UCLA IoES
Corporate Partners Program
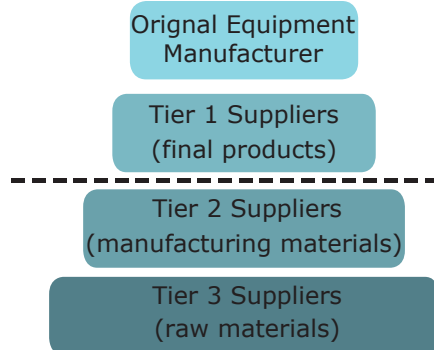
Watering the Tech Industry
How major tech companies are approaching water sustainability

The top 10 US tech firms alone reported over 1 trillion dollars in collective revenue in 2018, illustrating their prominent role in the modern economy. Building off of this economic capacity, tech companies are leaders, not just in technology, but in sustainability. While traditionally tech companies' sustainability efforts have focused on increasing energy efficiency, global water scarcity has prompted new efforts to reduce their water footprints. This project set out to answer the question of how tech companies are incorporating water use concerns into their decision-making.

The team conducted research into the water policies of 12 Fortune 500 tech companies. The four main trends uncovered by their research are listed below.

TREND 1

A company's water reporting rarely goes beyond its direct contractors (Tier 1 suppliers)

Orignal Equipment Manufacturer

Tier 1 Suppliers (final products)

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Tier 2 Suppliers (manufacturing materials)

Tier 3 Suppliers (raw materials)

TREND 2

There is strong demand for better water accounting & reporting tools

Data Collection

-Submeters
-Utility bills
-Moisture sensors

Risk Assessment Software

ECOLAB WATER RISK MONETIZER
POWERED BY MICROSOFT AND TRUCOST

Global watertool©

AQUEDUCT
Measuring and Mapping Water Risk

TREND 3

Risk to water supply motivates innovation at data centers

Water Scarcity
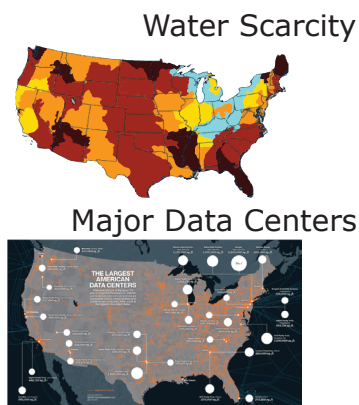
Major Data Centers

TREND 4

Water data are collected monthly but reviewed annually by leadership

1 Data Reporting
Collect data from data centers and supply chain

2 Leadership
Communicate data to corporate executives

3 Results
Lower annual water use to reduce total impact

Companies included in this report:

Apple · TEXAS INSTRUMENTS · CISCO · intel · CenturyLink · AT&T · hp · XEROX · IBM · WD · Microsoft · MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS

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