10 THINGS
ABOUT MASTER DATA GOVERNANCE

The single most important quality of a master data governance tool is ease of adoption. A technically advanced tool that no one wants to use is a waste of resources.

However, usability isn't the only thing to consider when choosing a master data governance tool for your organization.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE ABOUT MASTER DATA GOVERNANCE?

Data is everything – and the amount of data we deal with in business processes just keeps growing.

On top of the ever-growing amount of data, system landscapes are often quite complex and, as a result, data is usually scattered in several heterogeneous systems.

It's no secret that successful businesses depend on high-quality master data. Master data lies in the heart of **every business process**.

Because of this, your attention should be in disciplined governance and maintenance of your master data. This will help you get the most out of your data, and to leverage the full value of data as an enterprise asset.

In the next pages, we've compiled a list of 10 things you should consider when choosing how to maintain your master data.

Remember: **data is everything** – and that's why your tools need to be up to the task.

" Data is everything.

1 EASY CONFIGURABILITY

Avoid wasting momentum on lengthy design and implementation projects.

Regardless of whether you opt for a cloud-based or on-premise master data tool, configuring your data management flows should be fast and effortless. Choose a tool which allows rapid prototyping and development of data input forms, business rules and workflows.

LOOK FOR THESE:

- Quick feedback via instant changes
- Data input form definition without coding
- Validation rules
- Built-in support for various backend systems and APIs
- Flexible user management

2 HAPPY USERS

Bad usability slows down adoption and puts master data quality at risk.

A clean and simple user interface and guided user flows are important drivers of user productivity and quick adoption of new tools. Keeping the user focused on the task at hand by reducing screen clutter and excessive fields helps ensure data quality and user satisfaction.

LOOK FOR THESE:

- Polished user interface
- Guided user flows
- Clear visibility of process flow
- Filtering of displayed fields and information based on process stage and task

3 PROCESS GOVERNANCE

Data quality is only as good as the process that governs it.

Your business success is highly dependent on the data you operate with. To ensure your data is consistent and trustworthy, you may need to build enforced workflows, approval steps and properly administered user rights into your data governance process.

LOOK FOR THESE:

- Controlled workflows
- User and access roles management
- Easy business rule management

4 SHORT ROI

Data is valuable, but that cannot justify unlimited costs for tool implementation.

Protecting ROI is important. Getting up to speed quickly, having users on-boarded with little or no training, and being able to constantly improve your processes and workflows are essential to getting payback on your investment.

LOOK FOR THESE:

- Ease of use and quick adoption – less training needs and costs.
- Configurability – short time to market, quick implementation
- Room for future growth – support for incrementally adding new scenarios, data domains and backend systems to the same tool to avoid re-implementation

5 ROLE-BASED AND SECURE TASKS

Tasks assigned to individual users easily become bottlenecks.

Being able to define responsibilities, access rights and workflow assignments based on roles rather than individual users helps ensure smooth flow while maintaining security.

LOOK FOR THESE:

- Grouping users into groups, allowing shared responsibility
- Role-specific permissions per workflow state

6 CENTRALIZED OR DECENTRALIZED DATA?

One data management philosophy does not fit all use cases.

For some organizations, the best way forward is master data centralization (all master data is gathered and maintained in a single data repository and provided to consuming backend systems).

For others, a decentralized (master data remains and is maintained in several backend systems) or hybrid approach may fit better.

Choosing a tool which supports both modes of operation gives you flexibility for the future.

LOOK FOR THESE:

- Built-in support for working with multiple backends in parallel
- Ability to work on-the-fly against data in remote repositories
- Ability to act as a central repository

BIL●T

7 EXTENSIVE INTEGRATION SUPPORT

Implementing a master data governance tool should not trigger a complex integration project.

Automatic, reliable data flow from and to multiple backend systems is the key to short lead times in master data maintenance.

Your master data governance tool should be capable of communicating with either a centralized enterprise service bus, or with backend systems directly. Integrating with multiple backend systems in parallel should also be supported.

LOOK FOR THESE:

- Support for direct connectivity between data governance tool and data repositories
- Support for multiple backend systems
- Support for integrating via ESB or API layer
- Support for custom integration components to support additional backend systems

8 TRUST IN AUTOMATION

Manual data input and decision making is always prone to errors.

Your master data governance tool should support business rules which automates process flow and validates data input.
The tool should be capable of communicating with either a centralized enterprise service bus, or with backend systems directly. Integrating with multiple backend systems in parallel should also be supported..

LOOK FOR THESE:

- Strong validation of manual data input
- Automatic assignment of users by process state
- Email and system notification

9 COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

Email-driven processes are slow, inefficient and difficult to govern.

Most processes involve frequent communication between users and other stakeholders. The same applies to data governance processes.

Look for features that support efficient collaboration and reduce the need for process-related emails.

LOOK FOR THESE:

Strong validation of manual data input
Automatic assignment of users by process state
Email and system notification

BILOT

10 MONITOR, AUDIT AND ANALYZE

Do you know the bottlenecks in your data maintenance processes?

Reporting on how fast requests run through the system, creating audit processes, and simply sharing feedback and opinions inside the tool itself are great ways to create comparisons and improve efficiency and time usage.

LOOK FOR THESE:

- Reports and overviews on requests
- Ability to identify the slowest steps in your workflows

FINAL REMARKS

When choosing your master data governance tool, the key is to pick a tool that is easy to use for all stakeholders, and to start small. Your tools should lower the gap of maintaining data and return your investment in a moderate time frame.

A good master data tool will provide easily configurable security and support your chosen governance, and offer the data owners and IT an audit trail.

Bilot - Our mission is to simplify digitalization. We help our customers discover new opportunities, execute on insight and lead the way. We stand for more.

Info@bilot.fi | +358 10 548 4800 | Itämerenkatu 5, 00180 Helsinki

BIL●T