Use cases

Where do they come from, how do they enter and what does your sector do?

> *"Most AI risk is not in the use cases in the portfolio but in what never reached it. Every use case comes in through a single door, with a business owner, or it does not exist for the company."*

WHAT IT IS

Nine sources, each with its bias

Use cases come from the business, technology, suppliers, employees, customers, regulation, the board, the ecosystem and the customer's agent. Each source has a bias: the business brings the solution already chosen; technology looks for where to apply what it knows. The source tells you what to ask for.

Implication: Do you know which source each use case in your portfolio came from and what it lacked on entry?

Risk: If one source dominates, the portfolio reflects its interests and not the board's AI thesis.

WHAT IT PROPOSES

A single entry door

Every use case enters with a minimum sheet: a plain description, a named sponsor and product owner, sphere and ambition, order of magnitude of the value, investment up to the feasibility gate and fit with the thesis. Pre-filters set aside what is prohibited, duplicated, does not need AI or falls outside the risk appetite.

Implication: Does every use case in your portfolio have a named business sponsor?

Risk: Without a single door, the same cases enter several times, get duplicated and nobody knows how many there are.

HOW IT IS CHECKED

What enters without passing the door

Three routes bypass the door: AI embedded in products already contracted, which the supplier switches on; unauthorised use of tools by employees; and the free proof of concept. They are found through the inventory, a review of contracts and a channel to declare use without sanction, and they are regularised in the register.

Implication: How many AI tools do your employees use today that nobody has registered?

Risk: What is not in the register has no owner, no assessed risk and no regulatory classification.

FOUR QUESTIONS FOR THE BOARD

1. **Does every use case have a business sponsor?**
   Every use case in the register has a named sponsor who is accountable for the problem and the result, not for the development.
2. **Are the use cases we reject recorded?**
   Each rejection has its reason in the register. That way a rejected case does not come back unchanged, and the company learns from what it discarded.
3. **Do we know what AI employees use without registering it?**
   There is a channel to declare unauthorised use without sanction, and what is declared goes into the inventory and the use case register.
4. **What are other companies in our sector exploring?**
   Management compares its portfolio with the established, emerging and in-adoption use cases of its sector, and decides what to explore.

WHAT FAILS IF IT IS NOT GOVERNED

WHAT FAILS	LEVEL	WHAT TO DO
The supplier switches on AI in a product without a decision	HIGH	Review the contracts that include AI
Employees using AI without registration or control	HIGH	Open a channel to declare use without sanction
A free proof of concept that creates dependency	MEDIUM	Write down stop criteria and exit cost first
A technology solution in search of a problem	MEDIUM	Require a business sponsor on entry
Rejected cases that come back unchanged	LOW	Record each rejection with its reason
The same use case in two areas at once	LOW	Look for duplicates in the register before approving

FURTHER READING

How a company organises itself for AI
Document 54 · where use cases come from

Gallery of use cases by sector
Fictitious examples and use cases per sector

Portfolio management
Document 14 · minimum sheet and entry filters

Example use case register
With fictitious data

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