

The practical MSP guide to AI automation: the first 90 days



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The economics facing MSPs leave little room for cautious experimentation. Forty-eight percent of MSPs now rank AI and automation as the top IT needs their clients want them to solve, yet only 13% are generating meaningful revenue from those services.¹

This gap represents an opportunity to recover lost revenue at a time when MSP business is contracting. The share of MSPs reporting typical customer spending above \$25,000 a year fell from 75% to 41% in a single reporting cycle.² It also offers potential cost savings on the talent side, as the share of providers struggling to hire skilled technicians nearly doubled year over year, from 9% to 16%.³

This playbook is a sequenced guide for MSP owners and service-delivery leaders who are ready to clear routine work off the desk, climb the value chain, and convert agentic IT from keynote language into next-quarter margin. It will cover four things:

- 1 The operational problems AI is built to address**
- 2 The architectural reasons integrated platforms outperform bolted-on assistants**
- 3 The implementation sequence that produces results**
- 4 The metrics that prove the move worked**



The problem worth solving first

Ticket triage remains stubbornly manual at most MSPs, and the inaccuracy that comes with it has a real cost. Inside Kaseya's own help desk, the team estimated that twenty to thirty percent of tickets were not being categorized correctly, with downstream consequences for billing accuracy and SLA performance.

The picture looks similar across the broader market. Triage misclassification rates of twenty to fifty percent have been typical when humans handle intake.⁴ The resulting reassignments compound into hours of lost technician time before resolution work even begins.

Backup management is the second major drain. On average, MSP technicians spend two hours a day managing backups.⁵ This scales with the number of protected workloads and never lessens without intervention.

Cybersecurity adds a third bucket. An average of more than a hundred security tickets per customer per month absorbs roughly twelve and a half days of team time monthly.⁶ The work is high-volume, pattern-dense, and degrades in quality as fatigue accumulates.

The risk dimension is the part that often gets understated. Nearly forty percent of organizations have suffered a major outage caused by human error over the past three years, with failure to follow established procedures implicated in well over half of those incidents.⁷ Automation in this context is not principally a productivity story; it is a risk-management one, because it removes the inconsistency that drives the worst-case incidents.

20-50%

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Why the timing is forced

Cybersecurity is the only product line still growing reliably for most MSPs, with 71% reporting year-over-year revenue growth in that segment — yet the proportion of MSPs that are not yet profitable or just breaking even grew from 10% to 16% between 2025 and 2026.⁸ That leaves many businesses with little headroom to absorb new tooling costs without proportional efficiency gains.

The hiring market has also tightened, and the talent shortage is now a structural rather than cyclical issue. Reports show that the share of MSPs unable to find skilled technicians growing from 9% to 16% in a single year (and those numbers rising far higher in specific areas like cybersecurity).⁹ That means automation has shifted from a strategic option to a baseline requirement for scaling without proportional headcount expansion.

9% → 16%

The share of MSPs unable to find skilled technicians growing from 9% to 16% in a single year

Why an integrated AI layer matters more than a bolted-on one

AI's potential to solve some of these operation problems pivots on its inclusion as an integrated layer in a platform-based MSP solution rather than as a generic assistant grafted onto existing tools. When AI is bolted on, it reacts to problems that have already surfaced; when it is built into the data and workflow layer, it can predict, prevent, and ultimately remediate them before a technician sees a ticket.

Data access underpins this difference. A generic AI consultant working across a fragmented toolset cannot see the full ticket-to-endpoint-to-backup chain that drives a real diagnosis; an embedded model trained on that chain can.

Integrated AI platforms are now emerging to address this limitation by embedding intelligence directly into operational workflows rather than wrapping it around them. Kaseya Intelligence is the company's expression of that approach. It is an AI engine built into the core of the Kaseya platform, trained on more than a billion help desk tickets, three exabytes of backup data, 1.2 billion patches managed annually, and seventeen million managed endpoints. The training base produces richer recommendations reflecting thousands of real-world scenarios.

Each surfaced signal triggers an action in the platform, which then validates the outcome, and the model adjusts. That closed loop is structurally different from a co-pilot model that surfaces a recommendation and asks a human to decide what to do with it.



AUTOMATE



LAYER



MONETIZE

How to ease AI adoption for MSPs

The single biggest reason most MSPs have not adopted AI more aggressively is that the adoption work is difficult, not because the technology fails to deliver value when adopted. More than half of MSPs report needing longer than six months to deploy AI tooling into production, and a clear majority say they need deeper AI expertise to serve their clients effectively. The fix is to remove integration work from the MSP and concentrate it in the platform layer.

That is the design choice Kaseya Intelligence is built around. Because the AI is embedded across IT operations, security, and

backup simultaneously, an MSP does not have to stitch together a triage tool, a SIEM, and a backup management agent and then build the data pipes between them. Cooper Copilot, the workflow automation layer that preceded the broader Kaseya Intelligence rollout, has seen overall workflow success rates climb from 86% with traditional methods to over 96% across the install base.¹⁰

This section walks MSPs through the successful deployment of integrated platform-based AI to drive operational efficiency.



AUTOMATE



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STAGE 1

Automate the level 1 (L1) floor

The first stage in the sequence is the one with the highest signal-to-effort ratio. Deploying a Ticket Triage Digital Specialist inside the Autotask Ultimate professional services automation platform routes inbound tickets to the right technician based on specialization and current capacity.

Early adopters report that classification accuracy has moved from the twenty-to-fifty-percent error band to eighty percent better than the prior baseline straight out of the gate using this approach.¹¹ The activation effort is modest: the specialist needs to be pointed at the ticket history you want it to learn from, after which it begins running.

The downstream effect is what makes the L1 move worth the time. Triage classification that finally stops leaking revenue lets MSPs bill more accurately, because the right resolution path was captured the first time.

Kaseya's own internal help desk projected a five-percent operating-cost reduction from this single change, on the basis that five technicians could be redeployed out of the triage queue once the specialist was running.¹² The next L1 workflows in the queue are password reset, employee onboarding, and offboarding. Each of these are high-volume, pattern-rich, and well-suited to autonomous remediation.



AUTOMATE



LAYER



MONETIZE

STAGE 2

Layer AI into security and resilience

Once the L1 floor is automated, the next stage is harder but higher-value: pulling AI into security operations and cyber resilience. Kaseya SIEM, now in general availability, pulls data from more than sixty integrated sources and runs that data through an AI-driven SOC layer. The architectural advantage is that backup data and email security signals feed the correlation engine alongside endpoint telemetry. Most external SIEMs cannot ingest these natively.

On the resilience side, AI screenshot verification recently wiped out twelve million false-positive backup alerts in a single update, recovering an estimated eight technician-hours per MSP every month that can be redeployed to other parts of the business.¹³ The Unified Cyber Resilience Portal gives platform MSPs a single backup risk score across the protected fleet.



AUTOMATE



LAYER



MONETIZE

STAGE 3

Monetize the climb up the value chain

The third stage is where the operational gains finally show up in the margin line. Partners on the Kaseya 365 solution stacks report tool-cost reductions between twenty-five and thirty percent and net profit increases of up to four percent.¹⁴ These figures depend on the consolidation happening at the tooling layer rather than the AI being layered on top of an existing sprawl.

The sales motion at this stage is the part MSPs sometimes misjudge. Clients do not want to buy AI; they want faster response times, fewer outages, and tighter SLA adherence.

Rather than selling the AI capability itself, MSPs can sell the soft benefits: visibly faster service, more accurate billing, and fewer escalations to L2. The internal proof is what justifies the conversation with the customer in the first place. The conversation goes better when the AI is invisible inside a service-delivery story rather than positioned as a product feature.

Metrics that prove the move worked

Tracking the right metrics is what separates an AI pilot that proves out from one that gets quietly shelved after a few quarters. The headline metric is mean time to resolve: target a fifty percent reduction in MTTR. The secondary triage metrics, such as classification accuracy lift, billable hours recovered, and percentage of L1 tickets auto-classified, help MSPs decide whether the L1 floor is actually clearing.

On the security and resilience side, the metrics worth watching are backup risk-score coverage across the fleet, mean time to detect security incidents, and the volume of alerts being auto-suppressed by the AI screenshot verification layer. On the commercial side, track net new AI-attached revenue per client, technician retention, and Net Promoter Score from client surveys. Retention is often the leading indicator that AI is showing up in service quality rather than just internal dashboards.



Common pitfalls

Three failure modes recur often enough to be worth naming:

Treating AI as a feature rather than a workflow

MSPs will fail at AI if they bolt it onto a queue without integrating it into the broader service-delivery model. Gartner found half of all generative AI proof-of-concepts were abandoned by the end of 2025 because of poor data quality, and lack of business value.¹⁵ The workflow problem sits behind a meaningful share of those abandonments.

Skipping the governance step

When an autonomous action causes service disruption, the liability falls on the MSP, not the platform vendor. An MSP that has not documented the human-in-the-loop boundary, the override mechanisms, and the escalation path will struggle to defend the decision after the fact. The NIST AI RMF gives a structured starting point. MSPs can implement that framework before automating extensively in production.

Not piloting against the MSP's own baseline

Most published efficiency figures — Kaseya's own included — originate from partner case studies and self-reported surveys rather than independent third-party audits. The figures are directionally consistent with what early adopters report, but the actual gain in any given environment depends on ticket volume, customer mix, and existing tool sprawl. Run the pilot inside one queue, measure against the pre-pilot baseline, then expand.



Next steps

The MSP sector is moving through a structural shift that will take eighteen to twenty-four months to play out. The providers who clear routine work off the desk earliest will be the ones with margin headroom to climb the value chain. Partnering with a mature platform provider that has AI capabilities is the most direct route to lifting an MSP into the next phase of growth.

[Learn more](#) about how you can become a Kaseya partner and see how all the AI innovations will help propel your MSP to the next level.

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