

AI is the Engine. Strategy is the Journey.

By Randy Storch

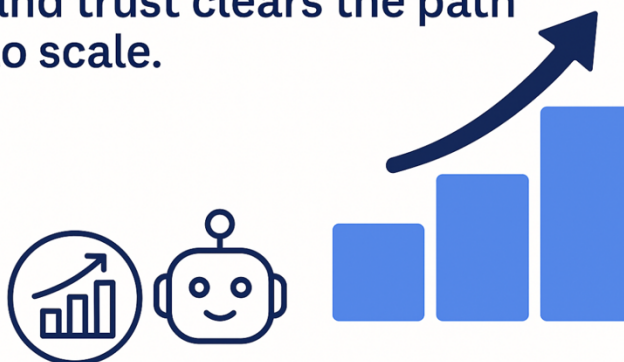
Everyone wants AI.

Fewer are ready for it.

Most smart building portfolios are sitting on fragmented systems, manual processes, and outdated data.

So if you lead with “AI,” you’ll get nods—until the first implementation meeting. Then reality sets in.

Short-term gains build trust, and trust clears the path to scale.



The key? Sell the journey—but earn the right to take it by delivering short-term ROI.

Step 1: Look for Patterns, Not Just Problems

The biggest mistake is solving one-off issues in isolation.

The better approach? **Consolidate field-level pain into repeatable patterns:**

- Multiple sites with delayed inspections?
- Reports taking hours to assemble?
- Reactive maintenance across regions?

These aren’t anomalies—they’re opportunities to build scalable solutions.

When you solve them **with reusable tech** (workflow engines, mobile intake, smart dashboards), you:

- Deliver short-term ROI

- Improve operational reliability
- And set the foundation for a smarter platform

This isn't just fixing things. It's designing for replication.

Step 2: Tie Every Win to a Bigger Vision

A process fix alone won't transform a building.

But a fix that's framed as part of a larger roadmap? That builds momentum.

Connect every improvement to a broader capability:

- From better asset data → to predictive maintenance
- From digitized workflows → to real-time decision support
- From cost savings today → to autonomous operations tomorrow

Every step forward should point to the longer journey.

Step 3: Build the Data Foundation While You Scale

Now you can fix what really matters:

- Normalize asset hierarchies
- Connect siloed systems
- Establish data governance and ownership

This is where most smart building AI efforts break down.

But if you've already delivered value—and shown what's next—you'll have support to keep going.

Step 4: Scale AI That Works

With a foundation in place, AI is no longer theoretical.

Now you can:

- Predict failures across your portfolio
- Surface operational insights in real time
- Optimize performance with AI copilots, not just dashboards

This is how AI moves from pilot to platform.

✨ **The Real Strategy?**

You don't sell AI.

You sell **a roadmap to smarter operations**—grounded in ROI, driven by pattern recognition, and sustained by a long-term vision.

👉 *Short-term wins get you started.*

👉 *The journey is what gets you scale.*

👉 *And in smart buildings, the journey is the strategy.*
