

Balance Compounding AI Value and Risk

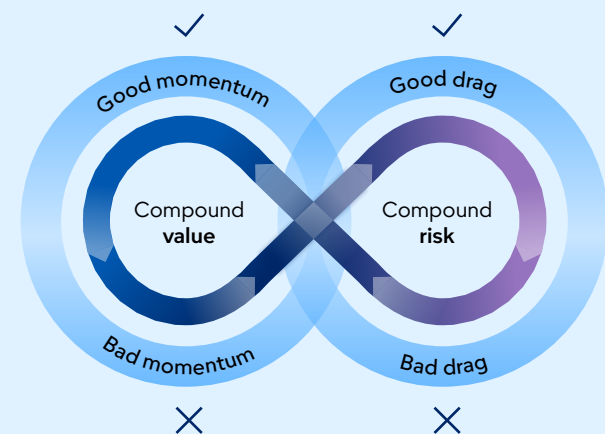
6 takeaways from the Gartner IT Symposium/Xpo™ keynote to help you maximize AI value while managing emerging risks.



1 Use the Gartner Value-Risk Flywheel to balance compounding value and compounding risk.

AI changes value and risk from isolated events into compounding systems. The Gartner Value-Risk Flywheel helps CIOs understand how momentum, and drag shape those systemic outcomes and consciously choose the value-risk balance that best supports their objectives. The goal is to avoid AI activity for the sake of it, build momentum and prevent risk, complexity and debt from compounding into actual harm.

The Value-Risk Flywheel Tool



Source: Gartner

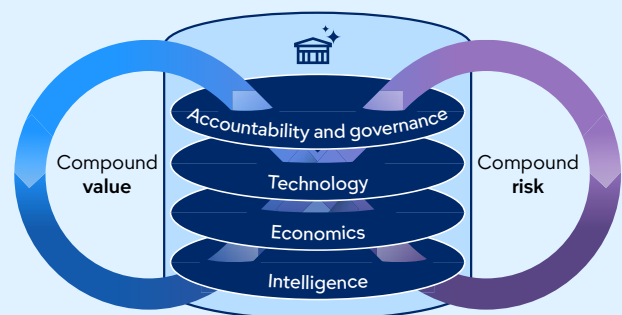
2 AI value is growing incrementally, but risk is compounding exponentially.

58% of functional leaders report positive value from their 2025 AI initiatives, yet only one in five AI use cases delivers a positive return. 86% of CIOs say AI risk is growing faster than AI value — four times faster, on average. Organizations are increasing AI activity, but they're not compounding AI value, which presents a significant imbalance. Without intervention, risk will outpace value and erode advantage.

3 Govern AI through an AI Central Bank.

AI is creating invisible chains of accountability across people, agents, models and platforms. CIOs must create an AI Central Bank: a common control plane that brings together governance, technology, economics and intelligence to improve visibility, accountability and decision making. Without it, organizations lack the unified oversight needed to balance compounding value and risk across an increasingly autonomous AI estate.

The AI Central Bank



Source: Gartner

4 Build good momentum. Activity without value only creates bad momentum.

In just one year, the average organization increased its number of AI use cases by more than 400%. Growth in AI activity doesn't automatically create value. It often creates more projects, complexity and effort with little impact. CIOs must build good momentum that compounds value through reuse, trust, work redesign and scaling proven successes, rather than chasing AI activity for the sake of it.

5 Introduce good drag to prevent risk from compounding into harm.

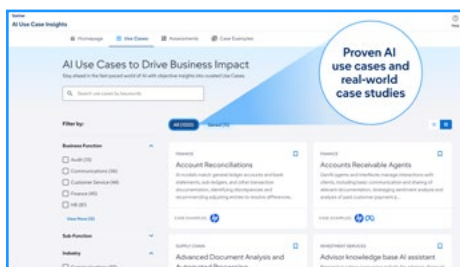
Drag isn't necessarily a bad thing. Good drag protects value through governance, cybersecurity, accountability and spending discipline. Bad drag creates bureaucracy, bottlenecks and rework. CIOs must consciously introduce good drag — stronger evidence trails, AI activity tracking and policy enforcement — while reducing bad drag that slows value without mitigating risk. As AI autonomy increases, accountability becomes more important and more difficult to trace.

6 Bring people to the rescue. They're the first responders and last line of defense.

AI is changing the skills we need and eroding skills we can't afford to lose. CIOs must ensure their people are the first responders to AI failures, the last line of defense against dark AI and the AI entrepreneurs who build good momentum. Establish an AI rescue team that can immediately isolate faulty models, trigger kill switches or revoke permissions before rolling back to safety. Humans fill the gaps in AI safety that technology can't.

Actionable, objective insights

Put the full suite of conference insights to work with practical tools and research designed to help CIOs prioritize AI investments, accelerate value realization and lead through change.



Build good AI momentum, not just more AI activity. The Gartner **AI Use Case Insights Tool** helps CIOs evaluate more than 1,300+ AI use cases, assess feasibility and business impact, and prioritize the initiatives most likely to compound value while minimizing risk.



Lead beyond AI hype and bridge the gap between ambition and tangible outcomes. **The 2027 CIO Agenda** provides data-driven insights into the four disconnects, limiting AI value realization and the actions CIOs can take to govern costs, prioritize investments and build an AI-ready workforce.



Prepare for what comes next. Explore the **Top 10 Strategic Technology Trends** defining the autonomous era and build a roadmap for trustworthy AI, resilient architecture and long-term competitive advantage.

How Gartner helps CIOs and their teams navigate AI and human readiness



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