Evolution or irrelevance?
Internal Audit at a crossroads

Deloitte’s Global Chief Audit Executive Survey

www.deloitte.com/globalCAEsurvey
When an organism’s environment changes, it either evolves to meet the demands of its new world or it becomes extinct. So it is in business. In less than a generation, the business world has been transformed in terms of methods, markets, technologies, regulations, and risks.

Similar dynamics exist for functions within organisations. Those that evolve to meet the changing needs of the organisation thrive and remain relevant. Those that do not become marginalised and irrelevant.

Deloitte’s 2015 publication *Adapt or Disappear* first sounded this evolutionary theme for Internal Audit. The intense interest and positive response to that article led to development of Deloitte’s Global Chief Audit Executive (CAE) Survey, the results of which are reported here.

Our research found that CAEs (Heads of Internal Audit) have serious concerns. They know that their organisations are changing—that’s been the case for a while. They also know that Internal Audit needs to respond to meet the changing needs of their organisations.

Those organisations need Internal Audit to inform them about the future rather than only report on the past. They need insights as well as information, advice as well as assurance. They need reviews of not only financial and operational controls, but also of strategic planning and risk management processes. They need internal auditors to apply their rigor, objectivity, independence, and skills in new ways.

As the results of this survey indicate, Internal Audit will have to evolve in specific ways in order to meet these needs. The needed changes are clearer than ever. CAEs must now lead their functions to take the next critical steps. In addition, Internal Audit’s key stakeholders, notably the audit committee and the executive team, must support the function as it takes those steps.

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1 See also Adapt or disappear: To navigate inevitable upheaval, internal audit must lead the way, Deloitte, 2015, [http://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/za/Documents/risk/ZA_Risk_AdaptorDisappear_120815.pdf](http://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/za/Documents/risk/ZA_Risk_AdaptorDisappear_120815.pdf)
As the findings of Deloitte’s Global CAE Survey show, CAEs understand that Internal Audit faces the need to change, yet many are struggling with how to act on that understanding. These findings vividly portray key aspects of this struggle.

Together with Deloitte’s observations, they also indicate ways in which Internal Audit can evolve to increase its value to the organisation.

Globally, more than 1,200 CAEs participated in this survey, a response that signifies their deep interest in the changes affecting Internal Audit, and in how they should respond. Spanning 29 countries and a wide range of industries, this research gauged CAEs’ thinking about their functions’ status, capabilities, activities, roles, and resources currently and over the next three to five years.

In Ireland, we received responses across a wide range of industries, giving us a good insight with regard to the Irish perspective. Interestingly, the Irish results are broadly aligned to the global perspective which indicates that Ireland has moved forward in terms of internal audit service provision. The key findings arising from the survey are as follows:

- CAEs recognise the need for change.
- Dynamic reporting is poised to increase.
- Internal Audit needs more impact and influence.
- Advisory services will expand.
- Gaps in skills must be addressed.
- Innovation is important too.
- Use of alternative resourcing models will expand.
- Reviews of strategic planning and risk management will increase.
- Analytics presents major opportunities.
Executive summary

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The change imperative

Build influence and impact

Strengthen the skillset

Address critical skill gaps

Use innovative resourcing models

Embrace analytics

Adopt dynamic reporting

Increase advisory services

Innovate

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• **CAEs recognise the need for change.** The status quo is not an option when 95% of CAEs expect their organisation to change moderately to significantly in the next three to five years and are also expecting similar change in Internal Audit. The survey also found that most CAEs believe that management and the audit committee will expect Internal Audit to step-up and meet new challenges.

• **Internal Audit needs more impact and influence.** Only 24% of CAEs believe that their functions have strong impact and influence within the organisation with 8% noting that Internal Audit has little to no impact and influence. Meanwhile, almost two-thirds believe that Internal Audit’s strength in these areas will be important in the coming years. This disconnect—between current and needed impact and influence—must be addressed, for the good of Internal Audit and the organisation.

• **Gaps in skills must be addressed.** While the results have improved on our previous survey (where 76% of respondents identified the need for additional skills, nearly half of CAEs (47%) are still not convinced that their teams have the skills and expertise needed to deliver on stakeholders’ current expectations—let alone future demands. If Internal Audit can’t fulfill stakeholder expectations, how can it exert influence and have an impact on the organisation?

• **Use of alternative resourcing models will expand.** Facing a skills gap and talent shortage, and the need for risk, cyber and other specialists, many CAEs expect to expand their use of alternative resourcing models. The use of co-sourcing is expected to slightly increase with 37% of CAEs planning to use this model. Significant increases in the use of guest auditor and rotation programs are expected to occur with the use of rotation programs, in particular, expected to double.
Executive summary (continued)

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- **Analytics presents major opportunities.** To increase its efficiency, value, and impact, Internal Audit needs to expand its usage of analytics, as indicated by several findings.

  - **Use of analytics is largely at basic levels.** While 87% of respondents use analytics, only 24% use them at an intermediate level and 7% at an advanced level. Most use basic, ad hoc analytics (e.g. spreadsheets) or no analytics; those that use them do so mainly in fieldwork and would benefit by expanding their use in audit scoping and planning.

  - **Use of analytics is expected to increase.** Over the next three to five years, 55% of respondents expect to be using analytics in at least 50 percent of their audits. 26% expect to move to high usage—employing analytics in at least 75 percent of their audits.

  - **Internal Audit faces barriers to greater use of analytics.** CAEs see talent gaps and accessing quality data as key barriers to greater use of analytics. Internal Audit’s skills remain heavily weighted toward auditing operational and financial areas; analytical and technology skills need to be upgraded.
Executive summary (continued)

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– **Dynamic reporting is poised to increase.** Most Internal Audit groups communicate with stakeholders through static text documents and presentations. Use of text in particular is expected to decrease slightly as dynamic visualisation tools increase dramatically to support reporting of results (from 2% to 45%). These dynamic visualisation tools enable Internal Audit to deliver more insightful observations, interact with stakeholders, and deliver greater value.

- **Advisory services will expand.** Two thirds of respondents (66%) expect the proportion of advisory services they provide to expand over the next three to five years. CAEs expect stakeholders to look to Internal Audit for insights regarding the future and to weigh in earlier on business initiatives.

- **Innovation is important too.** CAEs cited risk anticipation (39%) and data analytics (34%) as the two innovations most likely to impact Internal Audit over the next three to five years. This reflects stakeholders’ desire for Internal Audit to shift from mainly reporting on the past to also anticipating the future.

- **Reviews of strategic planning and risk management will increase.** While about one-third of Internal Audit groups have evaluated their organisation’s strategic planning process in the past three years, over half expect to do so in the next three to five years. A strong increase is also expected in the number of Internal Audit groups reviewing their risk management function.

- **Stable Internal Audit budgets may present challenges.** Half of CAEs expect their budgets to remain stable and another one-third (36%) expect them to increase somewhat. While a lack of cuts may be “good news,” the bad news is that in times of disruption and evolution, flat or slowly growing budgets may not be enough. Doing more with less (or with the same) may be possible, but only up to a point.

**Consider the key dilemma:** Most CAEs see change ahead for their organisations and functions. But only 13% are very satisfied that their functions have the skills to meet stakeholder expectations and only 28% believe that they have strong impact and influence in their organisations. Meanwhile, two-thirds believe that having impact and influence is very important.

This situation calls for vigorous, focused, well-planned responses. While each CAE must develop a response tailored to his or her organisation, function, and stakeholders’ needs, throughout this publication we suggest steps to take and summarise them in our conclusion.
Organisations are evolving to boost performance, address disruptors, and stay competitive. Internal Audit functions need to understand the changes their organisations are undergoing and how to respond in ways that support stakeholders.

Change expected within the organisation over the next 3 to 5 years:

- **50%** Significantly change
- **45%** Moderately change
- **5%** Not at all
- **0%** N/A
- **0%** Not sure
Furthermore, CAEs believe that the audit committee and management will expect their Internal Audit functions to evolve.

Given the widespread expectations of change, Internal Audit must respond proactively. Misjudgments—or failure to take action—can exact painful costs in decreased Internal Audit effectiveness, relevance, and influence. But this is not about change for the sake of change. It’s about understanding the type and extent of change that Internal Audit needs to make in order to meet stakeholders’ needs.

**Audit committee needs Internal Audit to evolve over the next 3 to 5 years**

![Audit committee survey results](chart)

**Management needs Internal Audit to evolve over the next 3 to 5 years**

![Management survey results](chart)
A minority of CAEs believe they have the ability to exert influence over the board of directors, executive team, and other key personnel and make a significant impact within their organisations. Some even believe they have little to no influence or impact. Yet CAEs also believe, correctly, that it will be important to have both in the years ahead.

Make no mistake: Changes are already underway as organisations call for a strong role on the part of Internal Audit, backed by strong capabilities. organisations need help understanding and addressing strategic, cyber, and other risks. Management needs help gauging the issues and potential outcomes of decisions and initiatives.

Audit committees and boards need help untangling the complexities of the evolving business, technologies, and competitive and regulatory environments.

Only Internal Audit possesses the objectivity, independence, rigor, and enterprise-wide view needed to help stakeholders understand and address these challenges. Yet if three-quarters of CAEs feel they already lack strong impact and influence within their organisations, the change imperative is crystal clear.
Internal Audit needs to strengthen its skillset if it is to increase its impact and influence within the organisation. CAEs are clearly aware of this: Relatively few are fully satisfied that their groups have the skills and expertise to deliver on stakeholders’ expectations. The Irish results are interesting in that an additional 10% of CAEs in Ireland are satisfied with current capabilities which shows the investment we have made in this area in Ireland over the past number of years. This is also highlighted in the fact that 76% of Irish CAEs highlighted in our previous survey that additional skills were needed and 53% are now saying that they are satisfied with the current internal audit capability.

Current satisfaction with Internal Audit’s capabilities

53% Satisfied
37% Somewhat satisfied
10% Not satisfied

However, when nearly half of CAEs are only somewhat satisfied or less than satisfied there is not only ample room—but also urgent need—for improvement. A deficit in skills and expertise undoubtedly affects Internal Audit’s ability to meet current organisational needs, as well as future needs. The situation may call for more than moderate change in many Internal Audit groups.
A look at specifically identified skills gaps helps to explain why CAEs are not satisfied with their groups’ capabilities—and perhaps why those groups lack impact and influence.

Top 5 gaps in capabilities

- Change management: 29%
- Innovation: 32%
- Model risk: 21%
- Data analytics: 66%
- Specialised IT: 55%

These skills are what will enable Internal Audit to respond to the top priority areas of analytics and innovation, and to key risks in their organisations. They go beyond the long-standing skills associated with reviews of controls and operational and financial audits, so it’s natural that gaps would exist. However, given the intended course of change, these skills will need to be boosted.
The war for talent rages on and Internal Audit is not (yet) the magnet for talent that CAEs would hope. To acquire specialised talent, Internal Audit groups are increasingly using alternative resourcing models to supplement their core Internal Audit teams. In 2015, our survey highlighted that 34% of CAEs were using in-house resources only. In contrast, only 16% of respondents to this survey indicated that no alternative staffing models are being used. This is to reduce further again to 11% over the next three to five years which shows the increasing emphasis on having the right skill sets.
CAEs expect that cosourcing will prevail as a popular alternative sourcing model—for good reason. This model enables Internal Audit to secure specialised skills, additional capacity, and just-in-time flexibility without long-term investment. The same is true for occasional use of external resources.

Use of guest auditor programmes, which bring people from the business into Internal Audit to assist with specific reviews is currently used significantly less in Ireland than globally (11% instead of the global figure of 20%) although this seems to be due to change in the next 3 to 5 years. These programmes bring in individuals with an in-depth understanding of the audit matter, enabling the Internal Audit team to ask more insightful questions, strengthen its analysis, and deliver greater value. This business knowledge is transferred to the Internal Audit team, while an understanding of risk and control is transferred to the business, along with a new ambassador for Internal Audit.

Rotation programmes bring similar benefits, cycling talent from the business through Internal Audit and vice versa. Many Internal Audit functions have not realised the significant benefits of these programmes due to barriers, such as lack of senior management support. Also, a rotation into Internal Audit is not universally seen as a career accelerator. In our experience, careful planning, long-term commitment, senior executive support, and wise choices regarding candidates increase the chances of success.

A few unexpected findings emerged in this area—the relatively small percentage who plan to use offshoring to reduce the costs of Internal Audit (13%) and the surprisingly high proportion who do not intend to use an alternative staffing model (11%).

Deloitte believes that better use of alternative staffing models, when properly planned and implemented, can do much to help Internal Audit address skills gaps, acquire expertise, and gain influence and impact within the organisation.
Analytics has taken hold in Internal Audit and is poised for greater usage. Most Internal Audit groups have adopted analytics during fieldwork, using basic, ad-hoc tools and capabilities. But Internal Audit needs to embed analytics into their approaches, methods, and communications across virtually all activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Internal Audit analytics capabilities</th>
<th>Current deployment of analytics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5% Advanced—standard methods and training, using advanced tools and analytics techniques</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24% Intermediate—some standardisation of methods, some repeatable analytics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63% Basic—ad hoc analytics with limited repeatable solutions, basic tools (e.g. spreadsheet, etc.)</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8% No analytics capabilities</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0% Not sure</td>
<td>18%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continuous auditing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continuous risk assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do not use analytics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Not sure</td>
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<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
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**Why?** Because using analytics enables Internal Audit to identify high priority areas, conduct audit activities more efficiently, develop deeper insights, and communicate results through visualisation tools.

As to current deployment, the majority of respondents use analytics in fieldwork, but fewer do so in annual planning and audit scoping. The latter are areas where analytics could help to identify risk areas, improve resource allocations, make audits more impactful, and free up time for advisory work. These are also areas in which Deloitte sees analytics having the most impact.

**Use of analytics in internal audits is rising sharply**

Most Internal Audit groups already intend to expand their use of analytics. Those now using analytics will use them more, and those not using analytics will start using them. Currently, 29% of respondents use analytics in 50 percent or more of their internal audits. That usage is anticipated to jump hugely to 56% over the next three to five years. And an impressive 27% or more plan on using analytics on at least 75 percent of their internal audits.
With analytical skills and a few simple tools, Internal Audit can readily apply analytics throughout the internal audit life cycle. Activities would include using analytics during audit scoping; using resulting insights to inform the audit plan; analysing, comparing, profiling, and visualising data; and formulating and testing key hypotheses from audit planning through report development.

From an Irish perspective, we compare favourably to the global results in that nearly three quarters of organisations use analytics regularly for sampling and basic profiling (compared to 70% globally) and 55% use analytics for data quality reviews (compared to 55% globally). Ireland has really moved on in the use of analytics in the past three years and this can be seen in the results; however, there are huge benefits and efficiencies to be gained by using it further.

After sampling populations, basic data profiling, and reviewing data quality, use of analytics significantly drops off. With only 16% performing advanced data management and aggregation, most Internal Audit uses of analytics are actually quite basic. Without data management and data aggregation capabilities, activities are more or less limited to scanning files and extracting simple samples. Yet the future—the immediate future—is in data modeling for behavioral analysis and predictive modeling for insight and foresight.
Here’s the real analytics opportunity: Having access to all data within the organisation, Internal Audit is uniquely positioned to analyse multiple data sets to identify trends, relationships, and anomalies that no one else in the organisation can identify. In addition, combining data from inside and outside the organisation can add richness to stakeholders’ understanding of risk. So, while using analytics to deliver more insightful audits more efficiently is a worthwhile goal, Internal Audit should also capitalise on its position and abilities to deliver more insightful views of business issues and risks.

The barriers to implementing analytics can be overcome
So what’s stopping Internal Audit from fully embracing analytics? At the top of the list is that gap in skills and the quality of data available.
To acquire analytics capabilities, a relatively high percentage of CAEs plan to train (63%) and/or hire (34%) staff, which may reflect a desire to develop talent specific to the industry and organisation. However, alternate staffing models, such as outsourcing (which is often done for information technology audits), can support more generalist activities like data extraction and data management.

Also, while data quality and access may present challenges, Deloitte has found that Internal Audit groups that work with the available data, rather than waiting for better data (or using “poor data quality” as an excuse for inaction), can overcome these data challenges and start deriving the benefits discussed here.
**Dynamic reporting is coming onscreen**

**Most Internal Audit functions communicate their findings through the same static reports** (i.e. text documents) and presentations that the profession has used for years. Relatively few CAEs employ dynamic analytics or visualisation tools to communicate with their stakeholders.

This may well be contributing to Internal Audit’s low impact and influence: Reams of necessary-but-not-useful reports will not engage an executive team.

A large number of CAEs expect to shift from static to dynamic (or interactive) communications using, for example, analytics or visualisation tools. This helps to meet the organisation’s need for more real-time and near real-time reporting on processes, controls, and risks. It also supports a focus on the future rather than the past, on insights rather than data. Stakeholders want practical, actionable information, not report cards. Relevant insights build credibility, in turn building the function’s ability to make an impact and gain influence.

As television gained popularity in the last century, media critic Marshall McLuhan noted that, “The medium is the message.” Today, when Twitter is quoted every day in mainstream media, that statement is truer than ever. To change its messaging, Internal Audit must change the media it uses to deliver its messages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present communication methods</th>
<th>Future expected communication methods</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Static word processing reports</td>
<td>Static presentation reports</td>
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<tr>
<td>Static presentation reports</td>
<td>Dynamic visualisation tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamic analytic tools</td>
<td>Static word processing reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Dynamic visualisation tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamic analytic tools</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
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</table>

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Two thirds of CAEs expect to increase the proportion of advisory services their groups deliver. Emphasising advisory services can increase the function’s impact and influence.

For example, advisory services, such as predictive risk analysis and advice on risk mitigation—provided in the planning stages of an initiative—will deliver more value than simply noting what management could have done differently after the initiative has been launched or completed.

Advisory services expand Internal Audit’s impact and influence by enhancing the value provided. Therefore, compared with assurance, advisory services lead more surely to a seat at the table—or position the CAE more firmly in that seat.

Advisory services do demand that Internal Audit have business, communication, and other skills needed to provide them. They also call upon Internal Audit to develop a “brand” that the organisation associates with an advisory perspective, as well as with assurance services.
Internal Audit needs to innovate

To make changes in its approaches and activities, Internal Audit should embrace an innovative mindset, as well as actual innovations. However, the function is not known for aggressive innovation. For example, analytics has taken hold in Internal Audit relatively recently; and many groups have still not embedded analytics into their Internal Audit activities.

CAEs identified risk anticipation as the innovative development they expect to impact their functions most in the next few years, as indicated by the adjacent word cloud. (The larger the font size, the greater the number of mentions by respondents.) That’s not surprising. When a risk event, financial loss, or case of fraud arises, it’s natural for stakeholders to ask, “Where was Internal Audit?”

Key innovative developments expected to impact Internal Audit

No innovation expected Transformation digital
Increasing size of the talent pool Shared IA service
Strengthening the bench and succession planning
Ability to audit news domains (eg. Quality of Services)
Cognitive technologies Collaborative assurance provision in partnership with management
Data analytics
Culture more specialism Strategic auditing and business impact Predictive analytics
Risk anticipation Review of Agile Programs New talent models (describe) Digitisation Improving the position of Internal Audit so that it is recognised as a developer of risk management talents for the entire organisation
Predictive analytics Synergy and integration
Expanding assurance activities to HSEC space Strategic co-sourcing Deep subject matter specialists Visualisation
In citing risk anticipation, data and predictive analytics, visualisation, and cognitive technologies as the innovations most likely to affect Internal Audit, CAEs signal their understanding that stakeholders expect them to provide foresight. Those stakeholders want Internal Audit to use predictive and sensing tools as well as other emerging technologies to gauge the likelihood of success or failure of an initiative, and to identify ways to increase the chances of success.

Perhaps Internal Audit should adopt the mantra of many companies—if you are not moving forward, you are moving backward, if only in relation to everyone who is moving forward.
An increasing focus on evaluating strategic planning processes and risk management functions surely makes sense given the disruption affecting organisations. Trends, such as peer-to-peer networks, collaborative consumption, artificial intelligence, wearable technologies, user-created content, and the Internet of things—together with relentless globalisation—threaten prices, margins, and entire business models and industries.

### Internal Audit’s evaluation of the organisation’s strategic planning function or process

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within the past 3 years</strong></td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Over the next 3 years</strong></td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>13%</td>
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### Internal Audit’s evaluation of the organisation’s risk management function or process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No*</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within the past 3 years</strong></td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Over the next 3 years</strong></td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</table>

*we have a risk management function/process but have not evaluated it/do not expect to evaluate it

*we don’t have a risk management function/process
A review of the risk management function can be revealing. Is there a process to identify emerging risks? Have the organisation’s risk appetite and risk tolerance been developed? Have key risks been identified and key risk indicators defined? How are they being monitored? Have strategic risks been considered (the latter is critical given market, technology, and business model disruptors)? Again, a review can determine the effectiveness of the function and related processes.

In certain jurisdictions, regulators are focused on the role of Internal Audit as the third line of defense for risk governance. Some are requiring Internal Audit to perform end-to-end reviews of the risk management process as part of its independent assessment of key second line of defense functions (for example, the risk management function).

A review of the strategic planning process can reveal, first, whether a formal, comprehensive process even exists. Does it consist of all key stakeholders, including the board of directors? Does it cover key elements, such as scenario planning? Does it combine top-down and bottom-up elements in useful ways? Then, a review can assess its components and their effectiveness.
The Internal Audit budget picture portrays a good-news/not-great-news scenario. The good news is that nine out of 10 CAEs expect their budgets to remain stable, increase slightly, or increase significantly over the next few years.

This indicates that organisations recognise the value of Internal Audit and are not reducing its resources (or not reducing them further). In fact, over 60% of CAEs expect increases.

Yet the finding that just under 40% of budgets will remain the same or decrease in a time of continual disruption and rising expectations is not great news. Internal Audit faces talent gaps and a need for transformative change. Increased financial resources would help the cause. Leaving budgets stable—let alone decreasing them—may not adequately fund the required evolution.

Still, the ways in which Internal Audit allocates its budget will make the difference between adequate and outstanding performance. Even with budget increases, Internal Audit will need to get creative, for example in using analytics to improve audit efficiency and harnessing visualisation tools to communicate insights. The resourcing models noted in this survey, such as co-sourcing, guest auditor programs, and rotation programs, also present opportunities to use budget creatively.
The business environment is dictating a need for organisations to develop certain capabilities over the next several years, such as the ability to anticipate risks and implement responses. Internal Audit can assist in developing these capabilities, yet many Internal Audit groups lack the influence, skills, and tools to do so. This presents an evolutionary challenge to organisations and their Internal Audit functions.

Deloitte’s research points to a path forward. Internal Audit—and only Internal Audit—has the professional objectivity and independence, the intellectual rigour and integrity, and the enterprise-wide perspective to assist the organisation in this time of change and opportunity.

Although the specific course of action will depend on the Internal Audit group and organisation in question, based on Deloitte’s research the following steps are worth considering:

- **Seek ways to increase impact and influence.**
  This overarching goal will be achieved by enhancing the value Internal Audit delivers to stakeholders. That calls for learning about the changes, issues, disruptors, and risks that keep stakeholders awake at night. Then, with management and audit committee support, Internal Audit must develop ways to help stakeholders address them more effectively.

- **Embed analytics into Internal Audit activities.**
  Deloitte believes that analytics holds great potential to transform Internal Audit. The cost and complexity of analytical tools have fallen while their value to Internal Audit has risen. From audit scoping and planning to risk assessment and insight generation, analytics enables Internal Audit to do more, and then to communicate the results visually and interactively. This area cries out for action—for example, an assessment of current capabilities and needs, and a pilot project to demonstrate analytics in action and its value.

- **Streamline and visualise communications and reports.**
  Stakeholders want information and insights in forms and formats that fulfill their needs. With simple visualisation tools, Internal Audit can highlight the anomalies, risks, and issues that stakeholders care about most. These methods demonstrate that Internal Audit is taking a stakeholder-centered, issue-oriented, future-focused approach.
An evolutionary crossroads (continued)

- **Assess and address talent and skills gaps.** The talent shortage is real, as are skills gaps. Targeted resources may be available through guest auditor and rotation programs, co-sourcing, outsourcing, and other arrangements. Given the complexity of stakeholder needs and risks in areas such as cyber threat management and data governance—and potentially limited budget—it only makes sense to explore such alternatives.

- **Review strategic planning and risk management.** These two areas are ripe for Internal Audit review or, in some cases, more rigorous review. Both areas are forward-looking and can benefit from good doses of objectivity and foresight. Internal Audit should ascertain that processes are sufficiently robust, particularly in the context of expected disruption and change.

- **Promote a culture of innovation within the function.** Keep abreast of changes affecting organisations and new techniques being used by leading Internal Audit functions. Expected innovative developments, such as risk anticipation and predictive analytics, should be explored and implemented, if not already in place.

- **Marshal senior-level support.** Work with key stakeholders—the audit committee chair, chief financial officer, and chief executive officer—to support a programme of specific changes that will yield benefits. One would be to apply analytics in ways that increase audit efficiency, reduce costs, or plug cash leaks. Another would be to secure support for rotation programmes as a way to help address skills gaps and to increase the number of ambassadors for Internal Audit within the broader organisation.

CAEs currently have real opportunities to shape the evolution of their functions, organisations, and profession.

Capitalising on those opportunities calls for taking action. **Now.**
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- Address critical skill gaps
- Use innovative resourcing models
- Embrace analytics
- Adopt dynamic reporting
- Increase advisory services
- Innovate
- Shift areas of focus
- Do more with the same
- Conclusion

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