



Allgress

Providing an Integrated View of Risk & Control

SOLUTION **PERSPECTIVE**

Governance, Risk Management & Compliance Insight

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TALK TO US . . .

We look forward to hearing from you and learning what you think about GRC 20/20 research. GRC 20/20 is eager to answer inquiries from organizations looking to improve GRC related processes and utilize technology to drive GRC efficiency, effectiveness, and agility.

Allgress

Providing an Integrated View of Risk & Control

Complexity in Business Requires New Paradigms in Risk Management

Organizations need 360° contextual awareness into risk, compliance, and controls across their organization, and to establish an integrated view of operational risks across the organization, that includes IT and information risks, to see the intricate relationships of objectives, risks, and boundaries of the enterprise.

Gone are the years of simplicity in business operations. Business operates in a world of chaos. A small event develops into what ends up being a significant issue. Exponential growth and change in risks, regulations, globalization, distributed operations, competitive velocity, technology, and business data encumbers organizations of all sizes. Keeping business strategy, performance, uncertainty, complexity, and change in sync is a significant challenge for boards and executives, as well as GRC management professionals throughout all levels of the business.

This challenge is even greater when risk management is buried in the depths of departments and not as an integrated focus across the business. Organizations need to understand how to monitor risk-taking, measure whether the associated risks taken are the right risks, and review whether risks are effectively controlled.

Today's organization requires holistic visibility and contextual awareness of risk in the context of the business. The complexity of business and intricacy, and interconnectedness of risk, dictates that the organization implement a governance, risk management, and compliance (GRC) management strategy. Consider that:

- **Governance** defines objectives, whether they are strategic, department, process, or asset level objectives.
- **Risk management** assesses and monitors risk to objectives within the context of the organization to take action on risk through identification, analysis, and then treatment. This provides a natural flow and integration of governance into risk management.
- **Compliance** provides the follow-through on risk treatment plans to ensure that risk is managed within limits and controls that are in place and functioning. Risk management fails without compliance, as compliance is needed to ensure controls are in place and operational to mitigate risk.

GRC 20/20 has identified two approaches that organizations take to manage risk, compliance, and controls: anarchy and federated.

- **Anarchy is based on ad hoc, departmentalized silos.** This is when the organization has departments doing different yet similar things with little to no collaboration between them. Distributed and siloed risk management initiatives never see the big picture and fail to put risk management in the context of organizational strategy, objectives, and performance. The organization is not thinking big picture about how risk management processes can be designed to meet a range of needs. An ad hoc approach to risk management results in poor visibility of the organization's relationships, as there is no framework for bringing the big picture together; there is no possibility to be insightful about risk, compliance, and performance. The organization fails to see the web of risk interconnectedness and its impact on performance and strategy, leading to greater exposure than any silo understood on its own.
- **Federated GRC is an integrated and collaborative approach.** The federated approach is where mature organizations will find the greatest balance in a collaborative and connected view of GRC management and oversight. It allows for some level of department and business function autonomy when needed, but also focuses on a common governance model, processes, and architecture that GRC functions across the organization can participate in. A federated approach increases the ability to connect, understand, analyze, and monitor connectedness and underlying patterns of performance, risk, and compliance. Different functions participate in GRC management with a focus on coordination and collaboration through common processes and integrated technology architecture.

The primary directive of a mature GRC management capability is to deliver effectiveness, efficiency, and agility to the business. This is in the context of managing the breadth of risks to the organization. This requires a strategy that connects the enterprise, business units, processes, transactions, and information to enable transparency, discipline, and control of the ecosystem of risks and controls across the enterprise.

Successful GRC management requires the organization to provide an integrated process, information, and technology architecture. This helps to identify, analyze, manage, and monitor GRC, as well as capture changes in the organization's risk profile from internal and external events as they occur. Mature GRC management is a seamless part of the organization and its operations.

Organizations striving to improve their GRC management capability and maturity in their organization will find they are more:

- **Aware.** They have a finger on the pulse of the business and watch for a change in the internal and external environments that introduce risk. Key to this is the ability to turn data into information that can be, and is, analyzed and shareable in every relevant direction.

- **Aligned.** They align risk management and compliance to support and inform business objectives. This requires continuously aligning objectives and operations of the integrated GRC capability to those of the entity, and to give strategic consideration to information from the GRC management capability to affect appropriate change.
- **Responsive.** Organizations cannot react to something they do not sense. Mature GRC management is focused on gaining greater awareness and understanding of information that drives decisions and actions, improves transparency, but also quickly cuts through the morass of data to uncover what an organization needs to know to make the right decisions.
- **Agile.** Stakeholders desire the organization to be more than fast; they require it to be nimble. Being fast isn't helpful if the organization is headed in the wrong direction. GRC enables decisions and actions that are quick, coordinated, and well thought out. Agility allows an entity to use GRC to its advantage, grasp strategic opportunities, and be confident in its ability to stay on course.
- **Resilient.** The best-laid plans of mice and men fail. Organizations need to be able to bounce back quickly from changes and risks with limited business impact. They need sufficient tolerances to allow for some missteps and have the confidence necessary to adapt and respond to opportunities rapidly.
- **Efficient.** They build business muscle and trim the fat to rid the organization of unnecessary duplication, redundancy and, misallocation of resources; to make the organization leaner overall with enhanced GRC capability and related decisions about the application of resources.

The bottom line: Organizations need a mature GRC capability that brings together a coordinated strategy and processes. This is supported by strong information and technology architecture that provides an integrated view of risks, compliance, controls, incidents, and more. Technology enables these processes to work together and function, but it does not define them.

Allgress

Providing an Integrated View of Risk & Control

Allgress is a solution that GRC 20/20 has researched, evaluated, and reviewed with organizations that are using it in distributed and dynamic business environments. Allgress is an integrated GRC management platform that can be used to manage a range of risk, compliance, and internal control initiatives across the business with a particular history focused on IT risk and control. Allgress was founded in 2008 and has approximately 50 employees. They deliver both on-premise and a cloud solution that has an updated information architecture, as well as an intuitive and modern user experience. Allgress enables organizations with out-of-the-box GRC applications and the ability to configure them to the needs of an organization.

GRC 20/20 has evaluated the features and capabilities of Allgress and finds that it delivers a flexible, intuitive, and engaging solution for enterprise GRC management, with particular capabilities in IT GRC (e.g., information security/digital risk). It is used to collect, organize, link, report, and analyze GRC data with increased control, collaboration, transparency, and accountability.

GRC 20/20's evaluation, research, and interactions with Allgress clients has determined the following:

- **Before Allgress:** Clients of Allgress typically are replacing manual processes of GRC that are encumbered by homegrown databases, as well as legions of documents, spreadsheets, and emails. Such approaches can be very manual, time-consuming, and prone to errors -particularly in aggregation and reporting on GRC data that involves hundreds to thousands of documents and spreadsheets. Clients said they were tired of the time spent on manual processes, things getting missed, and documentation lost.
- **Why Allgress:** Organizations choose Allgress as they are looking for a single integrated modular information architecture to automate and manage risk, internal control, security, and compliance processes. Clients were looking for a single information architecture that can handle an integrated taxonomy of risks and controls, mapped to an organization's strategies and context, that is agile and intuitive. Clients state they chose Allgress as the capabilities of the solution met their needs, but it also presented a significantly lower cost of ownership – from acquisition through maintenance – over its competitors.
- **How Allgress is used:** Typical use cases for Allgress vary to meet specific to broad GRC challenges, such as a single regulatory requirement (e.g., GDPR), to broad enterprise GRC implementations that span departments. These include:
 - Internal control assessment
 - Application security assessments
 - Vendor risk assessments
 - Risk management
 - Incident management
 - Policy Management
 - Standards and regulatory compliance (e.g., NIST 800, GDPR)
 - Vulnerability management
- **Where Allgress has excelled:** Organizations state that Allgress has improved the quality of their GRC information, reporting, and processes. This improves

the organization's overall visibility into GRC contexts across the organization, while eliminating the overhead of managing manual processes encumbered by hundreds to thousands of spreadsheets, documents, and emails. Clients find that the solution is flexible to adapt to their organization's requirements, has the core capabilities needed, and provides them the ability to grow and mature their program over time. Overall, users find the solution was particularly easy to implement and rollout in their organization.

Allgress Enables GRC Management Processes

GRC 20/20 finds that Allgress is a solution that can grow and expand with the organization and adapt as the organization and its environments change. It can be easily implemented to meet the needs of specific GRC processes or be implemented as the backbone for an enterprise GRC architecture.

Allgress is a solution that simplifies and strengthens GRC in organizations across industries and organizations of all sizes. It is particularly well adept to meet the needs of the mid-market. It is:

- **Engaging.** Allgress delivers an intuitive user experience focused on streamlined navigation across applications with easy access to data and reporting.
- **Configurable.** Allgress supports the agile ability to configure the solution to the needs of the organization in a scalable manner, helping the organization adapt to change quickly.
- **Informative.** Allgress delivers reporting tools and analytics to manage and monitor GRC trends, interrelationships, and actions in real time across the extended enterprise. This allows users to make data-driven decisions that trigger timely actions and follow-ups.

Allgress takes these capabilities and delivers a platform that is designed to make GRC management processes efficient, effective, and agile in a dynamic business environment. To achieve this, Allgress delivers core GRC management modules that can be further configured to the exact needs of the organization. These include:

- **Risk management.** Allgress facilitates the identification, assessment, management, and monitoring of operational risks across the organization. It enables the tracking of risks, risk ownership/accountability, and overall reporting on risk and risk exceptions.
- **Compliance management.** Allgress delivers a breadth of capabilities to assess and report on compliance controls and to identify gaps, create risk treatment plans, track remediation activity, and continuously monitor compliance.
- **Policy management.** Allgress provides a platform to document, approve, and communicate the range of organization policies and ensure they are understood and followed.

- **Third party risk management.** Allgess enables the organization to manage risk and compliance across the extended enterprise, to the breadth of vendors and suppliers, to ensure that risk and compliance is addressed in critical business relationships.
- **Internal Control Management.** Allgess simplifies the management and assurance (e.g., audit) of internal control management and processes.
- **Incident management.** Allgess enables the organization to track and respond to issues, incidents, cases, investigations, and threats impacting the organization which includes centralized management of cases, root cause analysis, reporting, and tracking.
- **Vulnerability management.** Allgess manages IT vulnerabilities, threats, and exposure so the organization can minimize risks to its processes, as well as specific logical and physical assets.
- **IT security operations management.** Allgess streamlines the overall IT security risk and control evaluation to enable the organization to measure risk posture and communicate this to key business owners.

Benefits Organizations Have Received with Allgess

Most Allgess clients moved to the solution because they found their manual, document-centric approaches consumed too many management resources, and they found things were getting lost in the continuous barrage of information and manual processes, as well as regulatory and business change. Others moved to Allgess as they found their previous solution was dated, cumbersome, complicated to use and implement, and lacked the ease-of-use that the business needed to engage in GRC related processes. Across these clients, there is consistent praise for the value of the ongoing cost of ownership of the Allgess platform, in the speed of deployment, return on investment, improved effectiveness, and agility to manage risk.

Specific benefits that GRC 20/20 finds that Allgess clients have achieved in their implementations are:

- ***360° visibility into hierarchical rollup of GRC*** across the enterprise or partners where all information is in one place and gives complete situational and contextual awareness of GRC in relation to objectives and processes.
- ***Elimination of hundreds to thousands of documents, spreadsheets, and emails,*** and the time needed to monitor, gather, and report on them to manage related activities and processes.
- ***Significant efficiencies in time through automation*** of workflow and tasks, as well as reporting. One client referenced that they went from three months to do an assessment down to two weeks with Allgess.

- ***Fewer things slipping through cracks***, as there are established tasks, notifications, and escalation when things are approaching deadlines or are past due.
- ***Efficiency in streamlining processes*** through identification of requirements, accountability, tracking, and getting things done.
- ***Greater granularity and ability to report*** on specific risk and control details that could not be done in documents or spreadsheets.
- ***Increased awareness and accountability of GRC*** by individuals who are informed on the subject matter in the context of their role.
- ***Collaboration and synergies across GRC management functions***, instead of different roles doing similar things in different formats and processes.
- ***Consistency and accuracy of information*** as the organization conforms to consistent processes and information structures.
- ***Accountability with full audit trails*** of who did what and when: this particularly has delivered value in fewer things slipping through the cracks.
- ***Reduction in time needed to govern and manage GRC*** that is freed from manual processes: these resources can then focus on value-added activities.
- ***Increased agility in the context of change*** that enables the organization to be proactive, and not just reactive - leading to less exposure and being caught off-guard.
- ***Full accountability for GRC across the business*** where individuals can see their tasks and responsibilities.
- ***Ability to manage risks and controls in the depths of the business*** that also roles up to an enterprise perspective.

Considerations in Context of Allgress

Every solution has its strengths and weaknesses and may not be the ideal fit for all organizations in all situations. While GRC 20/20 has identified many positive attributes of Allgress to enable organizations to achieve consistent GRC management processes, readers should not see this as a complete and unquestionable endorsement of Allgress.

Allgress clients praise the solution for its low cost of ownership while delivering the capabilities they need to manage risk, compliance, and controls. They see that they have achieved great value in implementing Allgress to bring together all of the organizations GRC related data and processed into one system. One area that clients state they would

like to see Allgress improve upon its reporting by providing a breadth of report templates they can use, instead of creating each report individually from scratch.

Allgress is a capable solution for a range of GRC use cases and industries, with a particular history and depth in IT security, risk, and control management. It is ideally suited for mid to large-sized organization moving from manual processes, or legacy GRC solutions that have a high cost of ownership and older technology. Organizations engaging Allgress will find that the speed of implementation and cost of ownership is superior to many other solutions available in the market.

About GRC 20/20 Research, LLC

GRC 20/20 Research, LLC (GRC 20/20) provides clarity of insight into governance, risk management, and compliance (GRC) solutions and strategies through objective market research, benchmarking, training, and analysis. We provide objective insight into GRC market dynamics; technology trends; competitive landscape; market sizing; expenditure priorities; and mergers and acquisitions. GRC 20/20 advises the entire ecosystem of GRC solution buyers, professional service firms, and solution providers. Our research clarity is delivered through analysts with real-world expertise, independence, creativity, and objectivity that understand GRC challenges and how to solve them practically and not just theoretically. Our clients include Fortune 1000 companies, major professional service firms, and the breadth of GRC solution providers.

Research Methodology

GRC 20/20 research reports are written by experienced analysts with experience selecting and implementing GRC solutions. GRC 20/20 evaluates all GRC solution providers using consistent and objective criteria, regardless of whether or not they are a GRC 20/20 client. The findings and analysis in GRC 20/20 research reports reflect analyst experience, opinions, research into market trends, participants, expenditure patterns, and best practices. Research facts and representations are verified with client references to validate accuracy. GRC solution providers are given the opportunity to correct factual errors, but cannot influence GRC 20/20 opinion.

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