

Data Insights Guide

*How Much Is Missed
Data Costing You?*



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But access does not equal insight. Many businesses collect mountains of information but struggle to extract any meaningful value from it.

What You Don't Know IS Hurting You



Most organisations have more data than they know what to do with. Sales data, operational logs, customer feedback, system metrics; it all exists somewhere. But access does not equal insight. Many businesses collect mountains of information but struggle to extract any meaningful value from it. Others generate reports that look impressive but drive no change. The problem isn't the lack of data, it's the missed opportunity to use it well.

This guide exists to help you evaluate whether your organisation is truly tapping into the power of its data.

We've included five key indicators of an underutilised data landscape, supported by relatable examples and real-world use cases. Each section is followed by a simple ROI awareness check to help you assess how much you might be leaving on the table.

Whether you're looking to reduce costs, make faster decisions, improve service quality, or simply stop relying on guesswork, this guide is designed to start an honest, practical conversation about where your data efforts are today and where they need to go.



MISSED OPPORTUNITY 1: YOU'RE REPORTING THE PAST INSTEAD OF PREDICTING THE FUTURE

What This Looks Like:

If your business intelligence tools are mainly used to look backwards (e.g., how many leads came in last quarter or which product line performed worst), then you're operating in reactive mode.

Why It Matters:

Lagging indicators are useful for context, but not for action. If you're not using data to forecast trends, spot churn early, or anticipate demand, you're at a disadvantage. Predictive models (even simple ones) help businesses prepare instead of just react.

MISSED OPPORTUNITY 2: YOU HAVE DASHBOARDS, BUT NO DECISIONS

What This Looks Like:

Your team opens dashboards every morning, but nothing changes. Data is viewed, even discussed, but rarely acted on. This is a classic sign of information overload or dashboard fatigue.



Missed Opportunity 1 ROI Awareness Check:

If customer churn takes you by surprise each quarter, or stock-outs happen without warning, consider the cost in lost revenue and customer trust.

Businesses using predictive models for even one key function (e.g., lead scoring or demand planning) typically reduce costs by 10–20% in that area within a year.

Why It Matters:

Dashboards should empower decisions, not just decorate meetings. If no one knows what action to take from the data, then the problem may be the way it's being visualised, interpreted, or contextualised.

MISSED OPPORTUNITY 3: YOU RELY ON GUT FEEL FOR HIGH-STAKES CHOICES

What This Looks Like:

You make major investment, hiring, or campaign decisions based on experience, intuition, or what competitors appear to be doing, rather than on clean, comparative data.

Why It Matters:

There's a place for instinct, but relying on it exclusively introduces bias, inconsistency, and risk. Well-structured data helps balance instinct with evidence. Over time, data-backed decisions outperform gut feel across nearly every operational area.

Missed Opportunity 2 ROI Awareness Check:

Think about how many decisions were made last month because of the data. If the answer is "not many," then your dashboards are costing more than they're earning.

Streamlining reports to 3–5 clear KPIs can improve decision-making velocity and reduce analysis time by up to 40%.

Missed Opportunity 3 ROI Awareness Check:

- How many high-cost or high-impact decisions in the past six months were supported by historical or real-time data?
- Businesses that shift from intuition-led to insight-led decisions often see double-digit improvements in campaign ROI, hiring efficiency, or operational throughput.



Missed Opportunity 4 ROI Awareness Check:

Estimate how many hours per month are spent on manual data prep. Multiply that by an average hourly wage. That's your baseline cost.

Organisations that automate reporting pipelines can cut data prep time by 60–80%, often freeing full days of staff time per week.

Missed Opportunity 5 ROI Awareness Check:

Ask: What does success look like for our data initiatives? If your answer is vague or undefined, alignment is missing.

Introducing basic quality metrics (e.g., time-to-insight, accuracy rate, stakeholder satisfaction) can increase the perceived value of data by up to 50% across internal teams.

MISSED OPPORTUNITY 4: MANUAL WORKAROUNDS ARE STILL THE NORM

What This Looks Like:

Someone on your team still pulls weekly data into Excel to reformat it. A different report needs manual copy-paste from five systems. Key insights depend on that “one person” who knows where everything lives.

Why It Matters:

Manual processes are not only time-consuming, they're error-prone, fragile, and expensive. Automating data workflows saves your business time and improves accuracy, builds resilience, and frees teams to focus on work that matters.

MISSED OPPORTUNITY 5: YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT “GOOD” LOOKS LIKE

What This Looks Like:

Your data team works hard, but there's no clear benchmark for success. Are insights delivered fast enough? Are they accurate? Is leadership actually using them? It's unclear.

Why It Matters:

Without standards or defined outcomes, data efforts drift. Teams chase interesting but irrelevant metrics. Valuable opportunities get missed. And stakeholders lose trust in the function entirely.

MINI ROI CALCULATOR TEMPLATE

Use this quick calculation to estimate the monthly opportunity cost of underutilised data:

1. Estimate the number of hours your team spends on manual data processing per week: ____ hours
2. Multiply by average hourly wage:
 $\text{€} ___ \times ___ \text{ hours} = \text{€} ___ \text{ per week}$
3. Multiply by 4.3 for monthly estimate: $\text{€} ___ \times 4.3 = \text{€} ___ / \text{month}$

This doesn't even account for opportunity costs from poor decisions or missed insights, but it's a good place to start.

WHAT GETS IN THE WAY: MISCONCEPTIONS AND MISALIGNMENT

Before we move into action, it's worth pausing to consider some of the beliefs that quietly undermine even the best-intentioned data initiatives. These misconceptions are common and often go unchallenged simply because they sound reasonable on the surface.

Common Misconceptions That Hold Teams Back

- "We're already collecting data, so we're doing fine." Data collection is just the first step. Without strategy, structure, and application, it's just noise.
- "It's too expensive to do anything smarter." Many improvements start with better usage of what you already have, not expensive new tools.
- "Our reports go out every week, we must be using the data well." Output isn't impact. If those reports don't inform decisions, they're just routine.

WHAT TO DO NEXT: STEPS THAT MATCH YOUR REALITY

SMALL FIXES, BIG GAINS

Getting the most out of your data doesn't always require massive transformation. Often, the first step is recognising the signs of underuse and making small, intentional shifts. Whether that means redesigning your dashboards, piloting a predictive model, or automating a single reporting task, the momentum builds quickly.

Data isn't just for data teams. It's the foundation of faster decisions, smarter strategies, and stronger outcomes. If your data isn't helping your organisation move forward, it's time to change that.

Want help identifying the biggest wins for your business? Insodus helps organisations turn messy, underutilised data into decision-ready intelligence, with the strategy, systems, and automation to make it sustainable.

Wherever your organisation is on the data maturity curve, the next move should feel achievable, not overwhelming. Below are simple, situation-specific actions you can take to build momentum without needing to overhaul your entire infrastructure.

Tailored Next Steps Based on Where You Are

- If you're overwhelmed by volume and don't know what matters: Start with a prioritisation exercise. What decisions do you want to improve? Build reporting around those.
- If you have tools but lack trust or clarity: Focus on data governance and team alignment. Even the best dashboard won't help if no one believes it.
- If you're making decisions without data at all: Pick one business process (e.g., lead qualification, budget planning) and build a lightweight reporting loop. Momentum builds fast.

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