



# Stop flying blind through the clouds

Turn cloud chaos into strategic advantage, even in the age of AI

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# The cloud-AI inflection point

Today, it seems like every business unit is rushing to the cloud. But few organizations are truly ready to handle the complexity. And AI only amplifies the urgency and the risk.

The obstacles feel endless. Fragmented visibility across platforms. Inconsistent governance. Data quality issues that multiply with scale. The mountain of technical debt piling up from too-hasty migrations. Teams are struggling to know what data they have. Where it lives, and whether they can trust it.

These challenges aren't disconnected. You can trace them back to one core problem: governance fragmentation. Where control and visibility remain tethered to specific cloud platforms, data sources and compute environments. And the fragmentation extends beyond systems to people—technical solutions aren't accessible to the stakeholders who need to define policies, ensure compliance and actually use the data.

You can overcome these challenges by building unified governance into your data cloud ecosystem. When your colleagues can trust, comply and consume data confidently across every environment, you can turn cloud complexity from an operational burden into a strategic accelerator that speeds up all your data and AI initiatives.

In the next few pages, you'll learn how to turn fragmented governance from a blocker to a breakthrough by following these four essential steps:

- Define/refine the operating model and policy strategy
- Discover/curate data across disparate systems
- Assess data asset readiness and feasibility
- Determine data quality health

**More than 85% of organizations will embrace a cloud-first principle by 2025.**

Source: Gartner, ['Gartner Says Cloud Will Be the Centerpiece of New Digital Experiences'](#)

# Why most cloud migrations fall short

The harsh truth is that moving to the cloud often amplifies existing governance challenges. Most data cloud migrations stumble for four specific reasons:

- **The migration strategy doesn't align with business objectives:** Your technical teams move fast. But without business alignment, you can end up with expensive mistakes
- **The migration control processes are broken or non-existent:** Where governance is fragmented across systems and teams, chaos follows
- **A one-time, lift-and-shift migration creates a data swamp:** Quick migrations without proper governance turn data lakes into data swamps that can sink all your data and AI use cases
- **The migration plan lacks ownership and transparency:** When business users are disconnected from data stewardship, migrations stall and trust erodes
- **AI is raising the stakes:** AI isn't just another use case. It's a fundamental amplifier of opportunity and risk. Poor data quality that might have once led to a flawed report can now propagate through AI models and thousands of automated decisions

Success in this new reality demands more than better migration tools. It requires a fundamental shift in how we think about cloud governance. From system-specific controls to a program of unified governance that spans the entire data ecosystem with a governance framework that's as flexible as the cloud environments they oversee. With this, you can build the foundation for Data Confidence.

## What is Data Confidence?

Data Confidence is the way you and your colleagues feel when your organization can accelerate every data and AI use case — without compromising on safety or quality.

It happens when governance becomes an enabler rather than a bottleneck. Your people can find, understand and use trusted data across every system. Business context flows alongside technical metadata. And policies apply consistently everywhere data lives.

Bottom line: When your people can trust, comply and consume data confidently, innovation accelerates. That's Data Confidence.



## Before you get started

Imagine this scenario: Your organization has embraced a cloud-first strategy, with different business units moving rapidly to their preferred platforms. Marketing runs advanced analytics in GCP, Finance has migrated core systems to Azure and your data science team is building AI models in AWS.

On paper, it's digital transformation in action. In reality, it's a deepening governance crisis.

As you learn more about how governance can power your data cloud migration, you'll want to make sure you have a strong foundation for migration success.

Be sure to ask yourself these important questions before you get started:

- Do I have organizational buy-in across all potential stakeholders within the business?
- Have I engaged business stakeholders to align priority use cases with business objectives?
- Is there a data migration plan that prioritizes high-value, high-usage data aligned with those priority use cases?
- Is there a change management strategy to drive adoption and accelerate time-to-value for our cloud investment?

Did you answer 'No' to any of these questions? Get valuable insights into getting ready for your data cloud migration in our blog, ['How to get ready for your data cloud migration \(Hint: Add data intelligence\).'](#)

# The flight path: From migration to strategic advantage

## Four steps to power your cloud migration with unified governance

The path forward isn't about better tools or stricter policies. It's about reimagining how governance works in a multi-cloud, AI-accelerated world. It's time to shift from system-specific controls to unified governance that spans your entire data ecosystem.

Unified governance represents a fundamental shift in how organizations approach cloud migration. Why? Because it creates the foundation for something more valuable: the ability to accelerate all your data and AI use cases, safely.

When governance spans your entire ecosystem — transcending individual platforms, breaking down silos, and bringing technical and business users together — it becomes a catalyst for innovation rather than a constraint.

But success requires a strategic approach built on four essential pillars

# A governance framework for strategic success

This isn't theoretical. It's drawn from organizations that have successfully navigated the complexity of modern cloud transformation while laying the foundation for AI innovation.

1. Define the operating model: Begin with clarity — establish your governance framework and policy strategy. This sets the foundation for how data moves through your organization, ensuring every stakeholder understands their role in creating value. This isn't about restricting access — it's about creating the conditions for scale
2. Discover and curate data: Transform scattered data assets into a coherent, intelligent network. By bringing your metadata into a central repository, you illuminate, not just what data exists, but how it flows and creates value. This is where fragmented governance gives way to unified visibility and control
3. Assess data asset readiness: Move beyond technical metrics to evaluate strategic fit and governance maturity. This comprehensive assessment examines data lineage, platform alignment and business value — ensuring every migration decision advances your strategic objectives
4. Determine data quality health: Quality isn't a checkpoint — it's a continuous journey that starts at the source. By embedding quality monitoring and enrichment into your data lifecycle, you transform data quality from a technical requirement into a strategic advantage

This framework isn't about adding layers of control — it's about creating the foundation for Data Confidence, where your people can trust, comply and consume data across every system and use case.

## What is unified governance?

Unlike fragmented approaches that tether control to specific systems, unified governance automates visibility and policy enforcement across all data sources while bringing both technical and business users into the fold. It creates the foundation to accelerate data initiatives and AI innovation, safely.

# Step 1

## Define the operating model and policy strategy

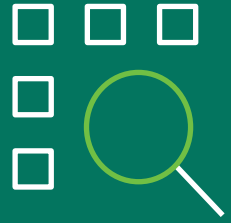
Your operating model structures how data flows through your organization, while your policy strategy creates the guardrails for safe innovation. This foundation determines how effectively you can scale data initiatives.

Start by documenting clear ownership of key roles in your business processes. Then engage stakeholders to establish your governance pillars and policies—for instance, requiring end-to-end lineage documentation before migration.

### Here's what this looks like

- Data policy creation and management
- Persona-based user experiences
- Automated workflows to facilitate governance
- Data retention rules
- Data access management





# Step 2

## Discover and/or curate data across disparate systems

With your operating model in place, it's time to illuminate your data landscape. Unified governance brings all your metadata into a central repository, revealing not just what data exists, but how it's used and transformed.

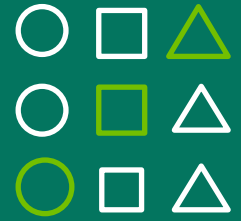
This visibility lets you engage stakeholders to enrich data with business context — turning technical assets into strategic resources.

### Here's what this looks like

- Intuitive data discovery across disparate systems
- Built-in business glossary
- Native integrations for metadata ingestion
- Automated extraction and maintenance of data lineage
- Automated data classification

**More than 9 out of 10 have either a cloud-first or a hybrid cloud policy**

*Sources: TechTarget, 'Is a cloud-first strategy right for you?'*



# Step 3

## Assess data asset readiness and feasibility

When you're considering migrating an asset, it's crucial to thoroughly evaluate its readiness. You'll want to cover three essential areas:

- **Understanding data lineage:** Getting an end-to-end view of the data lifecycle — from source to destination — offers a clear view of data flow and dependencies
- **Navigating multi- and hybrid-cloud environments:** Ensuring your use cases are a good match for the cloud platform you're considering is critical. Is your use case better suited for another platform in your stack
- **Leveraging analytics:** Running analytics on your data can help you determine if it needs to be migrated. Ask yourself these three questions:
  1. Do we still utilize this data
  2. Is the migration economically and strategically worthwhile
  3. Is there any chance we'll soon phase out this data?

### Here's what this looks like

- Navigable visualizations of technical and business lineage
- Context enrichment with business, security and other not-technical details
- Monitoring and transparency throughout the migration journey — for example, comparing the transformations that occur on-prem with the transformation happening in the cloud



# Step 4

## Determine data quality health data across disparate systems

The final and most important step is determining the quality of your data. And a pivotal part of planning this step is deciding when to do it. Should it be done before, during or after migration?

In almost all cases, you'll want to implement data quality and observability checks as soon as possible. Why? Getting an accurate view of your existing data landscape allows you to address any issues upfront and avoid wasteful migration of certain data, and unnecessary costs. It helps prioritization for higher-quality sources that are both trustworthy and useful in the first place, accelerating the process and aiding in adoption and trust with stakeholders.

On the other hand, some scenarios might lend themselves to conducting a data quality assessment after migration. This approach may make sense if your team wants to utilize the enhanced processing speed and scale of your cloud platform for initial checks, or already has a good idea of its data quality. With pushdown, some solutions also utilize cloud compute remotely for data quality and observability. This is most often utilized for continual checks to ensure data quality after migration.

### Here's what this looks like

- Repository of industry-specific and custom quality rules
- Proactive, automated approach to data quality routines and deployment
- Continuous data pipeline monitoring
- Automated issue remediation flagging



## Your ticket to the cloud

Get your bags ready. When unified governance powers your cloud migration, you gain more than efficiency—you gain acceleration. Your teams move faster. They understand what data exists. They trust its quality. And they know how to use it properly so that access is automated, quality becomes continuous and innovation becomes natural.

Once you're ready to make the move, you can navigate the journey successfully by following the four steps we've outlined in this ebook:

1. Define/refine the operating model and policy strategy
2. Discover/curate data across disparate systems
3. Assess data asset readiness and feasibility
4. Determine data quality health

The reality is that cloud migration is a never-ending process. Your organization will continue to add applications where data may need to be migrated. And you'll want to pursue an ongoing assessment of your data management process, ensuring data quality and much more. But laying a foundation for data cloud migration will be critical to enabling the successful evolution of your cloud strategy — and you can start today.

### How Collibra can help

Collibra frees your data from the constraints of silos by unifying data and AI governance across every system and bringing business and technical users into the fold. It gives you a higher degree of compliance paired with more autonomy, so your users can trust, comply and consume.

Ready to accelerate and strengthen every data and AI use case?

Discover the [Collibra Platform](#).

### The benefits of unified governance

- Scale data initiatives with confidence
- Launch AI projects knowing the training data is reliable
- Accelerate innovation while maintaining control
- Turn compliance from constraint to competitive advantage



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If you are interested in learning more,  
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