

UK AI IMPLEMENTATION / 2026

AI systems built for **reality**. Not just the demo.

Design, implementation and hands-on technical ownership for UK organisations that want AI to remove work, improve decisions and connect to the systems they already use.

AI AUTOMATION

RAG + KNOWLEDGE

AGENTIC SYSTEMS

CRM INTELLIGENCE

INTEGRATION

AI RESCUE

BRYAN SMALL

Applied AI Builder & Scottish AI Analyst.
One accountable technical lead from problem to
production.

PYTHON / TYPESCRIPT / RAG / AGENTS / AUTOMATION / CLOUDFLARE /
LOCAL LLMS / **PRODUCTION FIXES**

THE DIFFERENCE

The person who sells the solution stays **technically accountable.**

AI projects rarely fail because the demo looked bad. They fail when integrations break, data changes, edge cases appear, model behaviour drifts or nobody truly owns the system.

I will not promise software never breaks. I will promise that when reality exposes a problem, there is somebody technically capable and commercially accountable on your side of the table.

01 / HANDS-ON

Technical ownership

I stay involved in architecture, acceptance, troubleshooting and the decisions that matter.

- Requirements translated into working architecture
- Technical decisions challenged before build
- Hands-on diagnosis when production misbehaves

02 / ELASTIC

Engineering capacity when needed

Additional specialist capacity can be brought in without pretending every project needs a permanent internal team.

- Backend, cloud, data, QA and AI capability
- Fixed-project or dedicated delivery
- One accountable technical lead remains visible

03 / MODEL-AGNOSTIC

No unnecessary lock-in

Business logic should not be welded to whichever model happens to be fashionable this quarter.

- Replaceable model and retrieval layers
- Cloud or private/local inference where justified
- Provider choice follows the problem

04 / PRODUCTION

Past the prototype

Generated code and fast MVPs are useful. Production still needs engineering discipline.

- Failure handling and observability
- Security and permission review
- QA, deployment and operational handover

HOW I WORK

From business problem to **working system**.

Fixed-scope implementation first. Larger programmes only scale into dedicated delivery capacity after the economics and the need are real.

01	02	03	04	05
Discover	Design	Build	Prove	Support
Process, pain, data, users, constraints and commercial value.	Architecture, integrations, permissions, model strategy and acceptance criteria.	The right combination of AI, conventional software and automation.	Real workflows, edge cases, failures, permissions and operational readiness.	Monitor, improve and fix what real-world use inevitably reveals.

50%

TYPICAL MOBILISATION

Work starts with a funded first phase, not speculative engineering.

30%

WORKING BETA MILESTONE

Payment follows visible delivery, not vague activity.

20%

ACCEPTANCE / LAUNCH

Final scope and milestone structure is always project-specific.

PRINCIPLE

Clients buy the business outcome. Engineering cost, team composition and delivery mechanics are my responsibility to manage behind that outcome.

SCOPE CONTROL

Every project receives explicit deliverables, assumptions, exclusions and acceptance criteria before implementation begins.

01

AI Opportunity & Automation Audit

£1,500–£2,500

1–2 WEEKS

What you get

- Process and workflow review
- Data / system readiness assessment
- Prioritised AI opportunity map
- Risk and feasibility review
- 90-day implementation roadmap

Best for

Organisations that know AI matters but do not yet know which use cases are worth spending money on.

- SMEs with manual admin
- Teams evaluating AI vendors
- Owners who want a credible first move

02

AI Workflow Automation

£5,000–£12,000

2–4 WEEKS

What you get

- Email / document intake
- Classification and extraction
- Decision routing
- CRM / database updates
- Human approval steps
- Audit and exception handling

Typical outcomes

Automate repeatable business work while keeping people involved where judgement still matters.

- Fewer repetitive touches
- Faster response times
- Less copy / paste work
- Clear exception queue

03

Internal AI Knowledge System / RAG

£7,500–£15,000

3–6 WEEKS

What you get

- Document ingestion and indexing
- Retrieval architecture
- Source-grounded answers
- Permissions / role filtering
- Citations / provenance
- Admin update workflow

Where it fits

A controlled AI interface over company documents, policy, product knowledge, procedures or project records.

- Professional services
- Operations and compliance
- Technical support
- Distributed teams

04

AI Sales & CRM Intelligence

£8,000–£18,000

3–6 WEEKS

Capabilities

- Lead health / follow-up signals
- Meeting preparation briefs
- CRM summarisation
- Opportunity risk alerts
- Management digests
- Role-aware data access

Business value

Turn existing commercial data into timely prompts and usable context without replacing human judgement.

- More consistent account coverage
- Faster meeting preparation
- Less forgotten follow-up
- Management visibility

05

Agentic Operations System

£12,000–£30,000

4–8 WEEKS

What it includes

- Tool / API integration
- State and workflow orchestration
- Approval gates
- Permission boundaries
- Logging and audit trail
- Failure / retry paths

Design principle

Useful autonomy without giving an LLM uncontrolled access to business systems.

- Least-privilege tool access
- Human approval where risk warrants
- Action history
- Escalation to a person

06

AI MVP Productionisation / Rescue

£5,000–£20,000

2–6 WEEKS

Rescue work

- Architecture review
- Generated-code inspection
- Security / secrets review
- Error handling
- Observability
- Deployment hardening
- Performance / cost optimisation

When to call

The prototype impressed people. Production did not.

- Broken integrations
- Unreliable retrieval
- AI-generated code nobody owns
- Cloud cost problems
- Prototype handover issues

07

AI Governance, Permissions & Control Review

£4,000–£10,000

2–4 WEEKS

Review scope

- Data access mapping
- Role / permission review
- Human approval points
- Agent tool authority
- Audit / logging review
- Failure and escalation paths

Best for

AI touching CRM, customer records, internal documents, operational tools or other sensitive resources.

- Reduce accidental disclosure
- Clarify decision authority
- Make actions traceable
- Find unsafe privilege paths

08

Bespoke AI Platform / Integration

From £20,000

SCOPE-LED

Custom build

- Discovery and architecture
- Web / backend engineering
- AI / ML components
- Cloud deployment
- Data pipelines
- QA and testing
- Operational handover

How it scales

For commercially important systems that do not fit a template.

- Fixed milestones first
- No forced long-term team before value is proven
- Capacity scales with the opportunity
- Single accountable technical lead

SUPPORT

Production support without the disappearing act.

Data changes. Providers change. APIs change. Users find the one edge case nobody thought of. That is normal. The important question is who can actually diagnose it.

CARE

from £750/mo

STABLE SYSTEMS

Maintenance, small fixes and periodic review.

PRIORITY

from £1,500/mo

ACTIVE BUSINESS SYSTEMS

Faster technical response and ongoing change.

EMBEDDED

from £3,000/mo

EVOLVING SYSTEMS

Regular optimisation, integration work and deeper technical ownership.

Support can include

- Incident diagnosis and hands-on fixes
- Model / provider migration
- Prompt, retrieval and evaluation tuning
- API / CRM integration maintenance
- Permission and dependency review
- Workflow optimisation

What support does not pretend

No supplier can control a third-party platform outage or stop an API vendor changing its product.

- Response expectations are agreed in advance
- External dependencies are documented
- Recovery paths are designed where sensible
- Limitations are stated, not hidden

WHY THIS MATTERS

The difference is not that problems never happen. The difference is having somebody with enough system knowledge to step into the failure rather than simply forward a ticket.

Good AI work starts with the right problem.

GOOD FIT

Worth exploring

- + Manual work is consuming expensive staff time.
- + Critical knowledge is fragmented across systems.
- + CRM or operational data exists but is not producing action.
- + An AI MVP works but is not production-ready.
- + AI needs connecting to real tools and workflows.
- + Privacy, permissions or auditability genuinely matter.
- + Leadership wants measurable outcomes.

POOR FIT

Usually a bad use of money

- + The brief is simply "we need some AI".
- + Success cannot be defined in business terms.
- + The expectation is zero human involvement in high-risk decisions.
- + Nobody owns the underlying process.
- + The only criterion is the cheapest developer-hour.
- + The plan relies on pretending probabilistic AI is infallible.
- + The organisation wants a demo, not an operational system.

EVERY PROPOSAL MAKES CLEAR

Business outcome · success measure · scope · exclusions · systems/data involved · human decisions · change control · ownership and handover.

START WITH THE PROBLEM

The shortest path to useful AI is usually a **good technical conversation.**

Bring me the process that is slow, expensive, inconsistent or impossible to scale. I will tell you whether AI belongs in the solution — and if it does, what the practical route to implementation looks like.

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OPERATING PHILOSOPHY

Build. Test. Explain. Track.

Indicative prices are subject to discovery, scope, delivery risk and requirements. Third-party licences, model/API usage and cloud costs are excluded unless specifically included. AI systems are probabilistic; where consequences matter, appropriate human review and control should remain part of the design.