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WHITEPAPER

2025-26 Global Manager Survey Insights

Transitioning from 'Digital Debt' to 'Velocity'

2026 is the year of the Great Decoupling. While 780+ global managers tell us they are ready for AI-driven growth, our data reveals a sobering reality:

The "2025 Truths":

- **The Infrastructure Paradox:** 70% of the industry is still tethered to the 'Digital Gravity' of shared drives and Word documents. Using a shared drive for AI is like trying to put jet fuel in a horse-drawn carriage. To move from 'surviving the volume' to 'mastering the machine,' we must move from Files to Flow.
- **Standardization = Velocity:** The 46% surge in standard DDQ acceptance isn't about doing less work; it's about doing faster work. With growth of retail/wealth channels, managers are standardizing the 'table stakes' so they can spend their time on the 'unique alpha.'
- **The Machine-Readable Mandate:** Your next big mandate won't be won in a PDF. It will be won because your data was 'ready' when an allocator's AI came looking for it.

At DiligenceVault, we are obsessed with helping you cross this bridge. Our commitment to the Blaze Data Bridge initiative is our answer to the 'Shared Drive Trap.' We aren't just giving you a place to store files; we are giving you a living, breathing institutional memory that connects you to the global ecosystem in real-time.

The manual era is fighting to stay alive, but the future belongs to the firms that trade their folders for 'Flow.' Let's build that future together.

Monel Amin
Founder and CEO, DiligenceVault

Survey at a Glance

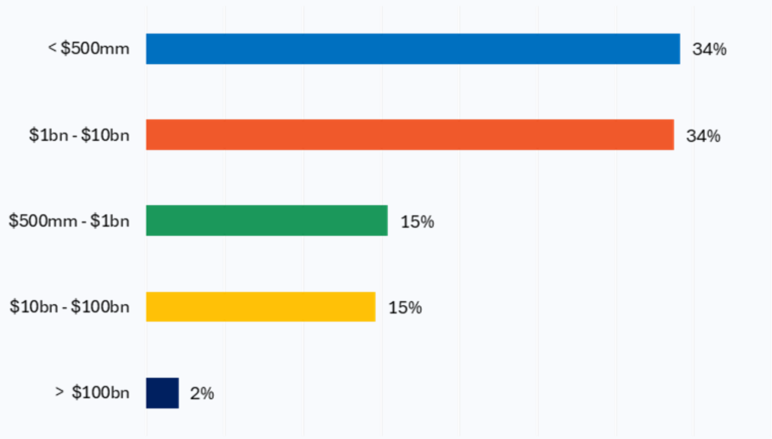
2025 research captured insights from investor relations and RFP/DDQ professionals worldwide

780+	78	15	17
Respondents	**Countries**	**Teams**	**Questions**
Asset Managers and GPs	Worldwide Representation	Investor Relations & SMEs	Informing 2026 Outlook

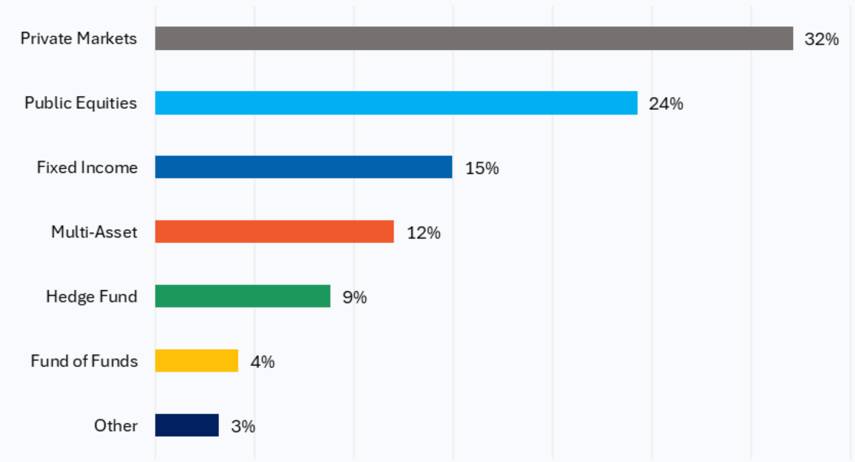
The 2025 Perspective

Spanning 78 countries and 17 core performance dimensions, these insights distill the collective intelligence of the modern asset managers. By engaging everyone from IR and Biz Dev to IT and Legal, we've captured the reality of a 12-department "team sport" currently fighting the complexity of fundraising and investor engagement environment. What follows is a data-driven roadmap to help you leapfrog current processes and build the AI-ready infrastructure required to win in the 2026 allocator landscape.

The 2025 Ecosystem: A Multi-Asset View Point



AUM Breakdown by # of Firms



Strategy Distribution by # of Firms

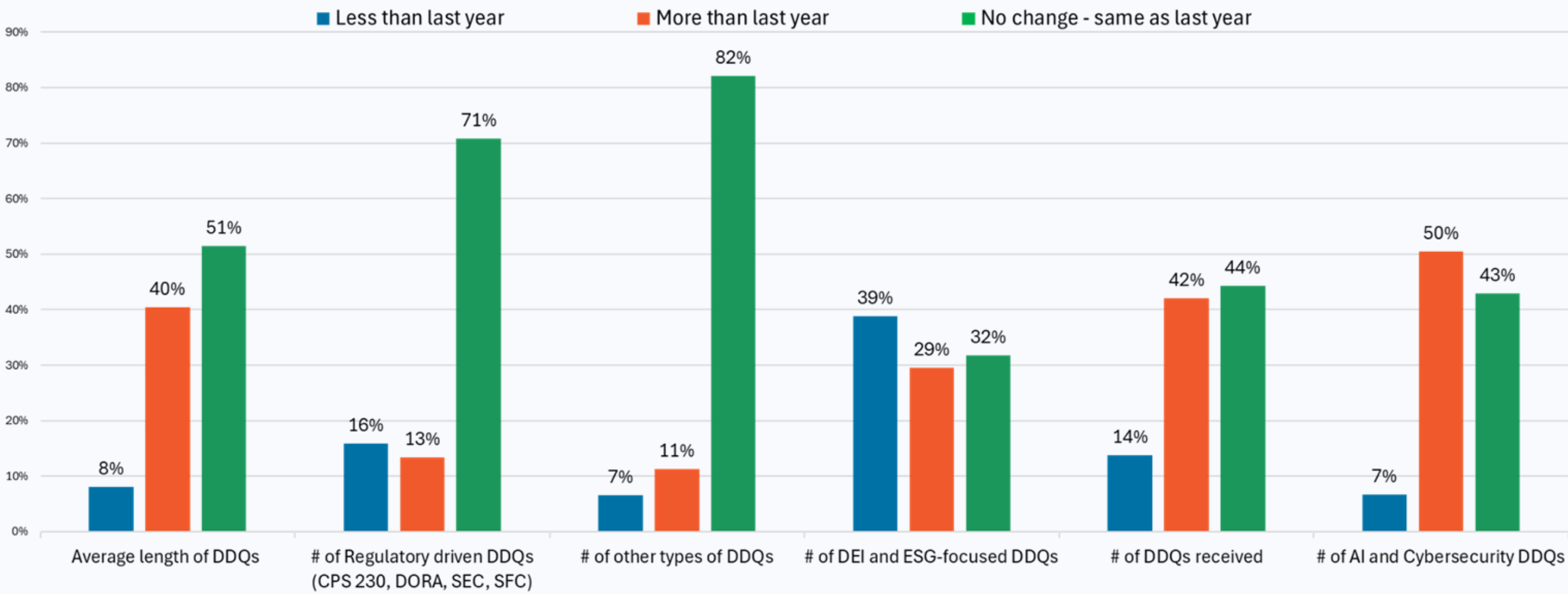
The Evolution of Due Diligence

Year-over-year changes in DDQ volume, complexity, and scope

+40% Increase in DDQ Length

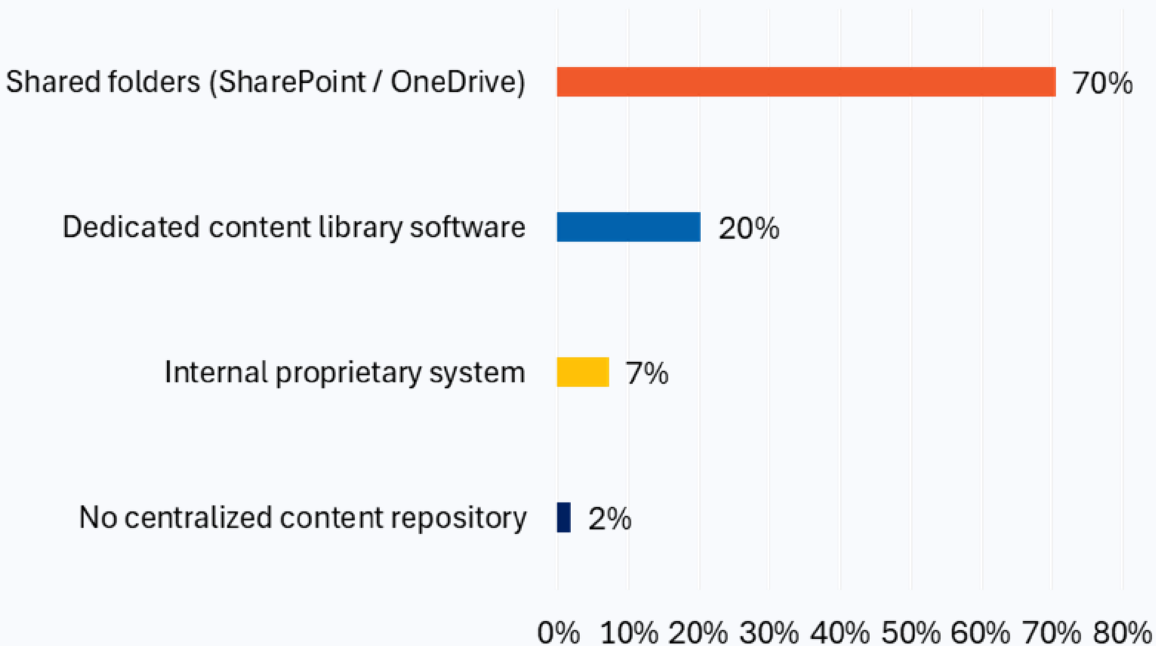
-39% Decline in DEI & ESG DDQs

+50% Growth in AI & Cyber DDQs



The Infrastructure Gap: Legacy Storage in an AI World

Where managers maintain their RFP/DDQ content libraries



The Bottleneck

70% of managers still use shared folders (SharePoint, OneDrive, Email) as the primary hurdle preventing firms from moving to high-fidelity AI-driven automation.

The AI Competitive Edge

The real advantage won't come from the AI model or tool itself, but from the centralized, high-quality content library that feeds it. This is the essential first step to operational maturity.

The Manager’s Perspective

We have observed a notable rise in AI-related questionnaires, driven by the growing global interest in artificial intelligence. There has been a slight decrease in ESG and DEI questionnaires, but this does not appear to be driven by any specific reason, and the reduction has not been significant.

~A $60 bn+ Asset Manager

Investors have inquired if we have an AI policy during operational due diligence meetings, however they have not specifically inquired or advised on their opinions regarding AI generated responses.

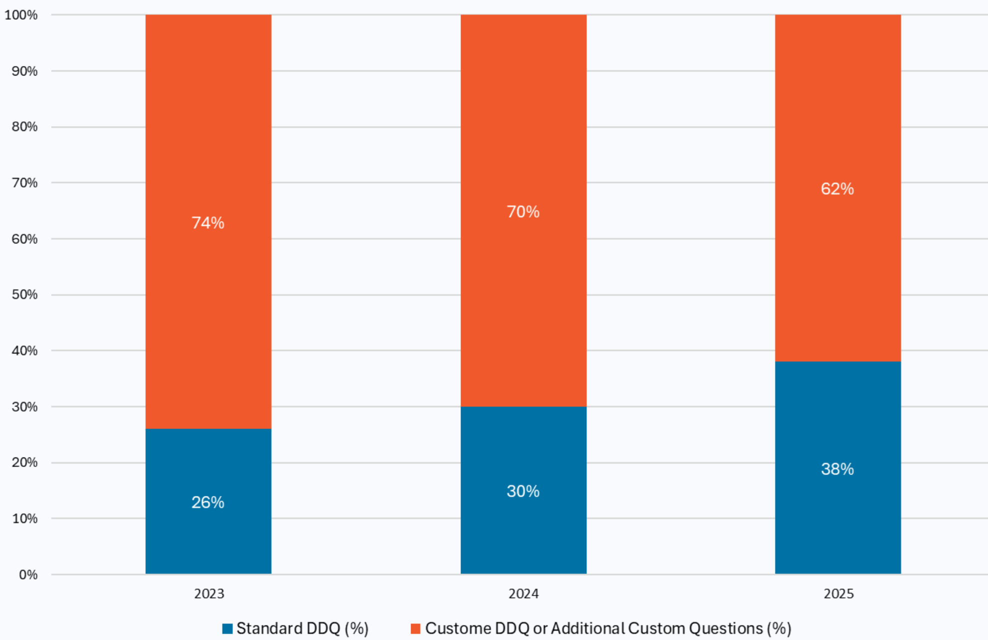
~A Private Credit Investment Manager

Standardization handles the volume, but AI solves the "bespoke burden." By layering AI over your Blaze Live Profiles, custom requests are instantly assembled from your firm’s institutional memory. This transforms the "Manual Chase" into a high-speed "Verification Exercise," allowing teams to support the complex requirements of Institutional, and now increasingly Wealth channels without increasing headcount.

~DiligenceVault

Is the Industry Finally Embracing Standards?

Three-year trend: custom DDQ vs. standard DDQ acceptance rates



Standardization Momentum

Standard DDQ acceptance has grown 46% since 2023, from 26% to 38% — the third consecutive year of positive shift toward efficiency.

The 2026 Shift

We are accelerating this shift with Blaze Live Profiles—enabling managers to update once and distribute across their entire client ecosystem instantly. It's time to trade the "Shared Drive Trap" for a live, machine-readable advantage.

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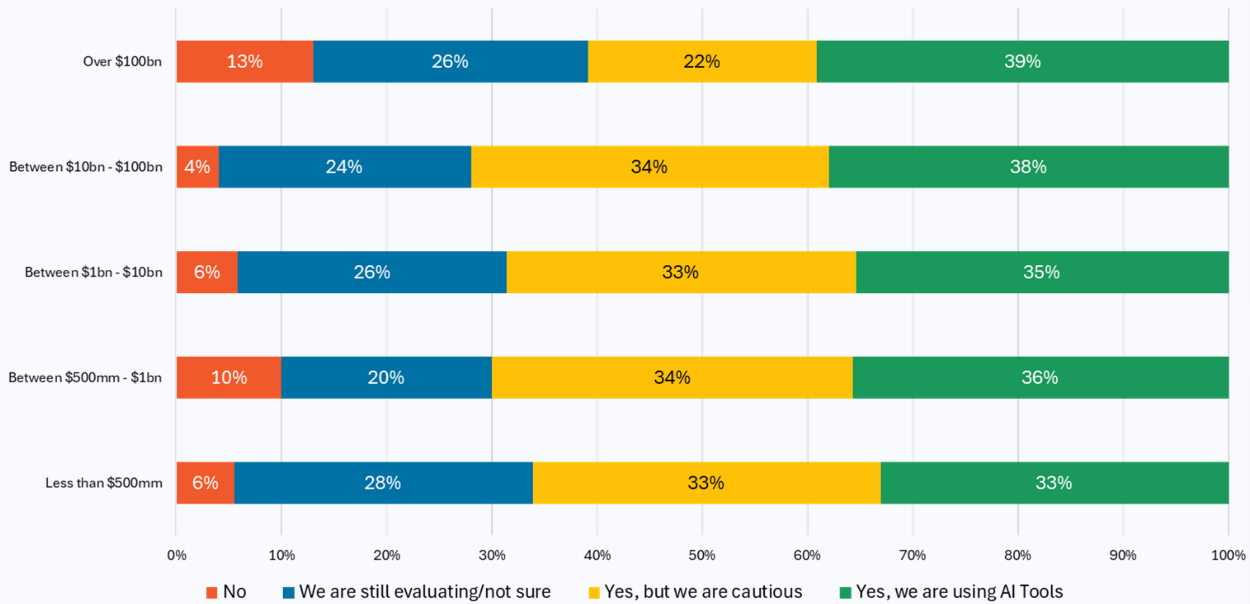
AI for All: The Great Equalizer in Asset Management

AI adoption rate by AUM tier mid-market firms lead the charge



Innovation Hub

Across all AUM cohorts, greater than 30% of firms are using AI tools.

20-26% of each cohort is still evaluating use of AI, which was in the 45-60% range.

The Equalizer Effect

Firms under $10bn are moving just as fast as $100bn+ counterparts, as AI deployment becomes omnipresent with DIY chat wrappers to specialized tools.

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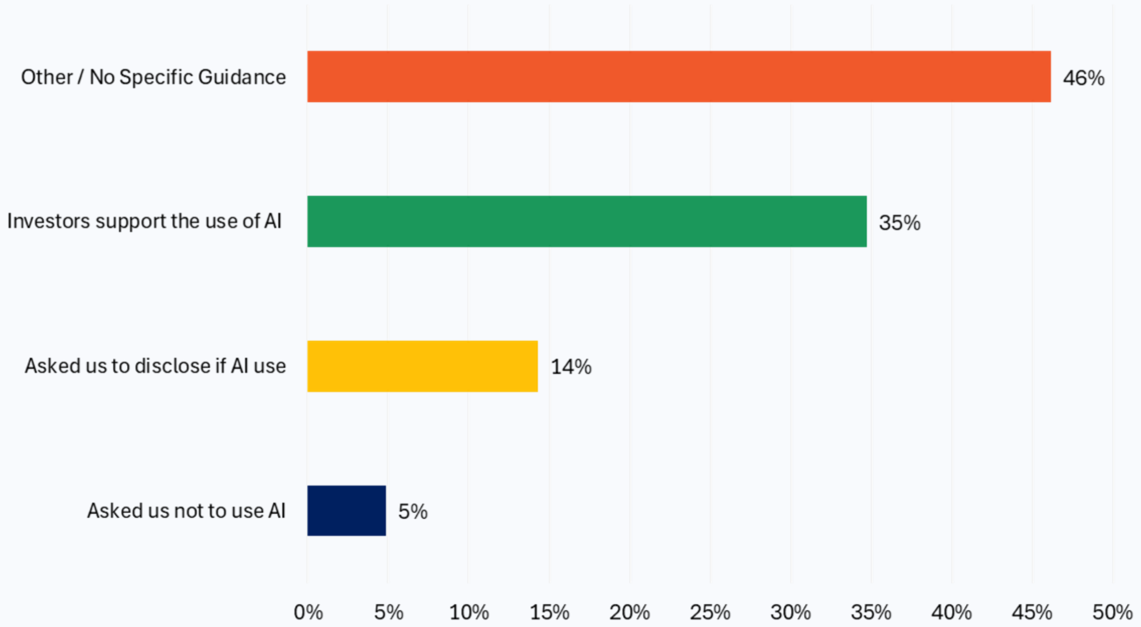
The AI Trust Gap: Balancing Speed with Governance

Investor expectations regarding AI use in DDQ responses



The Transparency Mandate

49% of investors favor AI for efficiency. 14% of the respondents indicate that allocator firms are beginning to ask for transparency in use of AI.

Verified Trust

As more managers disclose how they use AI and their overall AI governance framework which includes HITL verification, allocators will derive greater comfort.

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Key Takeaways for 2026

01

The Manual Era Is Over

780+ global managers confirm the industry shift from surviving the volume to mastering the machine. AI workflows are now table stakes.

02

Build a Transparent AI Framework

35% want AI speed; 19% demand guardrails. A documented AI governance policy — disclosing where AI is used and how oversight works — is a 2026 requirement.

03

Fix the Infrastructure First

70% still rely on shared folders. The competitive edge belongs to firms with accurate content and document libraries that can actually feed AI engines.

04

Standards Are Rising

38% allocators accept standard DDQs. Automate the standard with Blaze Live Profiles so your team can focus on what makes you truly unique.

Resources for You

- ↗ Investor Relations 5.0 – Transforming Investor Relations for the AI Age
- ↗ Modernizing Diligence: How a Global Hedge Fund Transformed its Standard DDQ Management Process
- ↗ The 2026 Manager Research Compendium
- ↗ AI Readiness Scorecard for Modern Asset Managers
- ↗ Whitepaper: Manager Survey 2024
- ↗ AI at DiligenceVault

Book a Live Demo

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