

# Sidetrade Wins The Hackett Group®'s 2026 Innovation Award for Its Agentic Operating Model

## Recognized in the Technology Operations Category

- Revolutionary New R&D AI-First Delivery Model
- Agentic Operating Model Now Scaling Company-Wide
- Targeting a 30% to 35% EBITDA Margin by 2030

**June 30, 2026 | [Sidetrade](#), the AI-native Order-to-Cash Intelligence company, has won [The Hackett Group®'s](#) 2026 Innovation Award for its agentic operating model, the internal engine of its [O2C Intelligence 2030](#) strategy. The Hackett Group® judged entrants on demonstrated evidence of value realization and business impact through AI-enabled solutions.**

While 88% of organizations are deploying AI, **81% of them report no meaningful bottom-line impact** ([McKinsey, State of Organizations 2026](#)). The companies pulling ahead are redesigning their operating models around AI rather than applying it to unchanged processes. Sidetrade was judged by **The Hackett Group® strictly on realized, not anticipated, impact and value**, placing the company among the early movers achieving significant performance improvement with AI.

**Kyle McNabb, Principal and Program Leader for AI Applied Intelligence, The Hackett Group®**, said: “The leading organizations recognized in this year's Hackett Innovation Awards demonstrate that real AI value comes from prioritizing workforce and process transformation over technology adoption alone. By redesigning how work gets done and embedding AI into workflows, they are delivering measurable performance gains and sustainable ROI at scale.”

## From Agentic AI as a Product to Agentic AI as an Operating Model

Sidetrade built a new R&D operating model, called PodFlow. In the initial pilot, a team of three delivered what once took six, and features that previously took 80 person-days were delivered in three. 22 R&D teams at Sidetrade now run PodFlow and the program paid back its costs within six months.

**Sidetrade Chief Product Officer, Rob Harvey**, said: “As an AI-native company, we are our client zero. We drink our own champagne. Every day, our teams work with the same AI-first mindset that defines what we bring to market. The result is a continuous cycle of learning, innovation, and execution that directly benefits our customers. That is what The Hackett Group® recognized.”

Sidetrade's AI transformation began mid-2025 with its annual hackathon, where engineering teams proved AI could contribute across the Software Development Lifecycle (SDLC), including code generation. As code gets generated faster, the bottlenecks in the previous SDLC move both upstream to Product and downstream to Quality Assurance and Release. So, Sidetrade extended PodFlow across the entire SDLC, reinventing how it builds. R&D teams have been restructured into smaller, AI-augmented pods with agents working at every stage of a structured delivery workflow, and quality gates enforcing standards from problem definition through documentation.

**Sidetrade Chief Technology Officer, Mark Sheldon**, said: “We did not optimize individual developer productivity. We redesigned the system in which development happens. Agents now validate problems, generate specifications, write code, run tests, and prepare documentation. The result is features

delivered faster, continuous product innovation, and an enhanced experience for our customers. Developers now direct, validate, and govern what AI and agents deliver."

This AI operating model was first piloted on two contrasting product lines (Deductions and Cash App), confirming it held across different codebases before scaling. At Sidetrade, no feature enters the R&D pipeline without a validated problem, and none ships without complete documentation, so speed never comes at the cost of control. It is now the standard way Sidetrade's R&D organization works, with all **six of The Hackett Group's AI enablers** (predictive, conversational, insight, workflow, cognitive, and content) in daily production use.

## Beyond Engineering, A Model for the Entire Enterprise

Sidetrade has now extended its new AI operating model to every business function.

"What started in engineering is now the new operating model across our company," said **Anaïs Novasque, Sidetrade Head of AI Transformation**. "We are redesigning how every function works, process by process, simplifying before automating, with people and AI agents collaborating. This is an operational transformation, not a technology deployment. The companies that lead over the next three years will be those that reinvent how work gets done through human-agent collaboration, not those that layer AI onto legacy processes."

Each phase is self-funded by the savings of the previous. Sidetrade is targeting up to a 20% productivity gain in 2026, with further gains expected in 2027. The resources freed up will be reinvested to provide a superior customer experience.

This also addresses shifting market expectations. Enterprise buyers increasingly expect vendors to run their business with the AI they advocate, and many now ask before shortlisting. **The Hackett Group® award provides independent recognition of Sidetrade's AI operational transformation with measurable business outcomes internally and for its clients**. The agentic operating model is the internal execution of [O2C Intelligence 2030](#), Sidetrade's strategy to become an AI-native company.

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### About Sidetrade ([www.sidetrade.com](http://www.sidetrade.com))

Sidetrade (Euronext Growth: ALBFR.PA) is an AI-native Order-to-Cash (O2C) company. Its platform combines O2C applications, autonomous AI agents, and Aimie IQ, a natural-language intelligence interface that helps global organizations accelerate cash generation. Sidetrade operates the world's largest [proprietary O2C Data Lake](#), built on \$9 trillion in B2B transactions and 42.5 million buyer entities. This data trains domain-expert AI models that continuously monitor, reason, decide, and act autonomously across the O2C cycle. Sidetrade serves businesses in 85 countries with 450 employees across Europe, North America, and Asia-Pacific.

For more information, visit us at [www.sidetrade.com](http://www.sidetrade.com) and follow us on LinkedIn at [@Sidetrade](#).

*In the event of any discrepancy between the French and English versions of this press release, only the English version is to be taken into account.*