

Chief Information Officers

The A.R.T. of Effective Execution

Agility. Risk-readiness. Tenacity.
Insights from the 2026 CIO Agenda.

The challenge

Amid turbulence, geopolitical shifts and changing digital sovereignty laws, CIOs are under pressure to execute.

94%

of CIOs expect major shifts in plans and outcomes by 2026.

Only

48%

of digital initiatives are meeting or exceeding business targets.

70%

of countries will implement comprehensive digital sovereignty laws by 2030.

57%

of CIOs face pressure to improve productivity —

52%

to reduce costs.

The solution

The A.R.T. Framework

CIOs who successfully execute during unpredictable or uncertain times share 3 abilities.

1. Agility

CIOs who embrace agility with dynamic, off-cycle reprioritization are **24%** more likely to be top performers, yet only **18%** do so.

24%

18%

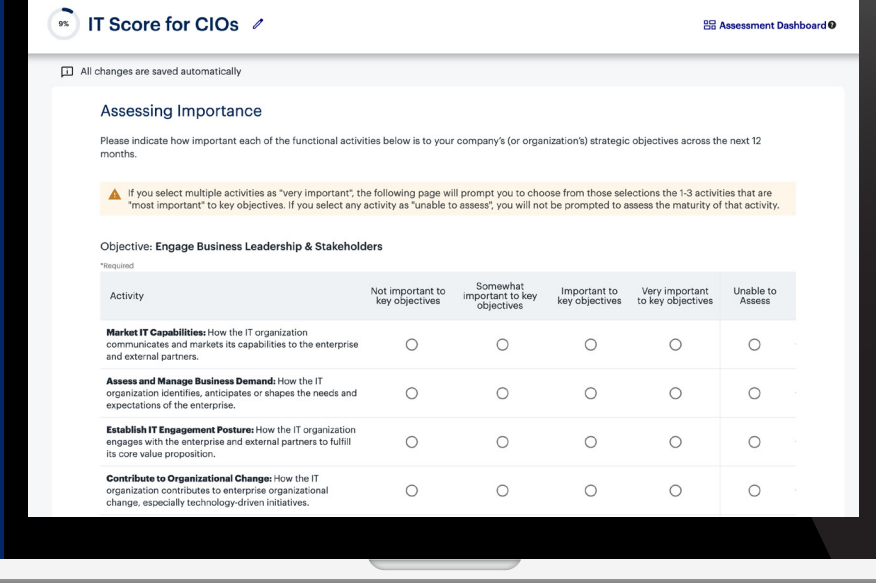
How to become an agile reprioritizer

Conduct ongoing resource allocation

Discontinue underperforming or strategically misaligned initiatives. Build support across teams to overcome resistance.

Use scenario planning

Anticipate disruptions and make bold, proactive decisions. Move beyond theoretical exercises — apply insights to address threats and seize opportunities before they impact the business.



How Gartner can help

Assess your IT function maturity and identify gaps to address to achieve your strategic initiatives.

Use the [interactive Gartner IT Score maturity assessment](#) to compare your performance against more than 2,000 IT benchmarks and review your results with our experts one-on-one.

2. Risk-readiness

CIOs who proactively manage geopolitical risks are **51%** more likely to be top performers, yet only **28%** excel in this area.

51%

28%

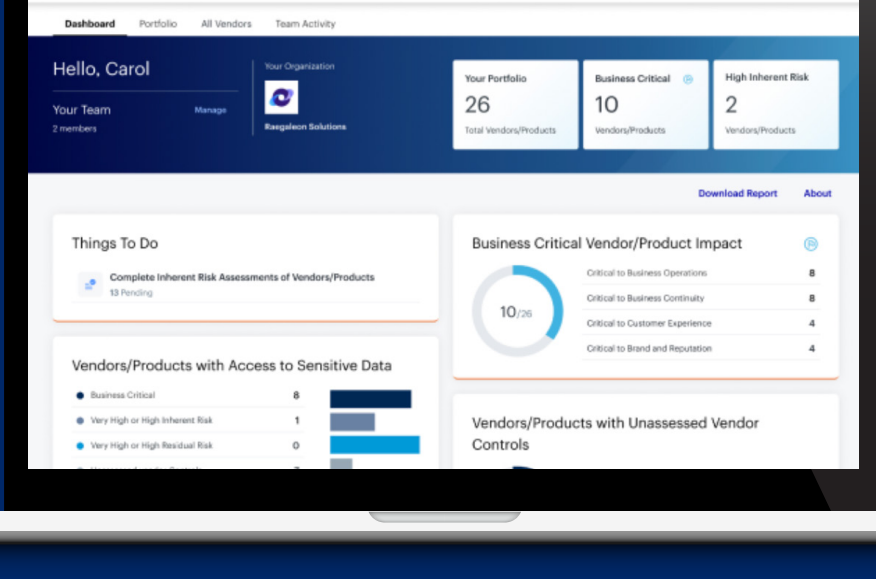
How to become a geopolitical risk mitigator

Rebalance your vendor mix

Weigh trade-offs between regional vendors' compliance and flexibility, and global vendors' scale and advanced capabilities.

Prioritize on-site support

Verify your vendors' ability to provide on-site support within your region. Factor local presence and support availability into your vendor selection criteria to reduce operational risk.



How Gartner can help

Harness the [Gartner Third-Party Cybersecurity Insights](#) platform to illuminate vendor risks, run swift assessments and chart decisive action plans.

Paired with tailored guidance from an Executive Partner, this tool empowers your team with timely intelligence, seamless workflows and executive-ready reports.

3. Tenacity

CIOs who stay focused on relentless pursuit of financial outcomes from technology initiatives — especially AI — are **25%** more likely to excel, yet only **33%** consistently do so.

25%

33%

How to become a tenacious executor

Prioritize high-impact initiatives

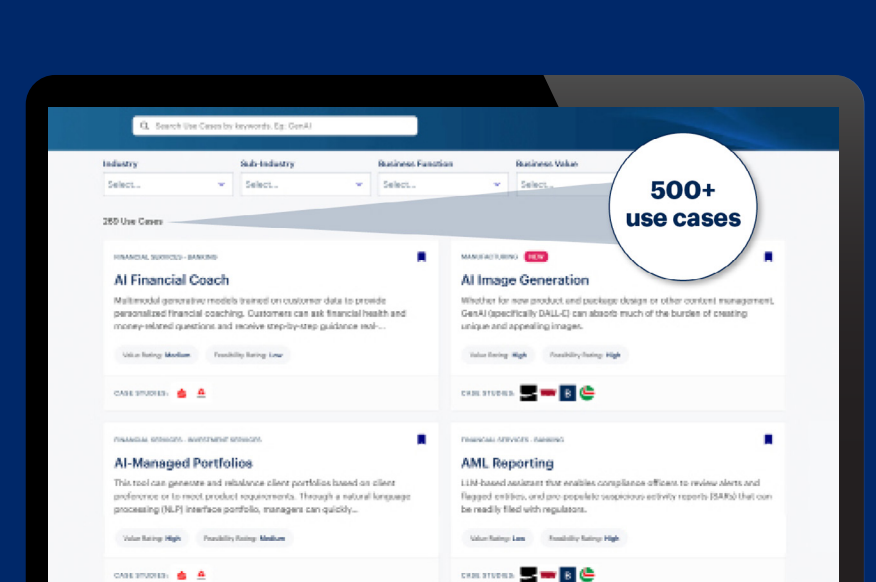
Focus on critical projects and build C-suite alliances to sustain support through tough decisions.

Drive financial outcomes

Go beyond efficiency — turn operational gains into cost savings and revenue growth by reengineering processes and teams.

Optimize service provider strategy with AI

Reassess insourcing and outsourcing as AI evolves. Consider “AI-sourcing” to bring offshored work in-house, cut costs by 5% to 30% and boost agility.



How Gartner can help

Unlock, prioritize and accelerate real-world AI opportunities tailored to your sector and strategic goals.

With [Gartner AI Use Case Insights](#), you gain access to a living library of over 500 proven AI use cases — spanning all organizational functions and industries. Discover practical examples, assess readiness and pinpoint the value that matters most, so you can build a compelling business case and lead your organization confidently on its AI journey.

About the CIO Agenda

Our annual CIO and Technology Executive Survey (CIO Survey) is the largest of its kind in the world, revealing the top priorities and initiatives of your CIO peers for the coming year.

The 2026 CIO Agenda will help you navigate changes in technology leadership, build stronger alliances for CxOs and technology users within and beyond IT, and advance your own career.

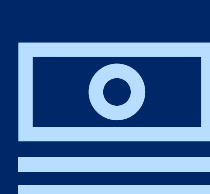
Insights from



+2,500 CIOs
Heads of IT functions



Representing
\$274B IT spend



\$13T Revenue



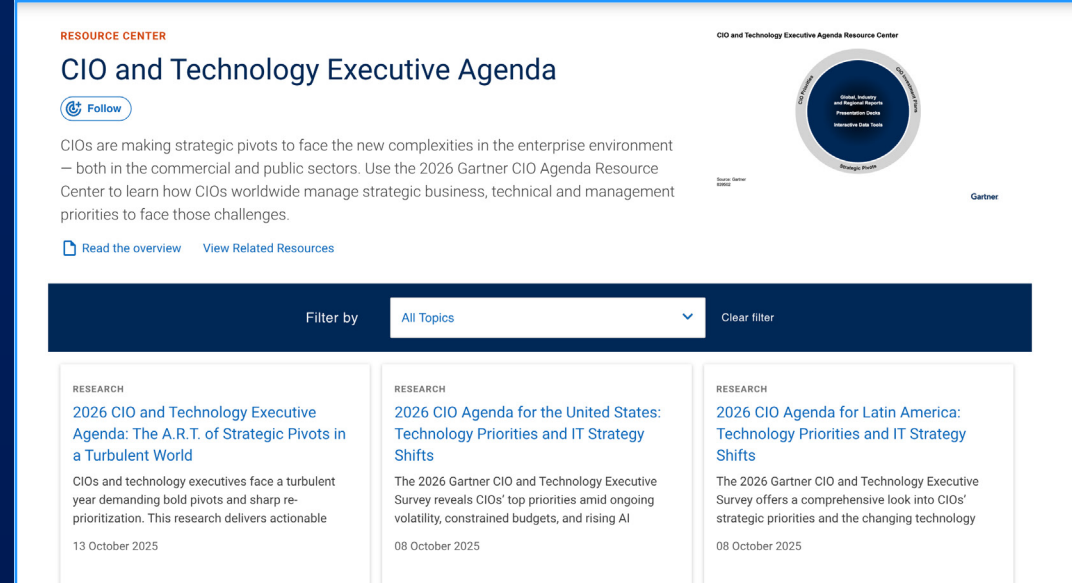
79 Countries

From vision to action

Inform your 18-month IT strategy with the full suite of downloadable insights from IT Symposium/Xpo™ 2025 conference.



The Opening Keynote sets the vision for how CIOs can lead change and deliver value in an AI-driven world — by reimaging the workforce, navigating vendor complexity and redefining organizational identity.



Our CIO clients are using the data from the 2026 CIO Agenda to benchmark IT priorities and investments against 2,500+ of their global peers with interactive data tools and industry-specific insights. [Learn more about this tool.](#)



The 2026 Top 10 Strategic Technology Trends equip CIOs and IT leaders with the technologies and foresight to act. They'll help you make smart decisions on AI, data, cybersecurity, cloud and cost optimization.

How Gartner helps CIOs and their teams stay ahead in the dynamic AI landscape

Gartner empowers CIOs with trusted insights, expert guidance, data-driven tools and a powerful peer network to make confident decisions, maximize IT value and lead successful digital transformation in the era of AI. Secure your competitive advantage with access to:



Insights, tools and diagnostics

Get actionable, objective insights into technology trends, evolving risks, best practices and peer benchmarks — so you can make informed investment decisions and drive stronger IT outcomes.



Premier events

Gain clarity on the future of IT and AI, connect with visionary leaders and accelerate your transformation journey with exclusive events built for CIOs.



Expert guidance

Participate in one-on-one analyst sessions and receive personalized recommendations aligned to your organization's strategy, priorities and challenges.



Peer Community

Join 100,000+ CIOs and technology leaders for real-time discussions, peer insights and member-driven polls to solve challenges and inspire innovation.

[Schedule time to talk with our team](#) and discover how Gartner can help you lead your organization to stronger performance.