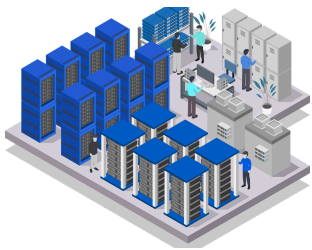
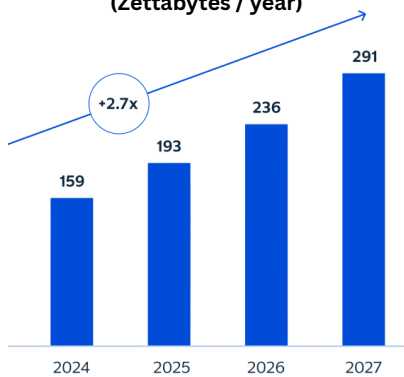


SHOULD WE BUILD MORE DATA CENTERS IN OHIO?

Have you ever wondered how AI can answer questions with the click of a button? The answer lies in facilities that many Ohioans find controversial: data centers. A data center is a building filled with computing infrastructure, including systems and servers that process, move, and store a massive amount of information. These networks support services like cloud storage, apps, websites, and of course, AI. Data centers require a large input of electricity to power computers, large supplies of water to prevent overheating, and can also contribute to noise, light, and air pollution. As companies race to develop AI, many are seeking to build more of these facilities in Ohio.

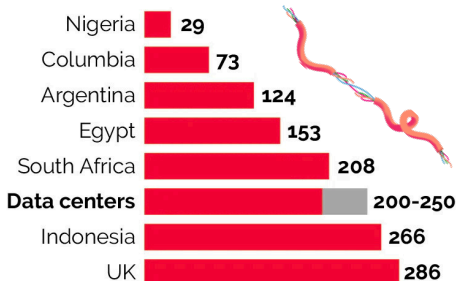


Increase in Projected Data Growth (Zettabytes / year)



More data creates the need for more data storage

Domestic Electricity Consumption of Countries VS. All Data Centers Combined in 2020 (in TWh)



By: Sarah Nazzal

YES, OHIO SHOULD BUILD MORE DATA CENTERS

Data centers are the future, and Ohio can't fall behind. Virginia, the state with the most data centers, generated about \$31 billion in economic output from data center operations in 2023 alone. And consider the job opportunities! Constructing a data center can require up to 1,500 workers, from equipment operators to electricians, and many positions don't need a college degree. Once built, centers still need permanent employees such as engineers, maintenance staff, and security personnel. Most importantly, data centers support innovation. Advances in AI are leading to breakthroughs in many fields. Although the power demands are great, these facilities also spur research into more sustainable power solutions like fuel cells and solar power. Many data centers are also shifting to closed loop water systems, which reduce water consumption by up to 70%. With time and proper environmental regulations, data centers will no longer be a cause for concern, and instead drive progress.

NO, OHIO SHOULDN'T BUILD MORE CENTERS

Data centers may sound appealing until there's one built in your backyard! The promised benefits of data centers are uncertain, but the consequences are definite. A large data center can use as much electricity as 100,000 homes. Meeting this demand requires electricity companies to build more infrastructure and expand the electric grid. In states with many data centers, like Virginia, electricity prices have increased by up to 267% over the last five years. On top of raising utility bills, AI data centers consume 3-5 million gallons of water a day to prevent servers from overheating. Because much of this water evaporates during the cooling process, it cannot be reused, removing it permanently from the local immediate water supply. Lastly, data centers make living quality worse for their neighbors. Diesel-powered backup generators release pollutants like nitrogen dioxide that can harm health. Generators and cooling equipment create a constant bothersome hum, and all-night lighting disrupts the natural circadian rhythms of the body. The harm of data centers most definitely outweighs the good.