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3 tips for Metadata Management

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 culture continues to boom, metadata management has become increasingly important. Companies are both generating and consuming data in huge quantities - this is where metadata management comes in. It allows you to contextualise your data so you can understand its true value.

Through metadata management, you will have one centralised piece of technology that stores this knowledge, organised in a simple and accessible way so you can fully harness your data's value.

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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1 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 metadata management 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.

Not all metadata management tools are built the same – some focus on the more technical challenges such as automated discovery, AI and lineage, while others are focussed on the business metadata – policies, rules and glossaries.

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 business departments.

2 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.

Start small

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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 POC, which is much more targeted and digestible for your business teams.

How can Amplifi help?

Amplifi is an award-winning data management consultancy that works with organisations to unlock the value of their data.

Not only do we understand the technical aspect of data, we also understand the positive impact good data management has on businesses. We combine metadata management with machine learning and human knowledge to create a fully integrated service.

We are the UK's leading partner for Alex Solutions who offer everything necessary to build a single source of metadata in their enterprise metadata management platform. They have featured as a Leader in Gartner's Metadata Management Solutions Magic Quadrant for three consecutive years.

Amplifi's experience and expertise coupled with Alex Solutions metadata management platform can help you maximise your investment in data governance technology.

We also provide the full suite of data management services including advisory, delivery and support services for Master Data Management (MDM), Product Information Management (PIM), Data Governance, Data Migration and Data Integration.

Gartner

For four years running, Amplifi has featured in Gartner's annual Market Report for MDM External Service Providers and is one of only 20 vendors to be included globally

Amplifi have worked with many FTSE 100 and FTSE 250 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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