

Hey! What's New? 2025-91

Data and Analytics Governance: The Backbone of AI Adoption

Myles Suer writes in the latest issue of *The Data Administration Newsletter* that “the primary aim of data and analytics (D&A) governance, our research has taught us, is aligning data and analytic content with business objectives, including regulatory requirements and stakeholder expectations.” He adds that “As such, D&A governance encompasses the policies, standards, decision rights, procedures, and technologies that govern data and analytic content across the organization. This includes not only structured data and reports, but also emerging assets such as machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI) models, their algorithms and the data used to train or tune them.”

Suer says the goals of D&A governance include:

- Recognizing and managing data and analytics as corporate assets.
- Creating and enforcing common standards and definitions.
- Reducing costs caused by duplication, inconsistency, and error.
- Minimizing regulatory, security, and reputational risk.
- Ensuring analytic content is trustworthy and high-value — including ML and AI components.
- Enabling discoverability while controlling and cataloging access appropriately.

“In short, D&A governance is not simply about control — it’s about creating an environment where data can be leveraged confidently and responsibly to drive business value.”

Suer suggests that governance efforts “should begin with a formal, resourced program aligned to mission-critical objectives. Starting with a focused scope — governing only the most vital data and analytics assets — allows organizations to deliver value quickly. The scope should expand only as needed and be reevaluated if not clearly tied to performance indicators or business value chains. A robust governance framework requires formal ownership structures, including data and analytic product owners, executive sponsors and decision-makers. It must span the full D&A lifecycle — covering structured and unstructured data, reports, models, and algorithms — and remain business-centric to balance value creation with risk management.”

As governance matures, he advises, “it should align with a unified, business-driven strategy and support a shift toward active data architectures. This evolution depends on enabling technologies that integrate with governance processes and empower people to act on trusted, well-managed data. Without this foundation, scaling D&A efforts will be inconsistent and ineffective.”

Addressing data discovery challenges, Suer says, will require more than technology. “Improved governance, better metadata practices, and data literacy are essential to ensure data remains findable, usable and valuable. Yet, formal D&A governance remains limited. In 2025, only 41% of organizations reported having a formal governance body — up from 32% the prior year, but still not widespread. Adoption is largely driven by regulation: 50% of compliance-focused firms and 63% of very large enterprises have governance programs, as do most financial services and healthcare organizations. In contrast, retail lags significantly, with only 11% reporting formal governance.”

This uneven adoption, he notes, “reveals a gap between the recognized strategic value of governance and actual organizational investment. Informal or fragmented efforts often lack the consistency and authority needed to drive enterprise-wide impact. The link between governance and BI success is clear: organizations with underperforming BI initiatives are far more likely to lack formal governance or rely on *ad hoc* teams without clear mandates. In these groups, 33% reported using virtual teams composed of individuals with secondary responsibilities. Conversely, organizations with more successful BI programs were significantly more likely to have adopted a distributed governance model — embedding formal roles across business units. These organizations also demonstrated a more balanced governance approach, supplementing formal structures with informal contributions from dedicated individuals where necessary.”

Despite rising demands and the growing influence of AI, most organizations have yet to broaden their governance scope, Suer says that “governance efforts still focus primarily on analytical data, master data, operational data and reports — all cited by over half of respondents. However, newer analytic assets like ML models and AI algorithms remain largely ungoverned. As AI becomes more pervasive, this blind spot could pose serious risks to enterprise oversight and performance.”

According to Suer, a well-rounded D&A governance program should prioritize four core features: “security, quality assurance, privacy and the governance of data models. Together, these elements ensure that data is protected, reliable, compliant and used responsibly in analytics and AI. As organizations scale their data initiatives, these pillars become essential for building trust, enabling innovation and supporting informed decision making.”

For more, check out [Data and Analytics Governance: The Backbone of AI Adoption – TDAN.com](#).