



II. Industry overview

Data centers are part of the modern digital economy, providing the infrastructure services required to store, process, and transmit data at scale. At their core, data centers deliver compute, storage, networking, hosting, and continuous operational control, which are used by cloud computing, artificial intelligence, digital communications, and data-intensive applications across virtually every sector of the economy.

While early data centers were closely associated with discrete physical facilities housing computing equipment, the industry has evolved into a distributed infrastructure production system. Today, data center services are delivered through a combination of hyperscale facilities, colocation environments, edge deployments, and managed infrastructure operations. These services rely increasingly on software-defined systems and monitoring tools to meet operational requirements related to uptime, performance, and system continuity.

Reflecting this evolution, data center services are no longer produced exclusively within establishments classified under a single industry code. While NAICS code 518210 (Computing Infrastructure Providers, Data Processing, Web Hosting, and Related Services) remains the core classification for data center operators, a growing share of data center service delivery occurs within establishments classified under adjacent IT services and infrastructure-management industries. In these cases, firms may deliver functionally identical data center services—including responsibility for uptime, availability, and operational control—despite being classified outside NAICS code 518210.