

BearingPoint & **FESTO**

New Procurement Workforce:

*Where **AI Agents** become
part of **the team***

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Why **AI** in procurement **doesn't scale** - and what to do about it



95%

of AI initiatives don't
make it into production



70%

during purchasing time
is spent on routine
operational tasks



<3%

of companies are
reaching autonomous
AI levels (GER)

The structural root causes:

Missing Architecture

Pilots without a scalable
orchestration layer - AI
stays a silo solution

Data Silo Problem

CPO and CSCO see
different datasets - no
single source of truth

Governance Gap

No AI governance board,
no roles, no operating
model - AI without control





The gap is growing –

every day.

THE LEADERS

15% of companies are already using AI in production. They automate, analyze, and decide faster.

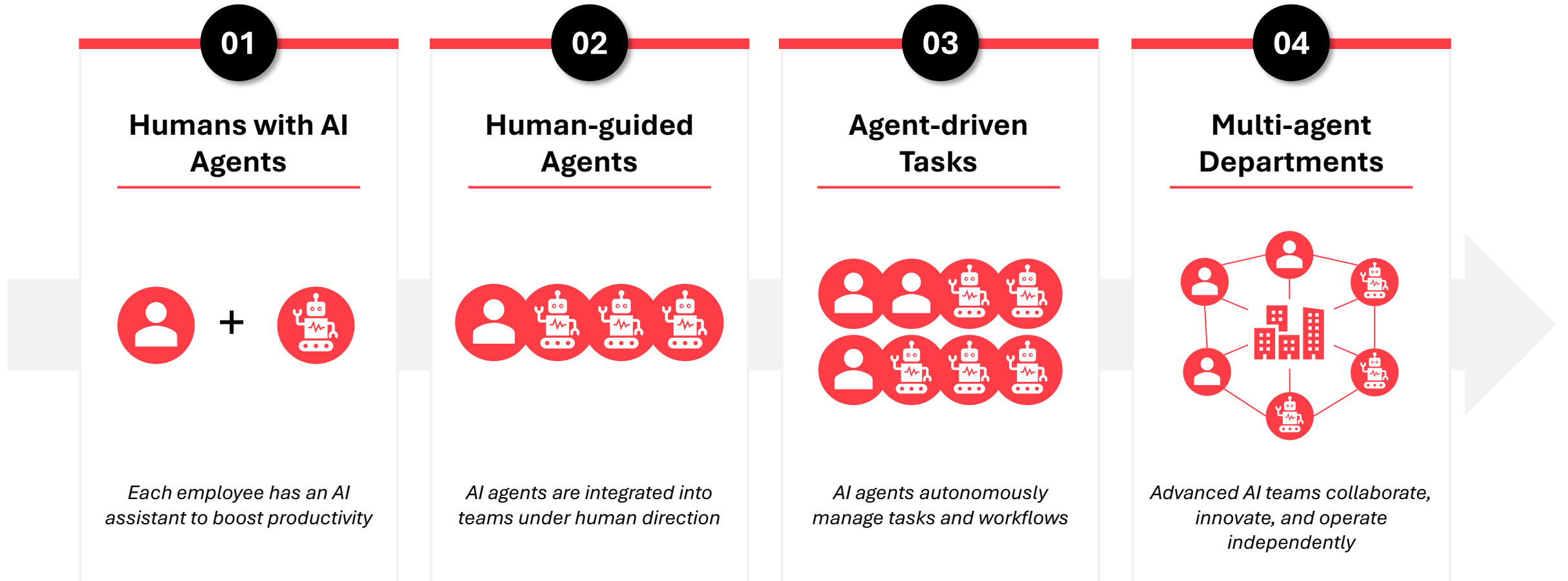
THE REST

85% are still watching. They are waiting for maturity, budget, or security. The gap to the leaders is widening quarter by quarter.

***BearingPoint Insight:** Companies with mature AI integration achieve up to 3× higher savings and 40% faster decision cycles.

As an organization matures, it will be able to deploy increasingly complex, end-to-end agents embedded in multiple areas of the enterprise

B°



Five prerequisites before **AI can scale.**

1. Vision & Strategy

C-level commitment, prioritized AI ambition, clear ROI targets, board-level governance structure

2. Data Foundation

Clean, unified data is the foundation of autonomous AI. Key elements: single source of truth, high data quality, APIs, real-time pipelines, semantic layer - data quality remains the main blocker

3. Operating Model

New roles need to be defined (e.g., AI Orchestrator, Data Product Owner, Prompt Engineer), decision rights clear, escalation paths defined

4. Governance & Compliance

AI governance board established, risk framework, audit trails, EU AI Act compliance roadmap, threshold definitions to be set

5. Orchestration Platform

Orchestrator deployed, agent framework in place, state management, human-in-the-loop workflows, observability live

Pilots fail not because of technology. Data Foundation is the #1 blocker for autonomous AI at scale. These five foundations must be in place before any agent goes live.



Two futures. One decision.

The structural choices you make now determine who leads in 2035.

Scenario A: The passenger seat



The Black Box

Procurement becomes opaque.
AI takes over - humans become observers.

- AI makes decisions autonomously
- Humans are reactive and replaceable
- No strategic ownership
- Dependent on vendor roadmaps
- Accountability gaps when AI fails

Risk: Regulatory exposure, loss of control

Scenario B: The driver's seat



The Orchestration Box

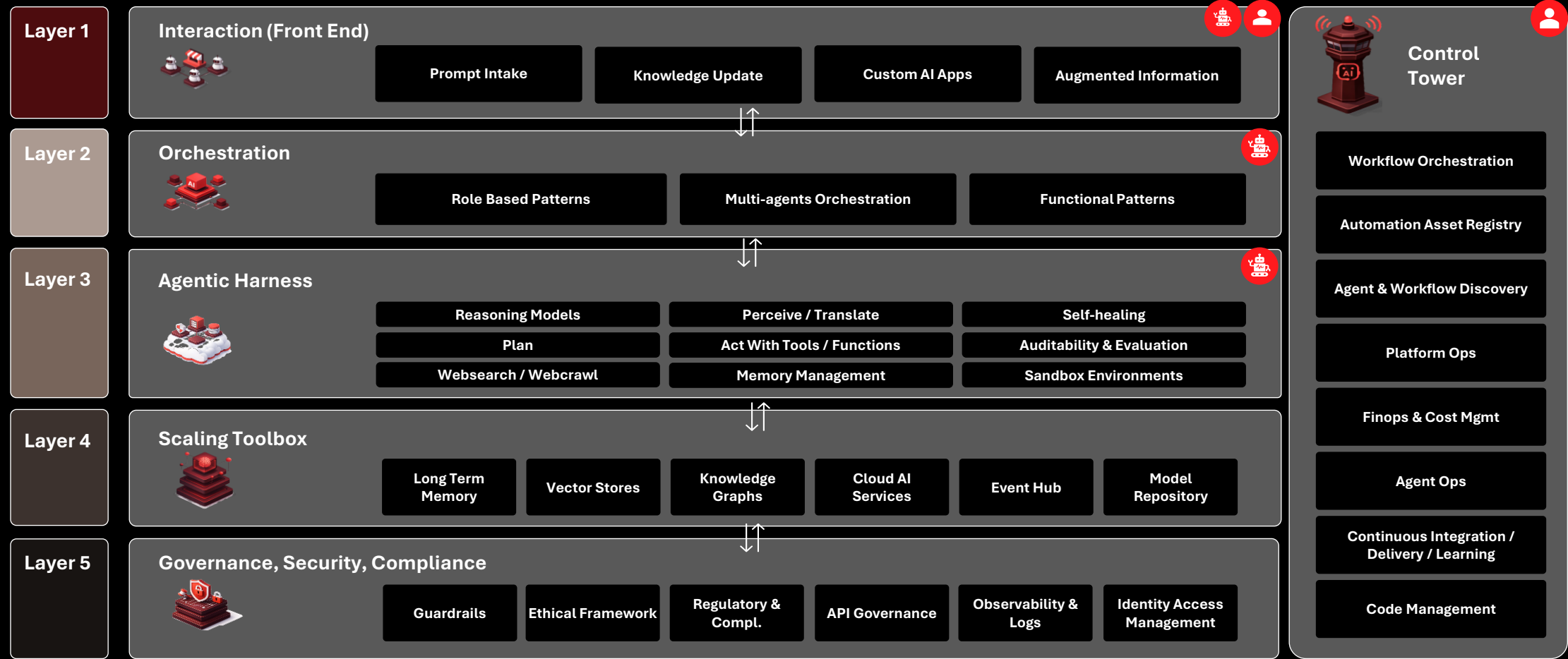
Procurement becomes transparent.
AI scales - humans conduct.

- Humans set strategy and thresholds
- AI executes within defined boundaries
- Full audit trails and governance
- Internal competence built
- Strategic oversight of every decision

Advantage: Compliance, control, competitive edge

“Companies that make the right structural choices today will define the rules of tomorrow.”

Multi-Agent Orchestration - **simplified**



Legend



Humans



AI Agents

Control Tower manages the Layer Orchestration



Control Tower

Workflow Orchestration

Automation Asset Registry

Agent & Workflow Discovery

Platform Ops

Finops & Cost Mgmt

Agent Ops

Continuous Integration /
Delivery / Learning

Code Management

Descriptions for each Control Tower component:

Workflow Orchestration: Coordinates end-to-end agent workflows, ensuring tasks run in the correct order with proper dependencies and timing.

Automation Asset Registry: Central catalog of agents, templates, and automation component - single source of truth for versions and ownership.

Agent & Workflow Discovery: Enables dynamic discovery and invocation of agents and workflows - the “yellow pages” of the ecosystem.

Platform Ops: Manages agent infrastructure - availability, scaling, monitoring, and incident response..

Finops & Cost Mgmt: Monitors and controls agent costs - tracking usage, spend, and preventing overruns. Prevents runaway costs.

Agent Ops: The operational backbone for agents in production - monitoring, health checks, anomaly detection, and lifecycle management.

Continuous Integration / Delivery / Learning: Automates testing, deployment, and improvement of agents with continuous feedback.

Code Management: Versions, stores, and governs agent code and configs - ensuring traceability, rollback, and compliance.



Three use cases – ONE reference architecture

Project AI-Manager

eProcurement solution Rollout



- (1) Reads prior rollouts, Teams, kick-off decks
- (2) Extracts lessons learned automatically
- (3) Creates WBS + task list + timeline
- (4) Places milestones in Outlook calendars
- (5) Creates risk analysis

P2P Admin Support

Post-rollout operations



- (1) Where is my order? via chat
- (2) Order tracking: status, delivery date, risk
- (3) Stuck orders: detects, resolves or raises ticket
- (4) Proactive delivery delay notification
- (5) Supplier email + ERP update automated

GB / End-User

Self-service



- (1) Chat-based demand recognition
- (2) Catalogue vs. free text auto-detected
- (3) Material group + GL account (asset/non-asset)
- (4) Preferred suppliers + policy check
- (5) Converts demand directly into PR / PO



All three use cases run on the same five layers – the infrastructure is generic; the agents are specialised. That is scalability.

How **users and systems** interact with AI agents

Project AI-Manager

LAYER 1 – Interaction (Front End)

Prompt Intake

Natural language entry point – how users start a conversation with the AI system

Prompt:

- Projekt-roll-out goals to be defined
- Build WBS from this rollout

Upload:

- Kick-off deck
- Business Case

Knowledge Update

Feeding new information into the AI knowledge base –policies, lessons, data

Create Knowledge base:

- New lessons learned
- auto-ingested into vector store
- Design Principles
- New Org structure
- Keep Core Clean policies

Custom AI Apps

Purpose-built AI interfaces embedded in existing tools (Ariba, Teams, Outlook)

Project Mgt Teams App:

- Project dashboard
- Project Plan options & comparison (incl. WBS view)
- Risk options & comparison
- Human checks & adjusts and decides for dedicated option

+

Project Mgt Teams App:

- Multi Project Dashboard
 - Risks
 - Progress
 - ...

Augmented Information

AI enriches what users see with context, recommendations and risk signals

Augmented AI support:

- WBS with risk flags from past rollouts auto-highlighted
- Show a detailed mitigation plan to the risk options

AI will not scale until **processes, people and agents are aligned.**

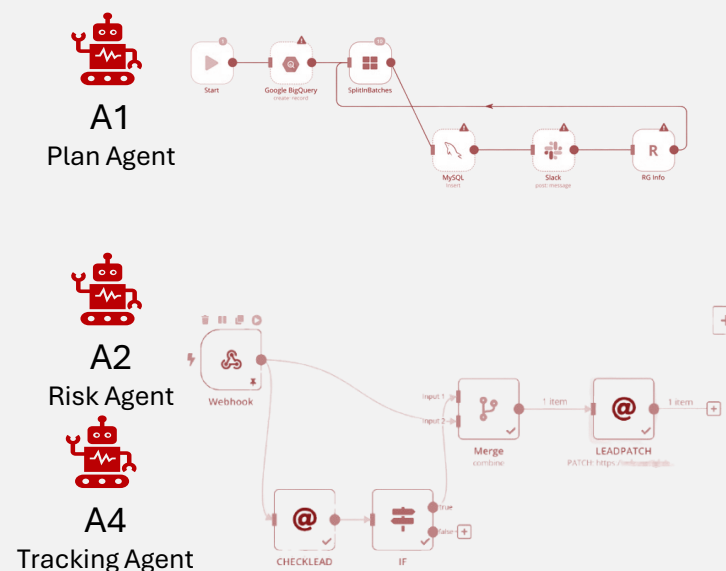
Project AI-Manager



Functional Patterns

Reusable workflow templates that map procurement processes into agent-executable steps. New use cases reuse the same patterns.

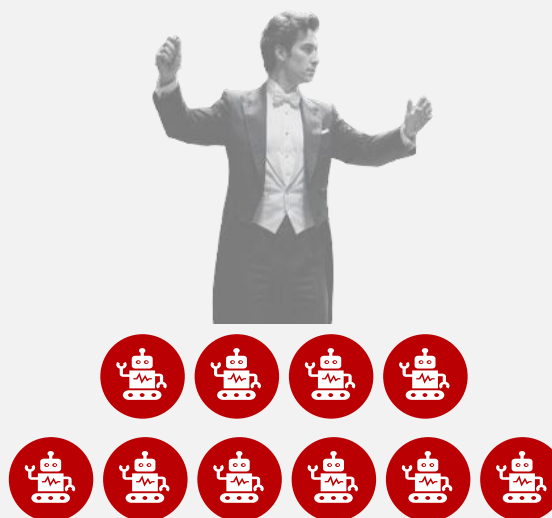
Workflow Repository



Multi-agents Orchestration

The orchestrator breaks complex tasks into sub-tasks, delegates to specialist agents, manages state and resolves conflicts.

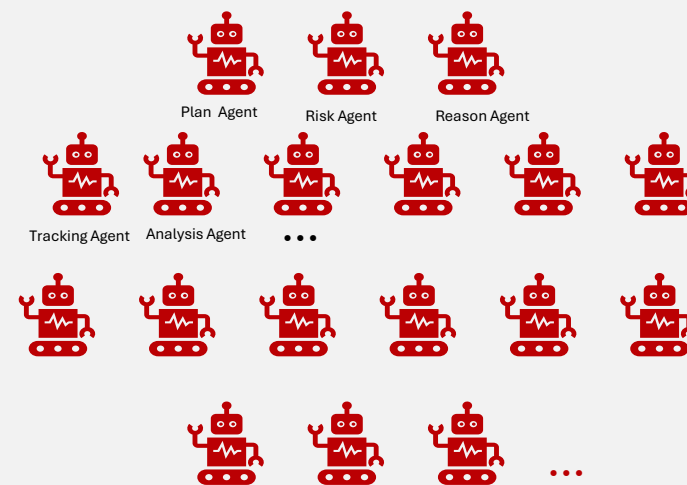
Multi-Agent Orchestrator



Role Based Patterns

Each agent holds a defined role, permission scope and decision boundary. No agent acts outside its domain.

Agent Repository



For each function, task, process a dedicated agent can be configured

Automation makes one task faster. **Orchestration** aligns agents, processes, humans and systems across the entire value chain.

The agents - specialized **AI workers** with full cognitive toolkit.

Project
AI-Manager



Rollout Analysis Agent

LAYER 3 - Agentic Harness

Reason

- Reads:
 - Teams threads prior WBS
 - kick-off decks
- Identifies:
 - Patterns
 - Bottlenecks
 - Lessons learned

Plan

- Decompose rollout
- Sub-tasks assignment
- Owners assignment
- calculate timeline

Tools

- MS Graph (Teams read)
- Graph API (Outlook write)
- Project APIs

Memory

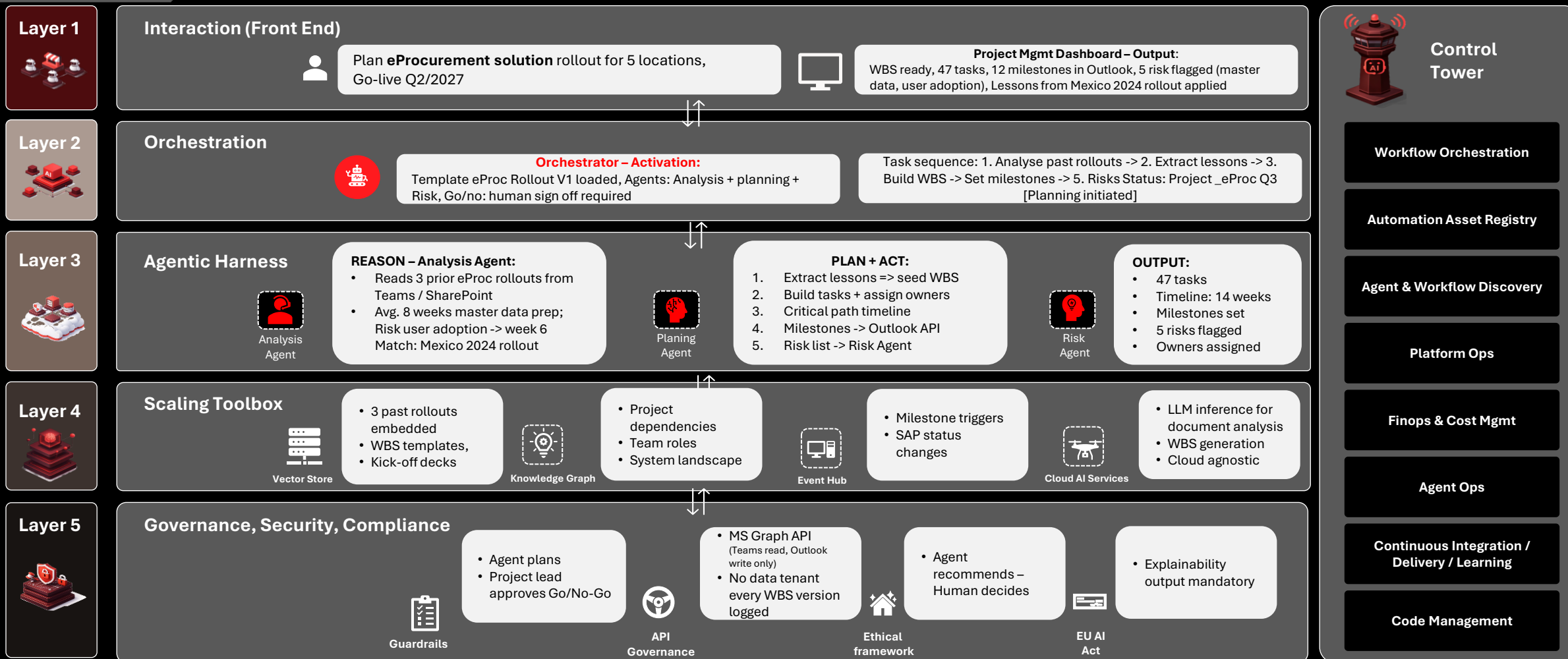
- Stores all prior rollout plans + outcomes in vector store

Audit

- Every WBS version timestamp
- Owner assignments logged

Multi-Agent Orchestration – **simplified** Today

Project AI-Manager



The Choice Is Yours: to turn AI agents from hype into scalable reality and shape the road ahead.

Target Architecture

Define what scalable AI looks like?

- Multi-agent architecture
- Central orchestration layer
- SAP ECC/S/4 integration
- Humans lead; agents execute.

Structural Decisions

Which structural decisions must be made now?

- Governance board
- Operating model
- New roles & Center of Excellence
- Data strategy & EU AI Act

Enterprise Readiness

Are your procurement processes & Team AI ready ?

- Processes
- Data
- People/Humans
- Agents

The technology is available. The architectures are definable. The results are measurable. What is missing is the structural decision to act now.



**Thank
you!**