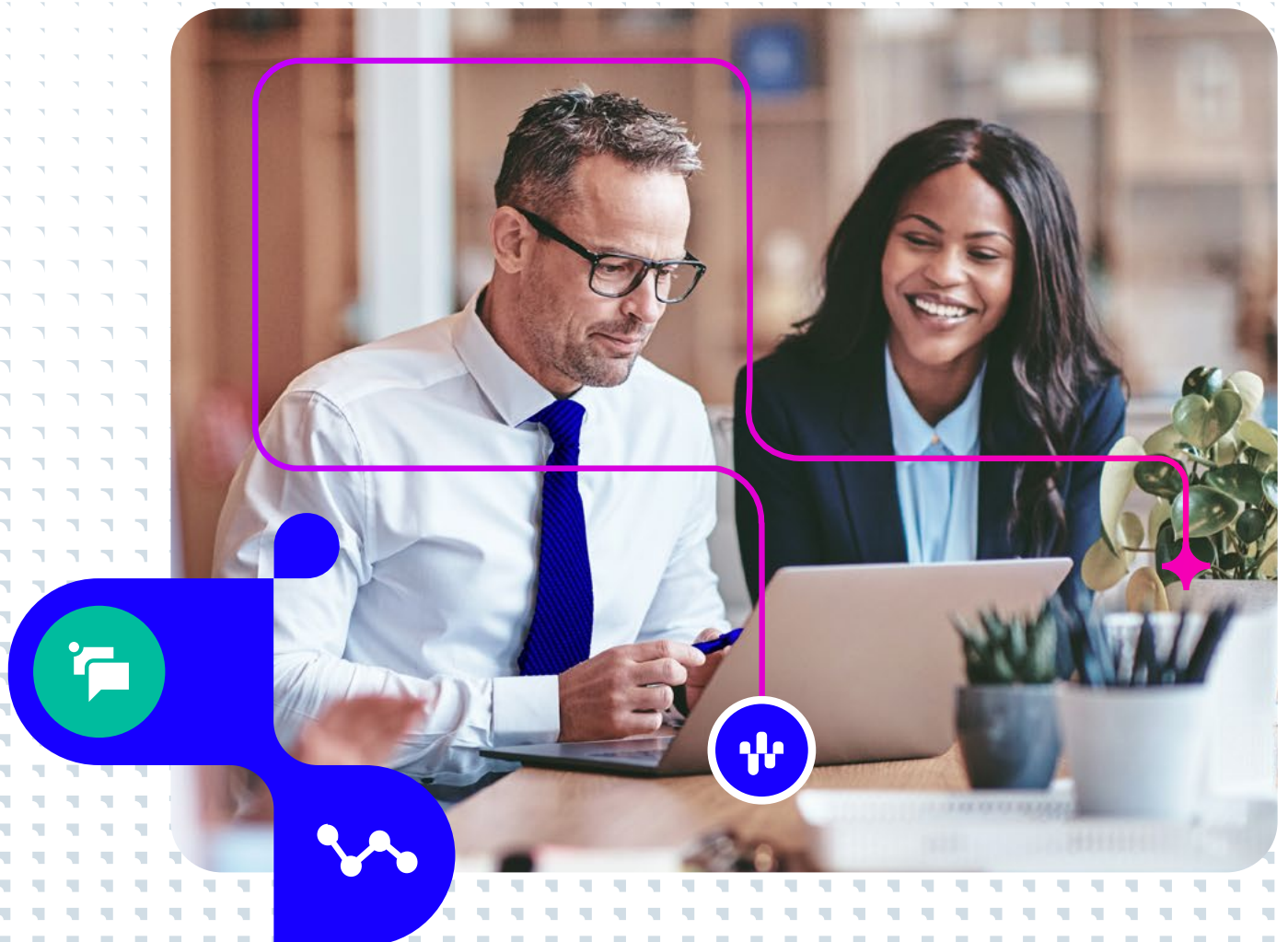


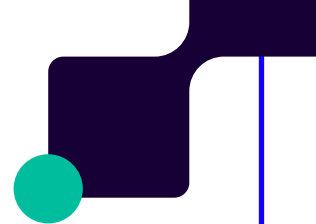
WHITE PAPER

Communications Data: The Untapped Engine for a Competitive Advantage

Transform compliance from a cost center to a growth driver by mining archived communications data



Executive summary



For years, enterprises have captured and preserved vast volumes of rich, unstructured communications data to meet regulatory obligations. Hidden within that data lies a powerful source of business intelligence, revealing things like customer sentiment, buying behaviors, market signals, and team collaboration patterns. Today with the power of AI, this data becomes more than a record of the past. It becomes a catalyst for insight, speed, and smarter decision-making across the enterprise.

What was once a compliance mandate is now a strategic advantage. Leading organizations are modernizing their archiving approach to transform static records into dynamic intelligence – enriching analytics, fueling models, and uncovering opportunities buried in everyday interactions.

Legacy archives can't deliver that. Designed for storage, not strategy, they're constrained by rigid schemas, closed architectures, and limited accessibility – locking away data that could be driving innovation and value.

Open, AI-ready and cloud-native platforms change the equation. By unifying communications data across channels, enriching it with context, and making it readily accessible to AI and analytics systems, compliance infrastructure is now an engine for competitive differentiation.

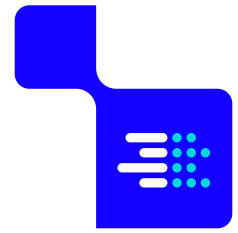
From obligation to opportunity

Regulatory frameworks have compelled (if not outright required) enterprises to preserve communications for years. The result is an immense, underused dataset: millions of daily interactions across chat, email, voice, and collaboration platforms.

Yet traditional and legacy archive systems were never designed for AI initiatives. Their closed architectures, rigid schemas, and limited accessibility prevent organizations from activating data beyond storage and retrieval. As AI and analytics accelerate, these constraints create both compliance risk and missed opportunity.

New technologies and innovations with [cloud-based capture and archiving platforms](#) now bridge this gap. By unifying communications capture and retention, they eliminate silos, facilitate accessibility and enable valuable data insights that can fuel your business and reduce risk.

Defining your data: Understanding what you have



Communications data includes every message, chat, voice note, and shared file exchanged across internal and external channels. Unlike transactional data, it's inherently unstructured. The data is rich in language, context, and sentiment, but inconsistent in format.

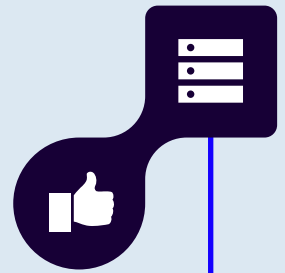
Fortunately, those very same infrastructures that once met recordkeeping obligations can now serve as a launchpad for data-driven insight. The communications data just needs to be enriched.

To unlock value, organizations must catalog their archives and apply consistent schemas and metadata so every message is contextualized and searchable.

Through this lens, communications archives become more than static repositories. They represent a behavioral, cultural and strategic record of the enterprise. When captured comprehensively and structured properly, communications reveal intent, collaboration patterns, and emerging risks – insights vital for both compliance and business strategy.



Data strategy: Turning retention into readiness



A successful data strategy moves beyond retention toward readiness – and the ability to use compliant data as fuel for analytics and AI. Key components of enriching communications data include:

- **Data discovery and normalization**
Standardizing content through tools that capture unique sources and convert unstructured inputs into structured, AI-ready formats.
- **Governance and lineage tracking**
Maintaining visibility into every transformation, ensuring data fidelity and auditability.
- **Privacy and security controls**
Applying encryption, authentication, and policy-based access to protect sensitive information.
- **AI readiness**
Ensuring data quality, completeness, and context so it can be confidently applied to models or analytics.

Why data strategy and preparation are vital to your organization:



- Up to 30% of AI initiatives stall before delivering results
- AI-related failures cost organizations an average of \$4.4 million

Building the right data architecture

To connect compliance data with AI innovation, enterprises need an architecture that is open, extensible, and secure. A modern model typically includes four layers:

1. **Capture and ingestion**

Collect communications from hundreds of channels at scale, which may require API connections.

2. **Normalization and enrichment**

Metadata and context are applied through flexible schema libraries, creating structured, searchable datasets. For regulated organizations, maintaining operational confidence and audit readiness is crucial [during this process](#).

3. **Storage and access**

A centralized, cloud-native, compliant archive or data lake that provides a single source of truth.

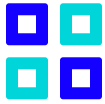
4. **Activation**

Connectors or APIs that deliver data to AI engines, analytics platforms, or downstream business applications.

A modern architecture combined with a forward-thinking data strategy connects compliant capture with AI analytics through open APIs and secure pipelines.

Implementation best practices: Keeping AI accountable

True AI readiness requires more than data enrichment and management; it demands trust. To harness AI insights from communications data responsibly, organizations should adopt a framework that emphasizes transparency, security, and human oversight:



Establish clear guidelines

Develop and implement a comprehensive AI ethics policy that outlines how tools should be used for communications. This includes defining rules for AI-generated content, governance, and review processes.



Prioritize privacy by design

Integrate privacy safeguards from the outset of any AI project. Use anonymized or synthetic data for training when possible and only collect the minimum amount of data required for a specific task.



Ensure robust security

Implement strong security protocols, including encryption and strict access controls, to protect sensitive data used in AI training.



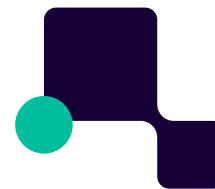
Promote transparency

Be transparent with users and customers about when and how AI is used to create or analyze communications. This includes clear disclosures about data sources and the purpose of the AI.



Provide training

Educate employees and communications teams on the ethical considerations, risks, and responsible use of AI tools.



Maintain human oversight

Ensure humans remain in the loop for reviewing AI outputs. Human oversight is crucial as it can mitigate credibility risks and catch biases or unintended consequences before they cause harm.

Use cases: From insight to innovation

Once communications data is structured and governed, its applications extend far beyond recordkeeping and surveillance:

- **AI-driven compliance monitoring**
Detect anomalies or potential misconduct with multilingual, domain-trained large language models.
- **Behavioral analytics**
Identify collaboration trends, sentiment shifts, or cultural risks across teams.
- **Knowledge discovery**
Retrieve institutional expertise from archived conversations to accelerate decision-making.
- **Operational efficiency**
Reduce false positives, automate triage, and surface genuine issues faster. Organizations can significantly reduce false positives, in some cases by as much as 95%.
- **Business insight**
Correlate communications with performance data to reveal emerging opportunities or client-service improvements.

Through Bring Your Own Model (BYOM) and **Bring Your Own Signal (BYOS)** capabilities, firms can integrate proprietary AI models or external alerts directly into existing workflows — extending surveillance and analytics beyond predefined tools while retaining full compliance control.

How Smarsh can help with AI innovation

The path from static compliance archives to dynamic AI-ready assets is clear — but execution requires the right partner. Organizations need a platform that not only stores communications but also transforms them into fuel for innovation, while maintaining the security and governance that regulated enterprises demand.

Smarsh is purpose-built for enterprises that can't compromise on scale, security, or compliance. Smarsh Communications Intelligence Platform enriches and normalizes communications data across every channel — email, chat, voice, collaboration platforms, and more — into structured, AI-ready formats. Through conversation threading across all channels, Smarsh delivers the full picture of every interaction, eliminating fragmentation and revealing insights that siloed data cannot.

Global enterprises can't afford data blind spots. Unlock the full power of your communications data and fuel AI at scale with Smarsh.

Contact us today to learn what's possible for your organization.



Smarsh® enables companies to transform oversight into foresight by surfacing business-critical signals from the most in-demand communications channels. Regulated organizations of all sizes rely upon the Smarsh portfolio of cloud-native digital communications capture, retention and oversight solutions to help them identify regulatory and reputational risks within their communications data before those risks become fines or headlines.

Smarsh serves a global client base spanning the top banks in North America, Europe and Asia, along with leading brokerage firms, insurers, and registered investment advisors and U.S. state and local government agencies. To discover more about the future of communications capture, archiving and oversight, visit www.smarsh.com.

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