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Your Risk Strategy Is Broken Without Resilience



Corporate performance depends on how well disruptions are managed. And these disruptions are more frequent, severe, and harder than ever to predict.

The most effective resilience plans are deeply intertwined with governance, risk, and compliance, where the disciplines work together for the greater good of the organization. Achieving that level of coordination, however, doesn't happen automatically. It takes commitment from both teams – and the right technical support to help the relationship flourish.

One of the biggest challenges in integrating risk and resilience is that the teams operate differently. The GRC team is scenario-driven, strategy-oriented, and often focused on financial, reputational, or regulatory issues. Business resilience is procedural, operational, and concerned with keeping people, processes, and systems running under stress.

The pressure is on to overcome these structural, cultural, and technical divides. Here's how to set yourself up for success.

Build a Foundation for Better Connection

Moving from parallel functions to an integrated risk and resilience program doesn't require a total rebuild. Start off with a few basic – but important – initiatives:

1. **Create a cross-functional team**. Put together a team with representation from both functions. This group can work together to identify risks, prioritize actions, and develop solutions. They can establish common workflows that bake in cross-collaboration from the start. You may even find that with your combined efforts, data gathered for one requirement can be leveraged to comply with another, saving everyone time and effort.

2. **Establish a regular cadence for talking.** Don't wait for trouble to happen. Get the cross-functional team together on a regular basis as a forum to raise issues, discuss solutions, and build trust.

3. **Decide on a common language and metrics.** Come together to institute a common taxonomy and measurement criteria for all stakeholders – including both the risk and resilience teams and internal partners. Jointly define what "critical" means for products, services, systems, and suppliers – and ensure that both the enterprise risk register and BIAs reflect the same assumptions. Shared objectives and KPIs can also motivate teams to collaborate on solutions. And a common language will help eliminate discrepancies and misunderstandings – which is especially important when facing the pressures of disruption.



4. **Establish a joint governance structure**. A shared steering committee keeps risk and resilience aligned with business strategy and ensures consistent communication up to leadership and the board. An executive sponsor who can champion the cross-functional group's work is a bonus. This person will have the authority to garner broad leadership support and secure necessary resources.

5. **Leverage GRC data to prioritize resilience testing.** Use the enterprise risk register to prioritize resilience testing scenarios. For example, if a specific supplier or facility appears in the top risk tier in GRC, that should drive tabletop drills and recovery testing.

6. **Translate risk appetite into recovery objectives.** GRC teams set the tolerances. Resilience teams operationalize them. Align recovery time objectives with stated risk appetite to bridge strategy to operational execution.

7. **Align risk registers with business impact analyses.** While these tools are often developed in silos, they are really two sides of the same coin. If a critical risk is in your risk register, it should be mapped to a BIA priority and vice versa. That will reveal your real risk exposures.

8. **Run joint exercises.** Don't limit scenario testing to just the resilience team. Involve the cross-functional team to help everyone think beyond their roles and share different perspectives for making improvements. Co-led exercises and after-action reports allow both risk and resilience to validate assumptions, surface blind spots, and jointly communicate outcomes to executives and boards.

9. **Sync metrics and dashboards.** Connect key risk indicators with operational recovery performance. Shared dashboards can show when thresholds are breached – and how quickly the organization recovers.



Add Software to Strengthen the Connection

Today's GRC and business continuity and resilience software gives both risk and resilience teams access to the same high-quality data so they can exchange knowledge and collaborate on actions. It reinforces the agreed-on vocabulary, standardizes processes, and establishes one source of truth for all, from frontline management to the board.

Here's what to look for:

Purpose-built solutions for GRC and for resilience. Beware of specialized vendors that try to oversell expertise in a discipline they know little about. Look for software that is built specifically for the practice of GRC and specifically for the practice of resilience – that also are tightly integrated with each other. That way, each team gets the best solution for their needs with the added benefit of a seamless information exchange.

A shared data model. What starts as, say, a data breach at a critical vendor, can lead to operational risks, cyber risks, compliance risks, and more. Look for software that brings all risk-related data into one place that's easily accessible to all stakeholders. Data can be entered once and used by all, which saves time, reduces the likelihood of errors, and adds transparency.

Interoperability. Combine things like risk exposures, KRIs, and risk appetites from the GRC perspective with business continuity metrics like RTO performance, BIA outputs, and recovery assurance levels. Look for software that puts them in one view, one voice, and one context, so you have the overall picture and can see whether critical risks and the response plans have been properly exercised.

Workflow automation. Integrated technology automates routine tasks, workflows, and follow-up, saving time, improving accuracy, and adding consistency. Look for software that not only streamlines everyday work in each discipline but that also automatically triggers cross-functional actions. For example, a risk flagged in a cyber audit would immediately trigger a business impact review and continuity plan check. Or a regulatory requirement for resilience would directly feed into your GRC framework, with controls mapped, tested, and ready to go.

Reporting and analytics. Boards want to know that the organization is ready for whatever obstacles pop up. That means reporting testing outcomes, recovery capabilities, and gaps in a way that reflects enterprise resilience. Look for software that helps the cross-functional team identify gaps, determine an action plan, assign responsibility, and set a timeline for completion.

Your Next Step

Survival amid constant volatility demands that risk and resilience work together.

Start the conversation. Establish a common vocabulary, share metrics, and sync your priorities. Find systems and software that facilitate discussion, strengthen trust, and support the kind of informed decision-making that will give your organization the edge over competitors.

And don't wait. A broken connection between risk management and resilience undermines both functions – with real cost implications for the organization.

Bringing the risk and resilience teams closer together will help your organization do a better job of planning for the unexpected. You can build up response capabilities in advance – and improve your chances of taking any disruption in stride.

For more information, please visit *riskonnect.com.*

About Riskonnect

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