

Third-party data risk maturity model: A roadmap for success

Third-party data risk management demands a new perspective. Unlike traditional approaches, it recognizes that operational risks extend beyond your organization’s internal walls. Every piece of data flowing through your business ecosystem, from partners to vendors, is a potential vulnerability.

Our maturity model charts your course to mastering third-party data risk across your entire ecosystem.

This framework helps organizations navigate the journey, from identifying data threats posed by third parties to building cost-effective programs that safeguard your most valuable partnerships.

STAGE	Unaware	Reactive/ Piloting	Standardized	Strategic	Integrated/ Predictive	
PROGRAM ATTRIBUTES	Program scope	Limited to none	Siloed; focused on intra-function pilots	Cross-unit	Cross-division	Cross-partnerships
	Resources & processes	Ad hoc	Scripted from existing security or compliance teams	Budgeted company-wide but varies by unit	Uniformly staffed, deployed, and monitored	Partners are at the same maturity level/outcome as company
	Costs	Largely unknown	Reactive and unpredictable—focused on remediations	Initial program deployments and expenses exceeding benefits	Efficient intra-company cost/benefit outcomes	Efficient cross-company cost/benefit outcomes
KEY INITIATIVES	Governance	Lacking	Policies may be partially present but are not enforced	Broadly defined policy enforcement with some automation	Company-wide policy automation with limited external enforcement	End-to-end data usage and rights enforcement
	Auditing	Manual or missing	Primarily manual, with some automated reporting	Workgroup- or department-scoped automation	Company-wide automation	Cross-company & partner automation with real-time auditability
	Achievable tracking resolution	N/A	Datasets	Individual tables/files	Columns, intra-file content	Columns, intra-file content with partner-spanning lineage
INTEROPERABILITY	Platform & sidecar adoption	None/unaware	Piloting / Learning	Initial deployments; piloting partnerships	Company-wide deployment; limited partnership use	Widely deployed internally and across partnerships
	Integrated with...	Limited to no systems	Primarily compliance activities or litigation driven	Compliance, security, auditing, and reporting	Compliance, security, auditing, reporting, and operations	Compliance, security, auditing, reporting, analytics, and data tooling
STRATEGIC VALUE GAP	 Very large Critical vulnerabilities, absent or ineffective controls, low risk awareness, inconsistent results	 Large Significant exposure to threats, limited risk mitigation, basic risk identification, and unaligned goals	 Moderate Identified and prioritized risks, with partial implementation of controls	 Mild Low-probability, high-impact risks primarily driven by external factors	 None Mature risk management practices resulting in consistent, predictable, and optimal outcomes	

While a strong data governance foundation offers advantages, even the most advanced organizations struggle with constant regulatory shifts and evolving consumer expectations. Financial institutions, for example, can’t answer basic questions about customer data access. Open banking regulations aim to address this, but upgrades for better transparency come at a significant cost.

For less regulated industries, the challenge is even steeper. Organizations often lack established data governance practices, teams, and protocols. Partnering with other companies adds another layer of complexity when integrating data governance across different entities.

The silver lining: Data automation pays off

Data automation isn’t just a hygiene factor, it’s a strategic investment. Automating data risk management, including internal and external audits, cuts costs over time. Modern tools are key. [Download our guide](#) to select the right solution and build trust across your data ecosystem.

About Vendia

Vendia is the future of collective data intelligence, combining smart APIs, databases, and distributed ledger technology into a single platform. Vendia’s data automation makes it easy to share data inside and outside of your organization in real time and with full visibility, governance, and control. Companies such as BMW, Delta Airlines, Resolution Life Insurance, and Fannie Mae use Vendia to automate contextual and compliant data flows between any-to-any systems for a harmonized, accurate view of data that unlocks speed, innovation, and cost savings. Learn more about us at [Vendia.com](#) and [#UnchainYourData](#) with Vendia.