



INSURANCE MANAGEMENT

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AI, Automation and Pest Control: What's Next for the Industry?

By John Culotta

From smart traps to predictive pest analytics, technology is transforming the pest control industry — but at what cost? Technology improves automation, customer service and the quality and precision of pest control tools and products, but with innovation comes risk.

As the owner of a pest management business, you must be proactive in addressing the risks associated with new technologies. In addition to working with a seasoned broker who knows your industry, there are many steps you can take to protect your data, your customers and your reputation while enjoying the many benefits of automation.

The Upside of Innovation

Automation and innovation offer numerous benefits by streamlining operations, boosting efficiency and enhancing safety across your organization. Improved technology can also deliver cost savings by lowering labor expenses, minimizing error correction and improving resource management.

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Real-time monitoring allows artificial intelligence (AI) camera technology and sensors to analyze pest behavior, predict outbreaks and optimize treatment strategies, often reducing the need for broad-spectrum pesticide use.

As a result, pest management professionals (PMPs) can target treatments more precisely where and when needed, reducing chemical use and enhancing effectiveness — while also decreasing the need for frequent physical inspections. Additional benefits include using fewer chemicals and performing more sustainable pest control.

Predictive pest analytics leverage this information to analyze historical data, environmental factors such as weather and temperature, geographic information and real-time sensor data to help predict when and where pest outbreaks are most likely to occur. This analysis can identify long-term pest trends and patterns that human analysis might miss.

As one of the most significant innovations in pest control, drones and robotics detect pest hotspots before infestations can spread. Equipped with thermal imaging, sensors and high-resolution cameras, drones can inspect high ceilings, large warehouses or dangerous outdoor areas for signs of pests, reducing risk to technicians.



The Risk of Technology

While innovation offers significant benefits, it also brings substantial risks to your business. For example, suppose the information you

collect from payment systems and AI-driven phone tools is stolen. In that case, it can lead to serious reputational damage, loss of client trust and expensive lawsuits.

In addition to cybersecurity insurance, companies need robust data protection measures to prevent breaches, such as regular audits, encryption protocols, staff training and compliance with regulations. Remember, as automation advances, you must follow all local, state and federal pesticide application laws, which new technologies can complicate.

Sometimes, technology malfunctions may produce false readings that cause property damage, health problems, persistent infestations or incorrect pesticide application, which reduces treatment effectiveness. Professional Liability (Errors & Omissions) insurance can cover financial losses from errors, omissions or negligence.

Repairing or replacing high-tech equipment like sensors, robotics or drones after malfunction, accident, damage or theft can be very expensive. Review your property and casualty insurance to ensure each piece of equipment is included in the policy, helping to cover repair or replacement costs.

As technology advances and your business expands, it's crucial to regularly review your insurance coverage to ensure it adequately protects against current risks. By carefully evaluating the risks associated with using AI and other technologies in your pest control business and obtaining appropriate insurance, you can help defend your company from potential financial losses and liabilities.



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John Culotta is program manager of PCOpro, the pest control operator program at Brownyard Group, a leading administrator providing specialized insurance coverage for select industry groups. He can be reached at jculotta@brownyard.com.

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