



RESEARCH REPORT

2025 Strategic Initiatives

PLANS AND PROGRESS
IN COMMERCIAL LINES

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ReSourcePro INSIGHTS

ReSource Pro Insights offers a broad range of research and observations on the insurance industry. We provide substantial studies, analysis and perspectives on business and technology strategies and plans across the P&C ecosystem, covering retail agencies and brokers, MGA/wholesalers, carriers, and tech vendors. Our coverage includes distribution, underwriting, policy servicing, billing/payments, and claims business areas, as well as cross-enterprise areas such as strategic initiatives, digital transformation, innovation, customer experience, and talent.

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About this research report

This report is based on ReSource Pro's observations of the commercial lines insurance market and a survey of insurance executives. All diagrams in this report are results from the 2025 P&C Strategic Initiatives Survey (n=59).

In this report, we split insights based on carriers' activity and plans in the small commercial segment versus the mid/large commercial segment. This indicates the complexity and risks associated with the customer base of each segment and does not suggest the size of the carrier.

Companion reports covering strategic initiatives in the personal lines segment and for Managing General Agents (MGAs) will also be available.

Key themes for commercial lines in 2025

Digital transformation and innovation have been driving a continuous wave of investments and activity across the P&C insurance space, and the commercial lines segment is no exception. Today, carriers must navigate a complex business environment impacted by advancing AI technologies, evolving risks and exposures, increasing catastrophic weather events, talent retention and recruitment challenges, and more. Consequently, carriers must adapt their goals and strategies to remain profitable and maintain growth amid intensified competition.

Annual research from ReSource Pro highlights that commercial lines carriers are continuing their transformation journeys in 2025, as underlined by these key themes:

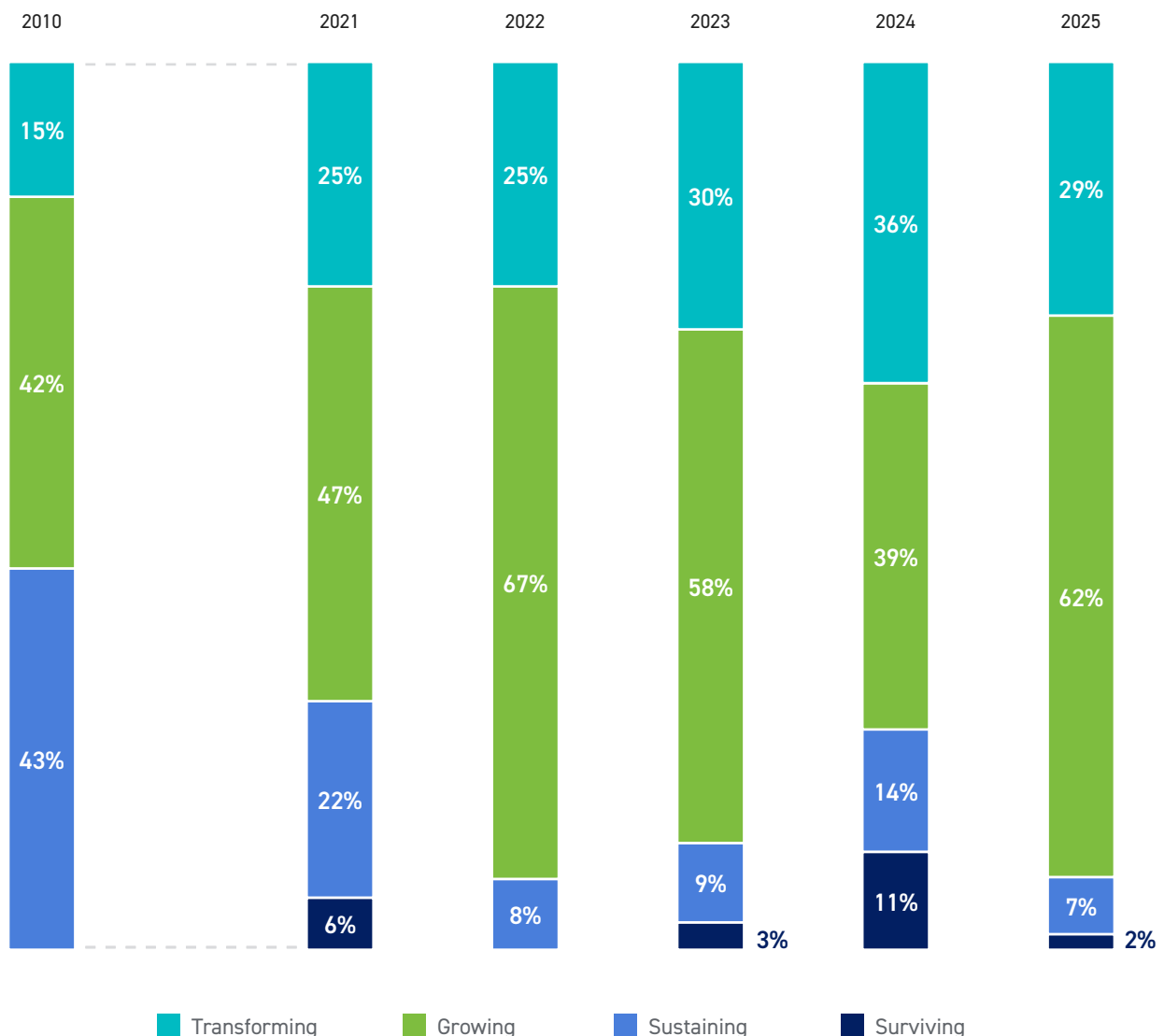
- 1. More focus on traditional initiatives.** Commercial lines carriers are shifting their focus away from bolder, more transformational strategies to instead progress in their traditional initiatives. However, there are two exceptions: there remains strong activity in both AI technologies and data and advanced analytics initiatives, which are considered more transformational in nature.
- 2. Business optimization remains top-of-mind.** For the second consecutive year, carriers have named business optimization the top driver of investments in both small commercial and mid/large commercial segments. This focus further highlights why carriers are paying greater attention to traditional initiatives that are defined by incremental and continuous strategic plans to deliver optimization and efficiency.
- 3. Priorities differ between segments.** In 2025, the small commercial segment and mid/large commercial segment are prioritizing a few different initiatives. Ninety-four percent of carriers have activity in customer experience and new products/services in their small commercial lines businesses. In the mid/large commercial segment, carriers are making progress and generating a lot of activity in AI, data and advanced analytics, underwriting transformation, and core modernization projects.
- 4. Slow and steady progress in AI deployments.** In the past year, AI technology initiatives have made moderate progress, with 96% of carriers engaging in activity in mid/large commercial lines compared to 86% in 2024. Additionally, 37% of carriers focused on small commercial lines are in the implementation or deployment phases versus 27% a year ago.

Stage of transformation

Evaluating the transformation progress of commercial lines carriers offers a pulse on the overall state and stability of the industry – and it is something we have done for over a decade. Figure 1 below shows how carriers' perceptions of their transformation journeys have evolved over time.

Currently, most carrier executives consider their businesses to be in growth mode (62%), increasing twenty-three percentage points over last year. And 29% are transforming operations in 2025. At the same time, there are fewer carriers in sustaining or surviving modes, narrowing the divide between pioneers and laggards in the industry. This indicates more optimism in the industry as many fears that existed in 2024, such as economic instability, wane. Nevertheless, there is an urgent need for commercial lines to reevaluate technology and processes to remain competitive as we enter the second half of this decade. Despite persistent challenges, many commercial lines insurers are committed to forging ahead with transformation.

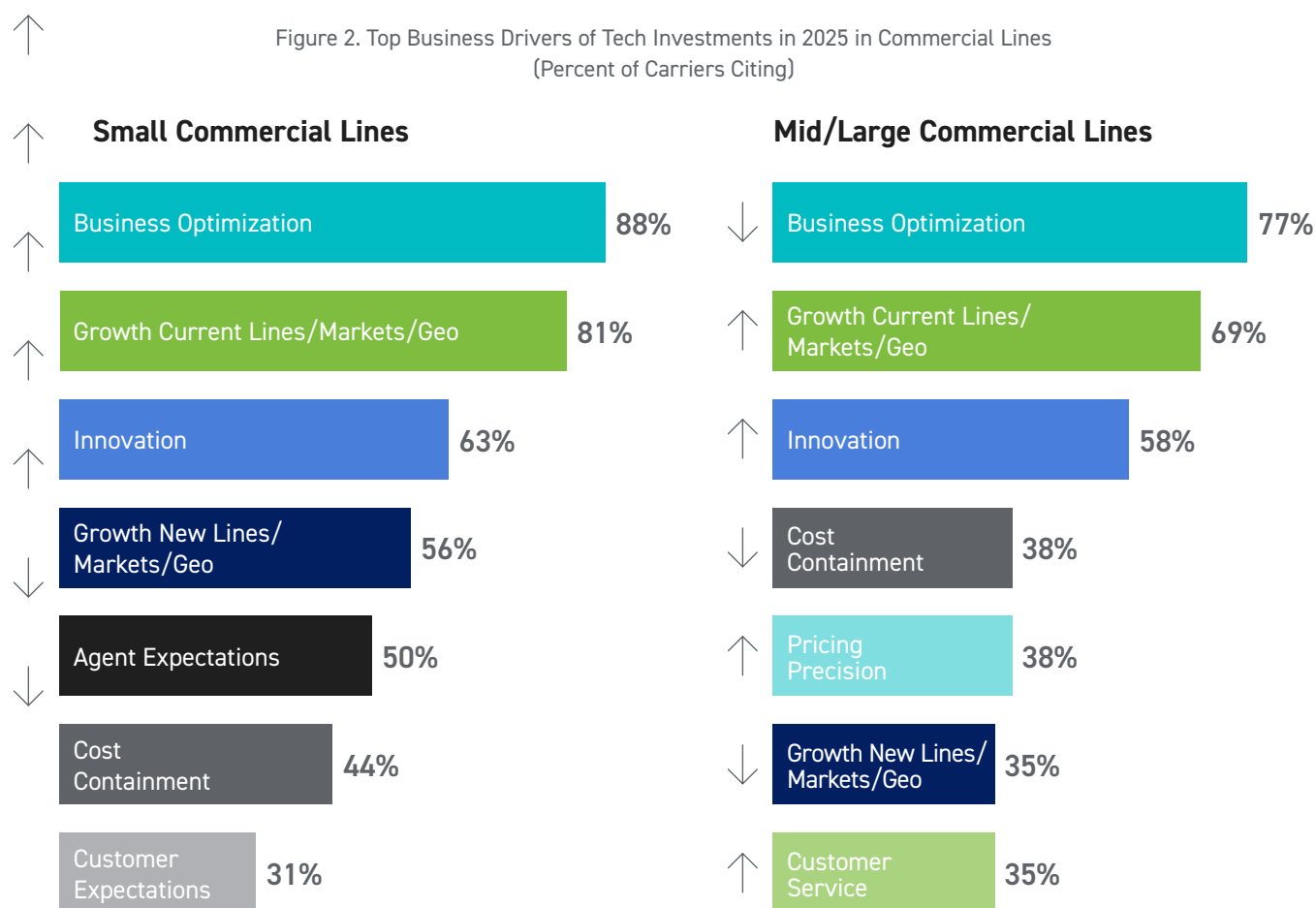
Figure 1. The Percentage of Commercial Lines Carriers in Various Company Modes



Key business drivers for tech investments

We asked carrier executives to rank the top drivers of technology investment in their small commercial and mid/large commercial segments. Figure 2 below shows the results with arrows indicating either increases or decreases in priority over 2024.

In this report, small commercial lines and mid/large commercial lines refer to the business segment within carriers where activity is underway. It is an indication of the complexity and risks associated with the customer base of each segment and does not suggest the size of the carrier.



In both segments, business optimization has remained the leading driver of technology investments over the past two years. In 2023, only about half of commercial lines executives prioritized business optimization, but this has now risen to 88% in small commercial lines and 77% in mid/large commercial lines (although there was a slight decrease in percentage on the mid/large commercial side since 2024). Expanding current lines, markets, and geographies, including through M&A, remains the second key factor influencing technology decisions, though it is less critical for the mid/large commercial segment. Cost containment has decreased in ranks for both segments, reflecting positive business results in 2024 and an overall increased focus on growth.

Interestingly, innovation is now one of the top three drivers of technology decisions, but last year, it wasn't even among the top five for either segment. During the pandemic, many carriers shifted away from innovative initiatives to focus on business sustainability amid difficult economic times. However, innovation is now table stakes and pervasive across the entire industry, raising the bar for all to capitalize on emerging technologies and gain a competitive edge.



Strategic initiatives for commercial lines in 2025

This research report outlines the 2025 plans for commercial lines carriers across key strategic initiatives. Figure 3 presents the 14 initiatives covered in this report, with seven labeled as traditional and seven as transformational. In 2025, we added cybersecurity as a new strategic initiative due to its increasing importance and visibility among the C-suite. It's important to emphasize that classifying initiatives as traditional does not lessen their importance or potential impact on transformation; rather, it highlights their longstanding presence in insurers' strategic plans. Transformational initiatives have emerged over the past five to ten years, providing new opportunities for strategists and senior leaders.

Figure 3. Traditional and Transformational Strategic Initiatives in Commercial Lines



Traditional initiatives

Traditional initiatives are crucial for the success of commercial lines carriers and require strategic investment and prioritization. These initiatives have been important elements of strategies for decades, although the strategic options for each continue to evolve with the changing market landscape.

This section highlights traditional initiatives and carriers' maturity journeys, segmented by small and mid/large commercial segments. A chart key at the end of each page explains the stages of maturity.

Underwriting transformation

Commercial lines carriers remain focused on advancing their underwriting capabilities, with a noticeable uptick to 92% of insurers focused on the mid/large segment reporting some activity, compared with 81% in 2024. The pace of small commercial underwriting transformation remains consistent with 2024, which was an increase compared with the prior year. This year, we also see more underwriting transformations being broadly deployed within mid/large carriers – 34% in 2025 compared with 19% in 2024.

Over the past year, the focus for both mid/large and small commercial lines has been optimizing underwriting business processes to reduce manual hand-offs and rekeying, with a high priority on transforming the beginning of the underwriting journey, the submission intake process. Intelligent document processing (IDP) solutions became increasingly available, both as standalone products and as expansions of underwriting platforms. Early results have converted even the earlier OCR-only pilot cynics that IDP's use of multiple AI technologies can finally make inroads to automate the submissions intake process for commercial lines products.

Now, carriers remain focused on the submissions process but with some progress already made during 2024, leveraging AI technologies becomes a leading priority (63% in small commercial and 73% in mid/large), with business optimization still front of mind, especially for 73% of the small commercial segment compared to 69% of mid/large. Process and decision support in the form of co-pilots is evolving from concept to reality, with carriers looking to insert GenAI into the underwriting process to guide both next-best actions and offer risk assessment and pricing recommendations.

Incorporating new data sources remains a high priority for small commercial lines (56%), and this year, the mid/large segment will be similarly looking for data solutions with pricing precision increasing as a driver of their technology investments. Also, reflecting progress made over the past year, fewer carriers focused on small commercial lines expect to implement an underwriting platform (31% in 2025 compared to 60% in 2024), while the level of interest for the mid/large segment has nudged up slightly to 50% from 48%. Our position is that fewer carriers in small commercial lines have projects underway because strong progress has already been made through integrating data solutions that address key data validation, augmentation, and modeling needs.

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Customer experience

Small and mid/large commercial lines carriers are addressing customer experience (CX) through a dual focus, considering both policyholder and agent/broker relationships. However, they diverge on which is driving their CX tech investments. Carriers in small commercial lines are focusing on agent-centric initiatives, whereas those in mid/large commercial lines are prioritizing direct policyholder interactions, most notably customer service.

Despite CX's continued importance, overall activity in this area has declined year-over-year across both segments, with mid/large commercial carriers experiencing the most significant reduction by approximately 10%. Nonetheless, CX remains a key initiative for most carriers. For small commercial carriers, CX ties with data and advanced analytics as well as new, innovative products and services for the initiative with the highest planned activity in 2025. Among mid/large commercial carriers, CX ranks fifth in planned activity.

A notable shift has also occurred in carriers' CX initiatives. An increasing percentage are now focused on developing strategies rather than implementing or deploying them. This trend is particularly evident within the small commercial segment, where the percentage reporting implementation or deployment has dropped from 80% in 2024 to 50% in 2025. This shift suggests that many previously in-flight CX initiatives have been successfully deployed, allowing carriers to concentrate on developing new strategies for the future.

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New, innovative products and services

As commercial risks evolve, carriers must find new and innovative ways to cover clients' diverse exposures and needs. In 2025, we are seeing a slight increase in activity for launching new products among commercial carriers. Currently, 23% of carriers focused on mid/large commercial lines have new products or services deployed in the market, up from 9% last year. Though there is less activity in the small commercial segment, the percentage of carriers in the implementation stage has nearly doubled from 27% in 2024.

Among those crafting strategies in the mid/large commercial segment, several (between 12-16%) are looking at new solutions in embedded, parametric, usage-based, and on-demand insurance solutions. For example, weather-related parametric insurance for agriculture businesses that pays out automatically when predefined conditions are met are gaining market presence. In the small commercial segment, carriers developing strategies are predominately looking at opportunities in usage-based insurance, which, for example, is rife with opportunities among insured with small transportation fleets.

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Leadership and talent development

In ReSource Pro's most recent carrier talent survey, half of executives identified leadership development as a primary objective of their talent strategy. This emphasis is crucial as the ongoing wave of Baby Boomer retirements creates significant leadership and talent gaps within the insurance industry. Consequently, most P&C carriers are actively engaged in leadership and talent development initiatives, with 81% in mid/large and 88% in small commercial lines reporting activity in this area.

However, a clear divergence exists between commercial segments (small versus mid/large) regarding initiative maturity. Approximately 40% of the latter report broadly deploying their strategies, while carriers in small commercial lines are more likely to be developing strategies or undergoing initial implementation. As the insurance landscape rapidly evolves, carriers broadly recognize the importance of upskilling and reskilling their employees to meet current and future business and customer needs. Technical skills, data literacy, AI, advanced analytics, and leadership are quickly transitioning from desirable attributes to essential competencies for success.

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Claims transformation

The overall focus on evolving claims capabilities this year shows 73% of the mid/large segment and 81% of small commercial lines with planned activity, consistent with last year. While overall activity is similar, this year, we see a jump in broad deployments for both mid/large (27% in 2025 compared with 14% in 2024) and small commercial (19% up from 6%). So, while new initiatives are not being launched, efforts are advancing from ideation to pilot to production rollout.

The leading area of focus for the small commercial segment continues to be enhancing digital FNOL/FROI capabilities (56%) and automating triage and assignment (44%). In 2025, we see rethinking the role of the adjuster and envisioning new roles for the future (38%) moving into the top three for small commercial lines, reflecting progress made in 2024 with high priorities, including implementing or expanding digital claims payments solutions. It also represents the small commercial segment recognizing talent as key to their increased focus on growth both within and beyond their current geography and products.

Carriers focused on the mid/large segment are most focused on leveraging AI technologies across the claims life cycle (38%), with enhancing digital FNOL/FROI coming in a close second at 33%. Like their small commercial lines peers, mid/large commercial lines carriers are also focused on automating triage and assignment and rethinking the role of the adjuster and new roles. Over the past year, the mid/large segment made progress in tackling their leading claims transformation priority to implement or expand digital payment solutions, with only 8% reporting that as part of their plans for 2025.

The continued focus on FNOL/FROI goes well beyond modernizing telephonic and digital self-service capabilities. Intelligent document processing (IDP) can streamline the recognition and processing of varied files and formats that can accompany a new claim report. Agentic AI can dynamically facilitate the claim reporting process, with chatbots being able to initiate resource assignments or process emergency advance claim payments.

Agentic AI could have the range of capabilities commercial carriers have been long awaiting to automate claim triaging and assignment. Commercial claims assignments are based on multiple dimensions, and earlier technologies have been challenged to negotiate dynamic conditions, like respecting caseload maximums or knowing how to handle a claims adjuster's absence.

AI copilots are continuing to demonstrate their value to guide claims adjusters both with processing and recommendations, including offering jurisdictional guidelines, identifying fraud indicators with suggested actions to offering reserving guidance both at intake and as the claim progresses.

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Core system modernization

Commercial lines carriers continue to prioritize core system modernization, with a notable increase in production rollouts for mid/large lines, 47% in 2025 compared to 29% in 2024. This momentum, in conjunction with 15% of carriers focused on the mid/large segment now having no plans in 2025 (5% in 2024), suggests that the remaining efforts in progress, once deployed, will close the most immediate gaps.

Small commercial lines, like last year, show a decrease in new core systems being broadly deployed – 43% in 2025 compared to 53% in 2024. This suggests that carriers in this segment remain focused on maintaining their current systems. In addition, the growing ecosystem of vendor solutions also offers commercial lines carriers the ability to introduce new features and data sources while leaving their core system foundation intact. Core system vendors are focused on their partner networks to make it easy for their carrier clients with prebuilt APIs and use case templates ready to customize.

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Expand distribution partnerships

Given the emphasis on growing existing and new lines, markets, and geographies as key business drivers for technology investments, it's logical to expect significant activity among commercial carriers in expanding their distribution channels and partnerships. However, the current landscape presents a mixed picture. While approximately two-thirds of carriers report distribution activity, a discernible downward trend exists. Approximately 80-90% of commercial carriers have reported distribution partnership initiatives in recent years.

Historically, the small commercial segment has led in pursuing alternative distribution strategies and partnerships. The recent decline could indicate a focus on growing and optimizing existing channel partnerships, as evidenced by the varying maturity levels in their initiatives. Only one-fourth report broadly deploying their distribution initiatives compared to over 40% of mid/large commercial carriers. This shift could also suggest a change in approach, such as an increased emphasis on direct distribution. More than likely, however, it's a temporary decline. Reaching new customers certainly remains a top priority for commercial lines carriers, who have increasing distribution options, ranging from independent agents to MGAs to embedded platforms.

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Transformational initiatives

Compared to traditional initiatives, those that are considered transformational involve ambitious projects led by the industry's innovators, with others eventually following their example. Notably, there is significant activity happening across commercial lines.

Data and advanced analytics

Data and advanced analytics is perhaps the most active area of all strategic initiatives for both small and mid/large commercial lines. This area is foundational and sets the stage for capitalizing on the power of AI. Initiatives in this area include traditional master data management (MDM) projects to standardize data definitions and enhance the accuracy, completeness, and organization of data across the enterprise. In addition, this area includes business intelligence and various tools for data analysis. All of these activities are vital steps on the road to leveraging AI technologies. As illustrated below, 100% of mid/large commercial lines carriers have initiatives underway, with half in broad deployment stages. Small commercial lines also has very high activity, with half deploying across the enterprise. Significant progress has been made over the past few years as companies advance implementations and broadly spread use cases.

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AI technologies (ML, generative AI, etc.)

It is no surprise that commercial lines companies are highly focused on AI technologies. This is especially true of those selling to mid/large customers due to the high volume and variety of data, including structured, semi-structured, and unstructured data. As the move to specialization and the desire to serve more discrete customer segments continues, the need for deeper insights into this complex array of data increases. For mid/large commercial lines, the percentage of companies with activity underway has increased 10 percentage points to 96% in 2025, with more advancing to implementing AI solutions for specific use cases. Overall, though, the majority of the mid/large segment is in earlier stages, with three-quarters in strategy or initial pilot/implementation stages.

The small commercial lines side is a bit different. The activity is still high but has moderated since last year. More small commercial players have advanced to implementation, but fewer companies overall have initiatives underway. While 75% are in process, 25% have no activity in the AI space. This may be due to the central focus on automation and straight-through processing. There are plenty of opportunities to leverage AI for small commercial and many existing use cases, but much of the use of AI for insight may be in the future.

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Cybersecurity

The significant progress that both small commercial and mid/large lines have made with the production rollout of cybersecurity measures is well-justified by the rapidly expanding and changing risk of a cyberattack. While 19% of both segments have no new cybersecurity initiatives planned for this year, this should be a careful watch area going forward. It is also important to note that this is the first year ReSource Pro is tracking carriers' activities in cybersecurity measures.

According to Astra Security, a cyberattack occurs every 39 seconds or an average of 2,200 times a day. IBM reports that the average cost of a data breach in 2024 was \$4.88 million, the highest total ever and 10% more than the prior year. Reports of publicly known cybersecurity vulnerabilities to SecurityScorecard have more than doubled since 2020 with more than 39,000 new entries just in 2024. According to Statista, more than 72% of businesses worldwide were affected by ransomware attacks.

While we are in the early stages of quantum computing, it will pose a significant threat to cybersecurity by making it possible to break mathematical encryption methods. Carriers will want to explore their future approach to establishing quantum-resistant encryption and how they could use quantum computing for more rapid cyber threat detection. In the meantime, leveraging advanced AI platforms for cybersecurity will remain a necessity.

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Deploy new business models

Over the years, we have seen commercial lines insurers diversify their offerings and geographical footprint by exploring new distribution models, establishing new brands, and other innovative approaches. Year-over-year, activity has remained relatively stable; however, a small group of carriers have moved from the implementation to the deployment phase across both segments.

Last year, 29% of carriers in the mid/large commercial segment were developing plans. That decreased to 16% in 2025, although more carriers are in the implementation and deployment stages. A small cohort of carriers in small commercial lines has also matured to deploy new business models, 6% now versus zero a year ago. However, in both segments, a significant portion of carriers have no plans. This reflects carriers' emphasis on optimizing existing operations rather than expanding into new lines, markets, or regions, as shown in Figure 2. It is also important to note that many carriers already have established business models beyond their traditional distribution channel, such as digital brands and insurtech collaborations, and it is also likely that most do not pursue new business model deployments every year.

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Invest or partner with insurtechs

Overall, new activity with insurtechs has declined. In the case of small commercial lines, the activity has decreased significantly, with only 57% having some level of activity (vs. 81% last year). In some ways, this follows a natural evolution, especially since insurtechs first emerged in the small commercial space a dozen years ago. Many carriers and MGAs have locked in on their partners and thus have limited new activity. Still, 31% are now in the strategy development stage, which may signal a new wave in future years.

From a middle market/large commercial standpoint, the picture is mixed. The overall activity is down 12 percentage points to 45% of companies, but the percentage that has broadly deployed insurtech solutions has jumped from 5% last year to 15% this year. This is due to the later arrival of viable insurtechs that tackled more complex risks.

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Connected world technologies (IoT, telematics, etc.)

In 2025, commercial lines carriers are slowing down their activity in connected world technologies, such as the IoT, telematics, and other sensors/devices that capture real-time data, with half or more indicating no plans in each segment this year. Overall, fewer carriers in mid/large commercial lines have activity underway – just compare the 8% that stated they have these technologies deployed now versus 19% in 2024. While there has been some progress in the small commercial segment, with 13% of carriers deploying plans compared to zero a year ago, the more than half with no plans suggests a slight pullback in the market.

Unlike personal lines, which leverages connected world tech more for the product and pricing strategies, commercial lines carriers prioritize loss prevention. They utilize IoT sensors and telematics to collect real-time data on risks and behavior to prevent potential hazards and mitigate losses. While integrating insurance programs with connected world technologies presents a significant opportunity for carriers, many challenges hinder widespread adoption. For starters, many insured businesses are wary of sharing proprietary data with their insurance carriers, and there are also many regulatory, legal, and privacy concerns over the collection of data via telematics or IoT devices.

For more insights on connected world technologies, read our research report: “IoT and Connected World Tech in Commercial Lines: Progress, Plans, and Predictions in 2024 and Beyond.”

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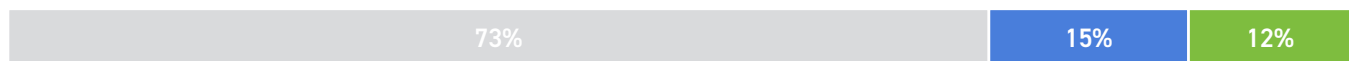
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Establish a greenfield insurer or digital brand

Since 2022, the percentage of commercial lines insurers establishing a greenfield insurer or digital brand has been in decline. This is particularly true within the small commercial segment, where 94% of executives now indicate they have no activity in this area. Declining activity underscores the challenges and uncertainties inherent in launching such ventures. Certainly, some insurers have successfully deployed such ventures in recent years, but the increase in carriers reporting no activity indicates a shift in priorities.

The story for mid/large commercial lines is more mixed, with one-fourth either developing strategies or undergoing initial implementation. While these percentages haven't notably changed from 2024, they are down significantly from prior years. Economic uncertainty, varying success, and the rapid rise of AI have prompted executives to revisit their priorities.

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Call to Action

The commercial lines segment is at a critical juncture, driven by rapid technological change, evolving customer expectations, changing demographics, and new risks and challenges. That said, it's also a time of tremendous opportunity for carriers willing to adapt, innovate, and embrace new technologies and approaches to insurance. As you examine and fine-tune your 2025 strategic initiatives, consider the following:

1. Increase attention on foundational activities that support all initiatives

Standardizing and optimizing processes, improving the data environment, and modernizing current systems are critical for positioning your organization for success in the near and long term. As carriers increasingly look to innovate, they must ensure that they've laid solid foundations in people, processes, and technology.

2. Be intentional and strategic in your approach to innovation

With innovation surging to the third spot on the top business drivers for tech investment, commercial lines carriers must remain grounded in their business goals and roadmap. Getting caught up in the hype around new and emerging technologies can be easy. Instead, prioritize investments in innovation that will directly enhance the customer experience, improve operational efficiency, and enable the development of new products and services.

3. Consider conducting a scenario planning exercise for the year 2035

During times of rapid evolution, executives must continually revisit and adjust their short-term and long-term roadmap. Conducting a scenario planning activity looking out ten years into the future can be invaluable for exploring how insurance and your business may differ and for identifying necessary adjustments to business strategies, operations, and more.

4. Take a multi-disciplinary approach to talent

The skill sets and competencies needed to succeed in the insurance industry are changing, and traditional approaches to talent management are no longer sufficient. Carriers must adopt a multi-disciplinary approach to talent to drive innovation and sustained growth. This means recruiting and developing individuals with diverse skill sets, knowledge, and perspectives and fostering a collaborative environment where employees can continue to learn and contribute their unique expertise.

5. Have a heightened awareness of and proactively monitor the external environment

The financial markets, economic environment, climate/CATs, and changes brought on by the new administration/federal government will undoubtedly impact the insurance industry, your customers and partners, and the risks you insure. Be intentional about monitoring these changes to ensure you can adjust your business plans and strategies as needed.

Lastly, commercial lines carriers must prioritize a balanced approach in 2025, allocating investments between traditional and transformational initiatives. Strong foundations in underwriting claims, talent development, and customer experience are essential for successful innovation and growth. By solidifying their core operations, carriers will remain resilient and well-positioned for long-term success.



ABOUT RESOURCE PRO

Focused exclusively on the insurance industry, ReSource Pro is a trusted strategic operations partner to insurance organizations seeking to increase their productivity and profitability. With a global team of more than 10,000 employees, ReSource Pro operates at the critical intersection of people, process, technology, and data to serve more than 1,800 clients across the carrier, broker, and MGA segments – consistently earning a +96% client retention rate for over a decade. It offers expert advisory services, proven business process management optimization and transformative data and technology solutions. It was recognized in 2024 by Inc. 5000 as one of the fastest growing companies in the US.

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