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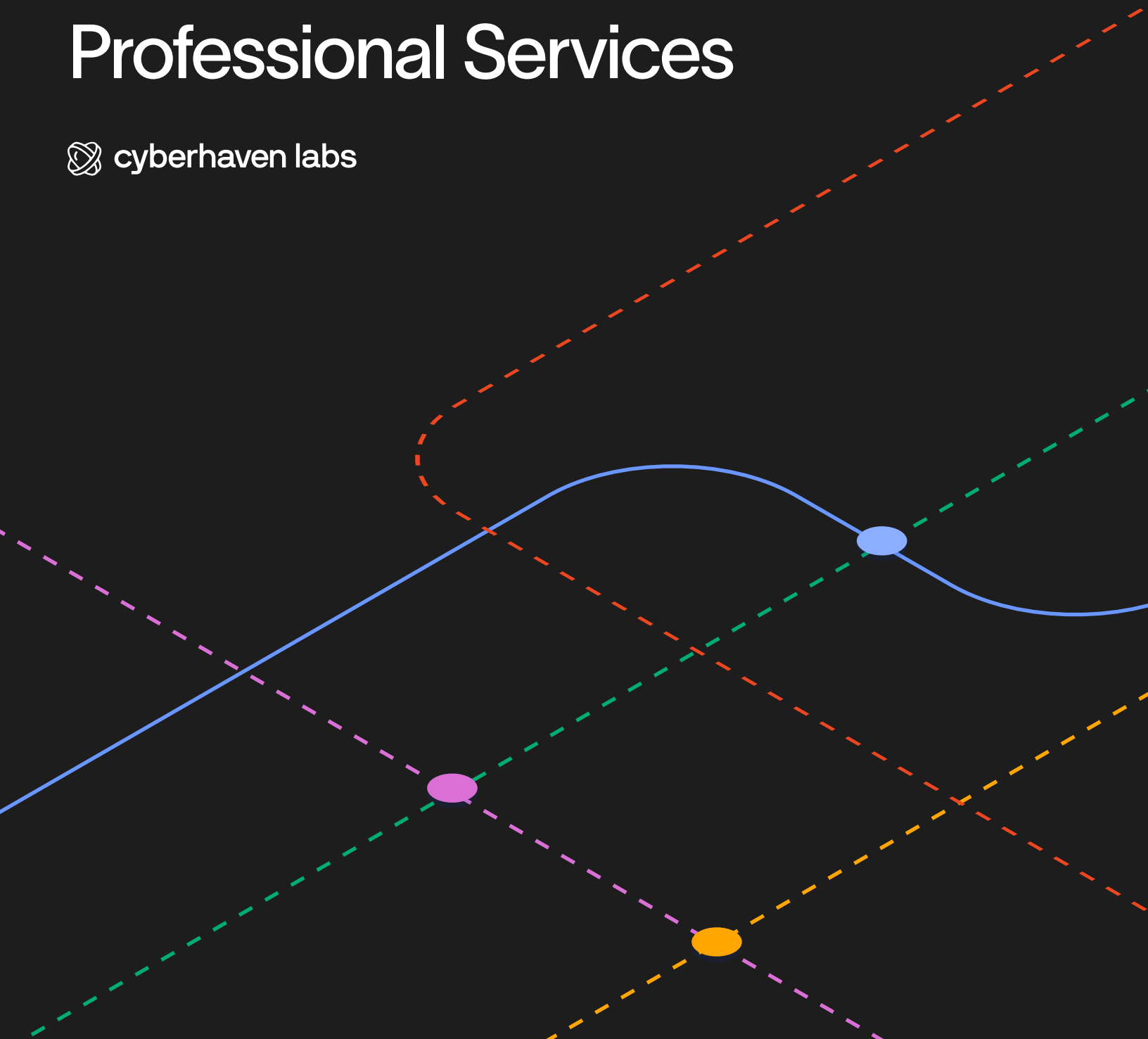
2026 AI Adoption & Risk Report

Professional Services

cyberhaven labs



Introduction

Since the launch of ChatGPT in 2022, AI has become one of the fastest-adopted workplace technologies in history.

What began as individual experimentation has rapidly evolved into tools embedded in core business workflows. The speed of this shift, from novelty to operational dependency, has often outpaced enterprises' ability to understand, govern, and secure AI usage.

Cyberhaven Labs' 2025 research captures this shift, analyzing usage across generative AI SaaS, endpoint AI applications, and AI agents. Leveraging billions of real-world data movements from 222 companies, we measured adoption via active users and event-level activity, revealing not just presence, but deep integration into workflows.

While traditional chat-based GenAI SaaS adoption is plateauing, AI coding assistants, browser-based agents, and custom AI agents are growing rapidly, operating inside development environments and workflows with limited oversight.

As AI becomes infrastructure rather than a standalone interface, security risks intensify: employees are inputting source code, financial data, and intellectual property into a fragmented ecosystem of tools, many outside traditional IT visibility, across personal accounts and SaaS platforms without enterprise-grade security. Shadow adoption increases, controls are inconsistent, and risk accumulates faster than organizations can manage.

These risks are real, material, and concentrated among aggressive adopters.

This report provides a data-driven view of 2025 enterprise AI usage, highlighting where adoption is accelerating and where security risk is compounding across the professional services industry. By analyzing real-world patterns across industries, departments, tools, and data types, Cyberhaven Labs helps security and technology leaders understand not just the scale of adoption, but the context needed to govern AI safely in 2026.

1

An AI Adoption Gap is Emerging

Artificial intelligence (AI) and large language models (LLMs) are becoming increasingly embedded in organizational workflows.

Today, 62% of organizations[1] are experimenting with AI agents, enterprises are spending four times more on AI software than on traditional software, and 74% of executives stated[2] they had achieved returns within the first year of AI tool deployment.

The professional services industry is no exception. According to a report by Thomson Reuters Institute, organization-wide use of AI in professional services almost doubled to 40% in 2026, compared to 22% in 2025, with survey respondents stating they "feel either excited or hopeful for GenAI's prospects in their respective industries."

However, AI adoption is not unfolding as a steady, industry-wide wave. Instead, it is becoming increasingly polarized.

A widening gap is emerging between AI early adopters and organizations that remain hesitant to embrace these technologies.

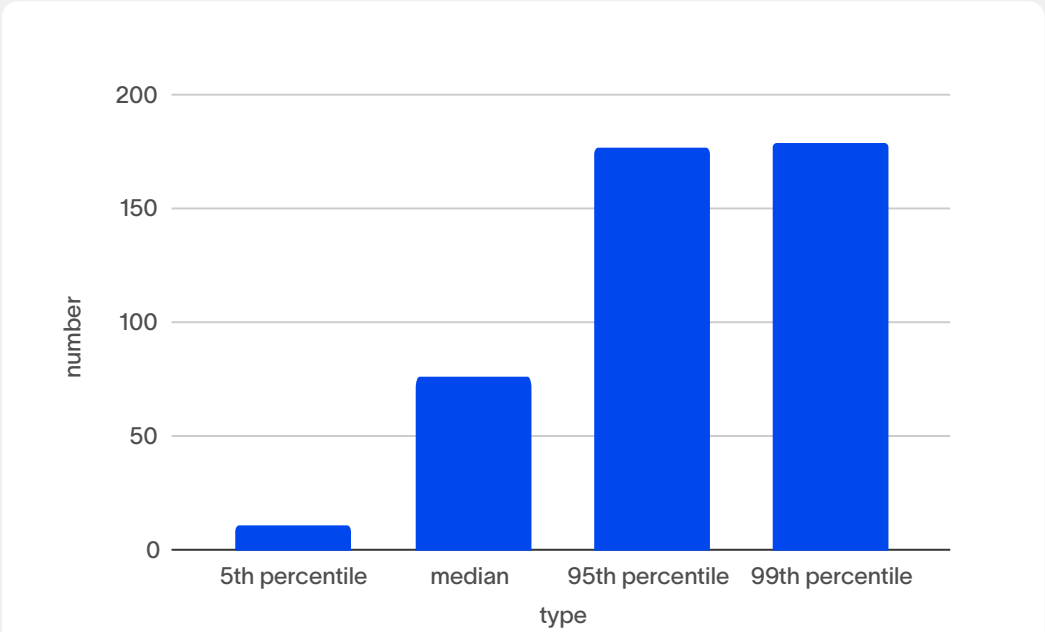
Frontier enterprises — those in the 99th percentile of GenAI adoption — were interacting with hundreds of GenAI applications over the course of 2025. In the most advanced cases, organizations are using almost 175 GenAI tools. By contrast, cautious enterprises, making up the 5th percentile, typically employ around 13 GenAI tools.

That is a 13x difference.

1 https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/quantumblack/our-insights/the-state-of-ai

2 https://blog.arcade.dev/ai-integration-platform-trends

Distribution of Number of GenAI SaaS Applications Used by Professional Services Organizations



Most Professional Services Organizations Remain Hesitant to Adopt AI

While frontier organizations are rapidly experimenting with GenAI, the majority of enterprises remain cautious. Professional services organizations need to consider data security, client confidentiality, and liability when adopting technology that would directly interact with data. There is also the issue of billable hours. Many organizations within this industry contain structural incentives tied to time-based billing models, meaning they may not be quick to adopt technology that reduces those hours.

This polarized adoption pattern reveals two realities. Some organizations are aggressively adopting AI and may realize outsized gains in innovation and growth. At the same time, these frontier enterprises are also assuming a disproportionate share of AI risk.

As data flows through hundreds of GenAI tools, rapid adoption multiplies risk points, governance complexity, and potential sensitive data exposure. Many organizations appear to be trading coordination and security controls for experimentation, creating a growing gap between AI adoption and AI security. This challenge is further amplified by uneven employee adoption rates, making one-size-fits-all AI security approaches ineffective. Effective AI security will depend not only on which tools are deployed, but on how and by whom they are actually used.

2

Top GenAI Apps Used by Professional Services Organizations

1. chatgpt.com
2. gemini.google.com
3. perplexity.ai
4. claude.ai
5. app.harvey.ai
6. copilot.com
7. grok.com
8. poe.com
9. chat.deepseek.com
10. notebook.google.com
11. app.synthesia.io
12. app.leonardo.ai
13. otter.ai
14. zerogpt.com
15. sora.chatgpt.com
16. deepai.org
17. kimi.com
18. app.jasper.ai
19. ai.azure.com
20. aistudio.google.com
21. huggingface.co
22. chat.chatbotapp.ai
23. goblin.tools
24. midjourney.com
25. app.wordtune.com

There are ten tools here that appear just on this list, but not the broader list of top GenAI applications used across industries. Professional services organizations tend to adopt tools that lean toward creative and client-impacting use cases. Instead of looking inward toward developmental or enterprise productivity, professional services organizations are looking outward, adopting tools that prioritize creativity, marketing, and client deliverables.

Most GenAI SaaS Tools Are Objectively Risky

When GenAI tools are evaluated by risk level, the results are stark. Across the top 100 most-used GenAI SaaS applications within professional services, **82%** are deemed "medium," "high," or "critical" risk. Even when excluding "medium" risk and considering only "high" and "critical," **61%** of tools still fall into these categories.

For security leaders, this means that most AI usage today occurs in tools that would not meet traditional enterprise risk standards, yet employees continue to input sensitive data into them at high rates.

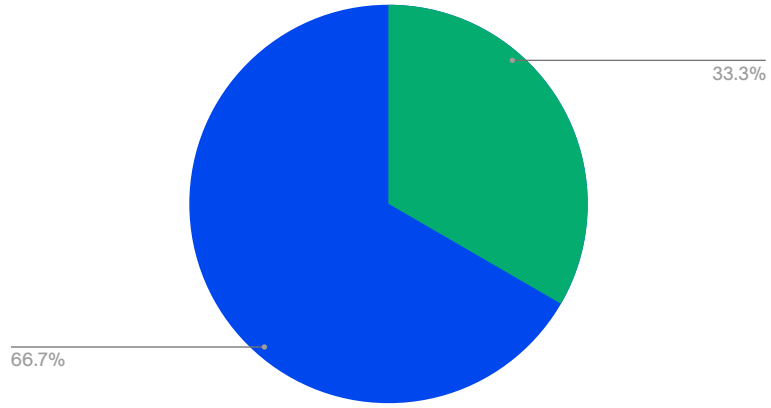
Agentic AI Adoption Below Average

Workplace AI is entering a "second wave," moving beyond general-purpose tools to more specialized applications that directly enhance workflows. Coding assistants and AI agents are no longer niche experiments. Instead, they are rapidly becoming embedded in the daily operations of developers and teams across enterprises.

However, when we compare adoption rates of agentic AI for professional services to the adoption rates across industries, we see an **11%** gap.

66% of professional services organizations are building with agentic SaaS platforms such as Glean or Copilot Studio, compared to **77%** of all organizations, regardless of industry.

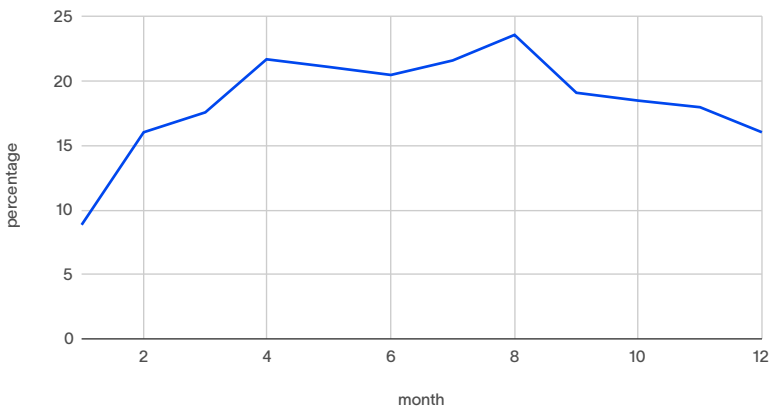
Percentage of Companies Using Agent-building SaaS Platforms



This gap could be attributed to the nature of work in professional services, which is often client-facing, less repetitive, and relies on human judgment. This leaves less room for autonomous agents to deliver immediate, low-risk value.

Additionally, the usage of AI coding agents, now rising in popularity, showed a unique pattern among professional services organizations. While most industries saw a steady increase in adoption across 2025, professional services saw a drop between month 8 and month 12 of the reporting period. Overall, adoption rates only increased **7%** across 2025. This, again, highlights the human-judgment nature of work among professional services organizations. Most industries that adopt AI coding agents heavily are building products such as software, data pipelines, and infrastructure. Professional services firms, however, are often selling time and advice.

Percentage of Developers Using AI Coding Assistants



Conclusion

AI Security Is Paramount as Organizations Race to Adopt New Technology

AI adoption is accelerating, but unevenly. A small group of frontier organizations is driving rapid usage, while others move more cautiously. In many cases, innovation and experimentation are prioritized ahead of security and governance. At the same time, employees are actively using high-risk AI tools and inputting sensitive data across a growing ecosystem of GenAI applications, coding assistants, and custom agents.

For many organizations, this reflects an ungoverned environment where tools proliferate faster than policy, usage often exceeds visibility, and sensitive data moves across systems with limited centralized control. Without clear insight into how AI is used across teams, workflows, and data types, the gap between innovation and security will continue to widen.

As adoption diverges across industries, teams, and users, AI security must become a core priority. One-size-fits-all policies are unlikely to work. Effective governance depends on understanding real usage patterns and applying controls based on data sensitivity, user maturity, and tool risk.

The challenge is complex. The scale and speed of AI adoption make manual oversight insufficient. Many organizations will benefit from specialized security solutions that unify visibility, context, and enforcement across data, users, and AI systems. Those that invest early in comprehensive AI security will be best positioned to innovate with confidence while maintaining trust, compliance, and resilience.

Want to learn more?
Request a demo with Cyberhaven

Read our full **AI Adoption & Risk Report**, with cross-industry analysis.