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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE (IT)**

**COURSE NAME : 21UCI508 - Business Intelligence**

**III YEAR / V SEMESTER**

**Unit I**

**Business Intelligence and Information Exploitation**

**Topic – Characteristics & categories of Information Asset**

## Information Asset & its characteristics

In today's digital economy, information is considered one of the most valuable assets of an organization, on par with physical and financial assets. An information asset refers to any data, knowledge, or digital resource that has value to an organization and contributes to its decision-making, operations, and strategic advantage. These assets include databases, documents, intellectual property, customer information, and more. To manage and protect these assets effectively, it is essential to understand their core characteristics, such as accuracy, completeness, timeliness, reliability, and relevance. Recognizing and evaluating these characteristics helps ensure high data quality and effective use of information for business intelligence, compliance, and competitive advantage.

# Information Asset & its characteristics

## Meaning of Information Asset

An Information Asset is any data or information that an organization owns or controls and that has value to the business. It can be used to support operations, decision-making, or strategic goals.

## Definition of Information Asset

Information Asset refers to any collection of data, information, or knowledge, stored in any format (digital or physical), which is recognized as valuable and important for an organization's activities, and requires proper management and protection.

## In business terms:

"An information asset is any piece of data or information that is considered valuable enough to be managed and protected by the organization."

# Characteristics of information assets



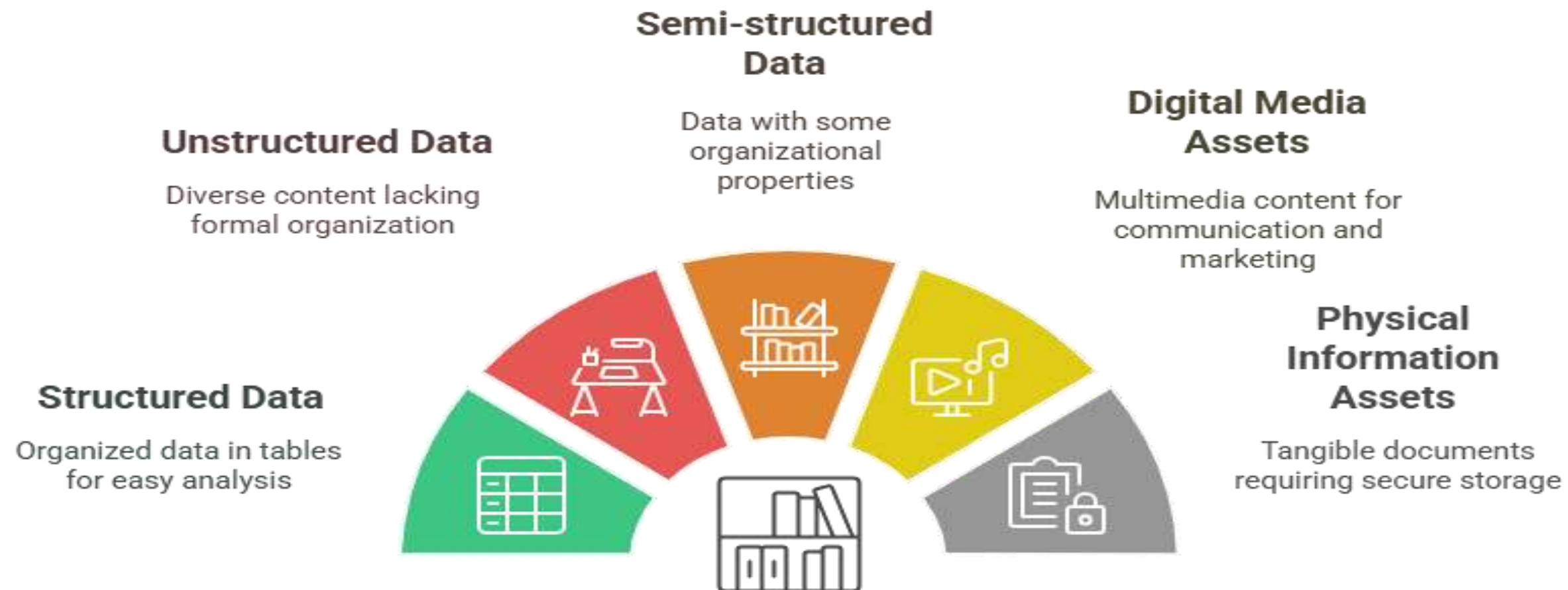
# Characteristics of information assets

- 1. Value:** Information assets hold significant value to an organization as they help in decision-making, operations, and gaining competitive advantage.
- 2. Confidentiality:** Some information assets contain sensitive or private data that must be protected from unauthorized access.
- 3. Integrity:** Information must be accurate, reliable, and free from unauthorized modification to maintain trustworthiness.
- 4. Availability:** Information assets should be accessible to authorized users whenever needed, ensuring smooth business processes.
- 5. Ownership:** Each information asset has a clearly defined owner or custodian responsible for its management and protection.
- 6. Relevance:** The information should be relevant and useful to current business activities and decision-making.
- 7. Usability:** Information should be easy to use, interpret, and integrate with other business processes or systems.
- 8. Compliance:** Information assets often need to comply with legal, regulatory, or organizational policies.
- 9. Lifecycle:** Information assets go through a lifecycle — from creation, storage, usage, to disposal — that must be managed effectively.

# Categories of information assets

In today's information-driven world, organizations treat data and information as valuable assets that need to be carefully managed. These assets come in various forms and can be broadly categorized based on their structure, format, and use. Understanding the different categories of information assets is vital for efficient data management, security, and leveraging information for strategic advantage.

## Types of Information Assets



## 1. Structured Data

Structured data refers to information that is highly organized and stored in a predefined format such as tables with rows and columns. This type of data is commonly found in relational databases and spreadsheets. Because of its orderly nature, structured data is easy to input, search, and analyze using traditional data management tools.

Examples of structured data include customer records stored in a CRM system, sales transactions, financial statements, and inventory details. Structured data plays a crucial role in business intelligence and analytics, providing accurate and timely information to support operational and strategic decisions.

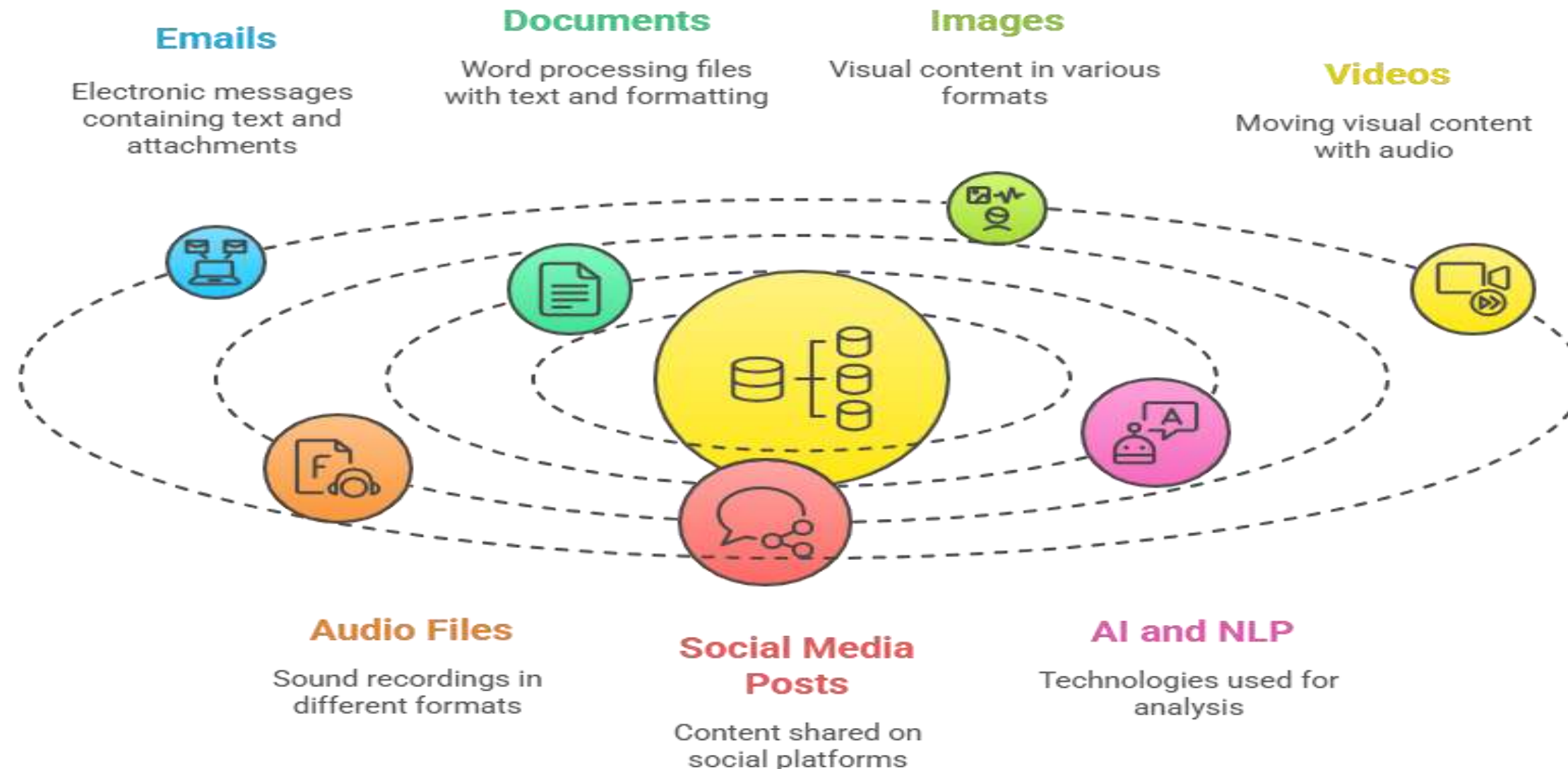
### Structured Data's Role in Business Decisions



## 2. Unstructured Data

Unstructured data lacks a formal organization or schema, making it more challenging to process and analyze. It includes a wide variety of content such as emails, word processing documents, images, videos, audio files, and social media posts. Despite its lack of structure, unstructured data holds immense value as it often contains rich context and insights that structured data may miss.

Organizations increasingly use advanced technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Natural Language Processing (NLP) to analyze unstructured data and extract meaningful patterns, such as customer sentiment analysis or brand reputation monitoring.



## 3. Semi-structured Data

Semi-structured data falls between structured and unstructured data. It contains elements of both, having some organizational properties in the form of tags or metadata but not fitting into rigid database tables. Examples include XML files, JSON documents, server logs, and HTML pages.

Semi-structured data is important for data integration and exchange between different systems, enabling flexibility while still allowing easier parsing and interpretation compared to purely unstructured data.

### Semi-structured Data Characteristics

Characteristic	Description
 <b>Definition</b>	Falls between structured and unstructured data
 <b>Organization</b>	Contains tags or metadata
 <b>Examples</b>	XML, JSON, server logs, HTML
 <b>Importance</b>	Data integration and exchange
 <b>Parsing</b>	Easier than unstructured data

## 4. Digital Media Assets

Digital media assets encompass multimedia content such as videos, audio recordings, animations, graphics, and presentations. These assets are essential for modern communication, marketing, and training purposes. Digital media enhances customer engagement, supports e-learning, and helps build brand identity.

The management of digital media assets requires specialized software and storage solutions due to their large file sizes and specific format requirements.

### Digital Media's Core Components



## 5. Physical Information Assets

Physical information assets are tangible forms of information such as printed contracts, handwritten notes, paper files, and legal documents. Although many organizations are moving towards digitalization, physical documents continue to play a vital role, especially when legal or regulatory compliance necessitates physical records.

Physical assets require secure storage and careful handling to prevent loss, damage, or unauthorized access. Often, organizations digitize these assets to improve accessibility and preservation.

### Safeguarding Physical Information



#### **Tangible Forms**

Includes printed contracts, handwritten notes, and paper files.



#### **Legal Compliance**

Ensures adherence to legal and regulatory requirements.



#### **Secure Storage**

Emphasizes the need for safe and protected storage.



#### **Digitalization**

Highlights the process of converting physical assets to digital formats.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, information assets form the backbone of organizational knowledge and decision-making processes, driving operational efficiency, innovation, and competitive differentiation. By understanding their characteristics—such as accuracy, consistency, confidentiality, integrity, and usability—organizations can better manage, secure, and leverage information for strategic benefits. Effective identification, classification, and governance of information assets ensure data-driven decision-making, regulatory compliance, and sustainable business value in the modern data-centric world.

