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Why **data flow management** is essential for all healthcare projects and companies looking to establish trust in their data

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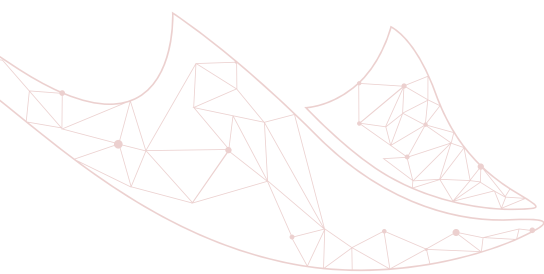
The current state of healthcare

Starting with industry-related regulations like HIPAA and then again with the advent of GDPR and other rules related to personal data, healthcare companies everywhere are dealing with new obligations for regulatory compliance and reporting. This is compelling healthcare organizations to invest heavily in data quality, data governance, and understanding their data. This includes its usage, whereabouts, and the way it flows through the enterprise. Being able to demonstrate exactly how the company secures sensitive data, which systems were sourced to fill data tables, and who is responsible for the quality and management of that data is critical for avoiding fines and satisfying regulatory obligations. Furthermore, headlines about data breaches have, unfortunately, become very common. This is unacceptable when it comes to such sensitive data. Being able to illustrate potential breaches in advance, and/or prove that the organization did everything possible to stop an event, can lessen the impact of a breach.
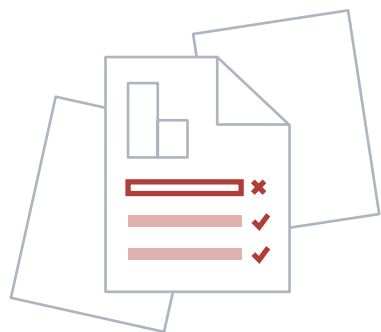
Getting fined for a data breach or poor risk management is only one of the many concerns that customers have on their minds. Customer and investor confidence can also be severely damaged, thus sinking trust in the company overall.

→ HOW CAN DATA LINEAGE HELP?

Many companies understand what data lineage is but struggle to understand the possible uses and the value that it can bring. Put simply, data lineage is the documentation of the journey of data for the information that matters most to the organization. When organizations are knowledgeable about that journey, they can answer a broad variety of questions: Where does this data come from? Where does it go? Who owns it? Here are a few examples of questions MANTA's customers have been able to answer using lineage.

What is a real image of the organization's data? Was the data used for preparing reports trustworthy?

Assuring data quality and understanding critical data assets are musts in a highly regulated healthcare industry. Inefficient management of huge complex environments leads not only to dire consequences when the time for a government audit comes but also to misunderstandings within the company and inaccurate reports that might have significant real-life impacts.

One of our large healthcare customers was struggling with their large data environment and outdated data libraries. They had multiple Chief Information Officers and ETL teams working, using 6 different ETL tools with no standardized process to implement ETL jobs. Over the course of 20 years, they had also acquired a few smaller companies and needed to understand their documentation that was either poor or nearly non-existent. Going through all the ETL transformations manually was not an option for them. Luckily, MANTA and its automation capabilities provided them with years of documentation in one big swipe.
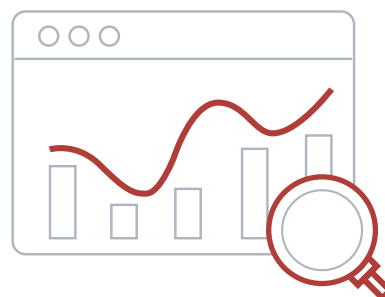
The complexity of the environment caused another issue—unreliable reporting. Non-technical users were often overwhelmed by the company data and were not always sure which data should be used for their specific reporting needs. This led to situations where multiple employees were working on the same reports, achieving different results. After implementing MANTA, those users finally understood their data and the connections between them, which shortened the time it took to prepare reports and make them accurate.

In highly regulated industries, data traceability is essential. All companies subject to any government audit must know how their data moves downstream to know if any of this data changes in the source system and what the implications of those downstream changes are.

It would have taken our customer's IT team months to enable traceability to detect the impacts of the downstream changes on government audit tables. Using MANTA reduced that time to a few mouse clicks. The automated data lineage turned out to be accurate, as opposed to the manual approach and tracing the data back using data models, which is just a guess.

Traceability—do you really know how your data moves downstream?

Conclusion

It has been established that data lineage yields positive results regarding data safety and regulatory compliance. Lineage is one of the major pillars of governance that helps companies tackle the complexities of their current "mass data" condition. Data quality and common understanding are critical too, of course, but lineage is crucial for:

- Establishing better trust in the entire system – The data sources for many risk and compliance initiatives also provide input to data lakes, warehouses, and many decision support dashboards. Increased confidence in data helps avoid decision paralysis when trying to determine whether certain measures are trustworthy.

- Comprehending how data is flowing through the mass data environment (within or between silos) – MANTA helps identify specific data within the various silos. (Once we know data is sensitive, where else is it moving to and where did it come from?)

- Determining what subsets of mass data can be migrated, purged, upgraded, or modernized for better time-to-value and efficiency when it is realized that all of it can't possibly be consumed in a timely manner.

- Applying an agile development strategy for your internal software, when you need to create sandboxes for a more flexible playground for your developers or you need to quickly identify dependencies in your systems so you don't experience an occasional collapse when deploying a new software update.

- Every organization uses data to stay relevant and competitive as it undergoes a constant digital transformation process. This process creates bigger and more complex systems with millions of data flows, where trust in data is undermined, operational costs skyrocket, and every change has unpredictable consequences. How do we ensure that our data management efforts continue safely and don't get out of control?

MANTA is the **hub of all data flows in the organization**, and with its lineage capabilities, it enables digital transformation. The self-service platform demonstrates the journey of highly sensitive data in a way that is clear and easily understandable to those at all levels of the organization. MANTA lineage delivers

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