



The future of investigations Human-led, AI-enabled

Forensics Today Special Edition

PwC perspectives for corporate investigators



- Investigative functions within organizations are getting squeezed by growing caseloads, data volumes, regulatory requirements, and cost pressures. Largely reliant on siloed, labor-intensive processes, many struggle to adapt and risk falling further behind.
- At the same time, trust remains a significant barrier to modernization. Many investigators worry that use of AI-enabled solutions—while proven in other domains—might jeopardize accuracy, compliance, privilege, explainability, and defensibility. Limited hands-on experience using AI compounds their concerns.
- Failing to modernize, however, is no longer sustainable. Human-led, AI-enabled models help empower teams to deliver faster, more reliable, and transparent results. When implemented responsibly, AI not only improves accuracy and credibility but can transform the investigative function from a cost center into a strategic collaborator.

Conducting timely, reliable investigations is increasingly challenging in today's environment. Rising caseloads, disparate data sets, and growing demand for speed and consistency are pushing the limits of traditional investigative functions, even as they face mounting budget pressures. Meanwhile, regulators have heightened expectations for how organizations handle sensitive data and emerging technology. The cumulative effect is clear. Outdated, manual models are cracking under the weight of modern demands, leaving legal and compliance teams overwhelmed and their organizations potentially exposed.

Recent industry data underscores the urgency of adapting. According to the Association of Corporate Counsel's **2025 survey of chief legal officers**, 44% of respondents see a rise in internal investigations, while 60% report increased litigation costs. **PwC's 2025 Global Compliance Survey** indicates that 63% of business leaders believe the complexity and disaggregated nature of data across their organization makes compliance more difficult. Together, these findings reflect a growing gap between the demands placed on investigations and what traditional models can sustain.

Faced with these risks, organizations should fundamentally reconsider their approach to investigations. Delays, inconsistent processes, missed evidence, rising costs, and investigator burnout slow resolutions, diminish quality control, and increase defensibility risks—not due to a lack of skill, but because of outdated systems and processes. Continuing to rely on legacy investigation models can put organizations at risk of significant operational and reputational harm.

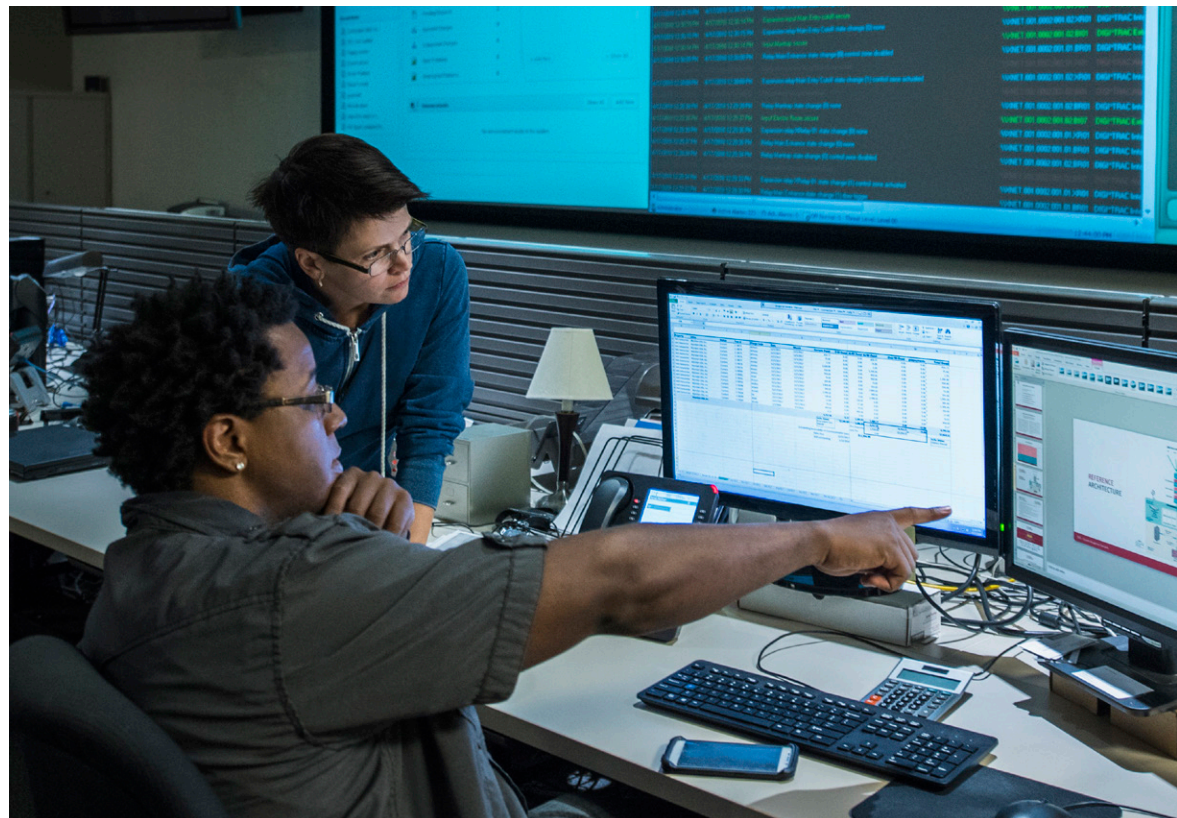
Legal and compliance leaders face a pivotal choice: modernize investigations or fall further behind. AI offers a powerful solution by absorbing data-heavy, repetitive tasks and generating insights, enabling investigators to focus on critical judgment and decision-making. When implemented responsibly with strong privacy, security, and oversight guardrails, AI enables faster, more consistent, and defensible investigations.

The hidden costs of business as usual

Maintaining the status quo is no longer sustainable. Traditional investigation models can't keep pace in the current environment, leaving teams ill-equipped and companies exposed.

- **Delays compound risk.** As cycle times expand, so does risk. Inconsistent triage, incomplete documentation, weak linkage between findings and evidence, and uneven quality control can create exposure in regulatory inquiries, employment matters, and follow-on litigation. Delays can also make it more challenging to meet expectations of boards and external auditors.

- **Insufficient capacity undermines morale.** Investigators are managing growing caseloads and data volumes using labor-intensive processes and tools developed in a bygone era, leading to burnout and turnover. Overwhelmed by manual tasks, teams have less time to apply and develop their analytical skills. Recruiting can become harder, too, when legacy models are out of step with modern expectations and career paths. Lack of capacity can also undermine the morale of investigation targets, who are forced to endure long waits to clear their name.
- **Inefficiencies drive up costs.** Traditional investigative programs can't absorb ever-growing demand while also meeting cost pressures, which can force investigators to cut corners. This dynamic can make it even harder to generate value and maintain relevance.



So, what's holding investigators back from modernizing?

Trust is often a key barrier. Many investigators have concerns that AI—despite its vast potential and proven track record in other areas (finance, HR, product, operations)—isn't suitable for their domain. Using AI in investigations, they fear, could undermine their key priorities: like accuracy, compliance, privilege, explainability, and defensibility. Out of caution, they prefer the perceived safety of incremental fixes to the uncertainty of AI transformation, even as the pace of change accelerates.

Another barrier to adoption is varying levels of AI acumen across organizations. Limited experience with the technology can compound the uncertainty and perceived risk for teams that don't feel they have the time to master it.

To break this cycle, organizations should consider innovative, secure solutions that directly address the limitations and risks inherent in traditional investigative models.

How can investigators adopt AI responsibly, improve speed and consistency, and strengthen defensibility, governance, and stakeholder trust? Getting there requires overcoming the distrust and gaining confidence that, with proper supervision and guardrails, AI-assisted investigations are accurate, explainable, and privilege-safe.

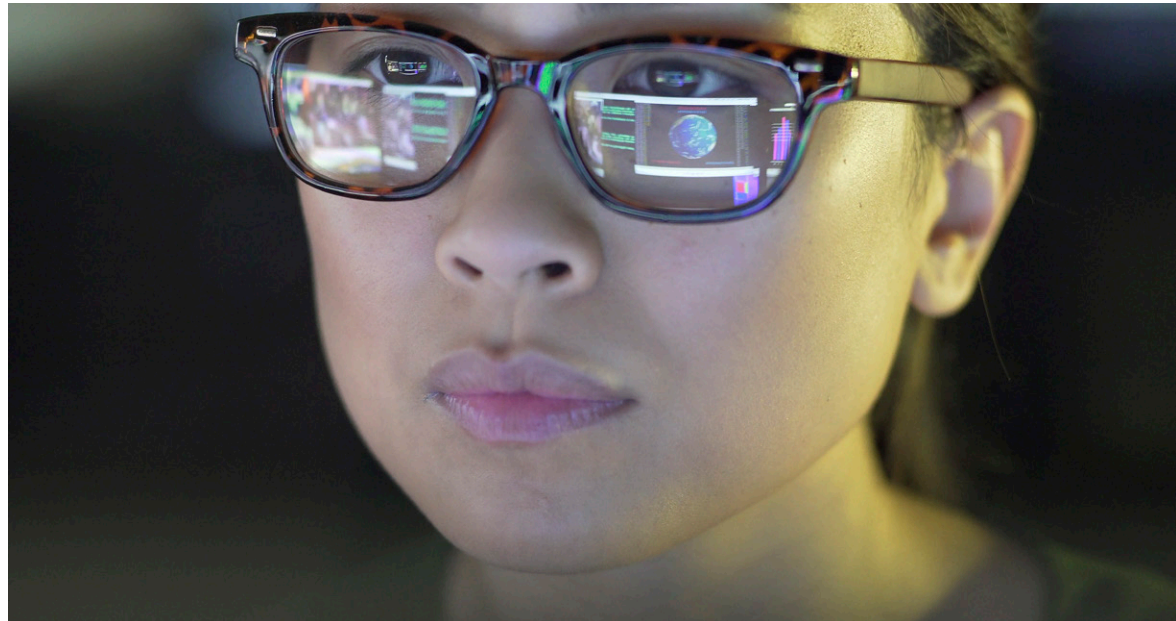
How to think about AI

AI doesn't have to be complicated. Think of it as a collection of building blocks that can be assembled in different ways to transform different investigative capabilities. These elements, grouped by category, include:

Language understanding	Summarization, named-entity recognition, translation, sentiment analysis, etc.
Knowledge and retrieval	Contextual understanding, fact extraction, fact verification, etc.
Reasoning and logic	Pattern recognition, anomaly detection, logical deduction, hypothesis generation, etc.
Autonomy and decision-making	Automated decision-making, task planning, workflow automation, interactive problem-solving, etc.
Memory and context	Long-term context retention, dynamic knowledge understanding, personalized context awareness, etc.
Interaction and personalization	Conversational AI, adaptive response generation, emotion detection, and recommendation systems.
Multi-modal integration	Cross-modal understanding, visual question answering, speech-to-text, etc.
Content generation	Text generation, code generation, image generation, audio/speech generation, and video generation.

For example, to enable **advanced fraud detection** that doesn't bury your team with false positives, use AI to link scattered data, reveal hidden patterns, and add context that matters. Investigators stay focused on what's real and can respond to risk signals more effectively.

Similarly, the burdensome task of **interview prep** becomes streamlined by removing the need for manual preparation and deep research. Use AI to accelerate this process, equipping you with insights to lead conversations with clarity and confidence.



Driving value across the investigation life cycle

Using this approach, your company can build tailored, scalable AI solutions that help support your organization’s overall investigation life cycle.

Human-led, AI-enabled investigations life cycle

Resource and time analysis	Intake, triage, scoping, and planning	Data collection/ fact finding analysis	Email review	Interviews	Reporting	Quality control	Remediation
Before AI	2 FTEs 5–7 days	3 FTEs > 10–14 days	2 FTEs 10–14 days	3 FTEs 2–4 days	2 FTEs 7–14 days	2 FTEs 5–7 days	1 FTE 5–7 days
With AI	0.25 FTE 1–2 days	1 FTE 2–4 days	0.5 FTE 2–4 days	1 FTE 24 hours	2 FTE 2 days	0.5 FTE 1 day	0.25 FTE 1 day



Intake, triage, scoping, and planning

AI helps transform allegations into structured, investigation-ready case files by synthesizing allegations, identifying policy violations, identifying evidence sources/interviewees, drafting investigative workplans and stakeholder notifications.



Business problem

- **Slow** allegation triage
- **Inconsistent** investigation planning, scoping, and quality
- **Delayed evidence** preservation
- **Manual and resource-heavy** workflows for case start-up



How AI can help

- Converts **allegations into structured case files**— including summary details, severity ratings, routing logic, policy flags, and investigation plans
- Applies client-specific logic to **suggest potential interviewees and draft stakeholder notifications** based on organization structure and escalation protocols
- Confirms every case **meets company policy and audit standards** with outputs that guide and accelerate the investigation process



Human-in-the-loop

- **Subject matter experts** review files to validate insights, refine taxonomies, and align recommendations with legal and compliance priorities







The impact

- **Accelerated case mobilization** from intake to investigator action
- Reduced **manual planning effort by 70–90%**
- **Rapid issue response**





Data collection and fact-finding analysis

AI integration can deploy a secure, centralized environment for storing and analyzing materials collected during an investigation and continuously review, process, and analyze case materials to make connections, highlight findings, assess evidence, and prepare narrative observations based on the overall case record.

 <p>Business problem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation data is scattered across emails, shared drives, and case folders Critical documents (e.g., HR records, corroborating statements) are often missing or outdated 	 <p>How AI can help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centralizes and indexes case materials by custodian, document type and phrase Detects missing, contradictory, or misclassified documentation Ingests structured and unstructured case materials for ongoing analysis Summarizes timelines, parties, issues, and flags inconsistencies 	 <p>Human-in-the-loop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional human oversight assesses flagged issues, interprets risk patterns, and refines classification logic 	 <p>The impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced manual review time by up to 60% Improved completeness and traceability across 100% of case files Support of cross-functional governance alignment (legal, HR, compliance) and centralized oversight under a scalable service model
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Email review

Embedding AI throughout the document review process enables actionable intelligence, helping your team to make strategic, data-driven decisions.

 <p>Business problem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional manual or keyword-based review processes struggle with the scale, redundancy, and contextual nuance of modern email datasets Review teams often face pressure to meet deadlines while managing increasing data volumes, diverse languages, and the need for consistent privilege and relevance determinations 	 <p>How AI can help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AI works to predict relevant documents for productions, locate material related to various legal issues that are important to your case strategy, and quickly identify key content—delivering faster results with speed and confidence Uses natural language input to understand your objectives, conduct multi-step reasoning, and make decisions that you can assess and defend 	 <p>Human-in-the-loop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humans audit and adjust decisions—keeping subject-matter specialists in control while using AI to help accelerate and scale review 	 <p>The impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50–70% efficiency gains—creating faster turnarounds with maintained accuracy Earlier identification of key facts, custodians, and privileged material improves investigation outcomes Workflows become more consistent, auditable, and cost-predictable—strengthening overall defensibility
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Interviews

AI can accelerate interview prep support by surfacing behavioral red flags or inconsistencies from prior statements, documents, or data interactions. Integrated real-time notetaking captures, organizes, and contextualizes findings for easier review and follow-up.

 <p>Business problem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delays in identifying key themes prolong investigations, can increase cost and risk of non-compliance or reputational exposure Interview workflows remain highly manual including planning questions, coordinating logistics, capturing notes/transcripts, reviewing for red flags, or hidden issues 	 <p>How AI can help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AI assists in interview preparation by generating tailored question sets and considering case contexts During and after interviews, AI helps transcribe, summarize key points, identify sentiment shifts, highlight contradictions, or missing topics Post-interview it aggregates across multiple interviews, detects patterns (e.g., recurring themes, deviations, custodians of interest) and prioritizes follow-up interviews 	 <p>Human-in-the-loop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigators retain ultimate decision-making—humans review, verify, and override Governance and oversight is key to review interview content and bias risks 	 <p>The impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% reduction in interview turnaround—creating detailed insights with fewer delays Improved consistency and thoroughness—generated question sets and summaries help confirm fewer gaps, more follow-up when needed, and standardized documentation
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Reporting

AI rapidly develops high-quality investigation reports with sources cited across the corpus of case information, including interview transcripts, data and documents collected, and investigative findings.

 <p>Business problem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent structure, tone, completeness, and quality in reports across teams and staff levels Surge periods strain documentation capacity 	 <p>How AI can help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Converts case data and transcripts into full draft reports using a fine-tuned LLM Applies formatting, tone, and structure by report type and audience Integrates evidence, interviews, and transactional data Offers optional footnotes, appendices, and red flag detection 	 <p>Human-in-the-loop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject matter expert assesses inputs, refines outputs, confirms accuracy, legal tone, and remediation alignment 	 <p>The impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced drafting time by 50-70% across multiple investigation types Improved consistency and defensibility of outputs across jurisdictions
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Quality control

AI helps enhance quality control by continuously monitoring outputs, detecting anomalies, and surfacing inconsistencies that humans may overlook, enabling faster, more reliable, and defensible investigations.

			
<p>Business problem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent documentation, fact development, resolutions, and disciplinary outcomes across investigations • Growing pressure from regulators for standardized, defensible investigations 	<p>How AI can help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digitizes closed cases and scores them across configurable quality criteria • Flags anomalies in documentation completeness, case routing, and outcomes • Detects inconsistencies across cases with similar fact patterns • Surfaces missed themes and systemic risks through NLP-driven analysis 	<p>Human-in-the-loop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combines PwC AI with professional human oversight to assess findings, calibrate review logic, and help support high-risk case escalation 	<p>The impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QC Review automated by 70–90% • Rapid identification of inconsistencies and missed systemic risks across large portfolios • Improved consistency in disciplinary decisions • Enablement of standardized, audit-ready investigation reviews at scale

Remediation

Unlock the full value of your investigation program with advanced remediation support. AI can find thematic trends, key risks, and organizational signals that help leaders make faster, more informed decisions in recommending controls and evidence types with defensible rationale.

			
<p>Business problem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remediation efforts often lack consistency across regions and teams, undermining governance and accountability • Manual synthesis can be slow and inconsistent 	<p>How AI can help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivers structured, risk-aligned corrective action plans enabled by client-specific context and risk insights • Confirms each case translates into defensible action, tied to enterprise risks and regulatory obligations • Summarizes allegations, identifies escalation worthy trends, and proposes next-steps 	<p>Human-in-the-loop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combines AI with professional human oversight to assess insights, refine taxonomies, and align recommendations with compliance priorities 	<p>The impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced manual workload by up to 75% • Reduced time from case intake to trend visibility from weeks to under 1 hour • Enabled continuous monitoring and enterprise-wide risk surveillance

Taken together, these capabilities enable teams to deliver faster, more consistent and defensible outcomes while focusing their energies on strategic thinking, judgment, decision-making, and other higher-level tasks.



Efficiencies we're seeing on the ground

Here are some examples of human-led, AI-enabled transformation in action.

50%

Faster investigation cycle time

Issue: Supplement the insurance carriers' current team/processes to detect and investigate additional potential fraud losses

Impact: AI-accelerated scenario detection model successfully identified an **additional \$3.2 million** in fraud loss savings annually.

- **3 to 1 return** based on fraud loss avoidance
- **50% time savings** in the investigative process
- **10,000 hours** of investigative time saved

35%

Reduction in manual review effort

Issue: Identify DEI-related content that could conflict with federal policies and executive orders across large data/document sets

Impact: Leveraged multi-agent GenAI workflows using thematic and semantic analysis, web scraping, contextual risk extraction, triage, and structured outputs to:

- **Reduce manual review** hours by **over 35%**
- **Increase precision by 30%**
- Accelerate legal review

93%

Review accuracy rate

Issue: Support a global entertainment client in standardizing and streamlining high-volume studio agreements

Impact: Developed an AI document analysis solution (AIDA) to extract key contract terms and map outputs to the CLM/enterprise reporting fields, as well as to downstream finance and marketing tables. AIDA resulted in:

- **60% faster contract ingestion**
- **over 93% extraction accuracy**

80,000

Documents reviewed in <30 days

Issue: Collect, process, and review electronic data across numerous platforms and custodians under tight deadlines

Impact: eDiscovery teams supported by Relativity AI tools (aiR for Review, aiR for Priv) expedited the review of data and documents across:

- **25 custodians**
- **80,000 responsive docs**

Based on the application of AI, the review was completed in **under 1 month**

It starts with responsible, human-led AI

The potential cost-savings of AI mean nothing if its risks aren't managed effectively. As AI becomes an integral part of investigations, governance emerges as the key differentiator for organizations. Today, regulators closely examine how organizations use data, AI, and automation within their compliance programs, making **Responsible AI** practices indispensable.

This means implementing defensibility by design. Responsible AI helps strengthen transparency and privilege by adopting strong data security and privacy protocols, assessing output accuracy and reliability, maintaining transparency and explainability in decision-making, and preserving human oversight at every stage.

According to **PwC's 2025 Responsible AI Survey**, organizations investing in Responsible AI are realizing measurable returns in innovation, performance, and trust. Benefits companies are seeing include enhanced cybersecurity and data protection (51%), improved transparency (41%), and reduced compliance or regulatory risk (39%).

Transform your function with Responsible AI

To modernize your investigative function securely and responsibly, focus on foundational elements that embed Responsible AI practices throughout the investigative life cycle.

- 1. Establish strong data governance.** Define clear ownership of investigative data sources, permissions, retention, and legal holds to strengthen accountability. Adopt and standardize data intake processes, metadata management, and evidence handling protocols. Assign precise authority

over data access and usage. Maintain uniform standards for data quality, labeling, retention, and deletion. Throughout the investigation life cycle, log data sources, transformations, and access to preserve traceability. Embed governance controls directly into investigative workflows. Finally, align investigative-level governance with organizational **data governance** and the specific needs of your legal and compliance teams.

- 2. Strengthen privacy safeguards.** Integrate guardrails directly within AI-enabled investigative workflows. Pay careful attention to jurisdictional requirements such as cross-border data transfer rules and localization mandates. Limit access to investigative data solely to authorized personnel through segmentation strategies such as need-to-know access, role-based permissions, and secure workspaces. Adopt strict retention and deletion protocols to help maintain compliance with privacy regulations and prevent unauthorized data exposure. Align these safeguards with your wider organizational initiatives to **embed privacy into AI**. Throughout the investigation life cycle, AI outputs should never expand visibility beyond what investigators have access to.
- 3. Preserve attorney-client privilege and work product.** Define when and how AI tools are incorporated into the investigative process. Specify storage methods for outputs and procedures to maintain privilege during interactions with both internal and external stakeholders. Establish clear guidelines to identify privileged content, manage its access and storage, and safeguard privilege status throughout collaborations with outside counsel. Integrate mechanisms for documenting privilege determinations and work-product status into AI-enabled workflows, which helps foster consistency and defensibility during audits, regulatory inquiries, or litigation.
- 4. Secure investigative data.** Implement role-based access controls and encrypt data both at rest and during transmission. Audit logs should document who accessed the data, when it happened, and for what purpose. Integrate only approved investigative sources and environments with AI

systems, establishing strong controls governing data movement, retention, and deletion. Stringent identity and access management protocols are essential, as is continuous monitoring of data usage. Establish clearly defined, secure workflows for uploading, exporting, and sharing information with external counsel or forensic consultants.

- 5. Maintain human oversight and judgment.** Subject matter experts play a vital role in guiding AI processes, reviewing outputs, and applying nuanced judgments such as determining a subject's culpability based on intent and weighing aggravating or mitigating circumstances, especially those with organizational implications. Before reaching any critical investigative decision or conclusion, qualified personnel should review AI outputs and document their assessment.
- 6. Design for audit readiness from day one.** Prioritize audit readiness from the outset. That means choosing AI systems for their ability to automatically log and track inputs and outputs, decision histories, data sources, model versions, and transformation steps throughout each phase of an investigation. Strong explainability features are essential, enabling clear documentation of how decisions are reached. Thorough documentation on model development, testing, and updates supports model governance practices, while oversight protocols confirm regular reviews of model behavior and outputs. If regulators and stakeholders ask why your AI made a particular decision, you'll be ready with clear, defensible answers.
- 7. Implement continuous monitoring for accuracy.** Assess model performance through continuous monitoring for drift. Conduct systematic output testing to identify and help address potential sources of bias. When piloting AI solutions, integration alongside established human investigative processes allows for rigorous performance assessment, specifically tracking false positives and negatives. Document escalation procedures for resolving discrepancies between AI outputs and investigative records. For high-impact decisions, require human review and establish defined thresholds for intervention when AI outcomes diverge from investigative standards.



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