

Solutions To Build an Audit-Ready Compliance Program

Several factors hinder a CCO's ability to create and maintain an audit-ready compliance program. From resource constraints to lack of team-wide engagement, we talk about the range of barriers in our first blog in this series.

Fortunately, though, people and technology-based solutions can help CCOs overcome these hurdles and succeed in building a robust, audit-ready compliance program that suits their firm's needs and meets regulators' high expectations.

Here, we explore how a compliance partner and technology solution can combine to help CCOs build a comprehensive compliance program they can be proud of.

The Role of a Compliance Partner

Many organizations lack dedicated compliance resources or in-house compliance expertise. However, these firms are still held to the same regulatory standards as their peers. For firms in need of additional support, an external compliance consultant is a valuable partner.

Consultants can identify gaps and weaknesses in firms' compliance programs to:

- Design an appropriately tailored program.
- Implement and execute the program through partial or complete outsourcing.
- Aid in exam preparation through mock examination exercises.

Preparing for an SEC exam is akin to running a fire drill. Consultants will offer services like a mock audit, where they assume the role of regulator and test your compliance program to validate a firm's audit readiness.

Additionally, a consultant can coach staff on how to behave during a regulatory exam and respond to SEC inquiries. This guidance ensures firms follow mandatory processes and set a chain of command.

Where Compliance Management Technology Fits In

Compliance software promotes efficiency, enabling compliance professionals to

quickly respond to numerous requests by leveraging a fully-integrated technology suite. The information accessible from a properly-implemented technology solution is robust, comprehensive and often exceeds an examiner's needs.

A fully-integrated compliance technology solution can:

- Design and administer compliance tests, certifications and attestations across your organization.
- Maintain risk inventories, ratings and weights.
- Connect risks to their mitigating controls.
- Provide timely updates on new regulatory standards and expectations.
- Manage gift and entertainment reporting and monitor firm-wide limits.
- Automate paper-driven processes, including those around political contributions, advertising, and outside business activities.
- Organize and share compliance documents across the firm, virtually and securely.
- Coordinate and conduct internal audit processes.

The benefits of leveraging a compliance technology solution do not end today. Retaining access to data and statistical insights across a compliance program empowers that program in perpetuity.

A compliance officer can easily recall what happened many months ago, make a qualitative assessment on how controls are working and determine if changes in the business model or regulatory requirements warrant any modifications.

Compliance programs must cover a lot of ground, so it's easy to understand why a fractional CCO would struggle to manage the entire operation independently. But firms can't afford to settle for "good enough." Outside resources exist to support your internal compliance team. Even a small internal team can meet big regulatory expectations with the help of compliance consultant partners and innovative technology solutions.

Download our ebook to learn more about the pieces that come together to form an audit-ready compliance program.



0936-OAT-5/26/2022