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**Thomas Steinborn**  
Chief Product and  
Technology Officer,  
Smartstream



# Why operations need to reinvent

Financial institutions and enterprises are reaching a pivotal moment in operational transformation, as exception-heavy workflows continue to slow teams down and consume up to 70% of operational effort.



# Firms continue to struggle with automation because of 3 deep-rooted barriers

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## 1. Data Fragmentation

Critical information remains scattered across disconnected systems, forcing analysts into slow 'user-chasing-data' processes.

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## 2. Human Dependency

Essential operational knowledge lives in SMEs' heads, making resolution dependent on individual memory instead of institutional intelligence.

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## 3. Workflow Stagnation

Processes lack the ability to learn, adapt, or improve, causing repeated cycles of the same manual tasks and laborious verbose communication.

For decades, these blockers have anchored operations in inefficiency.

### Removing the barriers requires a fundamentally new approach

One built to overcome long standing operational challenges through advanced natural language reasoning and continuous learning. Powered by Agentic AI, this new generation of intelligent systems enables autonomous, scalable workflows that bring data directly to users, breaking the cycle of manual effort and enabling a new era of intelligent, self directed operations that scale effortlessly, learn continuously, and operate reliably across the organisation.

### This is the shift beyond automation toward autonomous operations

It represents an intentional step change in how institutions execute their processes, introducing an explainable, resilient, and scalable intelligence layer that strengthens auditability, reduces risk, and drives autonomous execution across the back office.

## The rethink

The biggest inefficiencies in operations don't need fixing, they require the reengineering of business process. Smartstream's vision is to empower institutions with a new operational foundation, one where human expertise is amplified, not replaced, and where intelligent agents form a resilient, always-on workforce that adapts to the pace of global markets.

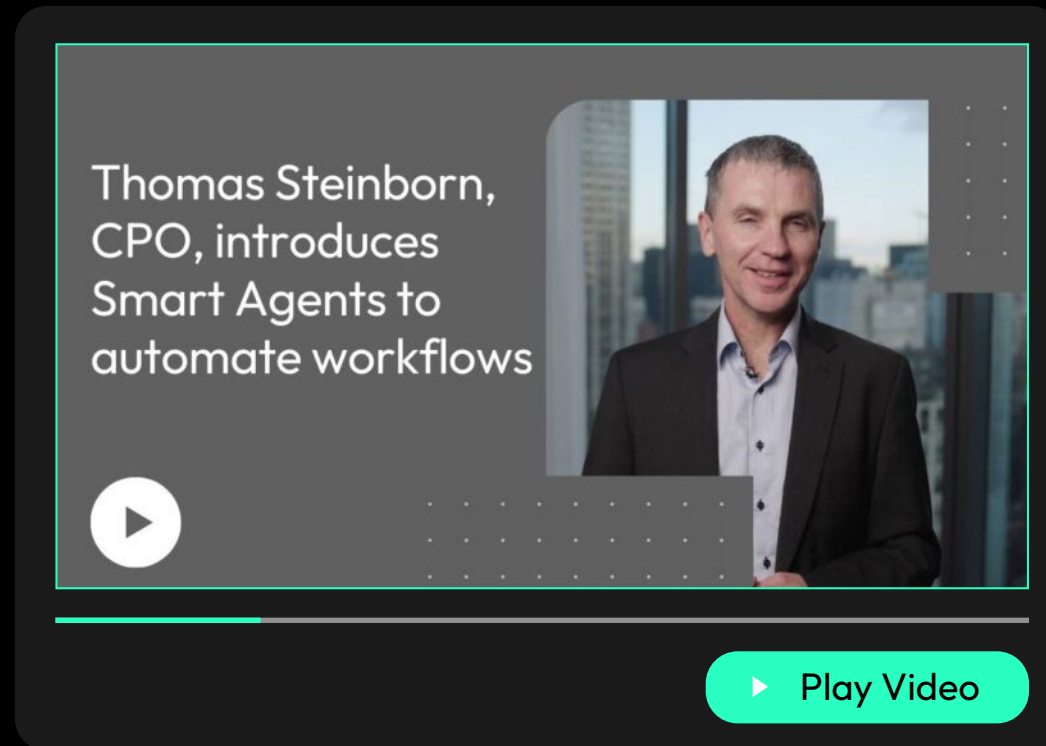
We believe that many of today's operational tasks shouldn't be optimised, they should be eliminated. Institutions spend countless hours assigning exceptions, prioritising queues, applying reason codes, and re-handling recurring cases that workflows never learn from. While clients often ask for better triage or smarter prioritisation, the real breakthrough lies in replacing these tasks entirely with automation.

### Workflows become self-directing

- ✓ Data is served, not chased
- ✓ Exceptions resolve with minimum triage
- ✓ Processes learn and improve automatically
- ✓ Communication is streamlined and targeted
- ✓ Ecosystems self-manage and self-optimize

This is the true transformation!

“Not improving broken processes but replacing them with autonomous operations that scale and strengthen control across the institution.”



Thomas Steinborn,  
CPO, introduces  
Smart Agents to  
automate workflows

▶ Play Video

The image shows a video player interface. On the left, there is a white play button icon. To its right, the text 'Thomas Steinborn, CPO, introduces Smart Agents to automate workflows' is displayed in white. On the right side of the video frame, there is a portrait of Thomas Steinborn, a man with short grey hair, wearing a dark suit jacket over a light blue shirt. Below the video frame, there is a progress bar and a red 'Play Video' button with a white play icon.



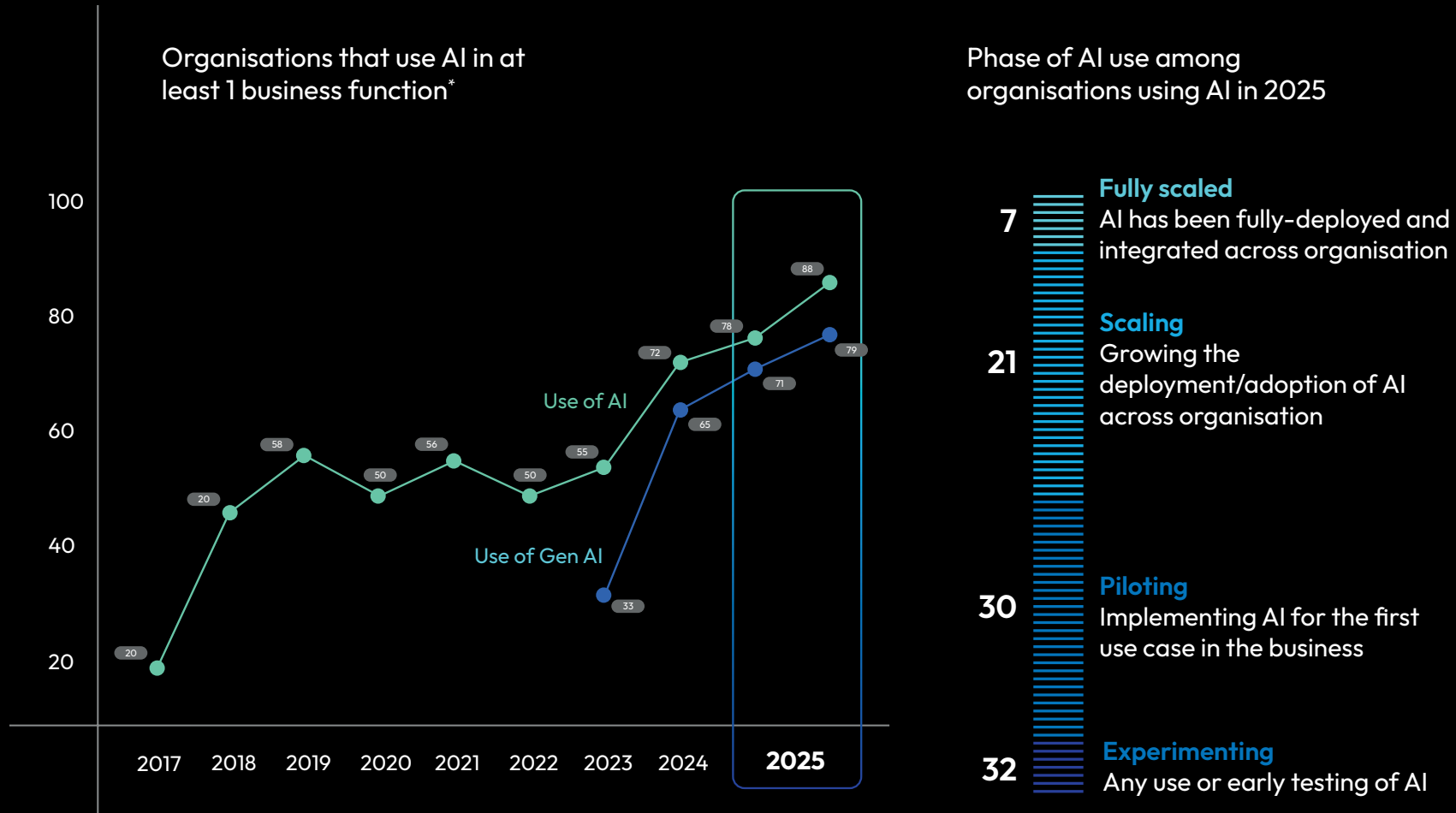
# AI adoption

Institutions are at a critical juncture in AI adoption. While traditional AI is broadly embedded across many functions, Agentic AI is rapidly emerging as the next major accelerator and catalyst for operational efficiency and risk reduction.



# Reported use of AI in at least one business function continues to increase

## Use of AI by respondents' organisations. % of respondents



\*In 2017 the definition of AI use was using AI in a core part of the organisation's business or at scale. In 2018-2019, the definition was embedding at least 1 AI capability in business processes or products. From 2020, the definition was that the organisation has adopted AI in at least 1 function, and in 2022-25, the definition was regular use of AI in at least 1 function. Source McKinsey Global Surveys on the state of AI. 2017-2025



# What is agentic AI?



Agentic AI represents a new generation of artificial intelligence, designed not just to generate responses, but to **plan, decide, and autonomously execute actions to achieve a defined outcome**. Unlike traditional or even generative AI, which primarily provides suggestions or produces content, Agentic AI completes tasks end-to-end, interacting with enterprise systems, and independently drive workflows while still allowing for human oversight.

In essence, **agentic AI is autonomous, workflow executing intelligence** capable of planning, acting, and completing complex multistep tasks across enterprise environments with accuracy, explainability, and full auditability.

While this new technology is extremely powerful, **building secure, scalable, enterprise wide solutions** requires far more than AI alone, it demands deep technical engineering combined with domain expertise and operational knowledge accumulated over decades.



# A new operating model for modern institutions

Today, Institutions operate with some of the most exception heavy and manually intensive workflows, including:

 Reconciliations

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 Cash Breaks

---

 Settlement Exception

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 AML/KYC Investigations



Data shows exception heavy operations dominate back office workloads consuming up to

70%

operational effort

These processes are expanding in volume and complexity, driven by increased regulatory scrutiny, diverse data sources, and the growing digital footprint of the industry.

MARKET DATA

3RD PARTY DATA

COMMUNICATION

PHONE

EMAIL

```
catch(IOException e){
    System.out.println("could not connect to file airlines.txt.");
    System.exit(0);
}
if(scannerToReadAirlines != null){
    System.out.println("could not connect
    Scanner scannerToReadAirlines = new Scanner(new File("airlines.txt"));
    while(scannerToReadAirlines.hasNextLine()){
        lineFromFile = scannerToReadAirlines.nextLine();
        airlineNames = lineFromFile.split(",");
        numAirline = new Airline(airlineNames[0],
        airlineNames[1], airlineNames[2], airlineNames[3], airlineNames[4]);
        airlinesPartnersNetwork.add(numAirline);
    }
    System.out.println(airlinesPartnersNetwork);
    Scanner keyboard = new Scanner(System.in);
    System.out.print("Enter airline id to read airlines: ");
    String start = keyboard.nextLine();
    while(start != null){
        int id = Integer.parseInt(start);
        Airline airline = airlinesPartnersNetwork.get(id);
        System.out.println(airline);
        start = keyboard.nextLine();
    }
}
```

# Teams face deeply entrenched inefficiencies across the back office



These challenges are mainly driven by fragmented systems landscape, manual and unstructured communication processes, and limited analytical insight.

# Key operational challenges

## Fragmented 'swivel-chair' processes

Teams manually navigate multiple internal systems and data sources to investigate issues, increasing the likelihood of human error, and slowing down resolution.

Create inconsistent data interpretation and heavy cognitive load on analysts.

## Communication bottlenecks

Email remains the primary mechanism for both internal and external communication, leading to delays, lost threads, and lost cycle times.

Critical information often sits in inboxes rather than flowing through structured workflows.

## Dependence on individual expertise

Reliance on manual controls and employee-developed workarounds make processes fragile and people-dependent.

Knowledge silos form, and outcomes vary based on who handles the case.

## Inefficiency from incorrect categorisation and assignment

Misclassification of breaks or issues at the start of the process leads to incorrect routing, wasted-effort, and repeated handoffs.

Root-cause analysis (RCA) becomes slow and inconsistent.

## Insufficient insight for risk assessment

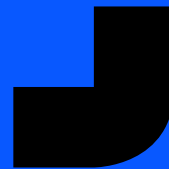
Lack of timely analytical insights and context, result in incomplete or inaccurate risk evaluations.

Increases the chance of missing high-risk items while over-processing low-risk ones.

These inefficiencies lead to rising operational costs, slower resolution times, and increased exposure to compliance and settlement risks.



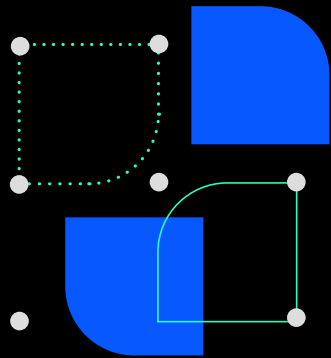
# Introducing Smart Agents



## The paradigm shift in data consumption

# From users chasing data to data served to users

Reimagine and transform exception-heavy, manual processes into intelligent, automated workflows that reduce human efforts, increase efficiency, and strengthen operational control.



Smart Agents mark a decisive shift for operational teams. Instead of analysts navigating fragmented systems and manually piecing together data, Smart Agents brings the right information, insights, and actions directly to the user and manage communication on behalf of the users.

Designed to replace exception-heavy workflows, they transform investigations into intelligent, automated processes that raise efficiency, accuracy, and control across the back office.

Purpose-built with Agentic AI, Smart Agents functions as intelligent, goal-driven digital operators. It interprets cases, gather and validate data, choose the appropriate resolution path, and execute actions across interconnected systems, all with full auditability and policy-controlled oversight.

By orchestrating this entire workflow, Smart Agents eliminates manual friction and accelerate outcomes across high-volume operational areas.

# A step-change for the future of operations



Powered by autonomous reasoning, adaptive decision-making, and continuous learning, Smart Agents evolves with the organisation.

It introduces a more responsive, resilient model of end-to-end automation that strengthens governance and elevates overall operational performance.

## From exception management to operational excellence.

This is more than the optimisation of existing processes; it is the redesign of how operations run.



### Autonomous planning and reasoning

Agentic I can analyse a problem, break it into steps, choose the right sequence of actions, and adapt if new information emerges.



### Goal driven behaviour

Rather than responding to isolated prompts, agents work toward a defined outcome (e.g., 'resolve this cash break').



### Multi-step workflow execution

Agents can connect to and operate across multiple systems:

- retrieve data
- analysing information
- triggering workflows
- updating records
- sending communications
- closing tasks



### Ability to interact with systems and humans

Agents can:

- read and write to applications
- call APIs
- generate and send emails / messages
  - request missing data from counterparties or internal teams



### Continuous learning

Over time, agentic systems refine their decision-making based on past outcomes, user feedback, and historical patterns.

# From manual effort to autonomous execution

## Re-designed operating model

At the centre of Smart Agents is a structured execution model that mirrors the way experienced analysts diagnose and resolve exceptions. Agents interpret breaks, retrieve and assess the required data, apply corrective actions, escalate only when human judgment is necessary, and record every decision with complete transparency.

This operating model replaces fragmented, multi-system workflows with streamlined, intelligent processes that deliver consistency, speed, and accuracy at scale. By taking ownership of repetitive, rules-based workloads, Smart Agents free teams to focus on oversight, risk management, and strategic refinement.

It provides firms with integrated, domain-aware Agentic AI for workflows, offering a fast, secure, and cost-efficient path to truly autonomous back office operations.

TO OPERATIONAL  
EXCELLENCE

Autonomous,  
end-to-end  
exception  
handling

Domain-first  
intelligence  
built for  
operations

Stronger risk,  
control, and  
auditability

Scalability  
without  
additional  
FTEs

FROM EXCEPTION  
MANAGEMENT

Smart Agents provide the most deeply integrated, domain aware and operationally transformative agentic AI solution for exception heavy financial workflows, offering the fastest, safest and most cost-efficient way for institutions to bring autonomy into their back office.



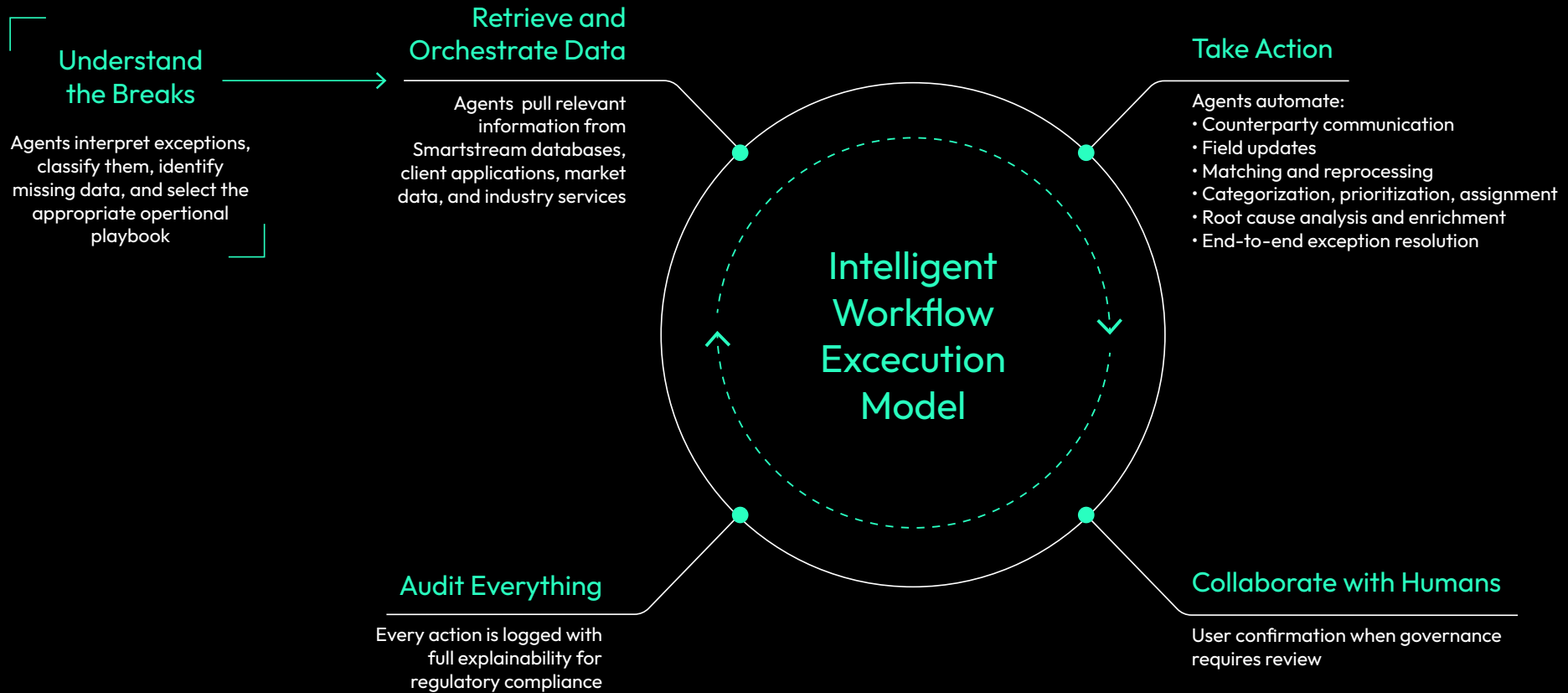
# How Smart Agents works

Breaking down complex investigations into a clear execution model that mirrors how experienced analysts work.

**Measurable gains from day one**

Through deep domain knowledge, Smart Agents automate the repetitive tasks that dominate operations today, unlocking multiple benefits.





## Benefits

1.  
20–40%  
operational  
efficiency gains



2.  
Stronger audit  
and compliance  
readiness



3.  
Improved SLA  
performance



4.  
Lower  
cost-to-serve



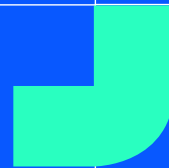
5.  
A scalable,  
future-ready  
operating model





# What makes Smart Agents unique?

Smart Agents stand apart through deep domain intelligence, enterprise-grade governance, and seamless integration across Smartstream's ecosystem and client infrastructures.



Together, these capabilities deliver autonomous operations that are accurate, compliant, and built to scale.

### **Policy-controlled autonomy**

Embedded governance with human-in-the-loop controls, maker-checker workflows, and explainable decisioning; ensuring accuracy, compliance and trust.

### **Multi-agent orchestration**

Coordinated triage, investigation, resolution, alerts, and analytics across a network of specialised agents, like a co-ordinated workforce capable of managing high-volume, high-complexity workflows.

### **Rapid onboarding and immediate value**

Smart Agents deploy into a client's existing operational environment with minimal configuration, using current data flows, reconciliations, and system connections as the starting point. This eliminates the lengthy setup projects and delivers measurable automation benefits from day one.

### **Elastic, on-demand scalability**

Automatically scales during peak volumes without additional FTEs or operational overhead, ensuring resilience during market stress.

### **Native auditability and compliance**

Full traceability across every action for risk, regulatory alignment, and operational assurance, providing a complete and transparent audit trail aligned with regulatory expectations.

### **Deep, native integration**

Connected with Smart Reconciliations, Smart Data and Smart Fees, while also connecting seamlessly to third-party and internal systems, Smart Agents operate as part of the client's infrastructure using protocol such as MCP.

### **Domain-first intelligence**

Purpose built for exception heavy operations, with workflows that are fully domain aware, enabling faster decisions, fewer errors, and smarter automation from day one.

### **Codified institutional knowledge**

Continuous learning loops converting analyst expertise into reusable playbooks and boosting automation efficiency over time.

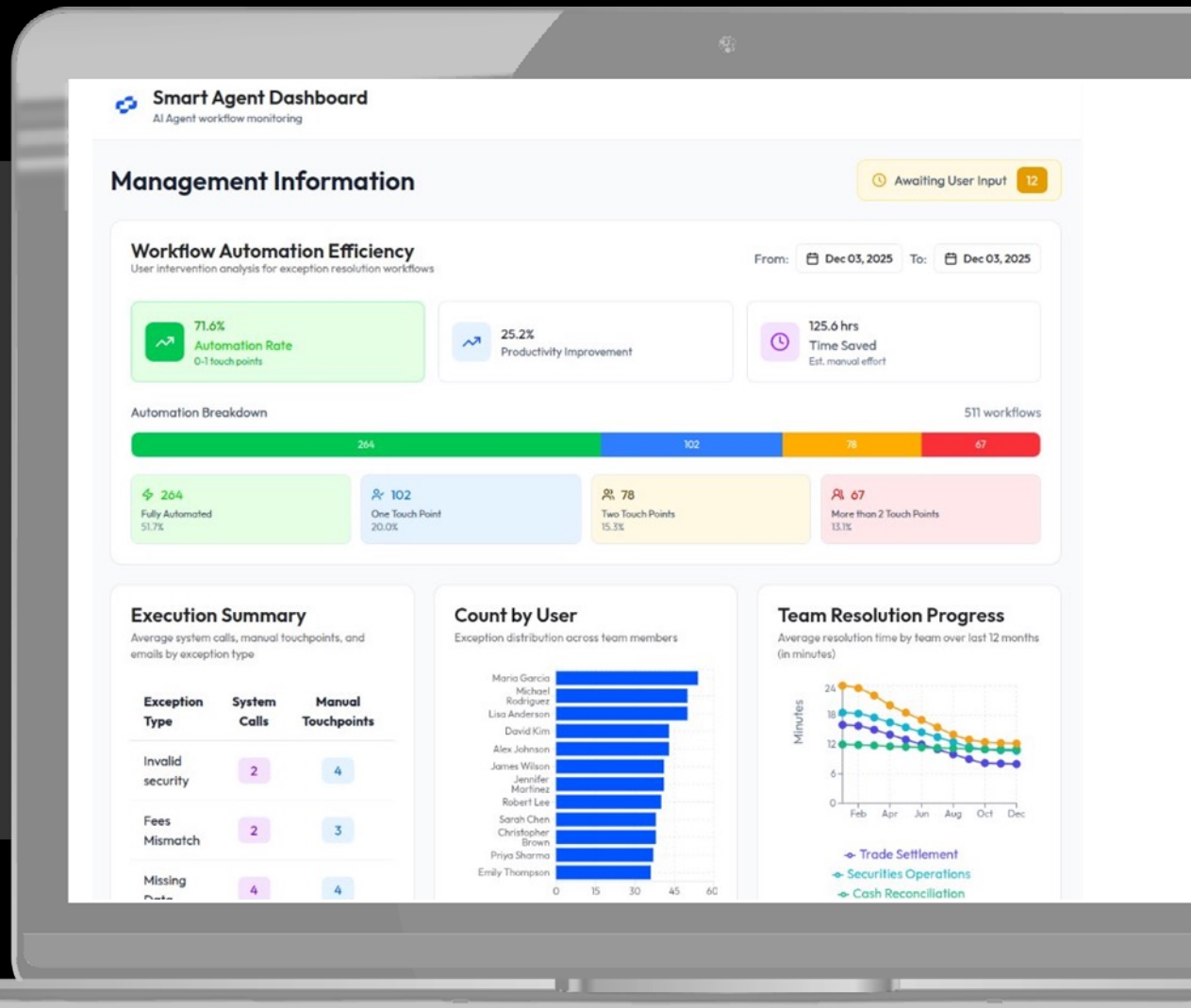
# Intelligence that learns, measures, and improves

Smart Agents continuously captures workflow performance metrics, allowing operations teams to monitor automation levels, understand where human involvement is still required, and refine processes for higher straight-through resolution.

This visibility extends to user activity, helping institutions strengthen oversight, optimise resource allocation, and systematically lift operational performance.

# Powered by deep domain expertise

With privileged access to Smartstream's proprietary product intelligence, private APIs, and decades of reconciliation knowledge, Smart Agents delivers a level of precision and actionability unavailable in generic AI tools. This results in deeper insights, more reliable decisions, and consistently higher-quality autonomous resolutions.





# Transformative application of Smart Agents



The Agentic AI framework opens the door to a wide range of transformative use cases, from automating components of the trade lifecycle to onboarding entirely new reconciliations. However, the most immediate and compelling value emerges around **exception investigation**. Today, firms rely on hundreds or even thousands of operations staff to resolve breaks across fragmented systems, navigating 'swivel-chair' workflows, manual data gathering, and email-based follow-ups. This heavy, inefficient process represents one of the biggest opportunities for intelligent, autonomous intervention.

Smart Agents takes ownership of the entire end to end sequence, reducing human intervention to only the moments where judgment or governance is required.

In every operational process, there are multiple manual touchpoints from data gathering to validation, cross checking, approvals, and updates. With autonomous workflows, these manual touchpoints are systematically removed.



# Manual touchpoints **vs** autonomous workflows

How agentic AI removes manual touchpoints across any process

Smart Agents eliminates manual touchpoints across exception heavy workflows, transforming fragmented, repetitive processes into seamless, autonomous operations that deliver accuracy, speed, and control at scale.

Process Step	TODAY: Manual Workflow
DATA GATHERING	Analysts check multiple systems, chase missing data
CROSS CHECKING	Manual comparison across fragmented sources
DECISION MAKING	Humans determine next steps
EXECUTION	Manual updates, email requests, approvals
VALIDATION AND RE-VERIFICATION	Repeated human checks to confirm correctness
EXCEPTION HANDLING	Frequent, time consuming human involvement
AUDIT TRAIL	Fragmented logs, emails, spreadsheets
SCALABILITY	Limited, heavily dependent on manpower

## WITH SMART AGENTS: Autonomous Workflow

Automatically retrieves and validates all required data

Performs real time cross checks across systems

Applies reasoning to select the correct action path

Executes updates, triggers actions, and requests approvals only when required

Validates, reconciles, and confirms outcomes end-to-end

Rare: escalated only for governance or judgment

Fully auditable, unified record of every action and decision

Instantly scalable with volume and complexity



# Proven impact on performance and costs

Smart Agents delivers operational improvements that are both quantifiable and transformational.

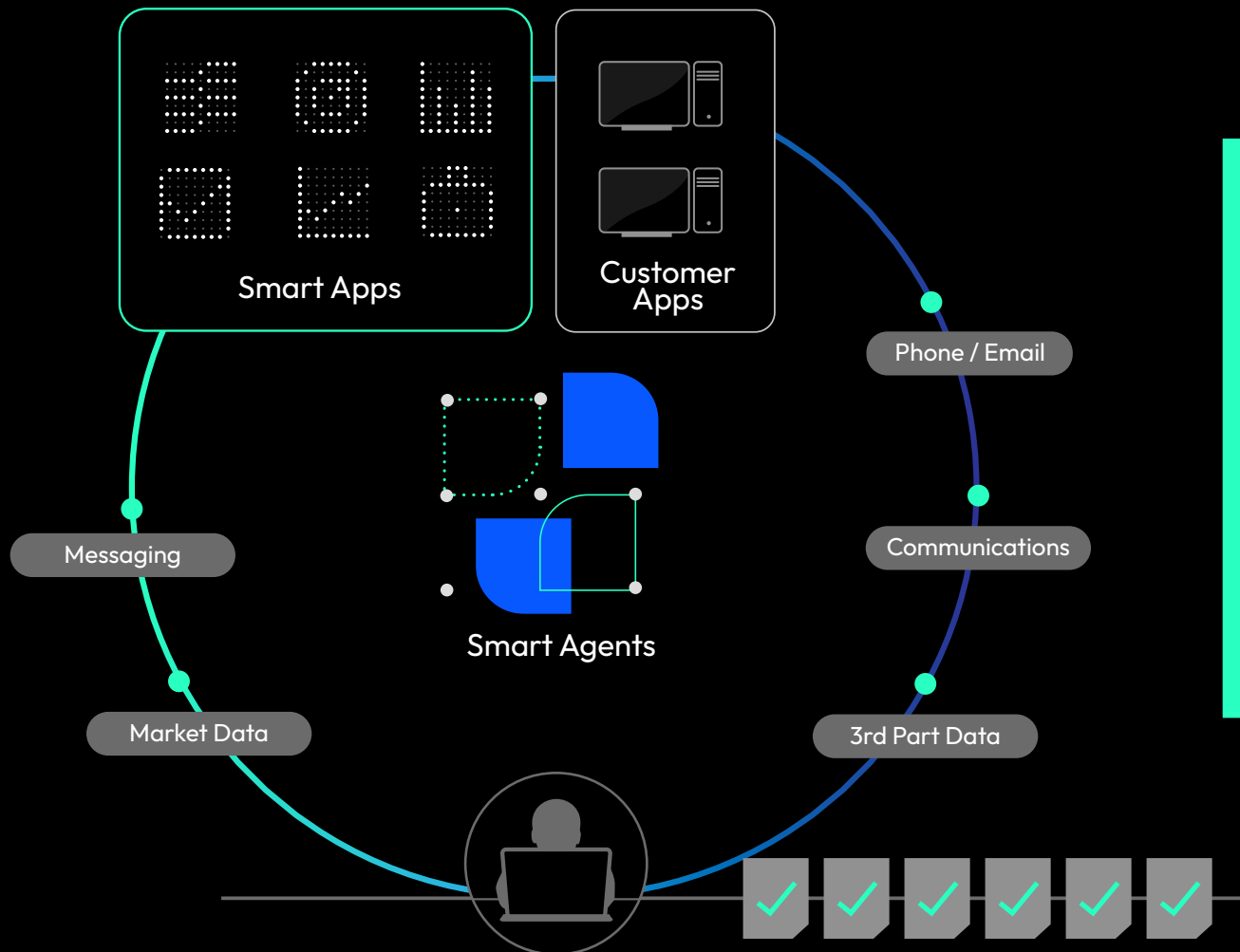
By automating and intelligently orchestrating exception handling across multi-system environments, it dramatically accelerates investigation cycles, improve accuracy, and reduce operational overheads.



## Time saving per 500 exceptions

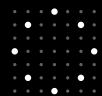
The impact is visible from day one, reshaping how teams work and how institutions scale

MODE	TIME PER EXCEPTION	TOTAL TIME
Manual	14 minutes	116 hours
Augmented	2.5 minutes	20 hours
Autonomous	0.5 minutes	4 hours



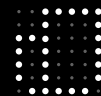
Productivity improvement  
**29x**  
 reduction in time per user, per break

Together, these outcomes redefine what 'high-performing operations' look like, combining speed, resilience, and control in a way that traditional automation simply cannot.



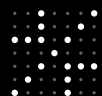
## Operational Outcomes

- ✓ 30-60% faster resolution time
- ✓ 20-40% fewer escalations
- ✓ Higher STP rates
- ✓ Faster investigations and fewer errors



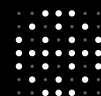
## Financial Impact

- ✓ Reduce write-offs
- ✓ Better liquidity utilization
- ✓ Lower cost to serve



## Risk and Compliance

- ✓ Full auditability across every action
- ✓ Policy driven controls
- ✓ Reduced settlement and compliance risk

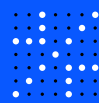


## Team Efficiency and Experience

- ✓ Analysts focus on high value tasks, not swivel chair investigation
- ✓ Institutional knowledge captures in reusable playbooks
- ✓ Faster SLA attainment and improved client satisfaction

# Strategic impact

Smart Agents unlocks enterprise-level operational transformation and enables teams to focus on higher-value oversight.



Up to 70% reduction in manual investigation workload



Stronger auditability and control



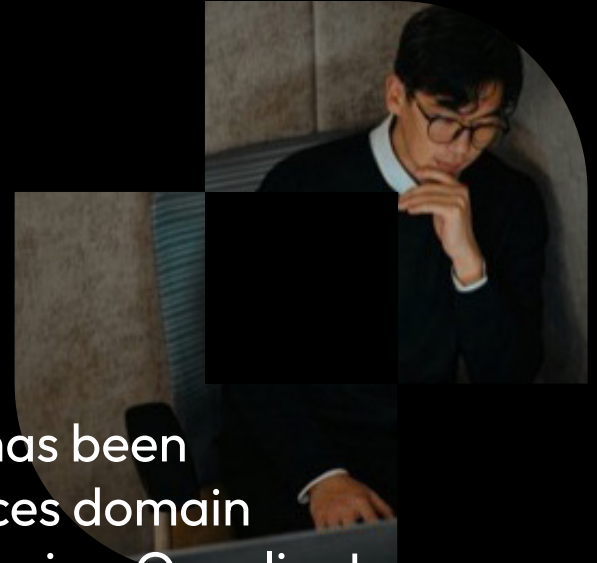
Reduced settlement and compliance risk



Improved scalability during volume spikes



Analysts freed to focus on risk, oversight, and value-added tasks



“We are very proud to introduce Smart Agents, it has been purposefully built, combining deep financial services domain knowledge with years of investment in AI technologies. Our clients have been asking for ways to reduce manual intervention and improve operational resilience, and Smart Agents delivers exactly that – an intelligent, autonomous layer that accelerates resolution, strengthens controls, and continuously learns to optimise processing. It’s a game-changer for exception-heavy workflows.”

**Thomas Steinborn, Chief Product and Technology Officer, Smartstream**





# Make your operations smarter, faster, and more resilient

Discover how Smart Agents can accelerate investigations, reduce risk, and transform your operating model

See Smart Agents  
in action within  
your workflows.

Register your interest  
for a tailored demo  
today.

**Contact**

[smart.stream/connect](https://smart.stream/connect)



## About Smartstream

For more information visit:  
[smart.stream](https://smart.stream)

Smartstream unlocks trusted, intelligent data insights – clearly, consistently, and without compromise.

Empowering leading global financial institutions and enterprises with innovative solutions that deliver accurate, timely data insights to streamline operations, reduce costs, and meet regulatory demands with confidence.

By harnessing data at the core of customer operations, Smartstream drives smarter, faster outcomes across reconciliations, liquidity, collateral, corporate actions, fees, and reference data solutions.