# DCAM

Data Management Capability Assessment Model

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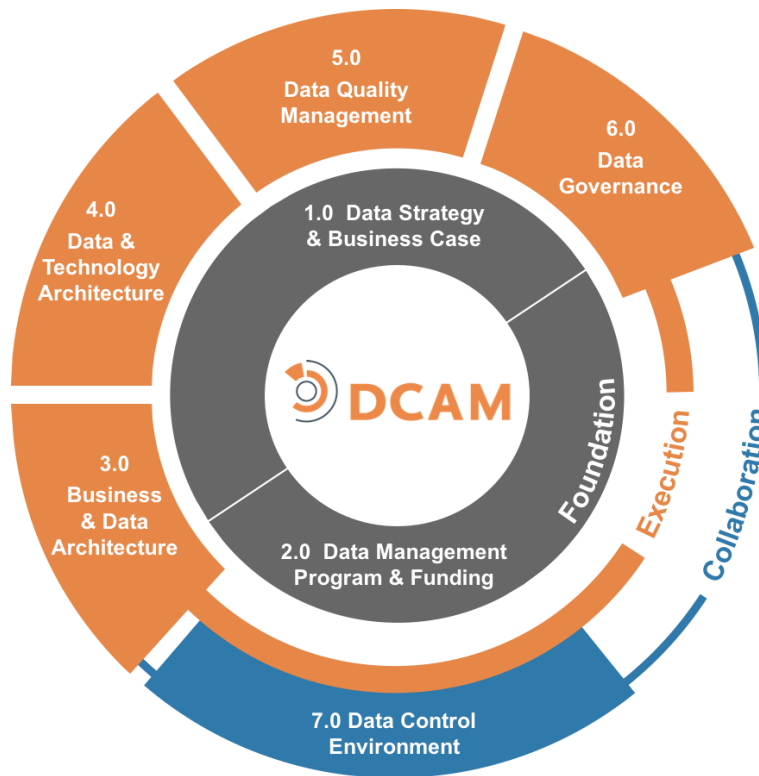
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# The DCAM® Framework

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# Foreword

The *Data Management Capability Assessment Model* (DCAM®) is a structured resource that defines and describes the capabilities needed to establish and sustain a successful data management (DM) initiative in any organization. The model was created by the Enterprise Data Management Council based on the practical experiences and hard-won lessons of many of the world's leading organizations. The result is the synthesis of a broad range of DM best practices from across the full spectrum of interconnected business *processes*. The DCAM addresses the strategies, organization-wide structures, technology and operational practices needed to successfully drive DM. It addresses the tenets of DM based on an understanding of business value combined with the hard reality of implementation.

To manage data in today's organizations we must start by recognizing that proper DM is about managing data as meaning. This is a relatively new concept for many organizations and not very well understood. Managing data according to its meaning is a *process* of defining each piece of data by what it represents or describes in the real world. This *process* results in a direct, readily comprehensible label for that data. By adding descriptive *metadata*, the precise nuanced connection between each piece of data and the real world is established. Data exists everywhere within an organization and must be managed consistently within a well-defined control framework. The DCAM defines the framework and capabilities required to make DM a critical part of an organization's' everyday operational fabric.

The challenges of properly managing data are significant. In most organizations there are numerous legacy data repositories and an overabundance of *functions* to unravel. There are social and political barriers to overcome. There are real technology challenges and execution gaps to address. *Data ownership* and accountability are hard to establish. Historically, funding often has been project based, making DM an intermittent priority. Data's now critical place in the organization requires a commitment to robust, ongoing funding. An additional challenge is that many organizations may have to build the strong executive support needed to ensure that the organization stays the course in the face of short-term measurement criteria, operational disruption and conflicting *stakeholder* challenges to properly address the realities of the DM challenge.

We understand this reality because we've been there, and we have the scars to show for it. Data is foundational. It is the lifeblood of the organization. The bad data tax is a significant expenditure for many organizations though it may remain hidden in accepted inefficiencies and stunted results. Unraveling data silos through the creation of harmonized data is a prerequisite for eliminating redundancy, reducing reconciliation and automating business *processes* across the organization.

Managing this kind of fully interconnected data is essential if we are to gain insight from analytics, feed our *models* with confidence, enhance our service to clients and capitalize on new, but often fleeting, business opportunities. DCAM provides the guidance needed to assess the current-state of any organization's DM and define the objectives and framework for the target-state of the DM initiative.

The DCAM is organized into seven core components:

1. Data Management Strategy & Business Case
2. Data Management Program & Funding Model
3. Business & Data Architecture
4. Data & Technology Architecture
5. Data Quality Management
6. Data Governance
7. Data Control Environment

The components are organized into 31 capabilities and 106 sub-capabilities.

The EDM Council is indebted to the dozens of members who contributed to the development of the initial DCAM in 2014 and the subsequent updates. DCAM is quickly gaining adoption across the DM industry. DCAM training has now been delivered to more than 1,000 students around the world. Organizations ranging from banks to brokerages to consultancies to regulatory bodies have successfully adopted the DCAM Framework. Born in the financial service industry, increasingly organizations from other industries, manufacturing to government, are applying DCAM to their environment.

To keep the model relevant and on the leading edge, the EDM Council has committed to the product management discipline to review and update the Framework on a regular basis. For this current version, a small but global team of representatives from organizations and consultancies was assembled into a Work Group to recommend and approve the latest updates to the Framework.

To ensure DCAM addresses the needs of the DM industry in each unique organization, we have and always will accept input and contribution from members who have worked closely with the model.

# Acknowledgement