



ESG INSIGHTS FOR EXECUTIVES

2026 Trends for Aligning ESG With
Business Outcomes, Compliance
and Sustainability Goals

Environmental, social and governance (ESG) expectations are rapidly transforming how security organizations operate, compete and create value. While the term “ESG” may seem new or geopolitically charged, its core principles have long been integral to the industry: ethical operations, safety, responsible sourcing, risk management and ongoing improvement. Today’s shift isn’t about developing entirely new programs—it’s about establishing these strengths into a clear, transparent and future-proof approach.

Gartner emphasizes that modern sustainable business requires integrating social, economic and environmental considerations directly into strategic and operational decisions—a clear indicator that sustainability is no longer a “bolt-on,” but a critical component of organizational relevance and resilience.¹

For the security sector, this offers significant win-win advantages: reduced operational costs, enhanced market competitiveness, improved stakeholder trust and greater innovation velocity. Organizations that proactively align ESG with corporate strategy are already differentiating themselves in procurement, talent acquisition and global market expansion.¹

This white paper builds on that foundation by explaining what ESG means for the security industry today and why it’s important, with practical guidance to help organizations turn these long-standing practices into a modern, strategic approach that boosts competitiveness and resilience.

Cutting Through the Noise

ESG has become a widely discussed term, often overshadowed by noise that complicates its true purpose, yet most organizations already practice the fundamentals of sustainability through their everyday activities, including ethics and compliance, employee safety, operational efficiency, responsible sourcing and risk management. The shift happening today is not about adopting entirely new programs—it is about aligning and communicating these existing efforts within a unified framework that supports transparency, resilience and customer expectations. In the security industry, where digital transformation, regulatory change and operational risk intersect, ESG provides a structured approach to enhancing competitiveness and driving long-term value creation.

- ESG practices already exist within everyday operations (safety, compliance, ethics, efficiency)
- Modern ESG focuses on alignment, transparency and measurable business outcomes
- Customer, investor and regulatory expectations are accelerating the need for integrated sustainability
- Security organizations benefit from a unified ESG approach to strengthen competitiveness and resilience

¹ Source: Gartner — *Sustainable Business Strategy* <https://www.gartner.com.au/en/insights/sustainable-business>



Regulatory and Market Forces Reshaping the Security Industry

The security industry is facing a rapidly evolving regulatory landscape that directly impacts product design, operations, supply chain accountability and end-of-life responsibilities. Requirements such as the Packing and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR), Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), global extended producer responsibility (EPR) frameworks* and climate disclosure laws are now shaping procurement decisions and vendor qualification criteria. At the same time, enterprise customers increasingly expect transparent environmental data, responsible sourcing, sustainable packaging and circular product pathways. These shifts elevate sustainability from a compliance exercise to a strategic imperative for continued market access and competitiveness.²

- Expanding global regulations (PPWR, WEEE, EPR, CSRD, California SB-253/SB-261)
- Customer demand for carbon data, energy efficiency, circularity and take-back programs
- Sustainability criteria are now embedded in government and enterprise request for proposal (RFP) scoring
- Noncompliance increasingly leads to lost bids, delayed sales or supply chain disruption

Gartner Insights: Sustainability as Strategy, Not an Initiative

Gartner's public research reinforces that sustainability has become a core strategic driver, not an isolated program. Organizations are integrating ESG into business decisions, leveraging sustainable technology to reduce impact, improving data quality for reporting and risk management and using sustainability as a platform for innovation. The security industry is already experiencing this shift through digital transformation, cloud adoption, mobile credentials and energy-efficient architectures. For the C-suite, the message is clear: sustainability investments create operational and competitive leverage.¹

- Sustainability is increasingly embedded in enterprise strategy and decision making
- Sustainable technology frameworks drive efficiency and ESG performance
- ESG data quality is now essential for reporting, risk mitigation and customer trust
- Sustainability accelerates innovation across cloud, mobile and low-impact product design

² PPWR: Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation; WEEE: Waste From Electrical and Electronic Equipment; CSRD: Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive; EPR: Extended Producer Responsibility

Most Companies Already Have ESG – They Just Don't Call It ESG

Many organizations underestimate their ESG maturity because the terminology is new, not the work itself. Most security companies already operate robust environmental, social and governance programs through compliance, safety, operational efficiency and ethics initiatives. ESG simply connects these activities into a cohesive framework that demonstrates value, reduces risk and aligns with stakeholder expectations. ³

- Existing programs: ethics, safety, compliance, employee well-being, recycling, efficiency
- ESG = coordination and communication, not reinvention
- Aligns long-standing practices to modern expectations of transparency and accountability
- Strengthens reputation and trust with enterprise customers and regulators

Competitive Advantages: The C-Suite Win-Wins

ESG is increasingly a source of differentiation and competitive advantage. Companies that proactively integrate sustainability into operations and product strategy see benefits across procurement, cost structure, innovation velocity, workforce retention and capital access. These win-wins demonstrate that ESG is not a cost center—it is a performance driver. ³

- Higher win rates in sustainability-weighted RFPs
- Reduced operational costs through energy and waste efficiency
- Stronger employee retention, especially for technical and emerging talent
- Improved supply chain resilience and reduced risk exposure
- Preferential treatment from investors, insurers, and global enterprise buyers

Strategic Actions for Security Industry C-Suite Leaders

To lead effectively amid rising expectations, executives must treat ESG as a strategic capability. This includes reframing sustainability as business-driven, modernizing data infrastructure, evaluating material risks and opportunities, prioritizing low-energy and circular design principles, strengthening supplier oversight and collaborating across industry ecosystems.

- Reframe ESG as a strategy, not a report
- Modernize ESG data systems for automation, accuracy and visibility
- Conduct materiality assessments to align sustainability with enterprise value
- Integrate circularity and energy-efficient engineering into product roadmaps
- Establish partnerships for recycling, supply chain traceability and product innovation

Conclusion

Sustainability is no longer a peripheral initiative—it is a strategic lever that strengthens resilience, reduces operational risk and enhances long-term business performance. For the security industry, ESG offers clear pathways to differentiation, efficiency and innovation, aligning directly with customer expectations and global regulatory trends. By reframing ESG as a business strategy rather than a reporting exercise, C-suite leaders can position their organizations for lasting relevance, stronger market positioning and sustained growth in an increasingly dynamic global environment. ²



For additional support of ESG initiatives within your organization, reach out to the SIA ESG Advisory Board.