

HOW TO CHOOSE

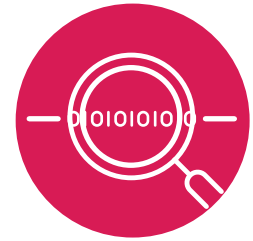
a Data Discovery Solution



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What is Data Discovery?



Consumers, employees, enterprise clients and many other key stakeholders trust organizations with their most critical data, including sensitive personally identifiable information (PII). This includes social security numbers, addresses, health records, birth dates and much more. The volume of PII organizations are trusted with has increased exponentially in recent years, with no signs of letting up. In 2020, IDC predicted that by the end of 2023, we would create more data than we did over the past three *decades*.¹ Since then, the amount of data we've created has grown at an even faster rate due to the dramatic increase in people working, learning and entertaining themselves from home during the pandemic.²

As a result, organizations must ensure their data storage and handling practices maintain compliance with a broad range of data privacy regulations. All organizations face a multitude of mandatory industry and global data management obligations, irrespective of how and where they store and process their data. These obligations fuel data-related challenges around complexity, hygiene, process and reporting.



GDPR, CCPA, CPRA, PDPA, HIPAA, LGPD, PCI DSS — in today's global economy, the alphabet-soup of data privacy regulations continues to grow. Each year, more regions and more industries enact new rules that require compliance.

Data discovery is a process that enables organizations to identify and locate both structured and unstructured data they are storing, with the goal of securing or remediating any unprotected or unauthorized data. As an essential part of any security plan, data discovery helps organizations to achieve their compliance goals, secure sensitive information, protect customers and employees, prevent data breaches, and deliver trust to customers, employers and shareholders.

Effective data discovery needs to be an ongoing process. Compliance regulations are constantly evolving and ever-growing customer and employee bases mean the data organizations are storing is changing too. Continuous data discovery helps security teams maintain an ongoing, proactive understanding of where all sensitive data is stored.

Why Your Organization Should Be Leveraging an Effective Data Discovery Solution



Companies store their data in so many locations that it is impossible to search for it all manually, especially considering the distributed, hybrid nature of work today. The majority of organizations are unable to pinpoint where all their data resides. This is especially applicable when it comes to personal or sensitive data. They assume that all of their customers' PII data is stored in one or two databases, while they are actually unknowingly storing data in a myriad of locations. As a result, these companies draw conclusions and establish policies based on inaccurate assumptions around what they think their data storage should be rather than what it actually is.

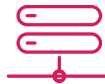
Companies often unknowingly store PII in many locations, including:



Cloud Storage Providers



Email



Databases and Servers



Workstations

An effective data discovery solution provides organizations with insights into their current and evolving organizational needs, giving security teams control over the organization's data. Data discovery solutions can help businesses achieve the following security goals:

Meet Compliance Obligations

Compliance with privacy regulations needs to be a top priority for every organization. Depending on your industry and the geographic regions your business operates in, there might be several compliance laws you need to adhere to.

137 countries around the world have implemented data privacy legislation, and many other regulations exist at the local and industry-specific level.³



Here are a few examples of these data privacy regulations that apply to a wide variety of businesses:

- GDPR⁴
- PCI DSS 4.0⁵
- CCPA⁶
- HIPAA⁷

Data discovery solutions can help your team scan servers for PII, the first step towards achieving compliance with most privacy laws. Global and regional requirements are ever-changing, and a PII discovery tool ensures organizations avoid liability and risk. They can also help organizations comply with subject access requests (SARs) when individuals request a copy of the data the organization has stored about them.⁸

Mitigate Risk

Today, risk management and risk mitigation are not simply board level discussions. CISOs and CTOs have to try to manage risk across multiple aspects of an organization, including firewalls, endpoint antivirus, VPNs, networks and more. The core asset being protected by risk management and mitigation policies, is, in many cases, data. Yet where that data resides is often a secondary consideration. When looking at data as a key asset, and not just as a byproduct of its processes, organizations can start mitigating risk to enhance their security posture.

Data discovery should be part of every organization's data asset and data management policies. This will allow the business to drive change management policies, such as leveraging data insights to improve staff productivity and deficiencies.

Understanding where your data resides is particularly important when your company is going through an acquisition or divestiture. If your company is going through a merger or acquisition, you will likely take on or transfer a lot of valuable data all at once. Data discovery can help make the transition process more smooth and secure by helping your team find, keep track of, and secure all that data.

As every business is migrating toward cloud-first technologies, data discovery is also a critical tool to help security teams understand what their organization is transitioning to the cloud. Data discovery will help your organization establish good data hygiene before the transition, ensuring you're only moving the appropriate data to the cloud. This allows you to avoid a lift-and-shift strategy, lowers the cost of storage and minimizes legal exposure.

Maintain Customer and Employee Trust

Companies that experience a data breach often experience a loss of customer trust and lost business. A privacy law fine imposed after a data breach might seem small and manageable for an organization, but losing your customers' trust can have a devastating impact on your brand and shareholder value. In 2020, 38% of the cost of a data breach came from lost business. On average, this meant a loss of \$1.59 million due to lost business — an amount that can have a significant impact on a company's bottom line.

Data discovery solutions allow your team to build and execute a proactive approach to data security — as opposed to a reactive approach that relies on damage control post-breach — to build a stronger foundation of trust within your organization.

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What to Look For in an Enterprise-Grade Solution



When choosing a data discovery solution, you want to select a solution that addresses the specific needs of your organization, while also expanding its capabilities as your needs grow.¹⁰ Some foundational things to look for are: whether the solution will allow you to accomplish the scan in the timeframe you need, if it can connect to the targets that hold your data, and whether it can handle data unique to your organization.

You want a data discovery tool that is not a stand-alone solution, but one that works to mitigate risk by integrating with tokenization and encryption tools, API frameworks and BI reporting solutions. Ensure you are considering not just the reporting tools and frameworks you use now, but others you might want to use in the future.¹¹

Primary Factors To Look For

- Class-leading accuracy
- Discover both personal and sensitive data
- Lack of false positives
- Speed across network with little or no network impact
- Scope of targets natively supported
- Ease of use and remediation capability
- Risk analysis and mapping capabilities
- Future-proof technology
- Reporting tools the solution integrates with, such as ODBC, Power BI, etc.
- APIs for tokenization and encryption
- Diverse ecosystem of targets and data types
- The number and types of target systems where the solution can perform data discovery
- Ability to add custom data patterns and exclusions
- Ability to scan images (OCR scanning)

What to Avoid

Avoid data discovery solutions that simply look at a sample of data, instead of your entire data source. Any tool that uses a sample will inevitably miss critical data. You also want to avoid solutions that don't allow you to create filters to prevent false positives. For example, AAA automobile club numbers look similar to credit card numbers; if you're not able to filter out AAA numbers, your data discovery solution will register them as credit card numbers.

Conclusion

Whether you are running a single machine or 100,000 systems, Ground Labs award-winning discovery solutions offer the proven, trusted technology you need to discover all your data and meet evolving compliance regulations.

Book a demo with a member of the Ground Labs team by visiting:

<https://calendly.com/ground-labs-global-sales-team> ►



Established in 2007 and trusted by more than 4,500 companies in 85 countries, Ground Labs offers award-winning data discovery and management solutions for all industry sectors.

www.groundlabs.com

CONTACT:

US **+1 737 212 8111**
UK **+44 203 137 9898**
Ireland **+353 1 903 9162**
Australia **+612 8459 7092**
Asia **+65 3133 3133**

Email **info@groundlabs.com**

Endnotes

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