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Leveraging Digital Technologies (DT) for Sustainability Reporting

There is a plethora of sustainability reporting-specific DT products in the market which have been developed by numerous software vendors.



of organisations have never used or rarely used the **established** DTs* for sustainability reporting purposes.



*cloud computing, data analytics and mining tools, data management tools, data integration tools, data visualisation tools, and ERP systems



of organisations have never used or rarely used **emerging** DTs** for sustainability reporting purposes.



**artificial intelligence, the internet of things, and blockchain

Key barriers to using DTs for sustainability

Data-related barriers

- Difficulty in obtaining data from supply-chain partners and ensuring the veracity and integrity of that data
- Concerns about data protection and security

Software system-related barriers

- Challenges in adapting jurisdiction- and/or industry-specific systems to meet the unique and evolving sustainability reporting requirements
- Inflexibility of existing legacy ERP systems to integrate with new sustainability reporting systems
- Complexity and cost of DT solutions relative to current and future needs of the organisations

Human-related factors

- Accounting and finance professionals skilled at using technology in the finance function struggle to transfer those skill to sustainability data
- Significant skills shortage globally relating to the use of DTs for sustainability reporting

Organisational inertia

- Decision-makers struggle to justify the cost of sustainability systems
- Top management lacks knowledge about the need for and benefits of systems for capturing, measuring, managing and reporting sustainability risks and incorporating such systems
- Difficulty in quantifying the impact of sustainability risks on companies' profitability
- Lack of sustainability embeddedness in the organisational strategy and culture

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Main uses of DTs for sustainability purposes

Most common reasons for using DTs for sustainability purposes

- Internal and external reporting of sustainability performance
- Measurement and management of energy usage, waste and emissions
- Training of employees on matters relating to sustainability
- Educating and engaging with stakeholder on matters relating to sustainability impacts
- Identification of sustainability-related risks and opportunities
- Decision-making relating to sustainability projects
- Tracing sustainability performance in the supply chain

How DTs are used for sustainability reporting

- Collecting, aggregating and transforming sustainability data
- Measuring and managing sustainability performance and impacts
- Analysing, visualising and reporting sustainability data
- Stakeholder engagement and materiality assessment

Top benefits of using DTs for sustainability

- Accelerated information flow for quicker decision making
- Enhanced internal decision-making through improved information quality and quantity
- Increased efficiency and saved staff time
- Acquiring previously inaccessible or unavailable data
- Collection and integration of data/information from internal departments and supply chain partners
- Enhanced stakeholder engagement
- Improved sustainability reporting

Future opportunities relating to DT-use for sustainability

- Verify carbon capture projects, streamlining processes and increasing efficiency
- Using NFTs to improve security, transparency, and sharing of sustainability data. This could lead to more accurate and reliable sustainability reports, improved communication with stakeholders, and increased incentives to collect and report sustainability data