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Data Governance

Data governance is having a purposeful system to responsibly manage all the data the company already has and will obtain. There are 3 general reasons to have a data governance plan: limit legal liability via compliance, understanding and extracting value from data, and simply to ensure needed data is available for company operations. One huge benefit of having a data governance component to the company is just knowing which data we have and how we use it.

The first step in launching a data governance program is to gather information on the data, the usage of data, the users of data, and the storage of data our company handles. This first step is just a factual report of the current situation of the company and data practices. The second step would then be to analyze the nature of the data, data practices, and organization. The first priority in the second step would be to identify any liability issues and address them (probably even during the information gathering stage if straightforward). The third step would be to classify the data via a metadata taxonomy and set data valuation, this would be done with the cooperation and input of responsible stakeholders (i.e., department managers, or shipping/receiving clerks, etc.). Finally, a formalized plan would need to be proposed, adopted, and implemented to keep all deliberate data management information and policies current, compliant, and useful; all with regular review and enforcement, including strictly following data retention policies.

Data governance is necessary to “[r]educe risks”, and to “[i]mproving processes” of any company (Sebastian-Coleman, 2018, Chapter 5, Business Drivers For Data Governance). With data practices coming under increased scrutiny, even by Congress, it would be malpractice not to address data and data management issues. An initial approach to incorporate a data governance plan is simply just to identify and formalize what is already done in the company (Siener, 2014, Chapter 1, Definition of Data Governance). Where possible, nothing will be changed but written policy. Also most changes (like taxonomy and mapping) will take place transparently and unobtrusively by the data governance team. Any carefully planned disruptions will be to increase the value of data to the company by limiting liability via compliance, extracting actionable value out of data, and ensuring data is of use to our employees and all pertinent stakeholders.

Resources

Sebastian-Coleman, L. (2018). *Navigating the labyrinth: An executive guide to data management*. [Kindle Fire HD 10 (9th generation)]. Retrieved on January 13, 2021, from <https://www.amazon.com/>

Seiner, R.S. (2014). *Non-Invasive Data Governance: The Path of Least Resistance and Greatest Success*. [Kindle Fire HD 10 (9th generation)]. Retrieved on January 26, 2021, from <https://www.amazon.com/>