Modern Data Governance

The Three Steps to a Scalable and Effective

Data Governance Program

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Explosion of the World's Data Volume

1 ZB (zettabyte) = 1 billion terabytes

Source: IDC Research

1.8ZB

175ZB

59ZB

2011 → **2022** → **2025** forecast

The Sun may very well be at the center of our solar system, but the world of commerce and business revolves around data.

As organizations and business units create, gather, consume, and analyze astonishing amounts of data every day, they're keenly aware of data's potential to create a business advantage that directly impacts revenue and the bottom line.

How your organization manages its data is crucial for current and future performance.

Role of Data Governance

Data governance (DG) is the process of managing the availability, usability, integrity and security of data in your organization, based on internal data standards and policies that also control data usage.

Effective data governance ensures data is consistent, trustworthy and doesn't get misused. It's increasingly critical as organizations face new data privacy regulations and rely more and more on data analytics to help optimize operations and drive business decision-making. If you're an organization of any shape or size using data to drive revenue, product development, or any kind of business decision-making, effective data governance is a must.

Modern Data Governance

The Data Economy necessitates sharing of data and easy access to it by suppliers, partners, customers, vendors and other third parties. To facilitate this, many large enterprises are migrating to the cloud with tens of millions of dollars invested in this very risky process. In fact, data in the cloud often means multiple clouds.

While this is an important business need, storing data in the cloud greatly increases the risk exposure of an organization, especially when migrating data from one place to another. It is important to manage data in a manner that ensures access without compromising security and privacy.

The data governance of old, which mostly focused on organizing on-premise, server-based data assets, needs to adapt to changing conditions.

55%

of organizations currently use multiple public clouds, with 21% saying they use three or more.

Source: Tech Target

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Creating Effective Data Governance

Balancing business needs with security, privacy and regulatory pressures is not an easy task. Meanwhile the stakes have never been higher, even as the exposure increases by the day. Team work is integral to managing this risk. Data Governance is in a unique position to work with Privacy and Security partners as data increasingly takes center stage.

Effective data governance essentially boils down to three key steps.

Step 1: Know Your Data

You cannot fix what you don't know and acknowledge. While this sounds pretty rudimentary, given the ubiquitous nature of data within an organization, this task can seem overwhelming. But it is easier to tackle if you focus on the following three areas:

A. Data Repositories
Make a list of data repositories. There is a tendency to assume that this is known, but when you consider the cloud and unstructured data, more often than not there are unknowns. It is also important to have a process whereby this list is updated on a regular basis.

B. Data Map
Next, get a complete list of the data assets contained in these repositories. This includes but is not limited to employee data, customer data, other sensitive data, proprietary data, licensed data.

C. Access
Understand who has access to what kind of information. This is critical to understand the current level of exposure and risk.
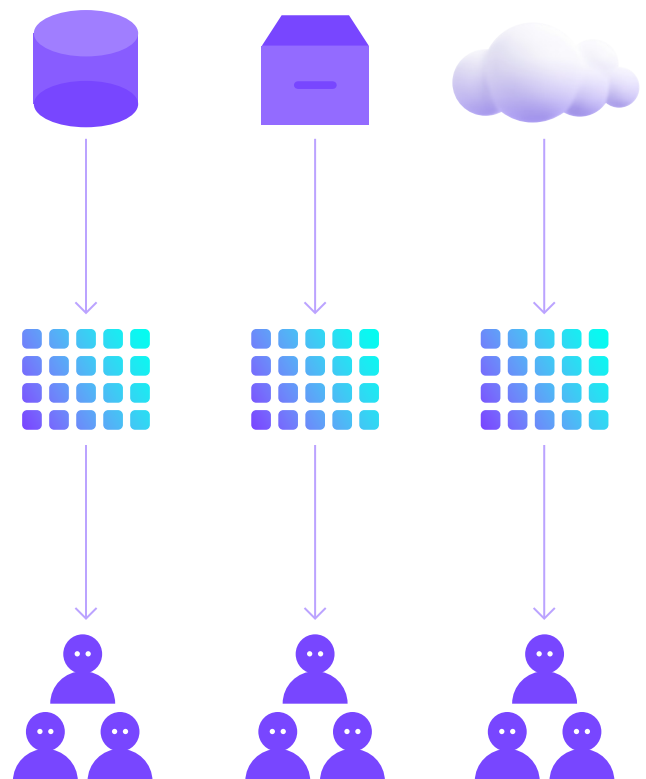
Step 2: Plan for Success

Once you have an accurate understanding of where your data is and who has access to it, the next step is to map out policies and rules that establish boundaries around storage, use and sharing of the data. Management support is critical to getting data governance off the ground. Policies that take into account how the business units use the data and not just the regulatory or compliance perspective have a better chance of adoption and success. While a little time consuming, this is not inherently difficult. Here is a checklist of things to keep in mind for that will help with implementation and resource allocation:

- [ ] **Crown Jewels:** Understand what the crown jewels are, i.e. data assets that are of greater strategic and regulatory importance to the organization.

- [ ] **Requirements:** Make sure you meet primary and secondary stakeholder needs and obligations.

- [ ] **Accountability:** Define ownership, without which there is little chance of success.

- [ ] **Buy-In:** Get top Management backing and buy-in by key decision makers and stakeholders.

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Step 3: Enable the Organization

Training, communication and an incremental approach are important to successfully operationalizing the plan. If you want an efficient and transparent Data Governance program that enables and meets business needs day in and day out, however, you're going to need the appropriate tooling.

Today, most governance teams are driven by spreadsheets and manual input, providing documentation at best. Data catalogs in recent times have made some progress but are still very difficult to keep up-to-date without significant effort given exponential growth in data and fast adoption of cloud platforms. Without automation, you'll constantly be playing catch-up.

With the right technology, a Data Governance program is able to:

- ✅ Continuously maintain and update an accurate map of the organization's most important assets.

- ✅ Ensure only the right individuals have access to this data.

- ✅ Implement automated policies that surface risks proactively with alerts and notifications.

- ✅ Promote collaboration between key stakeholders such as application owners, privacy, and security to mitigate and remediate risks.

- ✅ Provide proof of compliance and easy-to-understand, comprehensive reporting.

Automation that empowers practical data governance through all of the above was a powerful motivator for building the Divebell platform. Automated classification, access profiling, and the ability to assign business metadata and set policy to surface issues are built into Divebell's powerful, easy-to-use platform. It is designed to empower data governance across functional areas, drastically reducing the time spent on manual input and repetitive compliance exercises.

Modern Data Governance makes good business sense. The cost of error is very high in this era of ever increasing security and privacy regulations. By acknowledging current gaps and knowing your data, establishing rules and policies, and providing modern tools for success, you'll provide the essential building blocks for effective data governance. Enabling teams with training and the right technology for automation is critical to building a sustainable data governance program.

About Divebell

We designed our powerful, easy-to-use platform to meet the needs of privacy teams across functional areas, drastically reducing the time spent on privacy and compliance management. We believe that when privacy and data issues are easier, you can focus on the work that matters to you most.

Headquartered in Silicon Valley, our team is led by industry veterans from Vontu, Symantec, Trifacta, IAPP, PwC, Lookout, and Nymity. We've built a world-class data privacy and security platform that allows companies to take command of their compliance, customer data, and privacy.

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