

What to expect in cybersecurity: the next twelve months.

On the forces, not the forecasts, reshaping enterprise risk.

How will our defenses match what is coming in three weeks, three months, six months?

The answer is not a longer roadmap of point products. It is a question of speed. The adversary has moved to machine pace, and the next twelve months belong to whichever side closes the gap first.

Defending at human speed is no longer a strategy.

Three things have changed about how fast the work has to move.

The next twelve months will be measured against a new clock. These are the three forces setting it.

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|----|------------------------------------|--------|
| 01 | The Signal Explosion | VOLUME |
| 02 | Adversary Industrialization | TIME |
| 03 | The Governance Repricing | TEMPO |

THE SIGNAL EXPLOSION

144:1

In the average enterprise, one human analyst is outnumbered 144 to 1 by machine identities: agents, service accounts, and API keys.

UP 44% IN A YEAR.

— ENTRO SECURITY · NHI & SECRETS RISK REPORT, H1 2025



AI has learned to do cyber work.

Two years ago, frontier models could barely pass one in ten of the field's introductory tasks. Today they pass roughly half.

UK AI Security Institute

Frontier AI Trends Report · December 2025

ADVERSARY INDUSTRIALIZATION

22 sec

Median time for an intrusion to change hands from the initial-access broker to a follow-on attacker in 2025.

IN 2022, THE SAME HAND-OFF TOOK EIGHT HOURS.

— MANDIANT · M-TRENDS 2026



AI is already changing the economics of cyber risk.

JPMorganChase Global Technology Leadership Team

April 2026 · "Fortifying the enterprise: 10 actions to take now for AI-ready cyber resilience."

THE GOVERNANCE REPRICING

24_{hr}

The window in which a material cyber incident must be reported under the EU's NIS2 and DORA. No human-paced investigation can meet that clock.

IN FORCE TODAY. THE US CLOCK IS FOUR BUSINESS DAYS.

— NIS2 (EU 2022/2555) · DORA (EU 2022/2554)

Volume, time, and tempo run on the same clock now.

VOLUME

144:1

Machine identities per human analyst.

TIME

22 sec

Intrusion-to-hand-off, broker to attacker.

TEMPO

24 hr

Material-incident disclosure under EU rules.

The defender's clock **has not moved.**

Five priorities for the 2026 security budget.

01

Retire the patch SLA. Fund the exposure path.

Stop chasing every vulnerability. Fund the work that finds the ones attackers can actually exploit, and fix those first.

FORCE 02 · ADVERSARY INDUSTRIALIZATION

02

Govern every machine identity like a privileged employee.

Every API key, service account, and AI agent is an identity. Give it only the access it needs, only when it needs it.

FORCE 01 · SIGNAL EXPLOSION

03

Treat every AI agent as a system that ships code in production.

Know which agents you have, what they're allowed to do, and how you'd stop them. Start with humans on the loop.

FORCE 01 · SIGNAL EXPLOSION

04

Assume the breach. Rehearse the restoration.

Backups attackers can't destroy. Identity systems they can't pivot through. Recovery times your board has signed off on.

FORCE 02 · ADVERSARY INDUSTRIALIZATION

05

Start the crypto inventory. The clock is set to 2030.

Know where you use RSA and ECC encryption today. Know who's migrating you off it. Long-lived secrets need a plan.

FORCE 03 · GOVERNANCE REPRICING

06

Industrialize the five stages of the SOC.

Intel, hunting, detection, investigation, and response. Five stages, run as one workflow.

Four questions worth asking.

01 Are our defenses running at the speed of the adversary, or two cycles behind?

02 Where are we still solving today's problem when we should be preparing for what is three months out?

03 If identity were compromised tomorrow morning, what could we actually restore today, and how fast?

04 Where are we funding painkillers, and where are we raising the floor?

The next twelve months will be won at machine speed.

PRIMARY SOURCES

Entro Security, NHI & Secrets Risk Report, H1 2025 · UK AI Security Institute, Frontier AI Trends Report (December 2025) · Mandiant, M-Trends 2026 · JPMorganChase Global Technology Leadership Team (April 2026) · NIS2 (EU 2022/2555) · DORA (EU 2022/2554).