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THE MGA PLAYBOOK:
FOUR STRATEGIC CAPABILITIES
THAT DEFINE MARKET LEADERS

Introduction

The specialty insurance market is in one of its most sustained growth periods in modern history. The global market reached \$109 billion in 2025 and is projected to grow to \$180 billion by 2030, a CAGR of 10.6 percent¹. Managing General Agents (MGAs) are driving a large share of that growth, with premiums generated through delegated authority growing by 15% to \$90 billion in the US market in 2024². Research also shows that the top 20 US MGAs alone generated 32.5% of the \$67.6 billion in direct premium written in 2022 through Delegated Underwriting Authority Enterprises (DUAEs)³.

MGAs have earned that market position by bringing deep subject-matter expertise and judgment to turn raw exposure and loss data into sound underwriting decisions. Over time, that judgment helps many MGAs turn the patterns they have seen across a niche segment into proprietary data assets and pricing models. It is an edge built from experience, not handed to them on day one. That experience also helps MGAs move into emerging and complex risk categories, such as cyber, climate-exposed property and technology risk, often before carriers are willing to commit capital of their own.

MGAs do not carry the balance sheet obligations or operational demands as carriers, which can help them innovate and experiment faster. It is part of why so many are founded and led by industry veterans who want to put hard-won underwriting experience to work in a new venture. Carriers still supply the capacity behind these ventures while MGAs provide access and judgment for deployment. This division of roles has made MGAs one of the principal market engines, facilitating connections between retail distribution, carrier balance sheets and reinsurance capital.

However, the trust earned by the MGA channel comes with a rising price of admission. As carriers scale their MGA relationships, they're raising the bar on what "good" delegated authority looks like: cleaner bordereaux, tighter audit trails, real-time claims visibility, provable governance. MGAs that meet that bar are better positioned to earn and retain capacity. Those that do not may be at greater risk of losing it.

\$109B

The global market in 2025



\$180B

By 2030

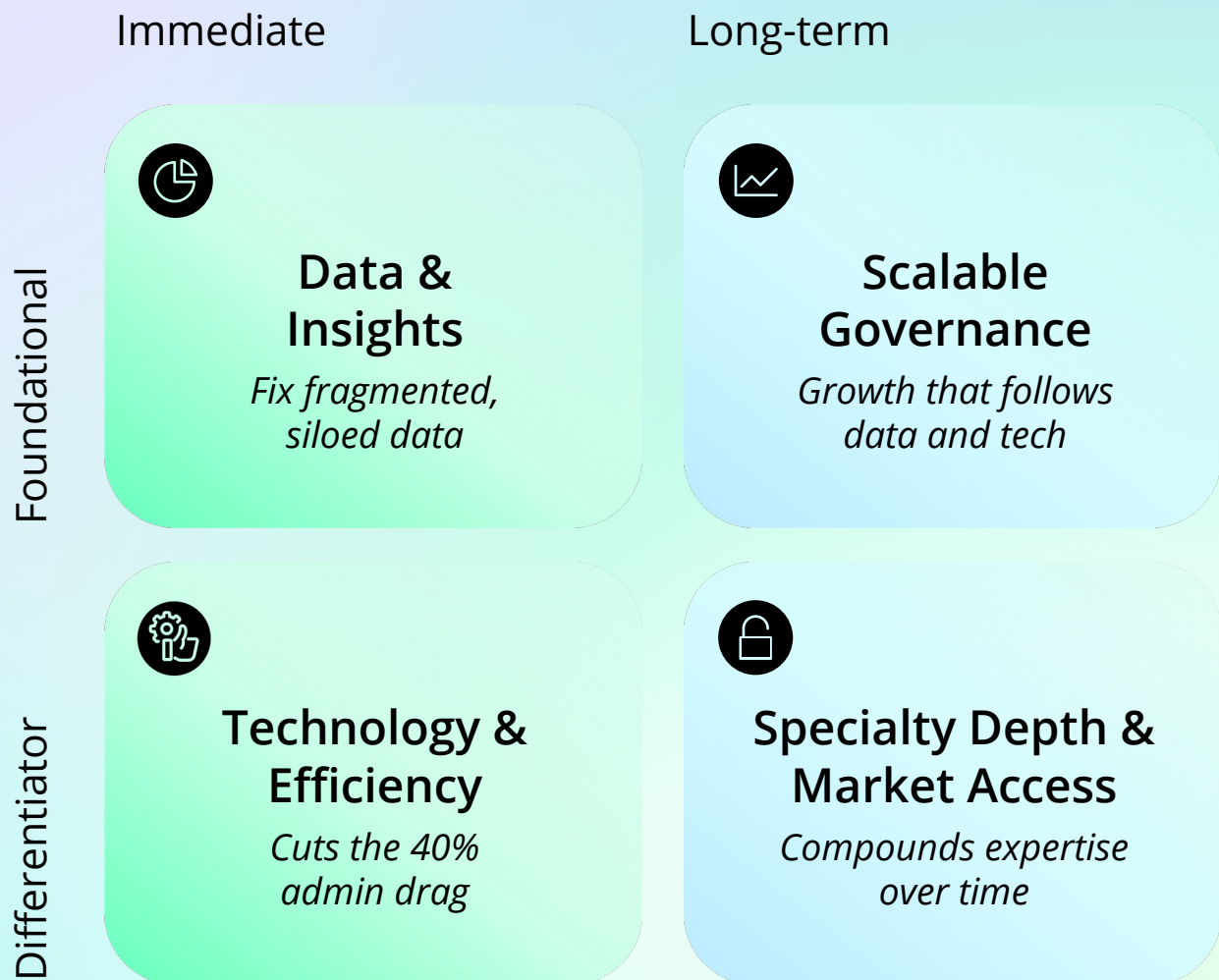
32.5%

of the \$67.6 billion in
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Where to start

MGAs that move with intention are mastering four strategic capabilities: data and insights, technology-enabled efficiency, scalable governance, and differentiated specialty depth and market access. The following sections explain what each capability means for MGAs, how to close common gaps and where to prioritize action.

We also show how Guidewire's InsuranceNow and PricingCenter can provide the structural foundation, enhanced by Deloitte's accelerators, product models and configuration discipline to help turn that foundation into a tailored, scalable operating model.



1 *Quality data and insights enhance your credibility*



Carriers now expect real-time, holistic visibility into how an MGA's book is performing—the same portfolio confidence they would expect from an in-house book.

The problem is rarely a lack of data. It's that the data lives in siloed systems: one for submissions, another for policy administration, a spreadsheet for bordereaux, a separate claims feed from a third-party administrator (TPA). This fragmentation makes it harder to price and track exposure with confidence in a growing market and the challenge becomes more consequential as the business grows.

Connecting policy and exposure information to claims data is a common challenge. In fact, carriers themselves may struggle to make that link and in MGA and program business, the challenge is often compounded by bordereaux processes that can be manual and siloed across systems. The MGA that closes that gap can deliver confidence in data quality to its partners and provide valuable insights into shared business portfolio outcomes.

Guidewire

InsuranceNow gives MGAs a single cloud-based backbone for submissions, policy, billing, claims and pricing. It replaces scattered systems that make consolidated visibility impossible today. A Nashville-based E&S MGA saw straight-through processing climb from 80% to 98% after consolidating onto the platform—a direct measure of how a single data model can improve the book look to carriers.

Deloitte

A backbone is only as trustworthy as its configuration. Deloitte works alongside MGAs from day one, helping identify the right InsuranceNow modules and Guidewire solutions for their book, then configuring them around the MGA's growth strategy and use cases. Beyond go-live, Deloitte also helps build the MGA's internal team to run and extend that setup independently, turning a shared data model into an asset carriers trust.

2 *Technology-enabled efficiency fuels growth*



Efficiency isn't just a cost problem for MGAs; it's a throughput issue. Every hour an underwriter spends on paperwork instead of risk selection is a lost revenue opportunity. Carriers are increasingly directing business to MGAs who can transact efficiently and scale with confidence.

Without integrated policy administration and automated workflows, administrative work can consume underwriter bandwidth, leading to eroding margins, slower broker response times and employee turnover. Underwriters report spending up to 40% of their time on administrative tasks⁴. Automating this work helps underwriters focus on risk selection and portfolio quality.

US insurance technology spending is projected to increase by \$173 billion in 2026, up 7.8% from last year.⁵ Much of that investment is flowing to carriers building AI-enabled underwriting and claims capabilities. MGAs, by contrast, are investing far less in technology that enables the same level of operational sophistication. MGAs that continue to rely on manual processes and fragmented systems risk being left behind as the rest of the industry moves toward intelligence-driven operations.

Guidewire

InsuranceNow's preconfigured templates and cloud accelerators can help MGAs go live in months rather than years, reducing reliance on internal IT and freeing underwriters from lower-value administration such as intake, rekeying and bordereaux cleanup.

One MGA used this speed to launch 11 new products in eight months and reduce support costs by 60%, while enabling faster turnaround time to support sharper pricing decisions.

Deloitte

MGAs' operating model demands more than rapid implementation. Deloitte helps address the remaining operational gaps through purpose-built accelerators—inbound billing file ingestion, catastrophe claims handling, agency bill processing—plus specialty product models across lines like Yacht, Cyber, Builder's Risk, Employment Practices Liability, Lawyers Professional Liability and EU Property/General Liability, each built and approved on Guidewire Marketplace.

These assets combine agentic AI capabilities for business capability modeling and process reengineering inside the platform itself. The result is a more integrated way to support sharper decisions, rather than another tool bolted onto the operating model.

3 *Scalability that holds up to scrutiny*



Governance shouldn't inhibit scalability. Done well, it becomes a strategic imperative that links business appetite with day-to-day decisions to prevent unchecked growth from straining the business. As compliance requirements for E&S MGAs grow more complex, sponsors and capital providers track covenants such as leverage ratio, interest coverage, minimum liquidity and capex limitations closely, with EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization) weighted heavily.

Bordereaux remain the primary data bridge to capacity providers, but insurers often receive them in inconsistent formats and with uneven quality. For an MGA, compliance goes beyond a back-office function—it's the operating condition under which the business thrives and the mechanism through which capacity is earned and retained.

Guidewire

Governance is native to PricingCenter and InsuranceNow. Audit trails, authority matrices, rate governance and structured, standardized data are built in, not bolted on.

A California wildfire MGA writing on behalf of A-rated carriers, launched a compliant, non-admitted homeowners program on InsuranceNow in six months, demonstrating how the platform's native controls can help meet the expectations of sophisticated capacity partners from day one.

Deloitte

Structured, governed data is the foundation, but it isn't a submission-ready bordereaux. Every capacity provider still wants its own format: a carrier-specific Excel template, an XML, or CSV feed.

Deloitte closes this gap by mapping PricingCenter's and InsuranceNow's governed data to each carrier's and syndicate's exact bordereaux specifications, from initial configuration through ongoing reporting cycles. The result is a submission-ready bordereaux and the specific regulatory reports carriers and regulators require, proven by Deloitte's experience across many carrier transitions.

4

Differentiated specialty expertise earns access



MGAs that succeed over the long term are those that make a focused set of lines difficult to replicate. They focus on depth rather than breadth, consistently delivering a high-quality book of business. That depth comes from years of proprietary data, underwriting judgment tested across cycles and broker relationships earned in a niche market most carriers choose not to underwrite themselves. It's exactly what carriers, reinsurers and brokers are paying for when they extend delegated authority.

But depth is often easy to claim and hard to prove. Real depth shows up in the underwriting files: consistent selection criteria, documented pricing rationale and loss data detailed enough to defend at renewal. Taking it a step further, the MGAs pulling ahead are turning their niche underwriting expertise into structured, tangible data assets and reusable intelligence, rather than leaving that knowledge in the heads of a few senior underwriters.

Guidewire

PricingCenter codifies underwriting judgment into rating logic that MGAs design once and reuse across programs, turning years of pricing decisions into a structured, repeatable model instead of tribal knowledge.

The platform cannot replace hard-won underwriting expertise; however, it can help strengthen decision-making by generating more accurate predictions from the breadth and quality of available data.

Deloitte

Deloitte builds that depth the way MGAs do: through multi-year delivery on MGA-specific platform work, long enough to develop a genuine, tested understanding of MGA requirements, not a generic playbook. That understanding is reinforced by a dedicated actuarial practice working alongside Guidewire as a Global Premier alliance partner.

Ready to transform?

The next five years will not be defined by who writes the most premium, but by who turns specialist capability into an operating advantage: trusted data, scalable technology, governed execution and differentiated access to market.

These strategic capabilities are interconnected. High-quality data can strengthen your risk selection and pricing story when carriers, reinsurers, or regulators scrutinize it. Effective technology frees underwriters to focus on building a quality portfolio instead of managing paperwork. Specialized experience and market access help carriers see you as a valuable partner rather than a replaceable commodity. Scalable governance ensures these advantages continue to hold as the business grows.

Let's talk about how to get started.

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Acknowledgements

A special thanks to the team that contributed to writing this perspective:

Kelly Cusick, Debjani Roy and Matt Gilson

Citations

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