Rick Bawcum, CAE, CISSP, AAiP

Chief AI Officer · AI Governance, Risk & Assurance

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SUMMARY

Executive who builds the governance that lets organizations use AI safely: policy, vendor oversight, risk classification, independent testing, and board reporting. Founder of cimbiotic, an independent AI assurance firm, and former CEO who established an AI and Intelligence practice advising boards on human-in-the-loop AI adoption. Works hands-on with NIST AI RMF, ISO/IEC 42001, the EU AI Act, OWASP, and AIUC-1. CISSP, Association AI Professional (AAiP), MIT Sloan AI strategy graduate, and author of Ethical AI for Associations. Seeking a Chief AI Officer or AI governance and risk leadership role.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- **AI Governance & Assurance:** responsible AI, human-in-the-loop AI, AI policy and risk classification, independent testing of AI assistants and agents, board-level reporting; frameworks including NIST AI RMF, ISO/IEC 42001, the EU AI Act, OWASP, and AIUC-1
- **Security & Risk:** CISSP, cybersecurity, risk management, vendor oversight, resilient architecture
- **Executive Leadership:** P&L ownership, mergers and acquisitions, board advisory, organizational design, enterprise technology modernization
- **Data & AI Tools:** data governance, AI strategy; Claude Code, Claude Cowork, Anthropic, Gemini, Perplexity, LangChain, OpenTelemetry, GitHub

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Founder, cimbiotic *September 2026 – Present*

- Founded an independent AI assurance firm focused on professional and trade associations; designed an assurance framework with a fixed-price AI Assessment and a quarterly testing service, under an independence model free of vendor commissions and contingent fees.
- Designed, built, and launched cimassure, an Assurance-as-a-Service platform that independently tests AI assistants, developed with Claude Code and Claude Cowork.
- Published AI governance guidance and a Trust Readiness Scorecard for organizations.

Founder & CEO, Cimatri (acquired by Blue Cypress)

Washington DC-Baltimore Area · June 2015 – September 2026

Founder & CEO, 2015–2020 · CEO after private equity acquisition, 2020–January 2026 · Strategic Advisor to Blue Cypress through a planned nine-month transition, January–September 2026

- Established the AI and Intelligence practice, advising boards and executive teams on human-in-the-loop AI adoption, data governance, and AI strategy.
- Authored Ethical AI for Associations: Agentic Update (2025), AI governance guidance written for non-technical leaders and free to download on Sidecar's website.
- Founded Cimatri, an industry-focused firm delivering consulting, managed services, and AI governance, bootstrapped it to $2.5M in revenue, led its sale to private equity, and grew it to a $5M+ annual run rate across consulting, managed services, and enterprise AI, with 90% revenue retention.
- Directed a team of 20+, supported by an offshore and contract workforce, on 100+ client engagements in technology modernization and AI strategy.
- Advised Blue Cypress leadership across its portfolio during the planned transition as the acquirer reorganized the business.

COO / CTO, Bross Group *Denver Metropolitan Area · March 2011 – June 2015*

- Senior management team member of a premier IT staffing and consulting firm: strategic planning, operations, risk management, managed services, and engagement management.

Management Consultant, Independent *Greater Wilmington Area · October 2003 – March 2011*

- Interim executive for portfolio companies; advised partners and major clients on business planning, capital formation, technology deployment, and operations processes.

Earlier Career and Regulated-Industry Experience

- Vice President-level IT strategy, governance, and operations roles, 1996–2003, at Iron Mountain (FORTRUST), Rhythms NetConnections, CapRock Communications, Pagenet, and Verizon Wireless (PCS PrimeCo), including IT governance functions and the IT Master Plan at a national carrier.
- Compliance and operator certification at Warner-Lambert during an FDA consent decree; technical architect, special assets division, NationsBank / Bank of America, during a period of major upheaval in banking.

EDUCATION & CREDENTIALS

- MBA, Computer/Information Technology Administration and Management, Western Governors University (in progress) · BS, Business Administration, Finance and Management, Regis University, cum laude
- Telecommunications Executive Management Program, SMU Cox School of Business · MIT Sloan Executive Education: Implications of AI for Business; AI for Business Strategy
- CISSP · AAiP (Association AI Professional) · CAE (Certified Association Executive) · Certified AI Consultant (USIDHR)

PUBLICATIONS & COMMUNITY

- Author, Ethical AI for Associations: Agentic Update (2025) · Contributing author, Ascend: Unlocking the Power of AI for Associations (2023)
- Member, Technology Advisory Council and International Association Advisory Council, ASAE · Past President, Cape Fear Habitat for Humanity and Cape Fear Housing Land Trust