

The AI Reality Check



Five Hero Moves

- 1 Pick one AI use case on your roadmap**
Not the strategy. One use case.
- 2 Run the Heatmap on its primary data sources**
Completeness · Consistency · Freshness · Ownership · Fidelity
- 3 Answer all 10 checklist questions before anyone writes a prompt**
If you can't answer them, that's your first deliverable.
- 4 Name a data owner for each domain involved**
A person. Not a team. Not a ticket. A name.
- 5 Share what you find — the conversation is the deliverable**
You don't have to fix it all. You have to surface it.

The AI Readiness Heatmap: Grade each system in your stack before the first prompt is written.

System / Source	Complete?	Consistent?	Fresh?	Owner?	Integration Fidelity
CRM (Salesforce)					
ERP / Finance					
Marketing Automation Platform					
Data Platform					

● = Strong (AI-ready)

● = Needs Attention

● = High Risk (fix before pilot)

The "POC → Disaster" Checklist: 10 questions to ask before any AI pilot begins.

1. Where does this data actually come from — and when was it last validated?
2. Who owns this data domain, and do they know AI is consuming it?
3. What happens to the AI output if this field is null 30% of the time?
4. Does "Closed Won" mean the same thing in every system feeding this model?
5. Can I trace a single record from source to AI output right now?

6. What's the deduplication strategy — and when did it last run?
7. Are there any active data migrations or schema changes in progress?
8. What's the freshness SLA on the integration feeding this use case?
9. What does "failure" look like — and who gets alerted?
10. Would we be comfortable if an executive saw this AI output tomorrow?

The Data Social Contract Framework: Not a governance doc. An agreement with consequences.



Ownership

Who created this field or record?

Every data domain needs a named human who is the owner.



Definition

What does this field actually mean?

Written down. Agreed upon. The same answer in every system.



Accountability

Who is responsible when it breaks?

"The integration team" is not an answer. A name is an answer.