

AMERICAN BUREAU OF SHIPPING SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATES DATA PRIVACY



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The Customer

ABS is one of the world's leading ship classification organizations, committed to setting standards for safety and excellence so that the marine and offshore industries can operate safely, securely and responsibly. For more than 150 years, ABS has worked alongside its partners to tackle the most pressing technical, operational and regulatory challenges.

The Challenge

The American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) collects a substantial amount of data from customers and business partners through its operations in 70 countries. ABS needed to understand what laws applied to them and how best to move toward compliance. But, instead of waiting for each government mandate to roll out, ABS needed a bigger picture solution – one that was applicable, repeatable and would address a large percentage of whatever government data privacy rules come next. ABS also needed the solution to help distinguish its brand in the marketplace as being a good steward of its customers' data.



How Prolifics met PFM's challenge

Prolifics provided data integration and data management solutions that helped ABS modernize data delivery and data consolidation for its 200 offices around the world.

Prolifics' initial partnership with ABS focused on modernizing applications and reducing dependency on data silos. As part of a yearly rolling contract, Prolifics was responsible for both platform and product upgrades to help ABS streamline digital transformation initiatives – no small feat for a company that has been in business for more than 150 years. By modernizing data operations, Prolifics helped ABS pinpoint key data sources across the organization and create a framework capable of collecting, curating, and storing this data securely.

In 2018, ABS asked Prolifics to assess their GDPR-readiness. We worked with ABS to deploy our rapid Data Privacy Assessment, to identify issues and opportunities for data integration and a larger data solution for continuity. Prolifics determined that while existing processes and policies were effective for structured data management, their unstructured data handling needed work. To help manage this data at scale, Prolifics recommended using IBM's StoredIQ, an in-place data management application that easily integrated with their existing IBM server technology and made it possible to build out a robust governance solution.

The success of this project led to a follow-on services engagement that focused on developing a comprehensive and in-depth data governance strategy, using Prolifics' Data Governance Framework solution. This gave ABS a unified platform to deliver data governance, analytics and compliance on a global scale. The Data Governance Framework centralizes both structured and unstructured data from across ABS, so that the company can gain a more complete understanding of the information it owns and act on regulatory requests. With this insight, the company can target sensitive data for action, move toward better compliance, and avoid regulatory infractions that impact both the bottom line and the brand's image.

The Results

Delivering data governance in-depth started with a roadmap: Prolifics teams looked at where data was being stored, how it was being used, and what potential risks this posed for the organization. Physical data presented one such risk: While more recent shipping data was stored on IBM information servers, ABS was also storing paper documents that were well over a century old.

As a result, Prolifics' initial assessment focused on digital data migration and storage using StoredIQ and also identified security solutions to help protect this data, such as Gardium-like tools and master data management (MDM) solutions. Next, Prolifics teams took a hard look at ABS's existing systems to determine which were in scope, which needed work, and which required replacement to meet GDPR and other evolving regulatory standards.

In practice, this meant achieving end-to-end data lineage to meet data handling obligations under GDPR regulations.

Using the IBM information analyzer, Prolifics teams conducted analysis on locally stored data and leveraged StoredIQ to crawl through additional repositories. The resulting output identified where files lived and what type of data they contained. In many instances, Prolifics found personally identifiable information (PII) that wasn't properly stored or went beyond the bounds of GDPR's data collection framework. Coordinating with ABS legal teams, Prolifics then applied remediation practices such as the deduplication of data and the consolidation of records.

Bolstered by robust data handling and armed with a three-year roadmap from Prolifics, ABS was able to identify gaps, processes, and technologies that put them at risk of GDPR noncompliance, implement new policies to reduce regulatory risk, and develop in-depth data governance capabilities to help meet evolving compliance requirements.

As a result of the Data Governance Framework solution, ABS is closer to compliance with GDPR, CCPA, and other regulations as they emerge.

The solution provides ABS with extensive cost savings in infrastructure capital expenditure in the first three years by centralizing onto a single platform. ABS expects a 10 percent improvement in service utilization, with a projected revenue growth of 20 percent over the next three years.

A foundation of reputable, high-quality data prepares ABS to adopt cutting-edge technologies that leverage artificial intelligence and machine learning (AI/ML) to drive innovation. Potential use cases include regular, automated data remediation and risk reporting, as well as larger AI/ML-powered initiatives across the business.

ABS used the Data Governance Framework solution to:

- Develop and enable a data privacy and governance roadmap, used to design and implement a fully featured data governance program
- Create data transparency by identifying structured and unstructured data across organizational silos
- Track, analyze and report the lineage of this data, which allows insight into the history and metadata of this information
- Perform risk analysis to determine personally identifiable information and associated risk, with a data risk dashboard enabling executive review and monitoring of key risk factors

Technology

The Data Governance Framework solution brings together a number of Prolifics and IBM technologies to create a unique capability. Our combination of software, integration, governance framework, and forward-looking focus on innovation enables the Data Governance Framework solution to understand and respond to data problems as a whole – creating compelling long-term value for the client.

- A data mart that stores information regarding customers' personal data, metrics, and progress
- A data glossary housing information about transactions, service availabilities, rates, relevant business terms, and more



- Integration with an information data governance catalog to consume and export business terms and steward relevant data for lines of business. It also provided a systematic data remediation approach.
- Configurable information analysis to provide details about risk that is associated with compliance according to regulatory standards. The solution provided enterprise data inventory, data mapping, and data lineage capabilities that support compliance goals.
- Reporting, analytics, and auditing capabilities
- Unstructured data discovery to understand compliance risks surrounding big data and unstructured data repositories such as Outlook and other cloud applications
- Remediation controls to satisfy company data privacy policies and prepare for regulatory data subject access requests

Specific technologies implemented with ABS included:

- Prolifics' rapid Data Privacy Assessment – identifies issues and opportunities for data integration into the larger data solution
- Prolifics' Data Governance Framework and assets – developed through extensive experience in solving data challenges
- IBM Information Server and Information Governance Catalog – consolidates data from across the enterprise into a format that is ready for use in analytics and reporting
- IBM QualityStage – cleanses data to ensure high data quality
- IBM StoredIQ – gathers unstructured data from across the enterprise; combines that unstructured data with structured data gathered using IBM Information Server to provide a full view of the customer information within the environment

Learn more

At Prolifics, we provide end-to-end data analytics services, at any point you want them, for whatever condition your data is in.

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We provide consulting, engineering and managed services for all our practice areas – Data & AI, Integration & Applications, Business Automation, DevXOps, Test Automation, and Cybersecurity – at any point our clients need them.

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