



How artificial intelligence creates competitive advantage

AI Business Case White Paper 2020

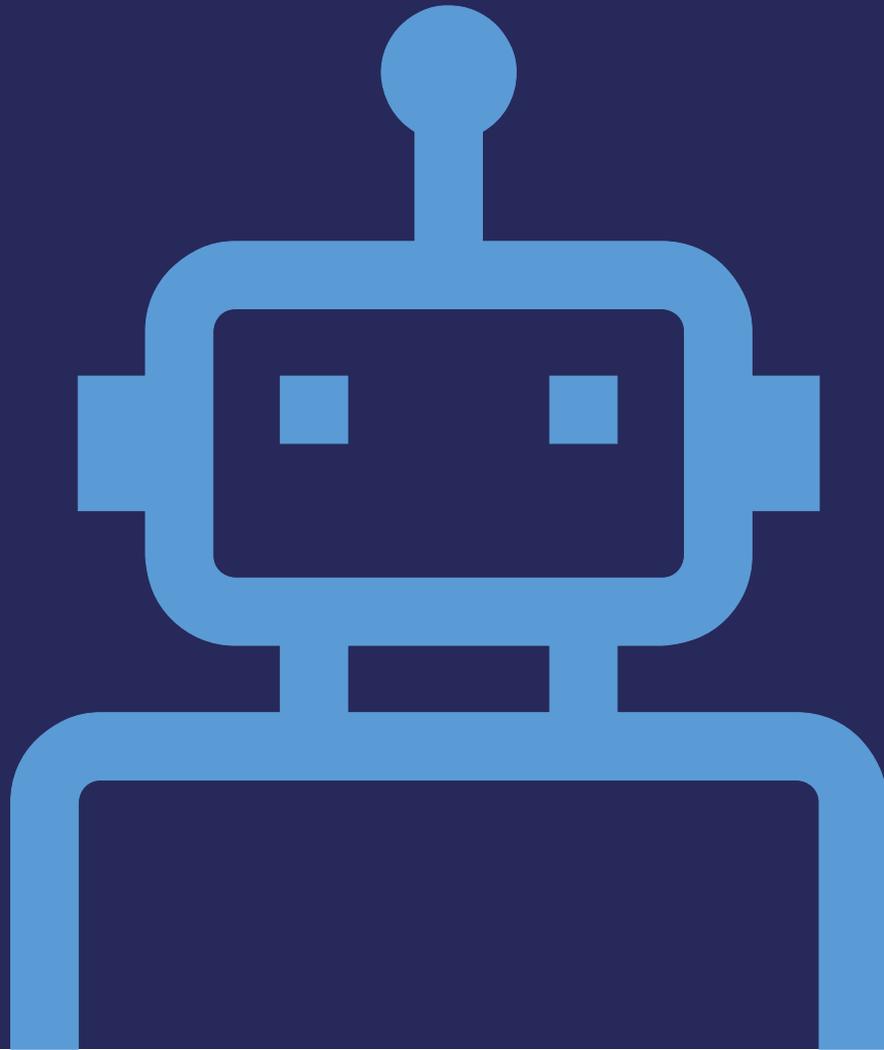


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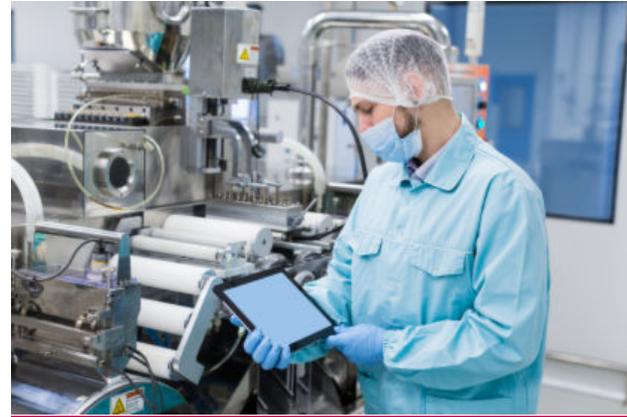
Introduction

Artificial intelligence or AI is not only about advanced algorithms in high technology sectors. Often it are more traditional organizations that benefit the most from artificial intelligence. The applications of AI are very broad: from quality control over website conversion to smarter visit planning for sales teams.

This white paper contains a selection of real-life AI cases. We share the experiences of four organizations that rely on artificial intelligence to make their business more efficient, focused or relieve staff workload.

These business cases show how AI plays a complementary role in today's business world. The strength of artificial intelligence provides a **competitive advantage** in a variety of ways.

Case 1: From a traditional sales approach to data driven *next best actions*



Sales teams work smarter

The company in this case is an independent drug producer with an extensive product range. The sales team consists of a few dozen sales representatives. These are individually responsible for the sale of medicines to pharmacists in a certain region. Every member of the sales team works with tight sales targets, both at product and pharmacy level.

In a competitive sector such as the pharmaceutical industry, sales objectives are an important business driver. Prior to the implementation of Trendskout, sales targets were linearly imposed top-down by the management. Hundred products per pharmacy and per seller were the target for all sales employees.

Sector: pharmaceutical industry

Region: Benelux & France

Number of employees: 150

Revenue: 50M-100M

The standardized target proved to be problematic for several reasons:

- The medicines sold by the company are cyclic products. Cough medicines sell better during a national flu epidemic, while sunburn is inseparably linked to the summer. However, due to the wide variety of products and product types in the company, it was difficult to keep relevant data manually - let alone **draw relevant conclusions** for sales targets.
- The available information was very **dispersed in silos** throughout the organization. Both the CRM, the ERP, spreadsheets and sector information contain valuable data.
- Customer pharmacists have **different purchasing policies**. Pharmacies purchase their products according to their own schedule and specialize in various categories.
- The time the sales team can spend on **sales visits** is limited. Every sales employee serves many pharmacies in a region and therefore has to make choices.
- Every product requires its **own marketing and sales style**. However, product-specific marketing proved to be impractical. The product portfolio was simply too extensive for the marketers to be able to devise a communication strategy and positioning for each individual medicine that would suit the individual customers.

"How can AI help determine the most optimal action for sales people, depending on the products, the purchasing policy of the pharmacies in the region and the season?"

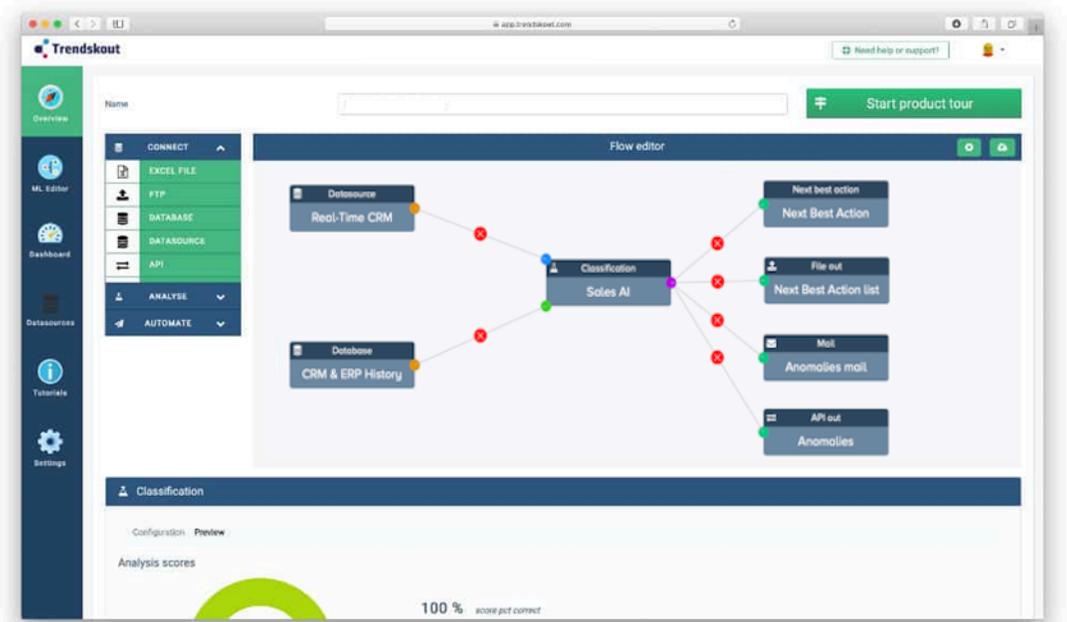
It turned out to be impossible to get sales people to work in a targeted way based on the very diffuse, hard-to-access data from different systems. Which sales person could visit *which pharmacy*, and *when* and with *which product*? Experienced sales people could rely on their gut feeling, but often it was better guesswork. And something had to change.

The solution

The company approached Trendskout to create order in the tangle of confusing and elusive parameters and to automatically interpret them. In a first phase, the Trendskout platform was easily linked to the existing CRM, after which the data transfer could start automatically.

Based on input from the sales team, new data is continuously collected in the CRM. That data is then automatically merged with **Trendskout Data Prepper**.

The continuous flow of data is reprocessed every day by the Trendskout software. The AI proposes **sales promotions** with the highest chance of success. In practice, that means an increased efficiency of the sales team. **Trendskout analyzes data and automatically fills the agenda of the sales staff, based on the chance of success of a visit or related sales action.** The sales representatives know that all possible factors have been taken into account and can blindly rely on the suggestions.



Trendskout AI Flow for this business case

Immediate results

The automation immediately yielded hard results: on average **12% extra sales** per product line, purely thanks to more targeted sales visits. The employees in the sales team also reported **higher job satisfaction** in an internal survey, thanks to more efficient planning and more successful visits.



Case 2: Quality control and predictive maintenance in food production



Quality control and machine maintenance

In this food processing company, huge amounts of fruit are rolling off the belt every day. **Quality inspection** is one of the most important processes in the processing chain. However, manual checking of the fruit is a very monotonous task, as a result of which the risk of errors in the selection of fruit types and pieces to be rejected is relatively high. In addition, due to the boring nature, it is a job that gives staff members little satisfaction.

Sector: food production

Region: Worldwide

Number of employees: 75-100

Revenue: 50M-100M

The **machine park** is a second crucial factor in the operational model. Before the implementation of Trendskout, the company used a traditional approach of **periodic maintenance**. In practice, this meant more frequent service than is strictly necessary, due to internal safety margins. **This approach provides a classic double cost:**



Direct maintenance costs to the machines

Opportunity costs due to missed operating time during maintenance.

The solution

We linked Trendskout with a **computer vision** system for image recognition. The conveyor belt is filmed continuously and Trendskout detects the pieces of fruit that do not meet strict quality standards. The coordinates of rejected fruit are sent to an automatic gripping arm, which removes the piece from the belt.



The direct maintenance costs of the machinery were tackled by introducing more focused maintenance and frequency optimization, using Trendskout algorithms. This resulted in a significant increase in the **operational availability** of the machines.

-68%

Reduction of mis-classified fruit

-17%

Reduction in maintenance costs

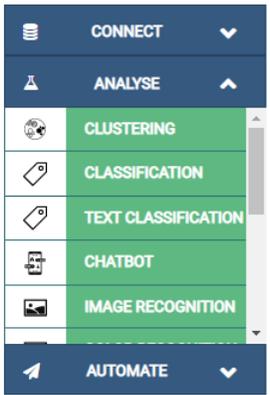
+20%

Available machine time

Case 3: AI-Chatbot and personalized website content for higher conversion

The road to a customer-centric experience

This building contractor for residential projects is mainly active in the Benelux. The website of the company could count on thousands of visitors per day, but conversion lagged behind. Visitors did not find the information they were looking for quickly enough. The visitor profiles on the website also diverged considerably: young families looking for information, experienced buyers with specific questions, seniors with less digital skills, ...



Chatbot is direct bruikbaar in een Trendskout AI Flow

The solution

In a first phase, a Trendskout chatbot was implemented on the existing website. The bot could answer questions from visitors directly and guide them in the right direction. Afterwards, the company had the **Trendskout Pixel** installed. This is a tracking code that makes it possible to map visitor behavior. Based on that data, the Trendskout algorithm was able to automatically create different visitor personalias. The different target groups are then shown a modified version of the website, tailored to their needs.



Sector: construction
Region: Belgium, The Netherlands
Number of employees: 180
Revenue: 100M-150M

Results

Immediately after the introduction of the intelligent website segmentation, the conversion rates went up, with a 31% increase in contacts. These in turn led to 10% higher sales figures after two months.



Case 4: Smarter order planning with AI

Need for a planning assistant

The chemical giant in this case has a planning team of more than twenty people strong. Their task consists of processing and subsequently scheduling incoming orders in a production schedule. Not every order can just be produced by any machine. **Determining the optimum utilization of the machinery therefore represents a major challenge for the planning team.** This often puts an unreasonable amount of work pressure on employees who have to put up a difficult organizational puzzle every day, resulting in a high error rate and loss of production volume.

The solution

The team consulted the AI platform at Trendskout. **The software is now used to triple incoming orders for the first time based on planability and profitability.** Orders that successfully pass this initial screening are then forwarded to the planning team for further processing. This gives the planning team extra breathing space to plan tiered orders more effectively. This led to a 24% increase in production utilization, which in turn increased the overall profitability of the entire machine park by no less than 10%.

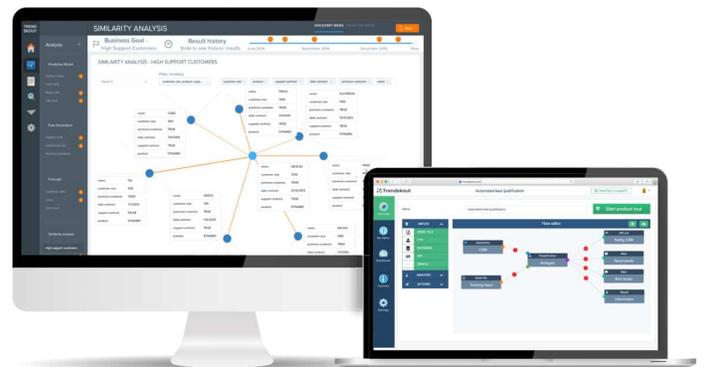


Sector: chemical industry

Region: Worldwide

Number of employees: 400

Revenue: 200M-250M



In this case the Trendskout visual AI and AI flow was used

-25%

Reduction of planning pressure

+4%

Increase in production utilization

+5%

Increase in profitability of the machinery

AND MORE

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Trendskout supports a wide range of applications in various sectors in addition to those mentioned above. Don't hesitate to contact us to discover how Trendskout can create direct added value for your organization.