



4 tips for Metadata Management





How to understand the value of your data

To truly understand the value of your data, you need to have knowledge of **where it came from, why it exists and how relevant it is.**

Metadata is data that describes other data. Whenever data is captured, moved across an organisation's structure, integrated with other types of data, profiled, used, analysed, or accessed by users, metadata is generated.

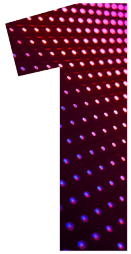
As data becomes more important in organisational culture, the need for capabilities to support this change, such as metadata management, grows too. Metadata management is the discipline of gathering, curating, monitoring, and leveraging metadata. Modern metadata management solutions, such as a data catalog, can help organisations improve their metadata management practices efficiently and effectively.

They typically do this by connecting to a wide range of metadata sources (e.g. files, databases, data processing systems), integrating and consolidating these into a structured format, and providing a range of features through a user-friendly interface to help people consume and leverage metadata.

So, what is the best way to approach a metadata management solution? The tips in this guide will give you a good focus on where to get started.



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Understand what you want to capture and why

A common mistake when exploring the idea of metadata management is to search for the best, most affordable software tool and then try and retrofit it into your existing IT and business landscape.

The problem here, is that you don't yet know which components of that tool are the most important to you as an organisation, or indeed how the metadata is going to be managed, and by which teams.

The first step in any data cataloging endeavour, is to understand what your business and IT teams want to capture, and why. This forms the basis of your requirements gathering and will allow you to approach the software market with much more rigour.

Effective metadata management clarifies data origins and relationships. A clearer view of an organisation's data can lead to more informed decision making, innovation, collaboration and improved processes, ultimately giving businesses a competitive edge.

Not all data cataloging tools are built the same – some focus on the more technical use cases featuring automated discovery, AI and lineage, while others are focused on the business metadata – policies, rules, glossaries etc.

Of course, there are a lot of tools that do both, but you still want to understand which components are most relevant to you, and if the requirements are varied across different functional areas of the organisation.



2

Have a strategic approach

Organisations that have a data strategy (or even want to have one), will need to optimise their approach to metadata management if they are to have any lasting success. Imagine navigating without a map, finding a book in a library without the genres, baking a cake without a recipe, building a house without a blueprint – yes you might deliver an outcome that resembles what you think you wanted but:

- Will it last?
- Could you do it again?
- Could you do it faster?
- Could you do it at scale?
- What risks did you have to face to deliver the outcome?
- Is the outcome what you set out to achieve?

By establishing a strong foundation in metadata management, organisations can repeat their successes, reduce risks, and achieve their intended outcomes more efficiently. Without a well-defined data strategy and robust metadata management, your efforts risk becoming one-off successes that lack replicability and scalability.



3

Don't forget your data governance organisation and business roles

Even with a powerful tool at your disposal, there is no guarantee you will be able to achieve your desired return on investment just by embedding it within the business and hoping the cataloguing of metadata is done seamlessly.

To have effective metadata management, it is critical that your business and data teams have clear accountabilities and responsibilities when it comes to the management of these artefacts. In addition to defining the right roles, there are usually important processes to be designed and embedded too.

These processes govern how metadata is created, viewed, updated, shared and deleted. It is through this combination of people, processes and tooling that you can truly make metadata management a natural, operational part of your business. Without this, your software purchase may just gather dust.

A critical outcome from any data catalog investment is democratisation of data. This is where data knowledge is accessible and shared in a way (via a data catalog) that empowers and enables teams to self-serve. It breaks down key person dependencies and marks a step-change in practices towards a more inclusive model. As a result, teams can make better decisions faster, feel more engaged, and find it easier to get their jobs done effectively.



4

Start small

Whether it is creating that data governance organisation, or capturing your metadata, it can be tempting to think that you need to define everything for your entire organisation from day 1.

The truth is that the change management challenge of this is usually far too great to overcome, and there is a risk that your programme loses traction or fails completely. To ease the business into a new way of working, it is often better to “slice” your organisation and pick a candidate area for a “proof of concept”.

From this, you can define the right data governance operating model and test any software to see if you can bring about tangible change and maturity before you try it across other business areas.

It also means you don’t need to worry about capturing metadata across every system and business area – your scope will only be the metadata that is relevant to the business area you have chosen for the proof of concept, which is much more targeted and digestible for your business teams.



How can Amplifi help?

Amplifi is a modern data consultancy for modern data challenges.

Not only do we understand the technical aspect of data, we also understand the positive impact good data management has on businesses. A data catalog can be the 'keystone' of an MDE. We can help organisations maximise and future-proof their data catalog investment, supporting their broader journey towards an MDE.

We empower our customers to innovate, grow and succeed by establishing and delivering strategies across all elements of the data value chain.

From the governance and management of data through to analytics and automation, our integrated approach to modern data ecosystems delivers measurable results through a combination of expert consultancy and best-in-breed technology.

Our services include Data Strategy, Data Governance, Data Quality, Data Migration, Data Integration, Data Mesh, Data Fabric, Metadata Management, Master Data Management (MDM), and Product Information Management (PIM).

Amplifi have worked with many organisations to ensure their data management is world class

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Do you need help understanding the true value of your data? To find out how Amplifi can help, please contact us:

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