One year in, workers around the world are using AI—a trend that's higher for SMBs.

78% of small and medium-sized business workers across the world are already using AI tools.

But for small business leaders, uncertainty is stalling a plan and vision:

79% of SMB leaders say they believe AI adoption is critical for their company to remain competitive.

61% of these leaders also say their company lacks a vision and plan to implement AI.

SMBs have unique challenges ripe for AI innovation

71% of SMBs struggle with the energy to get their day-to-day work done.

67% of SMBs struggle with being innovative or thinking strategically.

61% of SMBs believe they spend too much time searching for the right data or information when they need it.

>half of SMBs struggle with not having enough focus time.

So employees are taking things into their own hands, and keeping AI use under wraps:

80% of SMB users are bringing their own AI tools to work.

49% are reluctant to admit using AI on their most important tasks.

52% believe that using AI on important tasks makes them look replaceable.

SMB employees are eyeing career moves.

55% of SMB leaders are concerned about having enough talent to fill key roles this year.

Nearly half of SMBs are planning to leave the workforce in the next year.

More than half are planning to leave their full-time job in favor of their side business or side hustle within the next year.

While SMBs see AI as an edge, there's a training gap.

79% of SMB employees believe having AI skills will broaden the job opportunities available to them.

60% of SMB leaders say they wouldn't hire someone without AI skills.

One-third of SMB AI users have received training.

76% of SMB leaders believe that employees can use AI effectively with minimal training.

Microsoft