

Realising the Benefits

- An organisation's mission and goals are more likely to be achieved if information risks are properly managed. Good Information Risk Management underpins a wide range of organisational goals and can provide benefits everywhere.
- Good Information Risk Management is an enabler. It does not exist to stifle initiative or restrict operational freedom.
- Organisations need to find a balance between risk mitigation and enabling the organisation to release the benefits its information can deliver.

What Benefits?

Good information risk management enhances stakeholder value. The benefits will vary between organisations, but can be expected to include:

Operational efficiency	Accurate, up to date information reduces wasted effort and costs.
Greater agility	Dependable information allows for faster decision making.
Improved manageability	Risk mitigation makes the organisation more manageable.
Exploitation of new opportunities	Information risk mitigation supports expansion into new areas of business with more confidence.
Customer retention	Customer experience is improved in a measurable way.
Strengthen the brand	Help your organisation be seen as a safe partner, contributing to success rather than introducing another source of risk.
Cost-efficient compliance	Satisfy multiple compliance needs within a single framework.
Maximise return on capital	Reduce the capital required to deal with unplanned turns of events so that it can be freed for more productive purposes.

Why Impose any Restrictions?

Uncontrolled or unconstrained exploitation of information can introduce dangers of its own.

- Exploitation of information for particular business initiatives needs to take account of the organisation's wider obligations and duties.
- There might be applicable external constraints on the purposes for which information can be used, and an organisation might be the custodian and not the owner of the information it wants to exploit.
- Short-term benefits need to be weighed against possible long term effects on the organisation and its customers.
- Specialist attention might be needed to ensure non-contravention of legislation or regulatory regimes, often differing country-by-country (see Regulation and Legislation).

Control Need Not be a Straitjacket

Good information risk mitigation supports organisational strategies and tactical agility rather than limiting them.

- Understanding its information risks can help ensure an organisation takes the right path towards its goals and objectives and avoids taking dead-end paths or hitting major bumps in the road.
- Monitoring and mitigating its information risks helps an organisation to anticipate what might happen and increases the ability of the organisation to react and respond well to what does happen.

Find the Right Path

Each organisation needs to find the path that is right for it and to understand its particular reasons for wanting to manage its information risks. These reasons will be a mixture of risk mitigation, the expected benefits, and the need for compliance, the themes developed in the three Organisation guides. All three of these themes will make a contribution.

All decision makers within the organisation, and that includes everyone from executive management to the shop floor, need to know what is expected of them. They need to know where they fit within the larger governance picture (see Governance and Structures) and the effects their decisions have on the organisation's exposure to information risks (see Creating a Strong Information Handling Culture).

On behalf of your organisation, you will want to find the optimum level of effort that maximises net value and builds success. The level of effort and resource your organisation puts to information risk mitigation should reflect the degree to which success in achieving organisational goals and objectives depends on reducing information risks (see Information Risk Management Approach), plus on the nature and level of the actual risks your organisation faces at any time (see Information Risk Mitigation). Decide on your priorities and set your programmes, methodologies and standards to ensure you achieve your risk management milestones (see Programmes, Methodologies and Standards).

