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The growing importance of context, composability and process intelligence for enterprise AI success

Leaders must give enterprise AI an understanding of how the business operates—their processes—and then break them down into modular, adaptable ‘blocks’—if they hope to transform their business with AI.



CIO

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Rudy Kuhn, lead evangelist at Celonis, was in the audience at an early 2026 [Forrester](#) event in Germany when analysts predicted that process intelligence (PI) would rescue 30% of failed AI projects in the year ahead. Many viewed this prediction as surprising, to Kuhn it sounded inevitable.

“That tells you something,” Kuhn says. “We are not in a failure phase. We are in a maturation phase. AI is not a race. It is a discipline.”

The Forrester prediction aligns with what Kuhn has observed in industry, as well as with the [2026 Process Optimization Report](#) from Celonis. According to the report, 85% of businesses aim to become “agentic enterprises” within the next two to three years, and 82% say AI can only deliver ROI if it understands how the business runs.

In short, Kuhn says, AI deployments are stalling not because of user resistance or lagging technology, but because they lack the right context.

“Most AI systems today understand language remarkably well, but understand businesses remarkably poorly,” Kuhn says. “AI can summarize documents, answer questions, generate recommendations, and even execute tasks. Yet they often lack an understanding of how work flows across departments, systems, suppliers, customers, and employees. As a result, many AI initiatives stall after successful pilots because they lack the operational context required to make reliable business decisions.”

To bridge this gap, he says, enterprise AI requires two foundational capabilities: process intelligence and composability. Process intelligence provides operational



understanding. Composability provides the ability to adapt. “Together, they enable the industrialization of enterprise AI,” Kuhn says.

AI cannot operate effectively in an environment it does not understand

“There is no AI without process intelligence,” Kuhn says. “AI may generate answers, but Process Intelligence provides the context needed to make the right decisions and take the right actions.”

Process intelligence creates a real-time understanding of how work actually happens inside the enterprise. It reveals how processes flow across systems, where bottlenecks occur, where value is lost, and how outcomes are created. Without this operational context, AI often produces recommendations that sound intelligent but are disconnected from business reality.

Kuhn compares AI to an exceptionally talented university graduate.

“They may be highly intelligent,” he says. “But would you make that person the CEO of your company on their first day? Most likely not. They first need to understand how the business operates.”



Why composability matters

Organizations must also be able to adapt their operations as conditions change. Customer expectations evolve. Supply chains become disrupted. New regulations emerge. Competitive pressures shift. And AI itself continues to evolve at an unprecedented pace.

In many organizations, however, processes remain trapped inside monolithic applications that are difficult to modify and even harder to orchestrate. This is where composability becomes critical. A composable enterprise breaks capabilities into modular building blocks that can be connected, recombined, replaced, and orchestrated as business needs evolve. APIs, services, workflows, automation components, and AI agents become reusable capabilities rather than isolated technologies. This flexibility is particularly important for AI.

As models, agents, and technologies continue to evolve, organizations cannot afford to redesign entire business processes every time a new capability emerges. Instead, they need architectures that allow them to introduce innovation while maintaining governance, compliance, and operational control.

“First, you need to understand the current situation in your business,” Kuhn says. “Then, as you start changing things, you need to monitor the outcomes. Customer expectations will shift, supply chains will be disrupted, and you need to be ready to adapt. Intelligent adaptation is what allows organizations not only to survive, but to thrive in the age of AI.”

Process orchestration, not process automation

According to Kuhn, there’s a prevalent misconception that AI can be used to automate entire business processes.

“There is no such thing as end-to-end process automation,” he says. “The only thing you can automate are tasks.”

Processes involve decisions, exceptions, policies, constraints, approvals, and accountability. They require coordination between people, systems, AI agents, and external partners. Rather than fully automating processes, Kuhn says organizations should focus on orchestrating them.

By combining Process Intelligence, AI, automation technologies, APIs, and human expertise, companies can create highly efficient operations in which routine work is automated while people focus on managing exceptions and making critical decisions.

“In a perfectly orchestrated process, people handle the exceptions,” Kuhn says. “Everything else is automated.”

According to Kuhn, this distinction is important because the future is unlikely to be defined by fully autonomous enterprises. Enterprises will continue to require leadership, governance, accountability, and human judgment. What will become increasingly autonomous are specific decisions, activities, and operational processes.

“The real opportunity lies in autonomous operations, not autonomous enterprises,” Kuhn says.

Process intelligence and composability in action

Celonis worked with a large European manufacturer to implement a process-aware, composable AI architecture for the company’s finance department. Historically, the company struggled with when and how to lift credit blocks on customer orders. If a customer had an overdue invoice, the company’s ERP system might automatically stop them from ordering more materials. People then had to manually review each block, weighing the financial risk of non-payment against the danger of angering loyal customers and frustrating the sales team.

Working with Celonis, the company trained an AI system on millions of historical data points, teaching it the reality of how the

business actually functioned, including the payment patterns of specific customers. For example, some customers reliably paid but were consistently a few days late, meaning that the company could confidently continue to extend them credit.

Once the AI understood this context, it began presenting human workers with clear recommendations, as well as the reasoning behind those decisions.

The project succeeded, Kuhn says, because the company didn’t simply plug its payment data into a large language model (LLM) and ask it to decide which credit blocks to remove. Instead, it and Celonis trained AI tools on the specific business context needed to make those decisions—and defined which parts of the process should be handled by AI, and which should be handled by people.

“The result was not just better AI,” Kuhn says. “It was better business performance.”

The future belongs to adaptive organizations

According to Kuhn, the organizations that succeed with AI will not necessarily be those with the largest models or the biggest budgets. They will be the ones that understand how work actually works, can continuously adapt that work as conditions change, and can orchestrate people, systems, automation, and AI toward measurable outcomes.

Together, process Intelligence and composability create the foundation for increasingly autonomous operations, where AI, people, and systems work together effectively, safely, and at scale.

To learn more, [click here](#).