AI in Resource Management:
## *From Curiosity to Capability*

By Ryan Childers, RMCP®

AI is poised to be one of the most transformative forces in modern business, driving a new wave of intelligence, automation, and efficiency. Yet many organizations have yet to fully unlock its potential in resource management. Are we on the edge of transformation or still testing the waters? This article explores what is holding teams back and how AI could soon change the game.

## The Current Landscape: Low Adoption, High Curiosity

Despite the growing buzz around AI, most organizations have yet to integrate it meaningfully into their resource management capabilities. Data collected from attendees at RMI Connect 2025 paints a clear picture: while nearly half (48%) of organizations in attendance reported that they are actively experimenting with AI, only 13% report systematic use.

Where is your organization along the AI adoption curve?

- Haven't Started At All
- Awareness
- Education
- Experimentation
- Systematic Use
- AI-Native

1%, 5%, 17%, 15%, 48%, 13%

Looking more specifically at the resource management function, the gap becomes even more pronounced. 58% of respondents said their resource management teams are lagging behind their broader organization in AI adoption. Only 9% are further ahead.
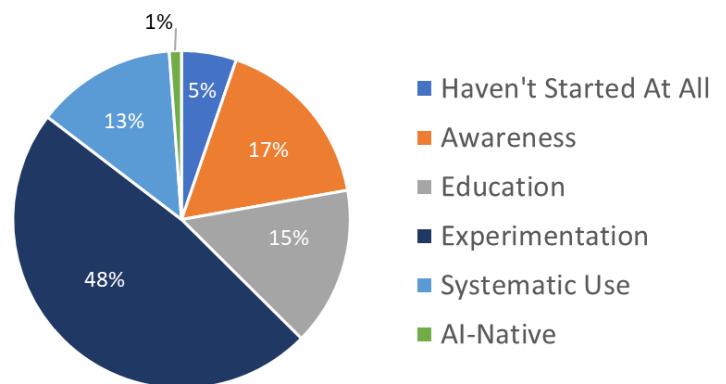
Where is your RM function along the AI adoption curve relative to the rest of your organization?

- Further Ahead
- Lagging Behind
- Same Stage

9%, 58%, 33%
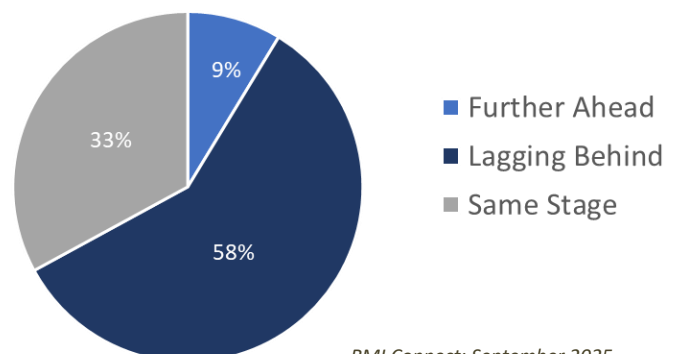
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This cautious approach is not without reason. Resource management is a nuanced discipline, requiring deep contextual understanding of people, projects, and priorities. Because AI is often perceived as a black box, it can feel misaligned with the human-centric nature of resource decisions. The data suggests that while curiosity is high, confidence and capability are still developing. The challenge now is to move from experimentation to strategic integration and ensure resource management does not get left behind.

Why the Lag? Look to the Tools

Most services organizations leverage commercial PSA, PPM, or RPM tools to automate resource management. These platforms often set the boundaries for innovation, leaving many organizations waiting for vendors to embed AI capabilities, while others are beginning to experiment with universally available tools to explore what is possible.

There's reason for optimism. PSA/PPM/RPM vendors are actively working to infuse AI into their products, and as these platforms evolve, they are poised to become catalysts for broader AI adoption, making advanced capabilities more accessible and seamlessly integrated into everyday resource management workflows.

To fully realize this potential, organizations should engage vendors proactively, helping shape product roadmaps to ensure emerging AI capabilities align with evolving needs. At the same time, it is essential to remember that AI is not a replacement for human judgment. When thoughtfully integrated, AI can complement the nuanced, people-centered nature of resource management by enhancing decision-making, surfacing insights, and enabling smarter, faster actions.

Where AI Has the Potential to Add Value in Resource Management

As AI capabilities continue to advance, the opportunity for resource management is becoming clearer. The real promise lies in enhancing decision-making, improving efficiency, and unlocking new levels of insight. While adoption is still early, several high-impact use cases are emerging:

- Forecasting Demand with Greater Precision: AI can analyze historical project data, business cycles, and external variables to generate more accurate and adaptive forecasts, which helps organizations anticipate resource needs before they become urgent.

- Optimizing Getting the Right Person, in the Right Place, at the Right Time: Machine learning algorithms can evaluate skills, availability, past performance, and even behavioral data to suggest optimal resource assignments. This can reduce bias, improve fit, and accelerate deployment.

- Modeling Complex Scenarios: AI can simulate multiple resourcing scenarios—what-if analyses that help leaders evaluate trade-offs, anticipate bottlenecks, and make more informed decisions under uncertainty.

- Detecting Utilization and Capacity Anomalies: AI can monitor patterns in real time and flag unusual spikes or drops in utilization, helping teams intervene early and avoid downstream impacts on delivery or employee wellbeing.

These capabilities are no longer theoretical, they are already reshaping adjacent business functions like operations, finance, and customer success. The opportunity for resource management is to adapt and apply these innovations thoughtfully, in ways that respect the discipline's complexity and the human-centered nature of its decisions.

From Curiosity to Capability: AI as a Strategic Enabler

AI in resource management is not just a passing trend; it is a strategic opportunity. The data from RMI Connect shows that while many organizations are experimenting, few have reached systematic adoption. Within resource management, the gap is even more pronounced.

This is not a lack of imagination, it reflects the discipline's complexity, the current state of tools, and the need for thoughtful integration. Encouragingly, PSA, PPM, and RPM vendors are actively investing in AI capabilities. This momentum suggests that AI will not replace

the human-centered nature of resource management but will enhance it, automating routine tasks, surfacing insights, and enabling smarter, faster decisions.

The path forward is not about chasing hype, it is about building capability. That means influencing vendor roadmaps, investing in data readiness, and equipping resource managers to work effectively alongside AI. Organizations that take these steps will not just improve efficiency; they will redefine what resource management can achieve.

The opportunity is real. The question remains: are we ready to move from curiosity to capability?

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Ryan Childers is the Managing Director of the Resource Management Institute (RMI). With specific expertise in Global Resource Management, Ryan was an early adopter and implementer of the Just-in-Time Resourcing® brand of human capital management solutions. His passion for the resource management discipline is central to his role leading this important industry institute.

Prior to leading the RMI, Ryan spent several years leading the Training practice at RTM Consulting and as a consultant, helping clients accelerate growth and implement operational best practices, delivery methodologies and Just-in-Time Resourcing®. His professional experience also includes serving in a number of leadership positions in Professional Services and corporate strategy at Finvi (formerly Ontario Systems) and working in systems deployment at Accenture.

Ryan holds an MS in Information and Communication Sciences and BS in Management from Ball State University. Ryan has been a frequent speaker and panelist at Technology Services Industry Association (TSIA) events.