

Case Study: civil servants and data stewardship

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Abstract The civil servants case study shows that future proof results can be obtained if data stewardship can make a connection between the top-down data strategy of the Ministry of Finance and the bottom-up data initiatives. Data stewardship can boost a culture of cooperation between enterprise data architects, data stewards and data engineers. A culture of listening and respect for other solutions.



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This article presents a case study at the Ministry of Finance in the Netherlands, Europe. The case study makes it clear what the conditions are to successfully implement data stewardship. Successful data stewardship to protect also the privacy of the data of civil servants.

The Shared Service Organization P-Direkt offers services to more than 130,000 civil servants who work for the national government of the Netherlands. From the year 2011 P-Direkt relieves the Ministry of Finance with functional and application support for personnel processes. In addition to the basic services, P-Direkt offers a growing functionality of standard Management Information solutions like dashboards and reports. P-Direkt also supplies the associated authorization solutions to guarantee the privacy of civil servants data. The P-Direkt standard services are centrally budgeted and come with no additional cost to the affiliated Ministries.

The new data strategy gives priority to data stewardship within the Ministry of Finance. In 2020, a renewed data strategy was launched within the Ministry of Finance: [From unlocking data to connecting data](#). This data strategy focuses more on privacy and security by emphasizing one primary data vault without data copies. In the data strategy, more attention is paid to metadata management and data stewardship. Data stewardship refers to a sustainable, future-oriented way to cope with data from citizens, companies and civil servants. The data stewards plays an important role in insuring the quality of the metadata and data.

The data stewardship is influenced by the sourcing scenarios of the data solutions. In data sourcing, a distinction is made between the following scenario's: Make, Buy and Ally. With a Make scenario, the data solution is developed in-house. In a Buy scenario, the data solutions are developed by an external party. In an Ally scenario, the external party and the Ministry of Finance are partners in the development of data solutions. The data sourcing scenario's for the business/personnel data domain within the Ministry of Finance are as follows:

Make Since its affiliation with P-Direkt in 2011, the Ministry of Finance has decided to develop the Management Information solutions itself. In ten years' time, the Ministry of Finance has made 10 internal data copies of the P-Direkt data vault for its internal customers. These ten data collections are connected to 25 data flows between P-Direkt data vault, data warehouse and internal customers. Both the 10 data collections and the 25 data flows are limited documented. This situation is not desirable from a data stewardship and privacy perspective.

Buy In the course of 2021, two developments will lead to a review of the data sourcing decision Make. The privacy and data stewardship requirements in the new data strategy of the Ministry of Finance can be better achieved by using standard Management Information solutions from P-Direkt. In this case no detailed civil servant data will be copied from the P-Direkt data vault. Due to the rapid SAP transition to SAP HANA and SAP/4 HANA, P-Direkt can also offer better and faster Management Information solutions to the Ministry of Finance. The remaining data integration between P-Direkt data sets and local data sets can be accomplished by API Management.

Ally The 33,000 civil servants of the Ministry of Finance represent 25% of the total number of civil servants within the P-Direkt's customer base. Due to the ten-year data sourcing decision Make, the civil servants of the Ministry of Finance have little contact with the civil servants of the P-Direkt organization. The result is that the Ministry of Finance has little influence at the development road map of the P-Direkt Management Information solutions. The Ministry of Finance can learn a lot from the speed of the P-Direkt SAP transition to SAP HANA and SAP S/4 HANA.

At board level, the Ministry of Finance has established the departmental frameworks for setting up P-Direkt as a Single Point of Truth. In the Buy scenario, the P-Direkt Metadata Management (P-Direkt data dictionary, P-Direkt data definition) becomes leading in the data stewardship of civil servants data within the Ministry of Finance (see fig 1). The internal customer wishes to expand the current P-Direkt Management Information reports with the realization and forecast of salary costs.

Make 2011-2021

Customer group	Management Information Solution	Metadata Management
Board		
Advisers, Analyst (BDO)		
Management		

Buy 2022-2030

Customer group	Management Information Solution	Metadata Management
Board		
Advisers, Analyst (BDO)		
Management		

Legend

-  Ministry of Finance
-  P-Direkt Standard

Fig 1. Data sourcing scenario's and its effect on Management Information solutions and metadata management.

Learning Privacy is a premium business driver of change in a data driven organization. The time between seeding change and harvesting results can be years or a generation in a big, complex organization like the Ministry of Finance. The period between seeding change and harvesting results is called nursing. Nursing new ideas and is often neglected or new seeding take place destroying the germs of an earlier change. Change requires a culture were top-down strategy and bottom-up data initiatives melted in future proof solutions. A culture with collaboration between data strategist, external partners, data stewards, data engineers and internal customers.

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