

MITR/TECH

Clean Up Legal
Operations With the
Data Management
Lifecycle



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01 Introduction

“Data governance is a large topic that spans different facets of different examinations,” Mitrastech expert Brian McGovern states in his [recent podcast](#). *“At the broadest level, it’s managing all the data in an organization, including systems, documents, financials and emails.”*

All legal departments have tremendous amounts of data. This data comes from a wide variety of sources, including: matter files, emails, documents, invoices, legal research, contracts, patents, employee incidents and claims. While management of this data can seem overwhelming, it could also be your greatest untapped resource for driving legal improvements and achieving results.

McGovern agrees.



“You can see how that [data management] would be really big,” McGovern states. “Not only managing all that different type of content, but what we mean by managing data is talking about the data quality - its usability, its integrity, its security, and ultimately, its preservation.”

In this day and age, managing data is no longer an option, it's a requirement. In fact, legal teams that aren't accessing their data to drive insights, establish key performance indicators and drive value for their business both do themselves a disservice and can lag behind their competition.

But how can corporate legal departments better manage their data so they can drive valuable insights for their entire company?



Brian McGovern, the man who was once in charge of AIG's legal technology evolution, created an enterprise data assets management lifecycle to guide the process of building out AIG's legal technology ecosystem.

This lifecycle is beneficial to any legal team looking to improve the way they handle their data.

What are the benefits to better data management?

"It's designed to improve reporting, decision-making and making sure we deliver maximum value for organizations using enterprise legal management solutions," McGovern explains.

After he led the AIG team that completed the largest (successful) global enterprise legal management implementation in the world, McGovern developed a series of best practices around legal data management to keep the organization consistent moving forward.

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BRIAN MCGOVERN

Executive Director, Strategic Programs
Mitratach

According to McGovern, **there are three steps in the data assets management lifecycle we can explore in detail:**

1. Build a Foundation and Manage Data
2. Connect the Dots and Integrate
3. Create a Smart and Personalized Business Focus Through Analysis



02 Build a Foundation and Manage Data

What's it mean to build a foundation when it comes to data? For McGovern and team, it meant three particular things:

1. Providing governed and controlled access to standardized information assets.
2. Implementing data governance and a data governance council.
3. Defining an organizational model and aligning it to the executive committee.

1. Controlled Access to Standardized Information

Before you can gain any insights from your data, or even consolidate everything into one place, the data across systems must first be consistent and accurate. It should adhere to specific formats. And the data types, field lengths, value masks, field compositions, etc., should all be consistent according to metadata documentation, external and internal data standards.

Only once this access and input is controlled and standardized can data be consolidated into a single place for review and decision making.



2. Data Governance and a Data Governance Council

On a larger scale than data management, which focuses more on the tools and processes those tools need to manage data, data governance encompasses a company's data-related policies and structures.

A data governance council consists of a group of people who have the authority (and the budget) needed to enforce these policies and internal regulations.

Data governance is a much larger term that encompasses a company's policies and structure.

3. Organizational Model and the Executive Committee

The organizational model has to do with how the organization is structured to support and manage the data that exists and draw insights from it.

In other words, this group of people, a data council made of individual data stewards from across the business, supports the goals of the executive leadership team.

For example, perhaps leadership wants to understand the value of their outside counsel firms and reduce this type of spend. This data council would then find the necessary data to support that goal.

They must review what data they have to pursue that goal, how good that data is, and verify whether it is reliable, accurate, consistent and up-to-date.



03 Connect the Dots and Integrate

For data to make any sense and drive any advantage, it must be connected and integrated fully across the business. McGovern recommends that companies find ways to enable a unified view of their information assets.

The first step towards creating this unified view is simply to bring all the data into the same place. Companies can do this by establishing data stores, data marts and a shared services environment to house all the raw information they needed.

Once a company has their single source of truth in place, the next step is to manage their data - and that data's quality - within the system, automatically.

According to McGovern, AIG succeeded in ensuring effective data management and quality control through completing a data profile of over 100 business rules across four dimensions.

Once a company has their single source of truth in place, the next step is to manage their data - and that data's quality - within the system, automatically.

What are these four dimensions?

1. Data management
2. Strategy management
3. Platform and architecture management
4. Data quality

These four dimensions make sure a company manages all aspects surrounding their legal management technology, which not only includes how they manage and control data, but the physical and technical set-up and function of the legal management platform, and the business processes surrounding the governance and use of that technology.



What do the 100 business rules consist of?

“These business rules are for the purpose of measuring data quality,” Brian McGovern states. “They are a set of rules you turn on so you can make sure the data you enter goes where it needs to.”

In other words, these rules enable a legal management and spend management system to ensure that any data entered is:

- The right data
- In the right field
- In the right format



For example, if the data field requires a matter name, a business rule in the technology tool would ensure the data entered follows a specific naming convention each time.

Ultimately, the rules depend on the types of data your company's legal team needs to enter into the system. They should be customized and tailored to your company's needs.

These rules ensure the same types of quality controls for a host of other information as well, such as names, phone numbers, geographies - the list goes on.

04 Create a Smart and Personalized Business Focus

Trying to win the race in business without insights from your data is like trying to win an actual race without a track to follow or a clear direction to head. Chances are, you won't ever reach the finish line without them.

AIG understood this problem clearly. Through leveraging the power of their complete [legal management solution](#), AIG was able to deliver business-focused insights and foresight, not just to their legal team, but to their entire company.



How did they accomplish this?

1. They implemented legal spend dashboards to enable a shift from reporting the past to driving the future. These dashboards allowed each general manager to instantly surface progress from the top down. The result? Over **\$10 million in savings** per year through adherence to strict, organization-wide guidelines.

2. They pulled insights from their data on litigation. This enabled them to look for trends, to re-evaluate the metrics and methodologies they used previously, and to become more strategic in their processes and decisions.
3. They expanded beyond dashboards to complex analysis, including predictive analytics, so they could proactively identify and address areas of concern within the business.

To create a smart and personalized business focus, a company must create a smart and personalized focus on data to drive business strategy and results.

“Right now, business insights are a differentiator,” Mitratach data and operations expert Karen Oxenford-Melcher states, *“If you don’t have these insights, you will fall behind your competitors that do.”*

Sounds like it’s time to make sure you’re on the right side of Legal Ops history, then.

“If you don’t have these insights, you will fall behind your competitors that do.”

KAREN OXFENFORD-MELCHER

VP, Sales Operations
Mitratach

About Mitratesch

Mitratesch is a proven global technology partner for corporate legal professionals who seek out and maximize opportunities to raise productivity, control expense and mitigate risk by deepening organizational alignment, increasing visibility and spurring collaboration across the enterprise.

With Mitratesch's proven portfolio of end-to-end solutions, operational best practices permeate the enterprise, standardizing processes and accelerating time-to-value. By unlocking every opportunity to drive progress and improve outcomes, we're helping legal teams rise to the challenge of serving the evolving needs of the modern, dynamic enterprise.

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