



NEWS RELEASE

New DFIN Survey Reveals Cautiously Optimistic CFOs Planning Increased M&A Activity for 2025 Amid Economic Uncertainty

2024-09-05

They will Leverage AI and Other Advanced Technologies for Strategic Growth as well as Continue Investing in Global ESG Compliance

Inflation and Cybersecurity will Remain Top Concerns, with Companies Cautiously Balancing Risks

CHICAGO, Sept. 5, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- **DFIN** (NYSE: DFIN), a leading global risk and compliance solutions company, today announced that a **new survey** of finance decision-makers reveals that 94 percent rate their company's business performance as strong, and more than 76 percent plan for increased M&A activity in 2025. Companies are making strategic investments in advanced technology and AI to drive efficiencies, mitigate cybersecurity risks, enhance insights into internal controls, and ensure compliance with evolving regulations, especially ESG mandates.

"Our survey findings highlight a significant shift toward modernization and increased performance in the finance office," said Craig Clay, President of Global Capital Markets, DFIN. "We are encouraged by CFOs' optimistic business outlook for 2025 and the pivotal role that innovative technology, such as DFIN's ActiveDisclosure, will play in helping public and private companies scale with confidence."

2025 Survey Top Trends

An Optimistic Company Outlook is Prevalent. Finance decision-makers overwhelmingly rate their

company's performance as strong and have a positive outlook for 2025.

- 84 percent of finance decision-makers report a positive outlook regarding the current macroeconomic trends and their impact on business.
- Nearly three-fourths of CFOs, a subset of the total respondents surveyed, plan to increase M&A activity in 2025.
- Over 52 percent of finance decision-makers say they have invested in new technology to help scale their business.

AI Investment Is Essential for Finance Decision-Makers. Finance decision-makers increasingly prioritize AI investments to boost company efficiency and modernization, with over half planning to use AI for data analysis and improving internal controls.

- AI is a top priority for driving efficiency with a majority of respondents planning to invest in AI in the next six months.
- Over half of survey respondents plan to use AI to automate processes and improve data analysis.
- Similarly, nearly half of survey respondents will use AI to enhance internal controls.

Funding ESG Compliance Efforts Strengthens Stakeholder Trust. Over half of all CFOs plan to continue funding ESG compliance efforts despite the SEC's stay on climate disclosure.

- Three-fourths of survey respondents have already taken steps to comply with the SEC's proposed climate-related disclosures.
- Finance decision-makers are proactively complying with California's climate disclosure bills, with 60 percent establishing an internal ESG committee and 60 percent developing an ESG reporting framework.
- Following AI, ESG is the second most prioritized compliance technology, with nearly 60 percent of respondents planning to invest in 2025.

Market-related concerns persist. Inflation, unpredictable economic conditions, and the looming threat of a recession (real or perceived), are top of mind for finance decision-makers. Cybersecurity threats, such as phishing, also remain significant concerns.

- 49 percent of CFOs are worried about inflation impacting business performance.
- 47 percent of CFOs are concerned about cybersecurity threats.
- 39 percent of CFOs are wary of threats from AI but overwhelmingly choose to invest in it while proceeding with caution.
- Private company CFOs are more concerned than their public company counterparts regarding AI and cybersecurity.

- To download the Survey Whitepaper, CFO Outlook 2025: Strategic Growth, Tech & ESG in Focus, visit <https://info.dfinsolutions.com/cfo-survey-whitepaper/>.

The survey findings will be discussed during a CFO Panel at **DFIN Activate**, the company's annual executive summit held September 11 at the Fairmont Grand Del Mar Resort in San Diego, CA. To register for DFIN Activate, visit info.dfinsolutions.com/activate-san-diego-2024.

About the Survey

The DFIN CFO Survey was commissioned to gain a deeper understanding of the macro trends impacting finance decision-makers. Conducted online from July 2-11, 2024, by business intelligence leader Morning Consult, the survey targeted finance and accounting decision-makers with titles such as CFO, Controller, SVP, or VP. Respondents were required to have decision-making authority in one or more of the following areas: financial reporting, corporate audits, developing proxy materials, SEC filing, virtual data rooms, ESG reporting, ESG policy and procedure, or deal due diligence.

About DFIN

DFIN is a leading global provider of innovative software and technology-enabled financial regulatory and compliance solutions. We provide domain expertise, enterprise software, and data analytics for every stage of our clients' business and investment lifecycles. Markets fluctuate, regulations evolve, technology advances, and through it all, DFIN delivers confidence with the right solutions in moments that matter. Learn about DFIN's end-to-end risk and compliance solutions online at DFINSolutions.com, or you can also follow us on X (formerly Twitter) [@DFINSolutions](#) or [LinkedIn](#).

View original content to download multimedia: <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/new-dfin-survey-reveals-cautiously-optimistic-cfos-planning-increased-ma-activity-for-2025-amid-economic-uncertainty-302239451.html>

SOURCE Donnelley Financial LLC