

# Why Data Compliance Monitoring is Essential to Manage Risk



Highly regulated industries such as healthcare and finance need to know where sensitive data resides and how it is used and shared. However, that data can live almost anywhere in the organization. [Automated data compliance monitoring](#) gives companies the visibility and control that they need to both ensure compliance and improve security.

## Unstructured Data Poses Significant Risk

Much of an organization's most dangerous digital property hides in [unstructured data](#). This includes data sprinkled in formats such as emails, instant messages, PDF files, and videos. Experts estimate that unstructured data currently makes up about 80 percent of enterprise data.

That massive amount of unclassified data poses a significant compliance problem for organizations. To comply with data privacy laws, companies need to know where sensitive data lives, how it is used and who has access to it. But gaining the necessary visibility can prove daunting.

For example, under [GDPR rules](#), consumers have the "right to be forgotten." That means that if a consumer requests, the organization must erase their personal data, wherever it resides. However, the organization first has to find the data or risk incurring penalties for non-compliance.

## Proactively Address Potential Privacy Law Violations

With compliance technology such as data compliance monitoring, companies can get ahead of potential problems. For instance, using [Microsoft 365 compliance](#) tools, the organization can monitor data, including unstructured data, for sharing violations. By catching the problem before data leaves the organization, the company reduces or eliminates legal issues.



## Provide Proof of Regulatory Compliance

Not only does monitoring reduce the potential for legal problems, but many regulations require monitoring as part of the conditions for achieving compliance. Monitoring demonstrates that an organization has proper procedures in place and enforces them. This can also prove helpful in lessening the negative repercussions if an issue does slip through.

In addition to satisfying legal conditions, monitoring also provides assurance to customers and stakeholders. In an environment where privacy standards hold significant weight, demonstrating data responsibility plays a key role.

## Set the Stage for Improvement

Compliance monitoring delivers benefits beyond achieving compliance and reassuring customers. Specifically, it helps organizations understand and improve the state of their data security. By delivering visibility into how data moves through and outside of the organization, monitoring helps to identify security vulnerabilities.

## Automate Data Compliance Monitoring to Increase Efficiency

Even if humans could comb through huge caches of data, the time involved and the risk of error would make manual data monitoring all but useless. In the first place, organizations need to find and review data in hundreds of locations and numerous formats.

At the same time, the [regulatory landscape](#) changes rapidly. Governments and industry enact new laws and regulations, which companies must then translate into policy changes. Fortunately, automation can help, both by scanning for regulatory changes and by processing large amounts of data very quickly.

With automated monitoring technology, organizations gain visibility into previously dark data. Monitoring systems use policies, as well as AI and machine learning to identify risks, alert the right people and even initiate necessary remediation.



## Compliance Technology Eases the Process

Automated, continuous monitoring looks for regulated data, flagging compliance issues. Customized alerts and automatic reports alert auditors or compliance officers, allowing them to quickly take any necessary action. Compliance consultants will help you choose and configure the right tools for your business and compliance needs.

The compliance experts at Messaging Architects have the [compliance technology](#) and expertise needed to help you discover and monitor data throughout your organization. This includes data in all storage locations, both on premises and in the cloud.