



# Aligning data and AI initiatives to mission objectives

# Data: The fundamental element of citizen services

The importance of data in the public sector, including federal and state and local governments, cannot be overstated. Data informs the decision makers of important agencies and departments, aids warfighters across the globe, helps deliver critical and important services that have lasting impacts on citizens. And, in the continued quest for digital transformation, data plays a pivotal role in enhancing citizen services at both federal and state levels. To ensure these missions are successful, the efficient management of supply chains, business operations, human resources and all other interconnected aspects of running government operations relies on the intelligent use of data.

However, with the strategic importance of data comes heavy regulations and the absolute need for trust from communities being served. Laws like the Federal Data Strategy provide a blueprint for the government to leverage data as a strategic asset while helping to ensure that the use of data is responsible, ethical and in alignment with the overarching mission of public service.

To compound these challenges, there has been a surge of interest in artificial intelligence (AI), specifically generative AI (GenAI), in the public sector. AI can be utilized in a variety of use cases, such as allocating healthcare resources more efficiently, enhancing productivity through content generation and automation of repetitive tasks, and improving citizen support through chatbots and AI agents. Even “old” analytical AI models are now seeing new life with expanded use cases and an even greater need for faster and better outputs. And with this focus on new use cases, there is a widening gap between what departments and agencies want to do with data and AI and what they can do. This can lead to risky initiatives without a unified governance foundation.

While these problems seem disconnected, they boil down to one thing: governance fragmentation. Control, visibility and even meaning are tied to specific systems, sources and even compute platforms. And fragmentation extends to your people, as technical solutions aren’t accessible to the stakeholders who need to create policies, steward and use the data.

The organizations that overcome these challenges to build a solid foundation for data governance will accelerate and strengthen every data and AI use case — without the risk.

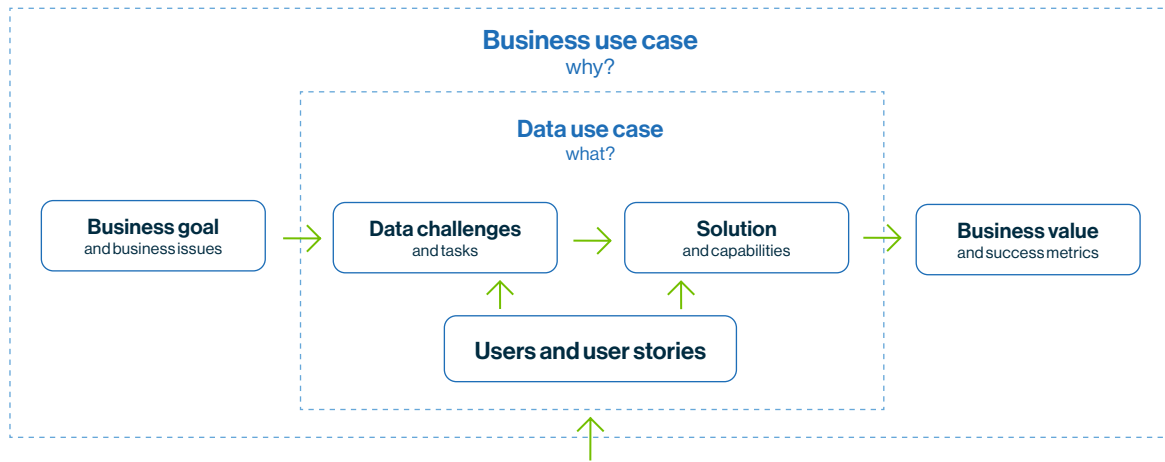
# Understanding your “why” first

While both data governance as well as AI governance can be viable solutions to the increasing challenges public sector departments and agencies face, fully understanding the “why” of these, or any programs, is critical for success. The essence of any program extends beyond just governance, it’s about maximizing productivity and efficiency. Governance is the “how”; it determines the way initiatives are managed, the rules of engagement and guidelines that are set up to ensure they are executed well. However, the ‘why’, the reason you embark on these endeavours in the first place, is inextricably tied to the added productivity they bring to your organization and deliver better citizen services. Increased productivity and efficiency serves government employees and stakeholders in a number of ways including time savings, advancement to the mission, improvement in citizen satisfaction and others. Any initiative, be it data governance or otherwise, should be an opportunity to eliminate waste and create more efficiency.

Without a clear understanding of the expected productivity gains of your implemented solution, there will inevitably be resistance from stakeholders, lack of user engagement and low adoption of the program. To ensure success and realize the expected value, there are several things that need to be accomplished.

- **Gain buy-in from stakeholders and decision-makers:** Their support and understanding can significantly influence the success of a project
- **Communicate KPIs and metrics clearly and often to all stakeholders:** This helps create transparency and fosters a sense of shared purpose
- **Prioritize use cases and develop a long-term roadmap:** This helps plan for the right resources early and helps you adjust on the fly as needed
- **Continuously track productivity and adoption:** Evaluating the effectiveness of the project as you go helps you make necessary adjustments

## Business value chain



Explain the tangible value for the organization and the practical benefits for specific personas. Identify target teams and users, tailor enablement plans and calculate created value. Monitor the generated value, drive adoption of the use case and create benchmarks.

Next, it's time to determine tangible gains for your identified use cases. Determining these gains justifies allocating resources to the project and helps secure stakeholder buy-in and alignment. Next, you can prioritize use cases based on returns and level of effort.

It's important to understand that not all use cases carry the same weight; some may require more resources but yield greater returns, while others may be easier to implement but offer less value. Prioritization helps in strategizing the project execution and ensures that efforts are directed towards use cases that offer the most gains, thus effectively driving the project towards its objectives.

# Sample Public Sector outcomes and the initiatives that support them

Public sector departments and agencies have an almost unlimited number of data and AI use cases. However, with use cases you are planning or executing on now, five distinct outcomes rise to the top. All of these use cases are important to enable data accessibility, adoption and security while quickly scaling cross-functional data and AI solutions to support warfighter and business operations.



## Enhance public services

- Proactive citizen engagement
- Service delivery optimization
- Citizen feedback analysis



## Optimize operational efficiency

- Infrastructure management
- Resources allocation optimization
- Process automation



## Drive innovation and digital transformation

- “Smart” initiative
- AI-driven analytics
- Digital services expansion



## Promote transparency and accountability

- Open data initiatives
- Streamline financial management and reporting
- Citizen feedback analysis



## Deliver trusted AI and enhance privacy

- Identity management
- Regulatory compliance for data and AI
- Access control policy management



## Outcome: Optimizing operational efficiency

Optimizing operational efficiency is a perennial concern. Efficient operations can lead to significant cost and time savings, freeing budgets to be better utilized in other mission critical areas. Enhancing operational efficiency also has the added benefit of improving transparency and accountability and strengthening public trust. With more efficient operations, departments and agencies can not only perform their duties more effectively, but also respond faster to the needs and expectations of warfighters and citizens alike.

### Resource allocation optimization

Resource allocation optimization refers to the process of assigning and managing resources in an efficient manner to minimize costs and maximize output. This includes staff, equipment, facilities and other resources. Resource allocation optimization helps to ensure resources are used effectively and efficiently, leading to cost and time savings and improved decision-making.

### Data challenges

- **Disparate data sources:** Various systems are often used to track resources, leading to disparate data sources. A complete and comprehensive view of resources is difficult to achieve, leading to inefficiencies

- **Inconsistent data quality:** Varying level of data quality can lead to inaccurate analysis and poor decision-making, severely impacting mission performance and success
- **Lack of transparency:** Without explicit visibility into how resources are allocated, it is nearly impossible to identify inefficiencies and areas for improvement
- **Inefficient discovery, access and reporting:** Without efficient processes for discovering and accessing data, creating reports (and the decisions that come from them) take too long, leading to sub-optimal outcomes or worse

### Business outcomes

- **Increased productivity:** Efficient resource allocation means less waste, leading to increased productivity and an overall higher output
- **Decreased costs:** Optimizing resources efficiently and effectively will help reduce costs and budget overages
- **Increase confidence in decisions:** With better data and improved visibility into usage, you'll make more informed decisions, increasing confidence in resource management decisions and allocations



## Outcome: Promoting transparency and accountability

Transparency and accountability is an essential component in the public sector and always a topic of concern for both lawmakers and citizens, especially when it comes to data. Transparency ensures the proper access to information about activities, decision-making processes and spending, allowing government staff and citizens to evaluate the performance of elected officials, projects, and departments and agencies. Transparency promotes accountability, providing clear understanding of who is responsible for both success and failures. Transparency and accountability fosters greater trust and enhances viability of data and AI initiatives while helping to prevent misuse and negative outcomes.

### Open data initiatives

Open data initiatives are designed to make data available to the public in an effort to increase transparency, innovation and public services. This requires making data available to the public in formats that are easy to understand and use.

### Data challenges

- **Lack of API repository and known data access:** Without an understanding of what APIs you have available and the data sources they connect to, it can be difficult for users to find and access the data they need, which hampers the effectiveness of open data initiatives
- **Lack of data transparency and usage:** Lack of visibility into the data being used, who is accessing it and how it is being used raises concerns about data misuse, making it difficult for initiatives to be trusted
- **Data protection:** There are significant concerns about sensitive data (especially PII) being well protected as to not lead to data breaches or misuse, leading to eroded trust

### Business outcomes

- **Increased efficiency and decreased costs:** By making data readily available, organizations can reduce the time and resources required to respond to data requests
- **Increased productivity:** By making data easy to access and use, individuals and organizations can more easily use this data to drive decision-making and innovation, leading to increased productivity
- **Enhanced public trust:** By making data publicly available and transparent, organizations can demonstrate their commitment to openness and accountability, which can help to build trust with the public
- **Reduced privacy risks:** By carefully managing and controlling what data is made available, organizations can ensure that sensitive information is protected, reducing the risk of privacy breaches





## Outcome: Deliver trusted data, AI and enhance privacy

With the amount of data being created on a daily basis and the overwhelming surge in AI, trusted data, AI and enhanced privacy are critical. By delivering trusted data and AI to department or agency staff, significant improvements in decision-making, enhanced public services and innovative new citizen services can be achieved. However, balancing the delivery of data and AI with the right protection and privacy of data is a must. Departments and agencies need to ensure breaches that compromise citizen data, mission objectives and national security do not take place.

### Regulatory compliance for data and AI

Regulatory compliance for data and AI ensures adherence to laws and regulations (both external regulations as well as internal regulations). It is critical for departments and agencies to ensure compliance to protect citizen information, avoid legal problems, and maintain public trust.

#### Data challenges

- **Identifying data elements that fall under data and AI protection:** Understanding what data you have, where it is located, and who has access to it, and mapping that to specific regulations and laws can be a complex task, leading to wasted time, money and potential misuse
- **Documenting processing activities and ensuring accountability:** Failing to keep proper records on how, who and what data and AI are used can lead to significant reporting challenges and legal penalties if data and AI breach laws

- **Managing consent and data subject requests:** Without citizens understanding and controlling how their data is being used, trust in departments and agencies can erode
- **Lack of data protection and encryption:** The absence of comprehensive data and AI governance policies and practices makes it harder to monitor and control how data is collected, stored, used and shared
- **No understanding of AI models in use:** A lack of understanding of what AI models are already in use make it difficult to identify data usage and potentially harmful AI models/use cases

#### Business outcomes

- **Increased productivity:** With data and AI properly managed and governed from the start, initiatives are more effective, helping streamline employee productivity to focus on other work/tasks
- **Decreased remediation efforts and resource savings:** With active compliance comes time and cost savings, eliminating the need for corrective measures in IT, finance, legal and other groups
- **Decreased risk of regulatory fines or penalties:** Ensuring compliance from the start is the best way to avoid fines and safeguard trust



### Start delivering value today

Ensuring productivity and efficiency for your data and AI initiatives is key. Collibra is here to help guide you with capabilities and solutions to tackle any use case your department and agency needs.



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