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Mind the Gap – Insights into the Disparity Between Risk Technology Ambition and Adoption

2026 Airmic Risk Technology Report

IN ASSOCIATION WITH:

Redhand advisors

SPONSORED BY:

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About Airmic

Airmic is the UK's largest and most vibrant risk management and insurance association. Airmic has over 450 corporate members and 2,000 individual members, and is supported by a network of leading risk and insurance partners and affiliated institutes, associations and universities.

We are growing through welcoming both those in the risk and insurance professions and in roles connected to risk and insurance. We have taken a leading position in the future of risk financing including alternative risk financing solutions. As such, we are in a strong position to represent the views of our members, and to advocate for their needs within business, standards and regulatory bodies, and government in the UK and internationally. We are active members of FERMA, the Federation of European Risk Management Associations, and IFRIMA, the International Federation of Risk and Insurance Management Associations.

Our members enjoy access to a wide variety of face-to-face and online events, networking, special interest groups, regional meetings, and learning opportunities supported by a competency framework and mentoring scheme. Our online library features work by leaders in the profession, including research, guides, papers, newsletters, and resources.

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About Redhand Advisors

Redhand Advisors is the leading provider of consulting services and market research for the risk management technology (RiskTech) market. Redhand's mission is to support organizations as they drive business performance through improved risk management, and to assist clients make informed business and technology decisions by providing actionable advice, support, subject matter expertise and in-depth knowledge on the risk technology market.

The firm offers expertise in a broad range of risk technology solutions including: IRM, RMIS, Claims, GRC, EH&S, Risk Pool Administration, Underwriting and AI/Analytics platforms. They support the entire system lifecycle from system analysis, vendor selection and implementation to solution alignment and optimization.

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About Riskonnect

Riskonnect is the leading integrated risk management software solution provider. Our technology empowers organisations with the ability to anticipate, manage, and respond in real-time to strategic and operational risks across the extended enterprise.

Riskonnect's integrated risk management platform consolidates data, connects risks, and illustrates their relationships. Our growing suite of risk management applications helps our customers understand risk at a level they can't get anywhere else. It's no wonder that more organisations choose Riskonnect than any other vendor as their preferred risk management technology provider.

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Preface

Risk management has never lacked for technology options. Over the past decade, the market has produced an increasingly capable range of platforms, tools, and solutions designed to help organisations identify, measure, and mitigate risk. What it has lacked and what this survey makes plain is a clear picture of how those options are actually being used, where they are falling short, and what the people who rely on them every day think should come next.

That is what this report sets out to provide. The 2026 Airmic Risk Technology Survey is built on the responses of risk and insurance professionals drawn from across Airmic's membership. It is not a vendor satisfaction survey or a technology showcase, though our 2026 RMIS Report does contain vendor solutions that allow you to research the marketplace at www.rmisreport.com. It is a practitioner-led view of how the profession is navigating a technology landscape that is becoming more powerful, more complex, and with the arrival of AI more uncertain than at any point in recent memory.

This report is intended to be provide meaningful information to risk and insurance professionals to understand the technology landscape, what to focus on, and where to make investments.

I am grateful to Airmic for commissioning this work and to every respondent who took the time to share their experience.

Patrick O'Neill
President & Founder, Redhand Advisors

Foreword

Airmic is delighted to share the results of our second risk technology survey. Conducted in association with Redhand Advisors and Riskonnect, it paints a picture that I recognise from my conversations with Airmic members. The profession is clear on its goals, but remains unclear on how technology can support the successful delivery of business objectives.

Respondents say data quality is their top priority, but still report challenges with fragmented systems and manual workarounds. They are engaged on AI, but may not have moved beyond the pilot stage. They want integrated platforms, but budgets and internal resistance hold them back. These are not reasons to be disheartened – they are a candid starting point for progress.

What gives me confidence is the direction of travel. Organisations and vendors are investing to overcome the challenges. Their priorities are clear – better data, stronger analytics, more useful reporting for decision-makers, understanding that technology is a means, not an end. To get the most from them, risk technology solutions need to be implemented and supported well.

I would like to thank our Airmic members who contributed to this report, as well as our partners. I hope it will help support the risk community in making better decisions on technology investment and use.

Diane Maxwell
CEO, Airmic

"This report underlines that risk professions are at an inflection point, where ambition is rising faster than technology adoption. Organisations know that better data, stronger integration, and more practical use of AI are essential to turning risk technology into business value. What stands out in these findings is not a lack of intent, but a clear need for simpler execution, stronger foundations, and measurable outcomes. The opportunity now is to close that gap with technology strategies that reduce complexity, improve decision-making, and help risk leaders move from insight to action.

– Jim Wetekamp, CEO, Riskonnect

Key Findings

The survey data points to six key findings that together define the state of risk technology across the Airmic community in 2026.

1. **Fragmentation is the defining challenge.** Well over half of the respondent base lacks meaningful system integration, with their technology split between disconnected multi-system environments and spreadsheet-reliant processes. This is not a technology limitation; integrated platforms exist. It is an investment, implementation, and change management challenge. Until integration improves, every other priority – data quality, analytics, AI – will be constrained.

2. **Satisfaction is lukewarm, but impact is demonstrable.** More than three-quarters of technology users report better reporting, and more than half cite improved risk analysis. Technology delivers when properly deployed. The problem is not whether technology works, it is whether the right technology is in place, well-implemented, and adequately supported.

3. **Data quality is the single most important enabler.** Data quality and governance emerged as the top priority, the foundation for analytics improvements, the prerequisite for AI effectiveness, and an implicit factor in nearly every other finding. Organisations that solve the data challenge unlock value across every other technology investment.

4. **AI interest is outpacing understanding.** Generative AI has achieved the fastest adoption curve in risk management history, yet two-thirds of respondents cite understanding capabilities and limitations as their top barrier, and more than half report no measurable AI value. The gap between adoption and impact is the most urgent challenge for the profession to address.

5. **Budget is the gatekeeper, but the real issue is the business case.** Cost appears as a barrier in multiple forms: budget constraints are the top barrier, high implementation costs follow close behind, and ROI uncertainty was selected by more than four in ten respondents. Total cost is a unanimous vendor selection criterion. The financial barriers will not be resolved through larger budgets alone, they require better measurement of technology's contribution to enterprise value and more disciplined approaches to business case development.

6. **The market is active and directional.** Roughly four in five organisations invested in risk technology in the past year. Those expecting budget increases outnumber those expecting decreases by five to one. Half plan further investment in the next two years. The pace is uneven, a meaningful minority are unlikely to invest but the direction is unmistakable: towards better data, smarter analytics, and AI-augmented risk management.


MIND

1. Introduction

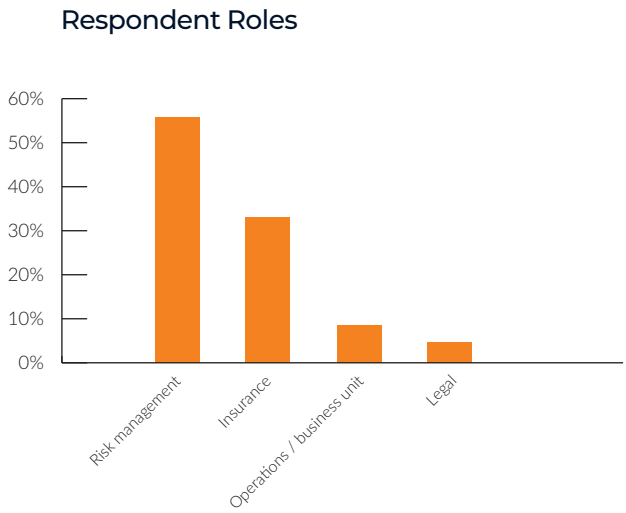
Risk management technology has never been more capable, or more unevenly adopted. The 2026 Airmic Risk Technology Survey captures the views of risk and insurance professionals across the United Kingdom to measure the gap between what the market offers and what practitioners actually use. Conducted in April 2026, the survey examines how organisations are adopting, deploying, and extracting value from risk technology, and where ambition is running ahead of reality.

The findings are organised around six dimensions of that gap: the current technology landscape, its fragmentation, and how technology is actually being used versus how it could be; satisfaction and demonstrable impact; the financial, technical, and organisational barriers that slow progress; the emerging role of artificial intelligence; investment intentions; and strategic priorities. Each section draws directly on the survey data, is accompanied by charts illustrating the key patterns, and concludes with analytical observations that contextualise the numbers within broader industry dynamics.

What emerges is a profession that knows where it wants to go but is struggling to get there. Organisations recognise the value of technology and are increasingly willing to invest, yet persistent gaps – between ambition and adoption, between purchase and implementation, between data aspiration and data reality – continue to define the landscape. The arrival of AI, particularly generative AI, has widened some of these gaps even as it promises to close others. This report aims to help risk professionals, vendors, and industry stakeholders mind those gaps and close them.

Respondent Demographics

The survey drew predominantly from risk management and insurance functions, which together accounted for nearly 90% of respondents. This composition means the findings are grounded in the perspective of those who own and operate risk technology day to day – the professionals who feel its limitations most acutely and stand to benefit most directly from improvements.



The survey results span the full revenue spectrum, from organisations with annual revenue below £500 million through to those with revenue above £15 billion. The distribution is important to note; it means findings are not skewed solely toward large enterprise. Mid-market organisations face many of the same technology challenges but typically with fewer resources and less vendor leverage. That both ends of the spectrum report similar barriers – budget, integration, executive buy-in – suggests these are structural issues for the profession, not simply a function of scale.

Organisation Revenue Distribution

About our respondents

The survey was conducted in April 2026, and received 53 responses from Airmic members from a variety of sectors. Respondents also came from a combination of existing commercial system users and those that do not currently use a commercial system.

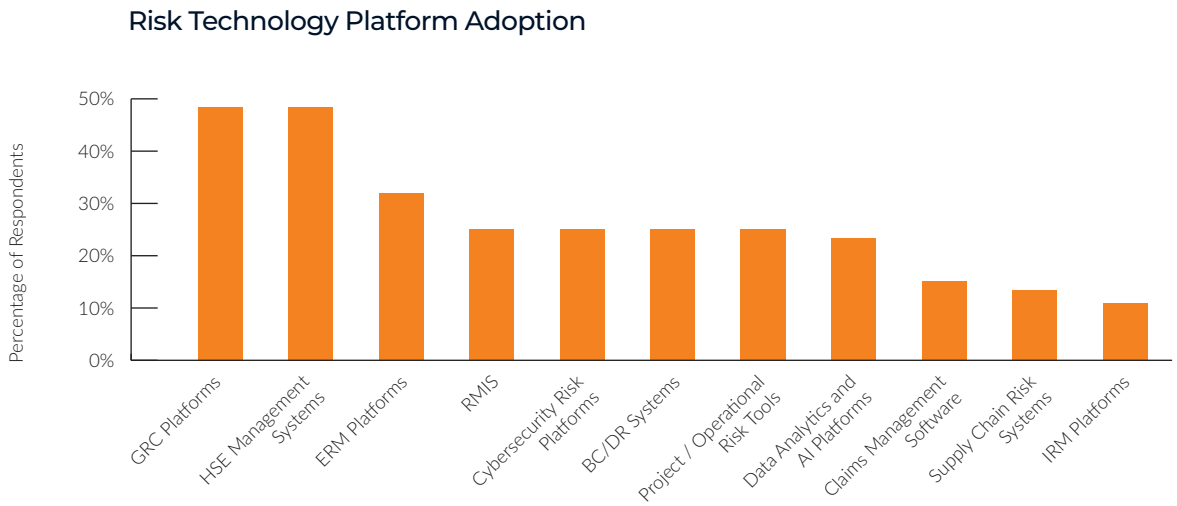
2. Current Technology Landscape

Platforms in Use

Governance, risk, and compliance (GRC) platforms, and health, safety, and environment (HSE) systems are the most widely adopted platforms, each used by nearly half of respondents. A cluster of tools including ERM platforms, traditional RMIS, cybersecurity risk platforms, business continuity and disaster recovery systems, and project/operational risk tools are part of the next tier of platforms in use.

Data analytics and AI-powered platforms have reached nearly one in four respondents. While this places these platforms near the bottom of the adoption table, this ranking is notable for two reasons: these platforms barely registered in earlier surveys, and it likely understates actual AI exposure given that many traditional platforms are now embedding AI features into their core offerings.

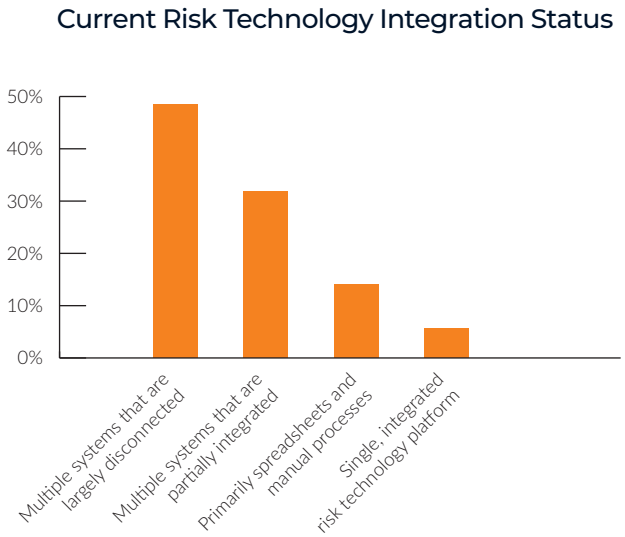
Integrated risk management (IRM) platforms trail the field. This is particularly striking given the industry's stated aspiration toward integration: very few organisations have adopted platforms explicitly designed to unify risk data, even though nearly half of respondents describe their systems as disconnected.



Integration and Fragmentation

The risk technology environment is heavily fragmented, and this is arguably the single most important finding in the survey. Nearly half of respondents use multiple systems that are largely disconnected. A further third report partial integration, meaning that a large majority of respondents are working with some degree of system fragmentation.

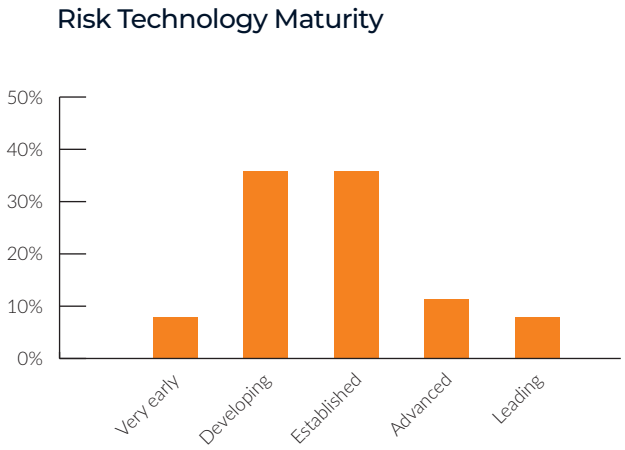
Fragmentation has cascading consequences. It undermines data quality, makes consolidated reporting difficult, creates manual workarounds that consume staff time, and limits the ability to generate the cross-functional risk insights that boards increasingly demand. It also constrains AI readiness: machine learning and generative AI tools require clean, consolidated data to function effectively, and the majority of the respondents are not yet in a position to provide that.



Technology Maturity

Technology maturity mirrors the integration picture. An equal percentage of respondents describe their organisation as 'developing' or 'established', and these two categories together account for nearly three-quarters of respondents. Only a small minority rate themselves as 'advanced' or 'leading'. This broad middle represents organisations that have moved past spreadsheets but have not yet achieved the integration and analytics sophistication they aspire to.

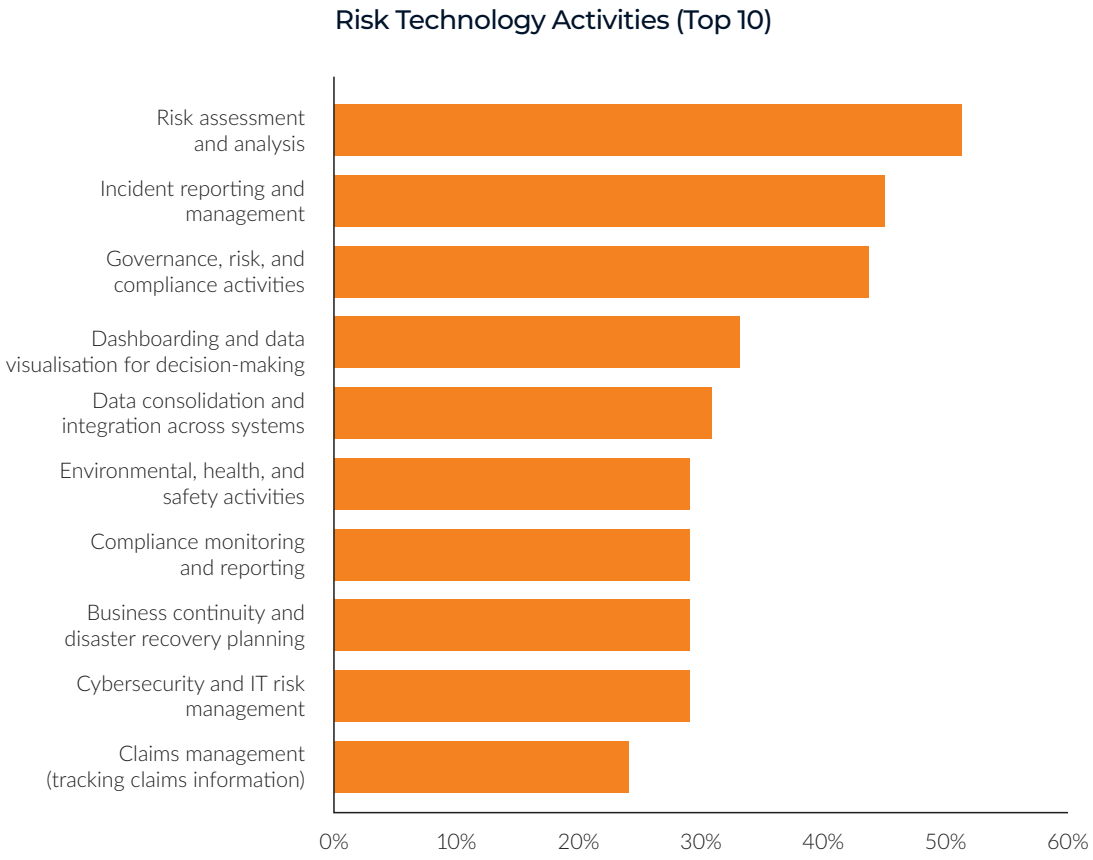
The gap between 'established' and 'advanced' appears to be the hardest to cross. Moving from a functioning but siloed technology environment to one that delivers integrated, analytics-driven insights requires investment in data architecture, process redesign, and organisational capability, not just new software.



How Technology Is Used

Risk assessment and analysis is the most common activity supported by technology, cited by more than half of respondents. Incident reporting and management, and governance, risk, and compliance activities follow close behind, with dashboarding and data visualisation cited by roughly a third. Data consolidation, environmental health and safety, compliance monitoring, business continuity, and cybersecurity risk management form a middle tier, with just under a third of respondents using technology for each of these activities.

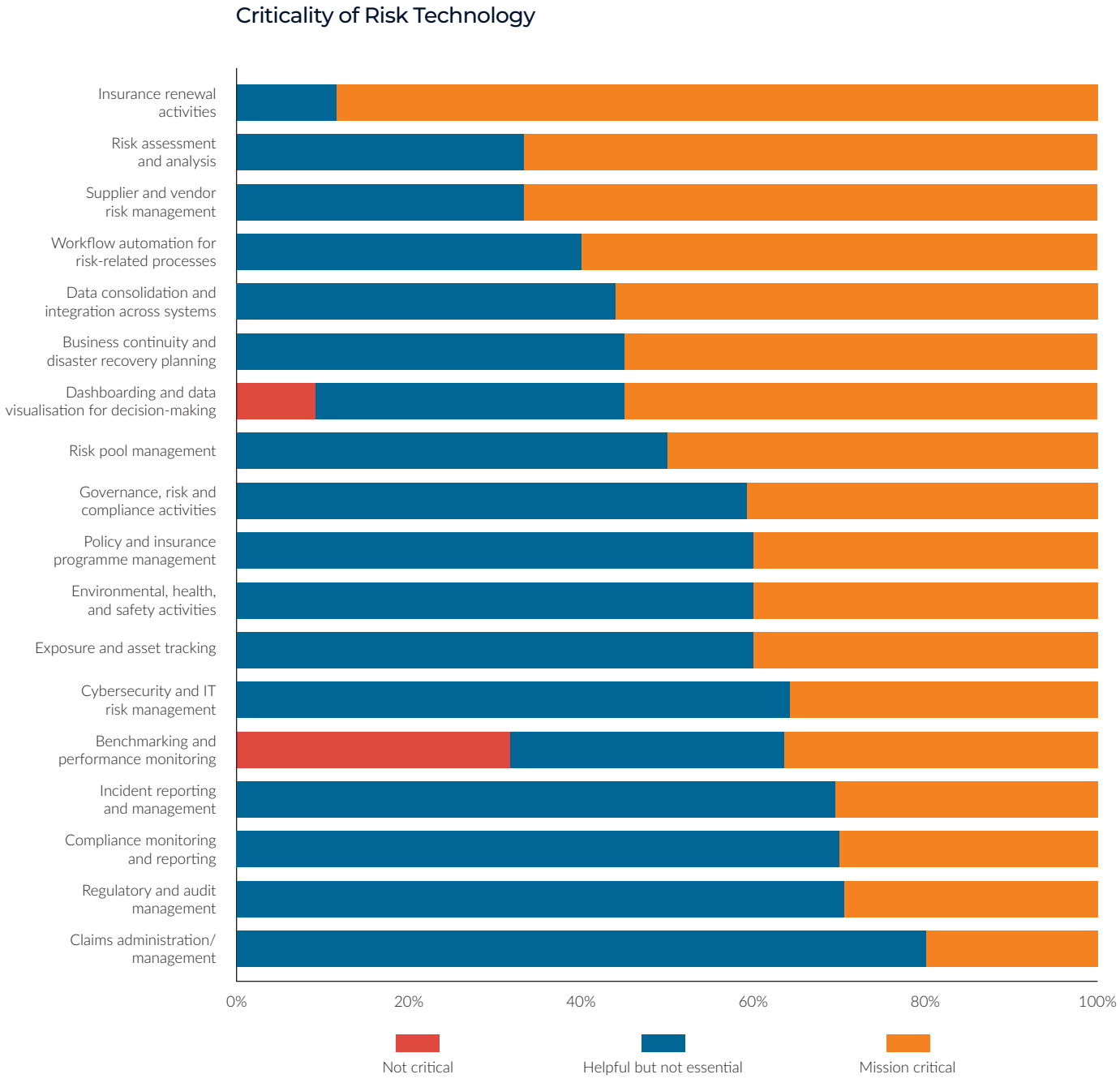
At the lower end, technology to support advanced analytics and predictive modelling is used by only 5% of respondents. This is one of the most striking gaps in the entire survey. Advanced analytics ranks as the second-highest unmet technology need, yet actual adoption is negligible. The gap between demand and deployment suggests that organisations recognise the value of predictive capability but face barriers – likely data quality, skills, and system fragmentation – that prevent them from acting on that recognition.



Criticality of Technology

Where technology is deployed, it rapidly becomes indispensable. When it comes to the criticality of using of risk technology, insurance renewal activities received the highest mission-critical rating. Supplier and vendor risk management, risk assessment and analysis, and workflow automation were also rated by a majority of users as mission-critical, as were data consolidation, business continuity, and dashboarding.

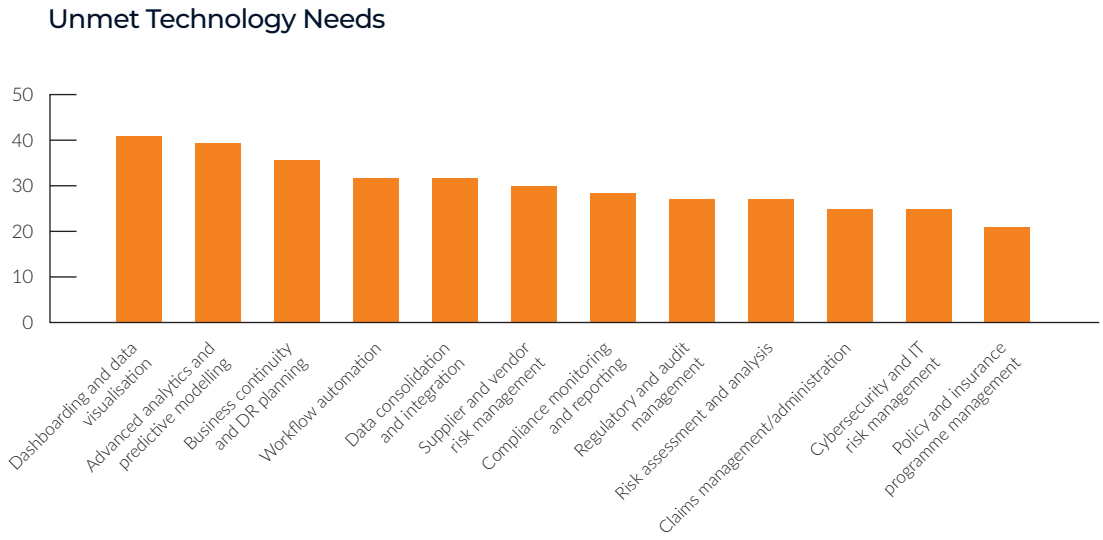
The most telling finding in this section is that only a few respondents rated any activities as 'not critical.' This tells us that once technology is embedded in a risk process, it is considered at minimum helpful and more often essential.



Unmet Technology Needs

The areas respondents most want technology to address but currently lack support for are dashboarding/data visualisation, advanced analytics/predictive modelling, and business continuity/disaster recovery (DR) planning. Data consolidation and workflow automation round out the top tier.

These gaps map directly to the strategic priorities respondents identified later in the survey, creating a reinforcing signal: the profession knows what it needs, and the technology exists to deliver it. The constraints are implementation capacity, data readiness, and budget.



Key Observations

- The combination of nearly half citing disconnected systems and a further group citing reliance on spreadsheets means that well over half of respondents lack meaningful system integration, the foundational challenge that constrains every other ambition.
- Low IRM platform adoption reveals a disconnect between aspiration and action: the profession wants integration but has not widely adopted the platforms designed to deliver it.
- The negligible adoption of advanced analytics versus substantial unmet demand represents the single largest capability gap in the survey. Closing it will require progress on data quality and integration before analytics tools can deliver value.
- Very few respondents rated any technology-supported activity as ‘not critical’. Once technology is deployed in a risk process, it becomes embedded and essential, making replacement and upgrade decisions inherently difficult.
- The tight alignment between unmet needs and stated priorities suggests the demand signal is genuine and consistent, highlighting a desire for investment in technology.

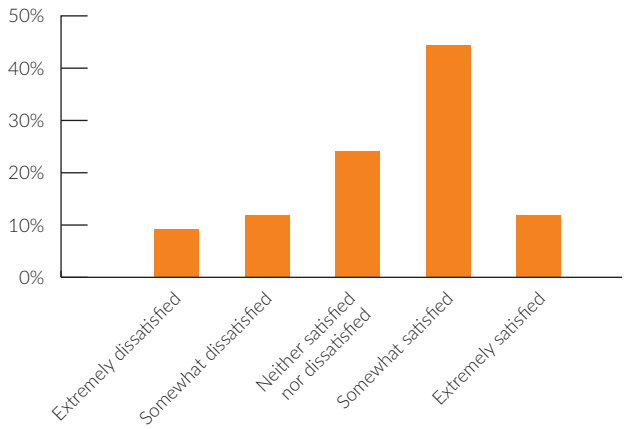
3. Satisfaction and Impact

Satisfaction Levels

Satisfaction with current risk technology is moderate. The satisfaction picture is notably weaker than what technology vendors typically report in their own customer surveys, suggesting a gap between vendor perception and user experience.

The sizeable neutral group may be the most strategically interesting segment. These are organisations that are not actively dissatisfied but are also not seeing enough value to commit to their current path. They represent the segment most likely to switch vendors, invest in upgrades, or engage with new approaches if the case is made effectively.

Satisfaction with Current Risk Technology

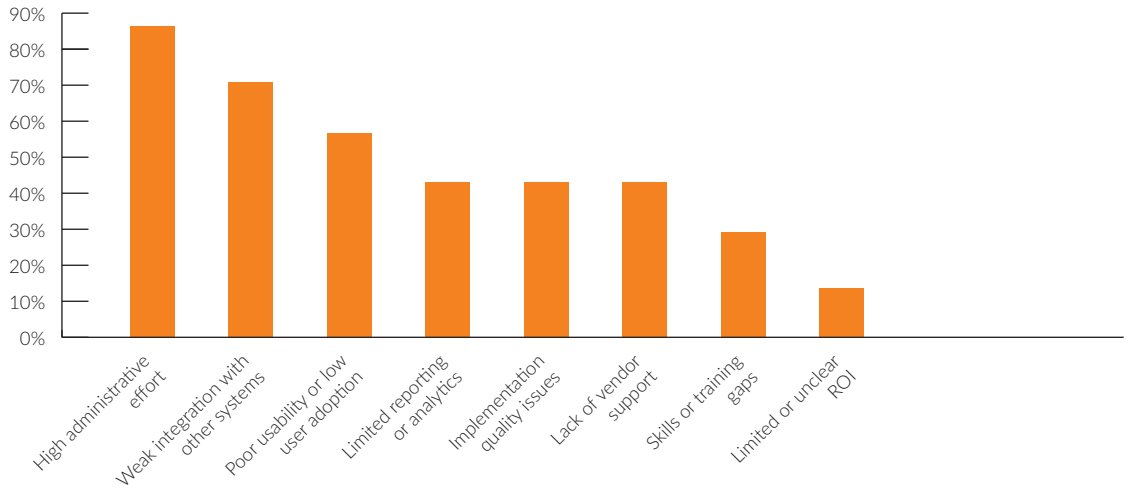


Drivers of Dissatisfaction

Among those who expressed dissatisfaction, the pain points are specific and actionable. High administrative effort was cited by the overwhelming majority, a finding that undercuts the fundamental promise of technology, which is to reduce manual work, not create it. Weak integration with other systems was the second most common complaint, reinforcing the fragmentation theme. Poor usability and low user adoption, and limited reporting or analytics round out the top tier.

Implementation quality issues, lack of vendor support, and limited or unclear ROI were each cited by a significant minority of dissatisfied respondents. Taken together, these findings suggest that dissatisfaction is driven less by the inherent capability of the technology and more by how it was selected, implemented, and supported. The implication for organisations planning new investments is clear: implementation quality and vendor support should be weighted as heavily as feature lists in procurement decisions.

Primary Reasons for Dissatisfaction

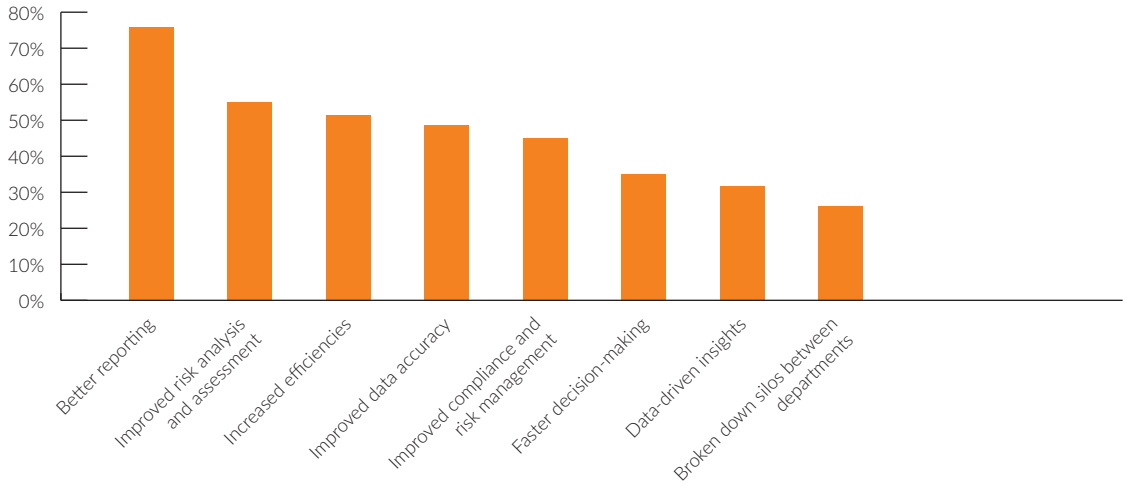


Technology Impact

Despite the satisfaction concerns, technology is delivering tangible outcomes where it is deployed. Better reporting leads the list by a wide margin. Improved risk analysis and assessment, increased efficiencies and improved business processes, and improved data accuracy form a second tier, each cited by roughly half of the respondents.

The lower-ranked outcomes are more revealing: data-driven insights and broken-down silos. These are the aspirational outcomes that most organisations have not yet achieved, the ones that require integrated data and advanced analytics. The pattern suggests a maturity ladder: organisations first achieve reporting improvements, then operational efficiencies, and only later reach the insight-generation stage that delivers strategic value.

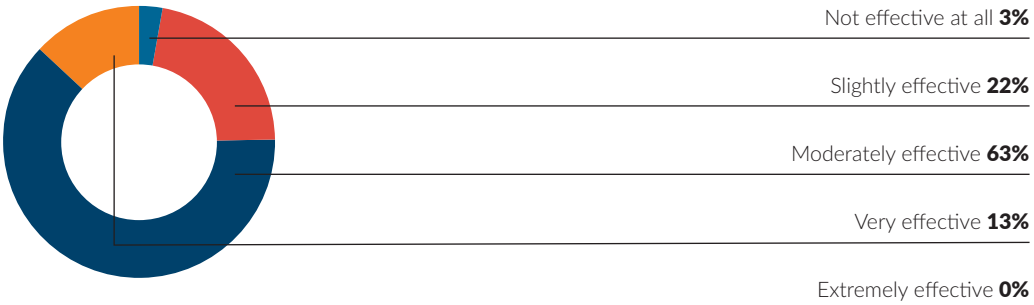
Impact of Current Risk Technology



Data and Analytics Effectiveness

When asked how effective their use of data and analytics is in managing risk, the clear majority settled on 'moderately effective'. A minority rated it as 'very effective', and not a single respondent said 'extremely effective'. The absence of any top-tier rating is glaring. Even among organisations that have invested in analytics, none feel they have fully realised the potential. This is consistent with the maturity and integration findings – analytics is only as good as the data that feeds it, and most organisations are still working on that foundation.

Data and Analytics Effectiveness



Year-over-year trends (based on the 2025 Airmic Technology Survey):

Satisfaction is slipping. Combined satisfaction ('somewhat satisfied' and 'extremely satisfied') dropped from 63% in 2025 to 56% in 2026. Extreme satisfaction fell from 19% to 12%, while extreme dissatisfaction nearly tripled. The neutral middle grew from 15% to 24%, reinforcing the point above: the persuadable middle is growing, and with it the window for competitive displacement.

Confidence in data and analytics has dropped sharply. In 2025, 33% of respondents rated their analytics effectiveness. In 2026, that figure fell to just 13%, with zero respondents selecting 'extremely effective'. The bulk of the population shifted into 'moderately effective' (from 40% to 63%), suggesting a more restrained self-assessment as organisations confront the gap between analytics ambition and the underlying data quality required to deliver on it.

Key Observations

- The overwhelming majority of dissatisfied respondents cited high administrative effort, indicating a fundamental implementation failure: technology that creates more manual work than it eliminates has failed its primary purpose.
- The sizeable neutral group represents a swing segment, highly receptive to vendor outreach, upgrade proposals, and competitive displacement.
- The steep drop from reporting improvements to data-driven insights reveals a maturity ladder: most organisations have achieved basic reporting but few have progressed to strategic insight generation.
- The complete absence of 'extremely effective' ratings for data and analytics signals that even the most advanced organisations see significant untapped potential.

4. Barriers to Adoption

Budget pressure dominates the barriers landscape, but the story is more nuanced than a simple resource constraint. The barriers cluster into three distinct themes: financial, technical, and organisational; and addressing only one will not be sufficient.

Financial Barriers

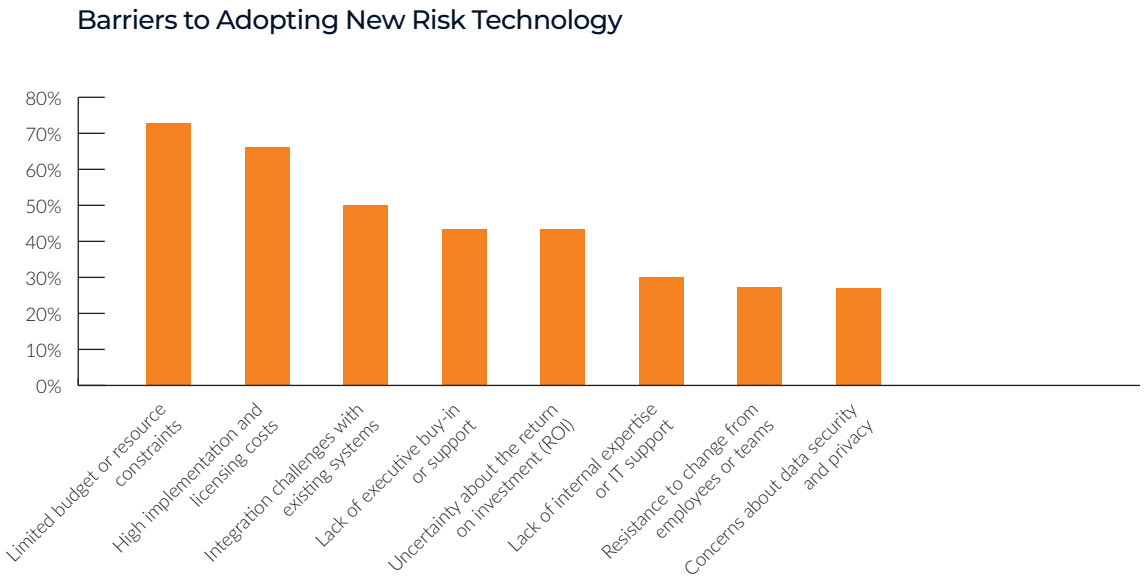
Budget and resource constraints are the single most cited barrier, with high implementation and licensing costs following close behind. Cost is not just a standalone barrier; it is intertwined with every other challenge. Integration is expensive. Training takes time. Executive buy-in is harder to secure when the return on investment (ROI) is unclear. The financial barriers are therefore both a root cause and an amplifier of every other barrier in the list.

Technical Barriers

Integration challenges with existing systems ranked third overall. When combined with the finding that nearly half of respondents operate disconnected systems, this paints a consistent picture: the installed base of technology is itself a barrier to further progress. Legacy system complexity and data security concerns add further friction.

Organisational Barriers

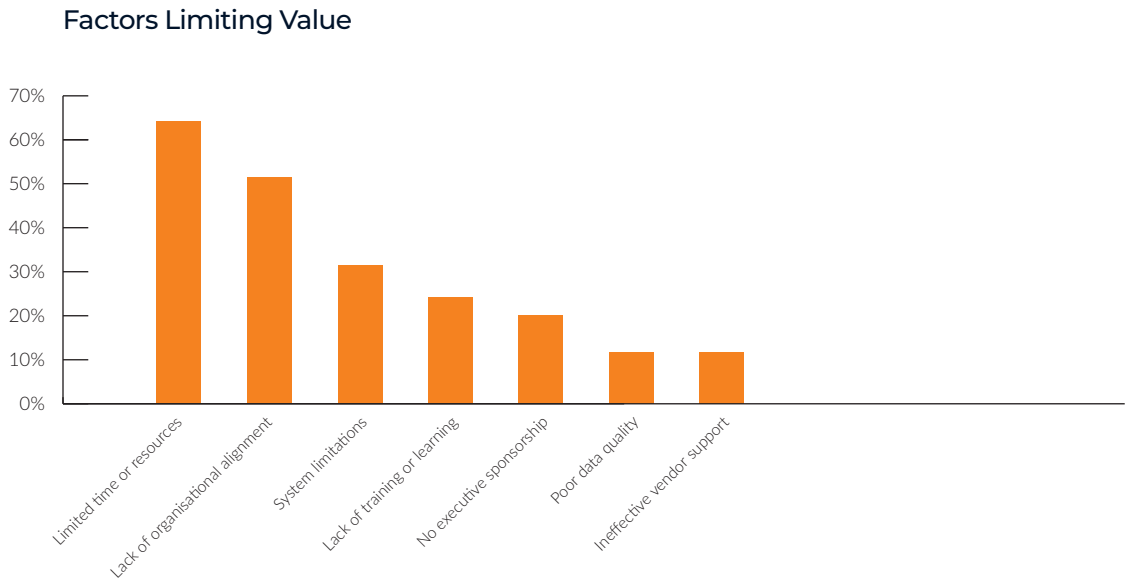
Lack of executive buy-in or support is the most significant organisational barrier. In an environment where the vast majority of the respondents are risk or insurance professionals rather than technology or executive leaders, the challenge of securing sponsorship from the C-suite is structural. Resistance to change and lack of internal expertise further constrain the pace of adoption.



Factors Limiting Value from Existing Technology

Even where technology is in place, organisations struggle to extract its full value. Limited time or resources is the dominant factor. Lack of organisational alignment is second, cited by more than half the respondents. System limitations, lack of training, absent executive sponsorship, poor data quality, and ineffective vendor support trail well behind.

The pairing of resource constraints with organisational misalignment is telling. These are not technology problems, they are organisational problems. Many organisations have purchased capable technology but lack the organisational capacity to configure it fully, train users adequately, and embed it into daily workflows. Technology investment without a corresponding investment in change management, training, and governance will continue to underdeliver.



Year-over-year trends:

Budget constraints have overtaken implementation costs as the top barrier. In 2025, high implementation and licensing costs led the field. By 2026, limited budget and resource constraints rose to the top barrier. Notably, ROI uncertainty jumped from 28% to 43%, and lack of executive buy-in rose from 35% to 43%, indicating that securing internal sponsorship and proving value have become materially harder.

Key Observations

- The three-barrier cluster - financial (budget and cost), technical (integration), and organisational (executive buy-in) - means successful adoption requires a coordinated strategy across all three dimensions.
- The dominance of time and resource constraints as the top limit on value extraction suggests many organisations are under-investing in implementation, training, and ongoing optimisation relative to their software spend.
- ROI uncertainty is both a symptom and a cause: organisations that cannot measure ROI cannot secure the budget to invest, creating a vicious cycle that can only be broken by better measurement and business case discipline.

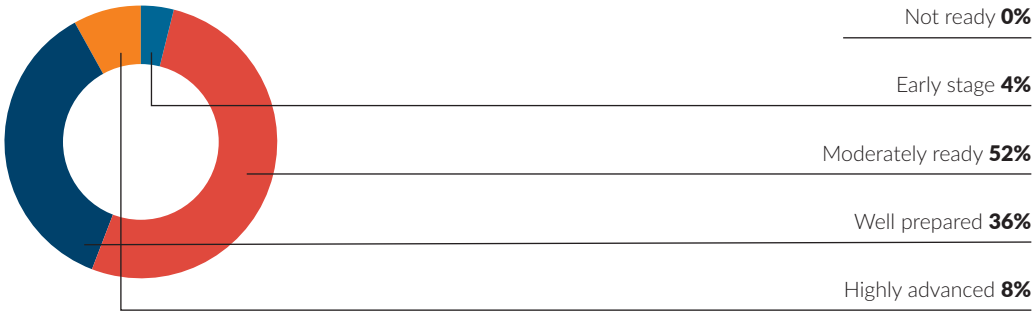
5. Artificial Intelligence

AI warrants its own section – not because it is the most important technology finding – because it is the area where ambition, uncertainty, and the pace of change are most important. The survey data tells a story of a profession that is engaged but not yet equipped.

AI Readiness

Just over half of respondents rate themselves as 'moderately ready' for AI, with roughly a third describing themselves as 'well prepared' and a small group claiming to be 'highly advanced'. On the surface, these are encouraging numbers. But the concentration at 'moderately ready' deserves scrutiny. Self-assessed readiness often reflects awareness and intent rather than actual capability and the barriers data suggests that many in this category are further from deployment than they believe.

Organisational Readiness to Adopt AI

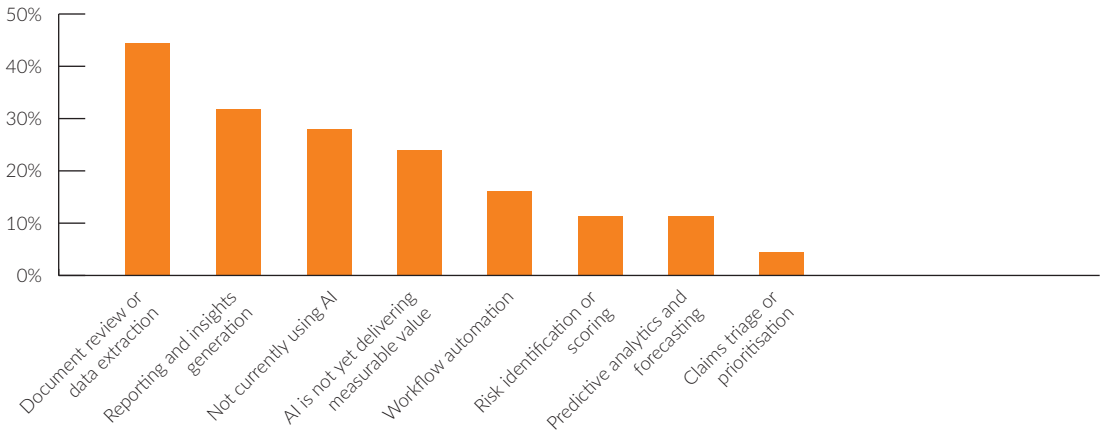


Where AI Is Delivering Value

Among those using AI, document review and data extraction is delivering the most value, followed by reporting and insights generation and workflow automation. These are pragmatic, high-volume use cases where AI can deliver immediate time savings, exactly the kind of quick-win applications that build organisational confidence.

However, more than a quarter of respondents are not currently using AI at all, and another similar percentage say AI is not yet delivering measurable value. Combined, more than half the respondents are still in early or pre-deployment phases. This majority position is at odds with the generative AI adoption data, suggesting that 'adoption' in many cases means experimentation or pilot use rather than enterprise-scale deployment delivering measurable outcomes.

Where is AI Delivering Value Today



AI Business Impact

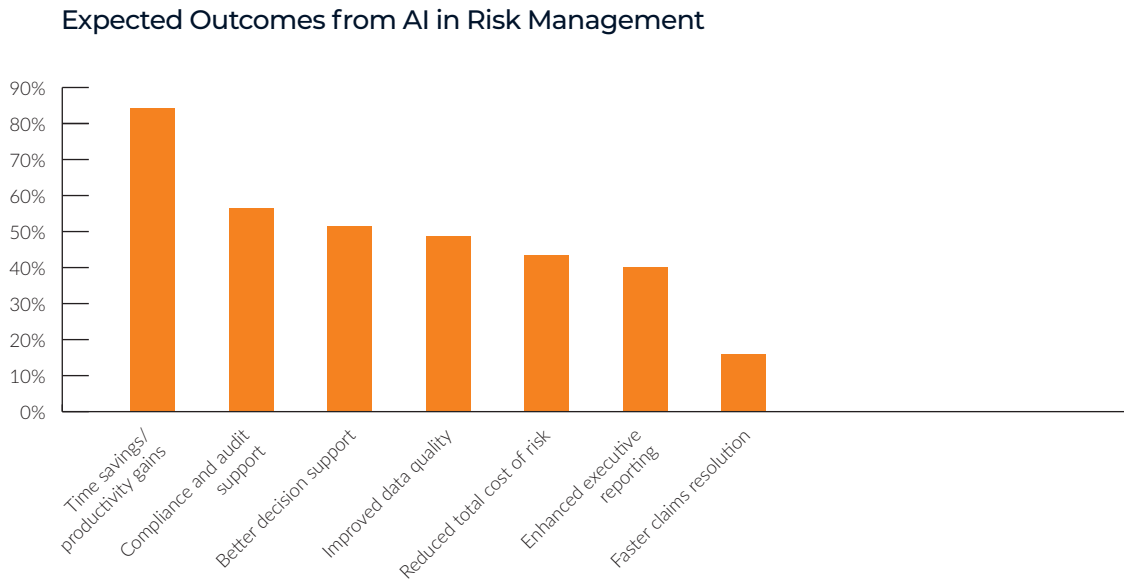
Views on AI's current business impact are spread across the spectrum. A roughly equal percentage of respondents describe the impact as 'moderate', 'early but promising', or 'significant'. A notable minority report 'transformational impact', a figure likely reflecting organisations where specific, high-value AI applications have been deployed in concentrated areas rather than broadly across the risk function.

A similar percentage reporting 'no measurable impact' highlights the divergence in the market. AI outcomes appear to be bimodal: organisations either find high-value applications quickly or struggle to move beyond experimentation. The difference likely comes down to data readiness, clarity of use case, and executive sponsorship rather than the AI technology itself.

Current AI Business Impact

Expected AI Outcomes

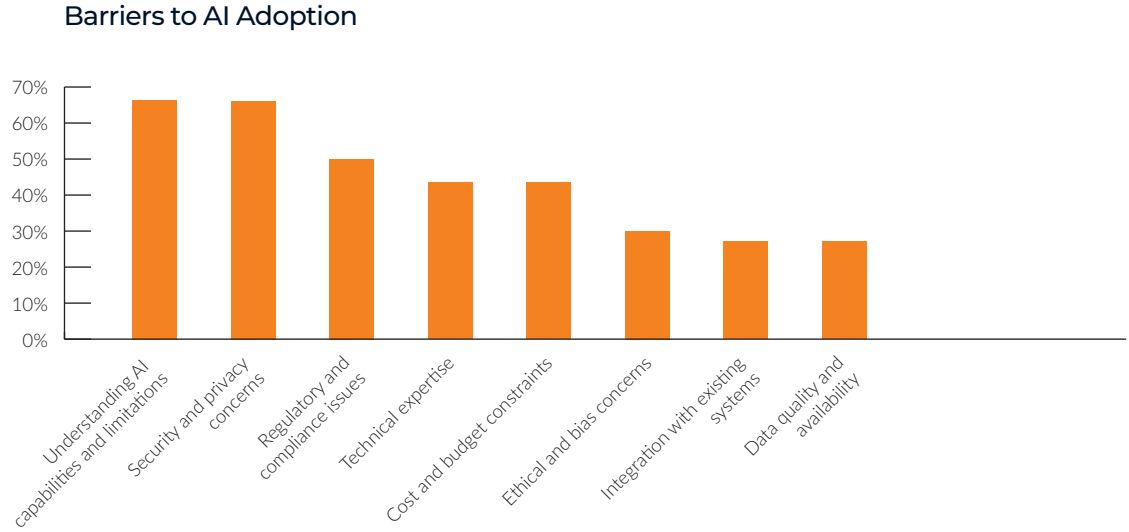
The expected outcomes from AI are dominated by time savings and productivity gains. The overwhelming emphasis on time savings carries both promise and risk. The promise is clear: AI has genuine potential to automate document review, report generation, data entry, and other high-volume tasks. The risk is that organisations focus exclusively on efficiency gains and miss AI's potential to fundamentally improve risk identification, prediction, and decision-making – the higher-value but harder-to-measure outcomes that sit further down the list.



Barriers to AI Adoption

Understanding AI capabilities and limitations is the dominant barrier, well ahead of the next most common response, security and privacy concerns. The leading barrier is not about technical illiteracy. It reflects a genuine uncertainty about what AI can reliably do, where it fails, and how to distinguish vendor hype from practical capability.

The relatively low ranking of data quality as an AI-specific barrier is arguably the most concerning finding in this section. Data quality is a top overall technology priority, yet respondents do not connect it to their AI challenges at the same rate. This may be more of a down the road issue as most organisations are still struggling to adopt AI and haven't had to overcome the data hurdles yet.



Year-over-year trends:

AI readiness has matured significantly. In 2025, 48% of respondents were still in the early stages of investigation; with only 2% having fully implemented generative AI. In 2026, 52% describe themselves as moderately ready, 36% as well prepared, and 8% as highly advanced. Generative AI adoption has accelerated: 56% of respondents now say they are somewhat or extremely likely to adopt it within two years, and 26% report having already done so. This is the most positive year-over-year shift in the survey and suggests the AI conversation is moving from curiosity to capability.

Key Observations

- More than half of respondents are in early or pre-deployment AI phases, despite a quarter claiming adoption, exposing a gap between having an AI tool and getting measurable value from it.
- The bimodal impact distribution suggests AI outcomes are strongly path-dependent: early choices about use case, data readiness, and sponsorship determine whether AI delivers or disappoints.
- The disconnect between data quality as a top overall priority and its low ranking among AI-specific barriers is a red flag: organisations may be moving toward AI deployment on inadequate data foundations.
- The overwhelming focus on time savings concentrates expectations on efficiency rather than effectiveness; the profession may be underestimating AI's potential to transform risk identification and decision-making, not just speed up existing processes.

6. Investment Outlook

Investment Intent

Despite the barriers, investment intent is cautiously optimistic. Half of respondents say they are somewhat or extremely likely to invest in new risk technology or upgrade current systems within the next two years.

The roughly even split between likely and unlikely investors reveals a market that is moving but divided. The likely cohort is large enough to sustain meaningful market activity, but those unlikely to invest represent a significant pool of organisations that will fall further behind unless their barriers are addressed.

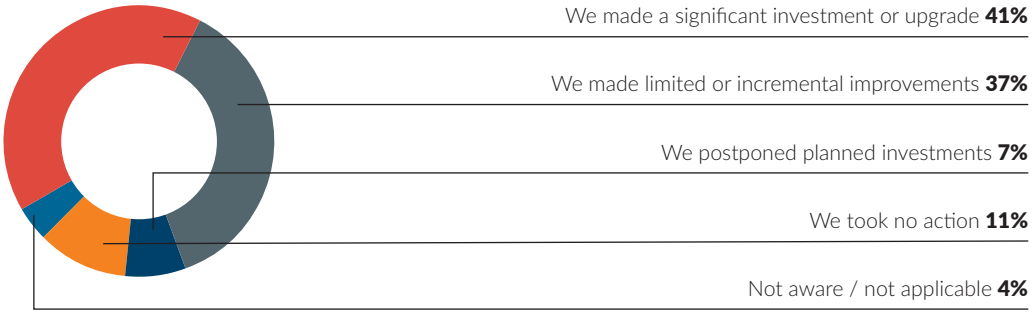
Likelihood of investing in new or upgrading risk technology in next 2 years

Recent Investment Activity

Looking back over the past 12 months provides a reality check against stated intent. More than four in ten respondents report making a significant investment or upgrade, and a further group of similar size made incremental improvements. Combined, the vast majority made at least some investment in the past year. Very few postponed planned investments or took no action at all.

This level of recent activity is a strong signal. Even in an environment of budget constraints and integration challenges, the large majority of organisations are actively spending on risk technology. The question is whether that spending is strategic and well-directed, or incremental and reactive.

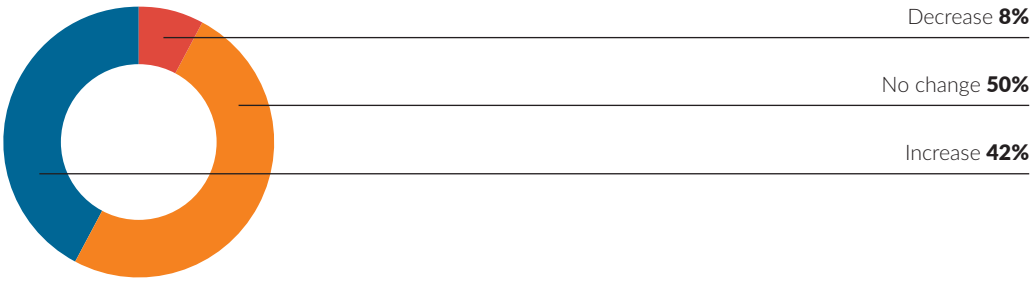
Risk Technology Activity in the Past 12 Months



Spending Trajectory

On the spending side, those respondents expecting their annual risk technology expenditure to increase outnumber those expecting a decrease, by more than five to one. Half expect no change. This points to a favourable near-term spending environment for the market.

Expected Change in Annual Risk Technology Spend



Key Observations

- The roughly four in five respondents who invested in the past 12 months demonstrates that market activity is running well ahead of what the barrier data might suggest. Organisations are investing despite their challenges, not waiting for them to resolve.
- The five-to-one ratio of expected spending increases over decreases signals a firmly upward budget trajectory across the community.
- Those unlikely to invest risk falling into a 'technology debt' trap, where deferred investment makes future adoption progressively more difficult and expensive.
- The gap between forward-looking investment intent and actual past-year activity suggests organisations are more active than they predict.

7. Strategic Priorities

When asked to select their top three priorities for risk technology over the next two years, respondents converged on a clear and consistent agenda. The priorities break into three tiers that reveal the profession's thinking about where technology should deliver value.

Tier 1: Data and Reporting

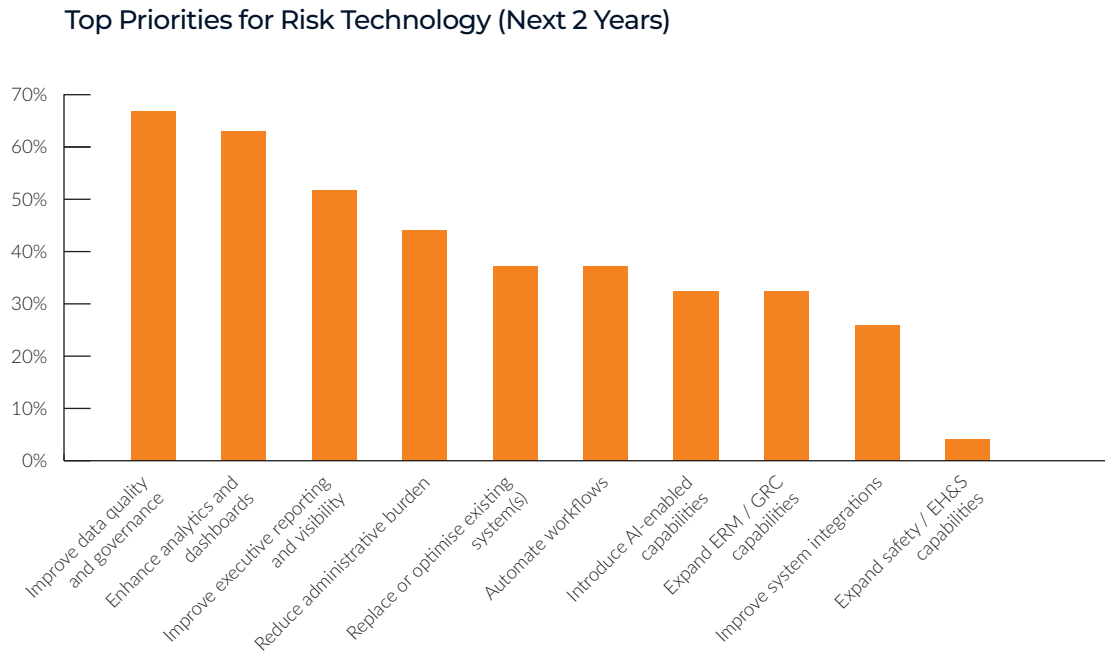
Improving data quality and governance leads the field as the single most selected priority, followed closely by enhancing analytics and dashboards. Improving executive reporting and visibility completes the top tier, selected by more than half of respondents. These three priorities form a consistent narrative: organisations want to fix their data, analyse it more effectively, and present it to decision-makers in a way that drives action. This is the core agenda, and it is consistent with every other finding in this survey.

Tier 2: Efficiency and Modernisation

Reducing administrative burden, replacing or optimising existing systems, and automating workflows form the second tier. These are the operational priorities: making the existing environment work better and freeing up time currently consumed by manual processes. The prominence of administrative burden reduction connects directly to the overwhelming complaint among dissatisfied users about high administrative effort.

Tier 3: Capability Expansion

Introducing AI-enabled capabilities, expanding ERM/GRC capabilities, and improving system integrations sit in the third tier. These are forward-looking priorities that depend on progress in Tiers 1 and 2: AI requires clean data, capability expansion requires stable platforms, and integration requires both. The sequencing implied by these tiers is logical and healthy – fix the foundation before building on it.



Key Observations

- The three-tier priority structure (data/reporting → efficiency/modernisation → capability expansion) reveals a mature and sequenced technology agenda.
- Data quality as the single most selected priority confirms that risk professionals see data as the binding constraint on everything else they want to achieve with technology.
- The alignment between the administrative burden priority and the dissatisfaction data demonstrates that priorities are grounded in real operational pain.
- Integration's lower ranking among priorities may be understated: given the scale of system fragmentation and the frequency of integration as a barrier, it is more likely an enabler that respondents assume rather than select explicitly.

8. Conclusion

The gap between risk technology ambition and adoption is real, measurable, and consequential, but it is not unbridgeable. The 2026 Airmic Risk Technology Survey reveals a profession that is moving beyond spreadsheets, is investing at pace, and has coalesced around a clear agenda: fix the data, strengthen the analytics, and get the right information to the decision-makers. The building blocks are in place. The challenge now is assembly.

That gap shows up in every dimension this survey measures. Nearly half of organisations operate on disconnected systems. Satisfaction is moderate despite demonstrable impact. Advanced analytics is the second-highest unmet need, yet adoption is negligible. AI interest is surging, while understanding lags behind. These are not technology deficits; capable tools exist for every one of these problems. They are implementation, integration, and change management deficits – the persistent distance between buying a platform and making it work.

AI has introduced a new dimension to the gap. Generative AI adoption is moving faster than any previous risk technology, yet more than half of organisations report no measurable value from it, and understanding capabilities and limitations remain the dominant barrier. The ambition–adoption gap is widest here: organisations are acquiring AI tools before they have the data foundations, governance frameworks, or internal clarity to use them well. Those that will benefit most are the ones that treat AI as a complement to integrated systems and clean data, not a shortcut past them.

Closing the gap requires progress on three concurrent fronts. First, consolidating and integrating existing technology to fix the data foundation that every other ambition depends on. Second, building the business case for investment by connecting technology outcomes to enterprise value – moving beyond generic ROI claims to specific, measurable improvements in reporting quality, decision speed, compliance outcomes, and cost of risk. Third, developing the organisational capability, AI literacy, vendor management maturity, and change management discipline to extract full value from the tools already purchased.

For vendors and service providers, the message is equally clear. Ease of use, total cost, and security are non-negotiable. Integration capability is strategically critical even if it does not top the rankings. The organisations most ready to buy are looking for help with data quality, analytics, and reporting; practical, outcome-oriented solutions rather than feature-rich platforms that add complexity without reducing it.

For Airmic and the broader UK risk management community, the survey underscores the value of continued investment in education, benchmarking, and peer exchange around technology adoption. The two-thirds of respondents who cite understanding AI as their top barrier are not asking for more technology. They are asking for clarity about what works, what does not, and what the path from experimentation to measurable impact actually looks like. That clarity, not another platform, not another pilot, is what will finally close the gap.

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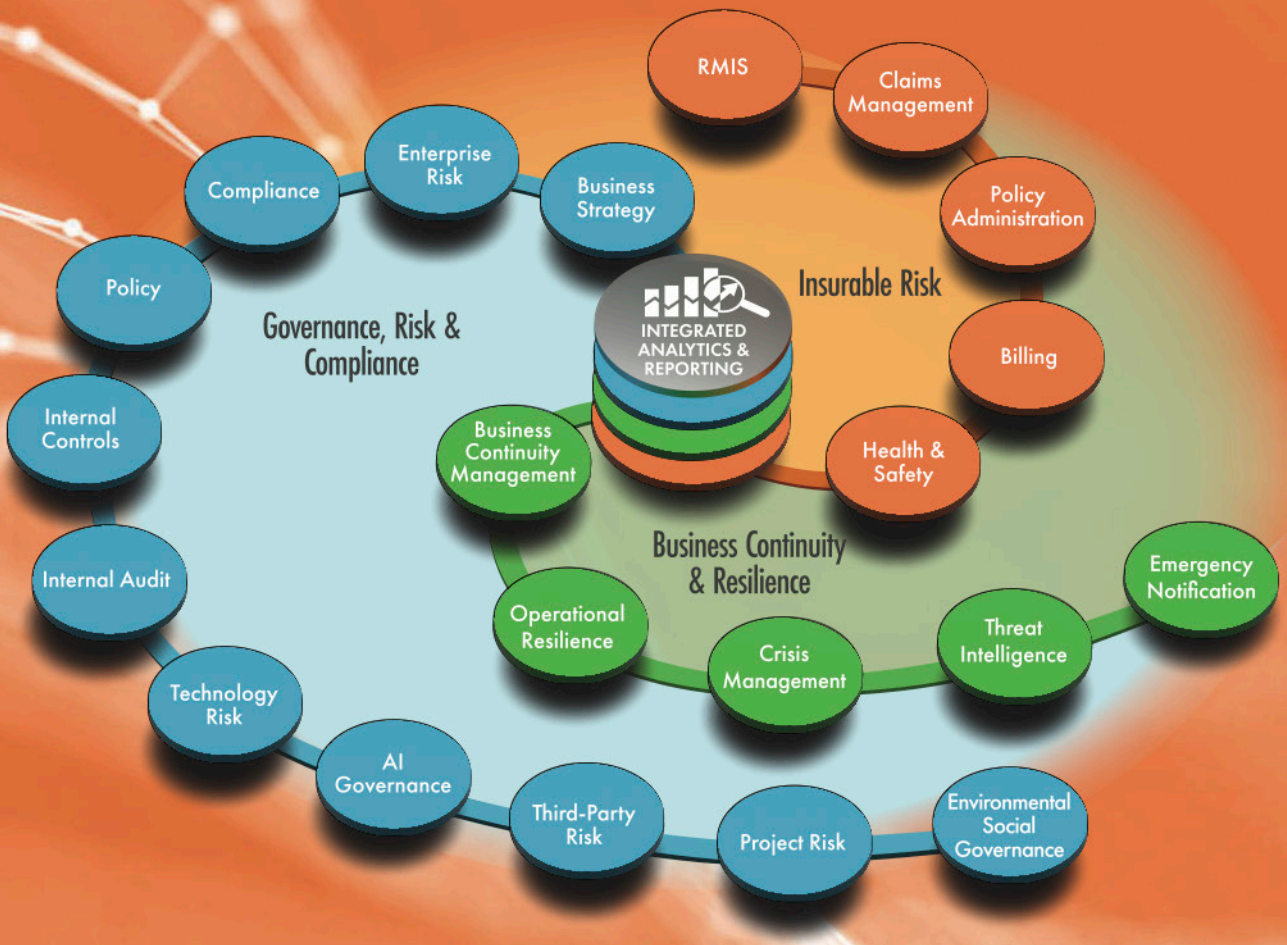

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