Operational Data Governance (ODG)

Written by Robert S. Seiner for Global IDs

Operational Data Governance (ODG)

Written by Robert S. Seiner for Global IDs

Contents

Operational Data Governance (ODG)

Written by Robert S. Seiner for Global IDs

Introduction

What is ODG?

There are a lot of acronyms that are associated with information technology. IT, which stands for Information Technology, is the most general of these acronyms. DG is used to abbreviate data governance and is often labeled as Enterprise Data Governance (EDG). As organizations embrace data governance and leap over the start-up hurdles, conversation is turning to how to maximize the value of data governance through operationalizing the data discipline. This paper is about activating data stewards and formalizing accountability for data through what we will call Operational Data Governance (ODG).

ODG is the practice of activating and engaging the core components of the data governance program by getting people involved in the act of governing data. The core components of data governance include people, process, and the prospects of leveraging the "right" people at the "right" time in the "right" process using the "right" data leading to the "right" decision – at least most of the time. I have been known to call this the Data Governance Bill of "Rights."

> *"Operational Data Governance (ODG) is the practice of*
> *activating and engaging the core components of the data governance program*
> *by getting people involved in the act of governing data."*

ODG is where the rubber hits the road with data governance. Prior to operationalizing data governance, the discipline of governing data is defined on paper and in slide presentations, but it fails to demonstrate value in the areas where you focus on governing data.

The Focus of DG and ODG

A typical Data Governance Program focuses on a multitude of disciplines associated with governing data. The focus can be on **improving data definition, understanding, and quality,** leading to improved decision-making through business intelligence and master data improvements. The focus can be on **privacy and protecting sensitive data** through classification and the appropriate handling of sensitive data resources. The focus can be on **improving data integration and analytical capabilities** through management of big data and varied other data resources. The focus can be on **improving compliance and reporting capabilities** to appease industry and governmental rules and regulatory bodies.

> *The focus of operationalizing your data governance program will be on:*
>
> 1. *Improving data definition, understanding, and quality*
> 2. *Privacy and protecting sensitive data*
> 3. *Improving data integration and analytical capabilities*
> 4. *Improving compliance and reporting capabilities*

The bottom line is that whichever focus or focuses you choose, data governance will require that you engage, employ, deploy and otherwise utilize the people, process, and prospects of how and when you will engage people in the act of governing data. In other words, you will be required to demonstrate value to the organization through the implementation of activated data governance – otherwise known as Operational Data Governance.

Approaches to DG and ODG

There are three distinct approaches to implementing, and thus operationalizing, data governance. I label the three approaches as 1) the Command-and-Control approach, 2) the Traditional approach, and 3) the Non-Invasive approach to Data Governance. More on each of the approaches in a minute.

The approach you select to implement Data Governance has a profound impact on how you operationalize data governance. But even more important, the approach you select to follow will influence how you will achieve results from operationalizing your data governance program. Let's start by describing the three approaches to data governance.

> *"The approach you select to implement Data Governance has a profound impact on how you operationalize data governance."*

The first approach I mentioned is the **Command-and-Control** approach. When you follow the Command-and-Control approach, Data Stewards are **<u>assigned</u> new responsibilities**, people are told they will find time to be involved, and everything becomes a "Data Governance Process." This approach is the antithesis of the Non-Invasive approach to data governance, as it is designed to feel over-and-above normal work efforts. In the Command-and-Control approach, data

governance is something new and requires an abundance of resources populating a Data Governance Office. Data governance is viewed in terms of "Big Brother is watching you."

The second approach, and the approach that dominates data governance landscapes, is the **Traditional** approach to data governance. In the Traditional approach, Data Stewards are __identified__ **by their positioning** in the organization, people are expected to be involved but only if their management agrees and if they see the value, and governance becomes the process followed to resolve any data governance issue. In this widely-used approach, data governance is something management says we will do, but we struggle with keeping people engaged as they focus their efforts on their "day jobs."

The third and final approach is the **Non-Invasive Data Governance** approach. In the Non-Invasive approach, Data Stewards are __recognized __**for their relationship to the data** (as definers, producers and users of data), accountabilities are based on their relationship to the data, and governance is applied consistently to new and existing processes. In this approach, it is assumed that a level of governance already exists although it is informal, inefficient, and/or ineffective. In Non-Invasive Data Governance, Data Stewards' responsibilities are formalized based on existing interactions with the data. This requires that the data governance program maintain a high-level of communications and awareness with the data stewards of the organization.

How the Approach You Select Affects ODG

It is worth repeating that the approach you select to implement Data Governance has a profound impact on how you will operationalize data governance. Operational Data Governance requires that Data Stewards play an active role in daily governance activities.

One way to separate the impact of each approach on ODG is to look at the way people are associated with Data Steward roles. In the description of the approaches I shared, people can either be assigned the role of a Data Steward, identified as a Data Steward per their position in the organization, or recognized as Data Stewards for their relationship to data as definers, producers, and users of data. Let's take a deeper look at why this can be important.

When a person is *assigned* the role of a data steward, the immediate perception is that they are being handed some level of responsibility or accountability that is new to their job function. Since many organizations err on the side of less employees rather than too many, or have open positions that they are presently not allowed to fill, people's "day jobs" occupy most their day (and then some), and there are just enough resources to go around. Therefore, when you hand Data Steward responsibilities to someone as something that is new, or something that is over-and-above their present job duties, it immediately feels as though they now have less time to conduct their present responsibilities. Gaining the confidence or gaining access to their time as part of the "new" responsibilities immediately becomes an unnecessary chore that can be avoided by following a different approach.

When a person is *identified* into the role of a Data Steward based on their position in the organization, it still may feel as though the responsibilities associated with the position have increased. This can have the same effect as being assigned into the role, but often the operational

model associated with this approach emphasizes that the responsibilities go along with the position.

Identifying someone by position may have unintended consequences if an inappropriate person is given the inappropriate level of accountability for data or information. Many operating models of roles and responsibilities include a tactical level of steward who is a subject matter expert, or an enterprise data steward representing the authority for a subject matter of data based on their knowledge of the subject rather than their position in the organization.

When a person is *recognized* into the role of a Data Steward based on their relationship to data, this is the least-invasive approach to associating people to their role in ODG. Being recognized for something has a positive connotation, but even more important, operationalizing data governance provides the data steward with the knowledge and the tools that are necessary to become formally accountable for following the rules associated with the data they define, produce, and use.

For example – a person that is defining the data for their part of the organization should become knowledgeable in how that data has already been defined for other parts of the organization. If data definers are provided the **tools**, forums, and guidance for collaborating with other stakeholders, they are more likely to collaborate on meaningful data definitions. *Keep this statement about **tools** in mind for later in the paper when I talk about the software tools provided by Global IDs.*

A major part of operationalizing data governance focuses on the implementation of the tools, forums, and guidance to direct the data stewards down a path of governed data definition. The same holds true for the governed path of production and usage of data as you see here.

A person that produces data, whether that person is physically creating the data or bringing the data into the organization from another source, must be held formally accountable for how they produce that data. If data producers are provided the knowledge, tools, and forums to understand the impact of the data they produce, they are more likely to produce higher quality data.

A person that uses data must be held formally accountable for how they use the data. This means that the data users must be knowledgeable in how the data can be used, shared, and distributed. If the users of the data are provided the knowledge, tools, forums, and guidance associated with protecting or using sensitive data, they are more likely to follow the rules associated with using the data.

> *"The way you implement the tools, forums, and guidance to direct the*
> *data stewards down a path of governed data definition, production, and usage*
> *is influenced by the approach you follow to operationalize data governance."*

In the Command-and-Control approach, data stewards are told how ODG WILL work and that they WILL be involved and follow the rules associated with data no matter the impact it has on their existing jobs. In the traditional approach, the data steward's operational responsibilities are

added to their existing job description. In the Non-Invasive approach to Data Governance, data stewards are engaged with ODG responsibilities directly associated with their job functions and their relationship to the data.

Sizing Up the Effort and Value of ODG

Operational Data Governance, as stated earlier, is the practice of activating and engaging the core components of the data governance program by getting people involved in the act of governing data. Let's look at activities that require data governance in most organizations and apply a consistent method for defining the value that comes from operationalizing data governance.

Most organizations focus their data governance programs on one or more of the following activities:

- Improving the quality and understanding of data leading to more effective information sharing
- Improving the protection of sensitive data and the ability to respond to regulatory requirements
- Improving decision-making capabilities through analytics, master data, and business intelligence

Assuming data governance will be operationalized to address one or more specific needs of the organization, and that your management has decided that not addressing that need is not an option, defining the value of ODG begins with determining the effort that is required to address their needs by answering these *post-program-definition questions*:

- What will it take to educate data stewards in the rules associated with the activity?
- What will it take get the stewards to follow the rules associated with the activity?
- What will it take to enforce the rules associated with the activity?
- What will it take to measure and report the improvement in the governance of the activity?
- What will it take to sustain governance of the activity moving forward?

[Note: *Post-program-definition* assumes that the primary components of the governance program have been defined, approved, and socialized to the appropriate level of the organization. These components include (but are not limited to) the program best practices and policies, roles and responsibilities, program leadership and management, business rules, processes and metrics, as well as other items. The questions do not consider the effort required to develop these primary components of governance programs.]

Answering the questions associated with the effort for each activity will size up what it will take to squarely address management's needs and demonstrate the value of operationalizing data governance for each of the activities.

Operationalizing Data Governance

What Needs to be Operationalized?

The previous section of this paper outlined five specific questions about sizing up the effort required to operationalize data governance. I will use the emphasis of each of the questions to address the question of "what needs to be operationalized?" when it comes to data governance.

Educating the Stewards

Educating the data stewards is not the first thing people think about when it comes operationalizing data governance, but it may be the most important. If you believe that the stewardship of data is directly associated with each person's relationship to the data, this means that there must be a repeatable process in place to educate all the stewards regarding the accountabilities that go along with the relationships.

A data definer must be empowered to govern the definition of data. A data producer must be empowered to produce quality data. The data user must be empowered with the rules associated with using the data. This empowerment starts with making certain the stewards are communicated with appropriately and equipped with the knowledge and the direction to follow rules associated with defining, producing, and using data.

Getting the Stewards to be Stewards

This is a hurdle that many organizations have a hard time getting over. Many organizations talk about giving data stewards the incentive to provide their time to act as data stewards. I provide a different perspective to this way of thinking.

Stewards, by my definition, are formally accountable for their relationship to the data. The stewards are the people that you are (or should be) involving in your efforts to define, produce, and use data. Getting the right people involved at the right time in the efforts becomes a big part of operationalizing data governance.

Enforcing the Rules

Educating the management of the data stewards and teaching them how to assure that governance rules are being followed by their stewards is an important aspect of operationalizing data governance. Measuring and reporting the level of management knowledge of the rules is another important aspect of ODG.

Providing the data stewards with the ability to share their concerns regarding what it takes to follow the rules is an important aspect of governing data. The governance program must include operational abilities to communicate about the enforcement of governance rules.

Measuring and Reporting Improvements

Continuously monitoring and reporting the results from governing data are activities that are extremely important to Senior Leadership that support, sponsor, and understand the activities of operationalizing data governance.

Selecting the appropriate metrics and enhancing those metrics require setting benchmarks upon which improvement will be measured, and repeatable processes for evaluating the way improvements are being measured and reported.

Sustaining Data Governance

Data governance is not a project that has a specific start and end date. I have heard it stated that organizations can only claim data governance victory once they have built the activities of governing data into the daily operations. At this point the governance of data does not feel like extra work. At this point data governance becomes a part of everything you do.

Sustaining data governance requires that the support for the program remains high and that the application of governance to process is continuously monitored and reported. Data governance is generally put in place as a permanent activity, and is not an activity that only covers a specific period.

The Goal of Data Governance

The goal of data governance is to maximize the value of the data an organization produces, consumes, and maintains.

As a business organization, we want to operationalize data governance, so that we can:

1. Reduce the impacts of defective data on our business operations and customer experiences by improving data quality
2. Use appropriate security measures to protect data by classifying data assets per their meanings and sensitivities
3. Minimize the likelihood and consequences of regulatory action by building and maintaining an inventory of all data within the enterprise subject to regulation
4. More easily share data across federated and interdependent systems by harmonizing data across the enterprise
5. More easily rationalize complex data environments by systematically identifying and eliminating untrustworthy and non-authoritative sources of data
6. Improve decision-making by harmonizing data and improving data quality
7. Trust the outcomes of decisions predicted by our machine learning algorithms by identifying, describing, and locating appropriate combinations of data, such that when we use these to train our machine learning algorithms, we can be confident these will produce trustworthy results
8. Reduce the cost and complexity of maintaining our data infrastructure by eliminating redundant, outdated and trivial (ROT) data sources

---

Activating ODG Processes

Operationalizing data governance focuses on getting the people that are assigned, identified, or recognized as data stewards actively involved in the processes that define governance. The activation or operationalization of the data stewards typically takes place after the roles of the programs and the steps of the process are defined.

Organizations often develop tools, such as a RACI matrix or what I call a Governance Activity Matrix, to define when data stewards will get involved in the steps of a process. In an activity matrix, the left side of the matrix lists the steps and sub-steps of a process, while the top of the

matrix lists the roles associated with a data governance program. In the boxes where the rows meet the columns, organizations complete the matrix in many ways.

Organizations often fill the blocks with the letters R-A-C-I which represent which role is [R] - Responsible for, [A] - Accountable for, [C] - Consulted during, or [I] - Informed of the step of the activity. These organizations call these activity matrices by the name of RACIs or RACI Matrices. The RACI matrix is the most simplified version of the Governance Activity Matrix, as it only details who is responsible, accountable, consulted, or informed during the process, and provides no further details of how the stewards and other roles will be activated.

Other versions of a Governance Activity Matrix that can be used to activate ODG processes include additional details about what it takes to activate stewards in the processes. Examples of other information that can complete the blocks include:
- The specific actions that must be completed by that role in that specific step.
- The amount of effort time (in hours) that will be permitted over an elapsed period (days, weeks, months) to complete the action.
- The specific outcomes or items that will be produced or documented by that role during that step.
- The manner of reporting the progress that has been made by that role during that step.

Non-Invasive Data Governance Leads to ODG

What is Non-Invasive Data Governance?

I define Non-Invasive Data Governance as "the practice of applying formal accountability and behavior to process to assure high quality, effective use, compliance, security, and protection of data." Non-Invasive describes how governance is applied to assure non-threatening management of valuable data assets. The goal of Non-Invasive Data Governance is to be transparent, supportive, and collaborative, while operationalizing your program.

"Non-Invasive Data Governance is the practice of
applying formal accountability and behavior to process to assure
high quality, effective use, compliance, security, and protection of data."

Many organizations view ODG as being the implementation of processes that are over-and-above normal and existing work efforts and threatening to the existing work culture of the organization. The truth is that it does not have to be that way.

Many organizations have a difficult time getting people to adopt data governance best practices because of a common belief that data governance is about command-and-control. Again, the truth is that data governance does not have to operate that way.

While I firmly state that data governance is "the execution and enforcement of authority over the management of data," nowhere in that definition does it say that the approach to implementing data governance must be invasive or threatening to the work, people, and culture of the organization. In fact, this misconception creates barriers to successful ODG. Again, the truth is that data governance does not have to be implemented that way.

Non-Invasive Data Governance can be summed up in a few quick statements:

- With Non-Invasive Data Governance – Data steward responsibilities are identified and recognized, formalized and operationalized per their existing responsibility rather than being assigned or handed to people as more work.
- With Non-Invasive Data Governance – The governance of data is operationalized by applying formal discipline to existing policies, standard operating procedures, practices, and methodologies, rather than being introduced or emphasized as new processes or methods.
- With Non-Invasive Data Governance – The governance of data augments and supports all data operations including data integration, privacy, risk management, business intelligence, and master data management activities.
- With Non-Invasive Data Governance – Specific attention is paid to operationalizing senior management's understanding of a practical and non-threatening yet effective approach to mediating ownership and promoting the effective stewarding of data as a cross-organization asset.
- With Non-Invasive Data Governance – Best practices and key concepts of the non-threatening approach are communicated effectively, compared to existing practices to identify and leverage strengths and enable the ability to address opportunities to improve.

Application of Non-Invasive ODG to Processes

In the next section of this paper I use a focus on data governance software and tools to spell out several applications of data governance. These applications include improving understanding, quality, protection, and rationalization of data.

Many organizations initially focus their data governance efforts on initiatives that the organizations are being forced to undertake, and that is often the very reason that governance starts to feel invasive. Protecting sensitive data and complying with industry and government regulations are not optional. Large data integration efforts, specifically when they are the result of organizations that have grown through acquisition and siloed development, are a fact of life and are not optional. These efforts must be governed.

Organizations that initially focus their data governance programs on improving the understanding of data or improving the quality of the data often find that it requires a larger effort to convince their management of the value of data governance and more time is invested in getting management to believe that a data governance program should be pursued. In many organizations, management believes that data understanding and quality is less valuable than assuring that the data complies and is being protected.

To operationalize a Non-Invasive Data Governance program involves recognizing the "right" people as data stewards, and formalizing those people's accountability by engaging them at the "right" time for the "right" reason to do the "right" thing. I often refer to this as the Data Governance Bill of "Rights."

The Data Governance Activity matrix mentioned earlier is a perfect example of applying governance to process in a non-invasive way rather than redefining people's role to suit the program. People understand when their personal responsibilities get formalized.

Global IDs and Tools to Enable ODG

Enabling Data Governance with Metadata

Metadata in the form of a comprehensive data asset inventory is a foundational technology for enabling data governance processes. These metadata can be cultivated and curated by hand (think business glossaries), or in combination with automation. Global IDs specializes in building automation to support enterprise data governance activities at a scale that would be impractical to achieve using traditional methods. These include tools to help:
1. Build and maintain an enterprise data asset inventory
2. Benchmark and measure data quality improvements
3. Classify data assets per their meaning, purpose, and sensitivity
4. Identify candidate data for decommissioning (e.g. redundant, outdated, and trivial datasets)
5. Assess impacts of changes in data structures, data quality, and data flows

The time and effort required to build a comprehensive data catalog using other techniques will, depending on the size of the data environment, eventually reach the point of diminishing returns. Global IDs' data discovery profiling tools operate with minimal human interaction – orders of magnitude less than what is required by most alternative techniques.

> *"Global IDs specializes in building automation to support enterprise data governance activities at a scale that would be impractical to achieve using traditional methods."*

Automated profiling will rapidly discover the structure, contents, and relationships among the data assets an organization owns. Statistical profiles produce metadata that describes semantic relationships among data. As it discovers recurring patterns in the data, it uses this information to automatically organize data having common characteristics.

It can automatically classify specific types of data, such as relational database columns containing name, address, and telephone numbers. It will also learn to recognize new types of data that it discovers along the way.   This will typically include columns used as business object identifiers such as customer, product, and order identifiers. Recurring relationships among the common identifiers it discovers are used to discover common attributes, and to derive candidate conceptual business objects.

Consider three independently designed databases holding similar types of information; for example, databases supporting an ordering system, a billing system, and an enterprise data warehouse.   Fragments of the three physical data models will represent similar semantic relationships, such as the relationship between a column representing an account identifier and an order number.

These low-level semantic relationships are foundational to enabling the tool to classify data based on semantics. Single database columns by themselves rarely have any intrinsic meaning. For example, what is the meaning of a column that contains a street address? It is through relationships with other data that these data become meaningful. This capability of discovering

common relationships across data elements found in various physical databases enables the tool to do automatically the otherwise labor-intensive process of mapping terms in a business glossary to each of the physical instantiations of those concepts.

Moreover, this capability also enables one to automatically tag data having specific combinations of data elements. A table containing FICO scores and Tax Brackets may be public information, or may represent personal financial information. The answer depends on what information is linked within a given database to these columns. The ability to automatically detect sensitive relationships helps to more rapidly locate data assets subject to regulation, such as data covered by the GDPR privacy regulations.

The Data Ecosystem

Global IDs tools assist with operationalizing data governance and collecting and maintaining the metadata necessary to demonstrate value from data governance. The tools focus on governing the most important aspects of your data and analytical landscape. Global IDs refers to this landscape as the Data Ecosystem of your organization.

Thinking of your data and analytical landscape as an ecosystem provides a context to view and manage specific aspects of the system, including the interactions between communities of living and growing organisms – in this case – the people, information requirements, and data resources. Global IDs provides the software to manage your data ecosystem.

In this section of the paper, I will analyze five specific aspects of the data ecosystem and provide information on how software tools can assist your organization to enable ODG. The five areas that will be investigated include:

- Transparency and Understanding
- Data and Information Quality
- Privacy and Data Protection
- Data Rationalization Ecosystem Cleanup
- Big Data and Data Lake Governance

The scientific community tells us that everything is connected, and that the connections between the things are the foundation of a successful ecosystem. After analyzing each of these areas independently, we will summarize how they interact, and how software tools can assist in connecting these items.

Transparency and Understanding

It is nearly impossible to manage your organization's data ecosystem without detailed information about the data that exists within that system. This involves building an inventory of the expanding number of data and information resources including data warehouses, enterprise and functionally focused integrated data sets, data lakes, and big data environments. Data Governance Tools are used to collect this information; specifically, to inventory and improve the understanding of the most important data assets that belong to the organization.

The automation of governed processes and metadata collection are used to maintain information about the data resources. This is a foundational governance requirement for many organizations. To operationalize data governance, organizations use tools designed

to govern the collection of metadata and maintenance of the metadata associated with systems, databases, and other information resources.

Data and Information Quality

ODG often focuses on governing the continual improvement of data and information quality. Once an organization catalogs their ecosystem and collects information about the databases, tables, and finite pieces of data that are most important to them, this information is augmented in the software tools with standards, business rules, processes, and specific metadata associated with effective stewarding of the data as an asset.

Poor quality data often results from poor documentation associated with the definition, production, and usage of data. Data governance software tools focus on effectively engaging the data stewards of the organization in activities associated with identifying and resolving data quality issues.

Privacy and Data Protection

ODG, and specifically Non-Invasive Data Governance, require that organizations govern the definition, production, and usage of data. Governing the usage of data requires that organizations operationalize how they classify data, specify handling for that data, and communicate and enforce the classification and handling rules for data that is shared inside and outside of the organization. Regulations bodies are leaning toward more stringent rules and demonstrable proof that sensitive data is being protected.

New legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), are starting slowly but gaining traction in any and all businesses that expect to do business in Europe into 2018. Effective data governance tools must enable ODG through the management of the metadata associated with data classification, data handling rules, individual accountability, and the ability to monitor and report on the ability of the organization to protect sensitive data.

Data Rationalization Ecosystem Cleanup

To clean up the ecosystem requires that organizations understand their present difficulties associated with their evolutionary ecosystem design. Data governance tools must operationalize an organization's abilities to simplify, rationalize (make sense of), and cleanup the data ecosystem to reduce costs.

Most organizations maintain numerous systems that focus on similar data and share data resources both inside and outside the organization. This duplication of data, management of similar data for individual purposes, and siloed ownership of data over time leads to an inability to look at the entire data ecosystem at one time.

Data Governance Tools must enable the organization to make sense of the quagmire and spaghetti-like design of the organization's data landscape. Documenting how systems interact and share data provides the backdrop for ecosystem cleanup, and improves understanding of the steps that are required to build better information resources and leverage the information resources already in the environment.

Big Data and Data Lake Governance

Newer technologies require that all the previous four items above – transparency and understanding, data quality, protection, and rationalization – must be governed effectively and operationalized to become part of daily business operations. A data lake is a place where organizations store data, in its natural format, that facilitates the collocation of data in various schemas and structural forms. The overabundance of formats and technologies call for strict governance that prevents big data and the data lake from becoming polluted and unusable.

Software tools like Global IDs allow organizations to govern critical data with less human oversight by using automated machine learning techniques. As the data ecosystem evolves and as new technologies are embraced, it is necessary that the transparency, quality, protection and rationalization of the data is maintained in a centralized location. That central location is Global IDs.

Everything is Connected

As mentioned earlier, everything in your organization's data and information ecosystem is connected or related. This particularly holds true when it comes to operationalizing how we maintain the quality of our data and analytics landscapes.

"Global IDs' data governance tool is the centralized location to collect, manage, and distribute metadata about the data ecosystem."

Global IDs' data governance tool is the centralized location to collect, manage, and distribute metadata about the data ecosystem. The tool is a core component of providing improved and governed resources associated with your data landscape. Global IDs products provide an integrated, all in one place tool that allows organizations to view, manage, and operationalize the governance of data across the organization.

Conclusion

Data Governance programs are developed to be operationalized. Defining data governance best practices, roles and responsibilities, and policies and procedures adds little to your organization. That is, until you engage data stewards in the act of stewarding data. That act can take the form of improving data transparency, improving data quality, protecting sensitive data, and improving data understanding through structured management of your ecosystem and its metadata.

No matter which approach you follow - whether you select to follow a command-and-control approach, a more traditional approach, or whether you follow the non-invasive approach that I have offered, Operational Data Governance (ODG) is always the practice of activating and engaging the core components of the data governance program by getting people involved in the act of governing data. That is reason enough for why you should be focusing on operationalizing your data governance program.

The Future of ODG

The future of data governance is certain for the foreseeable future. Organizations will continue to look for ways to find and demonstrate value in governing their most important data assets. Data governance program focus will continue to evolve within and between different organizations.

Some organizations will focus on improving understanding of data, while others will focus on improving the quality of the data. Some will focus of data analytics and their ability to make good decisions. Most every organization will be forced to operationalize data governance to improve in the areas of data privacy, protecting sensitive data, and regulatory/compliance concerns.

As long as there is a need to improve the value your organization gets from your data, and a need to follow the rules associated with your data, the need for data governance and ODG will not fade quietly into the night. There is an immediate need to govern your data and operationalize the components of your program. Look to Global IDs for more information about how their software tools can assist you.

-- 02/14/2017 --

Robert (Bob) S. Seiner is the President and Principal of KIK Consulting & Educational Services (KIKConsulting.com) and the Publisher of The Data Administration Newsletter (TDAN.com). In 2017, TDAN.com is celebrating its 20th anniversary. In 2017, KIK Consulting will celebrate its 15th anniversary focusing on knowledge transfer and consultative mentoring in the areas of Data Governance, Metadata and Information Quality. Bob was recently awarded the DAMA Professional Award for significant and demonstrable contributions to the data management industry. Bob specializes in Non-Invasive Data Governance™, data stewardship, and metadata management solutions and has successfully assisted and mentored many notable organizations. Bob's book on Non-Invasive Data Governance is available at Amazon.com and his webinar series and on-line Non-Invasive Data Governance learning plan are available through DATAVERSITY.net.