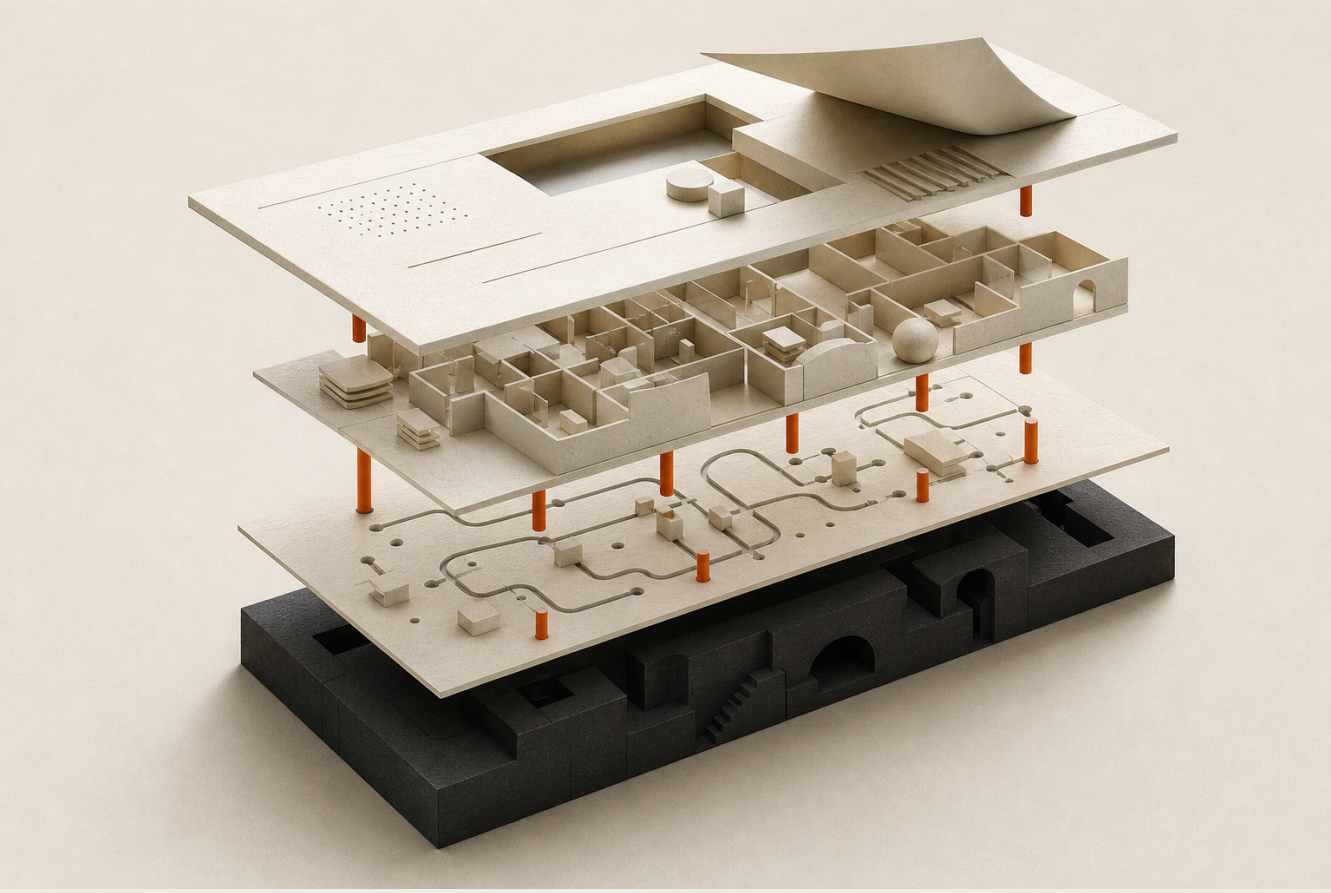
AI Automation Implementation Costs for 2027 Planning

Published implementation offers, scope differences and worked project budgets.



By Tom Crawshaw · The AI Architects

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Method: named implementation offers checked on 19 November 2026. [C] is observed. [E] is calculated.

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Executive summary

• [C] Tenaxity advertises an AI workflow across 3-5 systems from USD1,900, excluding VAT and third-party costs [S8].

• [C] BX lists a website chatbot from USD790 setup plus care from USD190 per month, with third-party costs extra [S9].

• [C] AgenTomte lists an agent or internal-app build sprint from USD9,500, excluding the customer's infrastructure bills [S10].

• [C] AIAgentAgency publishes indicative custom-system implementation prices of EUR3,000-8,000+, excluding VAT [S11].

• [C] The AI Architects advertises builds from $10,000 and maintenance at $500-1,000 per month, with new features priced separately and quote currency unconfirmed [S12].

Published implementation prices

Provider and service	One-off build [C]	Ongoing cost notes [C]	Published scope
Tenaxity AI workflow [S8]	From USD1,900	Care plans separate	3-5 systems with approval. Starting price, VAT and third-party costs excluded.
Tenaxity custom AI agent [S8]	From USD4,500	Care plans separate	CRM/helpdesk tools and memory. Starting price, VAT and third-party costs excluded.
BX website chatbot [S9]	From USD790	From USD190/month	Business-content chatbot and CRM lead capture. Third-party costs extra; tax not specified.
BX single workflow [S9]	From USD450	Optional, from USD150/month	One workflow. Third-party costs extra; tax not specified.
AgenTomte build sprint [S10]	From USD9,500	Infrastructure extra	One agent/app with handover. Launch price; infrastructure/API/SaaS extra; tax not specified.
AIAgentAgency custom system [S11]	Indicative EUR3,000-8,000+	Support separate	Custom agents/integrations. Indicative only, VAT excluded; support separate.

[C] Provider-published prices checked 19 November 2026 [S8]-[S11]. Starting prices and indicative ranges retain their original scope. This is not a market-average table.

This convenience sample contains six packages from four external providers with visible prices and scope. It contains no completed-project invoices or representative survey. A delivery retainer and the publisher offer appear separately.

These offers buy different work. BX chatbot care is required; single-workflow care is optional. AgenTomte labels its July 2026 prices as launch pricing [C S9] [C S10].

Request the same workflow and acceptance tests from shortlisted providers. Compare those written quotes, including tax and third-party charges, before choosing a supplier.

What changes the implementation price

Service type	What to compare	Cost question
Chatbot build	Approved knowledge, channels and customer actions	Does the fee cover answer drafting or account-specific actions?
Connected workflow	Systems touched, validation and recovery	Are unsupported APIs or data cleanup included?
Custom AI agent	Allowed tools, permissions and acceptance tests	Which actions need human approval and how are failures handled?
Managed maintenance	Monitoring, repairs and response terms	Does the monthly fee include new work or only upkeep?
Build retainer	New delivery and ongoing ownership	How much new work must be delivered each month?

Scope-comparison framework E8, informed by the named offers [S8]-[S11]. This table defines questions, not a new price range.

A single workflow is a different purchase from an agent that chooses among actions. A useful quote states the boundary rather than relying on the product label.

Check maintenance and new development separately. Repairing an agreed connection is not the same work as adding another process.

[C] AgenTomte's USD2,900 monthly Fractional AI Officer offer includes one new automation each month, monitoring and roadmap ownership [S10]. That is a delivery retainer, so it should not be compared directly with a repair-only care plan.

Ask for the source-data work to be priced explicitly. An approved knowledge base is a different starting point from scattered documents that conflict.

Write down what the business will still do. Reviewer time and source updates remain operating work even when a supplier owns the build.

Scope the work by business size

Employee band	Scope questions	Evidence for the quote
5-19	Can an owner approve one bounded process? Who covers exceptions?	Representative inputs, named operator and the manual process
20-99	Which departments share records? Who approves changes?	System map, access roles and cross-team handoffs
100+	Which teams and environments are included? Who owns governance?	Integration inventory, staged rollout and support requirements

Source: editorial scoping scenarios, not observed spending. Bands are non-overlapping. No headcount-based price is inferred.

Headcount helps identify who must participate in a rollout. It does not set the implementation price.

A small business with a legacy booking system can need more integration work than a larger business using supported connectors. The quote should follow the process and its constraints.

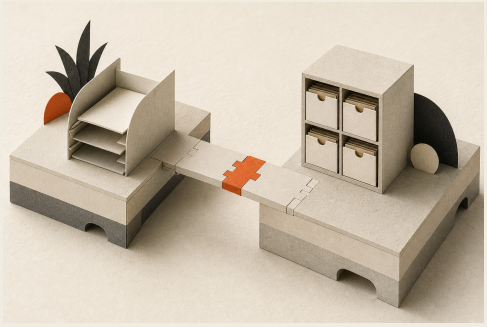
Name the business owner and the operational owner separately when they are different people. Confirm who can approve access and who will handle a failed run.

For a broader rollout, ask which work can be reused and which work must be tested for each team. A shared platform does not make every department's process identical.

A discovery engagement should produce the integration list and acceptance criteria needed for a written quote. It should also identify unresolved data issues before they become delivery commitments.

Price the workflow and its responsibilities.

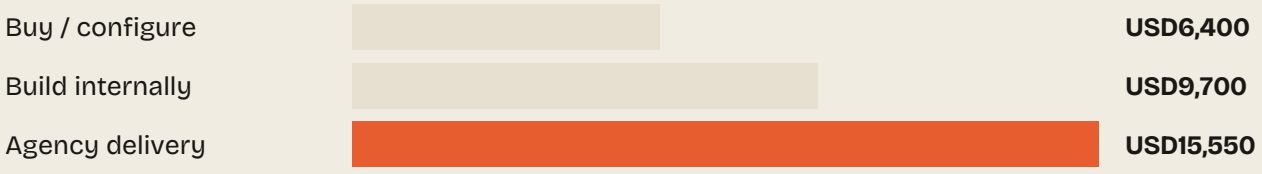
Concept illustration. Generated artwork, not a client site or measured result.



Build, buy or use an agency

Annual cost component [E]	Buy/configure	Build internally	Agency delivery
One-time setup labour	[E] 20 h x USD50 = USD1,000	[E] 80 h x USD50 = USD4,000	[E] 50 h x USD125 = USD6,250
Recurring software / usage	[E] USD150 x 12 = USD1,800	[E] USD75 x 12 = USD900	[E] USD75 x 12 = USD900
Recurring maintenance labour	[E] 2 h x USD50 x 12 = USD1,200	[E] 4 h x USD50 x 12 = USD2,400	[E] 4 h x USD125 x 12 = USD6,000
Recurring internal review	[E] 4 h x USD50 x 12 = USD2,400	[E] 4 h x USD50 x 12 = USD2,400	[E] 4 h x USD50 x 12 = USD2,400
First-year total	[E] USD6,400	[E] USD9,700	[E] USD15,550

Source: comparable-workload planning model [E3]. All quantities and rates are assumptions. These are economic costs including staff time, not vendor quotes.



[E] First-year economic cost for the same illustrative workload [E3]. Includes staff time. These are model outputs, not quoted offers.

[E] Shared workload: 1,000 submissions/month, each classified into a CRM with a draft reply awaiting approval. Software allowances include platform and model usage, subject to a capacity check [E3].

[E] Buy assumes existing functionality. Internal build assumes a capable employee. Agency assumes external setup and maintenance. Business review stays internal. Setup is one-time; other rows are annual recurring costs [E3].

[E] Hours, rates and software allowances are selected assumptions with high uncertainty, not observed route performance. Tax, major cleanup and specialist assurance are excluded equally. Staff time is economic cost, not necessarily extra cash spend [E3].

Software excludes support in this model. Maintenance is separate; never add bundled support or usage twice. Replace assumptions with quotes for the same acceptance test.

Costs to add before approval

Cost to check	Evidence to request	Budget treatment
Integration access	Connector limits, API access and test account	Separate initial work and recurring access fees
Data preparation	Sample records with missing or conflicting fields	Estimate cleanup before committing to delivery
Knowledge maintenance	Named owner and source update process	Reserve staff time after launch
Testing and review	Representative cases and recorded failures	Count reviewer labour and correction time
Monitoring and recovery	Failure alerts, retry rules and restore procedure	Include support time and hosting
Usage overruns	Billing unit, quota and overage terms	Model busy periods and repeated attempts
Training and handover	Runbook, access ownership and staff training	Put delivery obligations in the quote
Exit and replacement	Export format, credentials and migration scope	Check handover rights before signing

Source: author-created procurement checklist. Make's verified extra-credit premium is 25% [C S4], illustrating why overage terms need inspection.

Ask who pays when an upstream app changes. A connector can still exist while its permissions or fields change. The quote should say whether that repair belongs in maintenance or requires a new project.

Review labour belongs in the budget even when output quality looks promising. Count time spent checking drafts and handling exceptions. A workflow that saves typing but creates a large review queue can disappoint financially.

Separate the launch allowance from ongoing ownership. The person who approves the build is not always the person who maintains its source documents. Give that duty to a named role before handover.

For each checklist row, record included, excluded or unresolved. An unresolved item is a question for the supplier, not a zero-cost line. Do not turn a provisional estimate into an approved fixed budget until those questions have answers.

A worked first-year workflow budget

Component [E]	Assumption and formula	Cost [E]
Implementation	60 hours x USD125	[E] Model USD7,500
Software and usage	USD120/month x 12	[E] Model USD1,440
Maintenance	3 hours/month x USD125 x 12	[E] Model USD4,500
Business review	4 hours/month x USD50 x 12	[E] Model USD2,400
Base annual total	7,500 + 1,440 + 4,500 + 2,400	[E] Model USD15,840
Unallocated reserve	20% x USD15,840	[E] Model USD3,168
Approval envelope	USD15,840 + USD3,168	[E] Model USD19,008

Source: worked budget [E4]. Every input is an editorial assumption. The reserve is a selected planning buffer, not a statistically supported contingency percentile.

This example funds a bounded workflow with an owner who checks its output. The software allowance is not a named vendor package. A real quote must show that its subscription and usage capacity cover the required work.

The approval envelope includes the base budget plus a reserve. If a known requirement emerges, move it into the base estimate and explain it. Do not hide known costs inside a contingency line.

For an illustrative payback test, assume 50 gross staff hours saved per month at USD50/hour [E5]. That produces USD30,000 in annual capacity value [E5: 50 x 50 x 12]. Review labour is already counted above, so do not subtract it a second time.

The base-cost comparison is USD30,000 minus USD15,840, or USD14,160 in modelled annual net value [E5]. If the full reserve is spent, modelled net value becomes USD10,992 [E5: 30,000 - 19,008]. Neither result is a cash-saving promise.

Measure the gross time saved in a pilot before using this calculation. Retained employee capacity has value only when the business can use it. If workload stays unchanged and no paid cost disappears, record the result as capacity released rather than cash saved.

Usage units change the bill

Unit	What to measure	What can distort a comparison
Task	Billable actions in the actual workflow	A completed business process can contain several actions
Workflow execution	Workflow runs under the vendor's definition	Sub-workflows and retries need term checks
Credit	Credits consumed by each module or model action	AI actions can consume different amounts
Outcome	Vendor-defined completed result	An outcome is not necessarily a new customer or cash saving
Seat	People requiring licensed access	Total headcount is not the same as required seats

Sources: unit descriptions from [S2]-[S5]. Application to budgeting is author analysis. Check current contract definitions rather than equating units across vendors.

I would test the proposed workflow against a representative sample before choosing its usage tier. Count successful completions separately from attempts. Record failures that need another run and inputs that require more processing.

A supplier can produce a cost-per-completed-case figure from that test. Define a completed case before counting it, such as a validated lead saved to the CRM with a draft awaiting approval. An attempted run that ends in an exception should not be treated as a finished business result.

For an illustrative workflow, assume 1,000 cases per month and 3 billable actions per case [E7]. The base workload is 3,000 actions [E7: 1,000 x 3]. If 10% of cases repeat all actions once, it becomes 3,300 actions [E7: 3,000 x 1.10].

This arithmetic is a workload example, not a Zapier invoice or a Make credit estimate. Actual billing can exempt steps or apply different weights. Use the vendor's current definition after the workflow has been designed.

Add a spending alert and a decision rule for overruns. Specify who can increase the budget and whether processing should pause when the allowance is exhausted. That choice affects customer service as well as spend.

Published history and 2027 scenarios

Plan	July 2024 document [C S6]	19 Nov 2026 US page [C S1]
Premium	$15/user/month; currency and annual commitment not stated	US-page $15/user/month, paid yearly
Process	$150/bot/month; currency and annual commitment not stated	US-page $150/bot/month, paid yearly
Hosted Process	$215/bot/month; currency and annual commitment not stated	US-page $215/bot/month, paid yearly

Dated list-price observations [S6], printed page 17, and [S1]. The historical currency and billing commitment are not explicit. No comparable historical percentage delta is reported.

These are two dated price observations. The July 2024 guide does not state the currency or annual commitment beside these prices. I have removed the percentage comparison because equivalent billing terms are not established.

[C] Make announced its operation-to-credit transition for 27 August 2025, with a 1:1 conversion and unchanged prices at that transition [S7]. That announcement is not evidence that every customer paid the same bill afterwards. It also does not establish a 2027 price.

[E] For 2027, apply explicit sensitivity tests to a chosen USD100/month software baseline [E6]. An unchanged-price case gives USD1,200/year, a 10% increase gives USD1,320/year, and a 20% increase gives USD1,440/year [E6: 100 x 12 x 1.00, 1.10 or 1.20].

[E] Against that same baseline, the scenario deltas are USD0, USD120 and USD240 per year [E6]. These are selected stress tests with no probabilities attached. They are not published vendor increases or an industry price forecast.

Keep workload growth separate from price changes. A constant unit price can still produce a larger bill when usage rises. Recheck both inputs before renewing a contract or expanding the workflow.

Write the acceptance test into the quote

Requirement	What the quote must state	Acceptance evidence
Business outcome	Exact input and expected destination	Completed example with an audit record
Data validation	Required fields and rejection conditions	Invalid records stop safely
Human approval	Actions the system cannot take alone	Blocked action remains blocked
Duplicate handling	Identifier used to recognise repeat events	Repeated input does not duplicate the action
Failure recovery	Alert owner and retry behaviour	Deliberate failure produces the expected alert
Usage visibility	Where usage and costs can be inspected	Owner can find the relevant records
Ownership	Accounts, credentials and export rights	Business can access and transfer the build
Support boundary	Included repairs and chargeable changes	Written response and escalation terms

Source: author-created acceptance checklist. These are procurement requirements, not measured performance claims.

A demonstration proves that one path can run. An acceptance test should also show what happens when data is missing or a connected service is unavailable. Ask the supplier to retain the evidence with the handover documents.

I would test a duplicate submission deliberately before enabling actions that change customer records. Agree what must happen if approval is refused. The system should leave a clear record so an employee can continue the work manually.

Define the support boundary before launch. Updating a password is different work from adding a new business process. A written distinction reduces disputes about whether a change is included.

Tie final acceptance to the agreed tests and ownership handover. Avoid approving a build solely because its demonstration was persuasive. The business needs a working process that an accountable person can operate after the supplier leaves.

The publisher's own implementation offer

The AI Architects service	Published price [C]	Scope or condition
Done-for-you build [S12]	From $10,000	Written brief, build and deployment on customer-owned hosting
Maintenance after launch [S12]	$500-1,000/month	Depends on the system. New features and ongoing development cost extra
Build payment [S12]	50% / 50%	First payment at start, second after delivery and deployment

[C] The AI Architects service page, checked 19 November 2026 [S12]. Publisher-owned offer. Dollar symbol shown as printed. Confirm currency in the written quote.

I publish this report and sell implementation through The AI Architects. My offer is shown separately so it cannot be mistaken for an independent market observation.

The published starting price covers a scoped build. A written brief defines what the system must do, and the quote depends on the work involved [C S12].

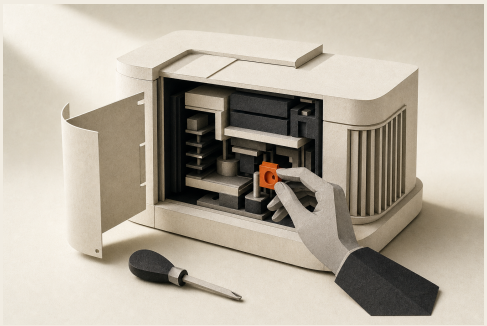
The system runs on the customer's hosting account and the customer holds the logins [C S12]. That ownership should be part of any supplier comparison.

For another provider's quote, compare the same delivery boundary and support duties. A lower starting price for a smaller scope is a different offer.

Keep the approved brief and acceptance results with the purchase record. They define what was bought and make later changes easier to price.

A maintained build needs an accountable owner.

Concept illustration. Generated artwork, not a client site or measured result.



Operating-cost appendix: software prices

Product	Published entry price	Billing basis
Power Automate Premium [C S1]	US-page $15/user/month	Paid yearly
Power Automate Process [C S1]	US-page $150/bot/month	Paid yearly
Power Automate Hosted Process [C S1]	US-page $215/bot/month	Paid yearly
Zapier Professional [C S2]	USD19.99/month	Annual billing, 750 tasks/month
Zapier Team [C S2]	USD69/month	Annual billing, starting price
n8n Starter [C S3]	EUR20/month	Annual billing, 2,500 executions/month
n8n Pro [C S3]	EUR50/month	Annual billing, 10,000 executions/month
Intercom Fin [C S5]	From USD0.99/outcome	Usage charge, minimum commitment can apply

Sources: [S1]-[S3], [S5], accessed 19 November 2026. Prices are observations for 2027 planning, not guaranteed 2027 tariffs.

These subscriptions are running-cost inputs after the implementation has been scoped. They do not replace the build or maintenance quote.

Keep the vendor's billing unit beside its price. Annual commitment, usage and required licences affect the operating budget.

Confirm the eligible plan and expected workload with the builder. Record third-party charges separately so changes in usage do not become hidden service fees.

Build your first-year budget

Cost or assumption	Amount / basis
Currency, tax basis and quote date	
Discovery and process redesign	
Data preparation and integrations	
Build, testing and security review	
Monthly licences, usage and hosting	
Monthly support and human review	
Training, migration and parallel running	
Risk reserve with a stated reason	

Source: The AI Architects editorial worksheet [E]. Complete with your own measurements and written quotes. No market averages are implied.

First-year cash budget = one-time cash costs + annual recurring cash costs + a stated reserve. Convert monthly charges to annual amounts using 12 months [E].

Record internal staff time separately unless it creates an additional cash expense. Confirm which model, hosting and support charges are already included in a supplier quote.

Usage basis: jobs per month ____ × billable units per job ____ = monthly units ____. Check minimum commitments, tier changes and overage rules. This formula assumes a fixed number of billable units per job [E].

Match the quote to the system

Single workflow — **Connected process** — **Shared application** — **Department change**

Scope reference, not a price scale. These are different project shapes, not compulsory stages. Complexity can be high in any category.

Project shape	Scope to include in the quote
Single workflow	Inputs, outputs, review rules and recovery from a failed run.
Connected process	System access, data mapping, duplicate handling and exception ownership.
Shared application	User roles, peak load, audit records and a support commitment.
Department change	Process redesign, migration, staff training and staged rollout.

Source: The AI Architects scoping framework. No price band is inferred from headcount or category.

Ask suppliers to state the workload their quote assumes. A system used across a department needs its own scope, including security and the work needed to change existing processes.

An entry subscription or a small fixed-price package cannot establish the budget for that work. Use a scoped proposal for the larger system.

Methodology and limits

I checked public service pricing, vendor pages and official documentation on 19 November 2026. The 2027 label identifies the planning period, not a supplier commitment to future prices.

[C] identifies an exact primary-source observation. [E] identifies a calculation with explicit assumptions and uncertainty. Editorial advice and proposed patterns are labelled in plain language and are not measured outcomes.

[C] marks a statement checked against the named primary source. For service prices, that means a published asking price or indicative range. It does not establish a completed transaction, delivery quality or customer result.

The implementation table is a convenience sample of providers with visible prices and a described scope. Its offers are not standardised, so I have not calculated a market average or a typical price by company size.

The AI Architects offer is publisher-owned and is disclosed separately. No independent endorsement is implied by inclusion of another provider.

The software appendix records operating-cost inputs. The Microsoft observations have unresolved historical currency and commitment terms. No historical percentage trend is calculated.

USD means US dollars. EUR remains in its source currency. The AI Architects dollar symbol is preserved as printed and the buyer must confirm quote currency. No exchange-rate conversion has been used.

No 2027 agency-price trend, representative supplier survey or guaranteed saving is claimed. Source URLs and access dates appear in the full citation list, with the calculation details in the accompanying ledger.

Published 20 November 2026. Primary sources rechecked 20 November 2026. Source dates describe observations, not a 2027 research period. No announced future prices are included.

Sources and citation details

[S8] Tenaxity service pricing

Public one-off starting prices: AI workflow USD1,900, custom AI agent USD4,500. Workflow scope is 3-5 systems with human approval. Prices exclude VAT and third-party services. Currency is explicitly US dollars.

https://tenaxity.ai/pricing/

Accessed 2026-11-19

[S9] BX / BrainNex AI automation service prices

Website chatbot from USD790 setup plus care from USD190/month. Single workflow from USD450 setup, optional care from USD150/month. Third-party services are extra. These are provider starting prices, not completed-project invoices.

https://brainnexdigitalmarketing.com/services/ai-automation-pricing/

Accessed 2026-11-19

[S10] AgenTomte service pricing

AI Workforce Sprint from USD9,500. Fractional AI Officer USD2,900/month, cancellable monthly. The page labels its offers launch pricing. Infrastructure, API and software bills are excluded. Page labels these prices current in July 2026.

https://www.agentomte.com/pricing

Accessed 2026-11-19

[S11] AIAgentAgency service pricing

Custom AI System EUR3,000-8,000+ one-off. The provider explicitly calls the range indicative guidance rather than an offer. Includes scoped controls, testing and handover. VAT excluded.

https://www.aiagentagency.cc/pricing

Accessed 2026-11-19

[S12] The AI Architects consulting and implementation

Publisher-owned commercial offer. Done-for-you build from $10,000, maintenance $500-1,000/month, new development extra. Payment 50% at start and 50% after delivery and deployment. Dollar symbol retained as printed. Confirm currency in the written quote.

https://theaiarchitects.com/ai-consulting

Accessed 2026-11-19

Sources and citation details continued

[S1] Microsoft Power Automate pricing

US-market page: Premium $15/user/month, Process $150/bot/month, Hosted Process $215/bot/month, all paid yearly. The retrieved page does not explicitly print the USD currency code. Implementation is excluded; licensing conditions apply.

https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/power-platform/products/power-automate/pricing

Accessed 2026-11-19

[S2] Zapier pricing explanation

Professional USD19.99/month billed annually with 750 tasks/month. Team USD69/month billed annually. Vendor's own pricing explanation, checked against its pricing page.

https://zapier.com/blog/zapier-pricing/

Accessed 2026-11-19

[S3] n8n plans and pricing

Starter EUR20/month annually with 2,500 executions. Pro EUR50/month annually with 10,000 executions. Workflow executions are the billing unit, regardless of step count. No currency conversion used.

https://n8n.io/pricing/

Accessed 2026-11-19

[S4] Make extra credits

Manual and automatic extra-credit purchases carry a 25% premium against the plan's credit rate. The page's USD9 plan is an illustration, not used here as a verified current offer.

https://help.make.com/extra-credits

Accessed 2026-11-19

[S5] Intercom pricing

Fin from USD0.99 per outcome. Existing-helpdesk use has a minimum monthly commitment. Current outcome definition includes some workflow completions and handoffs. Promotional seat prices excluded.

https://www.intercom.com/pricing

Accessed 2026-11-19

Sources and citation details continued

[S6] Microsoft Power Platform Licensing Guide, July 2024

July 2024 licensing guide, printed page 17. Lists $15/user/month, $150/bot/month and $215/bot/month. Currency and annual commitment are not explicit, so these observations are not used for a historical percentage delta.

https://cdn-dynmedia-1.microsoft.com/is/content/microsoftcorp/microsoft/final/en-us/microsoft-brand/documents/Power-Platform-Licensing-Guide-July-2024.pdf

Accessed 2026-11-19

[S7] Make 2025 release log

The 27 August 2025 entry records the move to credits with prices unchanged at that transition. The 13 August announcement states a 1:1 operation-to-credit conversion. Later changes prevent treating this as a continuing price guarantee.

https://help.make.com/2025

Accessed 2026-11-19

Prepare a scoped automation plan

Bring the process you want to improve and a representative input. Record what a completed job looks like and who approves it.

Use the questions below to turn the report into a brief that a supplier can price. Keep assumptions visible until a quote or a pilot replaces them.

Describe the work

Name the trigger, source records and required output. Include the exceptions that currently need manual attention.

Set the purchase boundary

List the systems and actions in scope. Identify who owns the accounts and who reviews the output.

Online report and updates: theaiarchitects.com/ai-automation-cost

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