

WHITE PAPER

Redefining the Speed of Change

Comprehensive access to real-time data could unlock a new frontier in agility for financial institutions.



The pace of technological advancement and strategic change (including the supporting change management) has risen across the board in recent years. How organizations manage that change matters. As banks and credit unions work to speed up their decision-making, it can be easy to miss the forest for the trees. When banks wind up doubling down on incremental, tactical changes, they can miss out on the bigger strategic picture. As institutions struggle to overcome legacy technology and siloed information architectures, they need to keep in mind that the speed of decision-making hinges on more than just making data accessible. To speed up strategic decisions, they need faster access to data that gives context to the choices they're making and allows them to assess the impact of the changes they make.

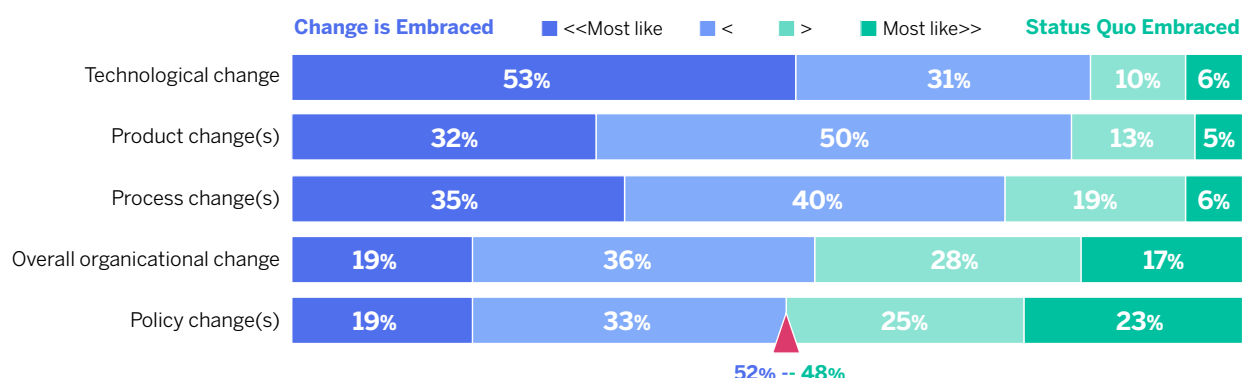
In July 2025, Arizent, parent company of American Banker, surveyed 100 professionals at banks or credit unions with between \$750 million and \$50 billion in assets. The research sought to better understand how these financial institutions manage change, with specific questions about how they leverage data in decision-making to act quickly. Highlights from the research show that:

- Banks aren't as agile as they could be.
- Executives and non-executive team members have differing views on the state of change management in their organizations.
- Data access is fundamental to tactical as well as strategic decision-making.

Banks are still working to become more nimble

Improving the speed of effective decision-making is a work in progress for financial institutions. Banks and credit unions believe they have gotten faster at making discrete, iterative changes to technologies, processes and products. Organizational changes that involve broader-based strategic decision-making remains slow and wholesale overall (see Figure 1 on next page).

Figure 1: Speeding up the pace of change is a work in progress



Source: Arizent/American Banker, 2025

The places where change has accelerated—in technologies, processes, and products—reflect the areas where financial institutions can move most decisively. While these shifts may appear incremental, they are essential building blocks for broader strategic transformation, enabling banks to act on insights more quickly and with greater confidence.

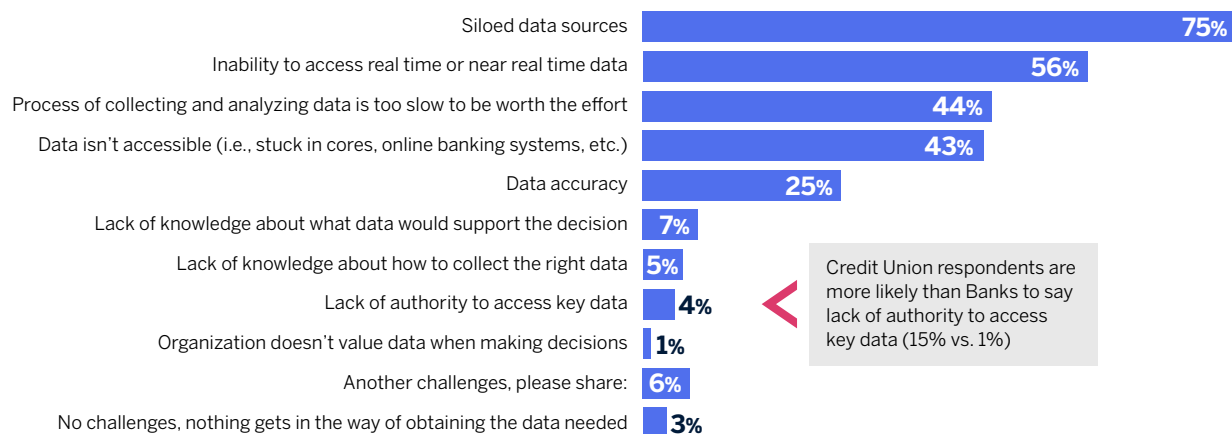
These changes may not seem earth-shattering, but it has taken some effort to get to this point. To manage change across the organization, most financial institutions are leveraging a wide variety of best practices that lend themselves well to discrete, iterative changes. These include cross-functional collaboration, iterative and flexible planning, and a tendency to lean on smaller, quicker changes driven by customer needs.

A lack of comprehensive, timely access to data is holding financial institutions back

The recipe for driving bigger, more strategic change requires timely access to the data that inform those decisions. For 64% of respondents, timely means access in real-time or at most in a few hours, with just 23% saying the next day. Timely also differs depending on where people sit in the organization and what sorts of things they intend to do with the information they get. Executives and upper management tend to be more focused on real-time or near-real-time information than those in middle management positions.

Getting access to data in that time frame poses a challenge for most financial institutions (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Data access remains a key barrier to strategic decision-making



Source: Arizent/American Banker, 2025

Siloed data sources remain a critical barrier across the industry. It's also striking that many financial institutions report that the process of [collecting and analyzing data](#) is too slow to be worth the effort. For others, some relevant data isn't accessible at all, so they couldn't use it for decision-making even if they wanted to.

"Speed only matters when you have clarity. Without timely, connected data, banks are making decisions in pieces instead of making them with purpose," says Kim Snyder, CEO and founder KlariVis. "When teams can see the relationship between actions and outcomes in real time, they make better choices and they make them with confidence."

Better change management requires a fundamental shift

Making data more accessible is a key first step in improving change management, achieving speed in decision-making and driving strategy. Data is not the only obstacle respondents cite, however. Strict hierarchies and resistance to change within the enterprise are also frequent challenges.

Where respondents sit in an organization's hierarchy affects how they see data-driven decision-making. Banks generally tend to make strategic decisions from the top down. Virtually all respondents (93%) characterize change in their organization as initiated by a vision from executives or division leadership. Lower-level employees, who are less likely to be involved in setting strategic direction, are more likely to rate strict hierarchy and siloed data as the biggest challenges to strategic decision-making. By contrast, executives who are more likely to understand the full context behind strategic decisions are less likely to identify data access challenges as a major obstacle.

"Change gets harder when teams feel disconnected from the information driving decisions," says Snyder. "When employees can see the same data leaders see, it builds trust and gives them a role in the solution. That shared understanding is what turns change from a mandate into momentum."

Interestingly, credit unions are something of an exception. They are significantly more likely than other financial institutions to take a bottom-up approach to organizational change (50% vs. 24%, respectively). They are also less likely to report being held back by strict hierarchies (35% for credit unions, vs. 61% for banks). These tendencies may offer credit unions an advantage in accelerating the pace of decision-making, but their bottom-up approach may require more care in ensuring that change aligns with the organization's larger strategy.

Whether organizations prioritize bottom-up or top-down approaches to change, getting everybody on the same page could simply be a matter of ensuring everybody has access to the same information. Without accessible, real-time metrics, the data points driving decisions are more likely to get created and distributed on a need-to-know basis. If people don't understand how changes relate to strategic goals, resistance to change is a natural response.

Partnering to accelerate the pace of change

Strategic change is complicated. It requires buy-in and coordination from people at all levels of the enterprise. Giving internal stakeholders the tools they need to see problems clearly and collaborate on a solution paves the way for faster, smoother change.

The ideal tools give employees more than just access to data. They also support analysis to identify opportunities to drive change more effectively (see sidebar). Insights gleaned provide a roadmap for both incremental technological changes and overarching strategic ones — for example, whether you should enter or exit a line of business. Data can also provide the basis for understanding how effective those changes have been — are portfolio changes producing the expected results? If you can access and view the data, it will tell you.

“When teams stop wrangling data and start working from insight, everything accelerates. They redirect their energy from producing reports to driving results, and that shift creates real value at scale,” says Snyder.

5 Advantages of On-Demand Analytics

- Identify growth opportunities in key areas, such as lending and deposits
- Make strategic decisions that enhance efficiency and drive profitability
- Enable employees to perform at higher levels, focused on achieving institutional goals
- Gain and retain a competitive edge in the marketplace
- Produce timely reports quickly with fewer internal resources
- Recognize previously unsung heroes driving growth and profitability, boosting moral and encouraging positive change

CASE STUDY:

Doing more with the data you have

In compiling data to drive decision-making, a South Atlantic community bank with \$1 billion to \$5 billion in assets faced the burden of pulling fragmented reports from disconnected systems. The finance, compliance, operations, and lending teams spent more time pulling data into spreadsheets than making actual decisions.

KlariVis changed that by providing widespread employee access to real-time data which allowed the bank to eliminate a large number of manually built, custom reports from the team’s workload and eliminate duplicate reports across departments. Now teams throughout the bank can answer their own questions in real time, reducing internal friction and unlocking capacity. As a result of gaining on-demand insights, the bank has been able to expand its margin by almost 40 basis points. Employees also have access to data that helps them understand their individual performance as well as how it connects to the bank’s broader goals.

Methodology

This research was conducted online in July 2025 among 100 qualified respondents. To qualify respondents had to work at a bank or credit union with \$750 million to \$50 billion in assets.

KlariVis was not identified as a sponsor of the research.



About KlariVis

KlariVis® is a banker-built performance intelligence platform that drives clarity, confidence, and speed for financial institutions - all in one platform. Designed by former bankers, KlariVis unifies fragmented data from across the institution: lending, deposits, operations, finance, and marketing into a single source of truth. The result? Decision velocity that powers profitability and growth.

For more information, please visit [KlariVis.com](https://klarivis.com).



About Arizent Research

Arizent delivers actionable insights through full-service research solutions that tap into their first-party data, industry SMEs, and highly engaged communities across banking, payments, mortgage, insurance, municipal finance, accounting, HR/employee benefits and wealth management. They have leading brands in financial services including American Banker, The Bond Buyer, Financial Planning and National Mortgage News and in professional services, such as Accounting Today, Employee Benefits News, and Digital Insurance.

For more information, please visit arizent.com.