A Shifting Paradigm: Governance in the Age of AI

CISCO 2026 DATA AND PRIVACY BENCHMARK STUDY

Privacy delivers tangible value

99%

of organizations report measurable benefits from their privacy investments

AI reshapes privacy's scope

90%

report their privacy programs have expanded due to AI

43%

increased privacy spending in the past year

93%

plan to allocate more resources into privacy and data governance over the next two years

Top benefits of AI governance

85%
Achieving corporate values (e.g., social responsibility, ethical conduct)

84%
Preparing for regulation

85%
Improving product quality (e.g., performance and reliability of AI products)

79%
Building trust with customers, partners, and regulators

83%
Enhancing employee relations (e.g., promoting an ethical culture)

Data discipline under pressure

7 in 10

report difficultly accessing relevant, high-quality data for AI use

3 in 4

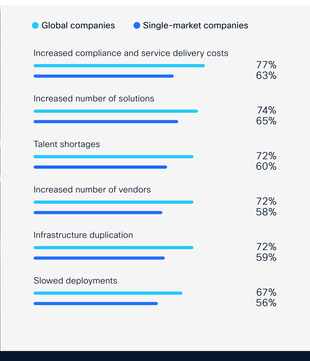
say IP protection of datasets is a top governance challenge

Transparency has emerged as the single most powerful driver of customer trust

Providing clear information as to what data is collected and how data is being used	46%
Demonstrating compliance with all relevant privacy laws	18%
Refraining from selling their information that will be used for online ads and other marketing	16%
Avoiding data breaches that might expose their data	14%
Allowing them to configure their privacy settings the way they want	6%

Localization raises operational challenges

85% say data localization adds cost, complexity, and risk to cross-border service delivery



Source: Cisco 2026 Data and Privacy Benchmark Study

Download the study here

Learn more about Cisco's approach to privacy, security, and trust at trust.cisco.com.

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