

State of Information Governance Research Executive Brief

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Information drives business. Hollywood mines records of streaming entertainment customers to decide which project to greenlight. Researchers tap into massive DNA sequencing stores to better understand vexing health challenges. Energy providers monitor historical power use to better predict future demand.



But there is a downside as well. IDC predicts the total volume of digital information in the world will reach 44 zettabytes by 2020. That is a number that is nearly impossible to fathom, but try this: If each byte of information was a grain of sand, we would need nearly 6,000 Earth's worth of sand to contain it all.

This information deluge is crushing the majority of those tasked with managing it.

To better understand this challenge, Veritas commissioned Ipsos Research to survey 481 organizations in the US and UK on topics related to information governance, the practice of maximizing the value of information, while minimizing associated risks and costs. The results of this survey form the basis of Veritas' first **Information Governance Best Practices** report.

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What we found is that organizations have a keen interest in information governance (IG). In fact, 94 percent either have, or are planning, a formal information governance program. Why? The top reasons cited were risk management and regulatory compliance. This tracks closely with what we see in the field: Organizations are reacting to a sharp uptick in data breaches and increased regulation.

So, organizations see the need for, and are pursuing information governance. But are they any good at it? To fully understand this, we drilled down into the results to discover differences between those organizations doing the best job at information governance (top-tier) and those doing the worst job (bottom-tier). The results were illuminating.

Let's start by exploring the processes and technologies that top-tier organizations are adopting versus the bottom-tier.

Top-tier are **37 percent** more likely to require employees to identify data they work with that is confidential

Top-tier are **28 percent** more likely to have an information governance platform ("single pane of glass")

Top-tier are **26 percent** more likely to have issued formal data use policies

Overall, top-tier organizations have made significantly more progress when it comes to the adoption of IG processes and technologies. That said, the types of tools that are being adopted by high-performers overwhelmingly focus on providing insight into the information across their environment and who is accessing that information.

Top-tier organizations were more likely to have staff assigned to IG roles. For example, top-tier companies were 54 percent more likely to use "information stewards" who are distributed around the organization and who are responsible for their group's protection of data. Additionally, top-tier organizations recognize that to truly generate momentum with their IG strategy they need to ensure buy-in and engagement from a broad set of stakeholders and we see this occurring more with the top-tier than the bottom-tier.

It is one thing to demonstrate that top-tier organizations are more serious about IG and further along in deploying formal IG practices. But, does this lead to better outcomes? To find out, we compared and contrasted IG results between the two groups.

We began by determining what goals were most important to organizations. On this point, there was some agreement between top-tier and bottom-tier organizations. Here is a list of some of the goals we analyzed that both groups found crucial:

- **Protecting** highly sensitive information
- **Complying** with regulations
- **Determining** where your organization's data exists
- **Determining** who has access to information across your organization
- **Creating** information policies
- **Protecting** your company/organization brand
- **Deploying and executing** information policies
- **Controlling** enterprise data growth
- **Determining** the value of an individual piece of data
- **Determining** who owns data across your organization
- **Deleting** no-value data

What defines a "**top-tier**" or "**bottom-tier**" organization? To find out we asked a series of questions about information practices (such as whether they have adopted a formal IG program, have formal IG roles defined, use specific IG tools, and so on). Each response received a score based on how the respondent answered.

In this fashion each individual organization received a total score. Those with the highest third of scores comprise our "top-tier"; those with the lowest third comprise the "bottom-tier."

This allowed us to compare and contrast the habits and results achieved between the best and the worst organizations in terms of information governance.



We then looked at how well each tier did with each of these goals. It turns out that top-tier organizations did better in **every case** – often by an extremely wide margin. For example, when compared to their bottom-tier counterparts:

Top-tier are **48 percent** more likely to be able to delete no-value data

Top-tier are **40 percent** better at determining the value of individual pieces of data

Top-tier are **29 percent** better at controlling enterprise data grown

The real takeaway is that top-tiers were better at achieving **all** goals, including high-value goals such as protecting the brand and complying with regulations.

We performed a similar analysis for how effective each tier was at mitigating certain risks:

Top-tier are **29 percent** more likely to report effectiveness at mitigating productivity risks

Top-tier are **15 percent** more likely to report effectiveness at mitigating financial risks

Top-tier are **12 percent** more likely to report effectiveness at mitigating reputational risks

With all of the positive outcomes achievable through an effective information governance program, it's no surprise that 94 percent of organizations are looking to adopt a more formal program so they can improve their ability to mitigate their information-based risk and begin to extract positive value out of their data.

Key Takeaways:

Veritas is a leader in the area of information governance. Based on this study and our deep experience, we offer the following recommendations to help organizations achieve the same kind of results the top-tier organizations in our study were able to achieve.

1

Gain Visibility: Information is everywhere. The first step toward information governance success is developing insight into what information you have and where it is. Evaluate file analysis tools to map out your data footprint and get smart about your information.

2

Take Action: Information is not created equal. Most organizations are letting low- or no-value-data clutter their storage repositories. It's critical to protect the jewels and eliminate the junk. Build out an information valuation framework to execute policies and enforce them.

3

Assume Control: Information will never stop growing. Organizations that focus on individual information clean-up projects will constantly be falling behind. Build a sustainable process with a distinct focus on driving cultural change through end-user training.