Data Governance Survey 2017

In association with:

CIO WaterCooler

VERITAS

Nicola Askham
THE DATA GOVERNANCE COACH
Summary

It has been a popular opinion that over the past few years there has been an increased focus on data governance, but until now any evidence has been largely anecdotal. This survey has been an excellent tool in assessing the maturity of the data governance market and highlights some interesting areas.

There has been a perception that only large corporates are embracing this data management discipline and most of them only because a regulator requires them to. It is very interesting to note that of the organisations who participated, nearly half of them were from small and medium-size organisations. There has also been a decided shift towards companies implementing data governance for the benefits that can be achieved, rather than because they "have to". Organisations are starting to understand that good quality data can help them achieve their strategy and objectives.

It is heartening that a resounding 39% of respondents confirmed that they do have a data governance framework in place. And in terms of how long organisations have been doing data governance, it is interesting that only a very small percentage have been doing this for more than three years.

One of the questions I am often asked when starting an engagement with a new client is: how long will it take to fully implement and embed a data governance framework?

This really is a "how long is a piece of string" question! The answer will depend on the size and complexity of the organisation, as well as their openness to change. Notwithstanding these factors, I always say is that will take six months to a year before you notice any benefits and at least a further year, before a data governance framework can become truly embedded in your organisation. The results of this survey have confirmed that these timescales hold true across most organisations.

The high percentage of organisations with executive buy in for the data governance initiatives is heartening and illustrates that this is linked to how well the business understand the value of data governance. This reinforces the message that you need executive sponsorship for long-term data governance success and sustainability.
In a world where big data and analytics are seen as the sexy or trendy things to be doing, it has been of concern to me that too many companies were jumping on the exciting side of analysing and visualising their data without realising that if the data is of poor quality they could well be making decisions based on the wrong data. So for me, the strong focus on doing data governance so that they can make better decisions is fantastic.

One area of concern raised by this survey is the high percentage of respondents that have not got any central support for the data governance framework, or even have plans to put that in place. In my experience without at least one person in your organisation having responsibility for and supporting the data governance framework, it is unlikely to be sustainable in the long-term. Failure to do this can result in your data governance initiative being seen as a one-off project and once the initial work has been done everyone may revert back to their old ways of working.

Nicola Askham, The Data Governance Coach
Who took part

We invited CIOs, Heads of IT and those in a senior IT leadership role to participate in a survey that reflects the broad audience of followers and visitors to the CIO WaterCooler. Respondents were chosen at random, in terms of industry and size.

Organisations by No. of Employees

![Bar chart showing the distribution of organisations by number of employees.]

Respondents by Region

![Pie chart showing the distribution of respondents by region.]

Scope of responsibility

![Pie chart showing the distribution of scope of responsibility.]

UK & Ireland: 64%
ROW: 14%
N. America: 13%
Europe: 9%

Localised: 43%
Regional: 40%
Global: 17%

Where companies stand currently with regard to Data Governance

As the volume of data and the number of sources increase, even for smaller companies, and increasing compliance and regulation call for more data governance, we first asked our respondents how far they had come in regards to implementing a data governance framework.

The good news is that only 22% don’t have a formal framework in place. However, our UK respondents appear to be furthest behind with only 29% saying yes compared to 72% in North America.

We also found that 53% of companies had only started working on this in the past year.
Why are organisations implementing data governance frameworks?

Clearly regulatory requirements, such as GDPR, have raised the importance of data governance, however what we’ve seen from the survey is a real appetite for organisations wanting to provide the business with good quality data to enable better decision making. We also saw respondents stress that the business value derived from data being linked directly to its quality.

- **63%**: We want our data to be of good quality for our company to achieve its strategy and objectives
- **21%**: We want to manage our data better
- **8%**: We have policy that requires that we implement data governance
Key drivers for implementing data governance

Throughout our survey we not only saw a focus on regulatory requirements but also on how organisations are looking at data to improve efficiencies within their businesses. We also saw a relatively low number of respondents quoting improving customer service as a key driver.

69% of those that had stated they had either achieved or were making progress toward their objective had been working on this for more than 2 years.

Of those that had stated that they’d made little or no progress towards their objective, 92% had been implementing data governance for less than a year.
How organisations are approaching data governance

One of the great things to see coming out of the survey is the level of buy-in at an executive level. Data governance is clearly seen as an important issue by the executive boards, though it’s importance appears to be driven by the regulator requirements as opposed to better decision making. With the vast majority of those with executive buy-in citing regulatory requirements as an objective, if not their key driver.

Have you got executive buy-in?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>81%</td>
<td>19%</td>
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We also asked respondents to expand on why they hadn’t received the executive buy-in of their peers?

“It’s seen as an IT problem rather than a business one and is also viewed as a distraction rather than a benefit.”

“Too busy focusing on other things”

“Still working to make senior management understand the strategic relevance of a powerful data governance structure”

“Data Governance and Security Compliance is a tough sell. It is a continuous sell especially in small to mid-size businesses.”
Does the business understand the value of data governance

Some of the biggest challenges identified by respondents in implementing a data governance framework relate to how well the business and its users understand the importance of data governance. Many of the challenges mentioned relate to whether the business sees data governance and data quality as a priority. Fortunately 63% of respondents felt that their businesses understood the value, however the importance of executive sponsorship is vital as confidence in that understanding drops to just 33% when executive sponsorship doesn’t exist.

Is the value of data governance understood by the business?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>With Executive Sponsorship</th>
<th>Without Executive Sponsorship</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, definitely</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, not really</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitely not</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
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What benefits are you hoping to achieve from implementing a data governance framework?

As we’ve seen with the key driver for implementing a data governance framework, there is a clear desire to benefit from better decisions and using data to drive efficiencies. It also appears that a relatively high proportion of organisations aren’t currently looking for data governance to benefit the customer.
Is data governance viewed as an IT or Business function in your organisation?

Respondents were pretty well split evenly between data governance being a IT or Business function. However, a number of respondents indicated that this was currently being discussed internally and also that, bearing in mind our respondents represented the senior IT function, that a standalone or shared function would be the most desired.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared</td>
<td>20%</td>
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We also asked whether their organisations had a data governance or data quality team in place?

- **60%** of respondents haven’t got a central team in place responsibly for data governance or data quality
- **66%** of those respondent’s organisations are looking to set up a data quality team or adding responsibilities to an existing team
What are the biggest challenges with implementing data governance?

**People**

“Ensuring all employees comply with all data compliance rules”

“Changing organisational roles and buy-in”

“Lack of resourcing and expertise”

“Culture change”

“Some people still don’t see data as a priority”

“New data sources are emerging all the time and the potential impact of GDPR aren’t fully understood”

“Lack of documentation and knowledge on data flow and structures”

“Accountability over data”

“Getting people throughout the business to understand that it is their responsibility and that it will be beneficial for them in the longer term”

“People and change”

“User understanding”

“Capacity/hiring/size of team to meet the high demand/appetite from the business”

“People and change”

“Lack of understanding”

“Getting agreement on how to do it”

“Getting the rest of the business to agree to its importance”

“Getting agreement on how to do it”

“Securing sufficient funding to implement compliance and governance throughout the organisation”

“Getting buy-in due to costs to do it The industry expects so much out of businesses and some older management teams do not want change because of cost they have never had to pay”

**Data**

“Evolving data sources and data quality (or lack thereof)”

“the use of 3rd party SaaS applications such as dropbox, googledrive etc.”

“Lack of understanding”

“New data sources are emerging all the time and the potential impact of GDPR aren’t fully understood”

“Accountability over data”

“Getting the business more involved in ownership”

“Business understanding the importance and allowing the time/budget to get ‘the house in order’ and not just throwing another system in to help handle data needs!”

“Getting buy-in due to costs to do it The industry expects so much out of businesses and some older management teams do not want change because of cost they have never had to pay”

**Strategy**

“Ensuring all employees comply with all data compliance rules”

“Changing organisational roles and buy-in”

“Lack of resourcing and expertise”

“Culture change”

“Some people still don’t see data as a priority”

“New data sources are emerging all the time and the potential impact of GDPR aren’t fully understood”

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About the CIO WaterCooler

The CIO WaterCooler is an eco-system for CIOs and leading technologists from around the world to come together, share their news and views and discuss the challenges facing the industry.

It features a rich collection of inspiring articles, blogs and ideas from IT leaders, analysts and service providers, with insights into the challenges and successes within the sector.

It provides opportunity for CIO’s & IT leaders to raise their profile, share best practice and also keep abreast of what’s going on in the market place.

www.ciwwatercooler.co.uk

About the Survey

Over the last 3 months, the CIO WaterCooler invited CIOs from a mixture of industries, size of companies and regions to share how they and their organisations were approaching the issue of data governance, their drivers and benefit they hope to achieve in building a data governance framework.