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Service AI Applications: Build vs. Buy

Manufacturers are moving beyond pilots and into real-world AI deployment across service, parts, and warranty. Yet more than 80% of custom-built AI initiatives fail to reach production or deliver measurable ROI.

Organizations face a critical decision: invest building internal AI capabilities or adopt a specialized Service AI platform engineered for production, scale, and continuous improvement.

Build vs. Buy Comparison

Criteria	Build	Buy
Time to value	Internal AI efforts often take many months to deliver. Service backlogs, excess warranty expenses, and productivity issues remain unresolved.	Deploy a production-ready AI solution in weeks and begin realizing ROI quickly, as teams see immediate gains in productivity, resolution speed, and efficiency.
Total cost of ownership	For internal builds, initial development is only the starting point. Infrastructure, cloud usage, model monitoring, head count, retraining, and support create ongoing costs that rarely decline.	Minimal upfront investment, with scalable costs aligned to business usage.
AI talent	AI expertise is limited and expensive. When key contributors leave or shift priorities, progress slows or stops altogether.	Avoid recruiting, onboarding, and retaining scarce AI specialists. Expertise is built in and continuously applied.
Maintenance	Keeping models accurate and relevant requires constant attention. This effort competes directly with core IT, digital, and operational initiatives.	The AI vendor manages all AI maintenance and overhead, allowing the organization to focus its time and resources on core business priorities.
Execution risk	Many internal AI initiatives never move beyond pilots. Others struggle to scale across regions, product lines, or dealer networks.	Lower execution risk with a proven solution already deployed across similar use cases, systems, and environments.
Data security	Organizations retain full control over data security, privacy policies, access controls, and how data is stored, processed, and governed within their own environments.	Customer data is owned by the client, is segregated and governed to meet enterprise security requirements. Customer data and business information is protected and never shared.
Features & Updates	When an organization builds its own AI, it retains full control over functionality, determining which features are included and which are not.	Receive continuous enhancements, new capabilities, and performance improvements as part of the AI platform.
Integrations	Organizations retain architectural control and reduce vendor dependency, but must design, build, and maintain integrations internally.	Pre-built integrations designed to work alongside existing ERP, CRM, and warranty systems.
Intellectual property	By building its own AI solution, the organization retains ownership of the intellectual property. However, it requires higher investment in IP development.	Use Enterprise AI-as-a-Service platforms with best-in-class foundation models and AI tools. Customers own their data, configurations, and service workflows.