

Blank is now

See why Data Sanitization is climbing the
“Slope of Enlightenment” on the Gartner Hype Cycle

“Gartner Hype Cycles provide a graphic representation of the maturity and adoption of technologies and applications. They also show how they are potentially relevant to solving real business problems and exploiting new opportunities.”¹

Below, we share what recent Gartner Hype Cycles say about data sanitization.

In addressing data sanitization in the Gartner Hype Cycle™ for Privacy, 2022,² and Hype Cycle for Endpoint Security, 2021,³ Gartner analysts have provided the following definition:

“[D]ata sanitization is the disciplined process of deliberately, permanently, and irreversibly removing or destroying data stored on a memory device to make it unrecoverable.”

They have also noted “growing concerns about data privacy and security, leakage, regulatory compliance, and the ever-expanding capacity of storage media and volume of edge computing and IoT devices are making robust data sanitization a core C-level requirement for all IT organizations.”

Let’s dive into their analysis, some background on the current technology landscape, as well as Blanco’s perspective.

Gartner Notes Data Sanitization Has Reached Mainstream Maturity

According to the [IBM Cost of a Data Breach Report 2022](#), “the average cost of a data breach reached a record high in 2022, increasing by USD 0.11 million to USD 4.35 million in 2022, the highest it’s been in the history of the report.”⁴

With the European Union’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in effect for more than four years now, “many organizations are [struggling to maintain regulatory compliance](#) while European regulators move toward more stricter enforcement actions.”

GDPR enforcement has continued to result in large (and highly publicized) [breach-related fines](#). All of this is causing organizations to look more closely than ever at their data management practices, including handling data at end of life.

Related article:
Examples Show The Need For
Enterprise Data Erasure



Gartner has updated its evaluation of data sanitization in its Hype Cycle for Privacy, 2022 and Hype Cycle for Endpoint Security, 2021 reports.

We believe their analysis confirms what we’ve seen in the marketplace: [Data sanitization](#) is no longer viewed as a “nice-to-have” data management practice. It’s a necessity.

Data regulations have increased compliance requirements, particularly for deleting data when it’s no longer needed or when consumers request that their data be removed.

Hoarded data is also vulnerable to hacking, posing an unnecessary and potentially costly risk.

Government organizations and private enterprises are revisiting their data protection policies. They’re seeking ways to increase data security, follow data privacy regulations, and get rid of redundant, old, or trivial [\(ROT\)](#) data.

And they must do it in a secure, permanent, and verified way.

According to Gartner, “[Gartner Hype Cycles](#) provide a graphic representation of the maturity and adoption of technologies and applications, and how they are potentially relevant to solving real business problems and exploiting new opportunities.”¹

This evolution goes through five phases of a technology’s lifecycle: Innovation Trigger, Peak of Inflated Expectations, Trough of Disillusionment, Slope of Enlightenment, and Plateau of Productivity.

Currently, Gartner analysts place data sanitization well within the upward “Slope of Enlightenment” in two of its reports, the Hype Cycle for Privacy, 2022, and Hype Cycle for Endpoint Security, 2021 (Gartner subscription required). [Gartner video](#) on Hype Cycle describes this fourth phase as “when early adopters see initial benefits and others start to understand how to adapt the innovation to their organizations.”

Data Sanitization: “Climbing the Slope” of the Gartner Hype Cycles

Data sanitization starts with C-level buy-in

In each report, Rob Schafer, Gartner Senior Director Analyst, and Christopher Dixon, Gartner Sr. Principal Analyst, state, “growing concerns about data privacy and security, leakage, regulatory compliance, and the ever-expanding capacity of storage media and volume of edge computing and IoT devices are making robust data sanitization a core C-level requirement for all IT organizations.

Why the C-suite must prioritize data sanitization

- **Data Leakage, Reputational Damage, and Financial Risk.** Recent data leaks and reports of misuse have occurred in tidal waves rather than slow drips. For the most infamous breaches, such as those at [Uber](#), [North Face](#), or [Optus](#), brand damage has been an incalculable hit on top of financial costs.
- **Regulatory Compliance and Expanded Tech Capabilities.** GDPR triggered a focus on government’s role in data privacy oversight. 5G transmission speeds and smart devices continue to be heavily marketed to consumers. At the same time, data misuse ([Facebook](#)) and invasive data collection (e.g., [Alexa](#), [TikTok](#)) have hit the headlines. Rapid delivery and widespread data gathering through Internet of Things devices mean unwanted data exposure can happen more quickly. All of this has resulted in more [government regulation](#).
- **Environmental Concerns.** An increasingly important factor is a growing interest in protecting the environment. Organizations are becoming more motivated to reduce e-waste by reusing and recycling IT assets. Sometimes this is because of national or local requirements. Other times, there are financial or business incentives motivating organizations to launch corporate social responsibility (CSR) or [environmental, social, and governance \(ESG\) initiatives](#).

But all business stakeholders should be involved.

In this context, Gartner identifies data sanitization as having reached mainstream maturity and predicts it to reach the Plateau of Productivity in 2-5 years.

Gartner advises “this requirement for comprehensive data sanitization should be applied to all devices with storage components (e.g., enterprise storage and servers, PCs, mobile devices, and increasingly, edge computing and some IoT devices). Lack of robust data sanitization competency is often due to handling asset life cycle stages as isolated events, with little coordination between business boundaries (such as finance, security, procurement and IT).”

The Hype Cycle for Endpoint Security, 2021, provides advice to “collaborate with data sanitization stakeholders (e.g., IT, security, privacy, compliance, legal, IT asset managers) to create appropriate data sanitization standards and processes that provide specific guidance on the end-to-end destruction process, based on data sensitivity for all data bearing devices.”

And includes outside data destruction vendors, or ITADs

Such care doesn’t just apply internally, either. Gartner further advises, “as different media require different sanitizing methods, ensure your internal IT organization or external ITAD vendor provides a certificate of data destruction sanitized to your security standards (e.g., NIST 800-88r1).”

Learn about the risks enterprises take when attempting to sanitize end-of-life data storage assets: [A False Sense Of Security](#)



The Blanco Perspective

Gartner's analysis has not changed our view on the necessity of prioritizing data sanitization. We firmly believe that for devices, **Blank is best**, and this is best achieved through robust, software-based data sanitization practices.

What the reports highlight is that awareness is growing on a wider scale, as the effects of accelerated growth in

data privacy regulations and greater reporting on data breaches begin to be felt, and organizations start to integrate data sanitization processes as standard.

This is a hugely positive step, and we look forward to seeing the 'Plateau of Productivity' for data sanitization come to full fruition in the near future, thanks to prioritization from the C-suite.

Start Prioritizing Data Sanitization

At Blanco, we have solutions that truly and completely erase your data, getting your devices and environments completely blank.

Explore how we securely and permanently achieve this without costing the Earth. Start your journey to blank now.

[Visit our content hub](#)

Blanco Technology Group has been identified as a Sample Vendor in the Hype Cycle for Privacy, 2022², and Hype Cycle for Endpoint Security, 2021.³ Blanco was named in the Data Sanitization category.

Endnotes

1. Gartner Methodologies, Gartner Hype Cycle, <https://www.gartner.com/en/information-technology/research/hype-cycle>
2. Gartner Hype Cycle for Privacy, 2022, Bernard Woo, Bart Willemsen, 2 August 2022
3. Gartner Hype Cycle for Endpoint Security, 2021, Chis Silva, 11 August 2021
4. Cost of a Data Breach Report 2022, IBM, <https://www.ibm.com/resources/downloads/cost-data-breach-report-2022-sponsored-ibm>