC Knowledge Worker Productivity Study (referenced in Salesforce CIO Playbook). Key Fact: Knowledge workers spend a median of 4.5 hours per week simply hunting for information

01

The consequences of this fragmentation are measurable, as the time it takes to find information for these tools quickly outweighs any benefits they could provide. The average enterprise environment now spans ~114 integrated applications, highlighting how many disconnected tools employees need to navigate to assemble the context AI needs to add value. Without a clear strategy in place, all they have is chaotic agent sprawl with no unifying layer to connect them.

At the same time, organizations report strong initial adoption of AI but struggle to scale it, citing concerns around accuracy, security, and reliability. These challenges are often treated as separate issues, but they share a common root: AI is operating without sufficient context to deliver value consistently.

Context is more than just data

For AI to make autonomous, accurate decisions, it needs access to multiple layers of information simultaneously.

- **Conversational context (the "why"):** This is where intent lives. Unstructured conversations in DMs, MPDMs, threads, and channels capture how decisions are made, what tradeoffs were considered, and what priorities shifted over time.

  → **AI can summarize activity, but not interpret it.**

- **Structured data (the "what"):** Systems like Workday, Confluence, and Salesforce provide the state of the business, but don't explain how it came to be. Data without surrounding context can be accurate, but difficult to act on.

  → **AI can see what's happening, but not what changed or why it matters.**

01

- **Process (the “action”):** Workflows in ticketing tools like Jira, Concur, or Zendesk define how work moves through steps and status updates, but not the reasoning behind them.

  → **AI can suggest next steps, but can’t reliably execute or adapt them.**

- **Knowledge and files (the “how”):** Documentation in Google Drive, OneDrive, Box, and SharePoint provides guidance, but it’s often static.

  → **AI can retrieve information, but may not apply it correctly.**

- **Organizational context (the “who”):** Work depends on people. AI needs to understand who owns decisions, who has expertise, and how teams connect – including reporting structures, subject matter experts, professional scope, and team topologies.

  → **AI can generate answers, but can’t involve the right people or route work appropriately.**

Most systems capture one or two of these layers. Very few bring them together in a way that reflects how work actually happens, making AI feel disconnected from the reality of the organization it’s meant to support.

At the same time, a new layer of fragmentation is emerging: agents themselves. Organizations are rapidly deploying AI agents across systems, but those agents often operate in isolation, without access to shared context. Like data and applications, they are distributed across tools – unable to see the full picture or coordinate effectively.

02

Where AI operates matters just as much as what it can do

Most organizations recognize AI performs better with more information, so they adopt capabilities like retrieval-augmented generation (RAG) and rely on employees to supply that context manually. In practice, that means stepping outside the flow of work: copying information, rewriting prompts, and reconstructing background just to get a useful response.

Instead of reducing effort, bolted-on AI adds a new layer by forcing employees to constantly bridge that gap themselves.

The swivel chair problem: Employees are forced to "swivel" between systems, reading a conversation in one place, checking data in another, then opening a separate interface to ask a question. Each step fragments context, forcing them to reconnect the pieces before AI can respond.

Lacking a side-panel experience: When AI lives in a separate panel, there's no shared context. Users have to explain what they're looking at before getting a useful response. A true side-panel experience brings AI into the work, so instead of restating context, users can interact with AI alongside the task.

The prompt fatigue trap: As these gaps persist, users write longer prompts – re-explaining projects, restating goals, and refining inputs to get better outputs. Repeating the same context becomes its own form of fatigue, and the effort starts to outweigh the benefit.

The sunroof problem: As organizations adopt multiple models, flexibility becomes necessary. But when model choice is disconnected from workflow, that flexibility becomes friction. The sunroof problem is when model choice exists, but sits above the work – like a sunroof – forcing employees to decide where to go before they can act.

02

Why do different teams use different models?

Different types of work require different capabilities. Some models are better at reasoning, others at generating content, writing code, or operating within stricter constraints. Teams choose models based on the task and the level of control, accuracy, or creativity required.

- **Engineering:** code generation, debugging, and reviewing pull requests
- **Marketing:** drafting campaigns, product copy, and content variations
- **Legal:** reviewing contracts and generating compliant language
- **Support and operations:** summarizing tickets, drafting responses, and routing requests

The agent-as-teammate gap: Many organizations now have access to specialized agents across systems, but those agents live behind separate interfaces. To use them, employees need to know where they are, when they're relevant, and how to provide the right context. Otherwise, agents remain at the edges of work rather than inside it.

What changes when agents are in the room

When agents operate in the flow of work, these gaps and fatigue disappear.

- **They can identify what matters:** With access to full conversations and supporting materials, agents can distinguish between signal and noise.
- **They can act at the right moment:** Timing improves because actions are based on the flow of work.
- **They can support decisions, not just generate answers:** By operating alongside the team, agents contribute to outcomes while still allowing people to retain control.
- **They reduce repeated effort:** Agents understand the context of the work, so users don't have to restate projects, goals, or background.

02

From doing the work to directing it

As AI becomes more integrated into the flow of work, both the roles of agents and employees shift. AI moves from assisting with tasks to contributing to outcomes, while employees move from executing work to directing it.

- **AI as an assistant:** AI is used for basic Q&A or content generation. It helps teams find answers faster, but remains separate from the systems where work happens – limiting its impact to individual tasks.
- **AI as a synthesizer:** With more context, AI begins to connect information across conversations, documents, and systems. It restores context by summarizing work, surfacing relevant materials, and reducing manual effort.
- **User as the director:** The role of the employee changes. Instead of executing each step manually, they direct the work while AI carries it out – updating systems, triggering workflows, and coordinating actions across tools based on shared context.

The closer AI operates to real work – within conversations, systems, and workflows – the less it has to guess, and the more useful it becomes. And when employees no longer have to compensate for disconnected tools, they can focus on higher-value work.

This also allows organizations to coordinate work across functions, where different teams, priorities, and systems need to stay aligned without creating additional overhead.

> “Slackbot has become a true digital member of our team, putting the intelligence we need right into the flow of our work. It handles the heavy lifting of digging through data and creating documents like executive briefs and enablement canvases, which used to take us hours. Now, instead of spending time on manual prep, our team can focus on what really matters–prioritizing higher-value tasks and driving the business forward.”

BRANDON METCALF
CEO, ASYMBL

03

Seizing the context opportunity: From fragmented tools to a connected solution

Organizations today have more AI than ever – more models, agents, data, and systems. But that intelligence remains fragmented in separate tools, it operates in isolation, and it rarely connects to how work actually happens.

This is the gap in most AI strategies: not a lack of intelligence, but no platform to bring it together. And agents can't act on what they can't see.

What organizations need is a way to bring all of those layers of intelligence into one place, where it can operate in context and in the flow of work.

Slack is where AI works

Slack is the open and connected platform for your enterprise, bringing the full context of work – all of those layers of data – into one place. Conversations, structured data, workflows, knowledge, and organizational information come together in a shared surface where people and agents can operate side by side.

How Slack brings this to life

- **Channels** in Slack are flexible and open, bringing conversations, decisions, files, and workflows into one place for collaboration. This makes communication more seamless and increases transparency across the organization.
- **CRM and business systems (Salesforce**) connect directly into Slack, bringing customer data, deal context, and workflows into the same place where decisions are made
- **Third-party apps and integrations** connect systems like CRM, ticketing, and knowledge tools into the same environment
- **Slackbot** is the interface for AI: an always-on teammate that connects people, systems, and agents. It can reason, orchestrate, and take action across them.
- **Agents** operate within this shared context, contributing alongside teams rather than from separate interfaces

03

In practice, this might look like a sales team preparing for a client call. Instead of switching between a CRM, shared documents, and past conversations, a rep can ask a question directly in Slack. Slackbot pulls in relevant deal history, surfaces recent discussions, and updates records as the conversation progresses. What would normally require multiple steps across multiple tools happens in one place, without needing to piece context together manually.

Your stack, unified

Slack works across the tools organizations already rely on, including Microsoft, Google, Salesforce, and a mix of AI models and custom-built agents. It doesn't require a single vendor or migration. It connects systems and coordinates how they work together.

Enterprise environments now span hundreds of applications, yet up to 25% go unused. When work is fragmented, both tools and AI become harder to access. Slack brings that work, and the intelligence connected to it into one place, so employees can act without constant switching and organizations can realize more value on their investments.

When AI is accessible through a single interface, grounded in shared context, and connected to existing systems, it becomes part of how work gets done – making enterprise-wide adoption possible through consistent access, governance, and use.

How this coordination works

This coordination depends on how context and capabilities move between systems. Slack is not another model or agent – it is the layer that connects them.

Slackbot serves as the interface for this system, bringing together context from conversations, enterprise systems, and workflows, and coordinating actions across agents in real time.

03

Under the hood, this model is enabled by the Model Context Protocol (MCP), an open standard that allows Slack to:

- Pull in capabilities from external tools and agents so work can be executed directly in Slack
- Push out context so those systems act with an understanding of the conversation and task

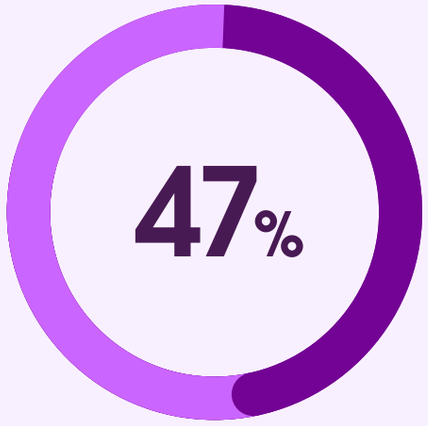
Because of MCP, Slack can connect to multiple AI models and agents, bringing their outputs into a single, shared context. Slackbot becomes the source of truth where that intelligence is unified and grounded in the full history of work.

This allows organizations to work across models and systems without fragmenting the user experience or losing context.

This keeps context and action connected, allowing AI to operate as part of the work itself, not separate from it.

From coordination to impact:

Organizations using Slack report up to a 47% increase in productivity, along with faster decision-making and more consistent execution across teams.



“We’ve made Slackbot a cornerstone of Engine’s AI transformation, turning high-volume data into actionable intelligence and empowering our team to match the speed of innovation – which has never been faster. Our sales team now uses Slackbot during client calls to surface competitive insights within seconds, ensuring they stay ahead of the conversation. Slackbot is at the heart of unifying our ecosystem, creating a seamless self-service environment. It’s a strategic shift that ensures our teams spend less time navigating noise and more time driving the high-impact innovation that defines Engine’s future.”

ELIA WALLEN
FOUNDER & CEO, ENGINE

04

The IT mandate: Balancing agency and control

For most organizations, the biggest barrier to AI adoption is risk. Leaders are expected to move quickly, but sensitive data is spread across systems, permissions are complex, and employees are already turning to public tools to get work done faster, often without oversight.

This creates a clear tension: teams need speed, while IT needs control. Without both, adoption stalls. AI only scales when employees can act quickly within systems that remain governed, secure, and visible.

Slack resolves this by embedding security, governance, and oversight directly into the flow of work, so teams can move fast without introducing risk.

How Slack enables agency and control

- **Eliminates shadow AI:** When AI is available inside Slack, employees don't need to turn to external tools. Work stays in a secure, governed environment with full visibility.
- **Centralizes governance with full visibility:** Slack provides a single interface to manage and monitor agents. Organizations can define approved agents, limit usage, and track interactions.
- **Keeps data inside the trust boundary:** AI operates on live context – conversations, files, and connected systems – without exposing data outside the environment.
- **Ensures data privacy by default:** Messages, files, and customer data are used only to generate responses and are never used to train models. Your data is private and stays within your organization.
- **Applies zero-touch permissions:** AI follows existing access controls, surfacing only what a user is authorized to see.

By building governance into how work happens, Slack makes AI usable and trustworthy at scale.

When trust is built into the system, adoption follows. Teams can use AI without hesitation, IT retains visibility and control, and organizations can move from ad hoc experimentation to consistent, enterprise-wide impact.

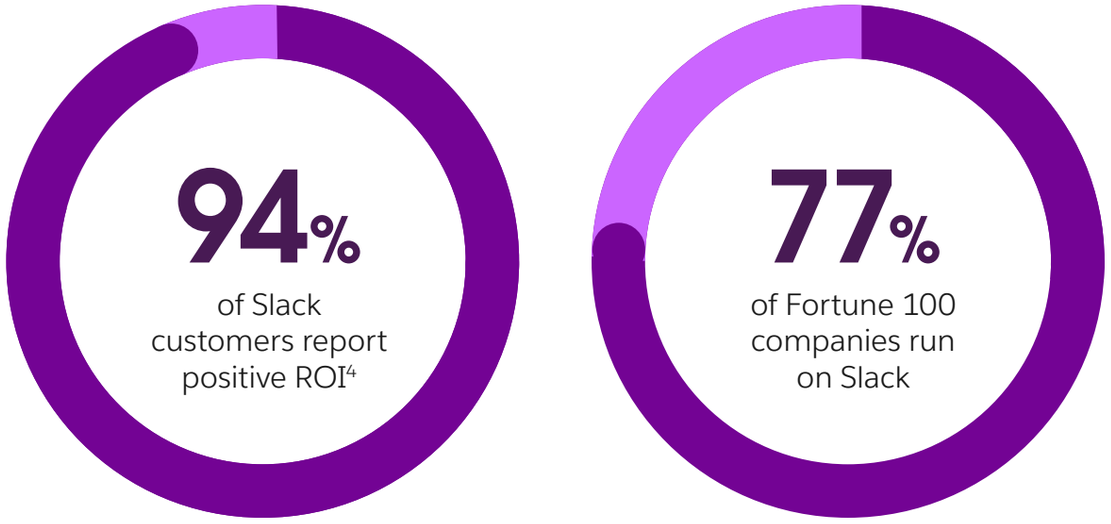
05

Embed AI where work happens and scalable impact will follow

The next phase of AI adoption depends on how well organizations integrate AI into the flow of work.

This requires a shift from isolated intelligence to shared context, from fragmented tools to coordinated systems, and from manual execution to guided orchestration. In this model, employees direct AI, overseeing systems that can interpret context and act on their behalf.

[4]2025 Salesforce Success Metrics Global Highlights. Data is aggregated from 1,754 customers across 10 countries.



Slack enables this shift. By bringing conversations, systems, and AI agents together into a unified context layer, it connects context and execution in one place, allowing organizations to move beyond experimentation to operate at scale.

> “The best work happens when context and execution aren’t separate. With Notion AI and Slack together, teams can turn every conversation into action.”

ERICA ANDERSON
NOTION CHIEF REVENUE OFFICER

To unlock the full value of AI, organizations must move beyond deploying siloed tools and embed intelligence directly into the flow of work. An AI work platform centralizes context– it’s how AI delivers consistent, measurable impact across the business

Upgrade how AI works

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