



Informatica®

The Government Data Strategy Playbook

An Executive Summary for
Implementation in the UK

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After more than 25 years of helping our customers – spanning government departments and agencies large and small around the world – unleash the power of their data, we understand the value of a data strategy. We commissioned this playbook to help UK government leaders build data strategies that drive change.

This playbook is intended to help CIOs, CDOs, enterprise architects and IT strategists in government organisations in the UK understand data strategy – what it is, why you need one, how to build one, and how to align the department around it.

01: Putting an Open Data Policy in Practice in the UK

Data-driven transformation is fueled by three key drivers:

1. **There's never been so much data to work with.**
2. **There have never been more users of data.**
3. **There have never been more examples of data-driven disruption.**

To unleash the value of government data, department and national organisations must manage their data as they would any asset, from cradle to grave, so they can:

- Increase operational efficiencies
- Enhance performance planning
- Improve services
- Support mission needs
- Inform policy decisions
- Safeguard personal information
- Increase public access to government data

Developing a Data Strategy – What Is Included?

A strong data strategy leverages and references a data lifecycle that includes data creation and collection, processing, access, use, dissemination, governance, storage and disposition.

What Is a Data Strategy?

A data strategy defines how an organisation achieves specific mission, organisational, or policy goals through the strategic use of its data assets. The data strategy outlines how a department will maximise the value of its data to generate the greatest impact on personnel, stakeholders and decision-makers, policymakers, and citizens.

“The most important consideration when mapping out your data strategy is to ensure ahead of your data scientists receiving data, that it is of suitable quality for them to produce the end results that will make a difference. We built this from the ground up and looked at the importance of getting data into an accurate place so that it can be shared both within and outside the organisation. A strategy beginning with the focus on data quality, getting the metadata principles right, understanding exactly what it was that master data management was going to deliver for us. Start by focusing defensively, get your data quality strategy in place and work with the business to ensure that it will bare fruition, and really give end users something to get their teeth into.”

- **Head of Data Transformation,**
Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency

What Are the Benefits of a Data Strategy?

Realising any one of these goals would make the case for a clear, sound data strategy:

- Accelerate all digital transformations. Make faster, better decisions that execute mission and IT strategy.
- Improve agility. Allow the department to pivot quickly in response to change.
- Become more citizen-centric. Leverage data to better understand citizens and their needs. Seize new opportunities. Deploy new technologies and innovative ideas.
- Focus resources on value creation. Streamline and automate processes to improve efficiencies. Earn continued commitment from every player involved. Promote the end game while showing your team's value every step of the way.

The Role of the Chief Data Officer and Chief Information Officer

With the increase in adoption across departments, CDOs are increasingly taking ownership of data strategies and data governance programs. CDOs will play an increasingly important role in the transformation of government organisations.

As the catalyst for transformation, no one is better placed than the CIO to help seize the data opportunity. CIOs see their departments and organisation as a connected system of processes and applications, and they understand the technologies available to unleash the power of data.

02: The Right Culture Is the DNA of a Successful Data Strategy

Implementing a successful data strategy requires fostering the right culture and appropriate change management strategies. The role of the CIO is to work with stakeholders, IT data analysts and peers across departments to creatively solve problems together:

Stakeholders bring domain expertise – they understand the processes and entities they need to serve.

IT owns the enabling technology stack – and they're aware of the new technologies that can enable processes.

Together, you can map out where the most relevant data resides, how trustworthy and protected that data is, who has access to the data, and how the data currently flows through the organisation.

If there's one unbreakable rule of data strategy, it's this: Successful data strategies are always an ongoing, iterative collaboration between IT and at least one stakeholder. Keeping your stakeholders in the loop and engaged is critical to fostering the kind of data-driven culture needed for success.

Think Big, Start Small

Pilot projects are a CIO's best friend in the public sector when it comes to trying out data strategies and winning support:

Don't try to sell a big, holistic data strategy from the start. You can't start with a department-wide data strategy.

Focus on critical opportunities or risks. Start with challenges to your mission that are most effectively addressed with a better use of data.

Look for quick wins with pilot projects. Low risk, low cost, but deserving attention.

Ensure everyone's focus remains on target outcomes. Evangelize a clear vision of the end goal.

Who's Involved: The Key Stakeholders

For a top-down, enterprise-wide data strategy, you need the support of the stakeholders who see across the entire business and mission of the department or agency: the senior executive, the chief operations officer and the chief financial officer. Even if you're starting with smaller, bottom-up initiatives, you want these key leaders on your side, understanding where you're going and how you plan to start.

Building Your Department's Data Strategy

Whether for a bottom-up or an enterprise-wide initiative, a data strategy works much like the GPS system in your car or on your phone. You need to do four things:

1. **Establish where you are today** – what is the current state of your department's data?
2. **Decide where you want to go** – focus on the business imperative rather than the technical target.
3. **Map the route** – with a specific, actionable data strategy.
4. **Communicate it** – to the key stakeholders, including leaders and front-line users.

“Post GDPR – data governance has come of age. Government has to be visibly demonstrating good practice around data so we don't lose our citizens' trust. At the same time Government Departments have a rich and varied data landscape, ever evolving in response to ministerial and service delivery priorities. Without proactive, automated data mapping, it becomes nearly impossible to maintain the level of oversight of our data that the public rightly expect of us.”

- Director, Chief Data Officer and Chief Statistician,
Data Directorate | Operations Group | Department for Education

03: Conducting a Gap Analysis to Identify Immediate Action Areas

Once you've outlined your initial data projects, you need to determine whether you have the information and skills needed to answer those key questions and solve those business-critical problems:

1. **Data access gaps:** How accessible is your mission-critical data? How can you improve the availability and fitness of your data?
2. **Data quality, data governance and data privacy gaps:** How consistently trustworthy and protected is your data for the intended business objectives? How is it governed? Who are the stewards and data owners? Do you know where your sensitive information resides?
3. **Skills gap:** Are data stewards up to speed on best practices for data management and governance? Are data generators aware of data policies and processes?

04: Data Governance Across the Organisation: The Big Picture

Data governance plays a major role in every data-driven digital transformation initiative and it should be a big part of any data strategy.

Informatica defines holistic data governance as: “an organisational competency in which business and technical stakeholders collaborate on the organisation’s data management policies, processes, and standards, to ensure consistent and trusted data informs regulatory compliance, drives business initiatives and powers data-driven digital transformations, in a reliable, repeatable, scalable way.”

The Benefits of a Platform Approach

A platform approach that can reconcile all data from all sources into a single, shared hybrid data management solution would be preferable.

The components of a complete data management platform should include:

- Data catalog to discover and inventory all data assets across the organisation
- Data integration to combine hybrid datasets spanning multi-cloud and on-prem systems
- Data quality to make data ready for use
- Data privacy and protection across all data assets
- Master data management to rationalize data around key domains
- Data governance to monitor and track all governed data

“We wanted to evolve our data platform and empower our business users to satisfy all their data needs through self-service. To accomplish this, we needed to move away from dependencies on individual knowledge, application-specific wiki pages, and data silos, and create an intelligent, enterprise-wide data catalog.”

– Director, Infrastructure Technology & Operations,
Railinc

Conclusion: Putting the Playbook to Work

Data strategy can never be a “one and done” initiative. It’s a process that continually evolves as your department or agency’s goals and challenges change.

Every department will need to find its own best path to discover the right enterprise-wide data strategy. But there are important lessons and critical steps that will help ensure your strategy continues to reflect the needs of your department, and that your capabilities continue to mature in support of your strategy. As a key component to long-term success, make sure to develop metrics to assess progress, sustain achievements and build on your momentum.

The Prize

Driving the kind of change described in this playbook will be far from easy. But the rewards are enormous. When government departments or agencies take control of their data, treating it like a strategic asset, they are more likely to improve transparency, increase staff and citizen satisfaction and, ultimately, better serve the public with enhanced decision-making.

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Digital transformation is changing our world. As the leader in enterprise cloud data management, we're prepared to help you intelligently lead the way. To provide you with the foresight to become more agile, realize new growth opportunities or even invent new things. We invite you to explore all that Informatica has to offer – and unleash the power of data to drive your next intelligent disruption. Not just once, but again and again.

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