

SUPERWISE® LEARN KIT · OCTOBER 2026

# AI numbers to stop using

Seven figures that travel through vendor decks, trade press, and board packs, each traced to its primary source: what the source says, the best current figure and its date, and the sentence to use instead.

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Every figure re-read in its primary source on October 8, 2026

# A number is usable when its source travels with it

A figure belongs in a decision, a client letter, or a board pack when four things come with it: who or what was counted, how it was measured, when, and by whom. Six of the seven figures in part 2 lost at least one of those on their way to you.

The table gives the figure as it is usually repeated, what the primary source says, the best current figure with its date, and a sentence that keeps the source's scope. Part 3 is a worksheet for running the same check on the next number that reaches you.

## Five questions before a number goes into anything you sign

- ☐ **What was counted?** The exact thing measured, surveyed, or modeled: one company's machines, one model, a set of interviews.
- ☐ **Out of what?** The denominator and the population. "95%" of 52 organizations and "95%" of all pilots are different claims.
- ☐ **When and where?** The field dates or the measurement period, and the place. A 2021 measurement describes 2021.
- ☐ **What kind of source is it?** A measurement, a modeled scenario, a survey, or an article repeating one of those.
- ☐ **Does your sentence keep the scope?** The company, the model, the date, and the uncertainty stay in the sentence that uses it.

## How to read part 2

|                      |                                                                                                        |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| STOP                 | No primary source supports the figure as it is repeated. Drop it.                                      |
| REPLACE              | A primary source exists and says something narrower or different. Use the sentence in the last column. |
| KEEP                 | The figure holds. Carry its population, dates, and margin with it.                                     |
| MEASURED             | Read from instruments or counted directly by the source.                                               |
| MODELED              | Arithmetic or a simulation from stated assumptions. Change an input and the figure moves.              |
| SURVEY<br>INTERVIEWS | What a sample of people said, with the sample size and dates beside it.                                |
| BUDGET               | A planning limit someone set. It caps the load; it is not a reading of it.                             |

**Where these figures go stale.** Rack power and data center forecasts move with each hardware generation and each new report. Re-read sources 2 and 3 before you use their figures after mid-2027, and replace the MIT figure if MIT publishes a final or peer-reviewed version.

# Seven figures, traced

| AS REPEATED                                                                | WHAT THE PRIMARY SOURCE SAYS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | BEST CURRENT FIGURE                                                                                                                                             | SAY THIS INSTEAD                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>ENERGY, POWER, AND WATER</b>                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>"Inference is 80 to 90% of AI energy."</b><br><b>STOP</b>               | No primary source for the range was found. The closest measurement is Google's own: one April week in each of 2019, 2020, and 2021, machine learning was 10% to 15% of Google's total energy use, and about three-fifths of that was inference [1].                                                                                                                                       | <b>About 3/5 inference, 2/5 training</b><br>Google's fleet only, 2019 to 2021, published 2022.<br><b>MEASURED</b>                                               | "In one April week each year from 2019 to 2021, inference was about three-fifths of Google's machine-learning energy use."                                                                         |
| <b>"A rack draws 150 kW."</b><br><b>STOP</b>                               | No primary source for 150 kW as a general rack figure was found. Rack power depends on the system. NVIDIA's power-management pilot sets a 375 kW envelope for three GB200 NVL72 racks and 405 kW for three GB300 NVL72 racks [2].                                                                                                                                                         | <b>About 125 kW and 135 kW a rack</b><br>Our division of NVIDIA's three-rack envelopes. The page is undated; read October 8, 2026.<br><b>BUDGET</b>             | "NVIDIA's power-management pilot budgets 375 kW for three GB200 NVL72 racks, about 125 kW each."                                                                                                   |
| <b>"GB200 and GB300 racks both run at about 120 kW."</b><br><b>REPLACE</b> | The same NVIDIA page gives the two systems different envelopes: 375 kW and 405 kW for three racks of each [2]. One shared figure blurs two configurations.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>About 125 kW (GB200 NVL72) and 135 kW (GB300 NVL72)</b><br>Per rack, by our division.<br><b>BUDGET</b>                                                       | "As NVIDIA budgets them, about 125 kW a rack for GB200 NVL72 and 135 kW for GB300 NVL72."                                                                                                          |
| <b>"AI will use 12% of US electricity by 2030."</b><br><b>REPLACE</b>      | The figure is Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory's, and it covers all US data centers. AI is one driver inside the total. The reference case is 11.8% of US electricity in 2030, or 649 TWh, inside a scenario range of 9.5% to 15.3% [3].                                                                                                                                             | <b>9.5% to 15.3% in 2030, all data centers</b><br>11.8% reference case; 521 to 843 TWh. Published June 2026.<br><b>MODELED</b>                                  | "LBNL's June 2026 scenarios put all US data centers at 9.5% to 15.3% of US electricity in 2030, with 11.8% in its reference case."                                                                 |
| <b>"Every AI prompt uses a bottle of water."</b><br><b>REPLACE</b>         | The study modeled GPT-3 and estimated a 500 mL bottle for roughly 10 to 50 medium-length responses, depending on when and where the model runs. At the US average location in its table, that is about 17 mL a request, or about 30 requests a bottle [4].                                                                                                                                | <b>500 mL per 10 to 50 GPT-3 responses</b><br>One model, 2023 data centers. First posted 2023; current version March 26, 2025.<br><b>MODELED</b>                | "One study estimated GPT-3 used about 500 mL of water for every 10 to 50 medium-length responses, depending on the data center."                                                                   |
| <b>ADOPTION AND PUBLIC OPINION</b>                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>"95% of generative AI pilots fail."</b><br><b>REPLACE</b>               | A July 2025 MIT NANDA report, labeled "Preliminary Findings", found "95% of organizations are getting zero return". Its base, January to June 2025: 52 organizations interviewed, 153 survey responses, and more than 300 public initiatives reviewed. The authors call their figures "directionally accurate based on individual interviews rather than official company reporting" [5]. | <b>Most organizations studied reported no measurable P&amp;L impact</b><br>52 interviews and 153 responses, early 2025. Not peer reviewed.<br><b>INTERVIEWS</b> | "A preliminary MIT NANDA report from July 2025, based on 52 interviews and 153 survey responses, found most of the organizations it studied reported no measurable P&L impact from generative AI." |
| <b>"71% of Americans oppose data centers near them."</b><br><b>KEEP</b>    | Gallup polled 1,000 US adults by phone, March 2 to 18, 2026, with a margin of $\pm 4$ points, and published May 13, 2026. 71% opposed a data center being built in their area, 48% strongly. 7% strongly favored one [6].                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>71% opposed, 48% strongly</b><br>US adults, March 2026, $\pm 4$ points.<br><b>SURVEY</b>                                                                     | "In a March 2026 Gallup poll of 1,000 US adults, 71% opposed a data center being built in their area, with a margin of $\pm 4$ points."                                                            |

# A worksheet for any number before you repeat it

Photocopy this page. Fill one block in for each figure that reaches a decision, then keep it with the document that uses the figure.

## Figure 1

|                                    |                                                                                                                                                                             |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The figure, as you read it         | _____                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Where you read it, and the date    | _____                                                                                                                                                                       |
| The primary source, found and read | _____                                                                                                                                                                       |
| What was counted, out of what      | _____                                                                                                                                                                       |
| When and where it was measured     | _____                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Source type                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Measured <input type="checkbox"/> Modeled <input type="checkbox"/> Survey <input type="checkbox"/> Budget <input type="checkbox"/> Repetition only |
| The sentence you will use          | _____                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Checked by, and date               | _____                                                                                                                                                                       |

## Figure 2

|                                    |                                                                                                                                                                             |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The figure, as you read it         | _____                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Where you read it, and the date    | _____                                                                                                                                                                       |
| The primary source, found and read | _____                                                                                                                                                                       |
| What was counted, out of what      | _____                                                                                                                                                                       |
| When and where it was measured     | _____                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Source type                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Measured <input type="checkbox"/> Modeled <input type="checkbox"/> Survey <input type="checkbox"/> Budget <input type="checkbox"/> Repetition only |
| The sentence you will use          | _____                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Checked by, and date               | _____                                                                                                                                                                       |

**When the primary source cannot be found**, tick “Repetition only” and leave the figure out. A number with no source is a number nobody can defend when a client or a board member asks where it came from.

# The figure you can defend best is one from your own record

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Industry headlines describe someone else's machines and someone else's sample. For decisions about your own firm's AI use, the strongest figure is a count from your own systems, with the period and the scope written beside it.

## What SUPERWISE Sentinel records

As described on [superwise.ai/sentinel/](https://superwise.ai/sentinel/), read October 8, 2026 [7]:

- **Each request.** Every request is logged with what was caught, and every inspected interaction lands in an Activity Log.
- **What it replaced.** It replaces emails, phone numbers, account and card numbers, government IDs, and secrets such as API keys with placeholders before a prompt reaches ChatGPT or Claude.
- **Where the record stays.** Sentinel runs on the machine or in your own cloud, and nothing is routed through SUPERWISE.

## Read your own figures with the same five questions

- **Scope.** A count from the Activity Log covers the traffic Sentinel inspected. AI use on machines or accounts outside it is outside the count, and the sentence should say so.
- **Period.** State the dates the count covers, the way the table in part 2 does.
- **Kind.** A log count is a measurement of what was inspected. It describes your firm and nobody else's.

**Trying it.** SUPERWISE Sentinel is free for 30 days with no card, then \$10, \$25, or \$50 a month, as listed on [superwise.ai/pricing/](https://superwise.ai/pricing/) on October 8, 2026 [7].

# Sources

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Each read on October 8, 2026. Where a figure came from a passage inside a PDF, that passage was read in the PDF itself.

- 1 David Patterson, Joseph Gonzalez, Urs Hölzle, Quoc Le, and others, *The Carbon Footprint of Machine Learning Training Will Plateau, Then Shrink*, arXiv:2204.05149 (April 11, 2022), later in IEEE Computer. The ML share of Google's energy and the inference split, measured for one week of April in 2019, 2020, and 2021. [arxiv.org/abs/2204.05149](https://arxiv.org/abs/2204.05149)
- 2 NVIDIA, *Inference power pilot: NVL72 fleet power management*, NVIDIA Dynamic Power Software documentation, version 0.8. Three-rack envelopes of 375 kW (GB200 NVL72) and 405 kW (GB300 NVL72). The page carries no date. [docs.nvidia.com/datacenter/dps/versions/0.8/guides/runbooks/maxlps-simple-mode-pilot/](https://docs.nvidia.com/datacenter/dps/versions/0.8/guides/runbooks/maxlps-simple-mode-pilot/)
- 3 Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, *United States Data Center Energy Usage Report: 2025 Update* (June 2026). 2030 reference case and scenario range. [eta-publications.lbl.gov/publications/united-states-data-center-energy-2025](https://eta-publications.lbl.gov/publications/united-states-data-center-energy-2025)
- 4 Pengfei Li, Jianyi Yang, Mohammad A. Islam, and Shaolei Ren, *Making AI Less "Thirsty": Uncovering and Addressing the Secret Water Footprint of AI Models*, arXiv:2304.03271, version 5 (March 26, 2025). The 10 to 50 response estimate and the per-request table. [doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2304.03271](https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2304.03271)
- 5 Aditya Challapally, Chris Pease, Ramesh Raskar, and Pradyumna Chari, MIT NANDA, *The GenAI Divide: State of AI in Business 2025* (July 2025), marked preliminary findings. **Weak host:** read from a copy posted by a law firm; no MIT-hosted or peer-reviewed version was found. [webberwentzel.com/News/Documents/2025/MIT1757411281972.pdf](https://webberwentzel.com/News/Documents/2025/MIT1757411281972.pdf)
- 6 Gallup, *Americans Oppose AI Data Centers in Their Area* (May 13, 2026). Telephone survey of 1,000 US adults, March 2 to 18, 2026,  $\pm 4$  points at 95% confidence. [news.gallup.com/poll/709772/americans-oppose-data-centers-area.aspx](https://news.gallup.com/poll/709772/americans-oppose-data-centers-area.aspx)
- 7 SUPERWISE, *Sentinel* and *Pricing*. The record, coverage, and prices used in part 4. [superwise.ai/sentinel/](https://superwise.ai/sentinel/) · [superwise.ai/pricing/](https://superwise.ai/pricing/)

## Further reading on superwise.ai

- **The public answer.** [superwise.ai/learn/ai-numbers-to-stop-using/](https://superwise.ai/learn/ai-numbers-to-stop-using/)
- **Training and inference.** [superwise.ai/learn/training-vs-inference/](https://superwise.ai/learn/training-vs-inference/)