The Ataccama Data Trust Report 2025

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Laying the foundation for data trust

Mike McKee
CEO of Ataccama

AI is set to revolutionize industries, streamline operations, and drive innovation. But delivering measurable value requires more than massive datasets – it demands data trust. As organizations strive to harness their vast data reserves to meet AI's insatiable appetite, they often fall short due to a lack of understanding and trust in their data. Unsurprisingly, **only 33% of organizations report meaningful progress in AI adoption** – a stark reminder of the challenges ahead.

Scaling AI demands actionable, trusted data, yet **68% of CDOs cite data quality as their top challenge**, highlighting foundational barriers to success. Until these barriers are addressed, enterprise data will remain a liability rather than an asset, and the potential of AI will remain unattainable.

41% of organizations report difficulties maintaining consistent data quality across systems, directly limiting AI outcomes. Without resolving these issues, even the most straightforward AI initiatives risk failure – wasting resources, stalling innovation, and eroding ROI.

This report, based on insights from 300 senior data leaders, explores:

- The obstacles that prevent organizations from achieving data trust, including fragmented systems and governance gaps
- The critical role of data quality in building AI-ready systems and driving transformation

> **The pressing question for data and business leaders: How can organizations ensure their data is reliable, accurate, and AI-ready?**

- Proven strategies for turning unreliable, scattered data into a strategic advantage

Data trust is the foundation for AI success. It allows organizations to move beyond compliance-driven governance initiatives to truly unlock AI's full potential – delivering measurable value and positioning businesses as leaders in the data-driven economy.

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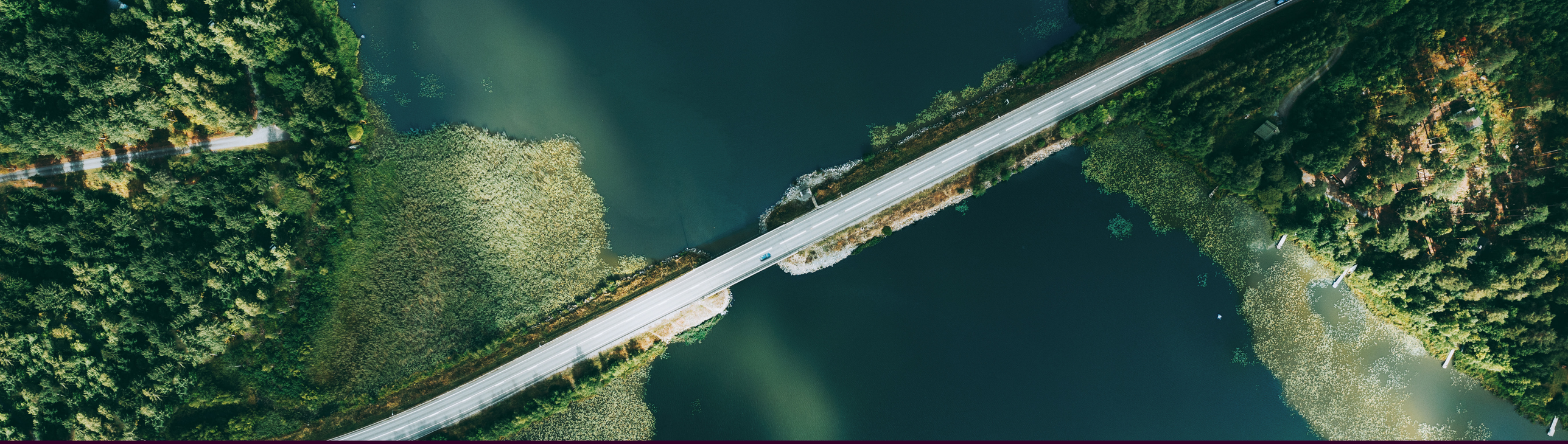

Methodology

This report is based on an online quantitative survey conducted by Hanover Research between September and October 2024. The participants included 300 senior leaders and department heads responsible for data strategy in organizations across the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. They represent a broad range of industries, including banking, healthcare, insurance, manufacturing, retail, software, and telecommunications. All participants worked at organizations generating over $500M in annual revenue.

What is data trust?

Data trust is the confidence that data is accurate, reliable, and fit for its intended purpose. It ensures that data is properly managed, high in quality, and free from errors or inconsistencies that could undermine business processes or decisions.

Companies need data trust to confidently use their data for critical operations, analytics, and innovation. Without it, organizations face inefficiencies, poor decision-making, and the risk of compliance failures, ultimately limiting their ability to achieve business objectives.

The reality, however, is that most organizations still struggle with siloed systems.

The steps needed to build data trust are:

Organize it

By cataloging and classifying your data, you can get a better sense of what it is, where it's come from, and who owns it.

Understand it

Next, by assessing the quality of that data, you can begin to establish lineage. How does it transform over time? How can it be used to improve business outcomes?

Improve it

Now that you've cleansed, standardized, enriched, and consolidated your data, you'll be presented with what we call a single source of truth.

These are the steps necessary to achieve data trust. Together, they create a framework for effectively managing data at every touch point – and in 2025 and beyond, they'll be powered and enhanced by AI.

Here's what we found

01

There's a real lack of trust, not only in data but in the potential of AI

The challenge:

A lot of companies have made the mistake of thinking their data is ready when it's not. They've invested in new platforms, in popular AI initiatives, but when it comes to that foundational first step – organizing data – many are falling short.

They're playing the game without rules, making decisions based on intuition and guesswork. **41% of those surveyed find it hard to maintain consistent data quality across their organizations.**

As a result, the pressure is on chief data officers to demonstrate the importance of a robust data management platform, and how it can be used to boost revenue, reduce costs, and keep customers happy.

68% **of CDOs identified data quality as their top challenge moving forward**

The impact:

Of course, AI models are only as effective as the data they rely on. And when that data is bad, the consequences are far-reaching:

- Bad data leads to inaccurate insights, which affects decision-making
- It slows down operations, and wastes valuable resources
- It jeopardizes compliance, making you vulnerable to regulatory and financial risks
- It diminishes ROI, so the scope of AI initiatives is limited

→ Next steps:

The only way to graduate from data uncertainty to data trust is for organizations to focus on the top end of the funnel. They need to coordinate all their efforts on **finding the right data**. Some of it is structured. Some of it is unstructured. It's on-site, it's in the cloud – it's everywhere, and it's constantly evolving, which means we need to be evolving with it.

This is where data lineage comes in. It draws us a map by which we can track our data as it migrates from one system to the next. The more lineage, the more transparency. The easier it is to identify issues in real time, and get the most from AI.

Quantitative Intuition – the combination of data and human judgment is the key to great decisions. Untrusted data erodes every decision it informs. Without real insights into data quality, businesses risk cascading failures, from unreliable AI outputs to stalled growth. Trust must permeate every layer—data, models, and decisions.

Krishna Cheriath

Chief Digital Officer at Thermo Fisher Scientific

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02

There are no unified standards, which leads to inconsistency

The challenge:

Without a clear picture of the landscape – without guidelines for data formats, definition, and validation – it's difficult for CDOs to establish a centralized system of control. **34% of organizations experience processing delays** because there are too many barriers that stand in the way of integration.

Legacy systems are often to blame here. They're ill-equipped to handle increasing data volumes, and many were designed to provide period data updates, not the continuous, real-time streams demanded by AI. Which explains why just **33% of organizations report meaningful progress in AI adoption**.

The impact:

Fragmented systems lead to siloed governance, which leads to:

- Bottlenecks that limit scalability and operational efficiency
- Increased compliance risks from inconsistent data management
- Slower AI innovation, since there's so much operational complexity
- Missed insights, as teams waste time reconciling incomplete or duplicated datasets

→ Next steps:

To overcome these barriers, organizations must unify their data ecosystems. They need solutions which extend beyond basic catalog and governance initiatives – platforms with built-in quality checks that happen regularly, data that can be observed in pipelines and at rest.

The benefits include:

- **Real-time visibility** into enterprise-wide data
- **Reliable AI models**, built on consistent, high-quality information
- **Renewed collaboration** between teams
- **Ongoing trust** across systems

That's the promise of a unified framework: It gives us a holistic view of our data, while freeing up space for AI initiatives to do their thing. By consolidating fragmented systems into a single source of truth, businesses can align their AI efforts with strategic objectives, driving measurable value and competitive advantage.

Fragmented systems bleed efficiency and inflate costs. Consolidating scattered sources transforms chaos into clarity, fueling competitive AI strategies.

Andrew Foster

Chief Data Officer at M&T Bank

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03

But there is a consensus on data quality, and its role in supporting AI-driven growth

The challenge:

Unfortunately, many organizations don't have the right frameworks in place to manage data quality at scale. They recognize its importance, they understand its role in forecasting trends and highlighting opportunities **(51% rank improving data quality as a top priority for 2025)**, but for some, the complexities of data management are too daunting, not to mention the perceived costs.

The truth is, investing in data quality will save you more in the long run – more time (by reducing delays) and more money (by preventing missteps).

In their survey, Hanover Research found that high-quality data enables:

77%
of organizations to improve operational efficiency

58%
to enhance customer experiences

56%
to gain a competitive edge

The impact:

By investing in an AI-assisted, end-to-end program, you can deliver high-quality data where it's needed most. This allows for:

- **Accelerated decision-making** through accurate, timely insights
- **Enhanced AI innovation**, fueling personalized customer experiences and competitive differentiation
- **Streamlined workflows**, reducing inefficiencies and redundancies
- **Tangible value**, including revenue growth, cost savings, and improved compliance

→ Next steps:

Business owners can maximize the potential of AI by using observability tools which validate the integrity of data throughout its lifecycle. These automated quality checks make it possible to:

- **Identify and resolve inconsistencies** at the source
- **Embed governance into workflows** to ensure sustained reliability
- **Adopt continuous validation practices** which adapt to suit evolving data ecosystems

By embedding data quality into everyday operations, organizations can ensure their data remains actionable, scalable, and AI-ready.

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Data quality isn’t just about fixing errors; it’s about building trust. As AI increasingly automates workflows and delivers real-time insights, actionable, trusted data ensures businesses can act confidently while reducing costs and risk. Data quality at the source is no longer optional – it’s essential.

Akhil Lalwani

Former Chief Data Officer at Convex Insurance

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In summary

As the next wave of AI innovation approaches, the organizations who stand to gain the most will be the ones who've made data trust a strategic priority.

By addressing data quality challenges, breaking down silos, and investing in unified platforms, these businesses can use their data to improve efficiency, drive growth and maintain competitive advantage. Data trust enables enterprises to scale AI initiatives, achieve measurable ROI, and thrive in a data-driven economy.

Our calls to action:

Build the foundations for AI success

Invest in data trust to transform AI into a growth engine

Align your investments with business goals

Focus on tools that ensure data is actionable and reliable

Turn data trust into results

Drive operational efficiency, revenue growth, and improved customer experiences

Unify your data ecosystems

Break down silos with platforms that centralize governance, quality, and observability

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one click away.

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