INTERVIEW WITH ERIC NAIBURG

Eric Green: Hello and welcome to a new podcast series from IBM software that explores the challenges IT managers and business professionals are facing today. I'm Eric Green and I'll be talking with a range of experts to discover new perspectives, approaches and examples that can help meet these challenges and introduce you to the capabilities of smarter software from IBM. So let's get started.

Welcome back to our next episode. Today we're going to be focusing on information governance with Eric Naiburg, who is the Program Director for Information Governance Solutions at IBM. Eric, thanks for joining us.

Eric Naiburg: No problem. Thank you, Eric.

Eric Green: So to start with, could you please give our listeners your definition of information governance as it's used in enterprises worldwide today?

Eric Naiburg: Sure. And honestly, Eric, I think there are many definitions that are being used. As a matter of fact, if I go to some of the analyst firms like Gardener and Forrester, they have a different definition. As a matter of fact, if I go to Forrester, they have two definitions depending on the type of information governance that you're talking about. What I find is more critical than having a single definition, actually, is for organizations to make sure that they clearly define what they mean by information governance, document that and communicate it as well.

So one of the things, and where I see failure in implementation of process, and governance in many ways is just a process, is that it's a lack of communication. And when people don't know what their goal is, don't know what they're working on and how they're working toward that goal, it falls apart quickly. So the first piece I'd add is I think that we need to make sure that we define it for what we're trying to achieve and ensure that we communicate that.

Now that said, we did do a survey recently of about 400 people. And looking at what they mean by and think of information governance. And this is what came back by the majority of the folks. Information governance is a holistic approach to managing and leveraging information for business benefit that encompasses information quality, information protection, and information life cycle management.

Eric Green: Excellent. So maybe you could elaborate on those three core principles for information governance.

Eric Naiburg: Sure. So we'll start with the first one, information quality. When we think about what's happening in our organizations and what's happening overall, it really often comes down to a lack of trust or trusted information. If the users don't trust the information that we're providing to them, if we can't report our filings at the end of a quarter because we don't trust the information we're gathering, then the value of all the work that IT's doing to provide that information goes down rather quickly. So we need to make sure that we have a high quality set of information that's being provided to the business so that they can make smarter and faster and more effective business decisions based on that trusted information.

When it comes to quality, it's not about just fixing it once because you're working on some BI project, for example. But it's really about ensuring that we continuously manage the quality of the information over time. Some of the differences that I see between what I call data management and information or data governance is that proactive nature of governance, putting the process in place, the policies in place, and the metrics to continuously measure, assess and improve on the process as we move forward.

Rather than just fixing the data quality once and I see this all the time, somebody's working on a BI project or building a warehouse and they improve the quality of the data, they cleanse, they do de-duplication and so on, they spend a million dollars to do it and I talk to them a year and a half later. They're budgeting for a million dollars again next year, because they didn't manage the quality continuously throughout. They didn't continuously monitor quality, they didn't put KPIs in place to ensure the quality stayed at a higher level and so on.

And when I talk about information quality and quality management, it's really that. It's putting the quality measures in place, improving the quality and continuously ensuring that the quality stays at a high level so that we can trust that information, so that information can be used, reused and continuously used, and that we can ensure we get single views of certain things as well, bringing together. So master data management plays a strong role in quality management, bringing single view of customer, for example, or of product or of citizen, and so on. So we're able to be able to leverage that information to make better decisions, to

improve our ability to market, to meet our goals at the end of a quarter and so on.

When I think about protection, one of the biggest risks we have in business today is the fact that our information is at risk. It's at risk of being lost, it's at risk of being stolen. There are lots of regulations around this, like PCI in the credit card industry, like HIPAA for healthcare and so on. And we need to protect our information. As a matter of fact, about 75% of all data breaches happen within the database itself. Yet we're often focused on other things, and focused in other areas. So what we need to do is proactive measures in place to protect our information. And we need to protect information from both authorized and unauthorized users.

We also need to protect not just production data, but data that fits in test databases, development databases and training databases as well. In those environments, we need realistic data, but it doesn't have to be real. So we can leverage masking technologies to mask that data in non-production, making it realistic but not real. So if it is lost or stolen, it's of no value. In production, we need to go beyond just protecting at the firewall. We need to protect from the inside out. So we really need to monitor all database activity to ensure that we're protecting the information, we understand what's happening, we know who's accessing the data, who may be doing things that they shouldn't be doing. And we can talk more about some of those as we move forward.

And lastly, information life cycle management, really managing the information from requirements all the way through to retirement. Managing costs and improving performance of my applications. We have lots and lots of data coming in, and some estimates say that it's growing at 60% year over year. Well how do we deal with all of that? Now we have to retain the data. Too many organizations today take a "keep everything forever" policy. As a matter of fact, I was at two CIO forums in the last week, one in Philadelphia and one in Chicago. And I asked the question, and I'm guessing there were about 350 or so people between the two. And I had asked the question in the session, how many people have a keep everything forever mentality, is that a policy, or a lack of policy in some cases. And about a third of the hands went up, which was somewhat surprising, although not surprising at the same time. People are afraid to get rid of their data, because they don't know what they can get rid of and what they can't. Putting life cycle management policies in place allows me to get rid of the

data that I don't need, either moving it from production into archives to reduce the cost of that tier one storage and production system, as well as improve the performance, because the more data I have in there, the less performance I get out of that system because of more churn and so on.

But also, don't keep it unless you have to. The longer I keep it if I don't have to, I'm still responsible for that data. So if I have a policy or compliance reason to keep data for 7 years and I keep it for 10 and it's stolen, I'm still responsible even though I only needed for those 7 of the 10 years. Or if I'm sued. I own the data, I'm responsible for it, I need to use those 10 years worth of data in that lawsuit, not just the 7 that I was required.

And lastly, as I'm retiring applications, I also need to keep the data. Yet I see so many people that just turn off the database or keep the database even running for compliance purposes, even though they've retired that system. Why not put that data into an archive that can be accessed independent of the application so that they can truly turn it off and save the millions of dollars that they are going to save by turning that system off.

Eric Green: So, I mean clearly from this, information governance and information management are, you know, are definitely – one is a subset of the other, and they are not the same thing. I was just wondering if you could give the listeners some examples, just a couple examples of information governance.

Eric Naiburg: Sure. So I think that we can go into those three areas, quality management, information protection and information life cycle management. But I think what we do when we talk about information governance, it's about delivering the right information, and continuously delivering that information as well. So making sure that as I deliver data, it's of high quality, it's protected, and it's efficient. And in some ways, yes, that might be also information management, but I think really the true difference there is that I put the metrics in place to measure it over time, I put policies in place to proactively measure it as we move forward and continuously improve what we're doing as we move forward as well.

And when I think about information governance and some of the things that I'm seeing as I work with clients and work with customers, it really starts with putting that right process in place. So being able to assess my ability and my effort of information

governance and how well I can meet those goals. What is my level of maturity and where do I have opportunity to improve? And some will say, and this is kind of an old saying, A fool with a fool is still a fool. Now we can give people all the tools in the world, but if we don't have the processes and the metrics and the ability to use those, we're not going to be that effective. So it's really about bringing those different pieces together.

And it starts really with defining a business problem. Well what is it that I'm going to need to do? So for example, we see different things. In the banking industry, a lender who cannot easily quantify the overall exposure to corporate entities with multiple subsidiaries in different countries that have individual lines of credit, causing issues in understanding their risk. Or at an insurance company that a result of the impending solvency too, they may need to be able to tell their people that they're insuring who's touched their data in the last X number of days. Or maybe a government agency with the child welfare service agencies, they have to track children who don't have a name, an address, or in the U.S., a social security number. And the inability to do these are impacting our business. The inability to successfully conquer this is affecting our ability to comply and to be profitable and make better decisions.

So we need to put processes in place to do that and to manage that as we move forward. You know, some of the things that we see and that I've seen around these are putting information governance KPIs or key performance indicators in place around how we're going to measure, both at a business and a technical level. So from a business level, maybe a bank looking at the percentage of customer records with no zip codes, standard industry classification code. Or an insurance company, percentage of policy holders that their records don't have the zip code or postal code, which can improve the trustworthiness of the insurer's calculations for risk. And you know, these are business measures that can be put into place that say hey, we're not doing this. Yes, we're capturing information, but we're not capturing the right information, and the quality of our information is poor.

Or at a technical level, you know, the number of failed audits for regulations such as SOCS or PCI or HIPAA or the EU data privacy and so on. Or the number of tests conducted with previous 12 months of testing sensitive data for vulnerability without that. So I think there's lots of measures and lots of indicators that we can look at and put in place to see how we're improving, but at the end

of the day, we need to look at – do our users trust our information? Is our information and our systems as efficient as possible, and are we protecting that information? And if not, what are we going to do about it? How are we going to put the policies in place to ensure that we're doing the things we need to do? Because there's an influx of data. All right, we've got more data than we know what to do with. But how are we making sure that we're getting the treasure out of it and getting rid of the noise, or not being distracted by that noise. And I think that's what a lot of organizations are struggling with today. There's a lot of noise. How do you get the gem? And by employing better governance policy, we can get to those gems more quickly.

Eric Green: Interesting. So Eric I was wondering if you could tell us where IBM is innovating in this space.

Eric Naiburg: Sure. So IBM is investing in multiple areas. And as I think about this, there's a lot of different things that we're doing. One, where we started – around the process. So information governance is certainly a combination of process and technology, as well as enabling the people. And where it starts is with the IBM information governance unified process. The process really helps organizations to understand how to assess their ability to be successful with information governance and put the right pieces in place, starting with defining a business problem all the way through to measuring those results and continuous improvement.

There's a book out by Sunil Sorez, one of our directors, who wrote a book on this process, and we've been using it with our customers for the last two years to really help them understand. It even goes back further than that, though. Back in about 2005, we created our Information Governance Council. The council is not an IBM council, although we started it. It's really a council made up of industry, there are folks from all different industries – anywhere from army and military to government to financial services and insurance and retail and banking and so on, some IBMers, some analysts, and experts in the field of information management and information governance. And what they've done is they've built a maturity model that helps organizations to assess their level of maturity. From that we've learned and learned from that, because we're not necessarily the only experts. We need to build that understanding of what's happening in the industry. So we've leveraged that to help build maturity models, to help build the process, and now what we're also doing is building the solutions around that.

So bringing in the different areas of tooling, if you will, to be able to support the process, because you need the process, and you need the ability to automate that. I need the ability to monitor database activity to protect my information. So we have our Infosphere Guardian technology to do that. I need the ability to clean my data, and make sure that it continually stays clean, and we we're interacting that information together with our Infosphere Information Server technology. We need to be able to better master our data with our Infosphere Master Data Management and Initiate technology. And I need to manage the life cycle of information with Infosphere Optum.

So what we've been doing over the last few years is really bringing together these sets of technologies to support the process of information governance, enable our customers to be successful with implementation of it, providing services, technology, and really a lot of leadership in the industry. So a lot of the things that we've been doing is outside of what I'd say for profit, things like the Information Governance Council. Things like the book by Sunil and so on, to really drive forward these concepts of information governance and organizations' ability to take them.

Now the caveat I'll give here is start small. If you're going to take on an information governance project, don't try to eat the elephant all in one bite, if you will. Start with a project and do the assessment, and understand what's your best opportunity for success. Measure that, implement just those practices in that area, document it, and then continue to add more practices on top and continue to improve the process. And communicate both the successes and the failures. There's nothing worse than just communicating the successes when everybody knows there's also failures, because you lose credibility quickly. So make sure you're communicating the results, the improvements in the ongoing plans as well.

Eric Green: So let me step in and say that more information on the IBM Information Governance Council and Sunil's book is next to this podcast, you'll have links there, so you can go check more information about that and all kinds of other interesting things going on around information governance. Meanwhile, that's all the time we have for today's podcast. Eric, thanks so much for joining us today.

Eric Naiburg: Thank you very much, Eric, and it was nice talking with you.

Eric Green: Thanks for listening. Please do visit IBM.com/software to connect with our experts, continue the conversation, and to learn more about smarter software from IBM. Let's build a smarter planet.