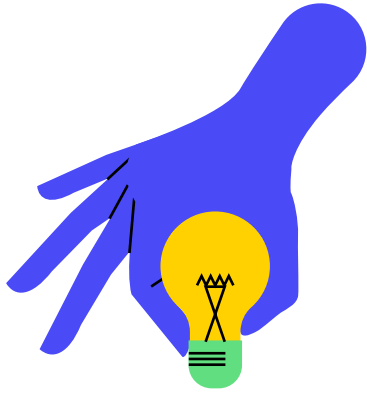
The background of the top half of the page is a dark blue field with a complex geometric pattern. It features a central blue database cylinder icon with a white plus sign on top and two green starburst icons to its right. The background is composed of various colored triangles and lines in shades of blue, purple, yellow, and green, creating a sense of depth and connectivity. A grid of thin white lines is overlaid on the background, with small colored dots at the intersections.

From Disruption to Dependability:

Why AI Depends on Enterprise Software, Not the Other Way Around



For the past several years, enterprise leaders have lived under a familiar refrain: *AI is coming for everything*—software will be built in hours; longstanding assumptions about how products are built and delivered are being challenged; and platforms will be reimagined through agents. And teams that don't move fast enough will be left behind.

In 2025, that story felt speculative. In 2026, it seems imminent.

Generative AI (GenAI) has crossed an important threshold—it is no longer an emerging capability, it is an operational reality: code generation is cheap; experimentation is frictionless; and new tools appear weekly, each promising faster delivery, lower costs and competitive advantage. And yet, for enterprises running mission-critical systems, the gap between AI's promise and its practical impact has never been wider.

This moment demands a reset—not in ambition, but in perspective.

The question facing enterprises today is not whether AI will disrupt their world. That has already happened. The real question is what level of disruption they are willing to accept, and what they are unwilling to compromise in pursuit of it.

GenAI Didn't Just Change Software. It Changed Expectations.

There is a subtle, but important, shift embedded in the transition from “GenAI is disrupting the world” to “GenAI *has* disrupted the world.” The first implies future impact; the second acknowledges present reality.

AI is no longer a peripheral innovation initiative. It is reshaping how software is built, how teams work and how value is defined—boards expect productivity gains, executives expect faster decisions, developers expect better tools and customers expect smarter experiences.

This pressure is universal, but its consequences are not evenly distributed.

For greenfield startups, disruption often means opportunity. But for enterprises operating complex, long-lived systems, disruption introduces a more uncomfortable truth: **change at this speed collides with responsibility at scale.**



Because while the cost of *generating* software has collapsed, the cost of *running* software has not—attention has not gotten cheaper, oversight has not disappeared and accountability has not been automated away.

And this is where much of the AI narrative breaks down.

The Hype Says Software Is Disposable. Enterprises Know Better.

One of the loudest ideas circulating today is that AI makes software disposable. If applications can be generated in hours, why invest in platforms? Why pay for SaaS? Why maintain systems when agents can recreate workflows on demand?

This thinking fuels correlated fears, often echoed in market commentary:

- Enterprises will build more software in house using AI coding tools, reducing demand for packaged solutions.
- AI-native startups will reimplement existing workflows on top of agents, intensifying competition for incumbents.

Both fears contain a kernel of truth, but they miss a more fundamental reality.

Enterprise software is not disposable because enterprise accountability is not disposable.

Software in regulated, mission-critical environments exists to enforce rules, preserve trust and maintain continuity. It embeds institutional knowledge, compliance logic, security models and operational safeguards accumulated over decades. These systems do not persist because enterprises lack imagination. *They persist because enterprises cannot afford failure.*

When something breaks in an enterprise system, the cost is not inconvenience; it is risk. Legal risk. Financial risk. Reputational risk. Human risk.

And AI does not eliminate these realities, it amplifies them.



Why AI Depends on Enterprise Software, Not the Other Way Around

There is a quieter, but far more accurate, counter narrative emerging: AI does not replace enterprise software, but depends on it.

AI cannot act in isolation. To drive the outcomes expected, it must query trusted data, respect governance boundaries, execute validated business logic and operate within auditable systems. Without platforms, AI has no grounding. Without workflows, it has no agency. Without oversight, it has no legitimacy.

In this light, the future is not AI vs enterprise software. It is AI embedded within enterprise software, enhancing what already works rather than tearing it out.

This distinction matters because it reframes the enterprise challenge:

The question is no longer: “How fast can we adopt AI?” but becomes, “How do we integrate AI without breaking what we already trust?”

When Code Gets Cheaper, Attention Gets More Expensive

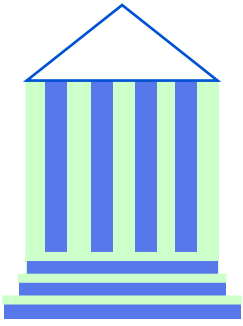
One of the most overlooked consequences of GenAI is the way it redistributes cost rather than eliminating it.

AI reduces the cost of producing code. But it does not reduce the cost of understanding that code, validating its outcomes or strengthening compliance, security or operational stability.

In many organizations, the result is a new form of technical debt: AI-induced complexity. Teams generate more artifacts faster than they can govern them. DIY AI applications proliferate without shared standards. Expert attention is diverted from strategic work to cleanup, review and exception handling.

What looks like speed on the surface often becomes drag beneath it.

This is why enterprises are not abandoning platforms, they are doubling down on them. Because when attention becomes the scarcest resource, organizations need systems they do not have to babysit.



Trust Is the Real Bottleneck in Enterprise AI

Despite the noise around model performance, cost curves and vendor competition, enterprise AI adoption stalls for a simpler reason: *trust*.

Enterprises need AI systems that are:

- Predictable
- Governed
- Secure
- Explainable
- Accountable

They need AI that respects privacy, enforces policy and produces outcomes that can be defended to auditors, regulators, customers and boards.

This is why speed alone is insufficient. A fast answer that cannot be verified is worse than no answer at all. A powerful agent that cannot be constrained is a liability, not an asset.

The enterprises that succeed with AI will not be the ones that move fastest; they will be the ones that move deliberately, embedding AI into architectures designed for trust.

AI as a Force Multiplier, Not a Replacement Engine

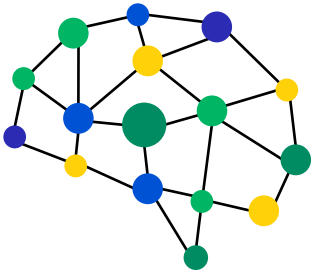
At its best, AI does not replace human judgment. It strengthens it by improving quality, cutting through complexity and freeing skilled workers to focus on strategy, creativity and value creation.

This human-plus-AI model is not a compromise. It is a competitive advantage.

Organizations that frame AI as a workforce replacement tool often see short-term cost savings, but long-term erosion of capability. Those that frame AI as a productivity and intelligence multiplier build resilience instead.

The strongest evidence for this shift is already visible. Companies integrating AI into workflows are reporting measurable productivity gains and cost reductions—not because they removed people, but because they removed friction.

AI becomes transformative when it is woven into how work gets done.



Agentic RAG: Where Understanding Meets Action

One of the most important developments in enterprise AI is the emergence of agentic retrieval-augmented generation (RAG).

Traditional GenAI answers questions. Agentic RAG understands context. It grounds responses in approved data. It enforces governance, creates traceability and, when paired with the right execution layer, enables AI to move beyond insight into action.

This is a critical inflection point.

Enterprises do not just need AI that *knows* things. They need AI that *understands* their world, their data models, their business rules and their operational constraints.

When AI is grounded in enterprise knowledge and connected to trusted logic, it stops being a novelty and starts becoming infrastructure.

The Fork in the Road: Three Paths Forward

As 2026 unfolds, enterprises face a fork in the road, whether they recognize it or not.

One path leads to stagnation. Organizations that hesitate too long, overwhelmed by complexity, risk falling behind competitors who have found ways to operationalize AI responsibly.

Another path leads to shallow survival. These organizations adopt AI primarily as a cost-cutting tool, automating isolated tasks without rethinking workflows. They realize *some* efficiency gains, but miss the larger opportunity to drive growth and innovation.

The third path leads to resilience and advantage. These enterprises treat AI as a strategic capability—one that enhances productivity, accelerates decision-making and strengthens competitive positioning without undermining trust.

The difference between these paths is not technology, it is intent.

Enhancing the Foundation Is the Winning Strategy

The enterprises that will win with AI share a common trait: they will not replace the foundations, they will enhance them.

They will use AI to:

- Deliver faster, higher-quality outcomes
- Extract deeper insight from complex data
- Enable smarter decisions without disrupting trusted systems
- Give teams more time to focus on innovation and value creation

They will recognize that AI's true power lies not in novelty, but in integration. Not in speed alone, but in dependability. Not in replacement, but in reinforcement.

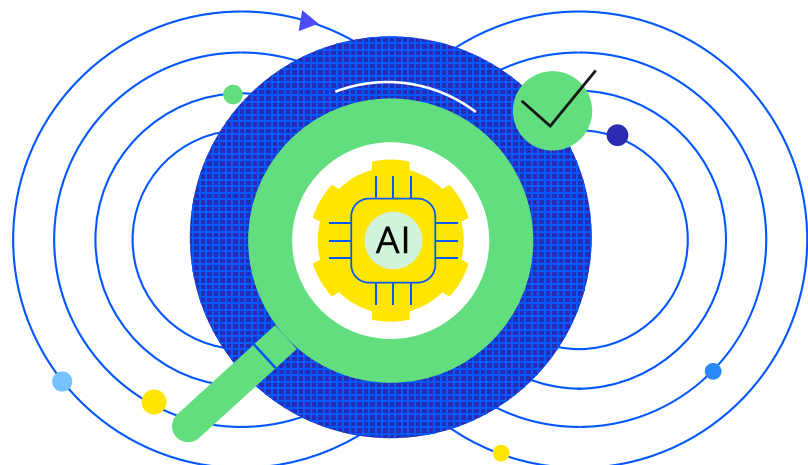
This is the quiet truth beneath the noise: the future of enterprise AI is not about tearing things down. It is about making what already works work *better*.

From Disruption to Dependability

AI has already disrupted the world. That chapter is closed.

The next chapter is about dependability and building AI systems enterprises can trust, govern and scale. About transforming disruption into sustained advantage. About choosing enhancement over replacement.

The organizations that understand this will not just survive the AI era, they will define it.



What This Means for Progress® OpenEdge® Customers and Partners

For OpenEdge customers and partners, conversations about AI often carry an extra layer of anxiety.

When headlines talk about software being rebuilt overnight, platforms being replaced by agents or developers becoming optional, it is natural to ask hard questions like: *Is the OpenEdge platform at risk? Are we betting on the wrong foundation? Will decades of investment still matter in an AI-first world?*

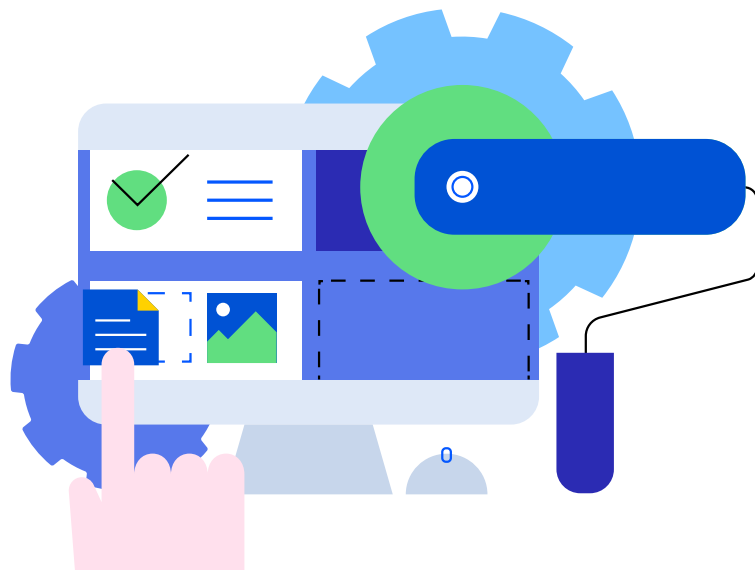
These fears are understandable, but they are also misplaced.

The reality is that OpenEdge customers and partners are not behind this shift—they are exactly where enterprises need to be.

OpenEdge applications exist at the intersection of three things AI cannot function without: trusted data, proven business logic and operational accountability. These are not liabilities in the AI era, they're prerequisites.

Where newer systems often struggle to establish trust, OpenEdge environments already enforce it. Where AI experiments lack governance, OpenEdge applications embody it. Where generative tools hallucinate, OpenEdge systems define truth.

This means the AI conversation for OpenEdge customers is not about replacement, it is about **activation**.



From “*Will AI Replace This?*” to “*How Does AI Unlock More Value?*”

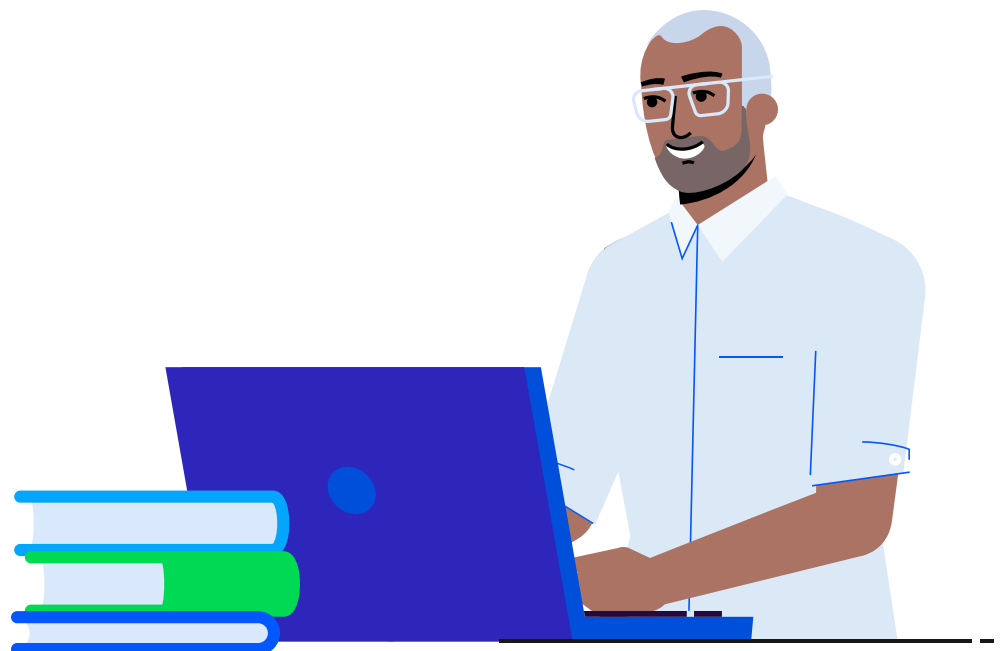
The most dangerous mistake OpenEdge customers could make is assuming that AI success requires ripping out what already works.

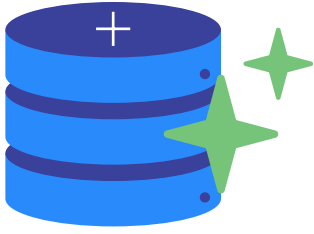
In reality, AI is most powerful when it is anchored in systems that **already understand the business**, systems that know how **pricing is calculated**, how **eligibility is determined**, how **compliance is enforced** and how **outcomes are validated**.

That is precisely what the OpenEdge platform provides.

By grounding AI in OpenEdge data and logic, organizations gain something far more valuable than novelty—**dependable intelligence**. AI becomes a force multiplier for existing investments, not a destabilizing force that introduces new risk.

This shift reframes modernization entirely. So instead of “starting over,” modernization becomes about **exposing, extending and enhancing** what already exists, safely.





The Reassurance That Matters Most

So, if there is one message to carry forward, it is this: AI **does not threaten** the OpenEdge platform, it **validates** it.

The enterprises that will thrive in the AI era are not those that discard their foundations, but those that enhance them. They will leverage AI to unlock more value from trusted platforms, not replace them with uncertainty.

For OpenEdge customers and partners, the future is not about keeping up with AI hype. It is about confidently turning AI into an advantage, on top of the systems you already trust.

And that is not a risk. **It is an opportunity.**

Why This Matters

AI has already changed the rules of the game, but it has not changed what enterprises ultimately value. *Trust* still matters. *Accountability* still matters. Systems that *work, scale and endure* still matter.

For organizations built on the OpenEdge platform, this moment is not about chasing hype or questioning past investments; it is about recognizing their relevance in a new era. AI's true potential is unlocked not by replacing trusted platforms, but by enhancing them and grounding intelligence in proven data, logic and governance. The enterprises that will lead over the next decade are not those that start over, but those that move forward with confidence, clarity and intent, turning AI disruption into dependable advantage.

Now is the time to move from uncertainty to opportunity.



Learn more about AI opportunities in the OpenEdge platform.

About Progress Software

Progress Software (Nasdaq: PRGS) empowers organizations to achieve transformational success in the face of disruptive change. Our software enables our customers to develop, deploy and manage responsible AI-powered applications and personalized digital experiences with agility and ease. Businesses of all sizes get a trusted provider in Progress, with the products, expertise and vision they need to turn AI disruption into a competitive advantage. Millions of developers and technologists at hundreds of thousands of organizations depend on Progress every day. Learn more at www.progress.com

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