

Consumer Sentiment on the Environmental Impact of Hoarding Unnecessary Enterprise Data

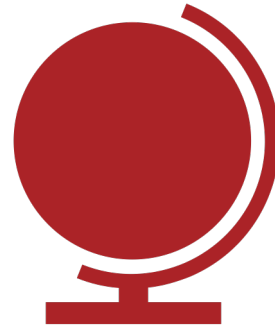
Original research from Veritas Technologies

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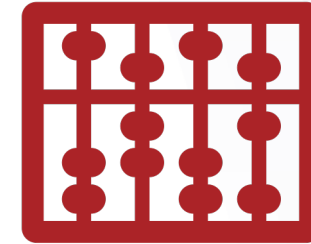
Methodology



Independent research
sponsored by Veritas
and carried out by
3Gem between
February 1-16, 2023.



Global scope
with respondents from
Australia, Brazil, China,
France, Germany,
Japan, Singapore,
South Korea, UAE, UK
and the US.

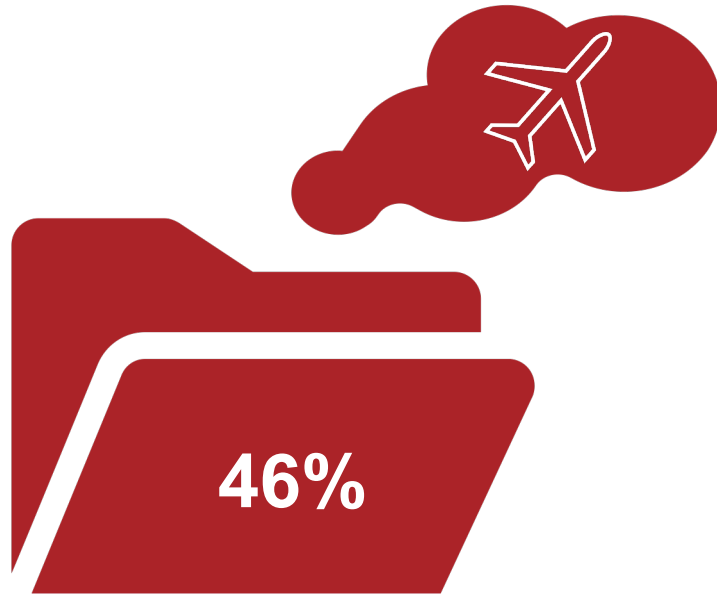


13,000 consumers
surveyed.

A night cityscape with a digital network overlay. The background shows a city at night with lights and buildings. A network of blue lines and dots is overlaid on the image, connecting various points across the city. A large red triangle is positioned on the right side of the image, containing the text 'Key Findings'.

Key Findings

Consumers are concerned about the amount of pollution created by datacenters, especially when they're used to store unnecessary data.



of consumers are concerned that 2% of global energy-related pollution emissions are caused by datacenters, the [same](#) amount created by the airline industry.



said they are especially concerned that data storage produces pollution when, [on average](#), half of the data enterprises store is redundant, obsolete or trivial (ROT) and another 35% is "dark" with unknown value.

Consumers want organizations to be more responsible with data when it's no longer needed and place a greater emphasis overall on controlling the negative environmental impact of data.



of consumers think it's the responsibility of the organizations that store the consumers' information online to delete it when it's no longer needed.



said they would like to see more focus from organizations on controlling the negative impact of online data storage on the environment.

Consumers are willing to put their money where their mouths are in response to organizations willfully causing environmental damage by storing unneeded data.



of consumers said they would stop buying from a company if they knew it was willfully causing environmental damage by failing to control how much unnecessary or unwanted data it is storing.

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Conclusion

Beyond the costs of storing data, the hidden costs of its environmental impact should be at the top of every business leader's agenda. Data centers run 24 hours a day and by 2030 are expected to use as much as [8%](#) of all electricity on the planet. It's easy to forget that data centers are mostly fossil fuel-powered and generate about the [same](#) amount of CO2 as the airline industry.

Organizations should not underestimate the environmental impact of poor data management practices, even if they are outsourcing their storage to public cloud providers. Many consumers feel passionately about reducing their carbon footprints, but the average organization is still causing more pollution by storing data they know is not needed than data they believe to be useful—on average, just [15%](#) of data is business critical.

With half of customers saying they would stop buying from companies that fail get a grip on the challenge, the risk for both businesses and the environment of not identifying and eliminating unneeded data is too great to ignore any longer.



A night cityscape, likely Hong Kong, with a network of blue dots and lines overlaid across the scene, symbolizing connectivity or data. The city lights are visible in the background, and a bridge is seen on the right side of the image.

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