How CDAOs Drive Better Outcomes: Focus on Value, Talent and Culture
Turn Gartner Survey Insights Into Value-Driving Action

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How CDAOs Grow Their Influence and Impact

Gartner surveyed 496 data and analytics (D&A) leaders in our seventh such annual survey, and the findings offer valuable lessons for anyone who is accountable for creating value from their organization’s D&A assets and ecosystem.

Chief Data and Analytics Officers (CDAOs) can see from the survey results where to focus their time and attention to generate outsized impact. Failing to prioritize effectively almost certainly guarantees poor team and organizational performance.

The survey surfaced a select group of high performers (35%) that consistently reported better-than-average results for their teams and organizations. In analyzing their responses, we see that relationships between CDAOs and multiple business stakeholders, especially at the executive level will be critical — as is the need to demonstrate measurable value outcomes for those stakeholders.

These trends may not be new, but what is changing is our collective ability to use D&A in increasingly sophisticated ways to inform our decisions about how we’re going to get to those outcomes.

High-performing CDAOs will promote data sharing and break down data silos, translating newly accessible, high-quality data into business results and monetize data or use it for product and service innovation.

They will also define the value proposition of D&A — and therefore its outcomes — in terms of the people who consume it: people as employees, customers, citizens and decision makers.

Gartner predicts that by 2023... ...the majority of successful CDAOs will have business rather than IT backgrounds as boards continue to focus more on digital value.
Focus of High-Performing CDAOs

High-performing CDAOs are much more likely to...

- Attract and retain top talent
- Translate customer or business needs into high-value products or services

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...do these things at an organizational level:

- Monetize data assets or create data products
- Provide value to the organization

...and do these things at a team level:

Low-performing CDAOs are much less likely to...

- Promote data sharing or increase access to the right data aligned to the business case
- Be resilient and adapt quickly to changing business conditions

- Develop innovative products or services
- Show demonstrable, verifiable value to D&A stakeholders
Initiatives to Drive More Business Benefits

What the data shows
To contribute business value more effectively, high-performing D&A leaders do the following:
• Meet objectives on ROI from D&A investment
• Meet objectives on revenue generation or contribution
• Undertake projects with the CEO
• Lead or be fully involved in overall business strategy

Takeaways for CDAOs
• Work closely with business stakeholders to enable them to meet their desired business outcomes.
• Value is best defined as a set of measurable outcomes optimized between competing interests.
• It’s especially important given that resources are always finite: time, money, materials, capacity and authority to make decisions.

Positive effects of key actions
The D&A team leader’s actions (left) increase the likelihood of consistently producing clear business value for the organization.
Initiatives to Show Stakeholders Verifiable Value

What the data shows
To increase the D&A team’s effectiveness at demonstrating verifiable value to D&A stakeholders, high-performing D&A leaders do the following:

• Meet objectives on revenue generation or contribution
• Prioritize D&A initiatives that improve customer relations and/or service
• Meet objectives on ROI from D&A investment
• Meet objectives on improving decision-making capability

Takeaways for CDAOs

• Inject D&A into value creation and decision-making processes.
• Expand the value propositions delivered to employees, customers, citizens and decision makers.

Positive effects of key actions
The D&A team leader’s actions (left) increase the likelihood of a successful outcome.

1.6x-2.7x

Base: All respondents, excluding unsure, n = 492.
Source: Gartner
Initiatives to Build a Data Literate Organization

What the data shows
To increase the D&A team’s effectiveness at fostering data literacy, data analytics and skills training, high-performing D&A leaders do the following:

- Invest in HR analytics initiatives
- Invest much more in resources and talent
- Commit to people development

Takeaways for CDAOs
- Avoid the talent shortages, culture challenges and lack of resources/funding that most often hinder success.
- Match investment to your commitment to improvement.

Positive effects of key actions
The D&A team leader’s actions (left) increase the likelihood of a successful outcome.

Base: All respondents, excluding unsure, n = 493.
Source: Gartner
Initiatives to Influence Culture Change

What the data shows
To increase the D&A team’s effectiveness in stakeholder engagement that influences culture change, high-performing D&A leaders do the following:

• Focus on enabling business stakeholders to become **self-sufficient**
• Commit to delegating that **allows autonomy**
• Go above and beyond to **engage with stakeholders and team members**

Takeaways for CDAOs

• Educate and lead business stakeholders to recognize that they must be fully engaged in D&A programs to capture real benefits.
• Positive stakeholder relationships, founded on good communication and data literacy, are more important than any specific reporting line.
• Without domain engagement and expertise, D&A becomes just another IT function that puts enablers in place but fails to link them to better business outcomes.

Positive effects of key actions
The D&A team leader’s actions (left) increase the likelihood of a successful outcome.

Base: All respondents, excluding unsure, n = 494.
Source: Gartner
Turn Survey Insights Into Action for CDAOs

High performers are more than twice as likely to have active projects with the CEO, and they engage about value delivery rather than enablement.

Promote value versus enablement with key stakeholders across multiple levels, with projects to engage the highest-level executives focused on value creation.

Driving business outcomes and supporting business decisions demand a full spectrum of analytic capabilities from business intelligence and analytics, extending through more advanced predictive and prescriptive approaches.

Engage a full spectrum of analytics capabilities to understand what has happened and why but also to determine next steps to drive specific action. Prioritize business enablement instead of tactical activities.

Talent shortages, cultural aversion to change and lack of training are the prevailing and recurring roadblocks to the success of D&A programs.

Rethink role descriptions amid ongoing and worsening talent shortages. Compensate with internal recruitment, upskilling and nontraditional hiring strategies.

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About the Gartner CDO Survey

The Gartner Chief Data Officer Agenda Survey for 2022 was conducted online from September through November 2021 among 496 respondents from across the world. Respondents included CDOs, CDAOs and their equivalents. They represented 17 named industry segments in companies ranging from less than $10 million to more than $10 billion, with 58% having revenue of $1 billion or more.

Respondents:

- 496 CDOs across the globe
- $1 billion in revenue
- 17 Industries
- 7th year of conducting the CDO Survey

Did you know that Gartner has enhanced insights and resources for Chief Data and Analytics Officers?

Lead your function to success with Gartner for CDAOs designed to empower you and your team to build and lead a D&A organization that is core to the business strategy and delivers better outcomes.

Contact us to find out how you can become a client.
Explore these additional complimentary resources and tools for Chief Data and Analytics Officers.

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  Elevate data and analytics strategies to advance a new vision of business problem solving.
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  Explore this Gartner survey of executive decision makers with broader research in behavioral psychology to examine how decisions are made within organizations.
  - [Watch Webinar](#)

- **eBook**
  2022 Leadership Vision for Data and Analytics Leaders
  Shift the conversation away from tools and technology and toward decision making as a business competency.
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- **Webinar**
  The Gartner Chief Data Officer Survey Results 2022: Drive Business Impact
  Explore successful behaviors and actions for top performers and actionable practices for D&A leaders.
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