

Capterra Study: AI Adoption Accelerates in Italy, But Security and Soft Skills Are Paramount

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A new global study by Capterra reveals a rapid acceleration in the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within project management (PM) software in Italy, yet the market is heavily influenced by deep concerns over security and user adaptability. The research, based on a global survey of 2,545 respondents, including 227 Italian professionals, also highlights a growing demand for emotional intelligence to manage complex, AI-enhanced workplaces.

Security Dictates Terms of AI Adoption

The study indicates a high propensity for innovation in Italy, but one tempered by caution regarding sensitive data. While the desire to add AI capabilities is a driving factor in purchasing decisions, security remains the primary barrier.

Forty-three percent of Italian PM software buyers cite the desire to add AI capabilities and improve software integrations as the main reasons for purchasing new tools. This figure is slightly below the global trend, where more than half of buyers (**55%**) cite the addition of AI as the main factor driving their most recent purchase.

However, security is the foremost concern: **64% of buyers in Italy consider security to be “critical” in the process of researching and implementing new PM software.**

This intense scrutiny is not accidental, as PM software stores sensitive company data such as budgets and contracts. In fact, **26% of Italian buyers said that security issues were the trigger for their most recent software purchase.** The introduction of AI, particularly generative AI and predictive analytics, further raises the stakes by creating new data flows and integration points that could be exploited by hackers.

Human Skills and Adoption Challenges

The introduction of AI-powered tools is exposing a significant gap between software purchase and the realisation of actual value. **35% of respondents in Italy cite issues related to AI adoption as the main software challenge they expect to face.** Globally, more than two in five respondents (**41%**) report difficulties in adopting AI.

This difficulty in adoption is frequently attributed to skills gaps, poor system onboarding, and workflow misalignment. AI capabilities necessitate new human skills, including interpreting complex predictions, configuring automations, and adapting existing workflows.

Crucially, experts suggest that automation is making human skills even more vital. AI can automate tasks, but it cannot resolve conflicts or build trust. For this reason, **51% of Italian project managers say they have increased their use of emotional intelligence since adopting AI.** Human skills such as conflict resolution, negotiation, and strategic communication are essential for effectively managing teams in increasingly complex and automated environments.

Strategic Perspectives for Software Buyers

To maximise the value of AI and prevent projects from failing, companies must balance technological innovation with solid operational preparation.

Given the high priority of security, leaders are advised to first focus on **security-centric design.** It is essential to demand transparency from suppliers, investigating how new data flows introduced by AI are governed and protected, and ensuring that security is a top priority and not just an add-on feature.

To address skill gaps and adoption challenges, companies must prioritise products with intuitive design and effective onboarding. Finally, project managers will need to be supported with ongoing training in emotional intelligence and conflict resolution. Ultimately, project management software does more than just manage projects; it empowers people with intelligent and responsible automation.