

Go South West · Go-Ahead Group · Plymouth Citybus, Go Cornwall Bus and Dartline

An AI audit that paid for itself before delivery even began.

Like most established businesses, AI was already inside Go South West before any plan for it existed. Managers were experimenting informally and invisibly across every department. Before rolling out training or buying licences, the business needed an honest picture: how AI was actually being used, where the real opportunities sat, and what could go wrong.

34

managers surveyed across four companies

30+

real use cases surfaced and ranked

40–80%

saved on the audit bill by targeting it

£0

licence spend committed during the audit

What we did

Over four months we surveyed the full 34-strong management group, ran one-to-one sessions with 16 managers selected on the strength of that evidence, took an AI usage policy from a blank page to director review, and designed a training programme built on what people actually said rather than on what a consultant assumed.

Every session was recorded, transcribed and written up into a structured, queryable knowledge base. Every recommendation traces back to something a manager actually said.

Without the bloat

The obvious approach was to interview all 34 managers and bill accordingly. We interviewed 16. A questionnaire did the wide sweep cheaply, and the expensive one-to-one sessions went only where the questionnaire could not answer the question. Twelve people were moved straight into the training plan instead of the interview list.

That discipline saved the client an estimated 40 to 80 per cent on the audit bill: money that would have been spent confirming what was already known.

What the audit found

- A data governance exposure the business could not see from the inside, now documented and being closed with a policy written for this business rather than inherited from elsewhere
- A tooling and licensing picture that turned out to be four different pictures across the four companies. A training programme built on the assumed baseline would have failed in front of its first cohort. It was corrected before a single module was written
- More than 30 repetitive tasks that managers themselves flagged as ready for AI, ranked into a pilot pipeline with named volunteer owners. Two of the strongest use cases were not in the original brief at all

A single pilot from the pipeline clears the entire cost of the audit on its own.

Where it stands

The programme is now moving into delivery: policy sign-off, a tooling audit, and the first training cohort with two pilots attached. This case study will grow as it does.

"We thought we had a reasonable picture of how AI was being used across our business. Discovery showed us how much we couldn't see. It changed what we're buying, what we're training, and the order we're doing it in, and it did that without wasting anyone's time."

Richard Stevens, Managing Director, Go South West

**AI is already inside your business.
Find out what it's doing.**

Book a conversation
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