

The Agent ROI Worksheet

Xagent

Calculate the business value of workflow automation before you deploy it

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Calculate first. Deploy second.

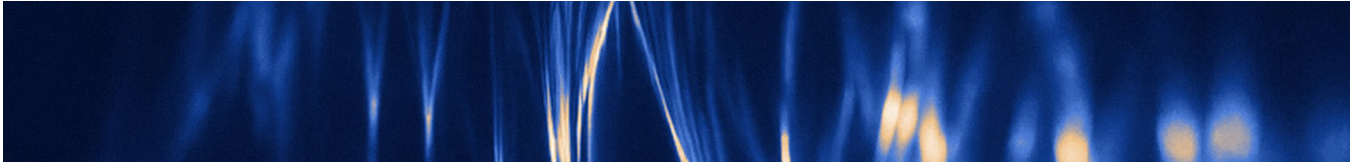
Enterprise teams often deploy AI agents based on enthusiasm or fear of falling behind. That approach wastes budget. The better approach: calculate ROI first, then decide. This worksheet walks one workflow through the full calculation in four steps, with space to write your own numbers next to a fully worked illustrative example.

The core equation is simple. The discipline is in estimating its components honestly:

$$\text{ROI (\%)} = (\text{hours saved} \times \text{loaded hourly rate} - \text{total cost}) \div \text{total cost}$$

Every example figure in this worksheet is illustrative; replace all of them with measured numbers from your own operation. One rule above all: track, do not guess.

01	Baseline	Measure what the workflow costs today.
02	Coverage	Estimate how much the agent can handle.
03	Costs	Value the hours and total the full deployment bill.
04	The calculation	Compute year-one and year-two ROI and the break-even month.



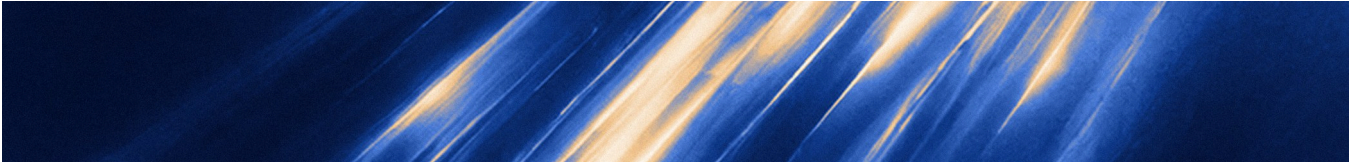
Step 1

Baseline: What Does the Workflow Cost Today?

Pick one workflow and measure it. Do not guess. If the workflow is "qualify inbound leads," count the leads arriving daily and time how long each takes to qualify: reading the inquiry, scoring, routing. Recurring admin work is systematically underestimated; thirty minutes a day per person is 2.5 hours a week, and for a team of ten that is 1,250 hours a year.

Question	Illustrative example	Your workflow
Workflow name	Inbound lead qualification	
Units processed per day	100 leads	
Minutes per unit (measured, not guessed)	5 minutes	
Hours per week (units × minutes ÷ 60 × days)	~42 hours	
Working weeks per year	50	
Total baseline hours per year	~2,100 hours	

Tip: shadow the team for two or three days, or pull timestamps from your CRM or ticketing system. Measured baselines often differ from the team's own estimate, so measure before you trust either number.



Step 2

Coverage: How Much Can the Agent Handle?

Agents rarely take a workflow end to end. They take the repeatable middle and leave judgment calls to people. Estimate coverage per sub-task, then weight by the time each sub-task consumes. Calibrate your estimates against typical ranges by workflow type:

Workflow type	Typical agent coverage	What stays human
Lead qualification and routing	70-85%	Ambiguous or strategic accounts
Support ticket triage	60-80% of triage	Resolution of complex tickets
Ops task assignment	80-95%	Exception handling
Document processing and extraction	85-95%	Outlier review

Line	Illustrative example	Your workflow
Estimated agent coverage (weighted)	80%	
Hours saved per year (baseline × coverage)	~1,680 hours	

Be conservative in year one: agents improve as prompts, rules, and integrations mature. A coverage estimate you can defend to a CFO beats an optimistic one you will have to walk back.

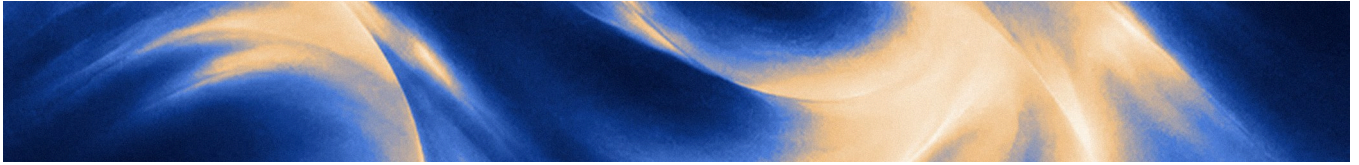
Step 3

Costs: The Full Deployment Bill

Value the hours with a loaded rate: salary plus benefits plus overhead, divided by roughly 2,000 working hours a year. Then total every cost category, not just the platform fee. The categories below cover what real deployments actually spend; fill in quotes and internal rates for your own case.

Cost category	Illustrative example	Your workflow
Loaded hourly rate of the team doing the work	\$35/hour	
Value of hours saved (hours × rate)	\$58,800/yr	
Platform and tooling (annual)	\$30,000	
Initial build: workflow design, integration, testing (one-time)	\$10,000	
Ongoing maintenance (monitoring, rule updates)	\$12,000/yr	
Integration infrastructure (one-time)	\$5,000	
Training and change management (one-time)	\$12,000	
Year-one total cost	\$69,000	
Year-two total cost (platform + maintenance only)	\$42,000	

No-code platforms shift the build cost curve: workflows described in plain language need far fewer engineering hours than custom-coded automations. Keep the category in your model either way.



Step 4

The ROI Calculation, Year One and Year Two

Now combine the pieces. In the illustrative example: year one delivers \$58,800 in saved hours against \$69,000 in cost, an ROI of -15%. Negative. This is common and it is not a failure signal; upfront build, integration, and training costs land entirely in year one.

Year one: $(\$58,800 - \$69,000) \div \$69,000 = -15\%$
Year two: $(\$58,800 - \$42,000) \div \$42,000 = +40\%$

Result	Illustrative example	Your workflow
Year-one ROI	-15%	
Year-two ROI	+40%	
Break-even month	~month 19	

Two dynamics improve the curve after deployment. First, scope expansion: once the agent handles qualification, teams typically extend it to follow-ups, templating, and scheduling, compounding the hours saved on the same platform spend. Second, coverage maturity: rules and prompts sharpen with production feedback, lifting coverage several points without new cost. Model both conservatively, then let measured production data replace the model.

Present all three numbers to your decision makers: year-one ROI, year-two ROI, and break-even month. A deployment that is negative in year one and strongly positive from year two onward is a normal, fundable profile, provided the workflow volume is stable and the team will keep using it.

Six Questions Before Any Agent Goes Live

1. Measured baseline	Did you time the workflow rather than estimate it?
2. Defensible coverage	Is your coverage estimate within the typical range for the workflow type, or justified if above it?
3. Full cost model	Does the bill include build, maintenance, integration, and training, not just the platform fee?
4. Two-year view	Have you computed year-two ROI and the break-even month, not just year one?
5. Oversight plan	Is every agent action logged, auditable, and reviewable by the owning team?
6. Expansion candidates	Have you listed the two or three adjacent workflows the agent could absorb next?

Next step

Model your own workflow with Xagent

Xagent runs this economics on your side of the ledger: agents are described in plain language (no engineering build), call 200+ tools plus your own via MCP, and keep run logs and traces you can review. Your busywork, handled by agents. We model ROI on your actual workflows as part of every demo.

Bring three things

01 **One workflow, with its measured baseline**

02 **Your loaded hourly rate**

03 **A list of the tools it touches**

To learn more, visit xagent.co.

Published by Xinference, September 2026. All example figures are illustrative and should be replaced with your own measured numbers.

