Introducing DCAM

The Data Management Capability Assessment Model, or DCAM, was created by the Enterprise Data Management Council, of which Delv is a proud member, as a collaboration between the EDMC and eminent CDOs from the world's major banks.

The DCAM model sets out precisely what is required to develop, implement, and sustain a successful data management program in your organization.

It also allows you to benchmark yourself:
- against the industry
- against other divisions
- or against yourself, measuring your own progress over time

What constitutes a successful data management program?

It's one that's calibrated to:
- deliver projects necessary for the organization's data strategy
- manage the organization's critical data assets

DCAM gives a unified vision across your business, data, and technology functions to provide a comprehensive picture of the health of your organization's data management program. It delivers high business value by strengthening organizations' commitment to widening access to data while lessening dependence on manual workarounds.

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Benefits

A DCAM assessment is a lightweight tool that packs outsized benefits:

BENCHMARKING

DCAM provides a benchmark against industry peers that helps CDOs articulate robust business to executive management, increasing their resolve to invest meaningfully in their data platform.

This assessment can be used to ensure alignment with peers from a defensive, regulatory-compliance perspective or to build competitive advantage via advanced analytics and frictionless self-serve cloud-based data.

CAPABILITY CHECKLIST

Operationally, DCAM offers an out-of-the-box framework and set of capabilities that is familiar to regulators and that makes data management part of an organization's everyday operational fabric.

DCAM provides a structure for assessing the current state of any organization's data management, and identifies the objectives and steps needed to reach a new level of capability.

DATA CULTURE

Coupled with an optional one or two-day DCAM Training, or even a one-two-hour training for executive management, DCAM assessments can also provide senior leadership and line practitioners with a common language and set of assumptions for talking about data, thus accelerating the development of a data culture.

DCAM in Action

The DCAM, as a best practice, advocates that the starting point is the business process or business architecture, which in turn drives the data requirements. The business process and corresponding data requirements can then be mapped onto a technology solution and architecture.

Consequently, collaboration between data management personnel and their counterparts in technology and the business is foundational to the success of an organization's data management initiative.

Business/Process	Data	Technology
Subject Matter Experts Driving Data Management	Data Management	Technology Management

DCAM assessments can be done at a higher or more granular level. When conducting a DCAM assessment, each of the seven top-level DCAM components explodes down into lower levels as follows:

Component (top level)	Sub-capabilities
Capabilities	Underlying objectives

As an example, the below diagram takes 'Data Management Strategy and Business Case', one of the seven top-level DCAM components, and shows it breaking down into three capabilities, which in turn break down into thirteen sub-capabilities, and ultimately thirty-five objectives.

Component
Data Management Strategy & Business Case

Capabilities
Three Capabilities Outlined

Sub-Capabilities
Thirteen Sub-Capabilities Outlined

Objectives
Thirty five Objectives

DCAM Assessment Options

When doing a DCAM assessment for the first time, it is advisable to stay at a higher level, covering the components and capabilities only. This is considered a sentiment-based approach, and can be very effective, still yielding a productive heat map of areas requiring attention.

The next level of granularity is to conduct a 'full' assessment, which covers all the sub-capabilities too. This is more thorough, while still not being overly burdensome if supporting artifacts are not requested.

> After doing one or two DCAM assessments, many organizations decide to conduct a full DCAM assessment, where artifacts are requested to support each survey response. This is a more comprehensive approach, which can align well with preparations for an audit or regulatory exam.

Depending on the objective of the assessment, combining some of these approaches into one overall assessment can be productive.

For example, to help reveal differences in perceptions about the success of the program while not over-burdening busy business stakeholders, one approach could be to keep the assessment sentiment-based for the business stakeholders, while asking the technology and data stakeholders to respond at the sub-capability level.

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Delv DCAM Assessment – Typical Plan

WEEK 1

Introduce stakeholders

Clarify key stakeholders' objectives for the assessment, and gather known data gaps, pain points, and plans

Gather key documentation e.g., data strategy, policies, and standards
Initial discussions on approach and scope

WEEK 2

Review documentation and clarify open questions

Finalize assessment approach, scope, and project plan

Sign off on approach, scope and project plan

WEEK 3

Interview stakeholders and complete assessments

WEEK 4

Interview stakeholders and complete assessments

WEEK 5

Draft summary report provided of assessment results, key findings, and recommendations for next steps

Review draft summary report with stakeholders, and refine

WEEK 6

Complete final review and sign off on summary report and project