

# 2025 Work Trend Index Highlights the Rise of Frontier Firms—Here's Why SMBs May Have the Advantage

## The SMB Reality Check



of SMBs leaders say this is a pivotal year to rethink strategy and operations.

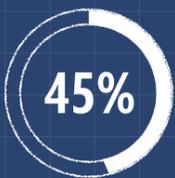
## You Can Buy Intelligence on Tap

Digital labor offers a powerful new lever for growth for SMBs.



53% of SMB leaders say productivity must increase, but both employees and leaders say they're lacking enough time or energy to do their work.

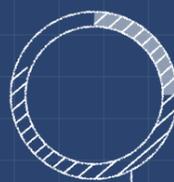
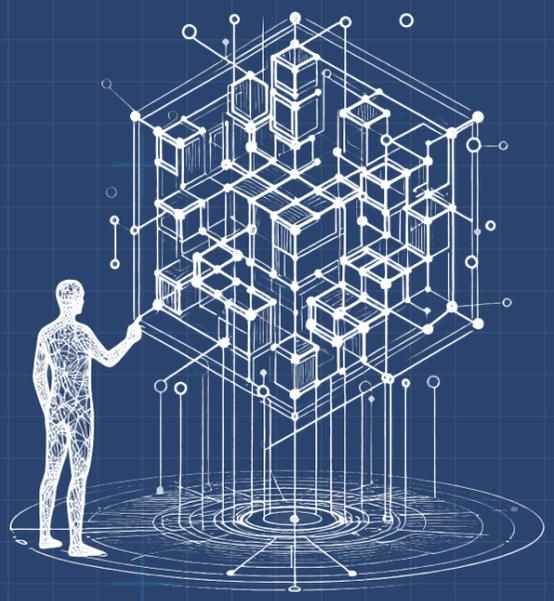
With the **democratization of intelligence**, it is now possible for a small business to operate with the scale and sophistication once reserved for companies ten times its size.



Nearly half of SMB leaders say expanding team capacity with digital labor is a top priority in the next 12 to 18 months.

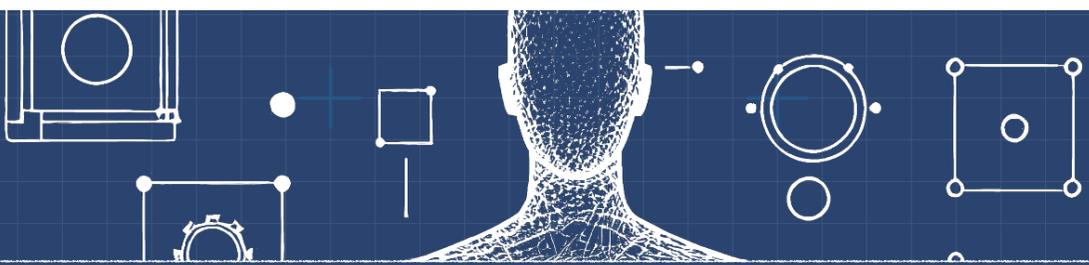
## Human-Agent Teams Will Upend the Org Chart

With the rise of **human-agent teams**, the agility of SMB work processes will become even more impactful.



of SMBs are already using agents and 79% plan to implement them within the next 12 to 18 months.

## Every Employee Becomes an Agent Boss



In the coming years, we'll see a rise of employees who **don't just use AI—but manage it**.

**It's a shift in mindset:** From doing everything yourself to delegating to agents with confidence.

In small businesses especially, that kind of empowerment isn't just helpful—**it's transformational**.



of SMBs are considering hiring AI Workforce Managers to lead hybrid teams of people and agents.



plan to hire AI Agent Specialists to design, develop, and optimize them within the next 12 to 18 months.

## Agility is the Small Business Advantage



As AI continues to evolve, one thing remains clear: **Small and medium-sized businesses are uniquely positioned to lead.**