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From AI Ambition to Real Business Impact

Why Data Management Decides Your AI Success

Andreas Karlgren | Stretch Evolve

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Agenda

01 The AI Reality Check
5 minutes

02 Why AI Initiatives Stall
5 minutes

03 The Data Foundation Framework
5 minutes

04 Data Foundation — The Blueprint
5 minutes

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The AI Reality Check

The ambition is clear.

Every organization has an AI strategy. Boards discuss it. Leaders mandate it. Budgets are allocated.

But here is the reality:

Most AI initiatives start successfully as pilots — but very few scale into real operational impact.

The question is not whether AI works.

The question is why so many organizations fail to reach production scale.

AI is not primarily
a technology challenge —
it is a data challenge.

AI Business Impact

Data Foundation x AI Capability

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Why AI Initiatives Stall

5 root causes found across SAP enterprises:

Fragmented data landscape

Data distributed across ERP, CRM, analytics platforms and cloud services without unified architecture.

Unclear data ownership

No defined accountability for key data domains — customer, product, supplier.

Poor data quality

Duplicates, missing attributes, inconsistent structures amplified by AI models.

Integration complexity

Moving and synchronizing data reliably across SAP ECC, S/4, BW, Data Lake and cloud platforms.

Missing governance & standards

No shared definitions, lifecycle management or stewardship for enterprise data.

The AI models work — but the data foundation is not ready to support them.

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The Core Insight

Organizations invest heavily in AI capability — but the limiting factor is always the data foundation beneath it.

AI Business Impact = Data Foundation × AI Capability

AI capability alone will never produce scalable value without a mature data foundation.

This means: architecture must come before tools. Governance before models. Data quality before analytics.

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The Enterprise Data Reality

The typical SAP enterprise landscape:

SAP S/4HANA / ECC — Core ERP

CRM / CX / SuccessFactors — Domain apps

BW / Analytics Cloud — Reporting layer

Data Lake / Snowflake / Azure — Data platform

AI / ML Platforms — Capability layer

Each platform was added to solve a local problem.

Together they created:

–Duplicated data pipelines
–Inconsistent master data definitions
–Competing system of record
–Rising integration complexity
–Unclear data ownership per domain

This is data spaghetti.

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Cornerstones of an AI-Ready Data Foundation

AI capabilities depend on the maturity of the layers beneath. You cannot skip layers.

■ **Capabilities**	AI | Machine Learning | Analytics | Data Warehouse | Data Lake
■ **Architecture**	Data Model | Master Data | Integration | Platform Blueprint
■ **Management**	Data Quality | Data Security | Lifecycle Management | Governance

Most organizations try to start with AI capabilities before the foundation layers are mature. That is why they fail.

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Data Strategy — Aligning Ambition with Reality

The Problem

Organizations say: "We want to be AI-driven."
But nobody owns the data. Initiatives multiply without coordination. AI pilots never scale — they become the "pilot trap."

What Data Strategy Provides

- Clear business value cases for AI & data investments
- Defined data ownership model across domains
- Governance principles and accountability structure
- Architecture direction and platform priorities

Cornerstone Impact

Touches all layers — with primary focus on Governance & Capability prioritization.

Key Question

"Where should data and AI create business value first?"

AI Impact

Ensures AI initiatives are aligned with business value and that clear accountability exists for the data fueling them.

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Data Architecture — Connecting the Landscape

The Problem

ERP + BW + Data Lake + Cloud analytics + AI tools.
Each team builds their own data pipelines. Duplication explodes. Nobody knows which system is the authoritative source. The result is “data spaghetti.”

What Data Architecture Provides

- Reference architecture defining system roles & platform responsibilities
- Canonical data domains with clear boundaries
- Integration patterns that reduce complexity
- Data flow design enabling reliable AI pipelines

Cornerstone Impact

Primarily impacts Data Model, Master Data, Integration and Data Warehouse / Lake layers.

The Core Message

Architecture transforms complexity into structure.

AI Impact

Reduces landscape complexity so AI can access data reliably across the entire system — not just in isolated silos.

SAP Systems:
LeanIX, Signavio (and your hyperscaler)

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Data Management — Creating Trusted Data

The Problem

An AI model is only as good as its training data.
If that data contains duplicates, missing attributes, or inconsistent structures — the AI will amplify these errors and produce unreliable predictions.

What Data Management Provides

- Data Governance — ownership, policies, accountability
- Data Quality controls and stewardship roles
- Data Security and compliance frameworks
- Lifecycle management — from creation to archival

Cornerstone Impact

Maps directly to the entire Management layer: Data Quality, Security, Lifecycle and Governance.

Key Insight

Without operational data management, architecture remains theoretical.

AI Impact

Establishes the discipline needed to ensure AI systems process trustworthy, secure and governed information at scale.

SAP Systems:
ILM, MDG, Data Steward, Data Intelligence, GRC, IAS, IAG

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Data Modeling — A Shared Business Language

The Problem

What is a "Customer"?

In ERP it is a billing account. In CRM it is a contact. In marketing it is a lead. These conflicting definitions cause AI models to become inconsistent and untrustworthy.

What Data Modeling Provides

- Canonical data models with enterprise-wide definitions
- Semantic consistency across ERP, CRM and analytics
- Business glossary aligned to technical data structures
- AI-ready datasets with consistent meaning and context

Cornerstone Impact

Focuses on Data Model and Master Data layers — the semantic foundation for all analytics and AI.

The Key Insight

AI depends on consistent meaning — not just consistent data.

AI Impact

Provides semantic consistency so AI systems and human leaders are speaking the same business language across the enterprise.

SAP Systems:
Business Data Cloud, Datasphere, BW, Analytics Cloud, HANA DB & Integration Platform

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The Journey to AI Readiness

AI maturity follows data maturity. This is a journey — not a one-time project.

Stage 1

Data Awareness

Fragmented landscape. Local analytics and isolated AI pilots. No shared ownership.

Stage 2

Architecture & Governance

Data ownership defined. Architecture principles established. Integration patterns documented.

Stage 3

Operational Management

Data quality controls operational. Stewardship roles active. Security and lifecycle managed.

Stage 4

AI at Scale

Predictive analytics, AI copilots and enterprise-wide automation running reliably.

The organizations that reach Stage 4 are those that invested in data discipline — not just AI platforms.

What Determines AI Success?

AI does not fail because of AI. It fails because of data.

Organizations that treat data as essential infrastructure — not a side effect of technology — will win the AI era.

- ✓ Data ownership
- ✓ Architecture
- ✓ Governance
- ✓ Data quality
- ✓ Data modeling
- ✓ Trusted data

Questions?

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Unlock the AI Potential in Your SAP Landscape

Our SAP AI Discovery Workshop is designed to bridge the gap between vision and execution. The agenda and outcomes are tailored to your goals, priorities, and technical maturity.

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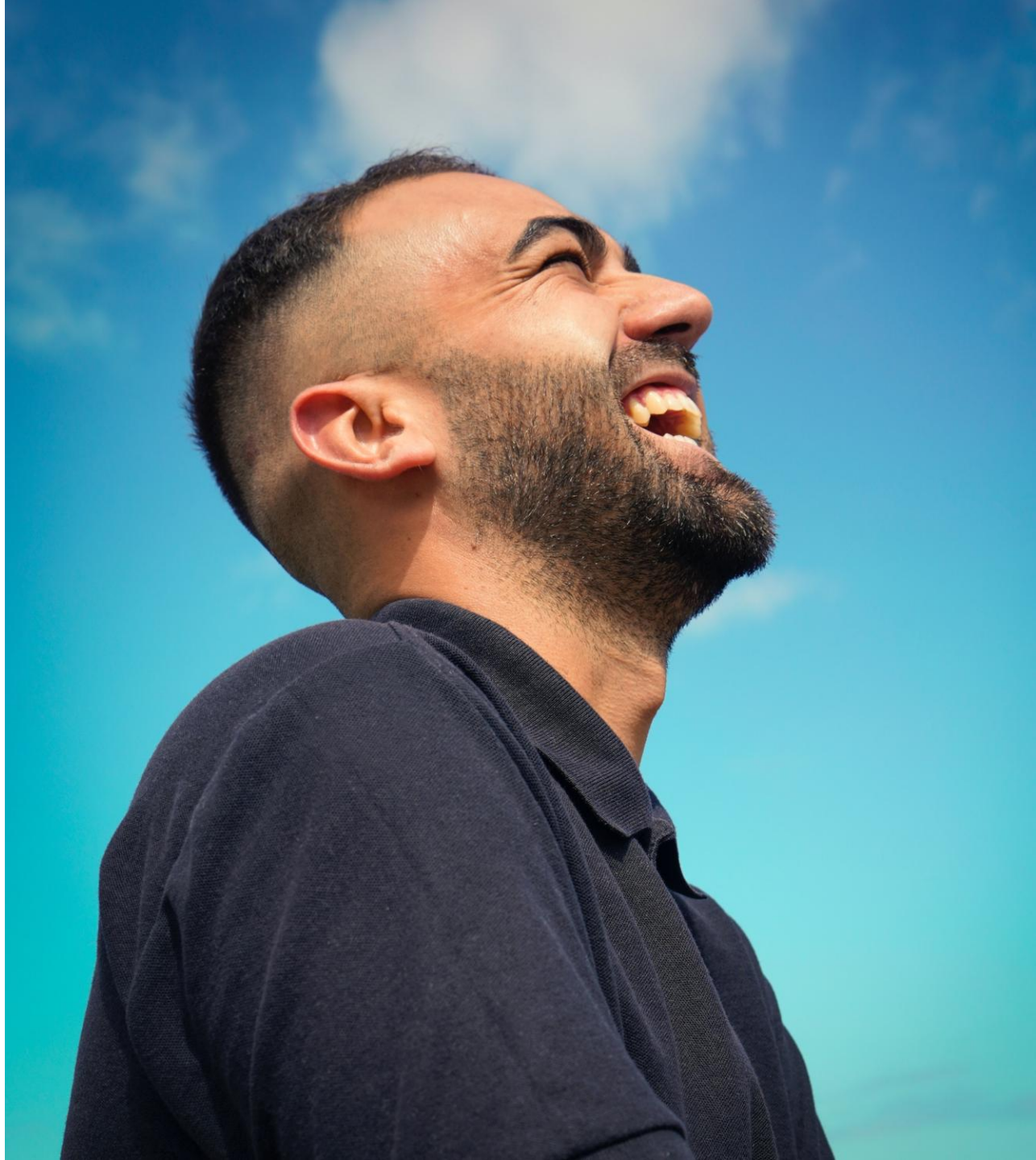

Contact Information

Andreas Karlgren – andreas.Karlgren@stretch.se - +46 70 555 66 84 Stretch Evolve