Special Analysis

Monetary Return on AI Investments Expected Soon by Advanced Computing Users

Tom Sorensen and Bob Sorensen
January 2026

OVERVIEW

A recent Hyperion Research study examining AI return on investment among advanced computing users found that expectations for measurable monetary ROI varied widely across the community. About half of the respondents anticipate achieving a measurable return within two years, including roughly 30% who expect results in under a year.

This demonstrates the confidence placed in AI, especially considering the high level of ongoing budget investment. Furthermore, the belief in the inherent value of generative AI integration is demonstrated with only 11.7% of the same respondents who cited increasing revenue as a main goal of their AI/HPC activity within the same study.

Overall, the larger study paints a picture of a field moving forward with confidence but still contending with structural and strategic challenges. The high expectations for ROI suggest strong momentum. Yet realizing that momentum will depend on overcoming technical, organizational, and economic barriers that remain very much in play.

Anticipated Time to Monetary Return On Investment in Years

Time	% Selected
Less than one year	29.1%
One year to less than two years	21.4%
Two years to less than three years	20.8%

Notes: N = 103

Source: Hyperion Research, 2025

Survey Results

The table above arrays the timespan in which respondents anticipated a measurable monetary return on their generative AI integration efforts. Over 70% of respondents expect a return within the next three years, with the plurality (29.1%) in less than one year. A notable portion (7.8%) expect no foreseeable return on investment.

When asked about the scale of expected returns, the largest segment of respondents projected ROI in the ranges of over 100% (11.7%), 50–99% (19.4%), and 25–49% (14.6%) with smaller segments trailing off. Interestingly, many participants emphasized that increased revenue was not their primary objective; instead, they prioritized gaining new insights and accelerating time to solution.

This data comes from a larger Hyperion Research study focusing on understanding the realized and anticipated ROI of AI integration into advanced computing environments. The study also contains planned and current investment strategies, expectations, and areas of difficulty or hesitance among users and decision makers.

ANALYST COMMENT

The patterns emerging from this recent Hyperion Research study suggest a complex but optimistic trajectory for future AI investments in advanced computing environments. The fact that a substantial share of organizations expect measurable ROI within two years, and many within the first year, signals strong confidence that AI deployments will continue to mature and deliver tangible value.

- Even more telling is that these expectations are drawn from a respondent pool that includes organizations not primarily seeking monetary returns.
- When those non-monetary-focused groups are factored out, the implied confidence in achieving financial ROI is even higher than the overall raw percentages indicate.

At the same time, the distribution of expectations highlights a market still navigating uncertainty. The sizable portion of respondents who either do not know when ROI will materialize or anticipate breakeven or negative returns over the next three years underscores that AI adoption is not yet a guaranteed economic win. This uncertainty could influence investment pacing, especially for organizations with limited budgets or lower risk tolerance.

Looking ahead, the study's other findings point to several potential roadblocks. First, the divergence in expected ROI timelines suggests uneven organizational readiness; differences in data maturity, workforce skills, and integration capabilities could slow progress for some sectors. Second, many organizations prioritize insights and time-to-solution over revenue generation indicates that AI's value proposition is still evolving and coming into focus. Finally, concerns around model reliability, security, and operational complexity, especially in mission critical, high-stakes, or advanced scientific and engineering applications, could create friction that slows broader adoption.