Delivering a Data Management Methodology in a Healthcare Software Development Organization

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Freed recently delivered a data management methodology for a healthcare software development client so that it could benefit from a best practices-based and repeatable set of related processes. The client was faced with the challenge of finding a way to provide high-quality data across the entire product lifecycle. This required a standard way to acquire, integrate, share and maintain its data so that it could realize a faster delivery of its software solutions to its customers, and also ensure that from a post-rollout perspective, it could maintain data quality as part of its ongoing product change management practices.

The client turned to Freed Associates because of our experience and ability to quickly craft an implementation approach, appropriately sized for the company's culture to help ensure adoption by the client's product development teams and senior management. This data management methodology and toolkit provided guidance for the identification and acquisition of data sets and their sources, data profiling processes and tools, data design

and build based on integrated data requirements, a data management toolkit for use in projects, and finally, a starting reference data library the entire organization could share.

Since the goal was to implement a data management process that provided processes and a data toolkit over the product development lifecycle, a practical approach was critical so that these processes and tools were appropriate. Thus, the approach to develop and implement the data management methodology required that the solution be developed within in the context of actual project implementations. Creation and implementation of the methodology within this context better supported success because it involved the product teams up front and thus assured a good organizational fit and had the benefit of use in real practice contexts.

Freed developed and trained the product teams on data processes that addressed the following challenges:

• Identification of data sets and their integration into software requirements

• Assessment of data sources' accessibility and high-level quality profiling

• Data quality concerns were addressed via the development of key data quality metrics for critical operational and quality data attributes. Data management reporting was developed to support the tracking of quality metrics throughout the execution of data profiling activities.

• Technical design activities, such as data mapping and document storage solutions, to ensure the design met the development requirements, technical solution sizing and customer expectations

• Buildout of data assets and establishment of a data maintenance plan to address needs for data change management as it pertained to the software product

• Data maintenance planning that identified resources, roles and processes to ensure the organization would be able to be informed and stay ahead of changes to data sources its products relied upon

The result was that Freed developed and helped the client to implement an end-to-end data management process that could deliver quality data for its software products. This involved direct coaching on the process and roles, and explaining best practices as we reconciled the methodology concepts with the client's experience and pace of their project work.
Freed delivered an organizational training for the data management processes and toolkit, and concurrently delivered data deliverables for four software projects that were in the process of implementation. Freed also provided recommendations for how the client should continue to develop its data management processes as well as insights into companion business and project processes as an added value to the engagement.

In this era of urgent need for organizations to leverage data for the improvement of patient care and other goals, a coherent, best-practices strategy for the acquisition, sharing and maintenance of data is indispensable. Freed

Associates can be a valuable partner, delivering data management strategies, methodologies and toolkits to help your organization meet these challenges.