

ROT Radar:

Quick ROT risk spotting tool

Redundant, obsolete, and trivial data (ROT) builds up fast – much faster than many organizations can keep up with. With so much unstructured data floating around, even the idea of getting started can be intimidating.

To help you find your starting point, use our quick diagnostic tool to help you zero in on the biggest risks – and opportunities – hiding in your unstructured data.



How to use this tool:

1. Review each ‘signal’ on the list and evaluate where your organization stands with the given data type – remember, this is an estimation exercise, perfect accuracy isn’t required
2. Give your organization a score based on the state of your data
3. Use the guide to interpret your score and pick your starting place

ROT risk signals – Diagnostic checklist

| Signal | What makes it ROT? | Score |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Files with no updates in 3+ years | “Cold” data is a common ROT indicator | <div>0</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> |
| Unknown ownership | No clear person/team responsible | <div>0</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> |
| Shared drives with >100 subfolders | Deep nesting often = ROT hiding spots | <div>0</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> |
| Email inboxes never reviewed | Inbox sprawl is often overlooked | <div>0</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> |
| "Just in case" archives | Saved forever with no clear value | <div>0</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> |
| Orphaned legacy systems | Systems no one owns but still store data | <div>0</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> |
| Unmonitored legal/compliance holds | Over-retention contributes to ROT | <div>0</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> |

Scoring scale

- 0

 NONE / DOESN'T EXIST
- 1

 POSSIBLY / UNSURE
- 2

 DEFINITELY APPLIES

Score interpretation and recommendations

Now what? Use your score to choose a starting point:

- 0–4: Minimal ROT risk:** You're in decent shape. Start by aligning key stakeholders and proposing a focused pilot project
- 5–9: Something smells stinky:** Some risk signals are present. Pick 1–2 high-risk data areas and start auditing before you move to stakeholder buy-in.
- 10–14: ROT is likely widespread:** Prioritize visible, high-volume areas to make early impact and educate relevant stakeholders of the situation.
- 15+: ROT alert!** Focus on shared drives or orphaned systems where risk and cost are highest. Loop in key stakeholders to ensure they're aware of the situation. A wider push might be necessary to get your organization started with ROT reduction.

Ready to build support for your ROT reduction project?

Pair your results with:

Buy-In Guide



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Example Business Case



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