What is Information Governance? Managing Data to Drive Compliance, Strategy and Productivity

At its heart, information governance involves knowing where the organization's data lives and who owns it. But what is information governance? Key elements of governance include categorizing data and managing the data lifecycle. Additionally, organizations must find a sweet spot that balances robust information security with streamlined data access.

Properly implemented, information governance paves the way for regulatory compliance. It also makes quality data available to decision makers to inform business strategy. And it increases productivity by making the right data available to the right people at the right time.

Maintain Compliance with Improved Visibility and Regular Monitoring

For many companies, motivation to develop an information governance strategy starts with the need for regulatory compliance. Regulations such as HIPAA mandate retention of certain types of data. Some privacy regulations, on the other hand, mandate destruction of personal data in certain instances. Most regulations include specifications regarding data security.

A robust information governance solution delivers visibility into all data, whether it lives on premises or in the cloud. It will also streamline data classification. When organizations label data, they can then apply retention and destruction policies according to data type. They can also tie sharing restrictions and rules for encryption to data classifications.

Finally, ongoing security and compliance monitoring helps to highlight security vulnerabilities and reduce the risk of privacy law violations. In fact, many regulatory agencies make monitoring a condition for compliance.

Strengthen Innovation and Strategy with Well-organized Data

When organizations take information governance beyond checkbox compliance, they begin to build data value. With data properly categorized, companies employ data analytics to inform strategy and drive innovation. By improving visibility and removing outdated information from the equation, categorization helps ensure that decision makers have high quality data.

For example, a personalized marketing strategy built on outdated or incomplete data will fail to reach the desired customers and generate conversions. On the other hand, reliable data about buyer behavior on company websites informs successful social media strategy.

Quality data also proves key in building effective business processes. For example, mismanaged data can create inventory control issues, resulting in delayed shipments that negatively impact customer loyalty. Conversely, with access to accurate machine performance history, manufacturers reduce downtime with customized maintenance schedules.

Improve Productivity by Balancing Security with Data Access

Well-organized, accessible data improves productivity by facilitating collaboration and helping users gather essential information. But organizations must manage the balance between making data accessible and keeping it secure.

Strict control over data access and information sharing will strengthen compliance and security. But at the same time, overly strict controls inhibit productivity. For instance, when users cannot quickly locate

the data they need, or when they lack necessary permissions, they will waste hours re-creating the information.

Combining identity governance with information governance, organizations ensure users have correct access to the data they need for their jobs. For instance, Microsoft Entra improves productivity by automating many aspects of identity governance. And when access is tied to roles and groups, users automatically gain the access they need as their job functions change.

What is Information Governance? Discover the Power of Data

Information governance encompasses a variety of processes and policies surrounding data, including:

- Data categorization and storage
- Comprehensive data security
- Regulatory compliance
- Data access controls
- eDiscovery management
- Data retention and destruction

The benefits of information governance impact the entire organization. Regulatory compliance becomes easier to achieve. Business strategies and processes improve, built on solid data analytics. End users quickly find essential business information, with increased confidence in its quality. And eDiscovery ceases to be a significant pain point.

Partner with Messaging Architects to design and implement an information governance strategy tailored to your budget and business needs.