# IT'S NOT YOU, IT'S ME

Breaking up with data governance.
And finding romance all over again.

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Data is everywhere. And every day we generate more of it. Organizations are looking for new ways to use that data — what some have called the fuel of the future — to drive value, define new growth opportunities, and transform the business.
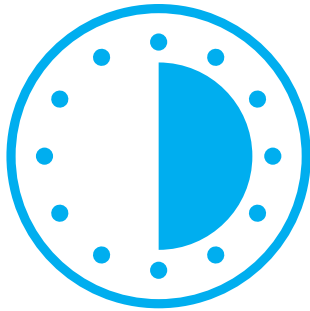
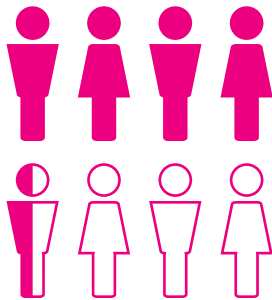**But getting that done isn't as easy as it looks.**
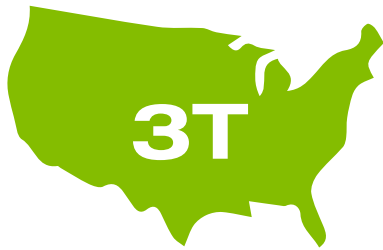
Bad data costs the U.S. alone over $3 trillion every year.

Source: Bad Data Costs the U.S. $3 Trillion Per Year, HBR.org

Data professionals spend half of their time searching for data. (And that's a conservative estimate).

Source: Data pros waste half of their work time chasing costly data, Information-Management.com

A report by KPMG found that more than half of CEOs surveyed don't trust the data they're using for decision making.

Source: How trustworthy is data that analytics throws up? KPMG rings warning bell, FinancialExpress.com

AND EVEN WHEN WE FIND DATA, OUR ABILITY TO MAKE SENSE OUT OF IT IS ACTUALLY DECLINING.

Those are just a few reasons that only **8%** of companies believe their business models will remain economically viable as they follow the path to digitalization.
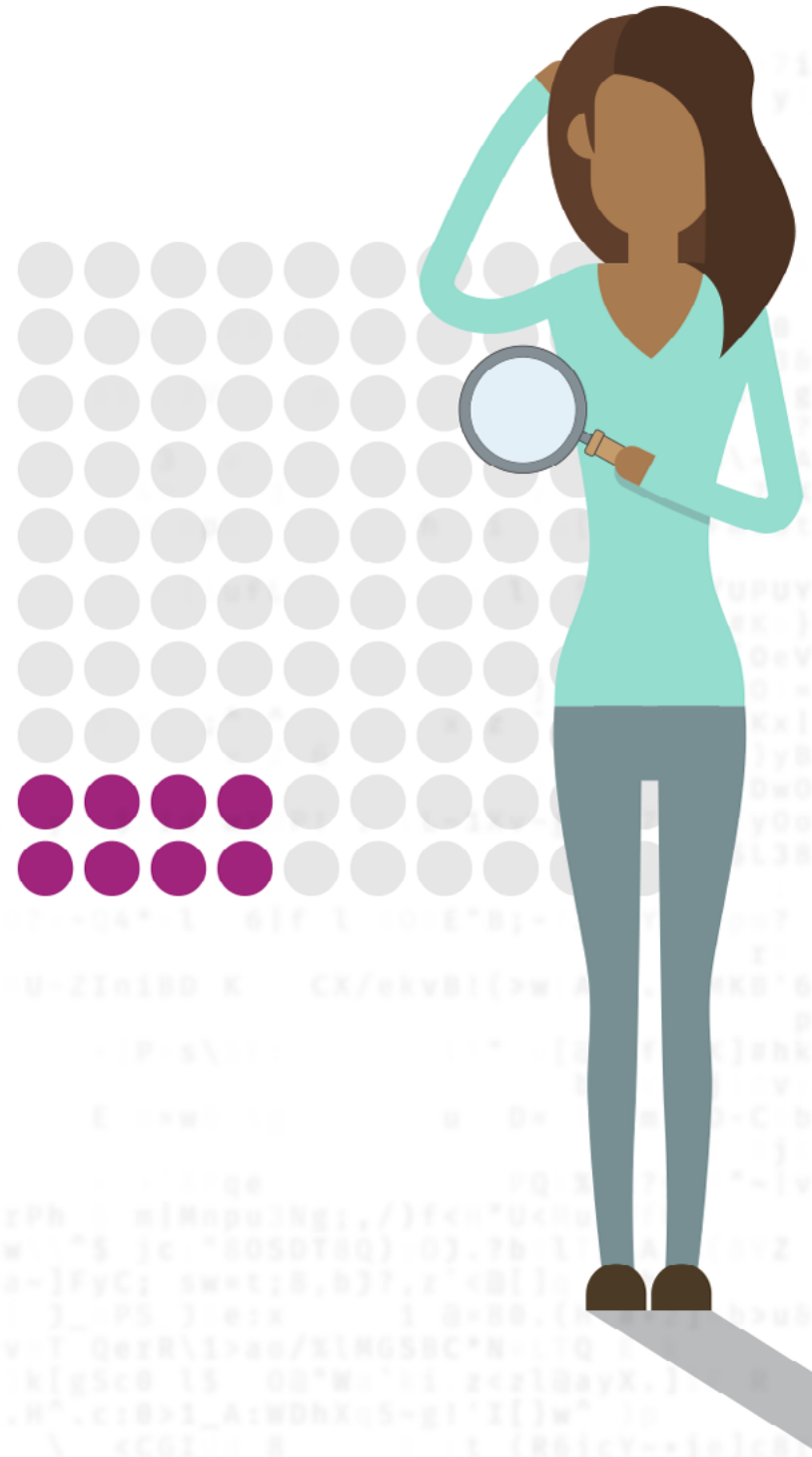
To drive actionable insight, organizations will need to make data easy for business users to find and use. To transform their business, they will need to provide accurate and up-to-date data that business users can understand and trust.

That's what data governance is all about. So why break up?

YOU LOVE DATA GOVERNANCE.
WE GET THAT.

- Data governance can help your organization manage their data – and improve its quality.

- People across your organization know where their data is coming from, who owns it now, and what it means.

- Because it's tagged, mapped, and defined, governed data is a lot easier to find.

- And because it's verifiable, governed data is trustworthy data.

- All that means your data is more likely to be used to drive insight.

But here's the thing. It isn't. The reason your data is in crisis? One word.

YOU

"Wait, what? You're telling me this is all my fault?"

TRUTH. HERE'S WHY.

You're not giving your business users what they need. We know. Because we've seen it time and time again.

Let's break this down.

HERE'S HOW YOU SEE DATA GOVERNANCE.
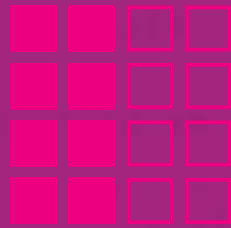
Order

Discipline

Security

Collaboration

HERE'S HOW YOUR BUSINESS USERS SEE DATA GOVERNANCE.

Spreadsheets

Wikis

Meetings that go on and on

Inaccessible data locked away in a mysterious data vault

And miles of red tape that strangle innovation

No wonder the words "maybe we should implement a data governance program" suck the air out of the room.

Or, maybe you've implemented what you think is the perfect data governance solution.

Except no one is using it.

Because humans are endlessly inventive. And your business users are deeply committed to their own squirrely ways of finding the data they need.

IF YOU CAN'T GIVE YOUR BUSINESS USERS A BETTER, FASTER WAY TO FIND THEIR DATA, THEY'RE NOT GOING TO GIVE UP THEIR NUT.

(Of course, they might simply be asking your data scientists to find the data for them. Way to make a data scientist miserable.)

SO THE CYCLE CONTINUES.

You propose data governance.
Your business users freak.

You implement a solution.
Your business users ignore it.

If you're doing this over and over again, please. **Stop.**
It's time to break up with data governance.

More accurately, it's time to break up with the idea that data governance is all about you.

Because, in fact, data governance is really about helping your business users get what they need to do the work that will make your organization great.

Instead of leading with data governance, you need a better way to lead your business user to data governance.

That takes finesse. A little bit of charm. And a whole lot of commitment.

Here's how to get started.

1

START THINKING LIKE A BUSINESS USER.

Not all data has strategic value. So start by governing what matters.

Understand your organization's business priorities and strategic objectives. Learn what data, information, metrics, and reports your business users will need to execute against them.

By explicitly aligning data governance to organizational priorities, you will make it clear that you're part of the team, and supporting the interests of the business – as well as the business user.

2

REMEMBER, IT'S ALL ABOUT THEM.

Most business users don't really need data – they need information. And information requires context.

That means it's your job to help everyone across the enterprise understand what the data means, who owns it, and how it should be used.

If they have questions, provide easy access to subject matter experts. Help them understand what data sets already exist or who has used similar data to answer similar questions.

Build processes that amplify trust – and you might find your business users cheering you on instead of running in the other direction.

3

MAKE INFORMATION EASY TO FIND AND USE.

Actually, to really win over your business users, don't just make data easy to find and use, make it easier to find and use than it is right now.

Make it easy to search for data – implement a data catalog that can help your business users search across disparate data sources using real-world business terms. Automate workflows and issue management so that your business users can say goodbye to SharePoint and Excel.

Make sure the processes you put in place reduce complexity – and you'll win the heart and mind of every business user in your organization.

4

MAKE YOUR DATA TRUSTWORTHY.

Business users want to know that the data they're using to build a critical report is trustworthy and reliable. Need to prove it to them? Find a way to certify the data so that they know at a glance that the information they're using is accurate and fit for purpose.

That de facto "badge" of good and reliable data will have a halo effect – business users begin to look for certified data to build reports, becoming enthusiastic evangelists for data governance.

Isn't it nice when relationships are easy?

5

BE A COMMUNICATOR.

Building a better data governance program means building a better way to communicate.

Make sure that business users understand why governed data will help them perform better at their jobs. Give data stewards the training and tools they need to respond to questions and requests. Design a support structure so that business users can log issues and see them resolved.

These are all capabilities your organization already possesses. The trick is applying them wholeheartedly to the data governance project.
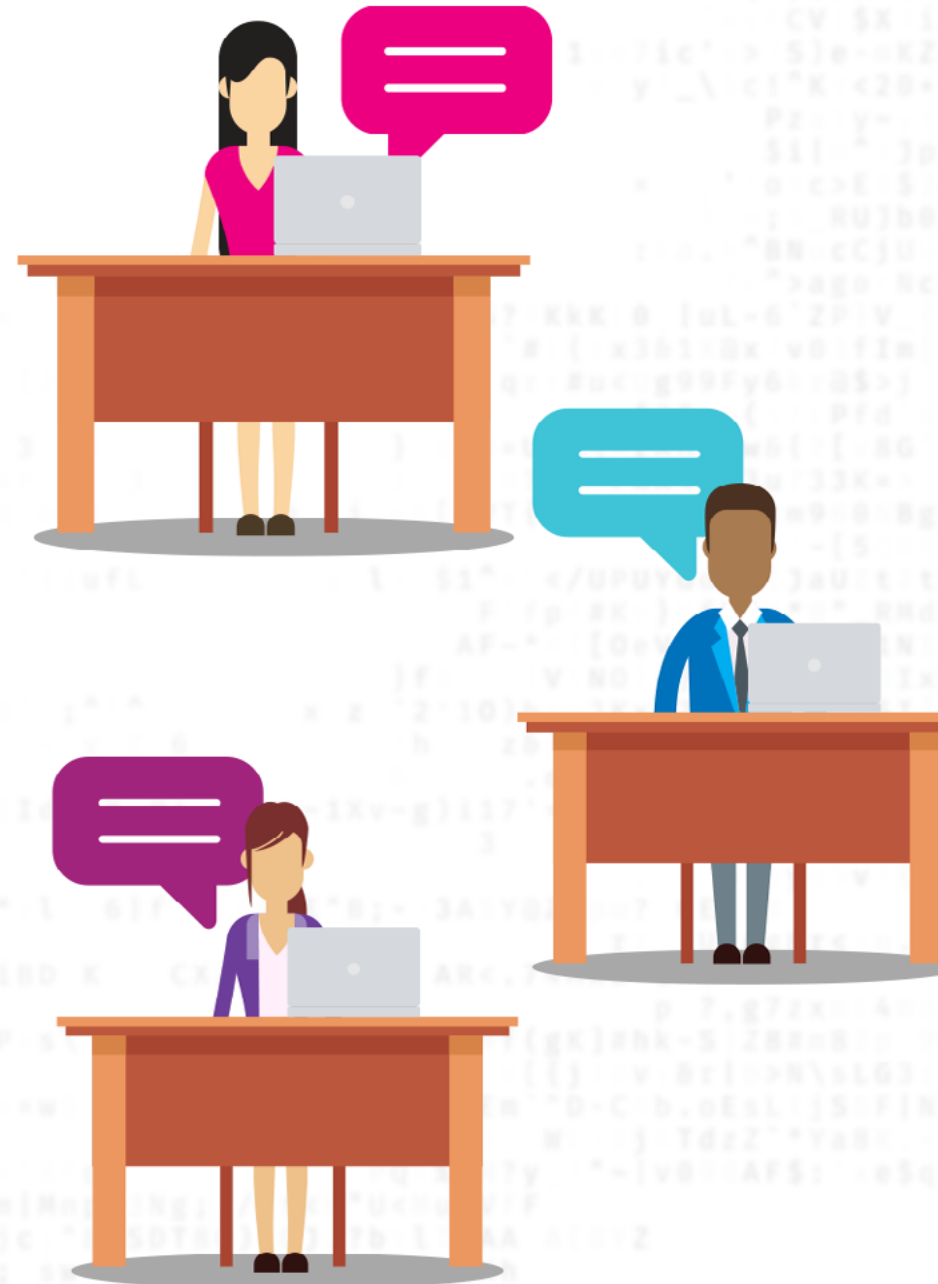
MAKING THE CASE FOR DATA GOVERNANCE BEGINS WITH CONSIDERING THE NEEDS OF YOUR BUSINESS USERS AND HELPING THEM EMBRACE A BETTER WAY OF DOING THINGS.

Soon, you'll see a new, more collaborative spirit across your organization. As your business users begin to use their data more confidently, they will begin to advocate for more data governance – not less – because they understand that defining rules and operating models, establishing controls, and tagging metadata get results.
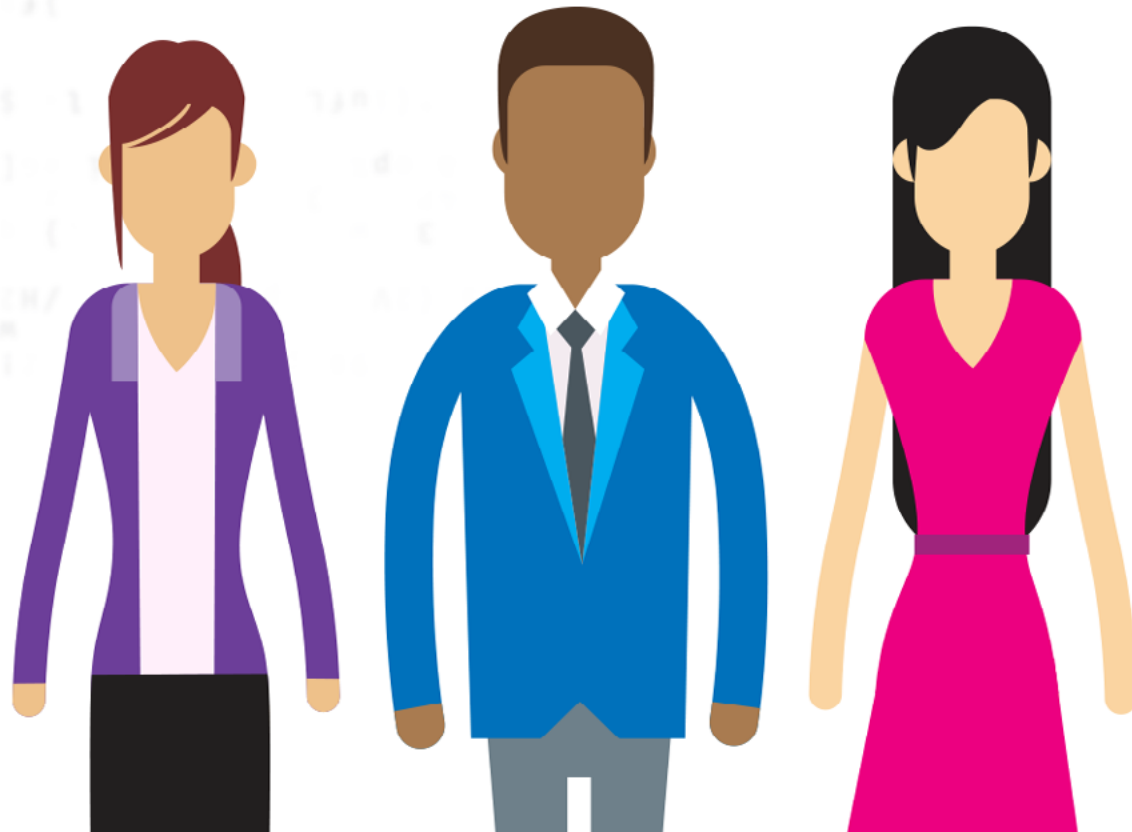
As your business users become better stewards of their own data, they become better consumers of your organization's data.

They become, in other words, true data citizens.

SIMPLY PUT:

when you put the business user first, you'll fall in love with data governance all over again.

Trust us. It's a lot more fun than the heartbreak of another failed implementation.

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