Automation, AI and End-User Analytics: Addressing Spending Review 2025

The UK Government's Spending Review 2025 (SR25) sets out a clear expectation: by the 2028–29 fiscal year, departments must deliver substantial efficiency gains, productivity, and operate with greater financial discipline. Against a backdrop of fiscal constraint, rising demand for public services, digital transformation ambitions, and regulatory complexity, departments are required to deliver multi-year efficiency savings across administrative budgets, improve productivity in frontline and back-office functions, reduce duplication and siloed operations, strengthen financial controls, compliance and reporting, modernise legacy systems and reduce technical debt, and to improve data quality, governance, and transparency. Above all, SR25 signals a shift from incremental cost-cutting to structural productivity reform, demanding smarter use of technology, analytics and AI.

Why Departments Must Achieve Efficiency Gains

Departments face constrained real-term budget growth whilst seeing an increasing public service demand. They are experiencing inflationary pressures on contracts and staffing while operating in a political environment where there is a heightened scrutiny on value-for-money. Efficiency gains are required not only to balance budgets but to protect frontline services while reducing administrative overhead. Productivity remains under pressure due to a reliance on manual processes and a dependency on the use of spreadsheets to join, clean and prepare data, often in a technology estate that has fragmented data systems. This can create heavy reliance on specialist technical teams who may struggle to cope with reporting cycles, creating bottlenecks and a need to start earlier, or allocate dedicated staff for weeks at a time.

Research from IDC highlights that 88% of organisations face data and analytics technology constraints, 95% struggle to turn data into actionable analytic outcomes, and users can waste more than 1 day per week repeating work as data changes. For departments managing millions of transactions, these inefficiencies translate into delays in decision-making, an increase in compliance risk and higher operating costs, all ultimately reducing the quality of citizen service delivery, creating a need to target efficiencies:

Area	Required Improvement
Finance & Reporting	Faster month-end close, improved forecasting, automated reconciliations
Procurement	Reduced revenue leakage, better contract oversight
Tax, Grants & Benefits	Improved eligibility checks, fraud detection
Regulatory Reporting	Reduced manual reporting errors and penalties
HR & Workforce Planning	Optimised workforce modelling and cost forecasting
Policy Evaluation	Data-driven impact assessment and scenario modelling
IT & Infrastructure	Reduced duplication and legacy system dependence

For a successful resolution to the challenges, efficiency must shift from isolated cost-cutting to enterprise-wide automation, analytics and AI enablement.

The Role of End-User Analytics and AI Software in Driving Productivity

End-user analytics platforms enable non-technical business users to automate workflows, prepare data, and generate insights without relying heavily on IT. The advantage of adopting this type of approach is that it aligns directly with SR25's objectives: reducing operational bottlenecks, improving data governance, enhancing productivity and delivering measurable ROI.

Automation transforms manual spreadsheet-heavy processes such as financial reconciliations, regulatory submissions, performance dashboards, forecast modelling and compliance testing – traditionally multi-step, manual and labour-intensive activities requiring data from multiple sources within the organisation. Simple calculation methodologies show how automation translates into financial value: *hours saved* × *frequency* × *FTE cost* = *annualised savings*. This does not, however, include the benefits of improved organisational outcomes that are also seen.

Agentic AI

Agentic AI surpasses static workflows by enabling context-aware decision logic, continuous data monitoring, trigger-based actions, and multi-system orchestration while maintaining explainability. It transforms workflows into intelligent agents that execute at scale, supporting SR25 by automating decision loops to detect anomalies, apply classification logic, escalate risks, and automatically document audit trails. This enhances fraud detection, speeds intervention, reduces staff workload, and increases confidence in compliance. For regulatory monitoring, it tracks threshold breaches, validates policies, re-runs checks on data changes, and triggers reports. It also allows scenario testing by recalculating impact models, comparing policies, updating dashboards, and flagging issues, thus improving policy agility, forecasting, and decision-making. This reduces reliance on custom scripts, manual reprocessing, and data engineering, offering ongoing benefits aligned with SR25 efficiency goals.

Risk Reduction and Compliance

Public sector risk exposure includes audit penalties, misreporting to regulators and delayed statutory submissions as well as data quality failures. Automated and AI-enhanced workflows, on the other hand, reduce manual errors, standardise KPI definitions, improve traceability and strengthen audit readiness. Server-based deployment further enhances governance by centralising workflows, version control, and audit trails. Some organisations report:

- 95% reduction in single-point-of-failure risk
- 3x faster access to trusted data
- 4x faster reconciliation cycles
- 25% time efficiency improvement across finance functions
- 55x faster processes vs. legacy (Source: Alteryx internal figures)

From these benefits, three primary value drivers consistently emerge: cost reduction, productivity gains and risk mitigation, all of which align directly with SR25 objectives.

Summary

AI-capable unified analytics platforms provide centralised governance, hybrid cloud/on-premises capability, AI-ready data preparation, and enterprise-level audit and lineage. This minimises dependencies, IT delays, data duplication, and shadow IT. Unlike large ERP projects, they integrate with existing systems, require minimal infrastructure changes, enable rapid prototyping, and support incremental deployment, reducing transformation risks and enabling high-impact, scalable use cases. Public sector deployments have realised high value when aligned with strategic goals, with up to 600% ROI over 3 years, payback in 3-6 months, 30% productivity gains, improved capacity reallocation and cost avoidance, service quality improvements, and reduced compliance risk: these metrics meet and exceed the ambitions and targets set out in SR25.

Meeting SR25 Targets

To meet SR25 targets, departments require automation at scale, governance by design and measurable ROI with minimal transformation disruption and the ability to digitally upskill the workforce without major restructuring. This is underpinned by rapid tool deployment, immediate productivity gains and controlled AI enablement, all while improving enterprise audit, compliance, governance and security. Critically, this does not require wholesale system replacement. It augments existing infrastructure, accelerating efficiency without destabilising operations. SR25 requires UK government departments to deliver structural efficiency gains: traditional cost-cutting will not suffice. Automation, Agentic AI and end-user analytics represent a practical, scalable, and measurable path to improve productivity, reduce risk, enhance transparency, strengthen financial control and enable better policy decisions.

Global evidence shows that platforms like Alteryx One can deliver substantial ROI, governance improvements and workforce enablement with minimal disruption. If the UK Government is serious about achieving its efficiency ambitions, empowering departments with governed, scalable end-user analytics, automation and AI may not just be helpful — it may be essential.

About Alteryx

Founded in 1997, Alteryx, Inc. is a global software company specialising in analytics automation, data preparation, and AI-driven insights. It empowers organisations to turn raw data into actionable outcomes through a unified, low-code analytics platform. With 2,500 employees globally, it provides solutions to over 8,000 organisations with over 500,000 community members.

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