

2026 Executive Summary

A message from the Conference Chair

Do you feel empowered to navigate today's complex risk landscape and strengthen your organization's ability to respond to fast-evolving and volatile risks?

We look forward to working with you to leverage innovative technology, analytics, and communication to turn risk insights into action and drive accountability.

We hope to see you at Gartner Enterprise Risk, Audit & Compliance Conference 2027.

Sincerely,



Doug Eckstein

Conference Chair and Distinguished VP Analyst,
Gartner



Top takeaways

1

Advance risk ownership by building business leader risk management know-how at scale

Enable business leaders to quickly adapt risk oversight, independently spotting and closing gaps before risks materialize, by elevating their risk management know-how. To make this feasible at scale, design know-how as a service, improve know-how with AI, and scale know-how by partnering with peers in audit, compliance, and ERM.

"Today's environment demands that we transform how we deliver value. Not by doing more of what we've always done, but by supporting the business differently."

Tegan Gebert,
VP Analyst,
Gartner

Nancy Queally,
Managing Vice President,
Gartner

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Build on existing governance structures to lead your organization through the AI era

The AI era presents a significant leadership opportunity for legal, risk, and compliance leaders. Assurance leaders can leverage their enterprise-wide visibility to bring alignment, accountability, and oversight to governance efforts while supporting responsible adoption. Beyond defining AI principles, ensure they're operationalized through codes of conduct, policies, and practical guidance to help employees make consistent, defensible decisions when confronted with emerging ethical dilemmas.

"The question is no longer whether employees will encounter AI-driven ethical dilemmas, but whether we've prepared them to navigate those dilemmas confidently and consistently."

Kelly Larmon,
Director Analyst,
Gartner

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Position assurance functions as enablers of your organization's AI ambitions

As AI is integrated into everyday business operations, assurance leaders must help their organization achieve its AI objectives through smart, strategic risk-taking. To help your organization deploy AI in a governed, risk-aware manner, focus on three key attributes: strategic alignment of AI investments, measurable achievement of expected outcomes, and reliable performance of AI systems.

"Our job isn't to be a roadblock. It's to help our organizations accelerate – with confidence."

Stephen Osborne,
Sr Director Analyst,
Gartner

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Adopt dynamic oversight to track and manage AI-driven changes to new and existing risks

Autonomous AI systems create new and evolving risk exposures by making decisions, taking actions, and interacting with other systems with limited human intervention. Identify AI-driven risks across existing risk domains rather than treating AI as a standalone risk category; and classify, document, and assess these impacts across the enterprise risk register. Recognize that traditional, point-in-time assurance approaches are insufficient for continuously learning and adapting AI systems; adopt more dynamic oversight strategies.

"AI doesn't add a new risk. It amplifies the ones you already have."

Tim Faulkner,
Director Analyst,
Gartner

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Drive better coordination to manage fast-moving, interconnected risks

Assurance teams must quickly spot, assess, and guide business leaders to an efficient response as emerging risks continue to proliferate. Shift ERM from standardized risk responses to coordination that surfaces misaligned responses, enables collaboration, and guides targeted actions. Strengthen compliance risk oversight by making it easier for business leaders to partner with compliance to develop actionable KRIs using operational data.

“74% of risk leaders worry that important risk management activities are falling through the cracks today.”

Jim Mello,
Sr Director, Advisory,
Gartner

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Operationalize risk guardrails directly into business leader workflows

Amid the pace of today's organizational decision-making, risk oversight that operates as a lagging checkpoint guarantees friction. Traditional risk appetite statements, compliance policies, and annual audit plans gather dust as they're defensive and detached from day-to-day decisions. Assurance leaders must embed actionable "dos" and tolerances directly into business leader workflows, deploying flexible guardrails that enable business leader decision-making.

“The business is transforming faster than ever. If audit arrives after the fact, we aren't protecting the business, we're just documenting the damage.”

Gisele Antunes,
Director Analyst,
Gartner

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Select technology based on must-achieve outcomes, not feature checklists

Start by identifying your organization's most critical objectives and operational challenges, then evaluate solutions against their ability to deliver measurable value in those areas. Treat technology selection as a strategic business decision that enables transformation and competitive advantage rather than as a procurement exercise.

“The shocking reality is that despite spending trillions on technology annually, 4 out of 5 organizations still have unmet automation needs and feel buyer's remorse.”

Jie Zhang,
VP Analyst,
Gartner

Gartner Enterprise Risk, Audit & Compliance Conference

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Improve AI ROI in your function through scalable deployment

Although AI usage is now nearly universal among assurance teams, many leaders struggle to achieve meaningful impact or measurable ROI. To mature your AI usage and drive scalable deployment, follow Gartner's three-part framework: first, prioritize use case opportunities for scalability; second, drive adoption within your team by making AI both easy-to-use and hard-to-avoid; and third, embed governance and validation steps directly into AI workflows.

"Scale for AI adoption is the ability to move AI from isolated pilots into repeatable, governed production, so use cases require less marginal effort, cost, and risk to operate and support."

Eren Frey,
Sr Director Analyst,
Gartner

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Curate risk insights to drive effective board and committee interactions and build strategic influence

Board and executive risk committees need information that helps them fulfill oversight duties and drive decision-making and action. As risk information continues to proliferate, assurance leaders must play a "curatorial" role and build focused agendas for each of their committee interactions to help stakeholders fulfill their responsibilities.

"The executive risk committee doesn't need more information – they need better curation."

Jonathan Keeney,
VP Analyst,
Gartner



Save the date!

Join us October 5-6, 2027 in Grapevine, Texas for [Gartner Enterprise Risk, Audit & Compliance Conference](#), and don't miss the added value of attending with your team.

You can also take a look at our [calendar](#) to explore the range of conferences we hold to find those most relevant to you and your organization.

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