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SOLUTION GUIDE

Industry Use Case Selection Guide

A Practical Guide to Active Metadata and Data Contracts

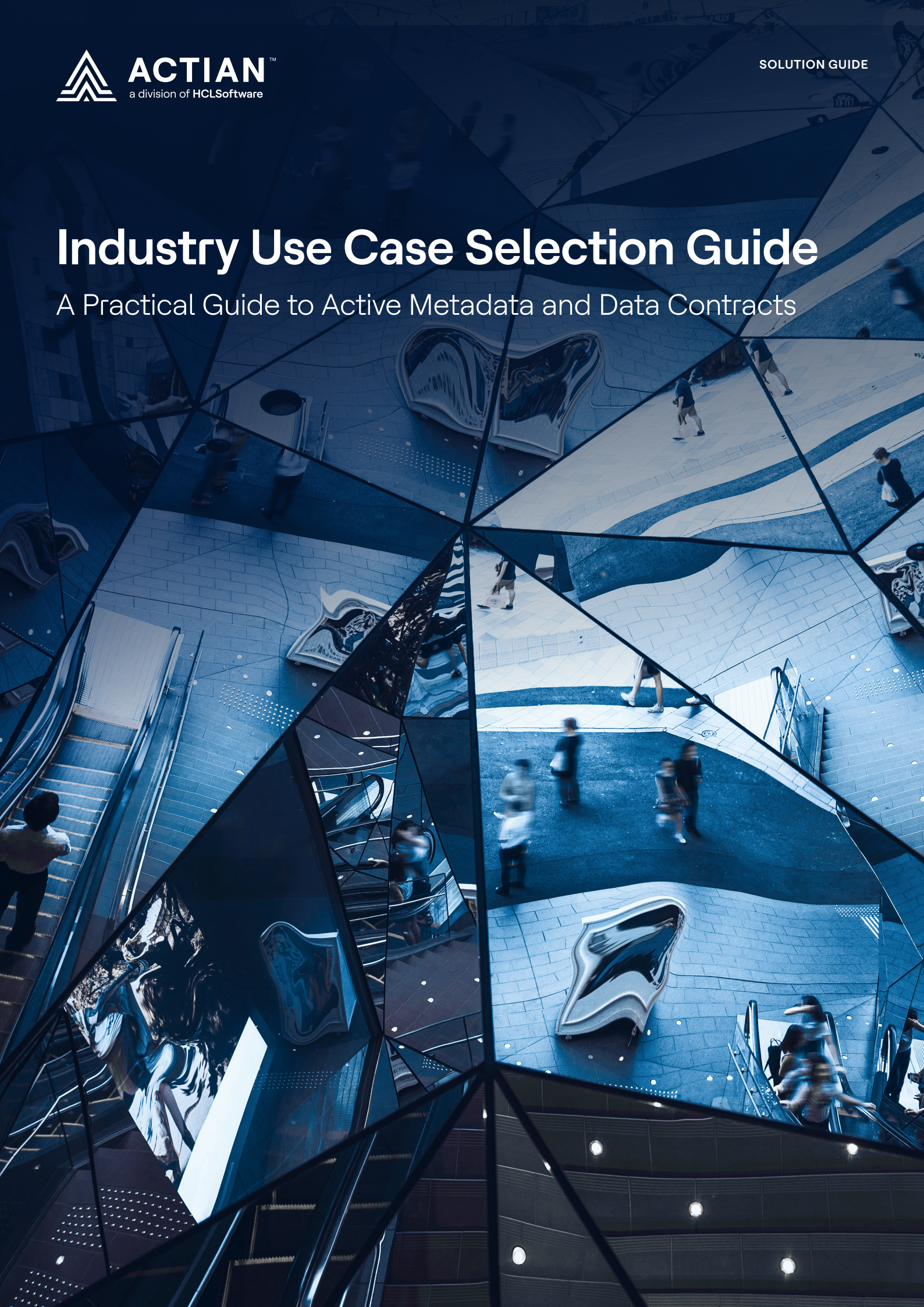


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Why Governance Needs to Evolve

Most organizations recognize the need for data governance, but few succeed in scaling it. Traditional governance approaches struggle with:

- Siloed data ownership
- Inconsistent standards across business units
- Lack of visibility into data quality and lineage
- Low adoption by business users

The result? Governance becomes a bottleneck — slowing innovation, complicating compliance, and eroding trust in data.

The Actian Data Intelligence Platform solves this by enabling federated data governance. It empowers domain teams to take ownership of their data while maintaining enterprise-wide governance standards.

By combining active metadata with data contracts, Actian provides a scalable, practical way to govern data in real time — ensuring data is not only compliant and trusted, but also accessible and usable across the business.

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Active Metadata and Data Contracts

The Backbone of Scalable Governance

Most data governance initiatives fail to scale because they rely on manual processes, static documentation, and unclear ownership. As organizations grow, these gaps lead to inconsistent data quality, fragmented standards, and slow adoption by business teams.

Active metadata and data contracts work together to solve these problems — making governance proactive, automated, and aligned with business needs.

Active Metadata: Making Governance Continuous

Active metadata is real-time information about your data assets — how they're created, moved, changed, and used. It includes:

- **Lineage**: Where data comes from, how it transforms, and where it's used
- **Quality Indicators**: Freshness, completeness, accuracy
- **Usage Insights**: Who is using which data, how often, and for what purpose

Unlike static catalogs, active metadata is continuously updated and automated, giving teams constant visibility into the state of their data.

Data Contracts: Enforcing Standards and Accountability

A data contract is an agreement between data producers and consumers that defines:

- **Data structure and semantics**: Fields, definitions, formats
- **Quality expectations**: SLAs on accuracy, completeness, timeliness
- **Usage policies**: Privacy, compliance, access controls

Data contracts eliminate ambiguity. They ensure everyone knows what data is available, what condition it's in, and how it can be used.

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Governance Problem	How Active Metadata and Data Contracts Solve It
Unclear data ownership and responsibilities	Data contracts formalize ownership, defining who is accountable for each data product.
Inconsistent standards across teams and systems	Contracts enforce shared definitions, quality metrics, and usage rules, reducing fragmentation.
Lack of visibility into data quality and lineage	Active metadata automates lineage tracking and quality monitoring, keeping information up-to-date and actionable.
Manual, reactive compliance efforts	Automated observability through active metadata ensures governance policies are continuously monitored and enforced.
Low business trust in available data	With clear contracts and transparent lineage, business users gain confidence in using data products.

How Active Metadata Solves Real Governance Challenges

With active metadata and data contracts, organizations can move from reactive, manual governance to a proactive, self-sustaining model.

- Data producers are accountable for delivering reliable data products.
- Business users can easily discover, trust, and use governed data.
- Compliance is embedded into daily operations, not managed as an afterthought.
- Governance scales naturally as new domains, systems, and users are onboarded.

This isn't about adding bureaucracy. It's about building governance into the fabric of how data is used — with automation, clarity, and shared responsibility.

From Theory to Practice: Operationalizing Governance with Active Metadata and Data Contracts

While the benefits of active metadata and data contracts are clear in theory, their true value is realized when applied to real-world business challenges. Many organizations still struggle to implement governance at scale due to fragmented ownership, inconsistent standards, and the difficulty of integrating governance into existing data environments.

Actian's federated approach addresses these barriers by shifting governance responsibilities closer to the data source, while maintaining enterprise-wide visibility and control. Through automation, flexible data contracts, and active metadata-driven observability, governance becomes part of everyday operations — not an isolated, reactive function.

The following industry examples showcase how leading organizations have used the Actian Data Intelligence Platform to overcome governance challenges specific to their sector. From financial services to life sciences and transportation, these stories highlight practical strategies for building trusted, scalable data governance frameworks that align with evolving business needs.

Banking and Financial Services



"Unlike Collibra, we were impressed by Actian's ability to connect instantly to our data sources without needing to rely on third-party tools. When comparing the TCO of both solutions – including subscription and implementation costs – Actian's Data Intelligence Platform proved to be a much more cost-effective option than Collibra."

– Data Catalog Project Manager, BPCE

GROUPE BPCE

Governance Challenge

BPCE needed to unify data governance across its network of regional banks while enabling decentralized ownership. Their existing governance approach was too rigid, lacked visibility into critical decision-making data, and struggled with adoption.

Why Actian

Actian enabled BPCE to apply a federated governance model by combining automated active metadata discovery with contract-based data products. This provided real-time visibility, simplified access for business users, and aligned decentralized teams with enterprise-wide standards.

Benefit

BPCE successfully unified its data catalog across multiple sources, achieving widespread adoption with over 1,000 users accessing the platform weekly. Standardized data definitions and user-friendly UI ensured consistent governance and accelerated compliance readiness.

Technology Stack

- Hadoop Cluster
- Oracle
- Exadata
- SQL Server
- Power BI
- Google BigQuery
- AWS

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Insurance



75% of enterprises say improving data quality and trust is the leading goal of their data programs and **66% of organizations with data governance programs report improved data quality** as the top added value from their programs.

Drexel University, "Trends in Data Governance and Quality"

GENERALI

Governance Challenge

Generali needed to improve visibility and governance of sensitive customer data spread across diverse systems to meet regulatory compliance requirements. Their teams lacked a flexible solution to identify, document, and maintain data assets with clear ownership and lineage.

Why Actian

Actian provided Generali with automated metadata collection and flexible governance capabilities to centralize documentation of sensitive data. The platform's scalable integrations allowed Generali to govern data effectively across existing technologies like Hadoop and Apache Kudu.

Benefit

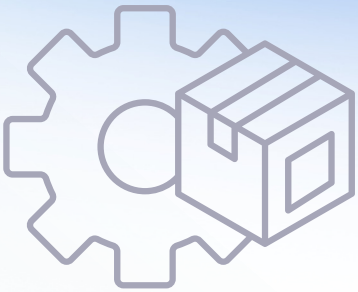
BPCE successfully unified its data catalog across multiple sources, achieving widespread adoption with over 1,000 users accessing the platform weekly. Standardized data definitions and user-friendly UI ensured consistent governance and accelerated compliance readiness.

Technology Stack

- Hadoop Cluster
- Hive Connector
- Apache Kudu Data Store
- Mutation API

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Logistics



"In our opinion, only the business functions can truly transform the company into a data-driven company. ***The Actian Data Intelligence Platform is the tool they need****—efficient and usable—so that they are fully aware of the data they have available.* ***It builds the bridge between business and data*** *at Autostrade. From a business perspective, it is fast, complete, easy to understand, and user-friendly. From an IT perspective, it is agile, scalable, and continuously upgradeable."*

–Ruben Marco Ganzaroli, Chief Data Officer, Autostrade per l'Italia

autostrade per l'italia

Governance Challenge

Autostrade needed to govern critical infrastructure data distributed across multiple subsidiaries while enabling operational teams to manage their own assets. Existing governance efforts were manual, fragmented, and unable to scale with the complexity of their data landscape.

Why Actian

Actian automated metadata collection and enabled federated governance through flexible metadata model, ensuring each business unit could manage its data while aligning to corporate standards. This approach provided real-time lineage, observability, and accountability across decentralized teams.

Benefit

Autostrade achieved 90% automation in metadata management, reducing manual governance overhead while improving data quality and transparency. Business teams gained faster access to trusted data, supporting operational efficiency and compliance without slowing down decision-making.

Technology Stack

- AWS Glue
- AWS S3
- AWS Redshift
- Erwin Data Modeler
- MySQL
- Tibco Data Virtualization
- Tibco Spotfire

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Life Sciences

"Every year, **poor data quality costs organizations an average $12.9 million**. Apart from the immediate impact on revenue, over the long term, poor quality data increases the complexity of data ecosystems and leads to poor decision making.

Gartner, "How to Improve Your Data Quality"

Governance Challenge

A leading global life sciences company needed to establish enterprise-wide governance for data spanning multiple platforms, including Snowflake, SAP, and Palantir. Siloed data ownership, limited visibility, and inconsistent documentation hindered their ability to reuse data effectively and ensure compliance.

Why Actian

Actian enabled automated metadata discovery across their hybrid data landscape and allowed for federated governance through flexible data products and contracts. This provided a centralized, always up-to-date catalog with real-time lineage and quality insights, while supporting domain-level ownership.

Benefit

The company cataloged over 30,000 datasets and documented more than 1,000 data products, creating a trusted data foundation for global teams. By clarifying data ownership and streamlining access through governed data products, they improved compliance readiness and accelerated data-driven initiatives across functions.

Technology Stack

- Snowflake
- Tableau
- AWS Glue
- Palantir
- SAP Success Factor
- SAP BW

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Transportation



"What we value about Actian's Data Intelligence Platform is its agility and how their teams involve customers in managing the product roadmap, along with a very active user community for sharing best practices. On the technology side, it's above all their compatibility with all clouds, especially AWS in our case, and the flexibility of their metamodel with the ability to create our own properties that best suit our context."

– **Naïma Badidi,** Head of Data Governance & Data Visualization Tools, SNCF

sncfconnect

Governance Challenge

SNCF Connect needed to centralize its fragmented data heritage and make it easily accessible for teams across the organization. Existing governance efforts lacked the flexibility to support both business and technical users in discovering and utilizing relevant data.

Why Actian

Actian provided SNCF with a centralized data catalog that consolidated data assets from across the organization. Its intuitive interface and flexible governance model made it easier for both business and technical users to collaborate around shared data assets.

Benefit

By centralizing its data heritage, SNCF improved access to governed data for all relevant teams, enhancing collaboration and reducing the effort required to locate and understand available data. This improved efficiency and supported more informed decision-making across the organization.

Technology Stack

- AWS S3

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Conclusion

As data environments grow in complexity, successful governance requires more than policies and documentation — it demands continuous visibility, clear accountability, and seamless integration into business workflows. The Actian Data Intelligence Platform empowers organizations to move beyond static governance models with a federated approach built on active metadata and data contracts. By enabling decentralized teams to manage their data with enterprise-wide alignment, the Actian Data Intelligence Platform helps businesses ensure data quality, maintain compliance, and unlock the full value of their data assets.

Key Takeaways

- **Traditional governance models struggle to scale,** leading to fragmented ownership, inconsistent standards, and limited business adoption.
- **Active metadata and data contracts enable a practical, scalable governance approach,** providing real-time visibility, automated lineage and quality tracking, and clear accountability across teams.
- The **Actian Data Intelligence Platform empowers federated data governance,** allowing decentralized teams to take ownership of their data while ensuring alignment with enterprise-wide governance standards.
- **Governance becomes embedded into daily operations,** making data quality, compliance, and trust part of how data is used—not isolated, manual efforts.
- **Industry leaders across sectors**—including banking, insurance, logistics, life sciences, and transportation—are realizing tangible business benefits by operationalizing governance with Actian.
- With a **flexible and integrated governance framework,** organizations can adapt to evolving business needs, accelerate compliance readiness, and maximize the value of their data assets.



About Actian

Actian powers the full data value chain for the AI era. We deliver databases that store and secure data at scale; platforms to connect, manage, govern, and observe it; and solutions to activate it through BI, conversational analytics, and AI agents. More than 20,000 organizations worldwide, including 30 of the Fortune 100, rely on Actian to fuel intelligent decisions and autonomous systems.

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