

FM Sector Forecasts 20%+ Productivity Gains From AI by 2030 as 95% of Leaders Back Technology to Deliver Double-digit Improvements

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Bidvest Noonan, a leading provider of FM services across the UK and Ireland, has published new research revealing near-universal confidence in AI's potential to transform the industry, yet fewer than two in five FM organisations have deployed it.

Based on a survey of 110 FM decision-makers, the findings show that 95% of FM leaders expect AI to deliver productivity gains of at least 10% by 2030, with more than half (56%) expecting productivity gains of 20% or more, while one in ten forecasts improvements exceeding 30%. This highlights a sector setting bold targets even as adoption remains in its early stages.

Large estates lead the charge

Confidence is highest among those managing the largest operations. Seven in ten leaders overseeing estates of more than 500,000 sq ft expect AI to deliver productivity gains of 20% or higher, and not a single respondent in this group anticipates gains of less than 10%.

This reflects a broader pattern in the data: larger FM operations are investing in the sensors, IoT and data platforms needed to scale AI effectively.

Phil Darcy, Head of Data & Emerging Technology at Bidvest Noonan, says: "The productivity numbers don't surprise us. What we're seeing across the sector is that organisations with the right data foundations are

already pulling ahead. The gap between those who've invested in sensors, IoT and integration capability and those who haven't is only going to widen as AI matures.”

Adoption is accelerating, but gaps remain

Despite the high expectations, current AI adoption levels are mixed. Just 37% of FM organisations have already deployed AI-powered productivity tools, while 45% are in the consideration or pilot phase. A further 18% consider AI not currently relevant to their operations, which may reflect uncertainty about where to start.

Autonomous service robots are also gaining traction: 12% of decision-makers have already deployed them, while 54% are actively considering or piloting the technology to augment the work of employees. Among larger estate managers, that figure rises to 57%.

AI as a strategic investment priority

AI-powered software productivity ranks as a top-three investment priority for 43% of all respondents over the next 12-24 months. The picture varies by estate size: 60% of smaller estate managers prioritise AI, while larger organisations (already investing in data infrastructure) place it at 30%, suggesting a phased approach to adoption.

Applications under exploration include predictive maintenance, energy optimisation, space planning, security monitoring and tools such as Microsoft Copilot.

Olga Mitropoulou, Director of Risk & Compliance at Bidvest Noonan says: “Confidence in AI is high, and rightly so. However, the real differentiator is execution. The organisations that will deliver the greatest value from AI implementation are those that have done the groundwork: established clear metrics, secured leadership buy-in and put a structured plan in place to bring their people with them. That is the fundamental work required to truly realise the benefits of any AI solution.”

From ambition to action

The research suggests the FM sector is moving from curiosity to action on AI. With 95% of leaders expecting meaningful productivity returns and nearly half already in pilot or consideration phases, the conditions for rapid adoption are in place. Those that pair investment with clear metrics, leadership support and effective change management will be best positioned to turn forecasts into measurable results.

Bidvest Noonan's full FM Technology Investment Survey report, *From Intent to Impact: FM Technology Investment in the UK and Ireland, 2026*, is available [to download by clicking here](#).