

Optimize collaboration and streamline communication across the organization

October 2008



**Information Management** software

## **The business value of a business glossary**

*How IBM helps businesses communicate more  
efficiently and effectively*

*IBM Software Group*

*and*

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## Introduction

“Sorry. I thought you meant something else.”

Misunderstandings are common in everyday conversation. When one person says “Hand me a wrench,” the person next to the toolbox inevitably will choose the wrong tool: Allen, adjustable, pipe or torque? Small, medium or large? Conventional or powered? Many times, the person next to the toolbox will hand over several tools before the understanding is clear.

In enterprises, effective communication is the key to success—so these misunderstandings can have serious consequences. The phrase “Q2 Sales Results for NE from Tier 2 Distributors” seems relatively clear, but for the IT professional responsible for generating those numbers and for the executives making decisions based on them, such a phrase is rife with ambiguities. What date range is Q2 in my company? Which regions make up NE? Who are the Tier 2 Distributors, and how up-to-date is that list? Who has the most current Sales Results data?

Misunderstandings caused by incorrect interpretation of enterprise information increase the risk of expensive errors. The complete business costs of ambiguous information are even more dramatic. Productivity plummets when executives in the boardroom or employees on the stock floor waste time searching for or misinterpreting poorly labeled data. Unclear information can cripple a sales force, obscuring opportunities and slowing response times to shifts in market conditions.

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### Highlights

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***A CEO called an emergency meeting to understand why there was such an inconsistent view of the number of customers across his management team's quarterly reports. One report stated that the company had 1 million customers, another said 500,000 and yet another stated 1.5 million. After much research, the team realized that each department had a unique definition of the term "customer": marketing defined "customer" as a household versus an individual; finance defined "customer" by the number of accounts; and operations defined "customer" by the number of customer-to-product relationships.***

Many businesses are moving aggressively to counter data ambiguity by building a business glossary—an authoritative dictionary of business terms and relationships used across an enterprise. Designed to be used by all employees, the business glossary defines the terms used in everyday communication, such as e-mail requests for business intelligence reports, marketing plans, legal documentation and communication with customers. In addition, IT professionals employ the glossary content to ensure that the proper, common language is used when designing the IT infrastructure, applications and reports.

A business glossary can connect workers across the enterprise to critical business information they can trust, helping to eliminate the misunderstandings that cause lost time, lost opportunities and lost revenue. This paper will explore the positive impact that a business glossary can have, the common challenges that companies face when adopting a business glossary and how IBM can help with tools, solutions and standard practices for deployment.

#### **The business impact of misunderstanding**

It is easy to dismiss the business impact of ambiguous information or the occasional miscommunication, but those isolated events add up quickly in a typical enterprise. Accenture conducted an online survey of more than 1,000 middle managers of large companies in the US and UK,<sup>1</sup> and the key findings illustrate the true depth of the problem:

- *Middle managers spend more than 25 percent of their time searching for information necessary to do their jobs*
- *More than 50 percent of the information they obtain has no value to their original search request*

- *Only 50 percent of all managers believe their companies do a good job in governing information distribution or have established processes to determine what data each part of the organization needs*
- *42 percent of respondents said they accidentally use the wrong information at least once a week*
- *53 percent said that less than half of the information they receive is valuable*
- *59 percent said that as a consequence of poor information distribution, they miss internal company information that might be valuable to their job*
- *36 percent said there is so much information available that it takes a long time to actually find the right piece of data*

When decision makers can't find the information they need or don't trust what they find, the effect on a business can be devastating. Productivity drops when employees waste time searching for information.

Knowledge work, a complex mixture of intellectual and repetitive jobs, is hard to quantify, but an IDC<sup>2</sup> survey of 600 customers across four verticals—financial, government, manufacturing and healthcare—found that the average information worker spends 9.5 hours per week searching for information. At an average yearly salary of US\$60,000 including benefits or US\$45,000 plus an additional 30 percent in benefits, that equals US\$274 per week or

US\$14,251 per year. Even more mind-boggling is the amount of time that is wasted. The average information worker spends 3.5 hours each week searching for but not finding the information they were looking for. For a company of 1,000 employees, that is a staggering US\$5,250,700 per year!

A business glossary can significantly improve the search for relevant information, thus improving employee productivity and the timeliness of decision-making processes. Today, many organizations are justifying the implementation of a business glossary based upon the improvements in employee search capabilities for information that resides in enterprise ecosystems. A second and often more important benefit of business glossaries is increased trust and confidence in information: decision makers can interpret and utilize their data and reporting systems based on a clearer understanding and meaning of their contained business constructs.

#### **Information initiatives benefit from a business glossary**

Organizations can also achieve significant business and technology value by using a business glossary to support enterprise-wide information initiatives—bringing together silos of data for new application usages. The absence of a business glossary on information initiatives can be disastrous, resulting in missed deadlines and opportunities. Here are two examples:

*“We are creating a formal data governance organization for our master data management (MDM) effort. How can a business glossary support our efforts and what value should we achieve?”*

As a collaboration tool, the business glossary supports a data governance or MDM project team in several ways:

- *Defining shared, common, approved business terms*
- *Capturing trusted, enterprise-wide definitions of business terms*
- *Associating business terms to a business structure*
- *Associating business terms to the technology systems and assets that manage the related data*
- *Identifying the multiple names (synonyms) that different business units may use to refer to the same business term, as well as the technical names used for each*
- *Resolving business terms, definitions and associated terms across business units*
- *Enabling the search for business information for all individuals from a consistent Web browser-based interface*

When implementing an MDM initiative, the purpose of the business glossary is to drive the organization to agree on which master data is important and how it is defined, and to ensure master data is effectively communicated across an organization. Additionally, data management processes can be consolidated to reduce the ongoing costs of data governance.

*“We often have to justify the metrics produced by our data warehouse due in part to a misunderstanding or lack of communication around the terminology used in specific business units. Can a business glossary help our business understand the terminology used at the business unit and enterprise level?”*

This issue is sometimes stated as “I don’t trust the data warehouse” or “my spreadsheet has the best data.” The root cause of these challenges can often be traced to differing definitions of and levels of trust in business terminology. What is “Net Sales Revenue”? Does it include taxes, commissions, shipping or cost of goods sold? The misunderstanding of a metric or key performance indicator (KPI) can lead to implementation delays, lost staff productivity, lost business opportunities and in the worst case, poor or incorrect business decisions.

The business glossary can be used to maximize the communication and understanding of terminology across the organization. It can help decision makers find relevant and timely information to support the understanding and usage of metrics and KPIs. However, accessing the business glossary should be simple, and the glossary should be readily available so users do not have to lose the context of their current task.

### **Key elements of a business glossary**

Previous attempts to document enterprise information and data have been met with mixed success. For example, data dictionary initiatives—which are meant to document definitions and data formats—have become a favorite pastime of IT departments in large organizations. Unfortunately, the vast majority of these efforts have resulted in silos of inaccessible information and content.

In contrast, a business glossary is based on four key principles that work together to ensure that the glossary is up-to-date, accurate, applicable and accessible to the entire enterprise:

- 1. Authoritative content, data stewardship and data governance*
2. Relationships between business understanding and physical data sources
3. Consumable access for business users
4. Intuitive access for each community

#### **Authoritative content, data stewardship and data governance**

While some information about business practices may be documented, the mainstay of information tends to be kept in people's heads. To get the right information into the glossary, the people who know the most about the company's subject areas must be identified and assigned to create and manage the authoritative dictionary.

**Relationships between business understanding and physical data sources**

While explaining business definitions in plain language provides a common starting point, the link to the physical data sources and targets provides the context between enterprise users and IT professionals. This enables the glossary to provide not only a textual definition for the term “Tier 2 Distributors,” but also a link to the server, database and tables within the IT infrastructure where the information is stored. This promotes improved collaboration between the business and IT communities.

**Consumable access for business users**

If the glossary is to be deployed throughout the enterprise, it must be fast, easy and intuitive to use. Consumable access to the glossary ensures not only that people will use the language when appropriate; it will also help ensure that more knowledge, interest and collaborative authoring are captured within the glossary.

**Intuitive access for each community**

Business users and IT professionals alike should be able to access the glossary instantly and suggest new terms while working in their native environments, whether that is a word processing tool, a spreadsheet, a reporting tool, a software development tool or an e-mail client.

**Who uses a business glossary?**

All enterprise workers should use the business glossary as a reference, much in the same way that individuals use a dictionary as a reference tool. Some users will also play a more active role in the creation, maintenance and organization of the business vocabulary.

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***Companies with global offices can use a business glossary to handle translations into different languages. An IBM customer with joint headquarters in France and America, for example, relates terms together to see the original French term and verify that nothing was lost during the translation to English.***

Glossary users typically fall into one of the following roles or categories:

- *Common user*
- *Subject matter expert*
- *Data architect*
- *Software developer*
- *Administrator*

#### **Common user**

Common users leverage the glossary to understand the agreed-upon meaning of enterprise terms. A business glossary should provide intuitive access to all enterprise users to enable quick, in-context access to the common business vocabulary from within any application—e-mail, Web browsing, documents, spreadsheets and reporting tools.

#### **Subject matter expert**

Every department has its experts: people who seem to spend their days fielding questions from all directions. When these users are recruited as data stewards responsible for subject areas, they can be publicly recognized for their expertise and will naturally become the company-wide experts for subject-related issues.

#### **Data architect**

Data architects can answer the critical question: Where is the data? Data architects link business glossary terms to their related physical data sources. This linkage between a business concept and the actual data in the enterprise ensures that all IT activities reference the correct information source for the business term.

**Software developer**

Consistent, precise language is critical to software developers. The business glossary provides an accurate, trusted business vocabulary to software developers from within the applications where they work, enabling proper use of the correct terms throughout the requirements gathering, software development design processes, data architecture and reporting processes.

**Administrator**

A well-governed business glossary encompasses multiple roles and processes. Managing the access permissions for these roles using defined procedures for approving and promoting terms requires an administrator who is familiar with corporate procedures and understands the steps necessary to deliver an approved glossary.

**Getting started with a business glossary**

There are many strategies for deploying a business glossary. Some organizations implement a business glossary across the enterprise in one stage. Others limit the initial scope to reduce risks, introducing the glossary to specific segments of the business in multiple phases.

One common strategy is to divide the business by subject area, such as customers, orders or products. This approach is effective for organizations implementing enterprise-wide data governance, customer data integration (CDI) or master data management (MDM) projects. Other organizations segment their enterprise by business unit, which is effective for companies just embarking on governance initiatives. The best approach for a given company ultimately depends on its individual strategy and the available resources that can be allocated to the effort.

#### **Data sources for a new business glossary**

When a company makes the commitment to deploy a business glossary, the first priority is determining the sources of information to include. The first potential source for business glossary information is the disparate places employees look each day when attempting to locate this information: the spreadsheets, documents, databases or Web portals that define and document terms. Often created for specific purposes or business projects, these documents represent a rich history of enterprise knowledge.

A second potential source is a logical data model. Logical data models, used to document the information architecture of an enterprise, represent business constructs with textual nomenclature and provide a natural relationship to a glossary of terms. One caveat: When you attempt to use a logical data model as one of your sources, be sure it is well-documented, current and accepted; otherwise, you may lose time and resources updating the logical data model rather than building the glossary.

A third potential source of business definitions is enterprise reporting applications. These applications were created with a set of very specific business requirements and a particular definition of purpose, but their dashboards and reports are full of critical definitions that are part of the requirements for the application itself. The information can often be captured directly from the reports, from the report developers or from the original report's requirements.

The last and probably the most valuable resource of glossary content—one that is often overlooked initially—is the employees themselves. An important exercise for prioritizing initial glossary content involves interviewing your employees and ranking the priority of categories identified as critical to the

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***The majority of an organization's metadata walks out the door at 5 P.M. each day when the employees go home. Think about it: If just 10 percent of your employees did not return to work tomorrow, how much information and knowledge would you lose?***

organization. Executives, management and key business personnel should be interviewed and asked a series of questions that highlight the need for a common definition. This process will not only help you figure out where to start, it can also help identify subject matter experts (SMEs) who should be recruited as data stewards.

In addition to internal sources of information, IBM also offers content that can be used to jump-start your business glossary. IBM provides a rich set of Industry Models that contain authoritative, comprehensive terms and definitions for six industry verticals. The terms you choose will be used to define and guide many subsequent efforts across your entire enterprise, so time spent up front is well spent—and you will reap the benefits on future projects.

#### **Architecting and populating the glossary**

After gathering the raw materials of the business definitions, the business can begin building the glossary and—just as important—begin creating the business processes that will sustain the glossary and integrate it into the daily workflow across the enterprise.

First, the data architects and line-of-business SMEs need to establish a hierarchy of categories or subject areas that will contain the terms. This hierarchy should reflect how someone would intuitively browse through information about the business—so it is not necessarily the same as a logical data model. Usually, dividing the top-level categories by department

(marketing, finance, human resources, etc.) provides a good starting point. Corporate portals and intranet sites often provide a reference framework for defining this hierarchy.

Next, the SMEs establish a list of terms to be defined. These terms should represent the most common words used in reporting, applications and general communication around the office. The SMEs then define the terms, relying on the data architects to keep them aware of relationships between terms and their physical storage location. In some companies, this process can result in debates, turf wars and acrimonious meetings, but by establishing a single definition and by assigning a single data steward to a term, all of those turf wars taking place under the surface can finally be settled and employees can move on to more important business.

When term definitions are settled, the data architects establish linkages between the terms and the trusted data sources where the concepts represented by the terms are instantiated in the IT environment. Finally, the management team may establish a data governance board and participate in the ongoing creation and maintenance of the glossary. This wealth of information is not free—the company must invest time, knowledge and influence to help establish the glossary as the authoritative source of business information. However, successful organizations find that the small initial investment and low ongoing maintenance costs can result in significant benefits received over time.

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***One customer installed IBM® InfoSphere™ Business Glossary on an old laptop marked for disposal to test the glossary concept. She sent the URL to her boss and left for holiday. When she returned, she was greeted by a large banner announcing the new corporate glossary. While she was out of the office, everyone had added terms—including the CIO, who sent management an e-mail promoting the corporate asset. Approvals for a new server were justified.***

### **Gaining acceptance and driving adoption**

As with any corporate initiative or new product deployment project, employees must be persuaded to leverage the glossary for corporate benefit. Early success is critical, so concentrate on deploying the glossary to those who will most readily appreciate it, benefit from it and adopt it. These users will often be technically minded professionals and business users who interact frequently with the IT group. This focus group can provide feedback on the content via e-mail or a discussion board.

If there is strong management backing for the glossary, the technical team should get management involved and create a formal data governance board that promotes a life cycle for categories and terms (such as Candidate, Accepted, Standard and Deprecated). Candidate status indicates an item that has been put forward for consideration. Accepted status indicates that an item has been accepted by the data governance board as a new, valid term but is not yet widely used. A Standard term has been fully approved by the data governance board, has all mandatory properties populated and should be used by everyone in the enterprise. A Deprecated term is no longer approved for use and usually has been replaced with a new term or synonym.

### **The strategy behind a successful business glossary: Walk before you run**

Implementing a business glossary must be a carefully planned endeavor. Pick a specific, high-value project to deliver real business benefits quickly and establish your glossary to gain immediate acceptance. This project will also provide valuable lessons for expanding and improving the next release.

Large organizations may be tempted to define thousands of related terms, concepts and processes throughout the enterprise. Focusing on a specific project, however, will limit the organization to a much smaller set of manageable terms. Placing boundaries around the company's first project and focusing on a process that is central to the core business can help increase the business glossary project's chance for success and its profile within the enterprise, leading to faster adoption.

The business glossary project should be driven with strong management support, demonstrating its value to the organization and its governance process. Start pointing business users at the glossary. Ask for feedback, but don't demand it; the opinions will come as more people start using it. Drive terms through their life cycle. After the business starts to rely on the glossary, the employees will want to have more formal involvement on their own.

The more feedback and employee involvement in maintaining the glossary, the better—as long as there is an established data steward who is given the authority to act as the referee and make the final decision on any changes to a term. One effective method to encourage and capture feedback is to establish a controlled wiki discussion area for each term.

In the corporate discussion board or an internal collaboration platform in the glossary itself, each term should be displayed with an option to view and add to the discussions surrounding it. Along with displaying a history of the actual changes performed by the steward, this information adds an entirely

new, interactive dimension to the meaning of the term. The lively discussions provide good background for developing new terms, sharing ideas between teams, understanding how particular players in the organization think and creating an audit trail for the data governance process.

### **Data governance roles and strategies**

Companies that successfully deploy a business glossary often include management oversight by a data governance group that is responsible for the overseeing glossary content. Creating a sustainable data governance framework that is both strong and flexible is crucial to the long-term success of a business glossary. The key is to gain consensus and keep the glossary's content current within an acceptable timeframe. Keeping terms up-to-date is critical to encouraging and maintaining enterprise usage of the business glossary.

Generally, there are four major parties to the approval process for a single business term: the SME, the data architect, the business approver and the subject group. The SME creates and defines a new business term. The data architect finds the technical objects that exist in the IT environment and hold data related to this term. The business approver ensures that the definition of the term is in line with the general business goals and usage for the concept. Finally, the term is deployed as a candidate to the immediate group of 5 to 10 people who can collaborate on the term. For a business glossary to be effective, the process for deploying a term to the enterprise should take no more than one week.

As the glossary initiative progresses, a group of senior business managers, IT managers and data architects should be formed as a data governance board. This oversight group decides on the overall structure of the business glossary, sets its implementation goals and formalizes the approval process and success criteria. The governance of a business glossary is similar to the governance of data (see Figure 1).

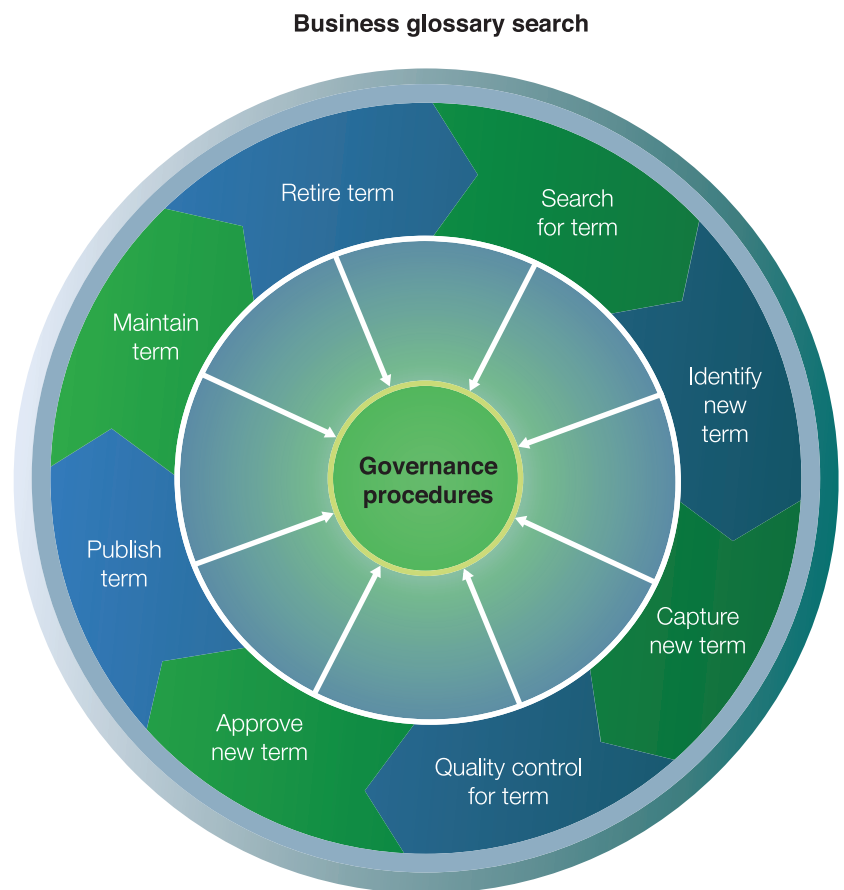


Figure 1: Governance procedures created by the business control the life cycle of a business glossary term.

There are several options for involving business teams in the governance of the business glossary. The two most popular types of governance approaches are light governance and formal governance.

Light governance is characterized by a committee of SMEs drawn from across the organization (see Figure 2). Light governance reduces the need for additional staff, can be put in place quickly and limits the amount of consensus required for each glossary item and the governance process itself.

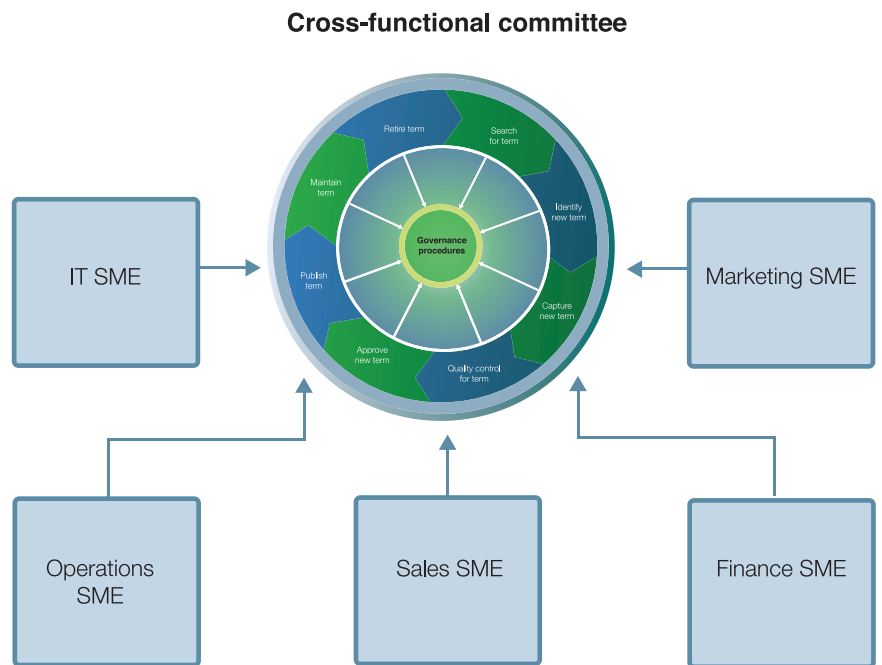


Figure 2: A light governance structure for business team governance of a glossary can be quickly set up and does not require dedicated governance staff.

Many larger organizations consider a formal governance process with a full-time governance leader. This is typically a senior-level position responsible for managing the efforts of a cross-functional team of SMEs (see Figure 3). These SME resources may be allocated to the team on a part-time or full-time basis. The primary advantage of formal governance is that dedicated governance resources tend to be more coordinated and terms often move more quickly through the life cycle process. Also, a dedicated governance staff requires commitment from one or more business sponsors, which can help spur organizational acceptance and ensure long-term program survival.

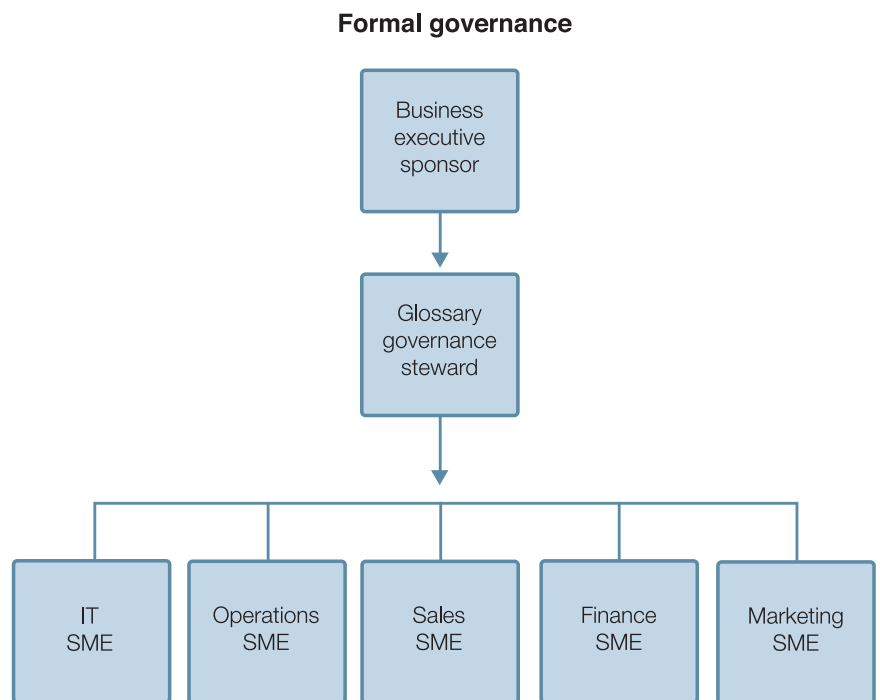


Figure 3: A formal governance structure for a business glossary includes dedicated staff resources and is often appropriate for larger organizations.

### **Overcoming challenges and avoiding pitfalls**

Unfortunately, not every business glossary initiative is easy. There are many reasons why projects fail, but here are three common challenges and ideas to help you avoid them:

#### **Failure to align the business glossary with a business program to establish the appropriate funding**

A business glossary that is viewed solely as an IT implementation, where IT is fully responsible for its content and delivery, will rarely survive for long—it must be aligned with a business program and receive support from business SME resources. The most successful business glossary projects are either closely aligned with a specific business project, such as an MDM initiative, or are sponsored by business/data governance initiatives. A data governance organization is well positioned to implement and manage a business glossary and its contents throughout its life cycle.

#### **Failure to communicate the vision throughout the organization**

The announcement and rollout of the business glossary is a critical success factor in the program. Many organizations successfully leverage their training, marketing and public relations teams to generate creative business glossary rollouts. Never underestimate the power of colorful balloons or free candy! The business glossary team should also include its materials and documentation in employee training programs and link directly to all corporate portals.

**Failure to appropriately scope the project**

A business glossary that is too large for the resources, funding or timeline will fail. A business glossary can be implemented in phases—and organizations should carefully create a plan that makes sense for their business.

**How IBM helps**

The IBM approach to a corporate business glossary is designed to support two key aspects: collaboration and data governance. Both are critical to the success of information integration projects.

IBM has a long history of developing innovative, industry-leading technology solutions, including its flagship release of the InfoSphere Information Server unified data integration platform in December 2006. InfoSphere Business Glossary, a modular tool of this scalable, flexible platform, helps organizations create, manage and share an enterprise-wide controlled vocabulary. It acts as the common language between business and IT and is critical to aligning cross-team efforts. Accessible via a Web browser or from any desktop application with a single click, InfoSphere Business Glossary supports the creation of corporate classification systems to expand business context. It enables data stewards and data architects to link business terms to technical artifacts, which in turn are shared across enterprise applications and development teams to provide valuable organizational insight to all of your business domains.

#### **IBM InfoSphere Information Server**

IBM InfoSphere Information Server is a flexible data integration platform designed to deliver trusted information on demand for key business initiatives. InfoSphere Information Server enables businesses to perform five integration functions that can be deployed in modules to meet any enterprise information requirement:

- ***Understand the data:*** Automatically discover, model, define and govern information content and structure, as well as understand and analyze the meaning, relationships and lineage of information
- ***Cleanse the data:*** Support information quality and consistency by standardizing, validating, matching and merging data to create a single, comprehensive, accurate view of information
- ***Transform data into information:*** Provide high-volume, complex data transformation and movement functionality that can be used for stand-alone extract, transform and load (ETL) scenarios or as a real-time data processing engine for application integration
- ***Deliver the right information at the right time:*** Virtualize, synchronize or move information to the people, processes or applications that need it using federation techniques and Service Oriented Architectures (SOAs)
- ***Perform unified metadata management:*** Enable understanding and collaboration across business, operational and technical users by building on a single, managed infrastructure to help reduce development times, improve trust and promote a common business terminology

#### **InfoSphere Business Glossary**

IBM InfoSphere Business Glossary enables data analysts, business analysts and subject matter experts to create a rich glossary of business terms, hierarchies and relationships. It links business concepts to technical metadata and exposes these linkages across the entire enterprise through three easy-to-use, simple interfaces designed for specific user audiences:

***Business Glossary:*** Designed for the data steward or SME, the Business Glossary interface enables these users to create rich, detailed definitions for terms and define categories to represent the relationships between terms. To describe organization-specific properties about particular terms of relevance, users can also add custom attributes that extend the meaning of items in the glossary. In addition, data architects and SMEs can use this interface to link technical artifacts such as database tables and columns to business terms. This linking helps ensure that particular data artifacts are coupled with their business context and enables two-way communication. Business users can drill down from a term to find the technical data sources, while technical users working on a data source or ETL job or creating a business report can understand the business context of the data being used.

**Business Glossary browser:** Designed for the business user, Business Glossary browser is an intuitive, read-only browser interface that does not require training (see Figure 4). Business users can search and explore the vocabulary and its classification of data assets, identify the stewards responsible and provide direct feedback on business information.

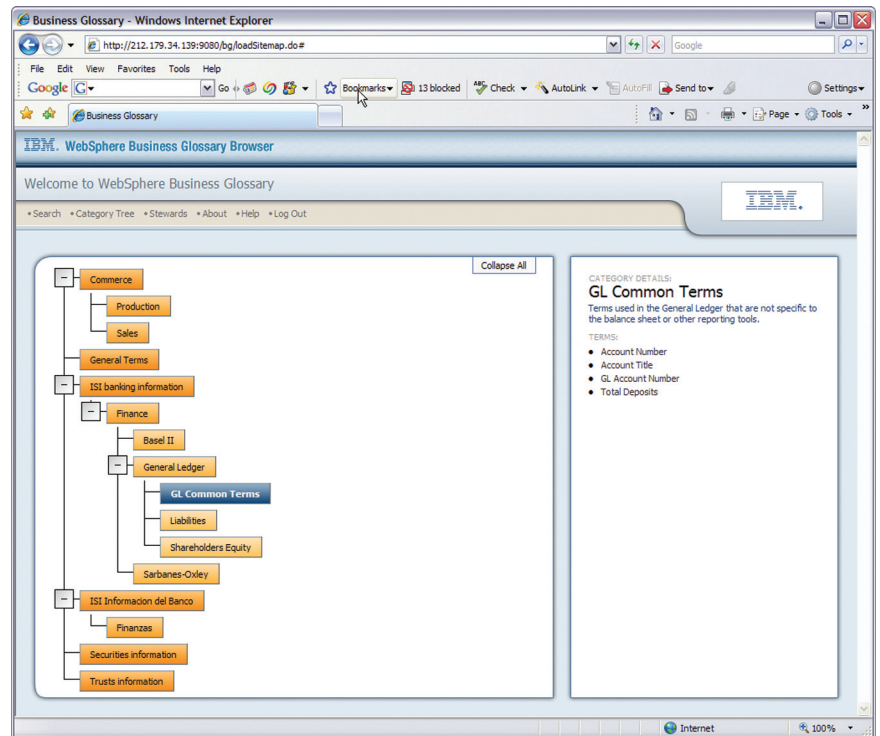


Figure 4: Business users can access categories and terms with little or no training through the IBM InfoSphere Business Glossary browser interface.

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***A recent metadata survey completed by IBM with Gavilan Research Associates, an independent third party, noted that more than 70 percent of all respondents ranked “ease of use” as critical to the adoption of a business glossary.<sup>3</sup>***

***Business Glossary Anywhere:*** Designed to allow anyone in the organization to view the contents of the common glossary and to promote the rapid adoption of a standardized language across the enterprise, Business Glossary Anywhere is invoked directly from an application. Users can search any term without losing the context of the application they are currently using. A single click produces a small window with information about associated metadata in the business glossary, including the steward of the term.

#### **Accelerating the deployment of a business glossary**

IBM understands that a business glossary must be flexible and able to receive content from many sources. Glossary material can be imported in a variety of methods and formats including:

- *File sources such as .csv, .xls, .xml or InfoSphere Business Glossary archive files*
- *Modeling tools, such as IBM Rational® Data Architect or CA ERwin*
- *IBM InfoSphere DataStage® and IBM InfoSphere QualityStage®, to format any source into a useable, importable format*
- *IBM Industry Models, which can be especially useful if your organization has no existing standard terms*

#### **IBM Industry Models**

Most organizations have informal glossary materials spread across multiple departments and disparate tools, but they may need to jump-start the process of defining these business terms. The IBM Industry Models, based upon the industry experience of more than 400 clients, provide structured and

deployable business content for a growing number of industries including banking, insurance, financial markets, health plans, telecommunications and retail. They consist of thousands of industry-standard terms, integrated data (operational and informational), process and service models consistently defined across business requirements, analysis and design. This validated structure fosters enterprise-wide business and IT collaboration and helps ensure that projects are delivered faster and with less risk.

Customers can use the IBM Industry Models to define a corporate set of standard definitions and terminology that is then exposed across the enterprise via InfoSphere Business Glossary to help accelerate project delivery. The models and content can be modified and extended to match each organization's unique business requirements.

### **Conclusion**

Implementing a business glossary can have a significant, positive impact on enterprise business activities. Determining common definitions for terms used across the enterprise helps ensure focus and attention on the organization's business goals. Through an effective data governance program, IT managers and business users alike will become more effective in business measures, including risk mitigation and value creation.

A common vocabulary also provides users across the enterprise with a common language to streamline communication and break down traditional collaboration barriers. A well-constructed business glossary helps enterprise workers spend less time on misunderstandings and fruitless information searches and more time focusing on the business itself.



## For more information

To learn more about IBM InfoSphere Business Glossary or IBM InfoSphere Information Server, contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit

[ibm.com/software/data/integration/business\\_glossary](http://ibm.com/software/data/integration/business_glossary)

Lowell Fryman is the vice president of professional services for Genesee Academy and RapidACE consulting. He is recognized as a thought leader in metadata, enterprise systems consolidation and integration and business intelligence applications, having hands-on experience with more than 80 BI implementations. He is a co-author of *Business Metadata: Capturing Enterprise Knowledge* (ISBN: 978-0-12-373726-7, William H. Inmon, Bonnie O'Neil, Lowell Fryman).

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<sup>1</sup> Accenture Web survey. January 4, 2007.  
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<sup>2</sup> IDC. The Hidden Costs of Information Work—Doc # 201334. April 2006.  
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<sup>3</sup> "2008 Metadata Market Survey Summary of Findings Whitepaper." Conducted by IBM and Gavilan Research Associates. June 25, 2008.  
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