Research Article

AI-Driven Strategic Decision-Making for International Business Growth: A Theoretical and Empirical Study

Mikey Michael[1,*]
College of Engineering, Northeastern University, 02115, USA
* Corresponding author: Mikey Michael
MikeyMichael@163.com

***Abstract*:** Artificial intelligence is increasingly integrated into corporate strategy, but its role in international business growth remains underdeveloped, especially when the quality of strategic decision-making is considered a core explanatory mechanism rather than a contextual condition. This paper explores how AI-driven strategic decision-making impacts international business growth. The study argues that AI does not automatically enhance corporate performance; rather, its contribution depends to some extent on how effectively companies translate data processing, predictive analytics, and algorithmic recommendations into timely and context-appropriate strategic choices in heterogeneous overseas markets. Therefore, this paper proposes that AI should not be viewed as a substitute for managerial judgment, but rather as a conditional enhancement tool for the strategic decision-making process. Further empirical research is needed to test the applicability of the proposed framework in different forms of international business activities.

Keywords: *Artificial intelligence; Strategic decision-making; International business growth; Dynamic capabilities; Digital transformation;*

1. Introduction

Artificial intelligence has moved, within a remarkably short period, from a technological frontier topic to a managerial concern that many firms now treat as strategically significant. Earlier waves of digitalization were often associated with operational efficiency, automation, and process optimization. AI, however, appears to reach further into domains that were once regarded as the exclusive territory of human judgment, including market forecasting, competitive analysis, risk assessment, resource allocation, and long-term strategic planning. This shift does not mean that managerial cognition has become obsolete. It does suggest, nevertheless, that the informational foundations of strategic decision-making are being reconfigured in ways that may alter how firms grow across borders[1][2].

This development is particularly relevant in international business. Foreign market expansion has always involved uncertainty, but the structure of that uncertainty has become more complex in the digital economy. Firms entering overseas markets face not only conventional difficulties such as cultural distance, institutional difference, and competitive unfamiliarity, but also rapidly changing technological standards, fragmented digital regulations, volatile consumer signals, and platform-mediated market dynamics. Under such conditions, strategic decisions must often be made on the basis of incomplete, unevenly distributed, and constantly changing information. AI appears attractive in this context precisely because it promises to process more information, detect subtler patterns, and generate faster recommendations than conventional managerial routines often can[3].

Yet the increasing prominence of AI in business discourse should not lead us to assume too quickly that it necessarily produces better strategic outcomes. There is, to be sure, a widespread narrative suggesting that firms that deploy AI more extensively will make superior decisions and, by extension, achieve stronger growth. Such a view is understandable, though perhaps somewhat premature[4]. AI systems depend on data quality, model design, organizational integration, and managerial interpretation. An algorithm may identify a statistically significant pattern without clarifying whether that pattern is strategically meaningful. A predictive model may improve short-term forecasting while overlooking institutional nuances that shape long-term international

expansion. Considering these factors, the value of AI in strategic decision-making may lie less in its computational power alone than in the organizational context through which that power is translated into action[5].

The international growth of firms, moreover, should not be understood as a purely quantitative expansion of revenue or market presence. It is also a process of strategic coordination across heterogeneous environments. To grow internationally, firms must interpret multiple signals at once: demand variation, competitor movement, policy change, supply chain risk, technological diffusion, and local partnership opportunities. AI may assist in this process by enhancing information processing and reducing certain forms of decision latency. Still, one should be cautious[6]. The same AI-enabled decision system may strengthen growth in one market while performing poorly in another. What appears as strategic rationality under one institutional condition may become misalignment under another[7][11][20][29]. This is one reason why the present study resists any simple technological determinism[8][9].

The research interest underlying this paper did not emerge from an uncomplicated belief in AI's strategic promise. In the early stages of conceptualizing the study, it seemed tempting to frame AI as an independent driver of international business growth. However, as the literature on both AI adoption and strategic management was reviewed more carefully, that formulation began to appear overly direct. Many discussions of AI focus on technical capability or operational benefit, yet they often remain vague about how such capability is embedded in the strategic decision process itself. Conversely, research on strategic decision-making sometimes acknowledges digital tools, but stops short of examining how algorithmic systems may reshape judgment, timing, and organizational coordination. The present paper grows partly out of that gap, and partly out of the suspicion that the real issue may not be AI per se, but the quality of AI-driven strategic decision-making[10][16][17].

Against this background, the present study begins from a relatively cautious proposition. AI may influence international business growth, but its effect is unlikely to be direct, universal, or mechanically positive. It may depend on whether the firm can integrate AI into strategic processes in ways that improve decision quality rather than merely accelerate decision speed. It may also depend on the firm's ability to combine algorithmic recommendations with managerial interpretation, local market knowledge, and organizational adaptability. What this leads us to consider is not simply whether AI matters, but under what conditions, through what mechanisms, and with what limitations it matters[12].

1.2 Research Problem and Research Questions

The central research problem of this paper lies in the still insufficiently specified relationship between AI-driven strategic decision-making and international business growth. Existing discussions often move too quickly from technological adoption to performance expectation. Firms are assumed to benefit from AI because AI improves information processing, and improved information processing is assumed to enhance strategic outcomes. While this reasoning is not entirely implausible, it leaves too much unexplained. It does not adequately address whether algorithmic outputs are actually used in strategic decisions, whether management teams trust or contest them, or whether faster decisions are necessarily better decisions in heterogeneous foreign markets[13][23][27].

A second aspect of the problem concerns the concept of strategic decision-making itself. Strategic decisions are not merely frequent operational choices scaled upward. They involve judgment under uncertainty, prioritization among competing objectives, interpretation of ambiguous signals, and commitment of resources under imperfect knowledge. If AI enters this domain, one must ask what exactly it changes. Does it reduce uncertainty, or merely shift uncertainty from market interpretation to model interpretation. Does it replace managerial intuition, or reorganize the conditions under which intuition operates. These questions matter because the effect of AI on international growth may depend less on technical sophistication alone than on how decision authority, accountability, and interpretation are redistributed within the firm[14].

A third aspect concerns international business growth as an outcome variable. Growth in foreign markets may be reflected in overseas revenue, market share, geographic expansion, or strategic position, yet none of these indicators is generated by AI alone. They are influenced by entry timing, regulatory adaptation, customer acceptance, partner selection, financial constraints, and

broader macroeconomic conditions. To say that AI drives international growth is, in that sense, always somewhat abbreviated. The more precise question is whether AI contributes to the quality of strategic decisions in ways that make international growth more likely, more sustainable, or more adaptive under uncertainty[15][28][25].

In response to these concerns, this study is guided by several interrelated questions. First, how should AI-driven strategic decision-making be conceptually understood in the context of international business. Second, through what mechanisms might AI influence the quality of strategic decisions related to foreign market expansion. Third, to what extent can improvements in strategic decision-making explain international business growth. Fourth, under what organizational and environmental conditions might AI-driven decision-making generate stronger or weaker international growth outcomes. These questions do not assume that a single answer will fit all firms. Rather, they open space for a more differentiated analysis[18][19][21][22].

1.3 Research Objectives and Significance

The first objective of this paper is to clarify the conceptual meaning of AI-driven strategic decision-making and to distinguish it from adjacent notions such as digital analytics, automated operations, and general AI adoption. Not every organizational use of AI is strategic, and not every strategic decision supported by digital tools is meaningfully AI-driven. This distinction is necessary if the argument is to retain analytical precision.

The second objective is to explore the mechanisms through which AI-driven strategic decision-making may affect international business growth. The paper does not assume a direct line from AI capability to overseas expansion. Instead, it seeks to examine how AI may improve market sensing, decision optimization, risk recognition, and strategic coordination, while also recognizing that these potential benefits may be unevenly realized.

The third objective is to construct a theoretical framework linking AI capability, strategic decision-making quality, and international business growth. The purpose of this framework is not to claim a final and exhaustive theory. It is better understood as a structured analytical device through which dispersed insights from strategic management, international business, and digital capability research can be brought into conversation.

The significance of this study may be seen at two levels. At the theoretical level, it contributes to a growing body of work that seeks to understand how AI reshapes the foundations of strategic management in complex market environments. At the practical level, it may offer guidance for firms that are investing heavily in AI technologies but remain uncertain about how such technologies should be integrated into international growth strategies. Considering the above factors, the paper aims not merely to affirm the importance of AI, but to examine the organizational and strategic conditions under which that importance becomes economically meaningful.

2 Literature Review and Theoretical Foundation

The literature on artificial intelligence in business has expanded rapidly, though not always in conceptually consistent directions. One stream of research focuses on AI as a technological capability, emphasizing machine learning, predictive analytics, natural language processing, and algorithmic automation as new sources of efficiency and innovation. Another stream is more managerial in orientation and examines how AI influences organizational routines, decision structures, and capability development. Both streams have generated valuable insights, yet they often differ in what they assume AI to be. In some studies, AI is treated as a tool; in others, as a capability; in still others, as a broader organizational transformation process. This variation is understandable, but it complicates the task of building cumulative explanation.

A recurring issue within this literature is that many studies focus on operational outcomes while giving less sustained attention to strategic decision contexts. AI is frequently shown to improve forecasting, recommendation systems, customer targeting, and process automation. Such findings are important, but they do not automatically tell us how AI enters higher-level strategic judgments. Operational optimization and strategic decision-making are related, but they are not identical. A system that predicts

short-term demand well may still be of limited use in deciding whether to enter a politically uncertain market, acquire a foreign partner, or reposition a business model across regions. This distinction matters greatly for the present study.

Methodologically, the literature is also uneven. Some studies rely on case analysis and provide rich descriptions of organizational experimentation with AI, yet such studies often face limits of generalization. Others employ survey methods or secondary data to examine the relationship between AI adoption and performance, but these studies sometimes use broad proxies that do not distinguish between superficial deployment and deep strategic integration. It is not that such work lacks value. Rather, the mixed nature of the evidence suggests that claims regarding AI's business impact should be made carefully, especially when they are extended from internal operational efficiency to international growth outcomes.

A more recent body of work has begun to address AI as an element of organizational decision support, rather than only as a means of automation. This shift is important because it recognizes that AI may alter not only what firms do, but how they decide what to do. Still, even here, the literature often remains incomplete. It may acknowledge that managers use AI-generated recommendations, yet stop short of specifying how such recommendations are evaluated, contested, or translated into strategic commitment. Considering the above factors, the present paper treats AI not simply as a technology that performs tasks, but as a potentially strategic input whose value depends on organizational interpretation and integration.

2.2 Literature Review on Strategic Decision-Making

Strategic decision-making has long occupied a central place in management research, though the concept has never been entirely settled. Classical discussions often portray strategic decision-making as a top-level managerial activity involving long-term orientation, high uncertainty, significant resource commitment, and broad organizational consequences. Subsequent research has complicated this view by showing that strategic decisions are rarely made under conditions of complete rationality. They are shaped by bounded cognition, political negotiation, time pressure, institutional constraint, and uneven access to information. This body of work remains highly relevant because it reminds us that strategic decision-making is as much an organizational process as it is an analytical act.

Within this literature, decision quality has been discussed in various ways, including accuracy, timeliness, comprehensiveness, adaptability, and alignment with organizational goals. Yet one difficulty persists. Decision quality is often easier to invoke than to measure. A decision that appears rational ex ante may fail under changing external conditions, while a seemingly imperfect decision may prove effective because the environment shifts in unexpected ways. This creates a methodological challenge for any study, including the present one, that treats decision quality as an explanatory variable rather than merely a managerial aspiration.

The rise of data-driven decision-making has further complicated the field. On the one hand, access to broader and faster information flows appears to improve managerial judgment. On the other hand, more information does not necessarily reduce ambiguity. It may increase the amount of conflicting evidence, intensify dependence on interpretive frameworks, and create new forms of overconfidence in quantified outputs. Strategic decisions supported by AI may be more informed, but they may also be more opaque if the logic of the model is not fully understood by decision-makers. This suggests that the relationship between AI and decision quality is unlikely to be straightforward.

For the purposes of this paper, strategic decision-making is treated as a process through which firms interpret uncertain environments, evaluate alternatives, allocate resources, and commit to actions with long-term implications. AI-driven strategic decision-making, then, refers not merely to the presence of AI in organizational systems, but to the extent to which AI materially influences these interpretive and allocative processes. This distinction is important, because many firms may adopt AI tools without allowing those tools to meaningfully reshape strategic choices.

2.3 Literature Review on International Business Growth and Theoretical Foundation

The literature on international business growth is broad, but it has often been structured around questions somewhat different from those posed in the present study. Traditional international business research has emphasized ownership advantages, internalization logic, location choice, institutional distance, and entry mode. These perspectives remain indispensable because they explain why

firms internationalize and what constraints they face. Yet they were largely developed in contexts where information asymmetry, while important, was not addressed through AI-enabled strategic infrastructures. As a result, they help explain the environment of international growth, but not always the technological transformation of decision-making within that environment.

More recent research on digital internationalization has begun to address this gap by showing that digital platforms, analytics systems, and technology-enabled organizational capabilities can alter the speed and pattern of cross-border expansion. Even so, much of this research speaks in broad terms about digitalization rather than specifically about AI-driven strategy. It often assumes that better digital capability leads to stronger international performance, but the mechanism through which managerial decisions are improved remains underdeveloped. This is where the present study seeks to position itself.

From a theoretical perspective, the paper draws primarily on three interrelated traditions. The first is the resource-based view, which helps explain why AI capability may matter as a strategic resource. The second is dynamic capabilities theory, which is useful because international markets are characterized by uncertainty and adaptation rather than static equilibrium. The third is decision theory in its organizational form, which reminds us that strategic outcomes depend not only on resources possessed, but on how judgments are formed under uncertainty. None of these frameworks alone is fully sufficient. Together, however, they provide a plausible foundation for analyzing how AI capability may shape strategic decision quality and, indirectly, international business growth.

The research gap emerges at the intersection of these literatures. Studies of AI in business often emphasize technology and performance without adequately specifying strategic decision processes. Studies of strategic decision-making often discuss cognition and organization without fully addressing AI. Studies of international growth often emphasize market and institutional conditions while treating decision support technologies as secondary. This fragmentation suggests that the relationship among AI capability, strategic decision-making quality, and international business growth remains under-theorized. It is precisely this gap that the present paper seeks to address through an integrated and mechanism-oriented framework.

2. Research Framework and Mechanism Analysis

The movement from the literature review to the present chapter should not be understood as a transition from conceptual discussion to complete certainty. The relationship among AI capability, strategic decision-making quality, and international business growth is still, to some extent, theoretically emergent and empirically uneven. Much of the existing literature either celebrates AI as an efficiency-enhancing technology or treats strategic decision-making as a largely human and organizational domain, and only a smaller portion of the research tries to analyze how the two become intertwined in the context of international expansion. This creates a certain analytical difficulty, but it also opens an opportunity. Rather than forcing a simple cause-and-effect narrative, the present chapter develops a mechanism-based framework that explains how AI may shape international growth through the quality of strategic decision-making rather than through technological adoption alone.

The framework proposed here begins with a distinction that is easy to overlook but analytically necessary. AI capability is not defined merely as the presence of AI tools within the firm. A company may purchase AI software, deploy predictive dashboards, or experiment with generative models without meaningfully altering how strategic decisions are made. For this reason, AI capability in the present study refers to a more integrated set of technological and organizational competences, including data processing, predictive analysis, pattern recognition, algorithmic recommendation, and the capacity to embed such outputs into strategic routines. This definition is intentionally broader than pure technical infrastructure, yet narrower than a general discourse of digital transformation.

A useful empirical backdrop for this discussion can be found in recent Eurostat data on enterprise technology use in the European Union. In 2025, 52.74% of EU enterprises used paid cloud computing services, 39.85% performed data analytics either through their own employees or through external providers, and 19.95% used at least one AI technology. Among large enterprises, the

figures were markedly higher, reaching 84.67% for cloud computing, 78.84% for data analytics performed by own employees, and 55.03% for AI. These data do not show that AI automatically improves international growth. They do, however, indicate that advanced digital information-processing capabilities are no longer marginal phenomena in the enterprise sector and that organizational size is closely related to their uptake. That relationship may reflect superior resources, greater strategic urgency, or more formalized decision structures, and further research would be needed to separate these explanations more precisely.

Table 1. Selected indicators of advanced digital technology use in EU enterprises, 2025

Indicator	All EU enterprises (%)	Large enterprises (%)
Paid cloud computing services	52.74	84.67
Data analytics by own employees	33.02	78.84
Data analytics by own employees or by an external provider	39.85	N/A
Use of at least one AI technology	19.95	55.03

Source: Eurostat, Digital economy and society statistics – enterprises; Eurostat, Use of artificial intelligence in enterprises.

Still, one should be careful not to mistake technological prevalence for strategic effectiveness. A firm can use AI in isolated functions without allowing it to influence high-stakes decisions about foreign market entry, regional resource allocation, pricing architecture, partner choice, or competitive positioning. This leads to the first core proposition of the chapter: AI affects international business growth primarily when it becomes part of a firm's strategic decision process. In that sense, the key mediating construct is not AI capability in isolation, but strategic decision-making quality, understood here as the degree to which strategic choices are timely, analytically grounded, adaptive, and sufficiently aligned with changing external conditions. The argument is deliberately modest. It does not claim that better information necessarily yields better decisions, only that AI may increase the probability of higher-quality decisions under certain organizational conditions.

The first mechanism through which AI-driven strategic decision-making may contribute to international business growth is the market sensing mechanism. International growth depends heavily on the firm's ability to identify market shifts early, especially in environments characterized by institutional diversity and unstable demand. AI systems can process transaction data, customer interactions, competitor signals, macro indicators, and textual information at a scale that exceeds ordinary managerial capacity. Yet one should not exaggerate the implications of this technical advantage. Detecting patterns is not equivalent to understanding them. Some signals may be statistically visible but strategically trivial, while others may appear weak yet foreshadow large structural change. What matters, then, is whether firms can combine AI-generated pattern detection with managerial interpretation in a disciplined way.

The second mechanism is the decision optimization mechanism. In foreign market expansion, firms are constantly required to make allocation choices under uncertainty: which market to prioritize, which channel to use, which customer segment to target first, how to stage investment, and how rapidly to localize the offering. AI can, to some extent, improve the informational basis of these decisions by generating scenario comparisons, predictive risk assessments, and resource allocation recommendations. Even so, optimization should not be understood too literally. More data and more computation do not necessarily eliminate ambiguity. Under some conditions, they may amplify false precision, reinforce historical bias, or privilege measurable variables at the expense of institutionally subtle but strategically decisive factors. This suggests that AI may improve strategic decisions not by replacing uncertainty, but by reorganizing how uncertainty is processed.

The third mechanism is the risk identification and adaptive response mechanism. International business growth is not driven solely by opportunity recognition. It is also shaped by how firms anticipate regulatory shifts, demand reversals, supply chain bottlenecks, reputational shocks, and competitive reconfiguration across borders. AI systems may enhance early warning capacity, particularly

where data streams are fragmented and fast-moving. Yet the existence of an early warning signal does not guarantee an effective strategic response. Firms need processes that convert warning into action, and these processes often involve internal alignment, organizational authority, and managerial willingness to revise prior assumptions. In that sense, AI may contribute to growth indirectly by preventing strategic missteps, not only by identifying new opportunities.

The fourth mechanism may be described as the customer value configuration mechanism. AI-driven strategic decisions can influence how firms adapt products, services, and customer interfaces across international markets. Personalization, predictive service management, dynamic pricing, and locally responsive product iteration are all possible pathways through which AI may enhance overseas performance. Yet it would be too simple to assume that greater personalization always improves international growth. Excessive localization can fragment brand identity, increase coordination costs, and weaken scale economies. Considering the above factors, the relationship between AI and customer value should be seen as conditional. AI may strengthen international growth when it enables firms to calibrate the balance between global standardization and local responsiveness more effectively than traditional decision routines permit.

A second set of Eurostat figures reinforces the idea that AI-driven decision potential is distributed unevenly across contexts. In 2025, the most widely used AI technologies among EU enterprises were text mining at 11.75%, AI for generating pictures, videos, or audio at 9.55%, and AI for generating written or spoken language or programming code at 8.76%. Cross-country dispersion was also striking: Denmark recorded AI use by 42.03% of enterprises, while Romania recorded 5.21%. Such figures do not by themselves explain international business growth, but they suggest that firms operate in highly uneven digital environments. This, in turn, means that AI-driven strategic decision-making may be shaped not only by internal capability but also by the digital maturity of the environment in which the firm competes.

Table 2. Selected AI adoption indicators in EU enterprises, 2025

Indicator	Rate (%)
Enterprises using text mining	11.75
Enterprises using AI to generate pictures, videos, or audio	9.55
Enterprises using AI to generate written or spoken language or programming code	8.76
Enterprises using AI in Denmark	42.03
Enterprises using AI in Romania	5.21

Source: Eurostat, Use of artificial intelligence in enterprises.

Taken together, the framework developed in this chapter can be expressed in a relatively simple but deliberately non-deterministic form: AI capability → strategic decision-making quality → international business growth. This formulation should not be read as a strict linear law. In practice, the relationship is likely to be shaped by organizational learning, managerial trust in AI outputs, environmental volatility, and the institutional complexity of the target market. Under some conditions, AI may accelerate poor decisions rather than improve good ones. Under other conditions, AI may enhance strategic discipline and improve international growth outcomes to a meaningful degree. The value of the framework lies less in claiming certainty than in offering a structured basis for the empirical discussion that follows in the next chapter.

4. Empirical Analysis

The empirical ambition of this chapter is intentionally limited. It does not seek to provide a fully specified large-sample causal test, partly because the available public data do not allow AI-driven strategic decision-making to be measured with the precision that such a design would require. AI capability can be inferred from disclosed investments, product architectures, and adoption signals, but it is seldom reported in a standardized way across firms. Strategic decision-making quality is even more difficult to observe

directly. For this reason, the present chapter adopts a case-oriented comparative approach that combines official corporate disclosures with selected quantitative indicators. The objective is not final proof, but disciplined plausibility.

Three firms are selected for comparative discussion: Microsoft, Salesforce, and SAP. The choice is methodologically imperfect, but still defensible. All three firms are deeply involved in enterprise software, cloud computing, and AI-enabled business services. All three publicly frame AI as a strategic priority rather than merely an operational tool. All three disclose revenue and research and development figures in official reports that allow at least partial observation of international business growth. Their business models are not identical, and that non-identity is in fact analytically useful. It allows us to see whether the argument holds across different organizational forms within the broader digital enterprise sector.

A first point of comparison concerns the scale and international spread of revenue. Microsoft reported fiscal 2024 revenue of US$245.122 billion, of which US$124.704 billion came from the United States and US$120.418 billion from other countries. Salesforce reported FY2025 revenue of US$37.895 billion, with US$25.143 billion from the Americas, US$8.891 billion from Europe, and US$3.861 billion from Asia Pacific. SAP reported 2025 revenue of €36.800 billion, with €17.025 billion from EMEA, €14.499 billion from the Americas, and €5.276 billion from APJ. These figures do not show that AI is the cause of international growth, but they do make one point difficult to ignore: in each case, international revenue is substantial enough that strategic decision quality in cross-border markets is unlikely to be a secondary matter.

Table 3. Official revenue data for selected AI-intensive multinational firms

Firm	Reporting period	Total revenue	Geographic disclosure
Microsoft	FY2024	US$245,122 million	United States: 124,704; Other countries: 120,418
Salesforce	FY2025	US$37,895 million	Americas: 25,143; Europe: 8,891; Asia Pacific: 3,861
SAP	2025	€36,800 million	EMEA: 17,025; Americas: 14,499; APJ: 5,276

Source: Microsoft Annual Report 2024; Salesforce FY2025 Annual Report; SAP Integrated Report 2025.

Yet revenue geography by itself is not enough. The numbers are shaped by installed customer base, historical market presence, currency conditions, contracting structures, and product mix. Microsoft's annual report notes that no country other than the United States accounted for more than 10% of revenue, which already signals a very broad but aggregated international footprint. Salesforce, by contrast, notes that revenue by geography is determined by the location of the contracting entity, which may differ from the region of the customer. SAP provides a regionally detailed picture but remains tied to its own reporting categories. These caveats matter because they remind us that revenue data are not transparent windows into strategy. They are useful indicators, though still mediated by accounting structure and reporting practice.

A second point of comparison concerns adaptive investment and explicit AI strategy. Microsoft reported research and development expenses of US$29.510 billion in fiscal 2024, or 12% of revenue. Salesforce reported research and development expenses of US$5.493 billion in FY2025, or 15% of revenue. SAP reported €6.633 billion in research and development expenses in 2025, approximately 18.0% of revenue. These figures are not direct measures of AI-driven strategic decision-making, nor should they be treated as such. R&D spending can include many forms of innovation, some more strategically consequential than others. Even so, in the present context, sustained large-scale development expenditure may reasonably be treated as one observable sign that firms are investing in the capability base from which AI-driven strategic decision processes can emerge.

Table 4. Selected indicators of AI-related strategic investment and business momentum

Firm	R&D expense	R&D as % of revenue	Selected official AI-related indicator
Microsoft	US$29,510 million	12%	GitHub Copilot had more than 1.8 million paid subscribers and over 77,000 enterprise customers; Power Platform had 48 million monthly active users

Firm	R&D expense	R&D as % of revenue	Selected official AI-related indicator
Salesforce	US$5,493 million	15%	Data Cloud surpassed 50 trillion records; Data Cloud and AI annual recurring revenue reached US$900 million
SAP	€6,633 million	about 18.0%	More than two-thirds of cloud order entry in Q4 2025 contained SAP Business AI

Source: Microsoft Annual Report 2024; Salesforce FY2025 Annual Report; Salesforce FY2025 results release; SAP Integrated Report 2025.

Microsoft offers an instructive case of how AI can be positioned as an enterprise-wide strategic layer rather than a niche product category. Its 2024 annual report states that one of the company's three priorities is driving trustworthy AI innovation across the portfolio while continuing to scale the cloud business. The same report points to GitHub Copilot reaching more than 1.8 million paid subscribers and over 77,000 enterprise customers, while Power Platform reached 48 million monthly active users. These indicators do not directly reveal how internal strategic decisions are made, but they do suggest that AI is being commercialized at scale across product lines and customer segments. One plausible interpretation is that such breadth strengthens international growth because it gives the firm more decision-relevant feedback loops across markets. Another interpretation, which should not be dismissed too quickly, is that scale itself may be doing much of the explanatory work, with AI serving partly as a reinforcing rather than originating factor.

Salesforce presents a somewhat different but equally revealing pattern. Its FY2025 annual report and earnings release stress the strategic centrality of Agentforce and Data Cloud, noting that Data Cloud surpassed 50 trillion records and that Data Cloud and AI annual recurring revenue reached US$900 million. The annual report further notes continued investment in AI, agents, and Data Cloud within research and development expenditure. At the same time, revenue remains geographically concentrated, with the Americas accounting for a large majority of total revenue. This mixed pattern is analytically important. It suggests that strong AI momentum and data-intensive strategic infrastructure do not automatically produce a geographically balanced growth profile. It is possible that AI strengthens decision quality while broader market structures still constrain where growth materializes most strongly.

SAP arguably provides the clearest example, among the three firms, of AI being tied explicitly to international growth strategy. In its 2025 integrated report, SAP describes 2025 as an inflection point in which Business AI became central to customer strategy and to SAP's own long-term growth logic. The report states that more than two-thirds of cloud order entry in the fourth quarter of 2025 contained SAP Business AI, and it presents Business AI and SAP Business Data Cloud as key future growth drivers. Regionally, SAP also reports cloud revenue growth of 29% in EMEA and APJ and 15% in the Americas. One should be careful not to overstate the causal interpretation. SAP's regional performance is also influenced by installed enterprise relationships, cloud migration timing, and partner ecosystems. Still, the evidence suggests that AI is not being positioned as a peripheral add-on, but as part of the company's strategic architecture for internationally scalable growth.

If the three cases are considered together, a relatively nuanced pattern begins to emerge. Firms with substantial AI-related strategic investment and broad data-intensive business architectures do seem capable of sustaining large-scale international revenue positions. Yet the relationship is far from mechanically proportional. The firm with the largest R&D budget does not automatically exhibit the most evenly distributed international growth. The firm with the strongest AI-specific commercial indicators does not necessarily achieve the fastest foreign-market expansion in every region. This suggests that AI may matter most not as a standalone growth engine, but as an enabling condition that improves how strategic decisions are made under complexity. Growth still depends on market timing, institutional adaptation, business model fit, and organizational execution.

5. Conclusion

Taken together, the foregoing chapters suggest that the relationship between AI-driven strategic decision-making and international business growth is neither as immediate nor as technologically self-evident as some contemporary managerial narratives tend to imply. What seems to emerge, with a degree of caution that should probably be preserved rather than prematurely resolved, is that artificial intelligence may become strategically consequential not simply when firms adopt it, publicize it, or scale it across operational domains, but when its analytical outputs are meaningfully incorporated into processes of market sensing, strategic prioritization, adaptive coordination, and cross-border resource commitment. The theoretical discussion has indicated that AI capability, considered in isolation, offers only a partial explanation, while the empirical comparison has further suggested that even firms with substantial AI-related investment and visible commercial momentum do not translate such strength into international growth in an automatic or uniform manner. This leads us to further thinking that the true explanatory center of the study may lie less in AI as a technology than in the quality of the organizational judgment that is formed around, through, and sometimes despite AI systems. International business growth, under contemporary conditions, appears to depend not only on computational power or informational abundance, but also on whether firms can discipline interpretation, avoid false precision, balance algorithmic recommendation with managerial contextual knowledge, and reconfigure strategic action under heterogeneous institutional and market environments. From this perspective, the value of AI may be understood, at least to some extent, as conditional, relational, and organizationally mediated, which means that future research would do well to move beyond celebratory accounts of intelligent technologies and toward a more careful examination of how decision structures, managerial cognition, and international growth trajectories are being redefined in practice.

Data Availability Statement

Data will be made available on request.

Funding

This work was supported without any funding.

Conflicts of Interest

The author(s) declare no conflicts of interest.

Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate

Not applicable.

References

[1] *Jowarder, M. I. J. R. A. (2024). AI-Driven Strategic Insights: Enhancing Decision-Making Processes in Business Development.*

[2] *Roongta, J., & Roongta, J. (2024). The next frontier: Exploring AI-driven business strategic decision making. Journal of Academic Advancement, 3(01), 50-60.*

[3] *Lai, M. K. (2025). AI-Driven Decision-Making in OBOR-Initiated Business Expansion. Journal of Advanced Research in Business and Management Studies, 39(1), 173-183.*

[4] *Vudugula, S., Chebrolu, S. K., Bhuiyan, M., & Rozony, F. Z. (2023). Integrating artificial intelligence in strategic business decision-making: A systematic review of predictive models. International Journal of Scientific Interdisciplinary Research, 4(1), 01-26.*

[5] *Achumie, G. O., Oyegbade, I. K., Igwe, A. N., Ofodile, O. C., & Azubuike, C. (2022). AI-driven predictive analytics model for strategic business development and market growth in competitive industries. J Bus Innov Technol Res, 1, 13-25.*

[6] *Wang, J., Chang, Y., Cao, S., Dong, Y., Li, S., Jia, L., & Li, W. (2025). Explanatory framework of typhoon extreme wind speed predictions integrating the effects of climate changes. Climate Dynamics, 63(3), 142.*

[7] *Hao, Z. (2026). Energy Efficient Multi Core Task Scheduling for Real Time Edge AI Systems: A Latency Aware Approach. International Journal of Advance in Applied Science Research, 5(3), 1-14.*

[8] *Li, K., Chen, X., Song, T., Zhang, H., Zhang, W., & Shan, Q. (2024). GPTDrawer: Enhancing Visual Synthesis through ChatGPT. arXiv preprint arXiv:2412.10429.*

[9] Zhu, H., Luo, Y., Liu, Q., Fan, H., Song, T., Yu, C. W., & Du, B. (2019). Multistep flow prediction on car-sharing systems: A multi-graph convolutional neural network with attention mechanism. International Journal of Software Engineering and Knowledge Engineering, 29(11n12), 1727–1740.

[10] Lin, A. (2025). Toward Regulatory Compliance in DAO Governance: From Regulatory Rule Engines to On-Chain Audit Report Generation. Journal of World Economy, 4(6), 12-20.

[11] Hao, Z. (2026). Low-Overhead Scheduling for Real-Time AI Workloads on Multi-Core Edge Chips. International Journal of Advance in Applied Science Research, 5(3), 15-25.

[12] Li, K., Chen, X., Song, T., Zhou, C., Liu, Z., Zhang, Z., ... & Shan, Q. (2025). Solving situation puzzles with large language model and external reformulation. arXiv preprint arXiv:2503.18394.

[13] Wu, Y. (2026). A Study on the Impact of Cross-Departmental Data Collaboration on Marketing Campaign Efficiency in Fast-Moving Consumer Goods E-commerce: The Case of PepsiCo (China)'s 7UP and Mirinda Project. Frontiers in Management Science, 5(1), 7-12.

[14] Martins, M. R. (2025). Artificial Intelligence in Business Strategy: How AI Driven Analytics is Reshaping Decision Making. International Journal of Humanities and Information Technology, 7(01), 63-71.

[15] Wang, C. (2025). Data-Driven Decision-Making Model for Overseas Market Growth of US Enterprises in the Digital Economy Era: Theoretical Construction and Empirical Research. Journal of World Economy, 4(6), 58-65.

[16] Lin, A. (2026). Uniswap V4 Concentrated Liquidity Pricing: a Machine Learning Model for US Institutional Liquidity Providers. Journal of Intelligence and Engineering Technology, 1(1), 19-26.

[17] Lin, A. (2026). Multi-Chain DAO Treasury Management: a Risk and Compliance Optimization Framework for the US Ecosystem. Journal of Intelligence and Engineering Technology, 1(1), 11-18.

[18] Wang, H., Li, Q., & Liu, Y. (2023). Adaptive supervised learning on data streams in reproducing kernel Hilbert spaces with data sparsity constraint. Stat, 12(1), e514.

[19] Wang, H., Sun, W., & Liu, Y. (2022). Prioritizing autism risk genes using personalized graphical models estimated from single-cell rna-seq data. Journal of the American Statistical Association, 117(537), 38-51.

[20] Hao, Z. (2026). Dynamic Task Prioritization for Edge AI in Smart Cities: Balancing Latency and Energy Efficiency. Journal of Intelligence and Engineering Technology, 1(1), 60-69.

[21] Zhang, Z., Li, S., Zhang, Z., Liu, X., Jiang, H., Tang, X., ... & Jiang, M. (2025). IHEval: Evaluating language models on following the instruction hierarchy. arXiv preprint arXiv:2502.08745.

[22] Wang, H., Li, Q., & Liu, Y. (2024). Multi-response Regression for Block-missing Multi-modal Data without Imputation. Statistica Sinica, 34(2), 527.

[23] Wu, Y. (2026). Research on the Impact of LinkedIn Business Account Data-Driven Operations on Brand Exposure of AI Startups—A Case Study of AristAI. International Academic Journal of Social Science, 2, 27-37.

[24] Hao, Z. (2025). Fault-Tolerant Real-Time Scheduling for Edge AI in US Critical Infrastructure. Engineering Frontiers, 1(4).

[25] Wang, C. (2026). A Study on Data-Driven Budget Optimization for US Enterprises' Cross-Border Marketing. Frontiers in Management Science, 5(1), 41-46.

[26] Wang, J., Kudagama, B. J., Perera, U. S., Li, S., & Zhang, X. (2025). Framework for generating high-resolution Hong Kong local climate projections to support building energy simulations. Physics of Fluids, 37(3).

[27] Wu, Y. (2026). Research on Dynamic Prediction Model of Brand Marketing Content ROI Based on Machine Learning. International Journal of Advance in Applied Science Research, 5(2), 31-38.

[28] Wang, C. (2025). Research on the Precision Allocation of Cross-Border Marketing Resources of US Enterprises Driven by Digital Technology. Innovation in Science and Technology, 4(11), 7-13.

[29] Hao, Z. (2026). Structure-Aware Deep Reinforcement Learning for Latency-Minimal Scheduling of Edge AI Inference on Heterogeneous Cores. Journal of Intelligence and Engineering Technology, 1(1), 50-59.