From Promise to Impact: Five-Layer AI Measurement — Methodology Review

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Document control

Field	Value
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Status	Independent source review — not an external audit
Publication type	Enterprise operating and impact-measurement framework
Source policy	Original public material only; no Dodone adaptation
Full source links	See section 14

Executive summary

McKinsey describes five layers of AI value measurement from technical quality up to financial outcomes. Each layer has accountable owners and metrics, and the framework recommends impact attribution through A/B tests or staggered rollouts with investment gates and recurring business review.

Scope: Connect model technical performance to adoption, operational change, strategic outcomes and enterprise-level financial impact.

Important: This paper documents published source material only. A missing equation or input is reported as not available in the reviewed sources; no substitute model or artificial worked example has been created.

1. Purpose and scope

Connect model technical performance to adoption, operational change, strategic outcomes and enterprise-level financial impact. This paper is an independent explanatory analysis of published methodology; it is not endorsed by the originating publisher.

2. Counterfactual and baseline

Define value before implementation and compare to a credible pre-AI baseline using instrumented pilot and rollout data. McKinsey explicitly advocates A/B or staggered deployments when feasible to identify incremental impact.

3. Published model inputs and variables

- Layer 5: latency, quality, hallucination, guardrail and token-cost metrics.
- Layer 4: active adoption, workflow penetration and user override/acceptance.
- Layer 3: cycle time, errors/rework, abandonment, cost per transaction.
- Layer 2: strategic outcomes such as retention, CSAT, on-time delivery and compliance.
- Layer 1: enterprise revenue uplift, cost-to-serve, margin and total ownership cost.

4. Cost methodology

Total cost of ownership, including cloud and token spending plus product and operational costs, is to be reflected in finance review. No single project-wide standard model input table or equation is published in the reviewed article.

5. Benefit and value methodology

The framework traces observed effects through technical performance, meaningful use, operational KPIs and strategic outcomes to financial returns. Financial planning and analysis owns the final financial-impact layer.

6. Published formulas and calculation logic

- The five layers constitute a measurement logic and ownership framework, not a universal arithmetic ROI formula.
- A standard published per-project equation linking all five layers numerically is not specified in the reviewed article.

7. Publisher-reported worked examples or results

The source describes examples of indicators at each layer, but does not publish a complete numerical case that takes one AI deployment through all five layers to a final ROI.

8. Sensitivity, attribution and uncertainty

A/B experiments, staggered deployments, stage gates and recurring reviews are recommended to strengthen attribution and stop projects that fail value tests.

9. Author-scope qualifications and methodological limitations

- Measurement and governance architecture, not a ready-made financial calculator.
- Actual KPI-to-profit conversion needs firm-specific causal measurement.
- Technical quality or user adoption cannot on its own establish financial impact.

10. Independent reproducibility assessment

High for the five-layer taxonomy and ownership mapping; not applicable for a single numeric ROI because no universal formula is defined.

11. Public-information gap register

Information unavailable or incomplete	Source review status
Universal cross-layer numeric coefficients and ROI formula: not published.	Not publicly available / insufficiently specified in reviewed source
One complete worked financial example spanning all five layers: not published in reviewed article.	Not publicly available / insufficiently specified in reviewed source

12. Independent reviewer observations

These observations address verifiability and scope; they are not additions to the publisher's financial method.

Confirm each numerical claim against the original publication before relying on it for an investment decision. Do not treat conceptual frameworks or opportunity estimates as if they were a reproducible company-level ROI algorithm.

Do not fill source gaps using assumed discount rates, value multipliers, proprietary weights, industry benchmarks, model code or synthetic test fixtures. An independent audit of calculations is possible only where sufficient primary data and methodology are disclosed.

13. Audit and publication checklist

- Primary publisher and publication dates have been identified.
- Source-specific equations are separated from descriptive process narratives.
- All author-reported numerical examples are identified as publisher examples.
- Unavailable parameters and proprietary elements are explicitly marked.
- No Dodone adaptations or fabricated examples have been introduced.
- Claims of complete numerical reproducibility are limited to publicly verifiable material.

14. Original source links and attribution

The following are the original publisher resources reviewed. Each link is clickable in the PDF and editable Word file.

S1 — From promise to impact: How companies can measure and realize the full value of AI — https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/quantumblack/our-insights/from-promise-to-impact-how-companies-can-measure-and-realize-the-full-value-of-ai

Research cut-off: 31 October 2026. Access conditions and source text may subsequently change.

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