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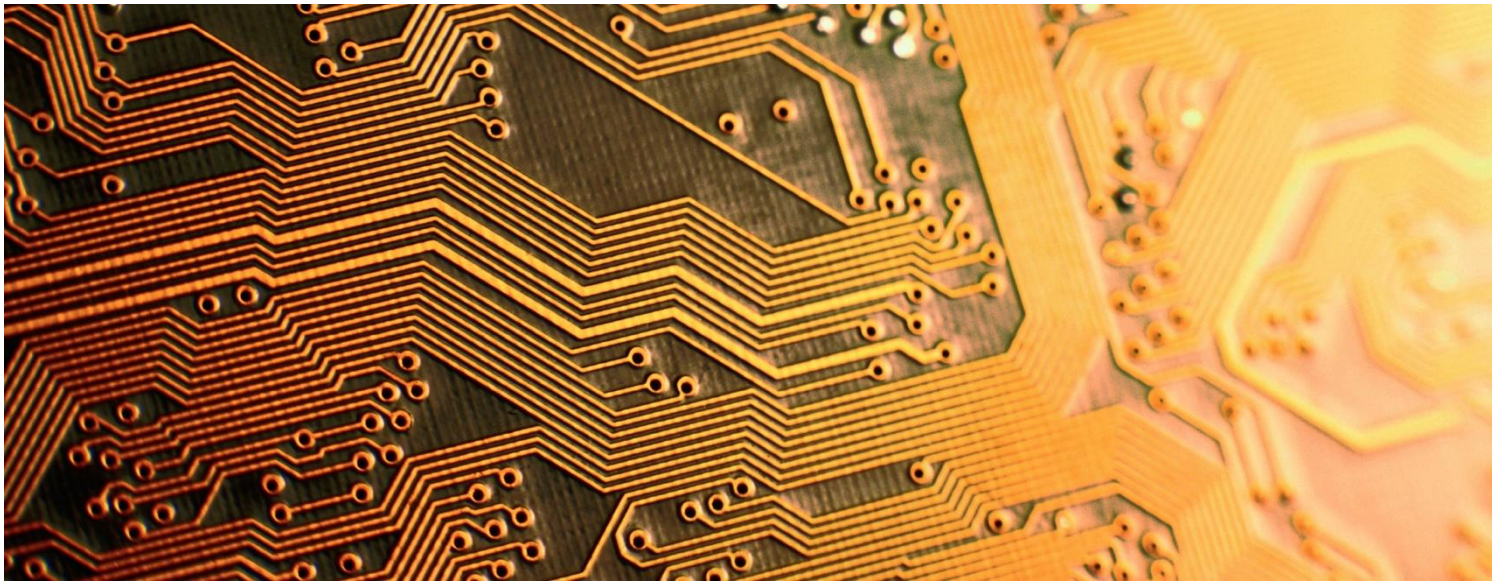
Global Entrepreneurial Wealth Report 2026



Investing for an AI world

The Global Entrepreneurial Wealth Report 2026 draws on a survey of over 3000 entrepreneurs across 17 markets to assess how entrepreneurs are approaching business growth, AI adoption and personal wealth strategy.

The findings show high overall confidence, with AI now the leading driver of optimism and planned investment. They also highlight a shift in growth strategy towards domestic M&A, while international expansion remains important in parts of Asia. On the wealth side, entrepreneurs' portfolios appear more preservation-led, with significant use of alternatives and private markets alongside traditional holdings.

$367bn

of AI investment is planned by these business owners over the next 12 months (based on an average 21% planned investment of annual turnover, and 34% for those operating the largest companies).

64%

are planning to buy a local company or merge with one, making domestic M&A the most commonly cited route to growth.

95%

of entrepreneurs are positive about their business prospects, with AI cited as the chief driver of that optimism.

49%

who invest in alternative assets plan to increase direct investment in private companies over the next 12 months.

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AI drives optimism

– Overall sentiment remains positive for business and personal wealth, but fewer are "highly" optimistic vs last year (fewer expecting things to get "a lot better" personally than 2025's 54%).

– 74% cite AI/technology as the main driver of business optimism.

– Hong Kong, mainland China and Taiwan show the biggest move up the optimism rankings (Hong Kong the most notable jump).

AI adoption and spend are accelerating — focused on productivity and margins

– AI is now widely used and embedded across entrepreneurs' businesses.

– 79% plan to increase AI spend in the next 12 months; 32% plan to increase it "a lot".

– Main drivers are productivity (43%) and profit margin improvement; only 26% cite enabling leaner workforces.

AI Investment signal is large: 21% of turnover, $367bn planned

– Planned AI investment averages 21% of annual turnover over the next 12 months, equating to an estimated $367bn across the surveyed businesses.

– The largest firms invest most (the $5bn+ revenue cohort plans 34% of turnover on average).

– Key barriers flagged: implementation cost (36%), data privacy/security (34%), employee resistance (34%), and legacy integration (33%).

Diversification and growth: domestic M&A leads, with selective international expansion

– 64% plan to buy/merge with a local company vs 43% looking at international expansion.

– For those looking overseas, Singapore draws the most interest (for both personal relocation and business expansion).

Wealth: preservation first; alternatives mainstream; AI trust dips for investing

– Trust in AI: 91% personal life, 90% helping in business, 84% managing investments.

– Key concerns: enjoying vs growing wealth (32%), volatility (31%), inflation (30%).

– Hard assets/alternatives feature strongly: gold held by 43% and the top planned increase (61%); planned increases also include real estate funds (55%) and private equity funds (50%).

Download the Global Entrepreneurial Wealth Report 2026 to see the full findings.

All data is based on an Ipsos UK online survey of 3,288 entrepreneurs (including 3,085 current and 203 former business owners) across 17 markets, conducted 1 April–15 May 2026.

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