



First Tech
federal credit union

CASE STUDY

How First Tech
Federal Credit
Union transformed
its risk culture
with Protecht.

Introduction

First Tech Federal Credit Union (First Tech), a leading credit union that serves technology-oriented companies and their employees, has transformed its risk and compliance capabilities with Protecht, overcoming the challenges of spreadsheets and poorly integrated software to achieve enhanced efficiency, accuracy, and a proactive risk culture.

Learn about First Tech's risk journey, from identifying the need for a better integrated and flexible risk management solution to the tangible benefits realized through the partnership with Protecht.

The challenge

First Tech faced inefficiencies and data integrity issues with risk management processes, which ran on a mixture of incompatible tools and spreadsheets.

Why they chose Protecht

First Tech selected Protecht ERM for its comprehensive functionality, ease of integration, user-friendly interface, advanced reporting capabilities, strong vendor support, and proven track record.

How Protecht helped

Protecht consolidated multiple systems into one integrated platform, which enables First Tech to streamline risk management processes, enhance data integrity, improve risk visibility, and facilitate real-time employee data integration.

Results

The deployment directly drove better risk reporting and risk visibility, as well as providing significant time savings benefits. From a broader perspective, Protecht ERM has helped to improve First Tech's risk and compliance culture, from front-line engagement to a more risk-informed board of directors.

Building a strategic partnership

Ongoing support and flexibility from Protecht during implementation has resulted in a strong, strategic partnership, enabling First Tech to adapt and grow.



“What we’ve modeled and have with Protecht now is a very detailed step-by-step RCSA.”

Cary Oswald

Senior Director of Enterprise Risk Management
First Tech Federal Credit Union

The challenge

First Tech, a technology-focused credit union based in Oregon that serves members across the United States, faced significant challenges in managing risk and compliance effectively. With an evolving financial landscape the credit union needed a better risk strategy and ERM system to handle risk data and ensure regulatory compliance.

First Tech's strategic focus is to be efficient at delivering online and mobile banking to accomplish high growth targets, and its risk team seeks to contribute to the organization's success with a lean team, better processes and controls that are embedded within those processes.

The systems First Tech had in place, which combined proprietary GRC and VRM platforms with manual spreadsheet tracking, were not only time-consuming to use but also prone to errors. Their reliance on spreadsheets to integrate incompatible systems and report in the necessary formats introduced risks of data inconsistency and integrity issues, impacting their ability to make informed decisions swiftly.

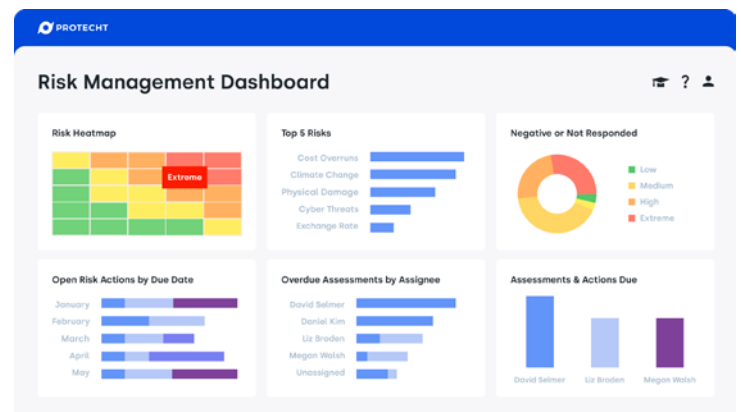
Cary Oswald, Senior Director of Enterprise Risk Management at First Tech, recognized the critical need for a streamlined, integrated risk management solution to address these inefficiencies and enhance overall risk oversight, including his vision to update the organization's risk scoring methodology.

The credit union established several key objectives with the deployment of Protecht:

- 1. Efficient risk hierarchy management**
 Ensuring risk hierarchy and organizational elements are easily accessible and updated within the tool.
- 2. Comprehensive ERM data management**
 Centralizing all ERM data and email notifications, encompassing enterprise risk assessments (ERAs), risk appetite metrics, risk control self-assessments (RCSAs), new product and service risk assessments (NPSIs), emerging risk assessments, and ad-hoc risk assessments.
- 3. Streamlined data submission**
 Allowing easy data submissions from internal groups through user-friendly upload processes.
- 4. Advanced reporting and dashboards**
 Providing robust dashboards for management to track and monitor rolled-up risk management oversight activities, along with automated reporting capabilities to minimize manual data manipulation and ensure data integrity.

- 5. Seamless employee data integration**
 Automating updates from HR systems to reflect employee changes, including terminations, new hires, and position changes.

By addressing these challenges, First Tech aimed to transition from fragmented, error-prone processes to a unified, efficient risk management framework, enhancing their ability to manage risks proactively and maintain regulatory compliance effectively.



Example Protecht ERM risk management dashboard.

Why they chose Protecht

First Tech's decision to partner with Protecht was driven by several key factors:

Comprehensive functionality

First Tech needed a solution that could manage diverse risk management activities within one platform. Protecht offered capabilities ranging from enterprise risk assessments to key risk indicators, incidents, findings, controls management and ad-hoc evaluations, meeting all their requirements seamlessly.

Ease of integration

The ability to integrate smoothly with existing systems, such as HR for automated updates, was vital. Protecht's integration capabilities ensured a seamless flow of data.

User-friendly interface

Protecht's intuitive design meant that both seasoned risk managers and new users could easily adapt to the system. This user-friendliness was critical for organization-wide adoption.

Advanced reporting capabilities

Protecht's robust reporting and dashboard features provided the detailed, real-time insights needed for effective risk management and oversight. This enabled First Tech to transition from manual spreadsheet tracking to automated, accurate reporting.

Vendor support and customization

The strong support from the Protecht team and the platform's flexibility to be tailored to First Tech's specific needs were significant advantages. This ensured that the solution could evolve with First Tech's growing requirements.

Proven track record

Protecht's established reputation and proven success in the financial sector gave First Tech confidence in the platform's ability to meet their comprehensive risk and compliance management needs. This trust in Protecht's capabilities was a decisive factor in their choice.



"We have proper, effective control documentation. We know what's going on..."

Cary Oswald

Senior Director of Enterprise Risk Management
First Tech Federal Credit Union

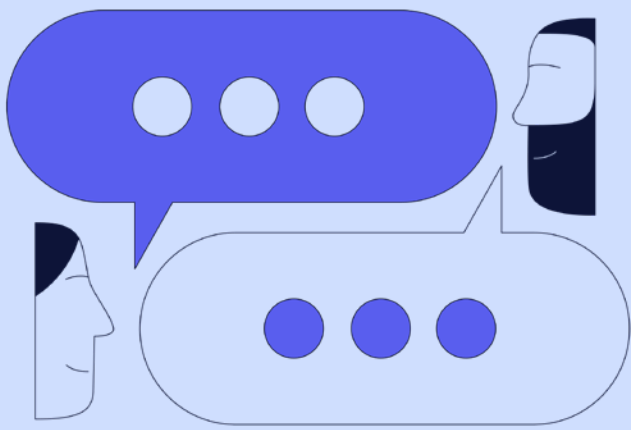
How Protecht helped

Protecht enabled First Tech to transition from manual spreadsheet-based processes and existing disparate risk solutions to a centralized, integrated, automated system. This shift significantly reduced the risk of errors and enhanced data integrity. For example, risk assessments, previously scattered across various spreadsheets and tools, are now conducted, stored and locked within Protecht ERM, ensuring consistency and accuracy.

"A huge improvement that we're already experiencing is in our risk and control self-assessments, RCSAs, a process that was done in multiple spreadsheets and that took many interviews with business units," Oswald said. He noted that examiners would ask if the risk team had effectively documented their challenges with business unit discussions.

"What we've modeled and have with Protecht now is a very detailed step-by-step RCSA, a process where you cannot go to the next step until you're communicated with the business unit and they've responded to questions within the tool.

"That gets over an examiner's issue of effective challenges, because Protecht ERM shows the questions that the risk team raises, the responses back and our evaluation of the response, and whether we agree with the response and scoring. Since it's a risk product, we control the final scoring, not the business unit. We have proper, effective control documentation. We know what's going on, the business unit manager is deeply engaged in the process, and now RCSAs can be a workflow for junior level employees."



Enhanced efficiency and accuracy

By implementing Protecht, First Tech significantly reduced the time spent on manual data entry and report generation. Automated processes replaced the error-prone spreadsheet-based system, ensuring higher data integrity and consistency. According to Cary Oswald, the transition saved the risk team hundreds of hours per quarter, allowing them to focus on strategic tasks rather than administrative ones.

For example, the risk team can now easily see the status of risk assessments and identify areas that require immediate attention. The ability to generate risk reports with minimal manual intervention – replacing a prior approach that involved data from three spreadsheets, compiled into a fourth, that was then cut-and-pasted into a slide deck – not only saved time but also ensured that all stakeholders received accurate and timely information.

Improved risk visibility and reporting

The customizable dashboards in Protecht provide First Tech's risk management team with a comprehensive view of their risk landscape. These dashboards enable users to monitor key risk indicators, track risk assessment progress, and visualize risk trends.



Streamlined findings and issue management

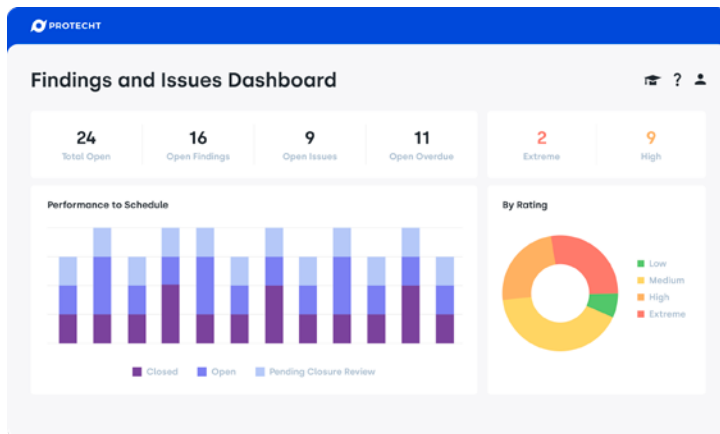
Protecht's issue management features allowed First Tech to track and resolve issues more efficiently. Automated alerts and status tracking helped the team stay on top of pending tasks and ensure timely resolution. This improved tracking system reduced the number of overdue action plans and enhanced overall issue management.

"Findings and actions are one of my favorite modules. I like how Protecht manages findings and links actions to it. In the previous system, people were accessing and muckraking in the findings all the time. I like the way Protecht thinks about it, a finding is created and closed. All of the actions to fix the finding are done at the action level, and that intuitively makes sense to me," Oswald said. "To me, that's like the Holy Grail. The finding is what the finding says it is, and then the finding gets closed when it's gone through a rigorous control process. We can go back and forth with the actions, create a new action, delete an action, modify an action – that's the whiteboard with the business telling us what they're planning on doing, and us going back to say, well that's not going to cut it, that's not going to close the finding."

"I like the way Protecht thinks about it, a finding is created and closed. All of the actions to fix the finding are done at the action level, and that intuitively makes sense to me. To me, that's like the Holy Grail."

Cary Oswald

Senior Director of Enterprise Risk Management
First Tech Federal Credit Union



Example Protecht ERM findings and issues dashboard.

Issue management dashboard

Protecht's issue management functionality provides First Tech with a robust platform to track and resolve enterprise issues efficiently. The system offers features like expected resolution dates, status tracking (with visual indicators like green, red, and yellow), and automated alerts for overdue action plans. This integration ensures that all issues are tracked consistently and resolved promptly.

Compliance and vendor risk management

With Protecht, First Tech was able to conduct thorough vendor risk assessments and compliance reviews more effectively. Protecht supports various compliance and risk review processes, such as vendor risk assessments, compliance reviews, and business continuity risk assessments. The system facilitates annual vendor reviews, and tracking compliance requirements, all within a unified platform. This functionality ensures that First Tech maintains high compliance standards and effectively manages vendor-related risks.

Real-time employee data integration

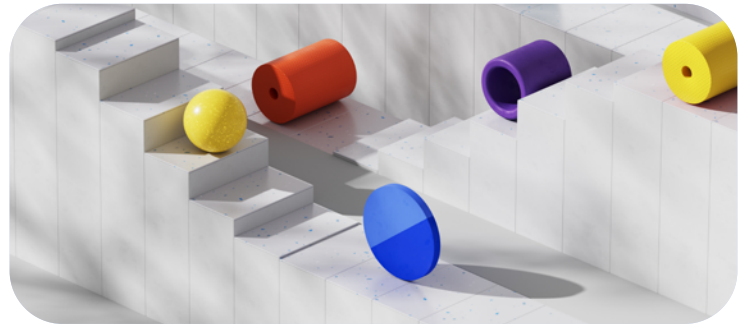
Integrating with First Tech's HR system, Protecht ensures that employee data is always current. This automation handles terminations, new hires, and position changes seamlessly, eliminating the need for manual updates and minimizing the risk of outdated information.

User adoption and training

The comprehensive training resources provided by Protecht made it easy for First Tech employees to become proficient with the system. Online training videos and materials simplified the onboarding process, resulting in high user adoption rates. This ensured that even inexperienced users could quickly and effectively use Protecht for their risk management tasks.

Overall risk culture improvement

Protecht's integrated risk management platform fostered a stronger risk culture within First Tech. Employees across the organization could now engage with risk management processes more effectively, contributing to a more proactive and informed approach to risk. This cultural shift was evident in the improved engagement and collaboration between different teams, ultimately leading to better risk management outcomes.



Building a strategic partnership

First Tech's partnership with Protecht has proven to be more than just a vendor-client relationship; it's a strategic alliance. First Tech's Cary Oswald emphasized the responsiveness and expertise of Protecht's team throughout the implementation process.

"Protecht's team was there every step of the way, ensuring that our specific needs were met and that the system was configured perfectly for our organization."

Cary Oswald
Senior Director of Enterprise Risk Management
First Tech Federal Credit Union

Protecht's commitment to customer success didn't end with the deployment. First Tech has benefited from ongoing support and regular check-ins to ensure the system continues to meet their evolving needs. Protecht's flexibility has allowed First Tech to adapt the platform as their risk management requirements grow. The ability to easily update and configure dashboards and reports has been particularly beneficial in maintaining an up-to-date and relevant risk management framework. With Protecht's easy to use import features, First Tech was able to perform the migration of data and attachments from existing systems into Protecht.

As First Tech looks to the future, the strategic partnership with Protecht is set to play a crucial role in their growth and risk management strategy. First Tech's compliance organization, which is a separate function, is beginning to align some of their business processes to the tool and the ERM model.

Protecht's platform is scalable and adaptable, providing First Tech with the tools they need to manage risks effectively as they expand. This partnership has laid a strong foundation for First Tech to continue its mission of providing exceptional financial services to its members while maintaining robust risk management practices.

Conclusion

The deployment of Protecht at First Tech marks a significant leap forward in the credit union's risk management capabilities, which is also advancing the organization's overall risk maturity.

By choosing Protecht, First Tech transitioned from fragmented processes based around incompatible proprietary systems linked by manual uploads and downloads to a streamlined, integrated platform that offers comprehensive risk oversight. The collaborative implementation process and ongoing support from Protecht have not only improved efficiency and accuracy but also fostered a proactive risk culture throughout the organization.

First Tech's journey with Protecht illustrates the power of a strategic partnership in driving organizational growth and resilience. This transformation ensures that First Tech is well-equipped to navigate future challenges and continue delivering exceptional financial services to its members in an increasingly complex and dynamic environment.

About Protecht

While others fear risk, we embrace it. For over 20 years, Protecht has redefined the way people think about risk. We enable smarter risk taking by our customers to drive their resilience and sustainable success.

We help you increase performance through better understanding, monitoring and management of risk. We provide a complete solution of risk management, compliance, training, advisory and consulting services to businesses, regulators and governments across the world.

About First Tech Federal Credit Union

First Tech Federal Credit Union is the banking partner for tech innovators. As the largest national credit union founded by and for the people of tech, First Tech understands the unique financial needs of their community and tailors services and solutions for them. Because First Tech is member-owned, it puts people over profits, with competitive rates and lower fees that provide members with the roadmap they need for future financial success. Founded more than 70 years ago, First Tech has over \$17 billion in assets and serves employees of cutting-edge companies like Microsoft, Intel, Cisco, Amazon, Nike, and Google.

Find out more about Protecht ERM

Our Protecht ERM SaaS platform lets you manage your risks in one place: risks, compliance, incidents, KRIs, vendor risk, IT and cyber risk, operational resilience, business continuity management, and more.

Website
protechtgroup.com

Email us
sales@protechtgroup.com

Call us
+1 (833) 328 5471

