

## Agentic AI in BFSI: From Friction to Flow

Leading voices deliver practical insights to accelerate BFSI transformation



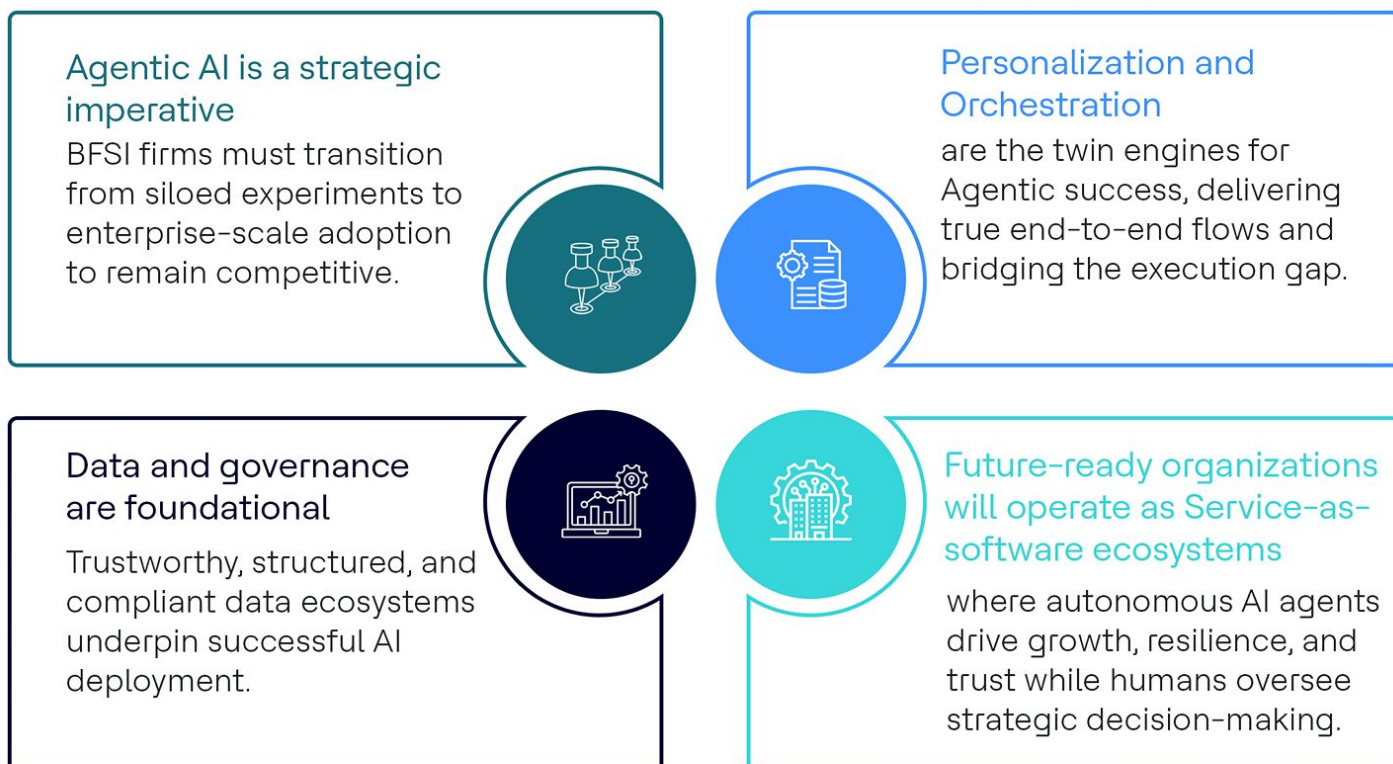
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## Executive Summary

Agentic artificial intelligence (AI) marks a step-change for Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance (BFSI). Unlike traditional scripts and siloed automation, Agentic AI comprises autonomous systems that reason with context, orchestrate across systems, and act on behalf of stakeholders. What distinguishes successful adopters is not AI alone, but an operating model that unifies Customer **Experience (X)**, **Data (D)**, and **Operations (O)**, so journeys are designed around the customer, decisions are driven by governed data, and execution is automated end-to-end under policy guardrails.

At an exclusive HCLSoftware Roundtable, which convened executives from leading banks, insurers, and securities firms, participants discussed the practical challenges and opportunities of Agentic AI. Their insights, combined with analyst perspectives and market data, reveal a clear path: BFSI institutions must invest in sovereign data platforms, outcome-driven AI deployments, and orchestration capabilities that ensure compliance, trust, resilience and scalability.

### Key conclusions from the discussion



Leaders advised a pragmatic roadmap: start small with high-impact, low-risk pilots; bake compliance in from the beginning; invest in data and platform; and measure outcomes. Within 3–5 years, panelists expect agentic AI to be embedded into core workflows, not as a novelty, but as an operational norm that differentiates customer experience and unlocks new revenue models.



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## Why Agentic, Why Now?

The global BFSI industry is in the midst of one of its most profound transformations. Over the past decade, banks, insurers, and securities firms have digitized front-end interactions, automated back-office workflows, and experimented with machine learning models for fraud detection and credit scoring. Yet despite these advances, friction, inefficiency, and customer dissatisfaction persist. Loan processing still involves multiple redundant handovers. Onboarding journeys continue to experience high drop-off rates. Compliance and regulatory updates require time-consuming manual interpretation, and customer service often falls short of delivering the seamless, contextual experiences that digital-first clients expect. At the root, many institutions have modernized parts of the stack in isolation, **Experience, Data, and Operations**, without unifying them. This **X-D-O** disconnect means journeys aren't consistently informed by governed data, and operational execution can't keep pace with what the front end promises.

This is where Agentic AI emerges as a game-changer. Unlike traditional AI, which has primarily been reactive and task-specific, Agentic AI is proactive, autonomous, and orchestrative. It allows institutions to move from a world where humans operate software to a new paradigm where **"software operates software, with humans in the loop to provide oversight, judgment, and trust"**, remarked Vikrant Chowdhary, SVP, Growth Markets (India and MEA) at HCLSoftware. This represents not just a technological shift, but a fundamental rethinking of how financial institutions design customer journeys, structure operations, and interpret regulatory guardrails.

The roundtable hosted by HCLSoftware brought together senior executives from across the BFSI spectrum to deliberate on these opportunities and challenges. Leaders from Tata Capital, HDFC Bank, SBI Securities, HDFC Life, Yes Securities, Axis Finance, and Axis Capital highlighted recurring themes:

**the urgent need to eliminate process redundancy, the promise of hyper-personalization, the complexities of moving from PoC to production, and the critical importance of building sovereign, structured, and trustworthy data ecosystems.**

What emerged was a consensus that Agentic AI is no longer a distant possibility, but an imperative. The industry is poised to transition from incremental automation to transformative orchestration, which unifies experience, data, and operations. And while the road ahead is complex, requiring regulatory alignment, organizational readiness, and a new mindset around trust, the rewards are equally compelling: faster, more contextual customer service, streamlined operations, enhanced compliance, and ultimately, a more resilient and customer-first financial ecosystem.

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## Turning Pain into Potential

Despite years of digital transformation, the BFSI sector continues to wrestle with inefficiencies, siloes, and customer friction. Traditional automation has offered incremental gains, but the systemic challenges require a new paradigm. Agentic AI, with its ability to orchestrate workflows, reason contextually, and act autonomously, is uniquely positioned to address these long-standing issues.

### 1. Complex and Redundant Processes

Lending remains one of the most burdened areas, with multiple checkpoints, data handovers, and inconsistent workflows. As **a Chief Data Officer from a leading financial institution observed:**

*“Repetition itself is the pain point. From a lending perspective, multiple steps are involved, acquisition, book writing, and backend processes. Loan processing could be inconsistent with multiple checkpoints.”*

Here, Agentic AI agents can act as digital coworkers, automating handovers, streamlining checks, and ensuring loan processing becomes smoother and faster.

### 2. Customer Journey Drop-Offs

Even as institutions invest in digital onboarding and self-service, abandonment remains high.

A senior digital leader at a leading securities firm explained:

*“From a brokerage standpoint, when a customer initiates a digital onboarding journey, there are high chances of dropouts, from lead generation to e-signing. Despite automation, accuracy is still not up to the mark.”*

CDO at one of India's largest private sector bank, added that existing solutions fail at deeper context handling:

*“In the digital journey, a lot of friction is still present. Traditional bots can handle basic queries, but any follow-up often fails. Agentic AI/GenAI can go into intricate details and explain them to the customer.”*

By providing context-aware guidance throughout the process, Agentic AI can reduce drop-offs and enhance conversion.



### 3. Compliance and Risk Management Overload

Financial services are heavily regulated, with constant circulars, policy updates, and KYC requirements. Manual interpretation of these is slow and resource-intensive.

A senior technology executive at an investment brokerage firm explained:

*“ Regulators issue a lot of circulars every quarter. Agents can summarize those circulars and highlight key aspects, making them more actionable for customer service and compliance. ”*

Group head CX at a major Indian insurance firm, observed:

*“ In life insurance, risk assessment needs to be done thoroughly but quickly. Bringing complex risk checks into the background through Agentic AI could allow customers to be serviced faster without losing rigor. ”*

### 4. Data Fragmentation and Siloes

Finally, data remains one of the biggest hurdles. Spread across CRMs, billing systems, and accounting platforms, it is often inaccessible for real-time use. A senior technology executive at a financial services company noted:

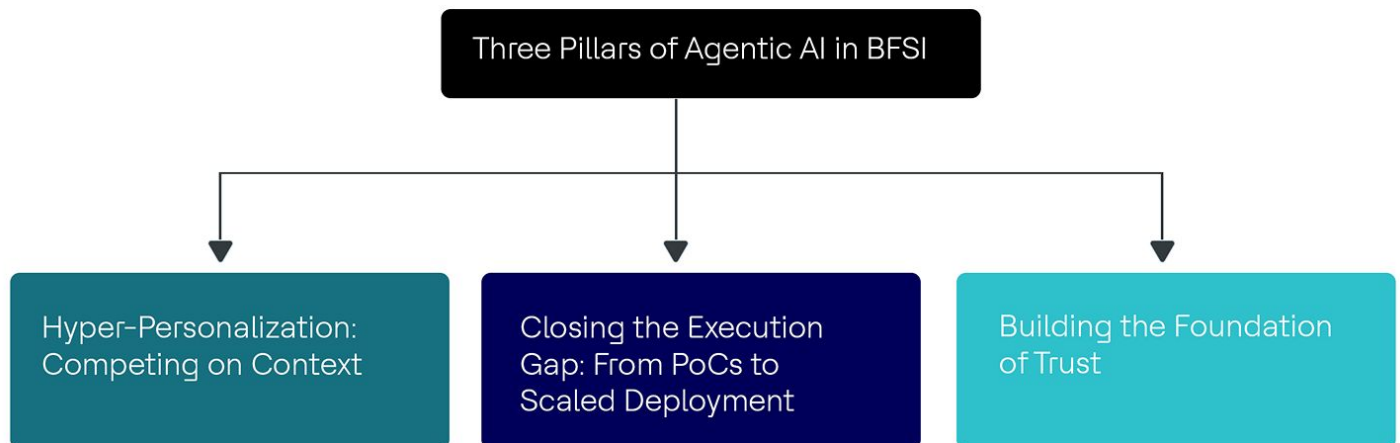
*“ Every data point is captured across multiple touchpoints like CRM, billing, and accounting systems, but today it’s scattered. A central data repository with complete insights is required. Agentic AI can help here. ”*

Agentic AI offers the orchestration needed to unify these siloes, creating a single source of truth that powers both compliance and personalization.

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# From Personalization to Production to Trust: The Three Pillars of Agentic AI in BFSI

While the promise of Agentic AI in BFSI is compelling, its successful adoption hinges on three interconnected imperatives: delivering hyper-personalized customer experiences, overcoming the execution gap between pilots and production, and establishing a robust foundation of trust. These pillars represent not only the industry's current challenges but also its most significant opportunities.



## 1. Hyper-Personalization: Competing on Context

In financial services, personalization has been the holy grail, but Agentic AI is making it achievable at scale. Traditional marketing systems are limited by static rules or segment-based approaches, often resulting in broad outreach with low conversion rates. By contrast, Agentic AI agents analyze customer data in real time, allowing institutions to anticipate needs, craft tailored offers, and interact seamlessly across channels.

As one banking leader emphasized during the roundtable:

***“ With Agentic AI, outreach can be hyper-personalized, reducing wastage and reaching only highly relevant customers. Agents are making capabilities sharper by moving interactions from Type to Tap to Talk. ”***

This evolution transforms customer engagement from transactional to relational, strengthening trust and loyalty while also unlocking new revenue streams. Analysts estimate that banks that deploy true personalization can achieve up to 15% revenue uplift and 20% reduction in churn. In a market where differentiation is elusive, personalization becomes the new competitive battleground.

## 2. Closing the Execution Gap: From PoCs to Scaled Deployment

Despite enthusiasm, many BFSI institutions are still trapped in the cycle of proof-of-concept experiments that rarely reach scale. Leaders at the roundtable were candid about the challenges: limited organizational readiness, complex integrations, and the regulatory caution required in highly sensitive industries.

As one insurance executive noted:

*“ Agentic AI is being whitewashed, RPA dressed up as AI. This causes failures when systems fail to communicate at a production scale. ”*

And another leader added:

*“ One of our successful PoCs took 1.5 years to achieve the intended outcomes ”*

These experiences underline a critical truth: Agentic AI is not plug-and-play. It requires patient investment, careful risk management, and platforms designed for enterprise orchestration. Institutions must move away from tactical experiments and adopt AI strategically, with a focus on outcomes. Otherwise, they risk disillusionment and competitive lag.

## 3. Building the Foundation of Trust

Trust is the currency of financial services, and nowhere is it more critical than in the adoption of autonomous AI. Without trustworthy data, explainable outcomes, and compliance guardrails, Agentic AI risks eroding rather than building customer confidence.

Executives stressed the importance of structured, sovereign, and curated data. As one securities CTO put it:

*“ How data is stored and structured itself is critical in your AI journey. A simple data lake is not enough, data must be curated, structured, and quickly retrievable. ”*

Institutions are increasingly recognizing the need to build sovereign data stacks, ensuring both compliance with localization regulations and confidence in AI-driven decisions. Moreover, the consensus at the roundtable was clear: **BFSI firms should begin with deterministic use cases (such as summarization, fraud checks, and credit evaluation) before progressing to probabilistic models.** This phased approach allows organizations to demonstrate tangible value, build internal confidence, and lay the groundwork for customer trust.



# The Emerging Playbook: Agentic AI Use Cases in BFSI

Agentic AI is not just about automating tasks, it is about reimagining workflows across customer engagement, operations, and compliance. The emerging use cases fall into three broad domains, as elaborated.

Together, these domains illustrate the full spectrum of value that Agentic AI can unlock in BFSI, from the front lines of customer interaction to the back-end of compliance assurance.

- **Digital Onboarding Optimization**  
AI agents guide customers seamlessly to reduce drop-offs.
  - **Fraud Detection & Complaint Resolution**  
Real-time anomaly detection and contextual support for service staff.
  - **Loan Operations Automation**  
Faster, more transparent application-to-approval journeys.
- **Risk Assessment & Underwriting**  
Agents orchestrate complex checks in the background for quicker, more accurate decisions.
  - **Replicating High-Performing Employees**  
Capturing best practices to scale expertise across teams.
- **Regulatory Assistance**  
AI agents summarize regulatory circulars, highlight obligations, and embed checks into workflows.
  - **Risk Monitoring**  
Embedding compliance controls directly into day-to-day decision-making.

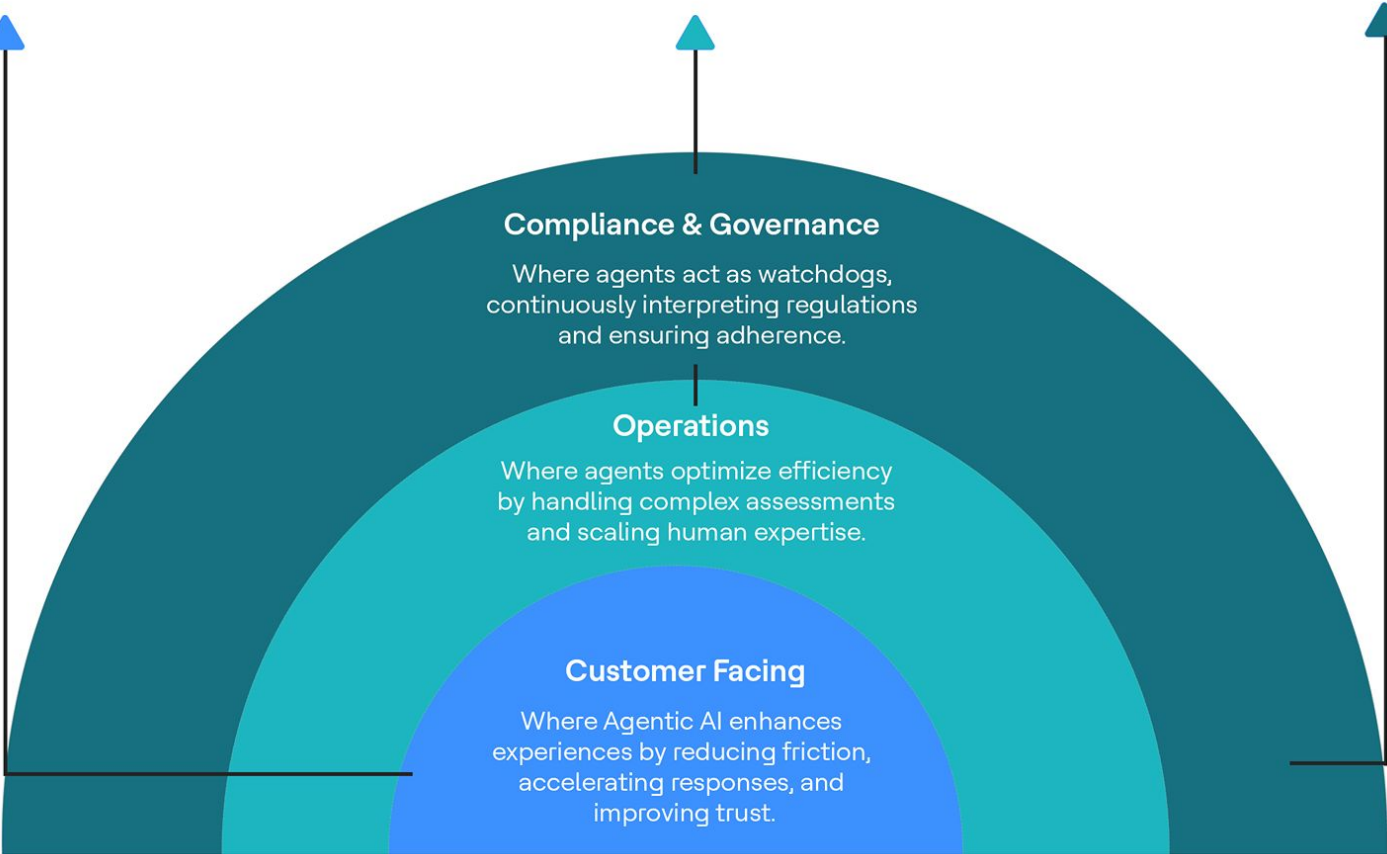


Figure 1. Agentic AI Use Cases for BFSI



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## HCLSoftware's Agentic AI Capabilities: Bridging Vision and Execution

The discussions at the roundtable bear out a clear message: BFSI institutions are no longer looking for point solutions tools, but for platforms aligned to X-D-O that fix systemic pain, fragmented data, inconsistent customer journeys, and the execution gap between PoCs and production. HCLSoftware's portfolio of Agentic AI solutions, including Unica and UNO, has been designed to address precisely these needs, helping financial institutions turn friction into flow.

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### HCL Unica: Personalization at Scale

One of the recurring challenges executives highlighted was customer journey drop-offs and wasted outreach. Traditional marketing often casts too wide a net, creating high costs with limited conversions.

- **How Unica Helps:** By embedding Agentic AI into campaign automation, Unica enables hyper-personalization. It ensures that institutions reach only the most relevant customers, on the right channel, at the right time.
- **Impact:** Unica transforms customer engagement from broad-based campaigns into contextual, one-to-one experiences that reduce abandonment and build long-term trust.

As one participant noted:

*“ With Agentic AI, outreach can be hyper-personalized, reducing wastage and reaching only highly relevant customers. ”*

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### HCL UNO: Orchestrating AI Agents with Confidence

A second central theme was the difficulty of scaling PoCs into production and the challenge of managing multiple AI agents across functions. Without orchestration, institutions risk “agent sprawl,” where fragmented deployments fail to deliver consistent outcomes.

- **How UNO Helps:** UNO acts as the orchestration layer, a “super agent” that manages, coordinates, and governs multiple AI agents across customer service, lending, compliance, and operations. It enforces guardrails, embeds human-in-the-loop oversight, and builds the confidence index required for adoption in regulated industries.
- **Impact:** With UNO, BFSI firms can move from experimental deployments to enterprise-scale AI ecosystems that are trusted, explainable, and compliant.

One executive framed the challenge perfectly:

*“ Managing multiple agents is a challenge – the go-to place is the super-agent. ”*

UNO was designed to be precisely that

## Conclusion: Future Roadmap & Strategic Imperatives

The adoption of Agentic AI in BFSI is not merely an operational upgrade, it signals a strategic transformation in how financial institutions engage customers, manage risk, and orchestrate internal processes. To capitalize on this shift, BFSI firms must pursue a multi-dimensional roadmap:

### Strategic actions (30–60 months)

- Shift to outcome-based commercial models where feasible, tie vendor pricing to realized business KPIs.
- Expand agentic capabilities into higher-value use cases such as advisory assistants, fraud-hunting agents and portfolio optimization co-pilots.

### Immediate actions (0–12 months)

- Identify 3–5 vertical use cases with clear owners, low regulatory risk, and measurable outcomes (onboarding acceleration, call-answer reduction, claims triage).
- Run sandboxed pilots and measure impact-focus on time-to-outcome and reproducibility.
- Establish a governing council (COE) comprising business, risk, data, legal and IT stakeholders.

### Medium-term actions (12–36 months)

- Integrate marketing orchestration (e.g HCL Unica) with outputs to convert insights into personalized offers and retention campaigns.
- Standardize monitoring, bias testing and model provenance reporting.
- Build or adopt a platform layer to host agents and enforce guardrails. Invest in a central data fabric or federated access patterns to enable secure retrieval and reasoning.



## 1 Hyper-Personalized, Contextual CX at Scale:

Move beyond static personalization to real-time, one-to-one engagement driven by AI agents capable of reasoning across customer history, preferences, and risk profiles.

## 2 Integrated, Sovereign Data Ecosystems:

Invest in sovereign data platforms to navigate regulatory mandates, maintain customer trust, and ensure AI models are auditable, explainable, and reliable.

## 3 Robust AI Governance and Operational Controls:

Implement multi-layered governance frameworks that balance agility with compliance, ensuring agents operate within defined boundaries.

## 4 Human-AI Symbiosis:

Position Agentic AI as a copilot rather than a replacement, augmenting human capabilities across risk, compliance, operations, and customer engagement. Focus on replicating high-performing employee knowledge into AI agents while empowering employees to handle higher-order tasks, strategy, and decision-making.

## 5 Enterprise-Scale Orchestration and AI Portfolios:

Move beyond isolated pilots to an orchestrated AI ecosystem, where multiple agents operate cohesively across departments and geographies.

## 6 Outcome-Driven, Agile Deployment Models:

Transition from CapEx-heavy experimentation to SaS-style, service-as-software deployment, where outcomes rather than hours or licenses measure performance.

Success will not be about chasing technology fads. It will come from disciplined problem selection, strong governance, and the ability to translate agentic capabilities into sustained customer and business outcomes. Organizations that combine HCL Unica's engagement power with an orchestration layer such as HCL Uno, while maintaining data discipline and regulatory clarity, will lead the next chapter of BFSI innovation.



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