

Maximizing AI Project Value and Velocity Through Data Products in Financial Services

How Data Products with Federated Governance Can Tackle Widespread AI Inhibitors



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In This InfoBrief

The rapid adoption of generative AI (GenAI) and emerging agentic AI pushes the limits of the possible — enhancing productivity, streamlining operations, enabling personalized customer engagement, and scaling risk and compliance capabilities. Yet, despite the buzz, many financial institutions struggle to progress AI initiatives to production and instead remain caught in what can only be described as an infinity loop — an endless cycle of experimentation, testing, and fixing data — preventing meaningful progress. In fact, only 33% of FSI institutions believe they have adequate systems and processes in place today to ensure high-quality data for their GenAI initiatives.

This InfoBrief explores the potential of data products, a new approach to data management and governance, to make AI projects more successful. Data products rely on decentralized data ownership and management by line-of-business (LOB) owners, self-service access by data users/consumers, and federated data governance enforcing clear guardrails and guidelines across the entire organization. Data products are also referred to as data mesh, domain-oriented data architecture, or decentralized data management.



Data Product



Decentralized Data Ownership



Self-Service Data Access



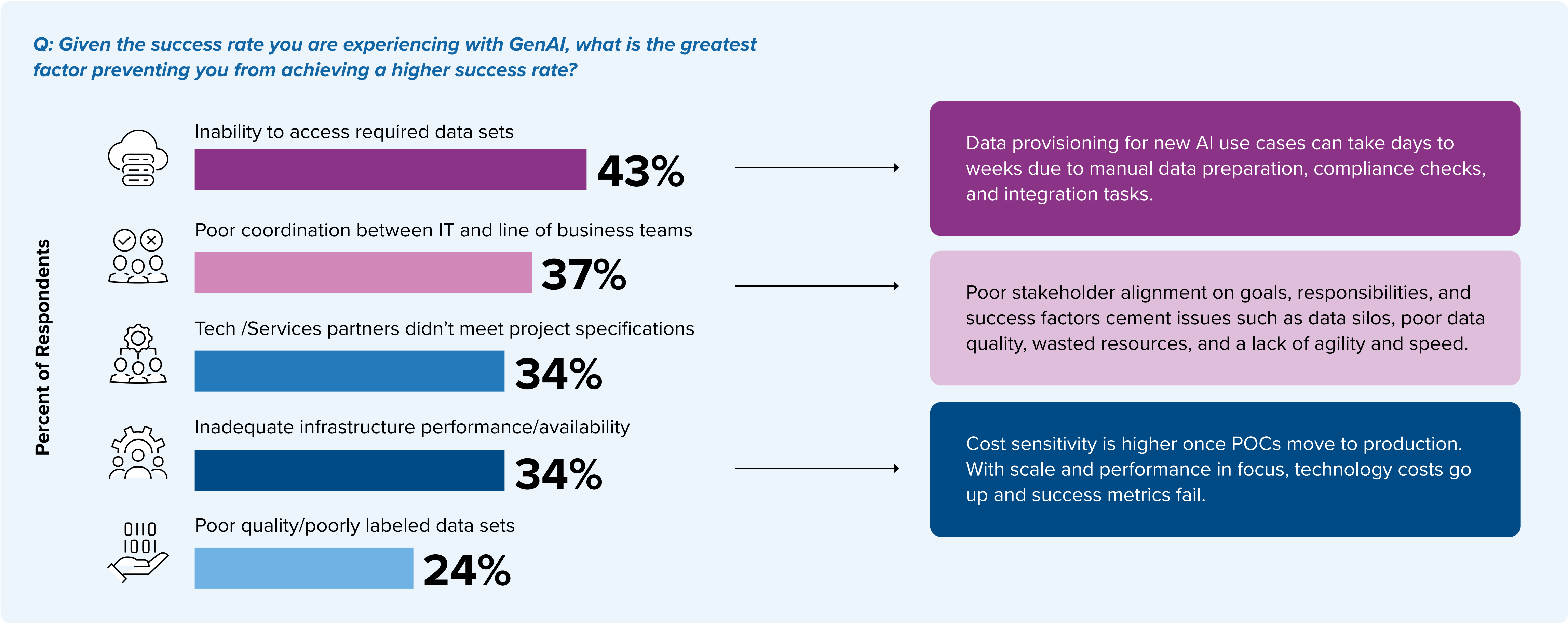
Federated Data Governance



Where Are GenAI Initiatives Failing?

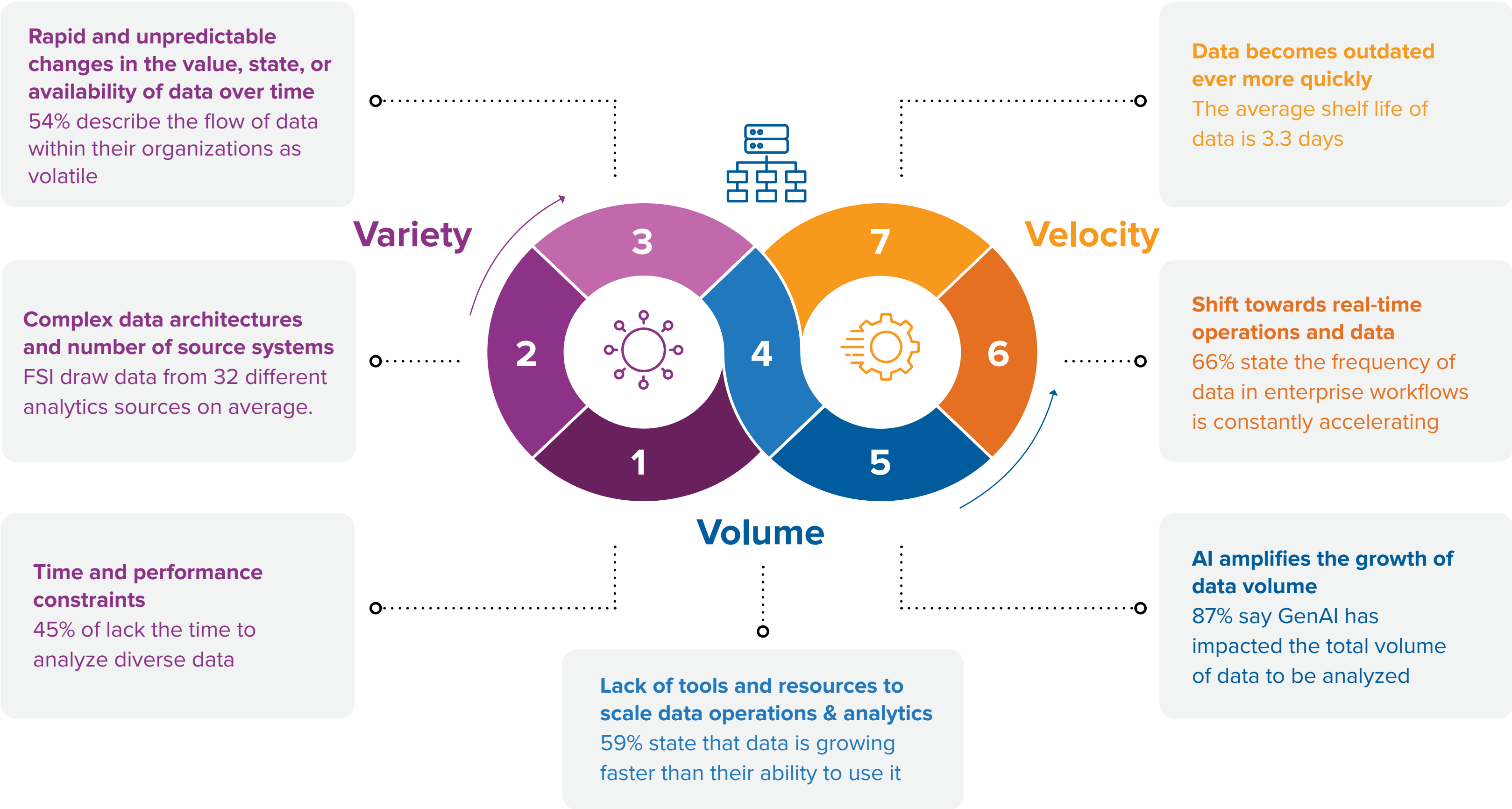
Traditional Data Management Shortcomings Impede AI initiatives

Success critically depends on an institution’s ability to move toward logical data management and accelerate access to high-quality data; federated governance defining domain ownership, stakeholder responsibilities, and consistency while ensuring data integrity, security, and privacy.



The Data Problem Infinity Loop

Financial service institutes (FSI) face an ever-expanding variety of data types (structured, unstructured, real-time, and third-party), an overwhelming volume of data, and higher velocity. FSI can no longer rely on traditional data management, which bogs them in an endless cycle of data patching, where each fix is a band-aid rather than a lasting remedy.



The consequences are dire!

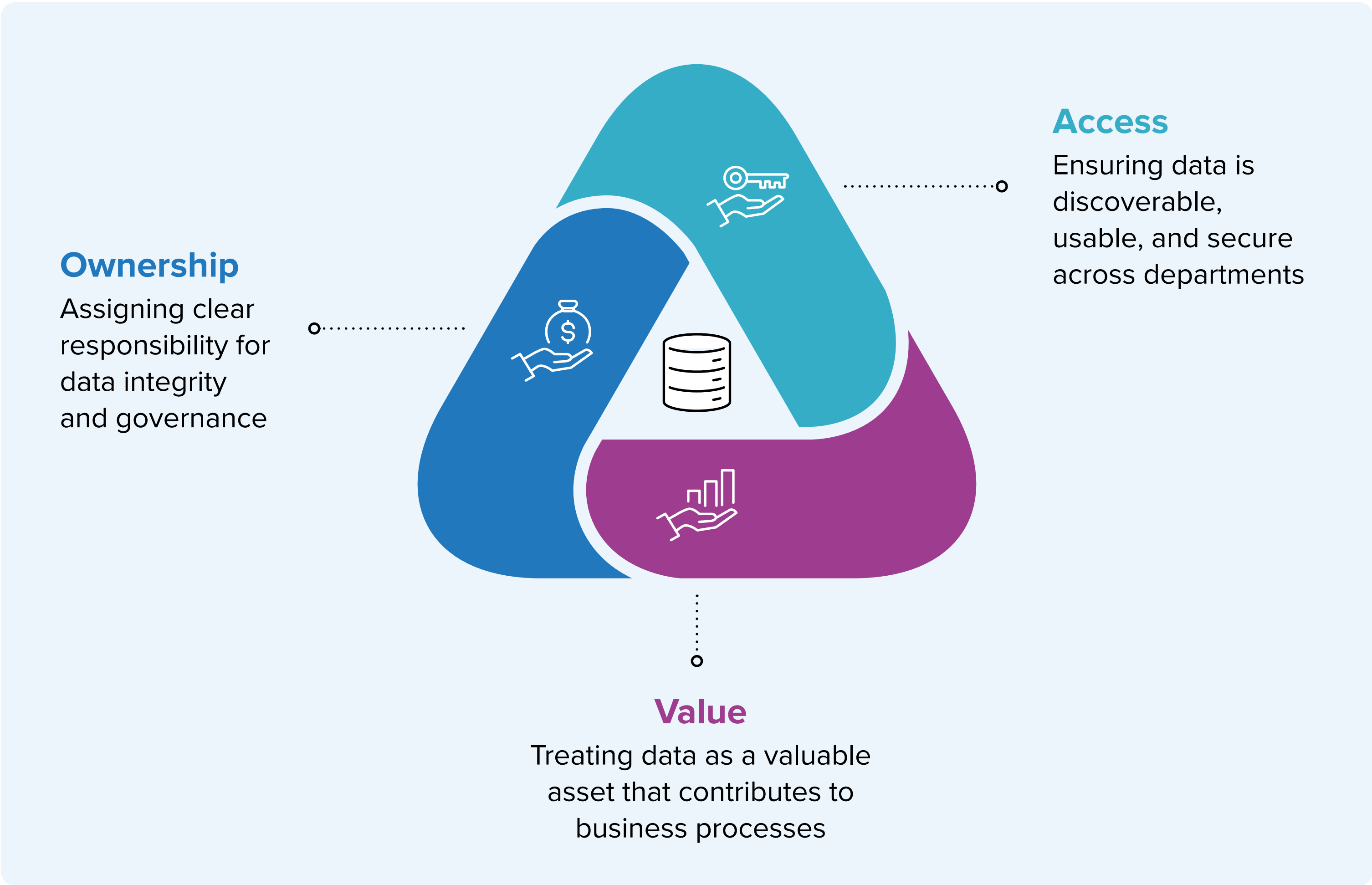
71%
of FSI data that might be useful is not used for data analytics.

59%
of respondents are challenged to find the data they need.

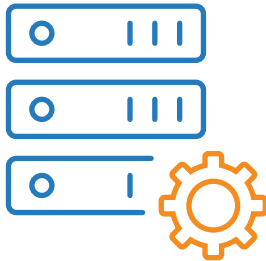
What Is a Data Product?



Transforming Data into Strategic Assets with Data Products



What are data products?



Data products are defined along three dimensions: access, value, and ownership. Access is making data products available, discoverable, and reusable. Value involves determining the business value derived from the data products that ultimately drives the data valuation methodology. Ownership determines who is responsible for developing, maintaining, monetizing, and nurturing the data product throughout its life cycle.

Data products are designed to support real business outcomes, including data-driven decision-making, risk and compliance management, customer experience, improved operational efficiency and productivity, and revenue growth and profitability. Moreover, data products enable organizational agility, innovation, collaboration, automation and version control, faster time to market, and scalability.

Ten Characteristics of Data Products

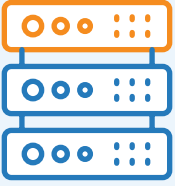
1

Inherently valuable:
Data products must be complete and valuable without any other data required.



2

Product managed:
A data product owner manages each product through the entire life cycle, like any other digital product.



3

Developable:
Data products should be structured to allow an agile and well-governed development process.



4

Backward compatible:
Data products must be versioned, coexistent in multiple versions, and backward compatible.



5

Exclusive:
End users can only access data through data products; there are no back doors.



6

Accessible:
Data products must be accessible in a useful way for target consumers.



7

Trustworthy:
SLAs are essential to improve trust in data products setting measurable goals for performance, completeness, accuracy, and timeliness.



8

Interoperable and composable:
Combining one data product with others must be easy, including creating new ones.



9

Secure:
Data products must meet access, confidentiality, and compliance requirements.



10

Discoverable:
Data products must be easy for target users to find.





Succeed by focusing on improving discoverability, adaptability, and utility.

What Are the Benefits of Data Products?

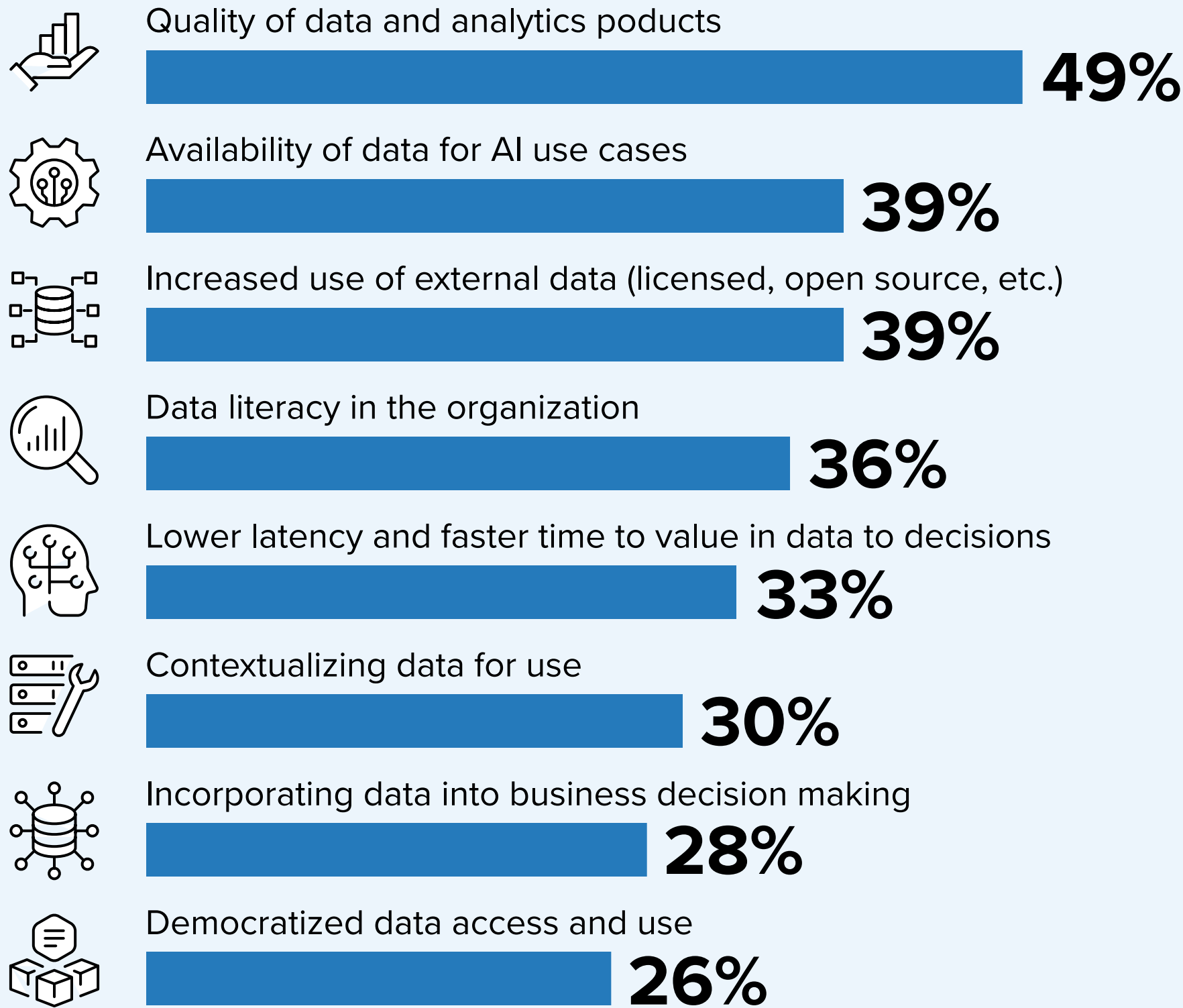


Examples of Data Products in Financial Services



How Data Products Invigorate AI Initiatives

Q: What outcomes have been significantly improved over the last 12-18 months as a result of new data initiatives?



Benefits of Data Products



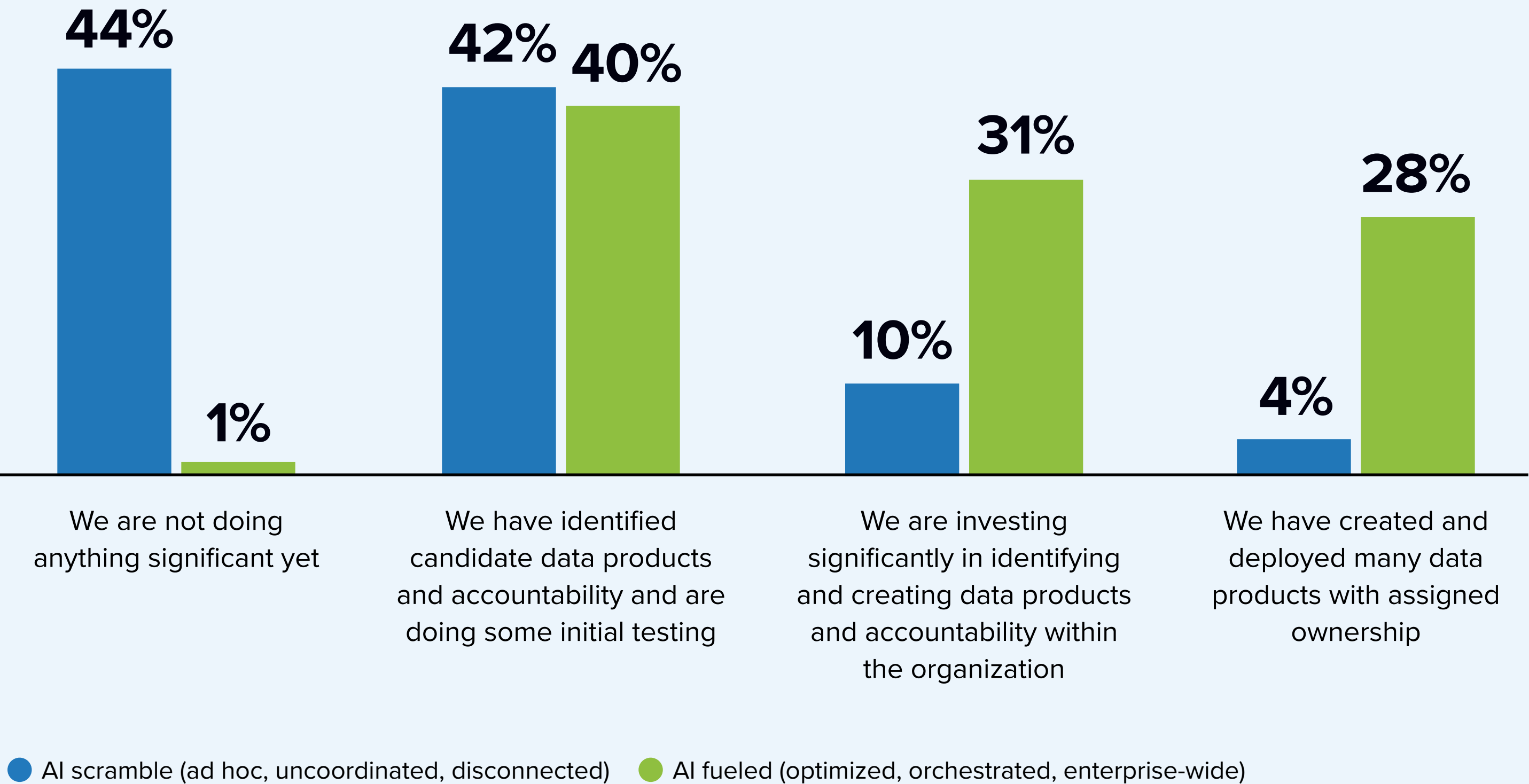
Data products improve data quality by embedding governance and quality checks directly into the data lifecycle, ensuring data is accurate, consistent, and reliable. They leverage automation and continuous monitoring to detect and resolve anomalies early, standardize and structure data to reduce errors, and assign clear ownership to maintain accountability.

Data products enhance AI and advanced analytics. AI applications fundamentally depend on high-quality, structured data. Data products improve the accuracy and reliability of AI models by ensuring that the data used to train them is clean, consistent, well-governed, and readily available for data users in a self-service model.

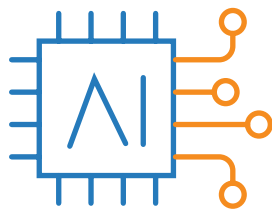
Data products increase the use of external data by enabling seamless integration, governance, and delivery of diverse data sources through automated, scalable platforms. They support ingestion from any source — cloud or on-premises — using multiple delivery methods such as APIs, data streaming, and ETL, while applying on-the-fly data transformation, masking, and enrichment to ensure data quality and privacy compliance.

Maturity in Data Products Drives AI Success

Q. What is your organization's current state of treating data as a product for the purpose of assigning accountability, internal data sharing, and democratization?



AI Leaders Are Already Adopting Data Products



IDC data shows a clear correlation between data products and AI-savvy institutions characterized by an enterprise-wide AI strategy, clear governance and accountability.

Mature data products provide well-governed, high-quality, integrated, and accessible data, which forms the essential foundation for effective AI adoption and deployment.

FSI that have advanced data management capabilities — such as cloud infrastructure, data integration, and metadata management embedded in data products — are more likely to achieve higher AI maturity as they turn data into actionable insights at scale.

ABN AMRO Verzekeringen Delivers Seamless, Efficient Customer Experience Supported by Robust, Agile Data Management



Challenge

- New insurance business models require **rapid and accurate data for success monitoring**: claims handled within three seconds and daily marketing campaign measurement.
- **Legacy data warehouses are unable to keep up**, requiring huge effort to merge information from multiple systems and deliver timely reports.
- **Business units only receive monthly updates** on campaign progress and service quality, slowing decision-making.
- The **volume of data for decision-making is rising exponentially**, while the time available to make those decisions is decreasing sharply.
- There is **pressure to provide reliable, frequent, and up-to-date data to various internal teams and regulators**, including the Dutch Authority for the Financial Markets.



Solution

- ABN AMRO Verzekeringen planned to **migrate critical source systems to the cloud**, deciding to move away from traditional data warehouses that rely on continuous copying, transforming, and combining of data.
- ABN AMRO Verzekeringen now flexibly **combines data from both on-premises and cloud systems into unified data products, delivering real-time insights** to business users.
- The new data management approach builds on **data virtualization to allow data access without replication**. This removed limitations related to source system size, location or technology.
- The built-in data catalogue enabled the creation of an **easily accessible data marketplace**, improving data discovery, usability and maintenance of data products across the organization.



Benefits

- **Faster claim settlement**, enhancing customer satisfaction and trust.
- **Democratized data access** simplifies data exploration, empowering users with deeper insights.
- **Easier and quicker unlocking of varied data sources** accelerates decision-making.
- **Strong data control and privacy** ensure compliance and protect customer information.
- **Facilitate rapid prototyping** to innovate and improve services swiftly.
- **Reporting speed improved** with reports delivered 1,440 times faster than before.

Governance and Roles in the Data Product Ecosystem

Key Stakeholders

Data products require two key classes of stakeholders powered by a centralized IT & governance function.

Data Product Consumers



- Consumers are often lines of business, but can also sit in support functions (e.g. compliance, risk management, data scientists, reporting)
- A data consumer (system, application, person, etc.) utilizes data to gain insights, make decisions, or perform specific tasks.
- Consumers are responsible for data acquisition from the appropriate producers through a self-service model (e.g. data streams, databases queries, or accessing APIs).
- Provide feedback to producers on quality, usability, relevance

Data Product Producers



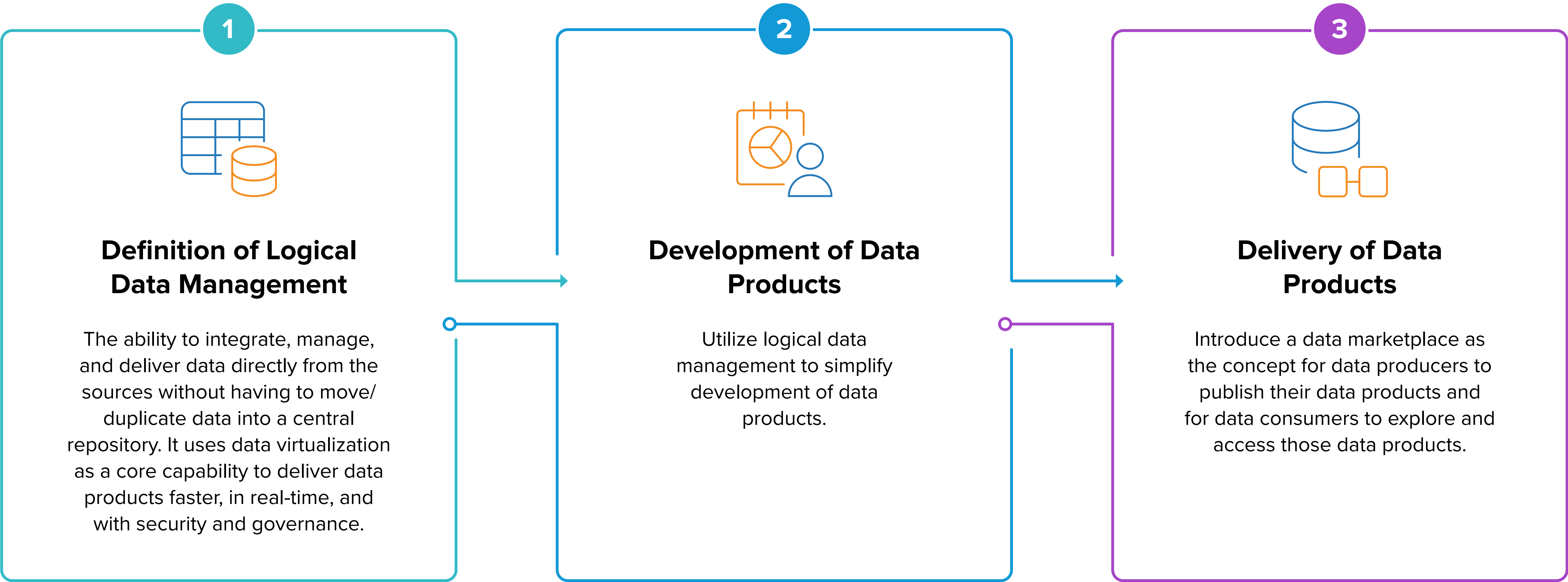
- Typically, lines of business own data products and lead efforts to define, design, and deliver them.
- Producers ensure data quality including accuracy, completeness, consistency, and timeliness through tasks such as lifecycle management, data validation, and cleansing.
- Define service levels, data formats, and structures
- Provide clear and comprehensive documentation
- Ensure monetization through internal chargebacks

Governance, Shared Services, and IT Support



- Build and maintain data infrastructures (cloud, on-premises) and integrity
- Provide essential tools, utilities, services, and platforms (e.g., data ingestion, storage, access controls, monitoring, governance, marketplaces, data lineage and quality tools, and self-service and analytics platforms)
- Automation and continuous integration/continuous deployment (CI/CD)
- Security, privacy, and compliance implementation

The Logical Approach to Developing and Delivering Governed Data Products

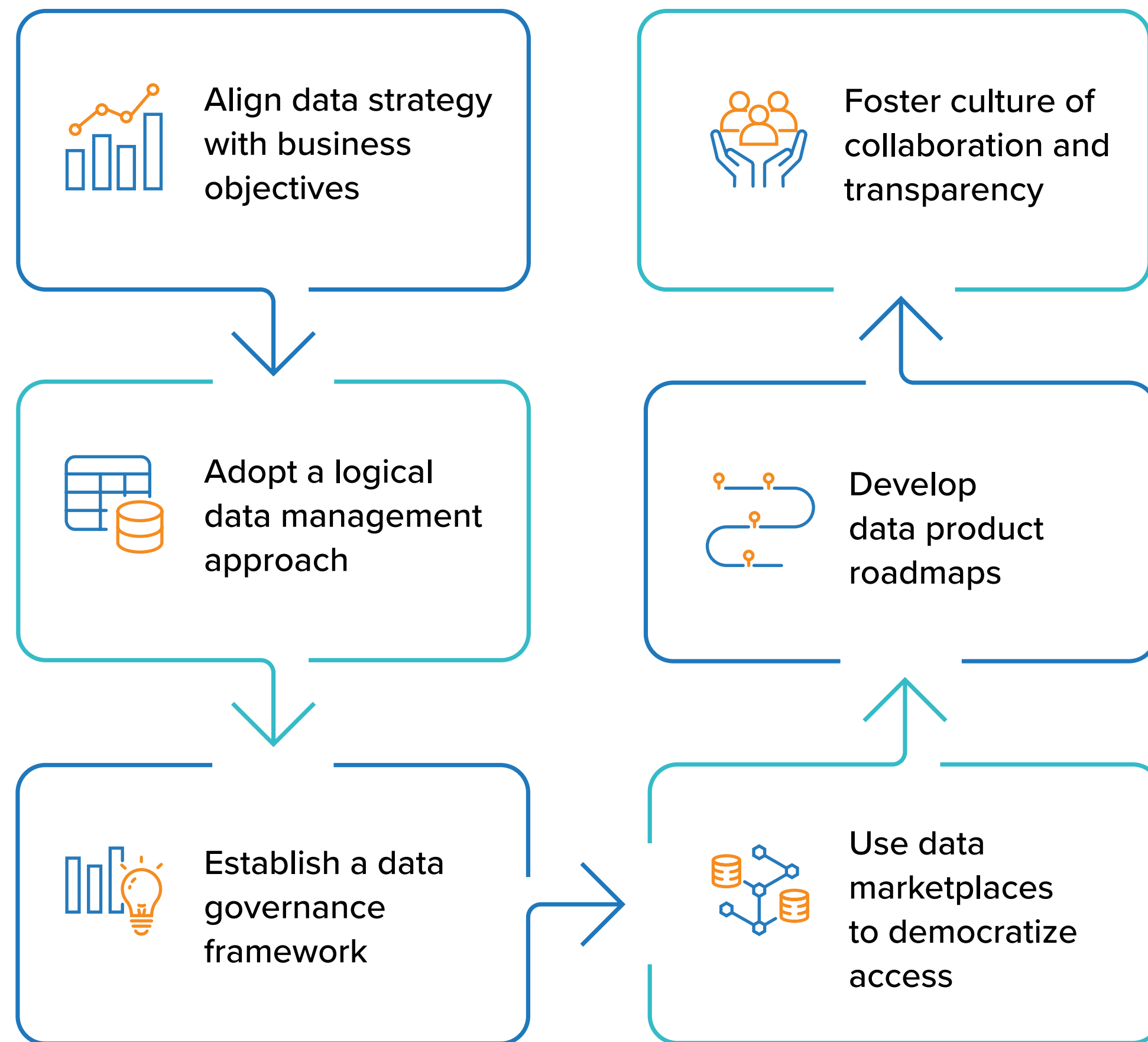


Essential Guidance: Develop and Execute a Data Product Roadmap



Next Steps to Deliver Governed Data Products Rapidly

Implementing data products demands a strategic focus on both technical and organizational factors.



Key Steps

1. Align data initiatives with business goals, prioritizing impactful products such as risk modelling and fraud detection.
2. Start by adopting a logical data management approach as the foundation for developing and delivering data products.
3. Establish a strong data governance framework with clear ownership across lines of business and other data producers.
4. Use data marketplaces to deliver data products for seamless data sharing and collaboration.
5. Develop a clear data product roadmap outlining roles, milestones, and governance to guide phased implementation.
6. Finally, cultivate a culture of collaboration and transparency by breaking down silos and securing leadership commitment, ensuring the organization fully leverages data productization for innovation and improved outcomes.

Message from the Sponsor



Data products have become foundational to delivering real-time, trusted insights and accelerating the impact of AI initiatives across industries. Denodo enables organizations to take a logical approach to data productization by providing seamless access to distributed data without physically moving it, while embedding governance, security, and data quality directly into the delivery layer. This approach empowers teams to publish, discover, and consume reusable data products — fostering collaboration between data producers and consumers and shortening the distance from insight to action.

As AI and advanced analytics continue to scale, organizations must overcome fragmented data landscapes and time-consuming data preparation cycles. Denodo's logical data management platform makes it possible to create well-governed, interoperable, and policy-compliant data products at speed and scale — helping organizations modernize their data infrastructure without disrupting existing systems.

Learn how leading organizations are building governed data products at denodo.com. Or, [schedule a conversation](#) to discuss your own data productization strategy.



About the Analysts



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Tom Zink leads IDC’s Worldwide Financial Services Platforms and Technologies research program since 2025. His research focuses on platforms, AI, cloud, cybersecurity and IT services within the financial services domain worldwide. He also wears the functional hat of Head of European IDC Financial Insights managing the European financial services analyst team since 2016.

[More about Tom Zink](#)

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