Mi az a State of FinOps Report?

A riport célja:

- megérteni, hogyan használják a vállalatok a FinOps gyakorlatokat
- feltérképezni az aktuális **trendeket és prioritásokat**
- megmutatni, hogyan változik a **cloud és technológiai költségmenedzsment**
- iránymutatást adni a FinOps szakma fejlődéséhez

A felmérés több száz szervezet válaszain alapul:

- FinOps practicioners
- cloud platform csapatok
- pénzügyi és engineering vezetők

A riport különösen fontos, mert:

- **benchmarkot ad a FinOps maturity-hez**
- segít megérteni a **következő 1-2 év trendjeit**
- betekintést ad abba, hogyan változik a **cloud cost management → technology value management** irányába.

A **State of FinOps Report** a FinOps Foundation éves globális felmérése, amely bemutatja, hogyan fejlődik a FinOps gyakorlat a szervezetekben.

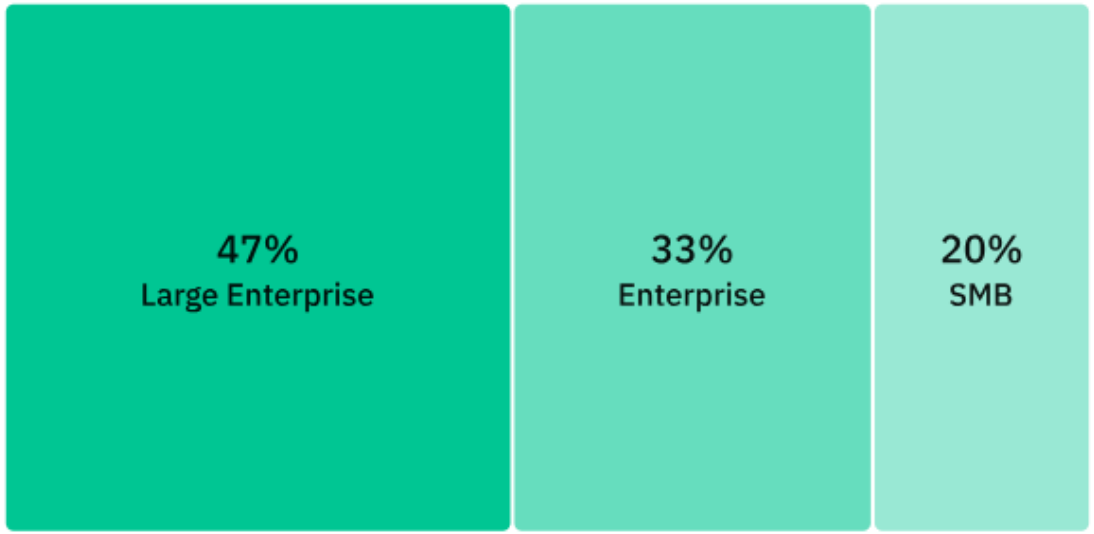
FinOps Foundation

A 2026-os riport egyik kulcsüzenete:
A FinOps már nem csak cloud költségoptimalizálásról szól – hanem a teljes technológiai érték menedzsmentjéről.

About the State of FinOps

The State of FinOps is an annual survey conducted by the FinOps Foundation, since 2020, to collect information about key priorities, industry trends, and the direction of the FinOps practice. The survey informs a range of Foundation activities and tells the broader market how FinOps is practiced in a variety of organizations.

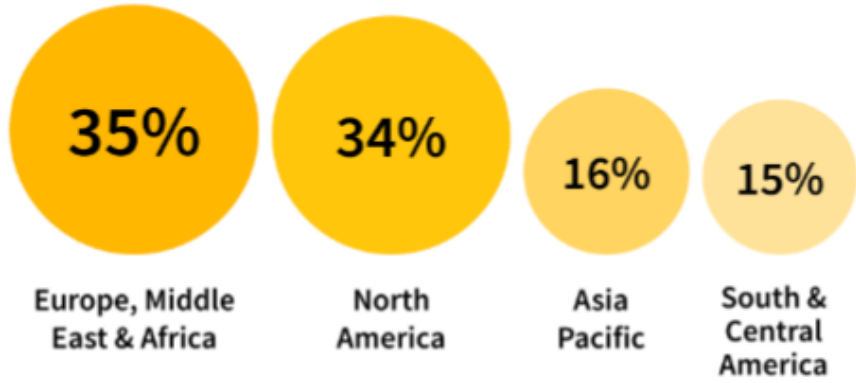
Share of survey respondents by org employee size



Large Enterprise: 10,000+, Enterprise: 1,000 - 9,999, SMB: <1,000

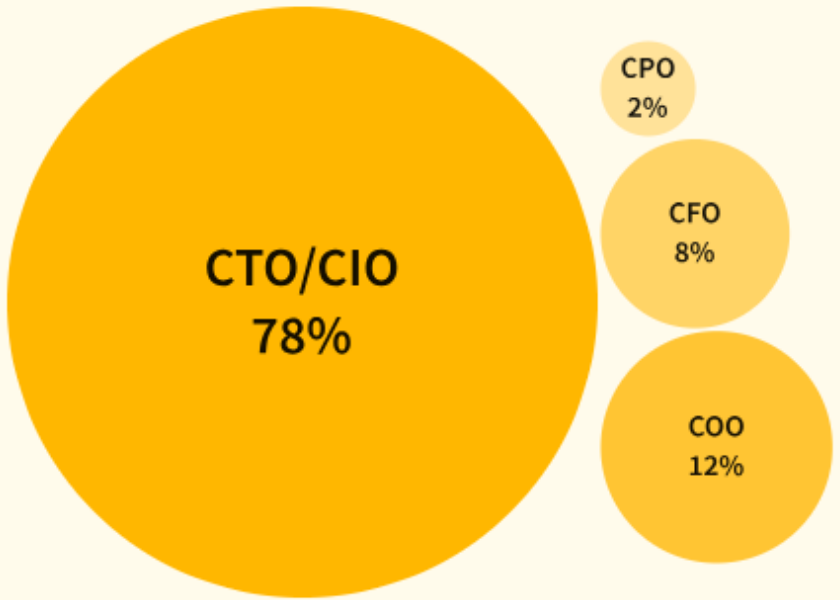
N=966 (Deduplicated, Cleaned etc)

Top regions



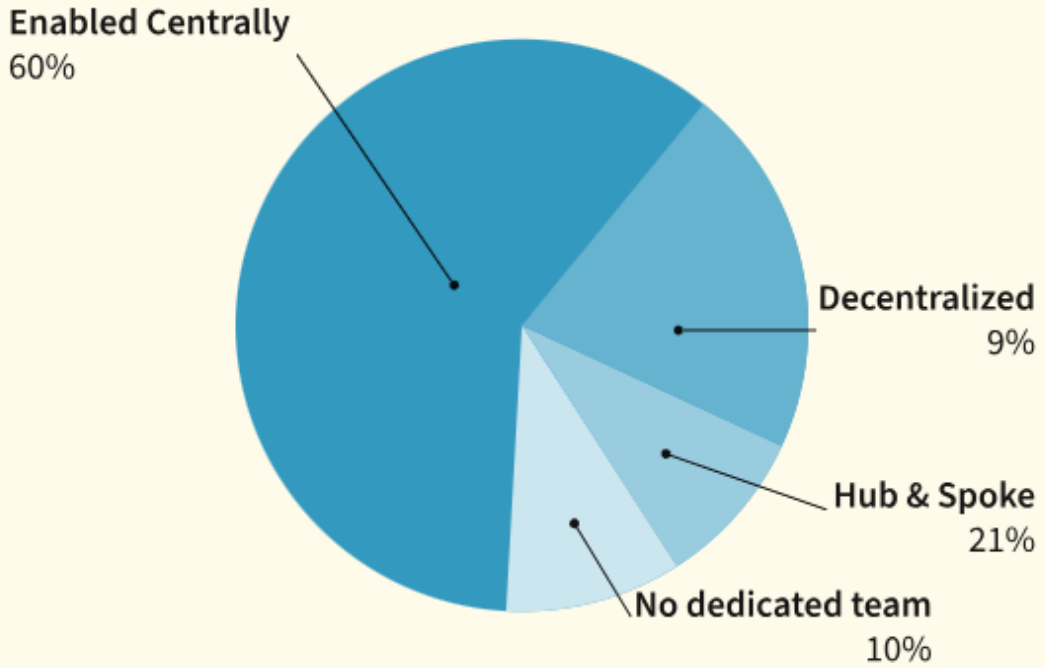


Where does your FinOps practice sit within your organization's leadership structure?



N=523

Which of these best describes your current FinOps team structure?



N=657

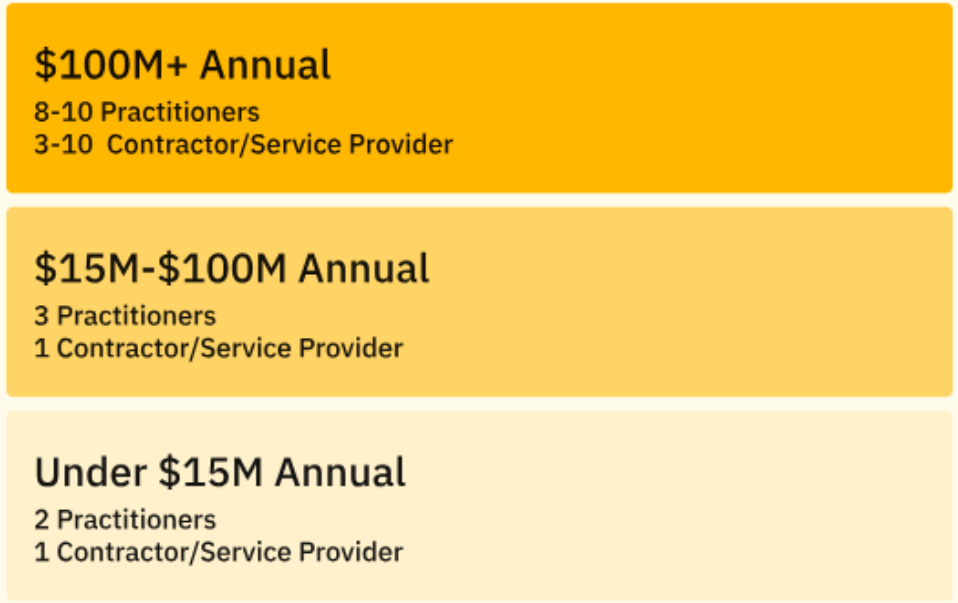
Lean Teams: AI and Automation Skills Are in Top Demand

Even at the highest spend levels, FinOps teams remain lean.

AI cost management stands out as the single most desired skillset across organizations of all sizes—reflecting both the rapid growth of AI-related spend and the complexity of understanding and allocating those costs. Tooling expertise and automation development follow closely, signaling that FinOps is becoming more data- and engineering-driven.

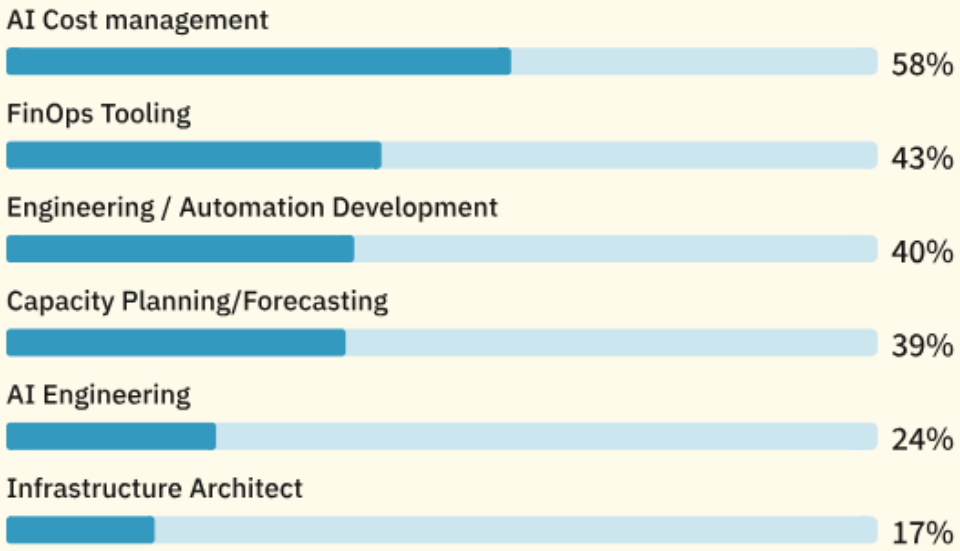
The combination of small teams and specialized skill requirements reinforces why the federated model has become dominant: central teams can't scale through headcount alone, so they scale through enablement, automation, and embedded champions.

What is the size and makeup of your FinOps Team?



Annual Cloud Spend, Box Plot Averages methodology | N=523

Which of these skillsets are you looking to add to your FinOps practice in the next 12 months via people or tooling?



Multi-select | % of respondents | N=695

Optimization Still Important, FinOps Priorities Diversifying

Workload optimization and waste reduction remain the single top current priority for FinOps teams. But the story is more nuanced than the headline suggests.

Year-over-year, the need to **apply FinOps to more technology categories climbs significantly**. When combined, priorities like expanding scope beyond cloud, governance and policy, organizational alignment, and forecasting **collectively outweigh optimization alone.**

Mature practitioners report diminishing returns on traditional optimization approaches. As one practitioner noted: *"We have hit the 'big rocks' of waste and now face a high volume of smaller opportunities that require more effort to capture."* Another described reaching 97% optimization in their Cost Optimization Hub, with the remaining 3% intentionally not actioned for business reasons.

This shift suggests a maturing discipline where savings alone are no longer the end goal. FinOps is increasingly expected to guide how technology investments are planned, governed, and valued—not just how costs are reduced.

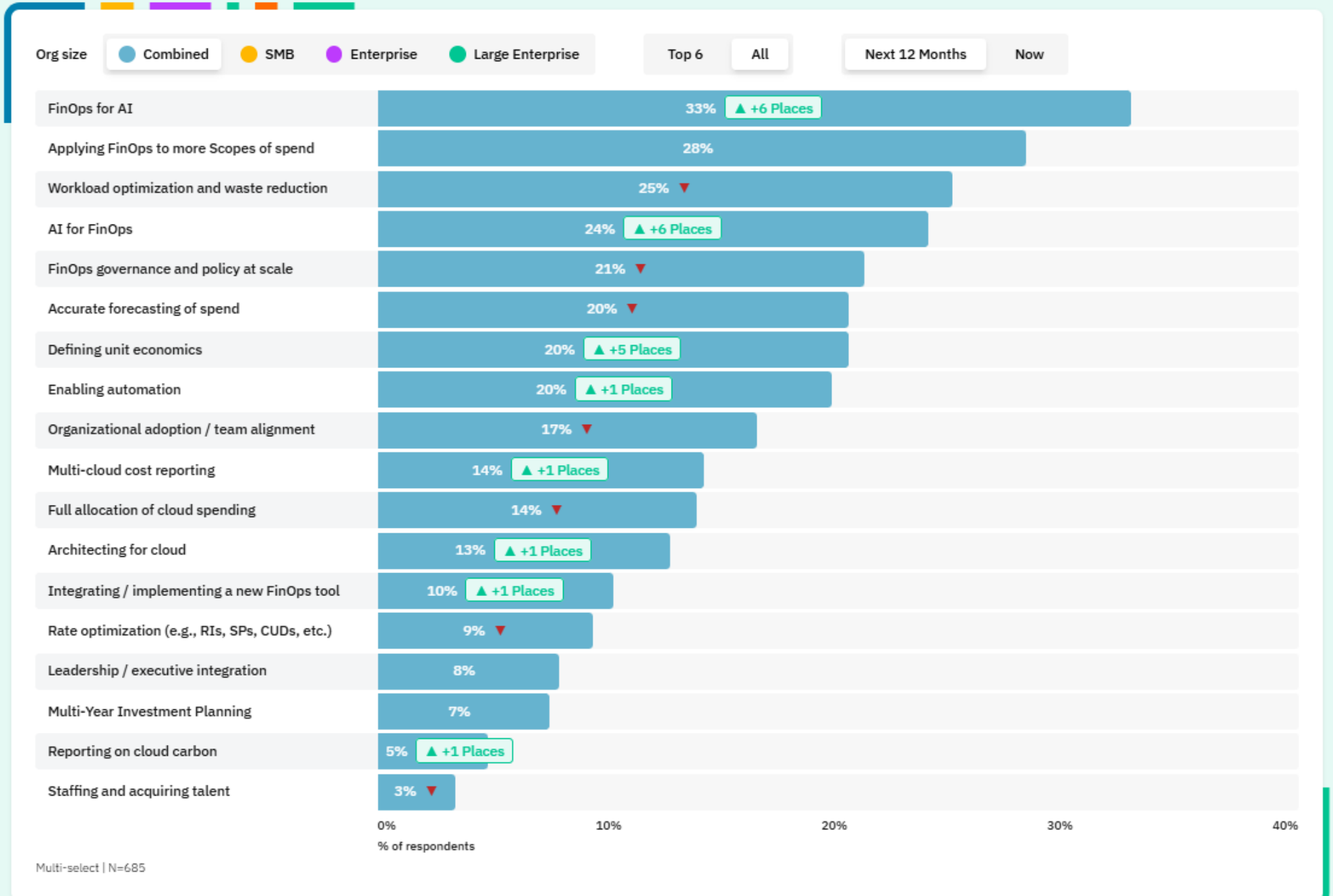
> ***The days of finding something that's grossly misconfigured, and we're gonna save a bunch of money, or there's reserve instances we haven't purchased yet—that was years ago. I haven't been focused on optimization as priority one for a long time.***
>
> Advanced Practitioner, Large Enterprise Org

Those Prioritizing Workload Optimization and Waste Reduction vs Other Priority



Multi-select | N=685

Current and future priorities

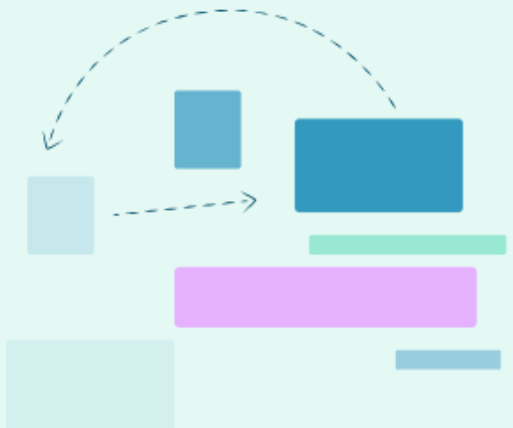


AI: Front and Center in the Next 12 Months

FinOps for AI emerges as the top forward-looking priority, outpacing traditional focus areas. Respondents also rank **AI for FinOps** among their top future priorities, signaling a dual mindset: govern AI value while leveraging AI to improve FinOps productivity and efficiency.

Many organizations report being asked to **self-fund AI investments through optimization savings**—creating direct pressure to find efficiency gains that can be redirected toward AI initiatives. This “squeeze more from existing footprint to create space for AI spend” dynamic is accelerating optimization urgency even as traditional waste opportunities diminish.

Expanding FinOps into additional technologies remains a leading priority. As more technology domains fall under FinOps purview, teams are preparing to operate across a wider and more complex billing landscape.



AI Is Not Just a Large-Enterprise Concern

Across organization sizes, AI-related priorities are rising into the top tier when looking at future priorities.
This signals that **AI spend governance is becoming a mainstream need**, not a niche or experimental effort.

FinOps Priorities for different org sizes (now and next 12-months)

SMB

Current Top Priorities

1. Workload optimization and waste reduction
2. Accurate forecasting of spend
3. Full allocation of cloud spend

Future Top Priorities

1. FinOps for AI
2. AI for FinOps
3. Full allocation of cloud spend

Enterprise

Current Top Priorities

1. Workload optimization and waste reduction
2. Organizational adoption / team alignment of FinOps
3. Implementing FinOps governance and policy at scale

Future Top Priorities

1. Applying FinOps to more technology categories
2. Workload optimization and waste reduction
3. FinOps for AI

Large Enterprise

Current Top Priorities

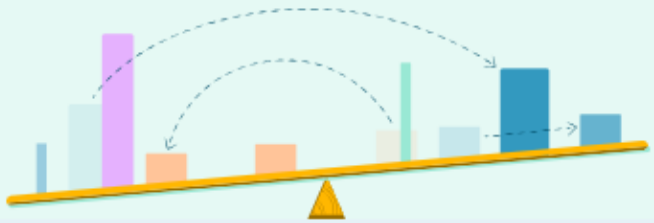
1. Workload optimization and waste reduction
2. Applying FinOps to more technology categories
3. Organizational adoption / team alignment of FinOps

Future Top Priorities

1. FinOps for AI
2. Applying FinOps to more technology categories
3. AI for FinOps

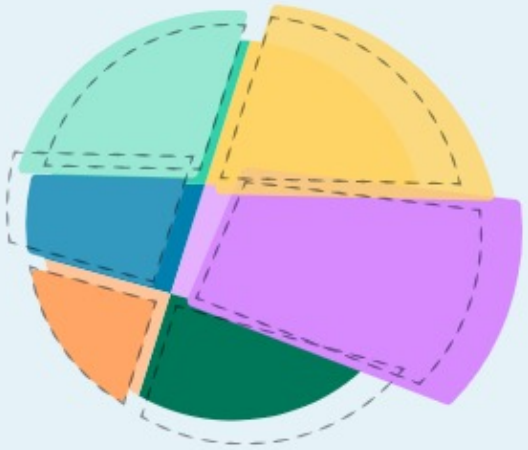
SMB (less than 1,000 employees), Enterprise (1,000-9,999 employees), Large Enterprise (10,000+ employees)

Smaller organizations balance AI alongside foundational FinOps work, while larger organizations increasingly treat AI as a dedicated domain. But the directional trend is consistent: teams across all sizes are preparing for AI-related value management.



FinOps Is a Multi-Technology Practice

What was once a cloud-focused practice is now definitively multi-technology. **90% of respondents now manage SaaS or have plans to** (up from 65% in 2025), alongside licensing (64%, up 15%), private cloud (57%, up 18%), and data center (48%, up 12%). AI management has become nearly universal at 98% (up from 63%). An emerging 28% are beginning to or plan to include labor costs signaling continued expansion toward total technology value management.



Practitioners describe this evolution in phases: *"First they asked us to fix cloud. Then fix the software mess. Now it's fix the contract and license mess, now fix the data center..."* referring to the progression from cloud optimization to SaaS rationalization to strategic vendor relationship management.

As purview grows, typically from leadership mandates, FinOps increasingly becomes the common language for understanding technology value across the organization. The mission has evolved from "cost of cloud" to "value of technology."

What areas of technology spend does the FinOps team manage today and in the next 12 months?

AI	SaaS	Licensing	Private Cloud	Data Center
98%	**90%**	**64%**	**57%**	**48%**
2025: 63%	2025: 65%	2025: 49%	2025: 39%	2025: 36%
YOY Change: +35%	YOY Change: +25%	YOY Change: +15%	YOY Change: +18%	YOY Change: +12%

Most Managed SaaS/PaaS: Data Cloud Platforms and AI

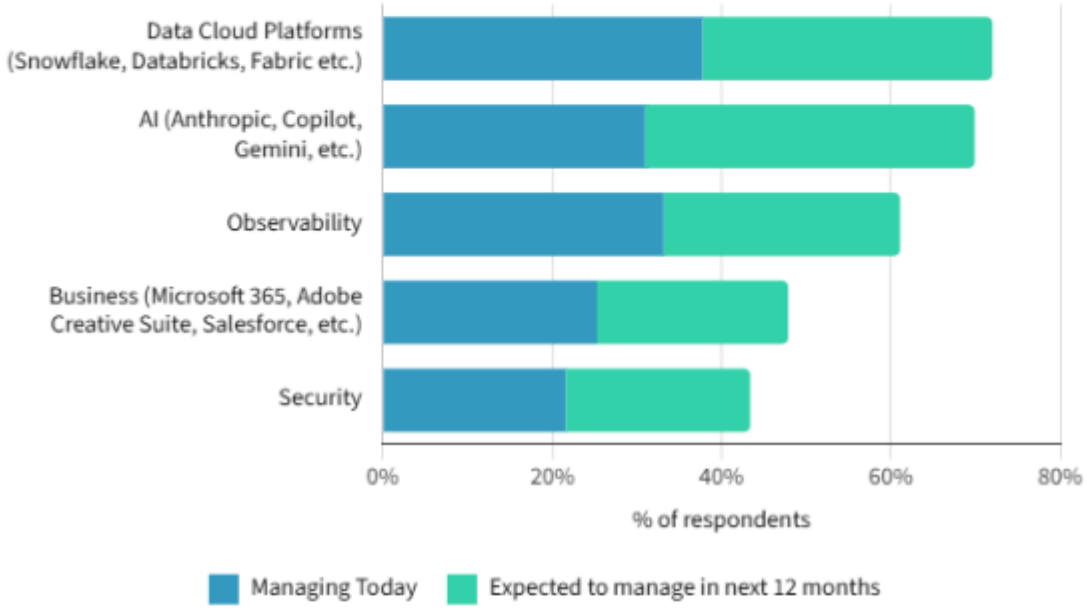
FinOps attention is concentrating where billing volatility and growth potential are highest. **Data cloud platforms and AI** stand out as the most actively managed areas today (and in the near future) for SaaS/PaaS, followed by observability and security tooling.

These categories share common characteristics: rapidly scaling spend, less predictable usage patterns, and emerging pricing models that don't yet have established optimization playbooks. AI and data platforms introduce new questions around tokens, inference costs, and value attribution that extend beyond traditional infrastructure optimization.

FinOps attention is gravitating toward the parts of the technology stack where spend is growing fastest and transparency is lowest.

> ***Leadership identified SaaS as an area of 'sprawl' and that costs could really spiral out of control quickly - they tasked FinOps to come in and provide a proactive approach to managing it more effectively.***
>
> Technology Company

Which areas of technology does the FinOps team manage today, and which areas are they expected to manage in the next 12 months?



Multi-select N=632

Understanding Cost Comes Before Optimizing, Whatever the Technology

Across SaaS, data center, licensing, and data cloud platforms, the most prioritized capabilities are **Allocation, Forecasting, Budgeting, Planning & Estimating, and Reporting & Analytics**. This shows teams focus first on understanding and structuring cost before trying to reduce it.

More advanced optimization capabilities start to appear in a change to last year's data but are not the universal starting point. Many teams are still building the financial and data foundations needed to optimize confidently as FinOps extends into new technologies.

As one practitioner noted: *"Dashboards are table stakes of yesterday—reactive. You have to move to proactive, real-time, automation."* But you can't automate what you can't see.

As FinOps expands into new domains, teams are applying the same maturity path they used in cloud into other technologies: first gain visibility, then build planning discipline, and only then optimize for value.

> ***Dashboards are table stakes of yesterday—reactive. You have to move to proactive, real-time, automation.***

What capabilities are your top priorities to apply to different areas of technology spend?

SaaS

- Allocation
- Forecasting & Budgeting
- Data Ingestion, and Reporting & Analytics
- Planning & Estimating
- FinOps Tools and Services
- Rate Optimization

Licensing

- Allocation
- Forecasting & Budgeting
- Planning & Estimating
- Data Ingestion, and Reporting & Analytics
- Rate Optimization
- FinOps Tools & Services

Data Center

- Allocation
- Planning & Estimating
- Forecasting & Budgeting
- Data Ingestion, and Reporting & Analytics
- Workload Optimization
- FinOps Tools & Services

Data Cloud Platforms

- Allocation
- Data Ingestion, and Reporting & Analytics
- Forecasting & Budgeting
- Planning & Estimating
- Rate Optimization
- FinOps Tools & Services

FinOps Domains: Optimize Usage & Cost | Manage the FinOps Practice | Understand Usage & Cost | Quantify Business Value

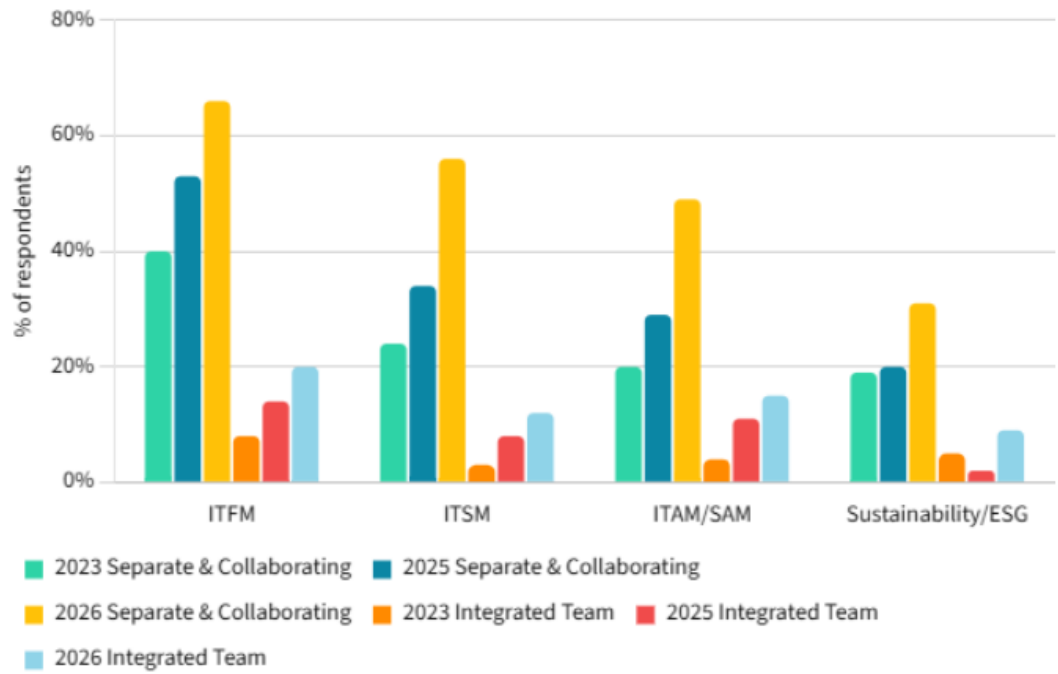
FinOps Is a Hub for Collaboration with Intersecting Disciplines

FinOps integration and collaboration continues to deepen across adjacent disciplines:

- FinOps teams are collaborating most often with **ITFM** teams to leverage shared data
- **ITAM/SAM** growth is propelled by SaaS and hybrid licensing optimization
- **ITSM** collaboration is shifting toward automation and remediation
- **Sustainability/ESG** growing engagement but low in priority, with most activity focused on external reporting requirements (collaboration highest in Europe and Asia)
- **Platform Engineering** is increasingly joining as FinOps shifts left into development workflows

Larger companies tend toward collaboration between separate teams; smaller companies integrate them. The varied patterns show that FinOps is not replacing adjacent disciplines but increasingly connecting them. As organizations seek a clearer view of technology value, FinOps is becoming a coordinating layer.

What other disciplines does your FinOps practice collaborate or integrate with?

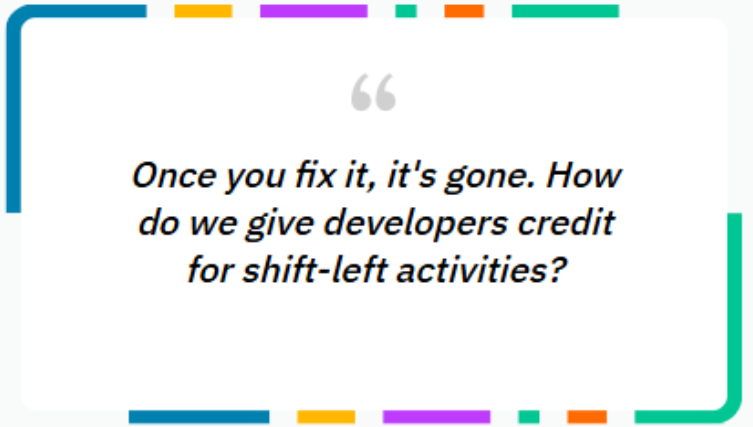


2026 N=698

FinOps Tooling Expectations Continue to Evolve

These requests reflect the increasing complexity of managing modern technology spending—and mirror where FinOps itself is expanding. As the practice evolves, tooling expectations naturally evolve with it. However, a fundamental challenge persists: *How do you measure cost avoidance?*

As one practitioner framed it: *"Once you fix it, it's gone. How do we give developers credit for shift-left activities?"*



Proposed solutions discussed in the community include:

- Including FinOps activities in performance reviews alongside feature delivery
- Unit cost tracking at team level with chargeback reductions for high performers
- Creating separate FinOps department budgets for recognition and awards

The shift-left measurement problem remains one of the discipline's most important unsolved challenges.

Notably, **pre-deployment architecture costing** emerged as a top request, reflecting the shift-left imperative. Practitioners are building internal solutions but want commercial tooling to catch up.

Open-ended responses highlight growing interest in:

What FinOps tool features or capabilities would you like to see that do not exist today?

Top 3

1. **Granular monitoring of AI spend (tokens, LLM requests and GPU utilization)**
2. **Shift-Left: Pre-Deployment Architecture Costing**
3. **The "Single Pane of Glass" for different technology spend**

Additional themes

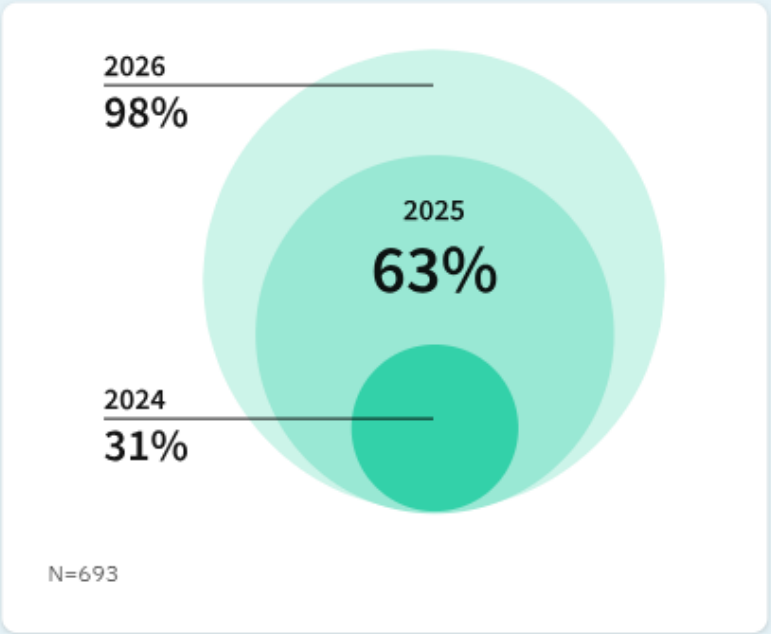
- Automated Remediation & "Easy Buttons"
- Technical Unit Economics & Business Value Attribution
- FOCUS adoption in tooling
- Sophisticated Forecasting & Scenario Modeling
- ITAM and FinOps: Managing software licenses
- Highlighting sustainable infrastructure alongside cost
- Granular Shared Cost & Container Allocation

Freeform

Managing AI Value Becomes the Norm

98% of respondents now manage AI spend (up from 63% in 2025 and 31% in 2024). AI has moved from emerging concern to everyday FinOps scope in just two years.

> *The practice you have for governing public cloud spend should naturally include AI. It is simply another bucket of spend that requires the same discipline and governance as any other technology.*
>
> Financial Services



Applying FinOps to AI Introduces New Visibility and Value Challenges

Many practitioners report difficulty gaining clear visibility into AI-related usage and costs. Compared to traditional cloud services, AI workloads often have less transparent or more variable pricing.

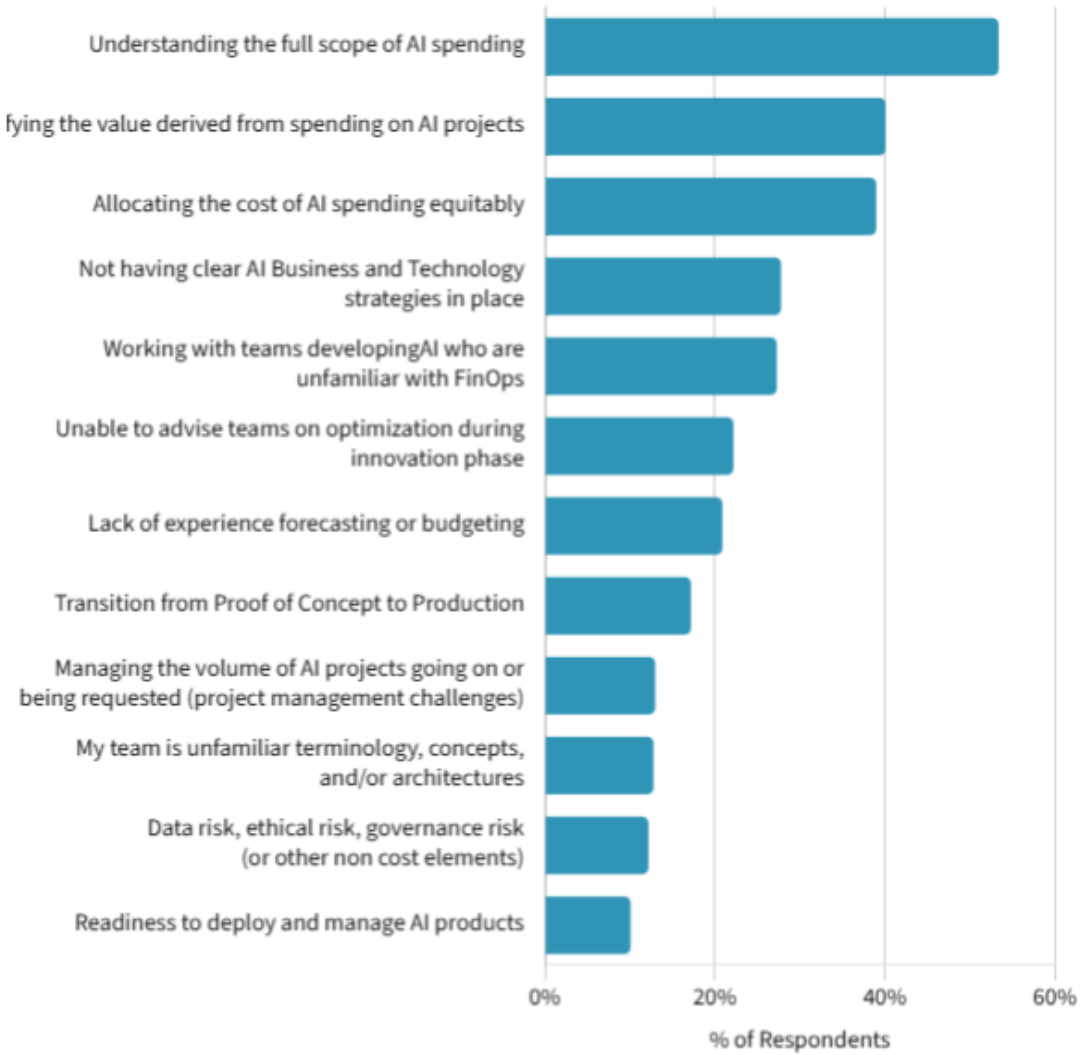
Top challenges cited:

- **Visibility into AI costs:** pricing models vary widely across providers and services
- **Allocating AI costs to business units:** harder than traditional infrastructure
- **Determining AI value/ROI:** investments are often exploratory, making returns hard to define early

As one practitioner framed it: *"Is your AI providing value? No one can answer that question yet."*

Practitioners are working to extend familiar principles into a new domain. AI is not rewriting FinOps, but it is testing how flexible the operational framework can become. Teams that adapt core fundamentals to AI quickly may gain an early advantage in managing this fast-growing spend area.

What challenges are you facing when applying FinOps practices to your AI spend? (multi-select)



Multi-select N=649

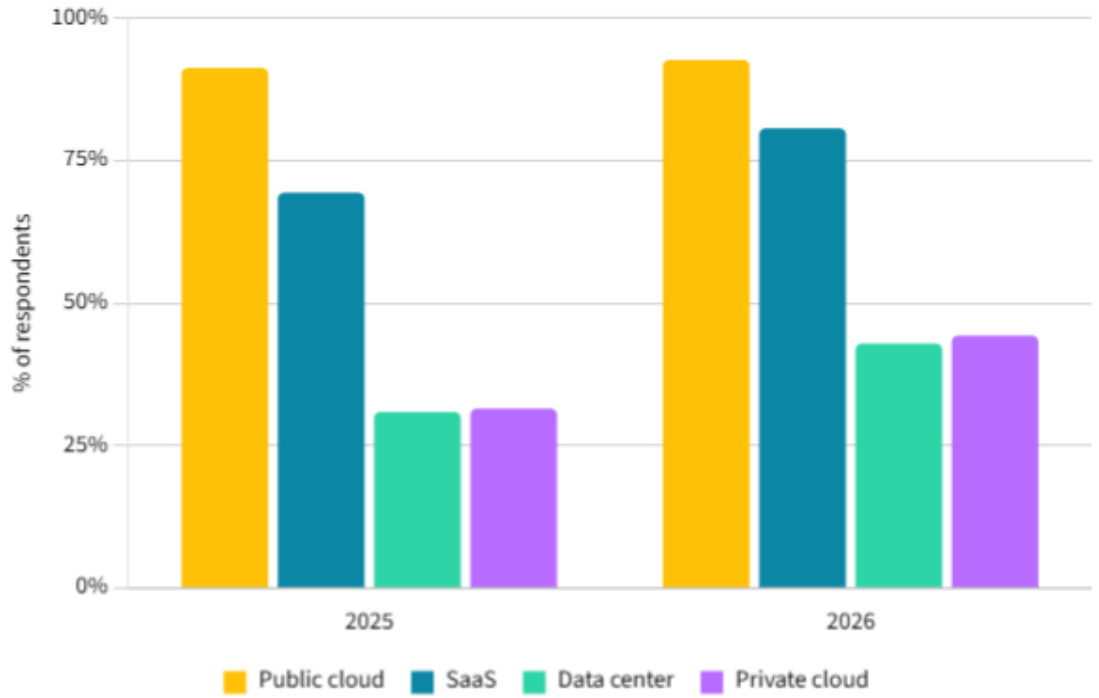
AI Investment Is Expanding Across the Technology Portfolio

Planned investments indicate that AI is influencing multiple areas of technology rather than remaining a standalone category. This reflects how FinOps capabilities are being embedded across platforms and services.

AI is becoming a cross-cutting investment theme rather than a siloed initiative. For FinOps practitioners, this means AI value management will increasingly appear across the technology portfolio, whether they expect it or not.

> ***AI investment is only continuing to rise but also the diversity where that investment is going, meaning additional complexity - for now the emphasis is on time to market so we are limiting guardrails not to slow down innovation and progress***
>
> Technology Company

Where is your organization planning to place its future AI investments?



Multi-select N=658

AI for FinOps Is Emerging as a Productivity Lever

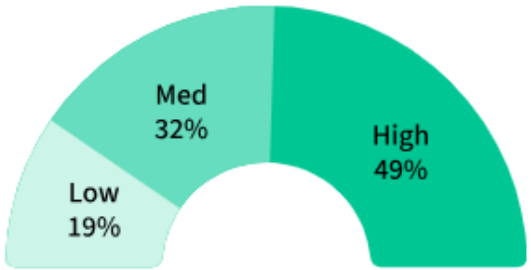
Respondents rate the importance of using AI within their FinOps practice above the midpoint on average, indicating broad recognition of its potential value. Teams focused on unit economics, managing AI spend, or operating at higher spend levels tend to rate **AI for FinOps** with high importance suggesting interest correlates with practice maturity and complexity.

Early use cases include:

- Anomaly detection and faster alerting
- Automated right-sizing recommendations
- Natural language querying of cost data
- Automated discount instrument procurement
- Tagging resources to speed up allocation

AI for FinOps may follow a similar path to other FinOps tooling: starting as an advantage for advanced teams before becoming standard practice. Early signals suggest AI is viewed as a capability amplifier, not a substitute for FinOps expertise.

How important is using AI for your FinOps practice?



N=663

> ***The topmost priority right now is AI for FinOps. There is a huge emphasis within the organization on utilizing AI to drive productivity and efficiency across our teams.***
>
> Media & Gaming Company

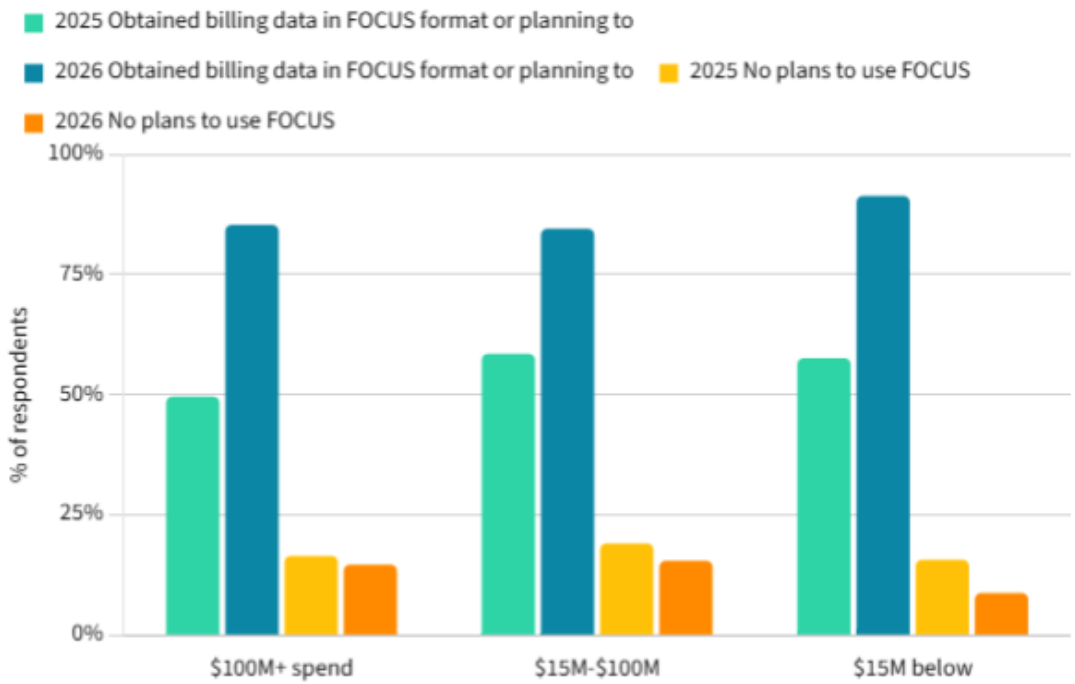
FOCUS Adoption Grows as FinOps Expands Across Technology Categories

Year-over-year growth in FOCUS usage signals increasing interest in normalizing cost and usage data. As FinOps expands across technologies, consistent data structures are more desired as confirmed in tooling feature responses.

Respondents highlight a growing list of desired datasets, particularly across SaaS and data platforms where AI-driven services increasingly require clear cost attribution.

As FinOps scope grows, the need for consistent and comparable billing data grows with it. Specifications like FOCUS are becoming part of the infrastructure that enables FinOps at scale.

From which providers have you obtained a FOCUS-formatted billing dataset?



2026 N=622

Practitioners Want More FOCUS Support Across Technology Categories

Top requests for FOCUS expansion center on AI, data center, and broader PaaS and SaaS support. These are the same areas where FinOps purview and complexity is growing. As organizations manage more spend in these environments, consistent cost and usage data becomes more important.

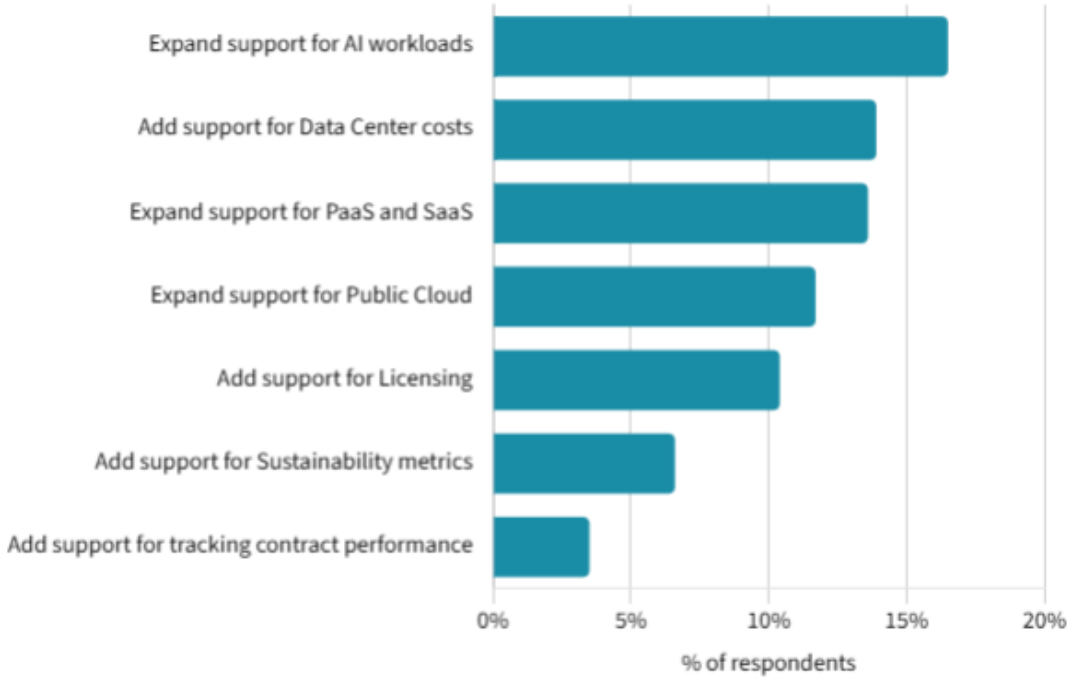
FOCUS feature requests mirror where FinOps itself is heading. As the practice broadens, expectations for standardized data across technologies naturally broaden with it.



Read the article

FinOps for Data Center: Practical Cost Modeling & FOCUS Alignment

Which area would you most like to see FOCUS expand into next?



Select one | N=622

FinOps is a Technology Value Discipline

FinOps is no longer defined by cloud cost management alone—it's become the method for identifying and communicating technology value across AI, SaaS, licensing, private cloud, and data center throughout the organization where needed. As the practice enables technology executives and "shifts left" into earlier decision points, teams are balancing two truths at once: optimization remains essential, but the next wave of impact will come from governing and shaping spend before it happens, especially as AI investment expands and diversifies.

Underpinning this evolution is the growing role of the FinOps Open Cost and Usage Specification (FOCUS), which helps organizations normalize and analyze billing datasets across an increasingly complex technology landscape. As more providers and tools support FOCUS, practitioners gain the consistent data foundation needed to apply FinOps principles across all their areas of technology spending.

The State of FinOps 2026 data points to significant opportunities for organizations that:

- Expand FinOps into more technologies beyond public cloud
- Enable stronger executive decision-making through VP+ engagement
- Make thoughtful investments into AI—both managing it and using it

FinOps is maturing into a durable capability for managing the value of technology—one that helps organizations make faster decisions in a world where complex technology choices increasingly shape business outcomes.

Aligning to this the FinOps Foundation has updated its mission from "Advancing the **People** who manage the **Value** of *Cloud*" to "Advancing the **People** who manage the **Value** of *Technology*".