Real-World Data Governance

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations

Monthly Webinar Series Hosted by DATAVERSITY

Robert S. Seiner – KIK Consulting
June 19, 2025 – 11:00 a.m. PT / 2:00 p.m. ET

It's a great day for data!

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Episode #161

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Introduction

Real-World Data Governance – Monthly Webinar Series

July 17, 2025: Aligning Data Governance with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
Third Thursday each Month @ 2pm EST – Register at TDAN.com, KIKconsulting.com, DATAVERSITY.net

Non-Invasive Data Governance / Non-Invasive Data Governance Strikes Again Books

2014: ISBN 9781935504856 / TechnicsPub.com / Amazon.com (NIDG)
2023: ISBN 9781634623599 / TechnicsPub.com / Amazon.com (Strikes Again)
2025: ISBN 9781634625937 / TechnicsPub.com / Amazon.com (Unleashed)

### Non-Invasive Data Governance / Metadata Governance Online Learning Plans

Most Recent: Business Glossaries, Data Dictionaries and Data Catalogs
DATAVERSITY Training Center – https://training.dataversity.net

KIK Consulting & Educational Services

KIKConsulting.com
The Home of Non-Invasive Data Governance®

Carnegie Mellon University (CMU)

Adjunct Faculty: Heinz College Executive Education
Chief Data and AI Officer (CDAIO) Certificate Program
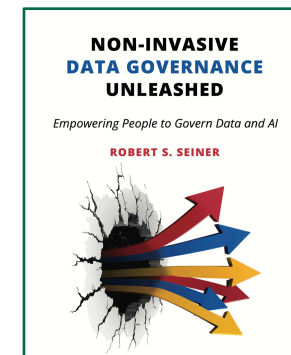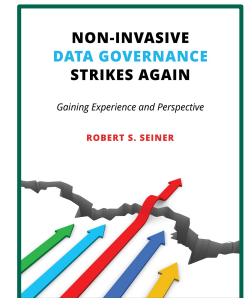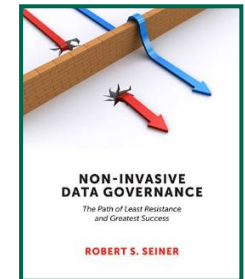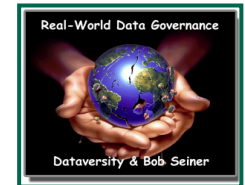
The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Abstract

- In this webinar, I will talk about …

  - Emerging Trends in Data Stewardship

  - Innovative Tools for Empowering Data Stewards

  - Best Practices for Modern Data Stewardship

  - Aligning Stewardship with Future Governance Needs

  - Case Studies of Forward-Thinking Stewardship Programs

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Definitions

- Data Governance – The **execution and enforcement** of authority over data.

- Data Stewardship – **Formal accountability** for data.

- Data Steward – A **person held formally accountable** for their relationship to the data.

1. A Data Steward Can Be Absolutely Anybody
2. Being a Data Steward Describes a Relationship to Data and is Not a Position
3. A Data Steward is Not Hired to be a Data Steward
4. A Data Steward Does Not Need to have the Title of "Data Steward"
5. A Data Steward Does Not Have to be Told How to Do His/Her Job
6. Public or Industry Data Steward Certification is a Load of Bunk (IMHO)
7. There is More Than One Data Steward for Each Type of Data
8. Data Steward Training Should be Focused on "Formalizing Accountability"

Seiner's Data Steward Rules – TDAN.com 02/01/16
https://tdan.com/seiners-data-steward-rules/16867

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The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
BWGS … Key Intro Points

- **Data stewardship is evolving rapidly** – As organizations adopt AI, distributed environments, and real-time analytics, this session highlights how stewardship must keep pace.

- **Stewards are central to data trust** – Modern stewards must enable accurate, responsible, and business-aligned use of data across the enterprise.

- **Governance success depends on stewardship** – Effective stewardship must drive data quality, compliance, and the success of data governance programs.

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The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
BWGS … Key Intro Points

- **Innovation meets practicality** – Explore new tools and practices that empower stewards without overwhelming them, making governance more sustainable and scalable.

- **It's about people, not just policies** – This webinar reframes stewardship as a business catalyst, showing how to embed accountability at the point of data use.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Emerging Trends in Data Stewardship

- Rise of AI-Augmented Stewardship

- Stewardship Without Borders

- From Gatekeepers to Guides

- Real-Time Stewardship for Real-Time Data

- Non-Invasive Stewardship at Scale

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Emerging Trends in Data Stewardship

- **Rise of AI-Augmented Stewardship**
  How stewards are leveraging AI to automate routine tasks and enhance decision support.

  - **AI tools** automate routine data classification, freeing stewards to focus on **strategic and contextual** data decisions.

  - **Predictive insights** from AI help stewards anticipate data issues before they **impact business operations**.

  - **Natural language interfaces** empower stewards to query metadata and lineage without deep **technical knowledge**.
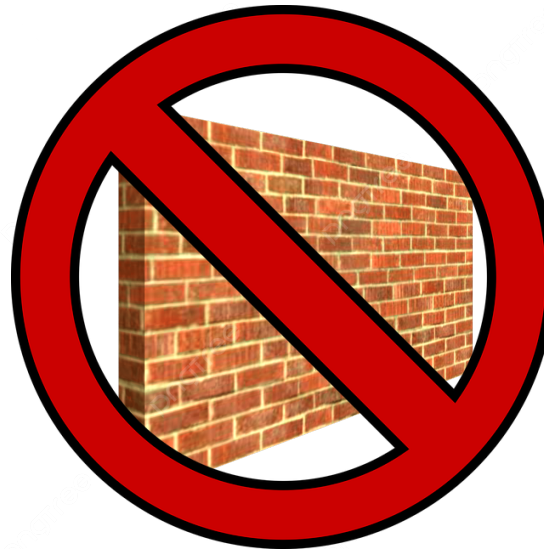
The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Emerging Trends in Data Stewardship

- **Stewardship Without Borders**
  The growing need for cross-functional, federated stewardship in hybrid data environments.

  - **Federated stewardship** enables consistent data oversight across **business units, regions, and platforms**.

  - **Cross-functional collaboration** ensures data accountability spans **IT, operations, and analytics** teams.

  - **Hybrid environments** demand flexible governance that supports both **cloud and on-premise** data assets.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Emerging Trends in Data Stewardship

- **From Gatekeepers to Guides**
  How modern stewards are evolving into enablers of data literacy and trusted insight.

  - **Modern stewards** act as **educators**, building data **literacy** and trust across the organization.

  - The role is shifting from **enforcement** to **enablement**, helping teams use data **confidently** and **responsibly**.

  - Stewards now provide **context**, not just access, to drive **informed decisions** and stronger **business outcomes**.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Emerging Trends in Data Stewardship

- **Real-Time Stewardship for Real-Time Data**
  Meeting the demands of streaming, edge, and real-time analytics environments.

  - **Stewards** must adapt to **instant data flows**, ensuring governance keeps pace with **real-time decision-making**.

  - **Streaming data** requires **continuous validation** to maintain trust in analytics at the **speed of operations**.

  - **Peripheral environments** demand localized stewardship that supports **low-latency**, **high-value** use cases without sacrificing control.
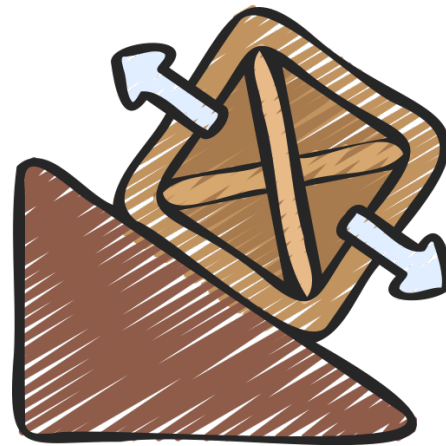
The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Emerging Trends in Data Stewardship

- **Non-Invasive Stewardship at Scale**
  Implementing sustainable accountability without adding friction or formal role changes.

  - **Embed accountability** into existing roles by formalizing **what people already do** with data every day.

  - Use **lightweight tools** and **social processes** to scale stewardship without organizational disruption.

  - Focus on **sustainable behavior change**, not title changes, to build long-term stewardship **buy-in and success**.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Innovative Tools for Empowering Data Stewards

- Smart Catalogs with Stewardship Workflows

- AI-Powered Glossaries and Definitions

- Collaborative Stewardship Platforms

- Automated Stewardship Scorecards

- Embedded Stewardship in Everyday Tools

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Innovative Tools for Empowering Data Stewards

- **Smart Catalogs with Stewardship Workflows**
  Connecting stewards directly to the metadata, lineage, and impact tools they need.

  - **Empower stewards** with direct access to **metadata, lineage, and glossary**—no middleman required.

  - Integrate **workflow automation** to streamline stewardship tasks and improve **responsiveness**.

  - Use catalogs as **collaboration hubs**, not just repositories, to **connect people to trusted knowledge** instantly.

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The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Innovative Tools for Empowering Data Stewards

- **AI-Powered Glossaries and Definitions**
  Automating term suggestions, relationships, and business context in real time.

  - **AI suggests terms** and definitions in real time, reducing ambiguity and boosting **business clarity**.

  - Discover **hidden relationships** between terms to improve **data understanding** and usage.

  - Add **real-time business context** automatically, making glossaries **more dynamic and relevant** for every user.
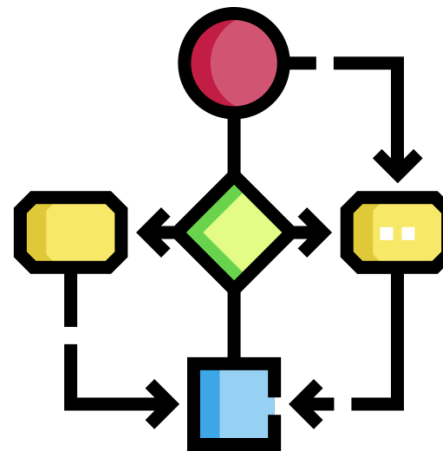
The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Innovative Tools for Empowering Data Stewards

- **Collaborative Stewardship Platforms**
  Enabling cross-functional coordination through chat-style interfaces and role-aware dashboards.

  - **Chat-style interfaces** make cross-functional **coordination intuitive**, immediate, and less formal.

  - **Role-aware dashboards** ensure stewards see **what matters most** to their data responsibilities.

  - Platforms foster **real-time collaboration**, accelerating **issue resolution** and stewardship impact across teams.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Innovative Tools for Empowering Data Stewards

- **Automated Stewardship Scorecards**
  Measuring and reporting the value of stewardship activities without manual tracking.

  - **Automated metrics** eliminate manual tracking, giving stewards more time to **focus on data quality**.

  - **Scorecards** highlight stewardship **impact and value**, helping justify ongoing investment in governance.

  - Enable **data-driven performance reviews** and **transparent accountability** across domains and programs.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Innovative Tools for Empowering Data Stewards

- **Embedded Stewardship in Everyday Tools**
  Bringing stewardship actions into Excel, Power BI, and CRM environments.

  - **Stewardship actions** integrated in **Excel, Power BI, and CRMs** make governance part of everyday workflows.

  - **In-context accountability** helps users define, validate, and correct data **without leaving their tools**.

  - Reduces **friction** by embedding governance where people **already work and make decisions**.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
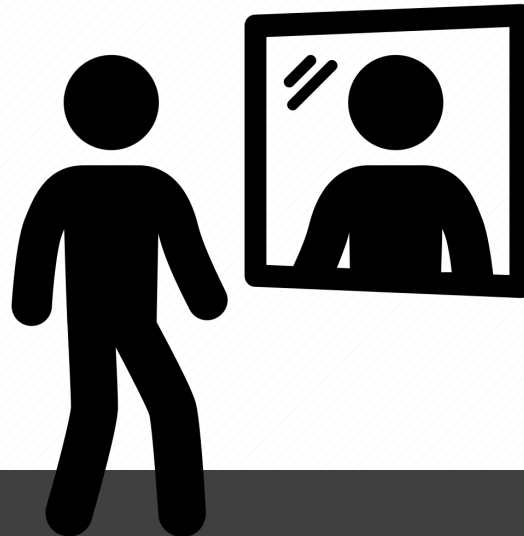## Best Practices for Modern Data Stewardship

- Recognize Stewardship as Role-Based, Not Title-Based

- Focus on Stewardship at the Point of Data Use

- Enable Stewards Through Targeted Training and Tools

- Align Stewardship with Business Priorities

- Promote Stewardship Wins Across the Organization

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Best Practices for Modern Data Stewardship

- **Recognize Stewardship as Role-Based, Not Title-Based**
  Formalize existing accountability without adding bureaucracy.

  - **Stewardship happens** wherever people define, produce, or use data — **regardless of job title**.

  - Focus on **accountability by role**, not creating new job descriptions or governance bottlenecks.

  - Empower staff by recognizing their **existing data responsibilities** and **formalizing them without disruption**.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Best Practices for Modern Data Stewardship

- **Focus on Stewardship at the Point of Data Use**
  Embed stewardship actions where data decisions are actually made.

  - **Embed stewardship** directly into the tools and workflows where **data is accessed, analyzed, or shared**.

  - Drive value by enabling **real-time accountability** when data decisions are being made — not afterward.

  - Shift from centralized control to **localized stewardship**, empowering users closest to the **data's impact**.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Best Practices for Modern Data Stewardship

- **Enable Stewards Through Targeted Training and Tools**
  Equip them with just enough governance to be effective, not overwhelmed.

  - **Deliver focused training** aligned to the steward's role, not a one-size-fits-all governance curriculum.

  - Provide **right-sized tools** that integrate into daily work without adding complexity or confusion.

  - Use **just-in-time resources** to support stewards at their moment of need — not months before or after.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Best Practices for Modern Data Stewardship

- **Align Stewardship with Business Priorities**
  Tie stewardship efforts directly to analytics, AI, and operational outcomes.

  – **Link stewardship** activities to measurable **business goals** like improved analytics or operational efficiency.

  – Prioritize **data assets** that directly support **AI, compliance, and high-impact decision-making**.

  – Frame stewardship as a **value catalyst**, not a governance overhead, to gain **executive buy-in**.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Best Practices for Modern Data Stewardship

- **Promote Stewardship Wins Across the Organization**
Share success stories to build momentum and increase adoption.

    - **Celebrate quick wins** by highlighting how stewardship improved **data quality, access, or trust** in real scenarios.

    - Use **storytelling** to connect stewardship success with **mission impact**, not just technical accomplishments.

    - Share wins through **newsletters, town halls**, or dashboards to increase **visibility and peer motivation**.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Aligning Stewardship with Future Governance Needs

- Position Stewards as Frontline Enablers of AI and Data Trust

- Integrate Stewardship Across Structured and Unstructured Data

- Adapt Steward Roles to Evolving Data Ecosystems

- Connect Stewardship to Measurable Business Outcomes
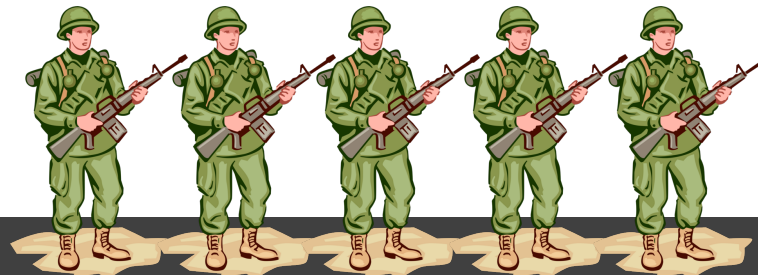
- Champion a Culture of Shared Accountability

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The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Aligning Stewardship with Future Governance Needs

- **Position Stewards as Frontline Enablers of AI and Data Trust**
Ensure data readiness for automation, analytics, and generative tools.

  - **Ensure data quality** at the source to support **accurate, bias-resistant AI** and trustworthy analytics outcomes.

  - Empower stewards to validate **context and lineage** critical for **AI explainability** and model reliability.

  - Make stewards champions of **responsible data use**, bridging the gap between **AI innovation and governance**.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Aligning Stewardship with Future Governance Needs

- **Integrate Stewardship Across Structured and Unstructured Data**
  Expand the scope to support full-spectrum data and information governance.

  - **Unify stewardship practices** to cover **emails, documents, and databases** within a single governance framework.

  - Equip stewards to manage **data context and meaning** across **structured, semi-structured, and unstructured formats**.

  - Bridge **information governance and data governance** efforts for **complete visibility and accountability** across all content types.
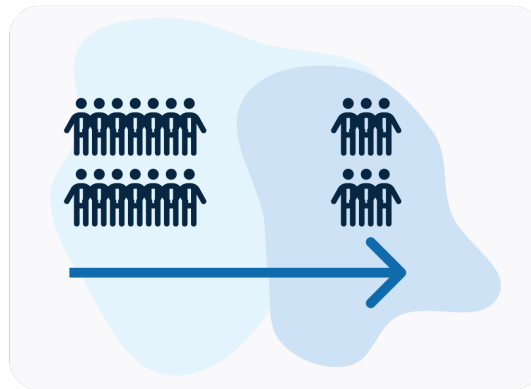
The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Aligning Stewardship with Future Governance Needs

- **Adapt Steward Roles to Evolving Data Ecosystems**
  Keep pace with cloud migrations, data mesh, and federated architectures.

  – Redefine stewardship for **cloud-native, decentralized** data environments like **data mesh and lakehouse** architectures.

  – Empower stewards to support **real-time governance** across **hybrid and federated** systems.

  – Align steward responsibilities with **modern pipelines, APIs**, and **platform-based** data strategies.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Aligning Stewardship with Future Governance Needs

- **Connect Stewardship to Measurable Business Outcomes**
  Align actions with data quality, compliance, and operational efficiency.

  - Tie stewardship impact to **key metrics** like **data quality scores**, **regulatory compliance**, and **decision accuracy**.

  - Showcase how stewards reduce **operational inefficiencies** by improving **data accessibility and usability**.

  - Link stewardship activities to **business KPIs** to justify investment and drive **executive engagement**.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Aligning Stewardship with Future Governance Needs

- **Champion a Culture of Shared Accountability**
  Prepare stewards to lead as governance becomes everyone's responsibility.

  - Promote **collective responsibility** by embedding stewardship principles into **daily roles and decision-making**.

  - Empower stewards to **model accountability**, fostering a culture where **data care is everyone's job**.

  - Shift governance from a **central function** to a **shared mission** with **visible leadership support**.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Case Studies of Forward-Thinking Stewardship Programs

- A Global Insurance Leader

- A Major U.S. Federal Agency

- A Multinational Manufacturing Firm

- A Fortune 100 Retailer

- A Top Healthcare Network

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Case Studies of Forward-Thinking Stewardship Programs

- **A Global Insurance Leader**
  Embedded stewardship roles into underwriting workflows, reducing policy data errors by ~35%.

  - A **global insurance leader** recognized that poor policy data quality was driving unnecessary rework, compliance risk, and customer dissatisfaction. Instead of creating separate governance processes, they chose to **embed stewardship directly** into their existing underwriting workflows. Business-aligned data stewards were recognized for specific lines of business, empowered to define critical data elements, resolve issues in real time, and work closely with IT to drive remediation.

  - The result was a **35% reduction in data errors**, faster turnaround on quotes and renewals, and a notable improvement in customer trust. More importantly, the success shifted internal perceptions of stewardship from "governance overhead" to a **core catalyst of operational performance**. By meeting people where they work, the organization created a **scalable model for stewardship** that continues to evolve with the business.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Case Studies of Forward-Thinking Stewardship Programs

- **A Major U.S. Federal Agency**
  Formalized stewardship through Non-Invasive Data Governance, improving compliance and metadata quality across departments.

  - A **major U.S. federal agency** faced persistent challenges around inconsistent data ownership (sic), unclear accountability, and fragmented compliance reporting. Rather than impose a top-down mandate, the agency adopted the **Non-Invasive Data Governance (NIDG)** approach to formalize stewardship roles based on how staff already interacted with data. This allowed them to **recognize responsibility without disruption**, leveraging existing relationships and workflows across departments.

  - The result was a measurable improvement in **metadata quality**, more consistent data definitions, and a higher level of **regulatory compliance**. By focusing on awareness, communication, and role-based engagement, the agency built a sustainable stewardship model that **empowered staff** and established a new baseline of trust in its data assets—without heavy bureaucracy or resistance.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Case Studies of Forward-Thinking Stewardship Programs

- **A Multinational Manufacturing Firm**
  Used domain-specific stewards to streamline engineering and supply chain data, boosting efficiency and AI-readiness.

  - A **multinational manufacturing firm** recognized that inconsistent engineering and supply chain data was delaying decisions and complicating automation efforts. To address this, the organization recognized **domain-specific stewards** embedded directly within engineering, procurement, and logistics teams. These stewards were tasked with clarifying definitions, aligning formats, and resolving discrepancies at the source—where the data was created and used.

  - By formalizing stewardship in the context of real business processes, the company achieved faster data handoffs, reduced rework, and laid a strong foundation for **AI-readiness**. The initiative not only **streamlined operations** across global teams, but also made it easier to feed clean, trusted data into **predictive analytics and automation tools**, accelerating innovation across the enterprise.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Case Studies of Forward-Thinking Stewardship Programs

- **A Fortune 100 Retailer**
  Enabled product data stewards to align definitions across channels, accelerating digital shelf updates and inventory decisions.

  - A **Fortune 100 retailer** faced persistent challenges with inconsistent product data across its in-store, online, and mobile sales channels. This misalignment caused delays in **digital shelf updates**, pricing inaccuracies, and poor customer experiences. By empowering **product data stewards** to align definitions, attributes, and standards across business units, the retailer was able to create a single, trusted source for product information.

  - This unified stewardship approach dramatically **accelerated inventory decisions**, streamlined product launches, and improved data quality across the board. As a result, teams could react faster to market trends, update product listings in near real time, and ensure that customers received accurate and consistent information—no matter where they shopped.

The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Case Studies of Forward-Thinking Stewardship Programs

- **A Top Healthcare Network**
  Connected stewardship to clinical data governance, improving patient outcome analytics and regulatory reporting.

  – A **Top healthcare network** recognized the critical need to improve trust in its **clinical data** to support advanced analytics and meet increasing regulatory demands. Historically, siloed departments and inconsistent definitions made it difficult to extract reliable insights from patient records and care processes. By embedding **data stewards** into clinical teams and aligning stewardship efforts with formal **data governance**, the organization built a bridge between frontline healthcare professionals and data management experts.

  – This integrated stewardship model led to dramatic improvements in **patient outcome analytics**, enabling faster identification of care gaps, quality trends, and population health risks. It also enhanced **regulatory reporting**, ensuring accuracy, timeliness, and defensibility of submissions. Most importantly, connecting stewardship directly to clinical priorities fostered a culture of **shared accountability**, where better data was directly tied to better care.

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The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations
Summary

- In this webinar, I talked about …

  - Emerging Trends in Data Stewardship

  - Innovative Tools for Empowering Data Stewards

  - Best Practices for Modern Data Stewardship

  - Aligning Stewardship with Future Governance Needs

  - Case Studies of Forward-Thinking Stewardship Programs

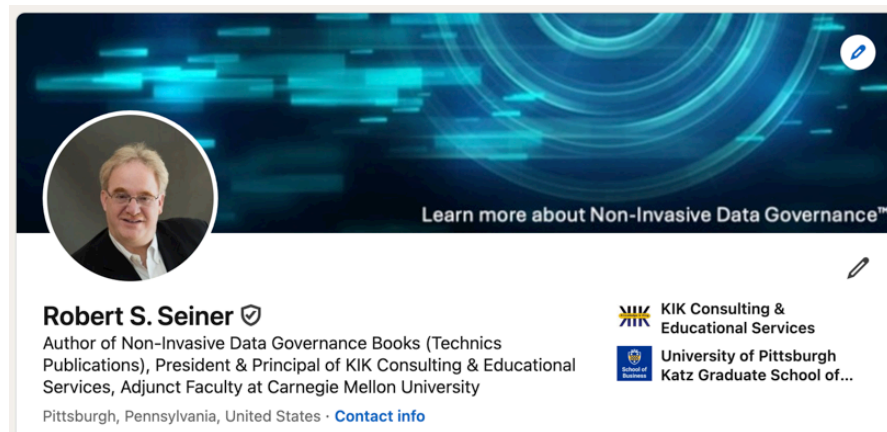# The Future of Data Stewardship – Trends and Innovations

Q & A - Contact Information

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