

GROUND LABS PRESENTS

A Complete Guide to Minimizing Digital Transformation Risk with Data Discovery



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What is Digital Transformation?

EVOLVING WITH CHANGING TIMES

Customer, employee, and partner expectations are constantly evolving. This is particularly true as our world increasingly relies on technology and becomes more and more digital. Digital transformation occurs when a company meets these changing demands by using digital technology to modify, improve, or replace existing business practices.¹

Most digital transformation initiatives are driven by growth opportunities, but competitive pressure and changing regulatory standards are often motivators as well.² For example, a local bookstore could undergo digital transformation by creating a website with an e-commerce shopping page so customers can order books online as well as purchasing them in store, or by launching a targeted social media advertising campaign.



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How COVID-19 & Remote Work Are Speeding up Digital Transformation

MEETING THE DEMANDS OF A REMOTE WORLD


By 2019, only 7% of companies had fully implemented their digital strategies.³ However, in 2020, COVID-19 forced many companies to shift very quickly to virtual work and commerce environments. Shelter-in-place orders required many employees to work from home. The pandemic also led to more consumers using e-commerce platforms, instead of shopping in brick and mortar stores. Enterprise customers started requesting virtual support and negotiating deals over video conferencing systems like Zoom, instead of meeting with vendors face to face.

As a result of these sudden and unprecedented shifts, companies needed to adapt quickly to the new virtual environment, rapidly ramping up digital transformation initiatives to survive in the virtual economy.



As of July 2020, the pandemic had already accelerated the digitization of customer interactions by three years in the US and Europe, and by four years in Asia-Pacific.⁴

After just three months of the pandemic, 77% of CEOs said COVID-19 had accelerated their digital transformation efforts.⁵



The COVID-19 pandemic spread rapidly, and businesses around the world had to act fast. One report found that most companies rolled out all pandemic-related digital changes in less than a month, including shifting to remote work, migrating assets to the cloud, adapting to changing customer needs, and more.⁶

The way organizations manage data has also changed dramatically as a result of the pandemic. Over the past year, employees dispersed to remote locations, companies migrated many of their assets to the cloud, and also implemented new digital communication and order processing platforms. As a result, data has become much more dispersed — opening the door to new risks.

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The Risks of Rapid Digital Transformation

CUTTING CORNERS DURING COVID-19

Prior to COVID-19, many organizations thought they were digital-ready; however, the current state of the world has proved they weren't as prepared as they believed. As a result, many companies have had to race, and perhaps cut corners, to build an effective digital transformation program in a very short period of time.

Companies can incur a number of potential risks when undergoing digital transformation, including:

- *Data leakage*
- *Regulatory adherence*
- *Customer and employee privacy*
- *Cyber attacks⁷*

When a business is quickly ramping up digital transformation efforts, one key risk stems from the new influx of data the company needs to process and store. For example, if a business implements an online communications platform to make it easier for customers to engage with the brand, the platform might start processing the customers' personal data. And unfortunately, many businesses aren't aware that such platforms collect customer data.⁸

Not knowing where all personal data is stored leaves businesses vulnerable to data breaches. This is problematic because the consequences of data breaches — including regulatory fines and decreased customer trust — can be severe.



In 2020, the average cost of a data breach was \$3.86 million. Lost business due to a data breach cost, on average, \$1.52 million.⁹

The Risks of Rapid Digital Transformation

MANAGING CUSTOMER DATA SECURELY

In the rush to build new digital customer and employee experiences, companies are accumulating a lot of new sensitive personal data. For example, many universities that shifted to online learning at the start of the pandemic needed to begin digitizing student health records. Because COVID-19 spread so suddenly, many of these organizations had to make quick decisions about the types of technology to implement. They also needed to begin rapidly managing new data infrastructure when they might not have had previous experience doing so.¹⁰

With the confusion of the pandemic and the overwhelming nature of ramping up a digital transformation program in a short period of time, complying with privacy regulations might feel like an afterthought. However, that is a risky mindset: compliance needs to be a top priority. Businesses need to maintain compliance with many data privacy regulations, depending on their industry and the geographic regions they operate in.

DID YOU KNOW



128 countries around the world have implemented data privacy legislation, and many other regulations exist at the local and industry-specific level.¹¹ **Here are a few examples of these data privacy regulations that apply to a wide variety of businesses:**

- [GDPR](#)
- [PCI DSS 4.0](#)
- [CCPA](#)
- [HIPAA](#)

How Data Discovery Can Help

KNOWING WHERE YOUR DATA IS STORED

The majority of businesses anticipate that many of the digital transformation changes they have made this year will stick long term.¹² Because of this, as companies plan and execute their digital transformation initiatives, they should be thinking about how to make them successful not just now, during the pandemic, but for years to come.

At every organization, data discovery needs to be a critical component of digital transformation. The data discovery process helps businesses mitigate risk while gaining and maintaining compliance. Ground Labs' Enterprise Recon can help companies undergoing digital transformation find and remediate sensitive information across the broadest range of structured and unstructured data, whether it's stored on prem or in the cloud on servers, desktops, email, or databases. Enterprise Recon makes it possible to locate and secure PII while helping organizations comply with GDPR, CCPA, HIPAA, and other data security standards.

The benefits of Ground Labs' data discovery tools:



Personal and Sensitive Data Discovery: All organizations should have an awareness of the personal and sensitive data they have stored on their servers. Customers trust organizations with a vast amount of data and it's important for businesses to maintain customers' trust and loyalty through confirmation that their personal information is being kept safely and securely.

Find Unencrypted PII: Encryption is an important part of preventing criminals or unauthorized individuals from viewing personal and sensitive information on an organization's servers. With a PII discovery tool, organizations can quickly identify unencrypted data such as social security numbers, credit card information, health data, and more.



Maintain Compliance: Scanning servers for PII is the first step towards simplifying data discovery and working towards compliance for HIPAA, GDPR, and PCI requirements. Global and regional requirements are ever-changing, and a PII discovery tool ensures organizations avoid liability and risk.

“Corporations have data stored in so many locations that it is impossible to manually look for information. With the data security tool from Ground Labs, it makes the process easy and simple for organizations to search for data that is stored in a non-secure manner and take corrective actions to remediate it and secure the data.”

—Ajay Unni, CEO at Stickman Consulting

Conclusion

GETTING STARTED WITH DATA DISCOVERY

If your organization is undergoing digital transformation, and particularly if you’ve accelerated the process to meet the new demands and requirements of today’s virtual economy, you will face new challenges, risks, and changes in the business process, and need to manage an unprecedented level of personal data from customers and employees.

Data discovery tools can enable your organization to find and remediate sensitive data to decrease risk and maintain compliance with data privacy regulations. [Learn more about Enterprise Recon here.](#)

Citation

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