

State of Information Governance

2016 Report



VERITAS™

Introduction

Information is both the lifeblood and the bane of any business, no matter its size, industry or location. Enterprises collect and analyze data from a myriad of internal and external sources to improve business efficiencies and decision-making processes. Yet these volumes of data grow larger and more difficult to manage and control every year. To make matters worse for the IT departments, that trend shows no signs of slowing. IDC predicts the total volume of digital information in the world will reach 44 zetabytes by 2020! Therefore, organizations that implement and follow an effective information governance (IG) program are much better able to mitigate risk, demonstrate regulatory compliance, and protect and control their information than those that do not.

Those are the key findings of the Veritas State of Information Governance Best Practices survey. Veritas commissioned Ipsos Research to survey senior IT executives at 481 organizations in the US and UK on topics related to information governance, the practice of maximizing the value of information, while minimizing the associated risks and costs. They work at companies of all sizes and across a wide range of industries. Ninety-four percent of enterprises either already have a formal IG program in place, or plan to implement one.



**Have a formal program or
planning on having one**

Before answering any questions about their policies and best practices, the respondents were given the following definition of information governance: “Information governance is the activities and technologies that organizations employ to maximize the value of their information while minimizing associated risks and costs.”

Then they were asked to explain why information governance is a priority for them, what tools and tactics they use, and to grade the effectiveness of their efforts.

Although a significant majority of organizations realize the need for information governance, some are much better at it than others. The survey reveals several disparities between those organizations that are doing the best job (high-performers), and those performing the worst (low-performers).

“Information governance is the activities and technologies that organizations employ to maximize the value of their information while minimizing associated risks and costs.”

Why?

Managing risk tops the list of reasons why enterprises engage in information governance, followed by the need to demonstrate regulatory compliance and a recognition of IG as a best practice. The word “risk” is an umbrella that covers a number of specific forms respondents face. Legal and regulatory rank the highest, followed by financial, reputational and productivity risk.



How?

Ipsos asked respondents to indicate which tools and tactics they were employing to achieve information governance. Respondents could choose among 18 different tools, such as archiving, eDiscovery, file analysis and policy tracking; and 14 individual tactics including policy creation, chargebacks, risk assessments and training. Most leverage virtually all of these tools and tactics, with adoption rates ranging from a minimum of 60 percent to almost 90 percent.

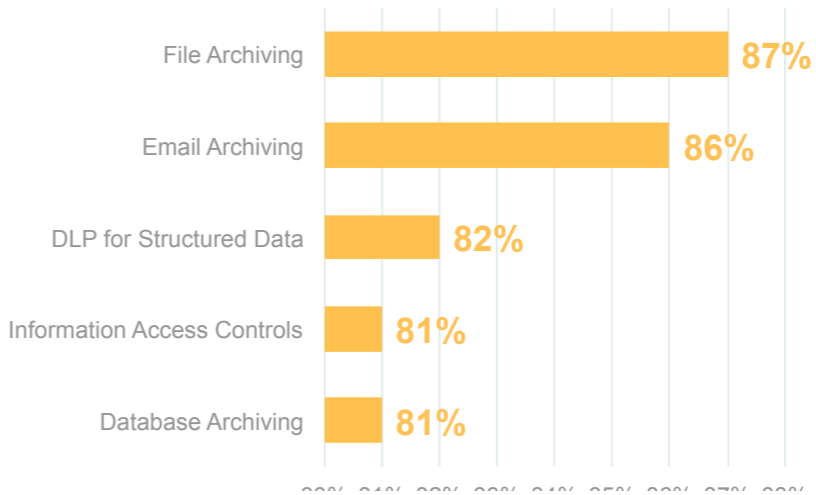
So enterprises see information governance as an important goal, but realizing that fact is just the first step. When it comes to implementation, the survey found that some strategies and tactics are more effective than others.

Respondents rated their level of engagement with each tool and tactic on a five-point scale. The highest end of the scale was “piloting” or “broadly engaged.”

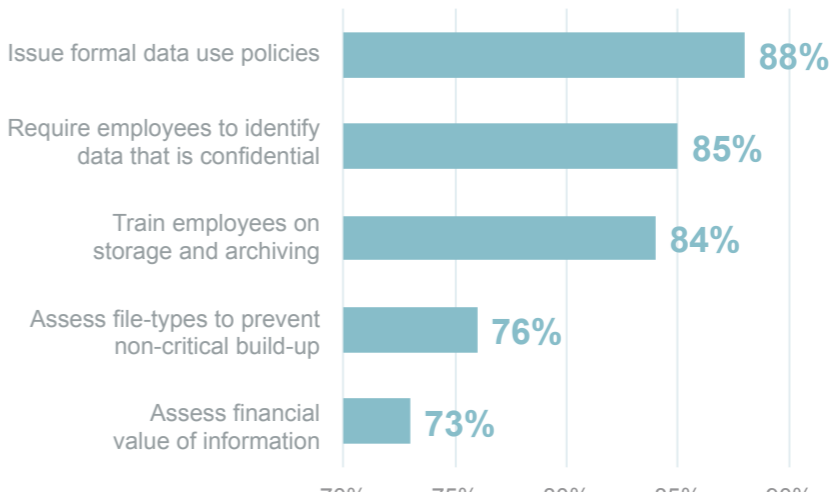
Notice that three of the top IG tools relate to archiving, which helps ensure proper data storage and retention. An organization also needs to protect information against accidental loss or theft, so it’s not surprising that the two other most common tools – DLP and information access controls - focus on information security.

Tools and tactics most often mentioned by enterprise IT as being in pilots or broadly adopted:

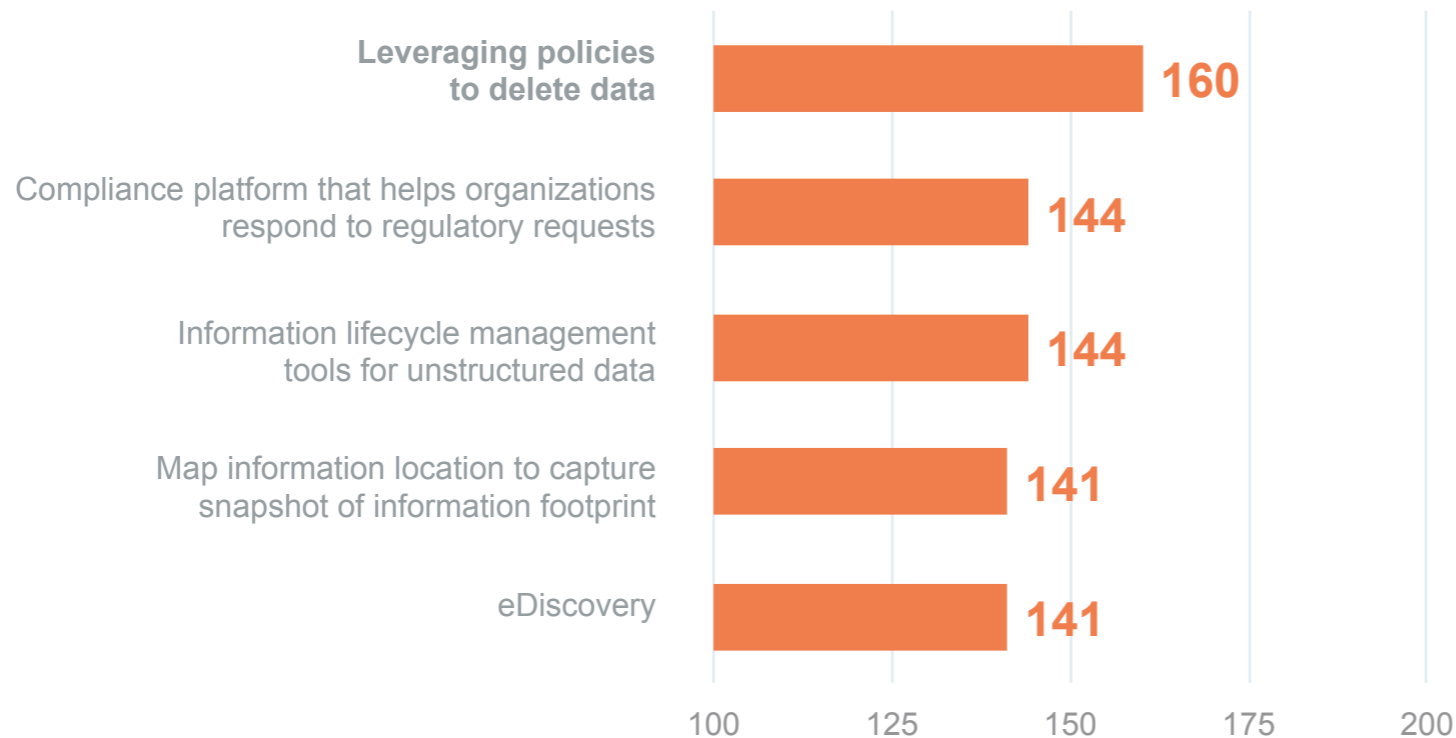
Information Governance Tools



Information Governance Tactics



Most active pilots



There is also a growing recognition of the need to have consistent visibility into where data “lives” both at-rest and while in-motion, and who is accessing individual files at any given time. That’s reflected in the fact that three of the most commonly cited tactics - having employees identify data that is confidential, conducting file type assessments, and assessing the financial value of information – all help improve data visibility.

Those are the tools and tactics enterprises use today, but what about tomorrow?

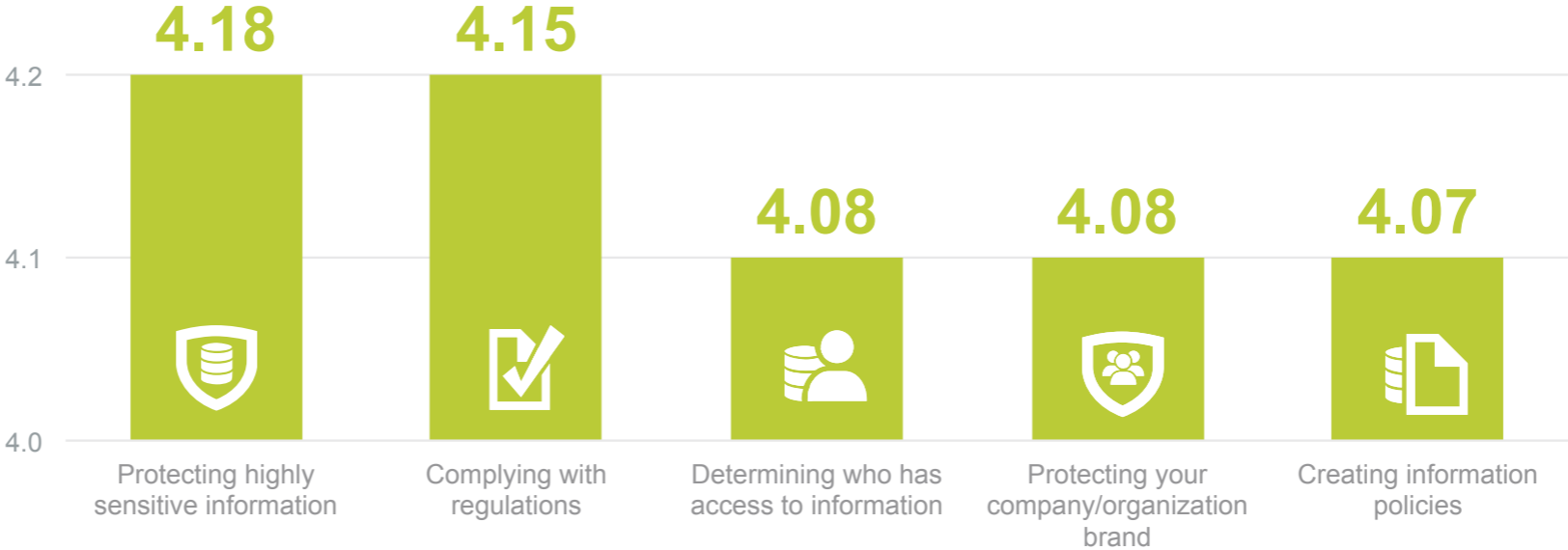
We asked respondents to identify what they are currently evaluating and testing.

You see that leveraging policies to delete data, information lifecycle management tools for unstructured data, and mapping information location are all in the top three. This suggests a focus on getting rid of information that no longer holds business value but may still expose the organization to unnecessary risks.

The fact that eDiscovery and creating a compliance platform to help organizations respond to a regulatory request demonstrates mitigating legal and regulatory risks are important drivers of such a high level of interest in information governance.

Is it working?

These findings collectively lead up to the most important question: how well are organizations doing in establishing an effective information governance program? We asked respondents to first list their most desired outcomes, then turn an honest eye on themselves and grade the effectiveness of their IG programs. The top five desired outcomes in order of importance to respondents were:

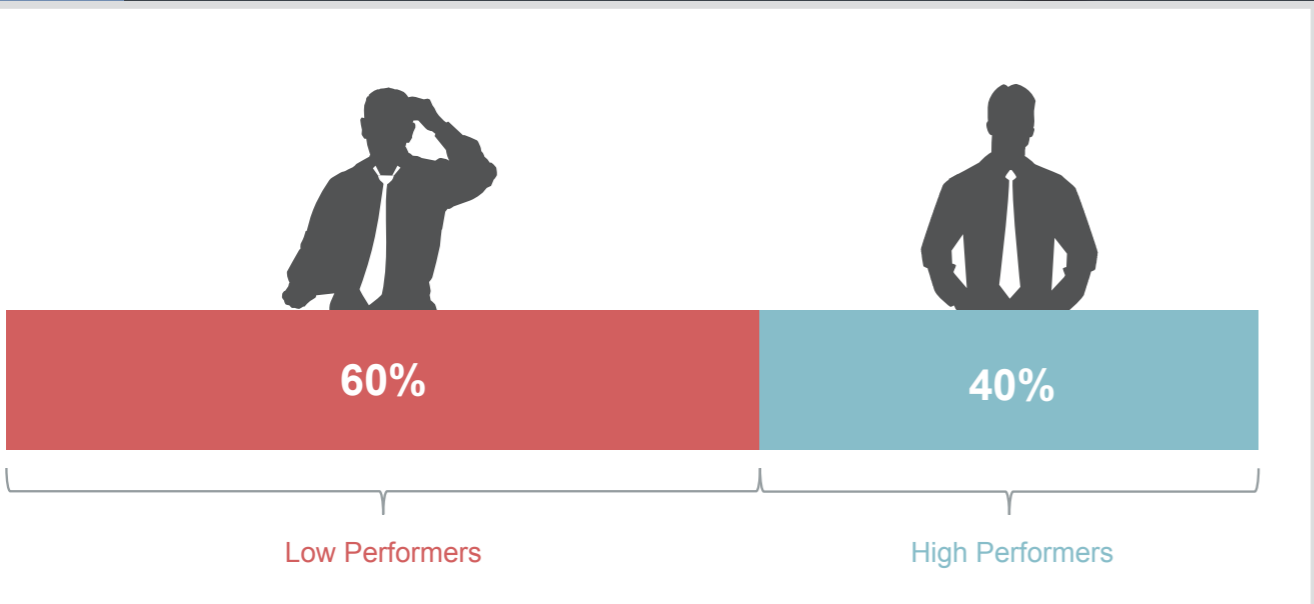


Interestingly, the top three are also the ones that a majority of respondents graded themselves most favorably.

However, red flags appear when comparing the habits of the organizations who had the highest absolute self-graded effectiveness scores with those who had the lowest effectiveness scores.

High-performers vs. low-performers

The findings separate the organizations that are able to achieve all five desired outcomes from those that fall short. Those whose overall self-graded effectiveness scores were 9 to 10 fall into the “high-performers group.” Those with a score of 8 or below fall into the “low-performers group.”



High-Performing Organizations are **50%** more effective than Low-Performers

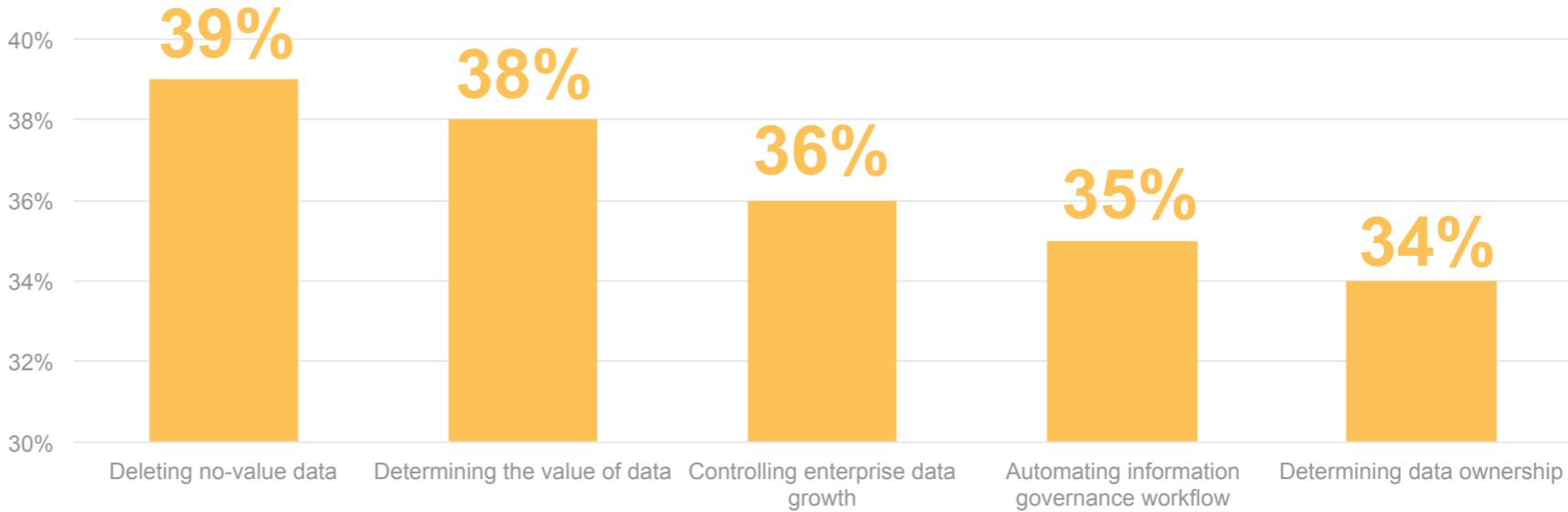


First, notice the gap in effectiveness across all tactics and tools. High-performers showed an overall effectiveness of 9.4 compared to 6.3 for low-performers. In other words, high-performers were nearly 50 percent more effective with information governance tools.



This points to several gaps in the effectiveness levels of desired outcomes on a stand-alone basis. Deleting data that has no value is the outcome high-performers outperform low-performers by the largest margin. They are also better able to determine the value of an individual piece of data. So being able to understand data leads to better governance of that data.

High-Performer vs. Low-Performer Gap

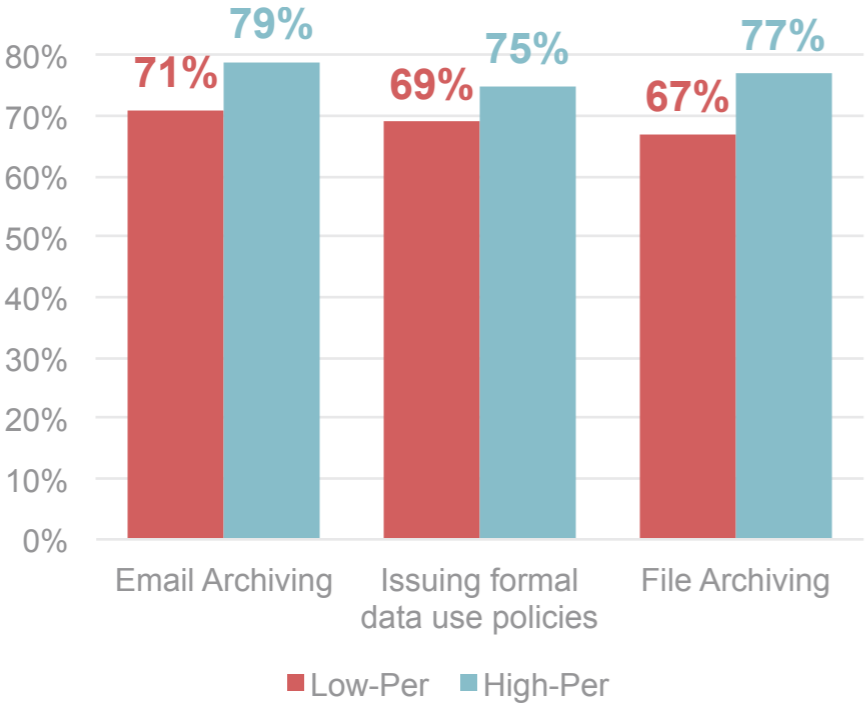


That leads to the question, “Do top-performers and low-performers use the same information governance tools and tactics?” The answer isn’t simply “yes” or “no”.

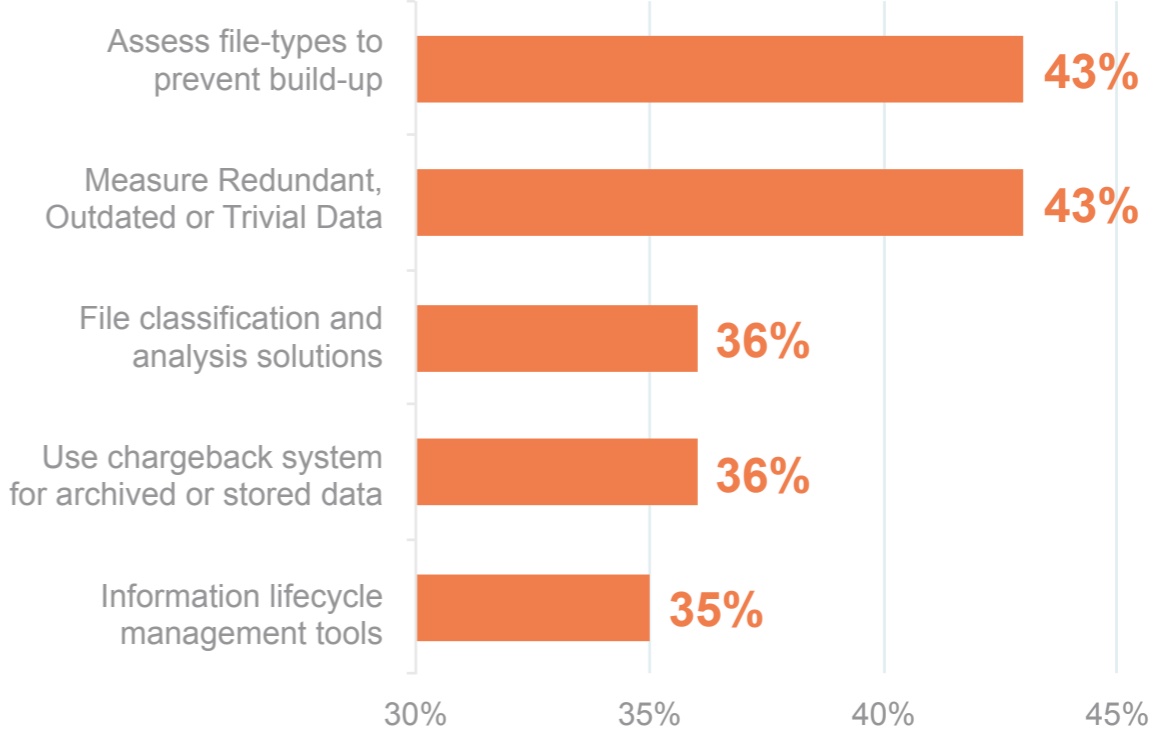
Both groups have similar levels of engagement with tools that are the table-stakes of information governance: Email archiving, formal data use policies and file archiving.

However, contrast that with the implementation of visibility tools, and you see that the top-performers are roughly two and a half times more likely to have adopted the tactic of conducting file-type assessments to prevent a build-up of non-mission critical files. They are also nearly three times as likely to actively measure redundant data, and twice as likely to employ file classification and analysis solutions. Only 29 percent of the low-performers have adopted that tactic.

Tool and Tactic Engagement



High-Performer vs. Low-Performer Gap



As a result, the top-performing organizations' higher level of engagement in visibility tools and tactics enables them to have a better sense of what's going on in their environment and remediate activity. They are better able to make decisions about what information is critical and what information is not.

The survey also found a correlation between which tools and tactics an organization chooses to use, and how effective their information governance programs are.

These top five tools and tactics in terms of how they correlate to an organization's effectiveness are necessary components of a successful information governance program.

Information Governance Tools

Information Governance Tactics

Tools to discover violations of data use policies

1 Assign a risk score to each piece of information stored

File classification and analysis solutions

2 Conduct file-type assessments to prevent build-up of non-mission critical files

File archiving

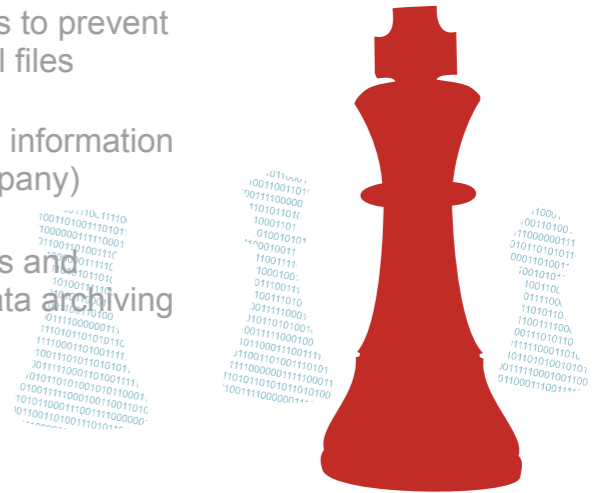
3 Identify and remediate orphan information (e.g., data owner has left company)

Information governance platform

4 Training employees on policies and procedures for storage and data archiving

Email deduplication to reduce the volume of archived data

5 Measuring cost per byte for data archived and/or stored



While you may expect to see tools like file classification and file archiving, others may not be as obvious, such as those for discovering violations of data use and having an information governance platform. On the tactics side, assigning a risk score, file type assessments, identifying orphan information and employee training are all important.

To summarize, here are the most common outcomes of an information program that the high-performers get right, and that most low-performers fail to address. These are the outcomes any organization should prioritize in order to achieve information governance success.

- 1 Deploying and executing information policies**
- 2 Making decisions regarding information lifecycle management**
- 3 Determining the value of an individual piece of data**
- 4 Controlling enterprise data growth
- 5 Determining who owns data across your organization



Recommendations

There is no one-size-fits-all template you can use to create an effective information governance program. You must determine the desired outcomes that are most important to your organization, then implement the appropriate tools and tactics.

Achieving a high level of effectiveness over the long-term also requires that you follow three key best practices:

1. Conduct a policy deployment audit:

Determine if your policies are being enforced.

2. Empower decision-making:

Establish a data valuation framework that empowers decision-making. High-performers control data growth by understanding the value of their data.

3. Mitigate risk:

Engage your cross-functional stakeholders in a risk prioritization exercise. This will ensure the alignment of all priorities and the ability to execute against them.

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