

FROM ASSUMPTION TO ASSURANCE

How PVW Partners gained confidence in vendor risk



QUICK LOOK



Objective

To transition from assumption-based trust to an evidence-based vendor risk management program that ensures visibility over data and compliance.



Solution

Implementation of Advanta Advisory's independent VRAs to translate technical findings into actionable insights for leadership.



Outcome

Strengthened client trust through documented risk postures, allowing the firm to mitigate vulnerabilities and meet regulatory expectations.



About PVW Partners

PVW Partners is a professional services firm providing accounting, tax, advisory, and business services to a broad client base.

Like many modern firms, PVW Partners depends on a growing ecosystem of technology and service providers, such as cloud platforms, AI-enabled tools, and specialist software, to deliver efficient, high-quality outcomes for clients.

For years, vendor oversight relied on a combination of reputation, basic due diligence, and assurances provided in sales materials. It was an approach that felt reasonable at the time, but it was neither consistent nor defensible.

The turning point came when they realised the firm was accountable to its clients for how vendors handled their data. As the firm's reliance on third-party technology deepened, so did the awareness of what it didn't know.

Two things were clear:

1. Regulatory and client expectations around privacy, cybersecurity were clearly rising, and relying on trust alone was no longer enough.
2. Some vendors presented polished marketing language but limited evidence that their controls worked in practice.

PVW Partners needed independent expertise to surface the risks it wasn't equipped to identify on its own.



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We trusted our vendors, but we didn't actually know what we didn't know. We weren't equipped to ask the right questions to get a true picture of their risk posture.

FIONA MCGILL
COO, PWC PARTNERS

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Objective

PVW Partners set out to establish a consistent, defensible vendor risk management program to help the firm move from assumption-based trust to evidence-based decision-making.

Specifically, the firm wanted clear visibility over how vendors were managing data security, privacy, business continuity, and control effectiveness, along with practical guidance to inform both governance decisions and day-to-day operations.



The solution

Advanta Advisory delivered a structured, independent Vendor Risk Assessment covering each vendor's security controls, privacy and data handling practices, business continuity and resilience, and the evidence behind vendor claims.

Technical findings were translated into plain language and presented as decision-ready insights, making it straightforward for PVW Partners' leadership team to assess risk and take action with confidence.



Engaging Advanta Advisory removed uncertainty from vendor decisions and helped us move from assumption-based trust to evidence-based decision-making when it comes to vendor risk.

FIONA MCGILL
COO, PWC PARTNERS



Outcomes & benefits

Clear visibility across the vendor portfolio

PVW Partners gained a documented view of each vendor's risk posture, replacing assumptions with objective, independent assessment.

Confidence where risk was low

Independent validation gave the firm assurance to proceed confidently with vendors assessed as lower risk, backed by evidence rather than hope.

Early warnings and practical safeguards

The assessment surfaced areas where controls were immature or absent. This helped directly inform how PVW Partners engaged those vendors, including introducing additional conditions or safeguards where required.

Strengthened governance and defensibility

Decisions are now supported by independent evidence, meeting regulatory expectations and giving the firm a defensible position with clients, regulators, and insurers.

Client protection built in, not bolted on

By proactively assessing the vendors that play a role in service delivery, PVW Partners can demonstrate reasonable steps are being taken to protect client data and continuity, even if clients never see the work directly.

A point of differentiation

Structured vendor risk assessments reinforce PVW Partners' reputation as a firm that genuinely prioritises trust, accountability, and professionalism.

PVW Partners' plans for the future

PVW Partners will maintain ongoing oversight of key vendors, repeat assessments on a risk-based cadence, and continue using independent evidence to guide onboarding, renewal, and remediation decisions.

The firm intends to embed this structured approach into standard governance processes so that vendor risk management scales alongside business growth and evolving technologies.



WORDS OF ADVICE

Vendor risk isn't theoretical anymore. If you rely on third parties, you carry the risk. Independent assessments give you clarity, confidence, and a defensible position when clients, regulators, or insurers ask questions. If the expertise doesn't exist in-house, seek external support.

FIONA MCGILL
COO, PWC PARTNERS



Stop guessing, start knowing.

Contact Advanta Advisory to schedule a strategy session on implementing evidence-based risk management.