



Irreplaceable Data is at Risk –

Poll Findings on Geological & Geophysical
Data Challenges

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Summary

In an era when your organisation is likely to be investing heavily in AI and digital transformation, a critical foundation may be missing - clean, structured, accessible data. Our recent LinkedIn poll of geoscientists provides an indicative snapshot, suggesting that irreplaceable legacy data could be facing significant challenges across the energy and mining sectors.

Key themes from poll responses

Risk awareness among your peers

- **82%** of the **213** poll respondents indicated concern about permanent loss of legacy geological and geophysical (G&G) data
- **66%** expressed moderate to extreme concern about the business impact of data loss
- Risk awareness appeared highest where digitisation levels were lowest

Operational challenges you may recognise

- **50%** of responses cited project delays and incomplete data for decision-making as consequences of working with non-digitised data
- **27%** of respondents reported that less than half of their G&G data is digitised or easily accessible
- Only **27%** indicated achieving over 90% digitisation

Investment and leadership themes affecting your sector

- **61%** of respondents suggested digitisation is not receiving sufficient investment or attention
- Budget constraints (**22%**) and lack of internal resources (**22%**) were most frequently cited as primary barriers
- Lack of leadership prioritisation emerged as a recurring theme

Areas that might affect your organisation

- **15%** of respondents indicated no concerns despite holding non-digitised data, suggesting **potential blind spots in risk awareness**
- **Institutional memory concerns** emerged in free-text responses, as experienced professionals move on to other companies or retire
- Several respondents highlighted **metadata and documentation challenges**

Potential business implications for your organisation

These poll responses align with broader industry findings. A 2025 McKinsey report indicates that only 1% of organisations are “mature” in AI deployment. Multiple sources confirm data quality as a primary cause of AI project failures. If these themes resonate with your experience, your decision-making and operational efficiency may already be affected.

Need help assessing your data risks and opportunities? We can help you take stock of your data assets and turn them into valuable resources. [Get in touch](#) with our friendly team today.

About the LinkedIn poll

We conducted this LinkedIn poll targeting geoscientists in the energy and mining sectors in July and August 2025. Our aim was to gauge industry attitudes toward data preparedness and digitisation challenges.

Poll profile

- **We had 213 total responses** from self-selecting LinkedIn users who chose to participate
- **The poll had a Global reach** with responses from Africa, Europe, Middle East, North America, Asia, and South America
- **People came from diverse professional backgrounds**, including geoscientists (137), engineers (39), and managers/directors (22)
- **There was a rapid response rate**, indicating that the topic resonated with professionals in these networks.

This LinkedIn poll provides an indicative snapshot of opinions among those who responded over the poll's active period, rather than a statistically representative sample of the broader sectors.



Jasmine Tran • 11:28 AM

Hi Allison,

Ovation Data is gathering insights from geoscientists like you on the challenges of legacy geological & geophysical (G&G) data.

Many organisations still rely on non-digitised data—tapes, paper logs, microfiche—that can be hard to access, share, or use. Ovation wants to understand the real-world impact and barriers to digitisation.

- Your input helps shape industry-wide insights
- Results will be anonymised and shared with all participants
- Survey closes **August 8, 2025**

Ready to get started?

[Take the survey now](#)

[Not interested](#)

Approximately what percentage of your relevant geological and geophysical (G&G) data is currently not digitised or easily accessible? *

Select one.

☐ 0-10%

☐ 11-25%

☐ 26-50%

☐ 51-75%

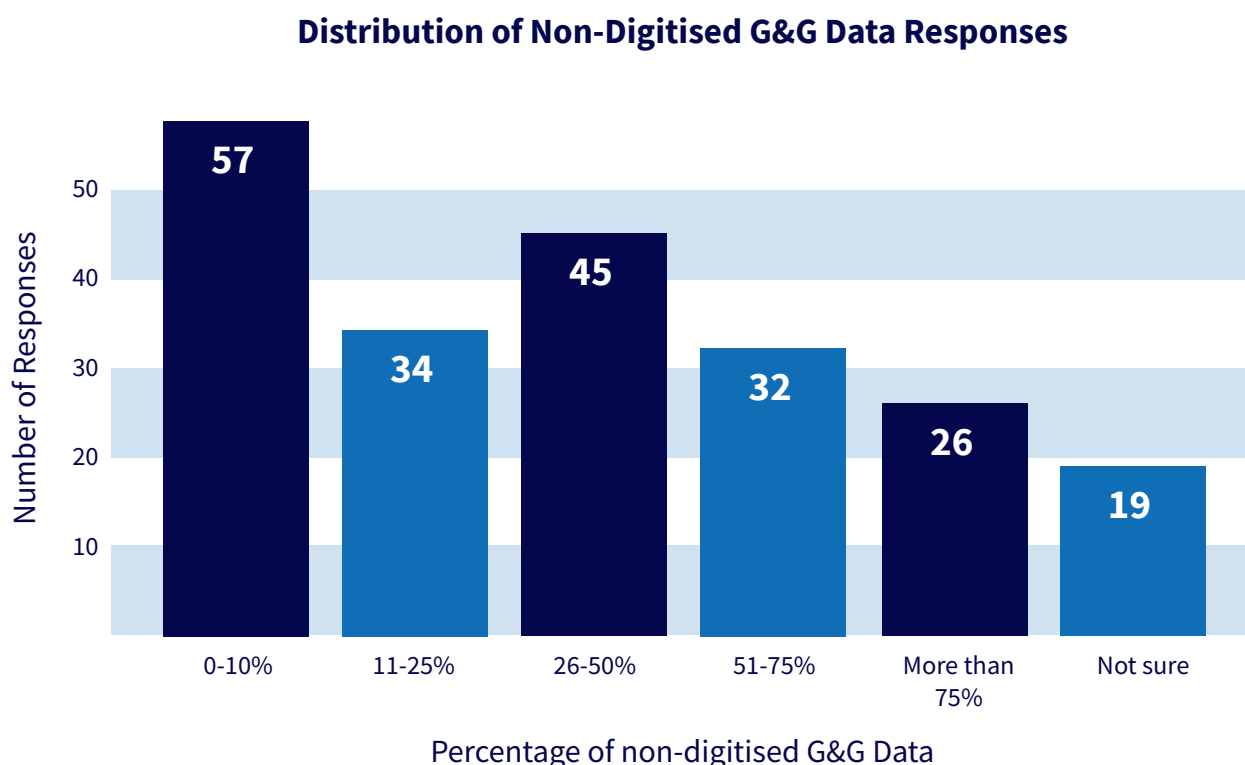
☐ More than 75%

☐ Not sure

[NEXT](#)

What the findings reveal about your industry

1. The digitisation gap – is your data accessible?



Among our 213 respondents:

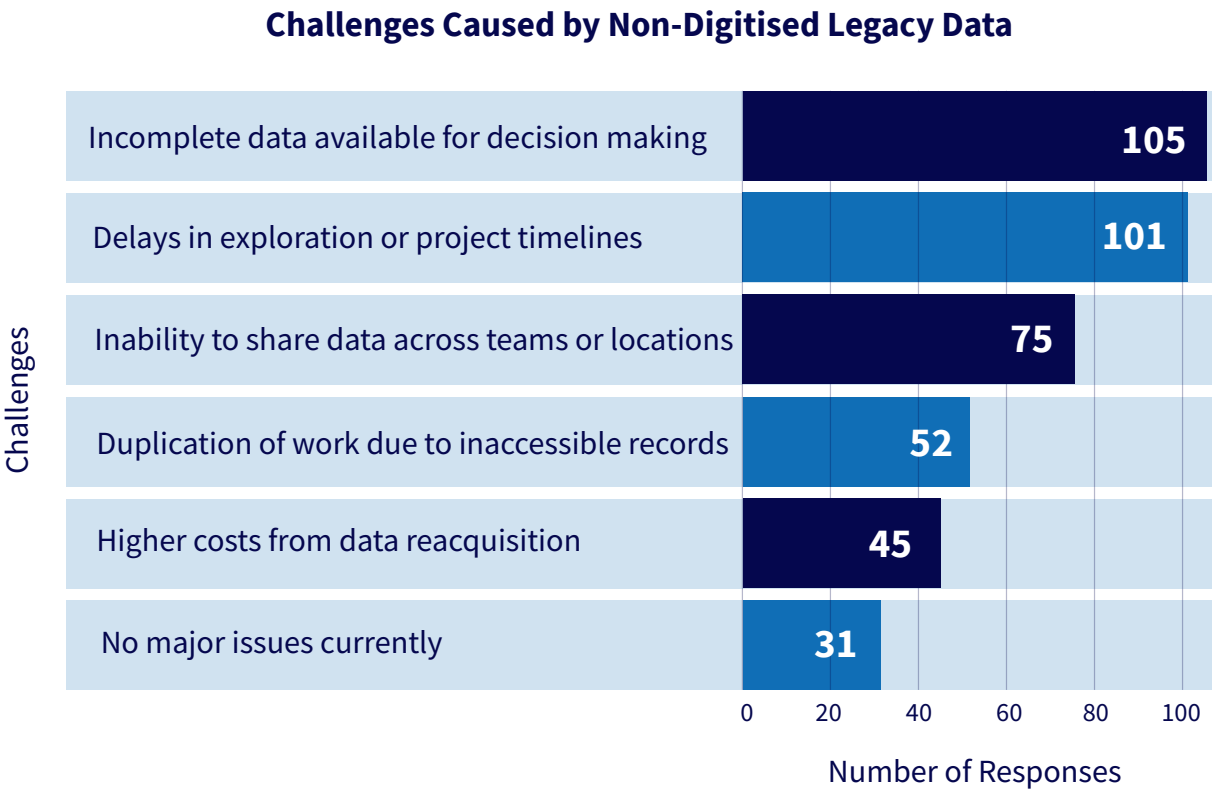
- **27%** indicated they have less than 50% of their G&G data digitised or easily accessible
- **43%** reported achieving more than 75% digitisation
- **27%** stated they have reached 90% digitisation or more

These responses suggest that if you're like most organisations, you may have significant volumes of your irreplaceable legacy data remaining in non-digital formats.

Wondering where your organisation stands? We can help you assess your current digitisation levels and identify priority areas for improvement. [Why not drop us a line?](#)

What the findings reveal about your industry

2. Operational impacts you might be experiencing



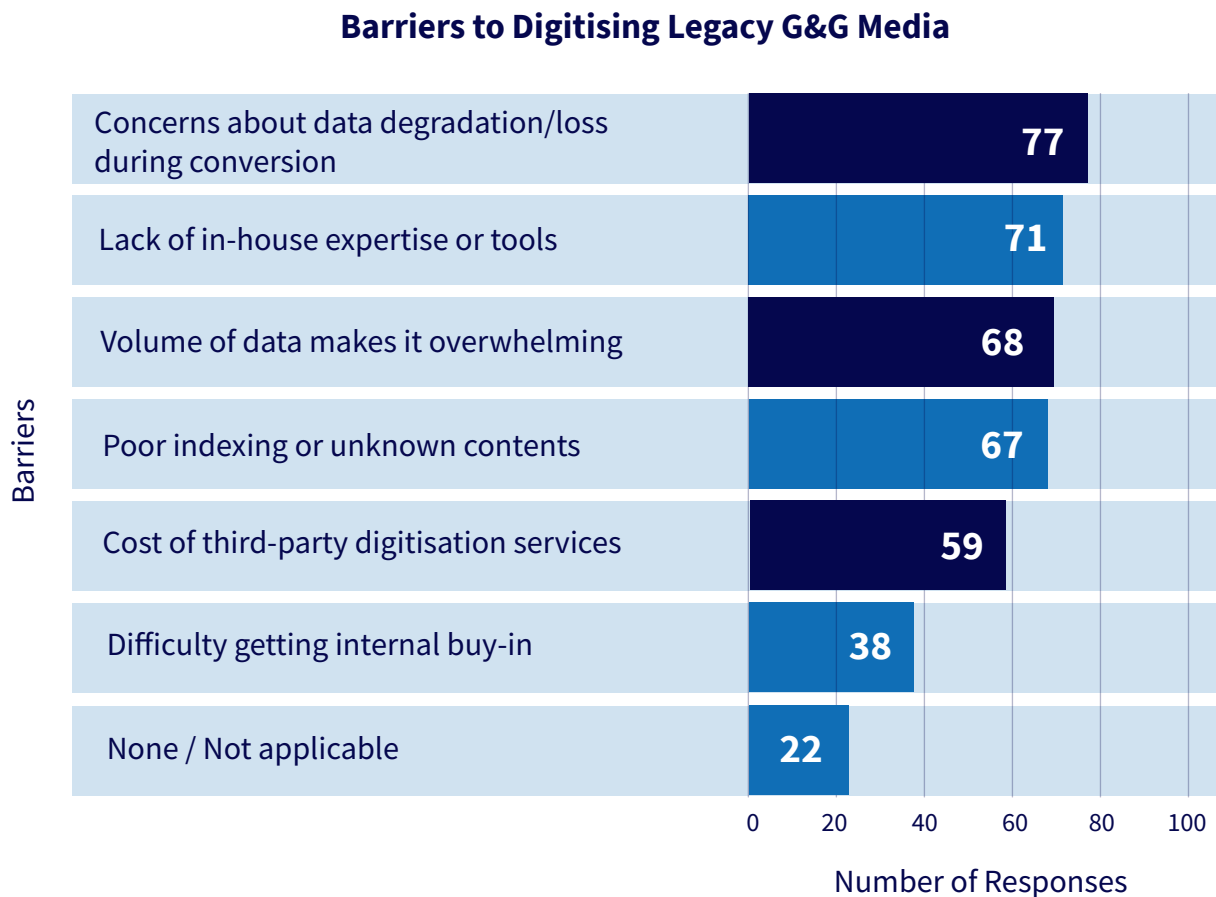
Among respondents working with non-digitised legacy data, these challenges were most frequently cited:

- Incomplete data for decision-making (**26%** of responses)
- Project delays and timeline disruptions (**25%** of responses)
- Inability to share data effectively
- **Less than 8%** of responses indicated no issues

If you're experiencing similar challenges, you're not alone - many professionals in our network face operational difficulties related to legacy data access. [Get in touch](#) to find out how we can help.

What the findings reveal about your industry

3. Barriers that might sound familiar

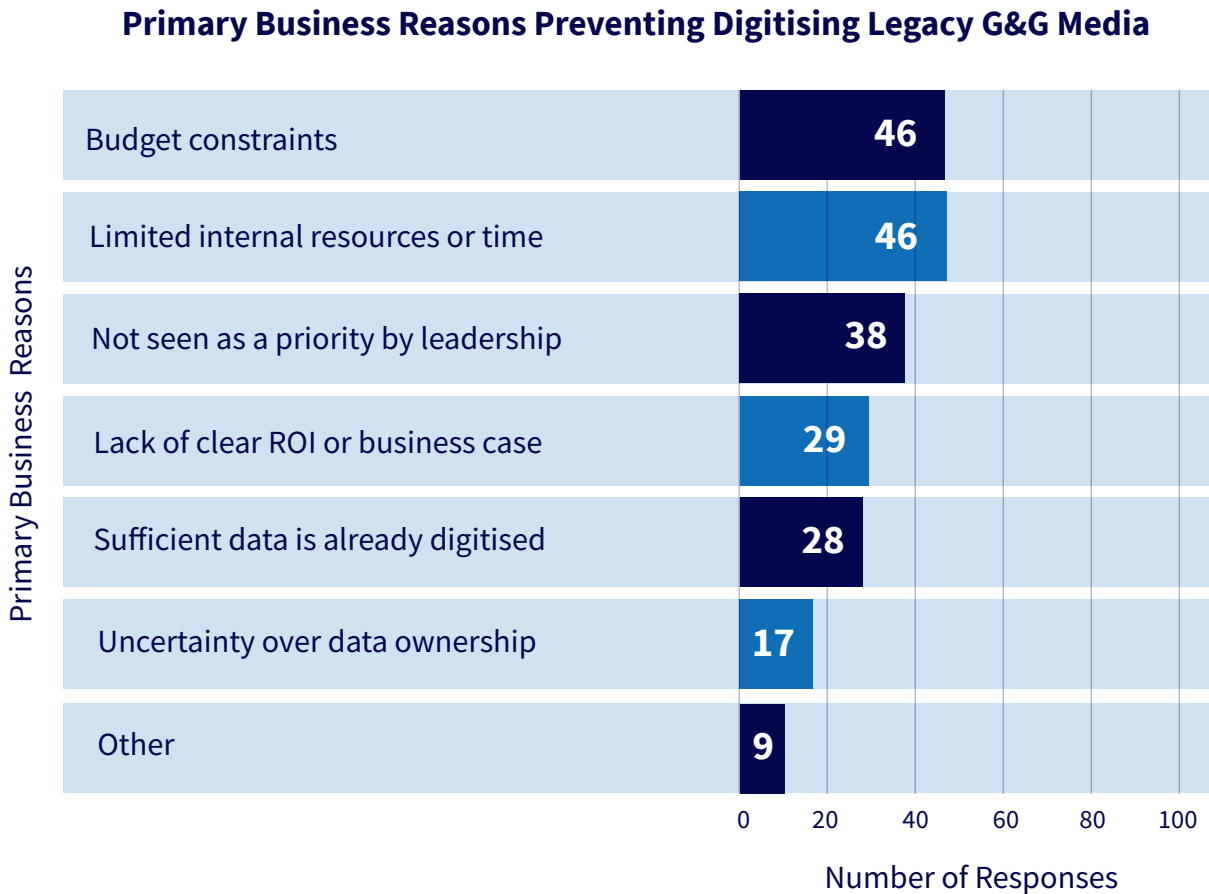


Our poll respondents identified multiple barriers to digitisation, with responses distributed relatively evenly across various issue areas. This suggests that if you're struggling with digitisation, your challenges are likely multifaceted rather than concentrated in single areas.

Struggling with complex digitisation barriers? [Find out more about how we can help.](#)

What the findings reveal about your industry

4. Investment and resource challenges



Among poll participants, these factors were most commonly cited as preventing digitisation:

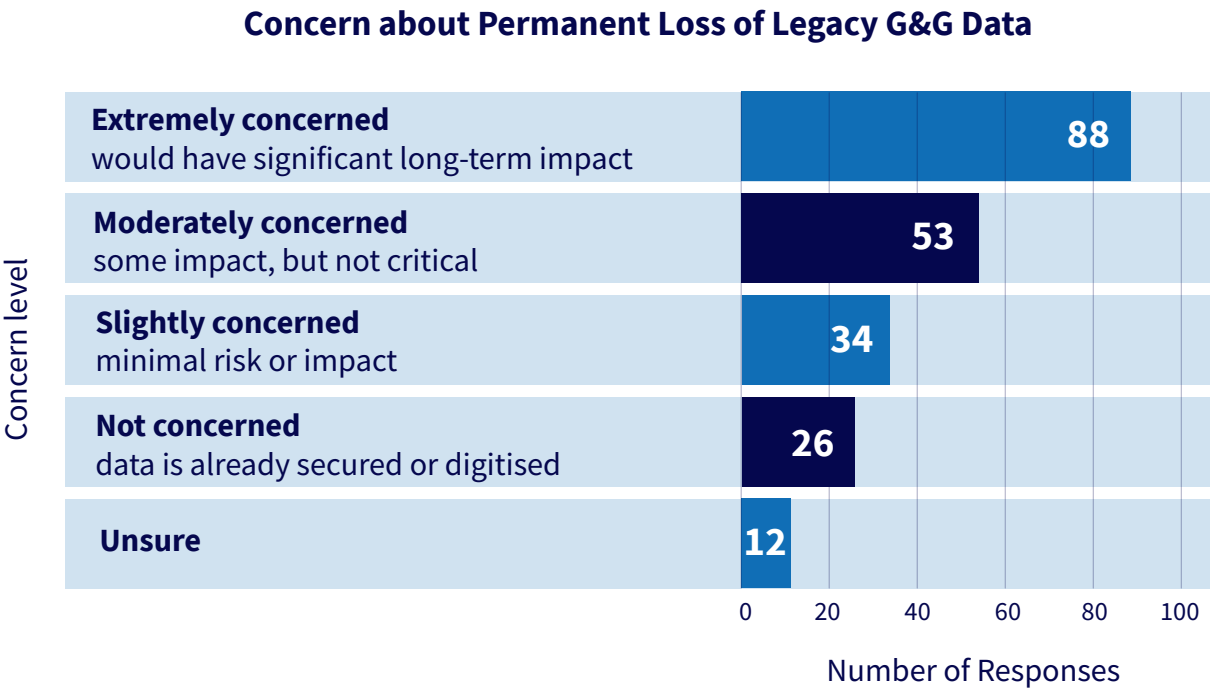
- Budget constraints (**22%** of responses)
- Lack of internal resources (**22%** of responses)
- Leadership prioritisation gaps (**18%** of responses)

Combined, these responses indicate that **61%** of poll participants perceive digitisation as not receiving adequate investment or attention in their organisations. Does this sound like your experience?

Talk to us today to find out more about how Ovation Data can help overcome your challenges.

What the findings reveal about your industry

5. How concerned should you be about data loss?



When we asked about concerns regarding potential data loss, poll respondents indicated:

- **82%** expressed some level of concern about potential permanent data loss
- **66%** indicated moderate to extreme concern levels
- **12%** reported no concern

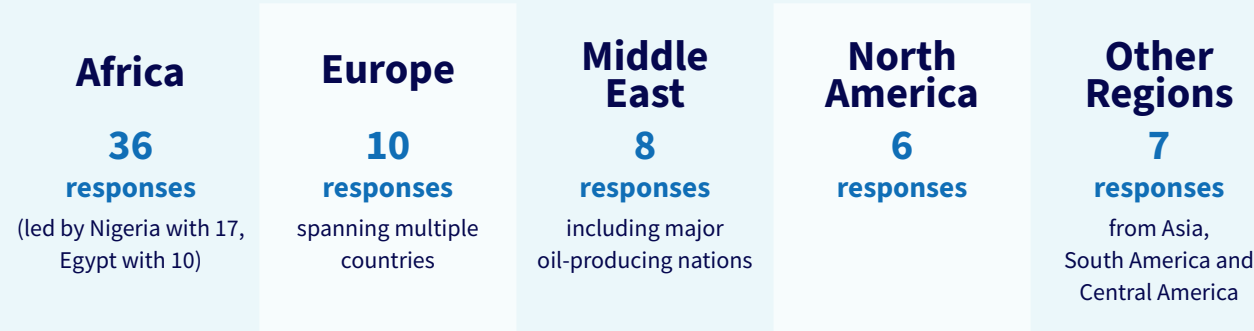
Notably, among respondents from organisations with higher levels of non-digitised data, concern levels were elevated. If you have significant non-digitised data, your risk awareness may be well-founded.

Concerned about your data security and accessibility? We specialise in protecting irreplaceable data assets. [Let's discuss](#) your specific situation.

Your industry's global perspective

Global reach of poll responses

Our LinkedIn poll attracted 213 responses from multiple continents:



While regional representation varied, similar themes around barriers and concerns emerged across different geographic areas within this respondent group.

Professional background of respondents

The poll attracted diverse professional backgrounds:



This diversity suggests the poll topic resonated across different professional levels and specialisations within the participating LinkedIn networks.

What colleagues are saying – critical themes from responses

The institutional memory crisis



"As experienced professionals retire, undocumented context around legacy data disappears, further complicating its use."

Seven respondents mentioned institutional memory loss as concerning:

- Concerns about experienced professionals moving onto other companies or retiring with undocumented contextual knowledge
- Challenges in interpreting legacy data without proper context
- Loss of understanding about data collection methods and limitations.

Facing knowledge transfer challenges as your experienced team members move companies or retire? We help organisations capture and preserve institutional memory alongside digitisation efforts. [Send us a message](#) to find out more.

Metadata and documentation challenges



"Legacy data often suffers from poor documentation, inconsistent formats, and missing metadata – violating the fundamental principles of data integrity and reproducibility."

Documentation issues were cited in five responses:

- Concerns about poor metadata standards affecting data reliability
- Challenges with inconsistent formats creating integration difficulties
- Missing contextual information potentially affecting decision quality.

Strategic awareness gaps in your sector



"Companies lose G&G information but don't realise the importance of having it for managing exploration areas."

Nine respondents mentioned leadership and investment issues:

- Suggestions that senior management may not fully understand data value
- Perceptions of insufficient investment in digitisation infrastructure
- Views that data preservation is treated as technical rather than strategic.

What this means for your organisation

Areas that may warrant your attention

The LinkedIn poll responses suggest several areas that may warrant your investigation:

Your data readiness for digital transformation. The poll themes align with broader industry research confirming that clean, structured data is fundamental to successful digital initiatives. With respondents indicating varying levels of digitisation, you may need a sector-wide assessment of your position.

Your risk awareness and preparedness. The variation in concern levels among poll respondents suggests that your risk perception may differ significantly from your peers. This could indicate opportunities for you to benchmark your risk assessment against best practices.

Your investment priorities and resource allocation. With **61%** of poll respondents suggesting inadequate investment in digitisation, you may need to explore how your organisation evaluates and prioritises data-related investments relative to other business priorities.

Your knowledge management and succession planning. The recurring theme of institutional memory loss suggests this may be a broader challenge affecting your organisation, particularly as your industry faces demographic changes with experienced professionals retiring.

Business implications you should consider

Based on these poll themes, you might want to evaluate:

- **Your decision-making processes** and how data accessibility affects your strategic choices
- **Your AI and digital transformation readiness**, given the emphasis on data quality in successful implementations
- **Your risk management frameworks** for assessing and protecting critical data assets
- **Your knowledge transfer processes** to capture contextual understanding before key personnel changes.

The poll responses suggest these may be areas where proactive planning could provide you with competitive advantages, though your organisation will need to assess its specific circumstances and priorities.

Need help building the business case for data investment in your organisation? We can support you in demonstrating the strategic value of your irreplaceable data assets. [Find out how today.](#)

Your next steps – strategic considerations for your organisation

Based on poll themes, whether you're a technical professional building the case or a senior leader evaluating priorities, these areas warrant consideration:

1. Data asset evaluation and business impact assessment

- **For technical teams** - assess current data accessibility and identify gaps that affect operational efficiency
- **For leadership** - understand the potential business impact of data loss or inaccessibility on strategic decision-making
- **Organisational priorities** - evaluate current data governance practices against business continuity requirements and competitive positioning

Ready to understand the true value of your data assets? We offer comprehensive data audits to help you identify risks and opportunities that support both operational excellence and strategic planning. [Get in touch](#) to find out more.

2. Investment strategy and resource allocation

- **For technical teams** - document capability gaps and resource needs for effective data management
- **For leadership** - review data-related budget allocation against strategic technology investments and risk mitigation priorities
- **Organisational priorities** - consider the strategic value of data readiness investments in supporting AI initiatives and operational resilience

3. Knowledge management as strategic infrastructure

- **For technical teams** - develop processes to capture and preserve critical institutional knowledge before expertise is lost
- **For leadership** - recognise knowledge management as essential business infrastructure that protects competitive advantages and operational continuity
- **Organisational priorities** - implement systematic approaches to documentation, metadata standards, and knowledge transfer protocols

Need help preserving your institutional knowledge? Our approach goes beyond simple digitisation to capture the context that makes your irreplaceable data truly valuable – supporting both technical operations and strategic business objectives. [Find out more](#) from our friendly team.

Your path forward

The poll responses suggest that organisations taking proactive approaches to legacy data challenges may position themselves advantageously for future opportunities. While your organisation's circumstances differ from others, the themes emerging from this poll indicate areas that may warrant your strategic consideration.

The broader context suggests that in a world generating unprecedented volumes of data, organisations like yours that effectively manage existing data assets may be better positioned to capitalise on new technologies and market opportunities.

Your irreplaceable data doesn't have to be irretrievable.

Ready to transform your data challenges into competitive advantages? [Get in touch with us today](#) - our team is here to help.

Notes for readers

About this LinkedIn poll

This report is based on a LinkedIn poll we conducted in July and August 2025 targeting geoscientists in the energy and mining sectors. Poll respondents were self-selecting LinkedIn users who chose to participate, rather than a randomised population sample. This means responses may not be representative of the broader energy and mining sectors or geological/geophysical community.

With 213 responses, the sample size is relatively small and likely skewed toward our LinkedIn network demographics. The geographic and professional distribution reflects the individuals who were reached through LinkedIn's targeting algorithms and network connections.

It's also important to remember too that LinkedIn polls capture responses only during their active period (typically a few weeks), which may not reflect longer-term trends or seasonal variations in opinion.

The results should be interpreted as indicating what this particular group of respondents said, rather than definitive statements about industry-wide practices or universal challenges. Your organisation's circumstances, priorities, and issues will differ.

This report aims to share insights from those who participated while acknowledging these limitations in scope and methodology.

Your irreplaceable data deserves irreplaceable care.

For more information about addressing your organisation's legacy data challenges, [contact Ovation Data today.](#)

About Ovation Data

Ovation Data is a global leader in data digitisation, preservation, and digital transformation. With more than 45 years of experience, we help organisations unlock the full value of their data. From paper archives to legacy media formats, we transform complex, fragmented, and aging data into secure, accessible, and usable digital assets. Our scalable solutions support everything from AI-readiness to regulatory compliance, enabling smarter decisions, accelerated innovation, and long-term data resilience. Whether you're safeguarding irreplaceable history or preparing for the future, Ovation Data delivers trusted, end-to-end data stewardship.

