

“ONE THING LEADS TO ANOTHER” - THE FIXX



It's funny when I talk about the “One Thing”, memories of the movie City Slickers come to mind. The scene where Jack Palance’s character, Curly tells Mitch, played by Billy Crystal the secret of life is (and I am paraphrasing here) “One Thing.” Just one thing you need to stick to.

My experience in getting to do the one thing you really want to do in your organization can sometimes take a strange path. My team’s “One Thing” is to create a data governance program that benefits the company.

My strange path to work on creating this program and work on what we wanted all begins with a little thing called GDPR. GDPR as many of you know is the General Data Protection Regulation for the EU. It applies to any company who has personal data collected from anyone residing in the EU. And you guessed it, my company fits the bill.

Protip: GDPR: Learn more about the impact of the EU regulations and what you need to have in place already. [Visit now.](#)

At Scripps Networks Interactive (SNI) and now Discovery, Inc. we've had a plan for a number of years to develop and deliver a program around Data Governance (my "One Thing"). The problem was it's a hard sell unless you can demonstrate value early and continue showing value over time.

And this is where GDPR comes in, a few years ago we started hearing that the EU was developing a comprehensive plan around personal data. With the help of our legal team and cyber security, we started to evaluate our risk related to personal data in our systems. My team developed a method for finding personal data using a variety of tools in databases and file systems, and packaging that data up for delivery back to the Data Requestor.

As a part of these efforts we were allowed some leeway in investigating the data in the company. So we began to interview the different organizations for the type of data they had and its purpose and now let the angels sing with joy –this was the opening my team had been searching for. Now, we could start developing a catalogue and glossary for company related terms.

The driver for the business to protect itself against a significant loss due to a data breach was the vehicle my team needed to build the



foundation of a value-based governance program. From these conversations we developed a business data flow diagram and used it to start conversations with key stake holders about how they moved and handled their data, not just from a personal data flow but from a holistic data flow. This allowed, us as a team, to identify terms the business used that could be turned into data personas or entities.

It was the start of developing the capability around entity definition and source system identification and classification – all components of a good data governance program. These foundation steps led to great conversations about data governance and the important role it plays in our company.

All of this became possible, when my team and I were willing to get to our “one thing” by unconventional means. So the takeaway for you is be clear on your company’s “one thing” and then relentlessly pursue action that lets you implement your strategy even if it comes disguised as European data regulations. The Fixx stated it so eloquently in the lyrics “Do what they say, say what you mean, and baby one thing leads to another”.



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