Executives

The most widespread challenge facing audit, risk management and compliance professionals is putting their work into a context that speaks to executives. According to the 2014 GRC Technology Pulse Survey, conducted by ACL, the company that is ...

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2014 GRC TECHNOLOGY PULSE SURVEY
AUDIT, COMPLIANCE & RISK

The focus of the annual GRC Technology Pulse Survey was to highlight industry shifts, technology adoption trends, and common practices in governance, risk management, and compliance (GRC).

More than **1,700** professionals from all over the world weighed in

The Results Are In

THE RIGHT PERSON FOR THE JOB

combined
91%

Audit, risk management and compliance professionals universally agreed that

EXECUTIVE CONTEXT IS KING

■ Keeping up with professional standards and maintaining certification/designation

■ Putting my work in an executive context so management 'gets'

91% universally agreed that their position uniquely equips them to identify

the value

- Getting approval to buy new technology

For purchasing new software tools, **the following attributes are top considerations:**

- Increase department productivity
- Increase effectiveness of staff
- Ease of use
- Raise executive/board visibility

Mixing operational attributes with value add attributes, such as raising executive/board visibility, are what will take audit, risk management and compliance departments to the next level.

THE WRONG TOOL

30% other, none, don't know

27% Microsoft Word / Excel / Shared Drives / Sharepoint

43% purpose built

A large number of participants reported **still using generic software solutions** to manage their GRC initiatives and documents. While generic software is adequate for many things, it falls short of easily linking and creating visibility around an organization's risk profile.

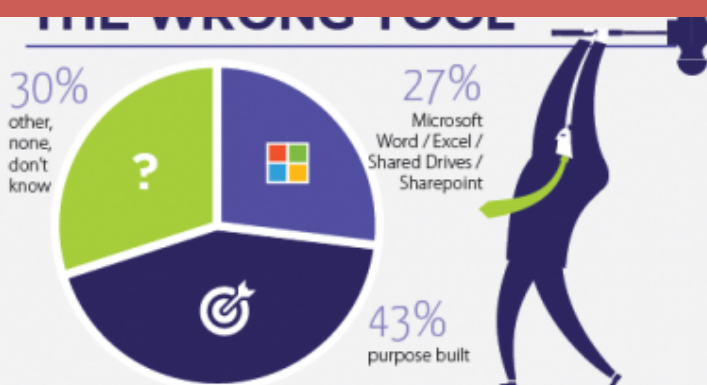## NEW CONCERNS
CAUSING SLEEPLESS NIGHTS

55%
2013
the most prevalent concern was **internal fraud, waste and abuse** and operational waste.

46%
2014
the most prevalent concern was **data privacy and security.**

TECHNOLOGY
IS AN AFTERTHOUGHT

Bootstrapped audit, risk management and compliance departments feel that they can only consider new technology when funding is made available, or when there is an unexpected control breach or other damaging incident.

Chart: # of Respondents (y-axis 0 to 300)
- New Leadership (Company)
- New Leadership (Department)
- Funding Becomes Available
- Unexpected Control Breach
- Regulatory Change
- Changes to Company Code of Conduct
- Merger/ Acquisition

BEAM ME UP SCOTTY
RIGHT THROUGH THE CLOUD

Software as a Service (SaaS), Cloud Deployment and mobile technology usage is becoming more prevalent. Approximately **25% of respondents have already or are planning on implementing SaaS,** Cloud or mobile technologies to manage GRC initiatives and documents, and/or data analysis/control monitoring within the next year.

25%

The **Benefits of SaaS and Cloud Technology** are still not clear. Software providers need to do a better job educating professionals.

- I don't know
- Easily accessible across many locations and devices
- Faster and easier to deploy with little to no IT support needed
- No benefit
- Other

and compliance professionals surveyed cited this issue as the largest obstacle they face today.

One reason this remains a challenge may well be that executives are not providing the resources required. A majority number of respondents reported that they are not using purpose-built audit and risk software, with 27 percent reporting they use Microsoft products like Word and Excel, shared drives or Sharepoint. While these general products are adequate for many tasks, they fall short of easily creating visibility around an organization's major risks, or linking findings to actionable results.

[Click Image to Enlarge]

Despite these challenges, 91 percent of audit and risk professionals agreed that their vantage point in the organizations has them uniquely equipped to identify opportunities that would improve operational performance if senior management empowers them.

"The stark reality for GRC professionals is that it is impossible to demonstrate strategic value if your daily reality is dominated by administrative work. To create more time for value-added, strategic work, it is imperative that audit, risk, and compliance professionals get out of their spreadsheets and take advantage of technology built for them. Our research indicates that they still struggle to do so," said Ross Paul, Vice President of Global Operations at ACL. "This surprising blind spot not only underutilizes GRC professionals who can have a positive impact on financial performance, it puts companies at great risk."

This year's GRC Technology Pulse Survey also revealed that GRC professionals think the most prevalent concern for organizations is data privacy and security. This is a change from 2013, when respondents indicated internal fraud, waste and abuse as the primary worry.

"It's time for leadership to step back and evaluate what modern technology can do

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