AI'S CHANGE OF REGIME

Abstract

At an American Fortune 500 financial services company, AI's rapid evolution had introduced new risks for its data engineering workflows. Realizing the need to close the gaps, Jake Wallis, Senior Manager for Data Engineering, brought in Infosys BPM and Infosys Responsible AI Office as an advisory partner for AI governance best practices. This case study details how the organization resultantly not only gained a new, agile, and future-ready AI governance framework but also positioned itself as a leader in responsible AI practices.

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When the old guard just cannot cope

As Senior Manager for Data Engineering at an American Fortune 500 financial services company, Jake Wallis is responsible for designing and maintaining its data platforms. For long, Jake's work had been relatively st`ress-free. The organization had a strong governance foundation with well-defined policies and controls for data management, risk oversight, and compliance which had worked effectively for traditional systems.

However, the rapid evolution of AI had introduced new dimensions of complexity that the organization's existing frameworks could not fully address. Jake realized that AI's emerging risks — algorithmic bias, model drift, explainability, and security vulnerabilities — would require governance approaches beyond conventional standards. He also recognized the challenges involved. Integrating AI governance with his existing, modern data engineering workflows, while maintaining consistency across the company's diverse platforms and not putting the brakes on AI-driven innovation, would require herculean efforts.

Jake decided to strengthen the organization's AI-specific governance using support from an external service provider well-versed with both technological advancements as well as evolving AI-related regulations. In due course, after a rigorous RFP process, he engaged Infosys BPM as a partner for his strategic initiative. He was soon in discussions with Infosys BPM's lead for the project, Sushila Tejwani, to get her and her team quickly on board with his mission.

In his briefings to the team, Jake emphasized that while he was committed to strengthening AI governance, their recommendations for governance enhancements would need to be practical, business-aligned, and minimally disruptive to ongoing operations without introducing unnecessary complexity. Data privacy and regulatory compliance would also need to factor as top priorities, given the sensitive nature of customers' financial data and the global regulatory landscape. Ultimately, they would need to focus on achieving a balance: reinforcing compliance and risk management while enabling agility and innovation for AI-driven transformation.
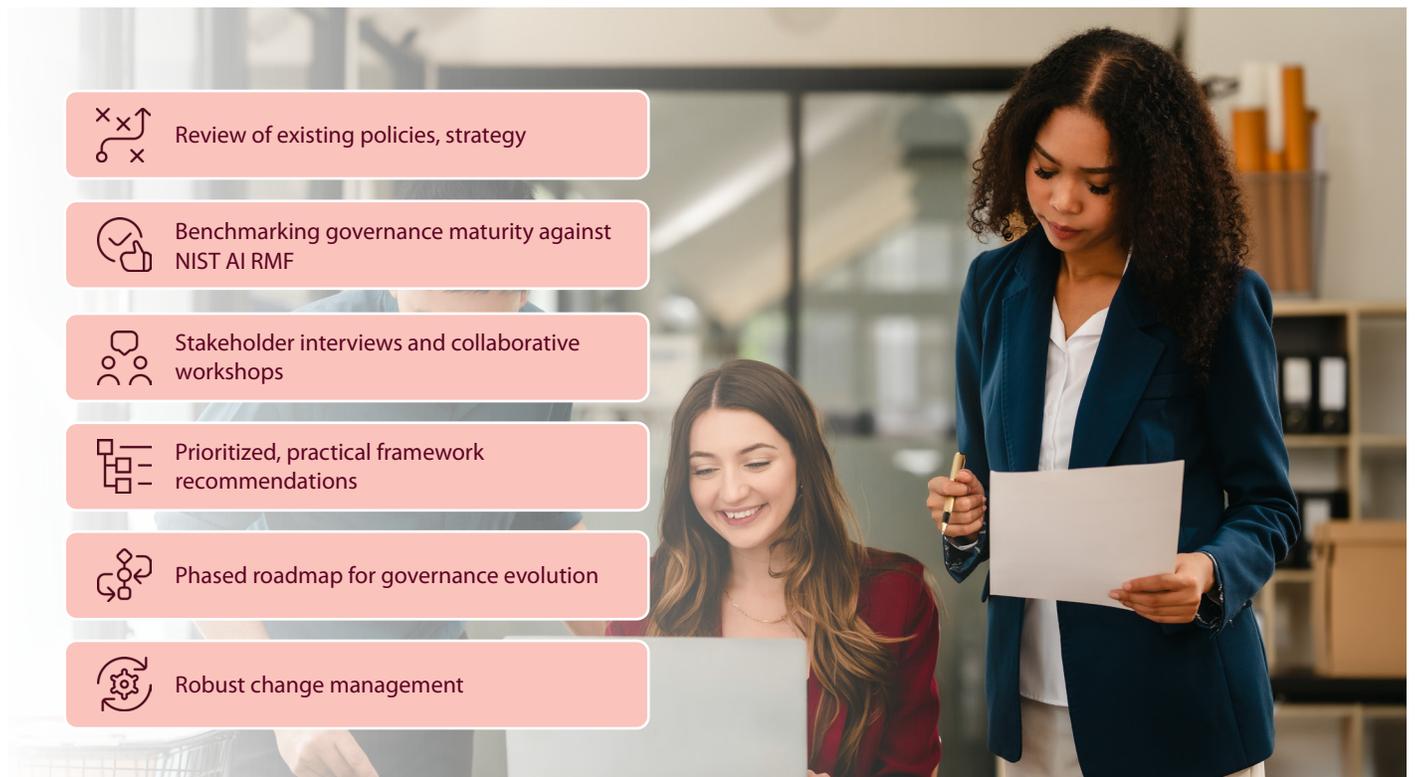
Blueprinting a change of regime

Initially, to ensure alignment with best practices and help identify improvement opportunities, Jake tasked Sushila with benchmarking his existing governance frameworks against globally recognized standards. With the help of their internal Responsible AI Office team, Sushila's team began with a comprehensive review of the organization's AI policies, strategy, and governance documentation.

Through in-depth assessments they established a baseline of current practices. Then, they evaluated the organization's AI governance maturity against 72 controls across the four core functions: Govern, Map, Measure, and Manage, ensuring alignment with global standards such as the NIST AI RMF (National Institute of Standards and Technology, Artificial Intelligence, Risk Management Framework). After reviewing their insights into the areas of governance that required enhancement to support AI-driven operations, Jake quickly evolved the relationship beyond a one-time assessment into a trusted advisory partnership.

Approach summary

- Review of existing policies, strategy
- Benchmarking governance maturity against NIST AI RMF
- Stakeholder interviews and collaborative workshops
- Prioritized, practical framework recommendations
- Phased roadmap for governance evolution
- Robust change management

Energized, the team conducted structured stakeholder interviews and collaborative workshops to validate the gaps they had identified in AI governance. They shared the outcomes from these sessions with Jake along with prioritized, practical recommendations tailored to the organization's business objectives, focusing on scalability and compliance readiness. Jake was happy to note that the team had also developed a phased roadmap for governance evolution, integrating risk management, transparency, and accountability into the AI and data engineering workflows.

After Jake had reviewed and approved the recommendations, the team moved on to implementing them. However, implementing enhanced AI governance within an established enterprise environment required careful planning to avoid disruption. One challenge was integrating the new controls into Jake's existing data engineering pipelines without disrupting operations or impacting operational efficiency. The team created a blueprint to do this and also introduced KPIs and dashboards to measure the governance effectiveness, enabling continuous improvement and real-time risk visibility. The evolving regulatory landscape added complexity, and the team dealt with this by designing a proactive regulatory readiness framework to anticipate evolving global regulations and minimize future audit risks.

As the project progressed through to completion, it had its fair share of roadblocks. Several stakeholders across the organization raised concerns on whether integrating the new controls in the data engineering workflows would slow innovation or impact delivery timelines. Additionally, they wanted assurance that the governance improvements would scale effectively across diverse AI environments and remain adaptable to future technological and regulatory changes. Achieving alignment of these stakeholders across multiple functions, including information security, data engineering, compliance, and business leadership, quality, was critical, as governance touched diverse areas of responsibility.

So, to build internal awareness, drive stakeholder consensus, and ensure smooth adoption of the governance enhancements, Sushila collaborated with Jake to conduct interactive workshops across the organization. These workshops helped them to strategically position governance as a business enabler, not a constraint. Sushila also built trust through detailing her phased implementation strategies and robust change management practices. Additionally, she ensured clear communication and documentation throughout the rolling out process.

A new framework takes the throne

Sushila's team's diligence and domain expertise soon gave the financial services enterprise its new AI governance controls seamlessly integrated into data engineering workflows, without impacting innovation or operational agility in any way.
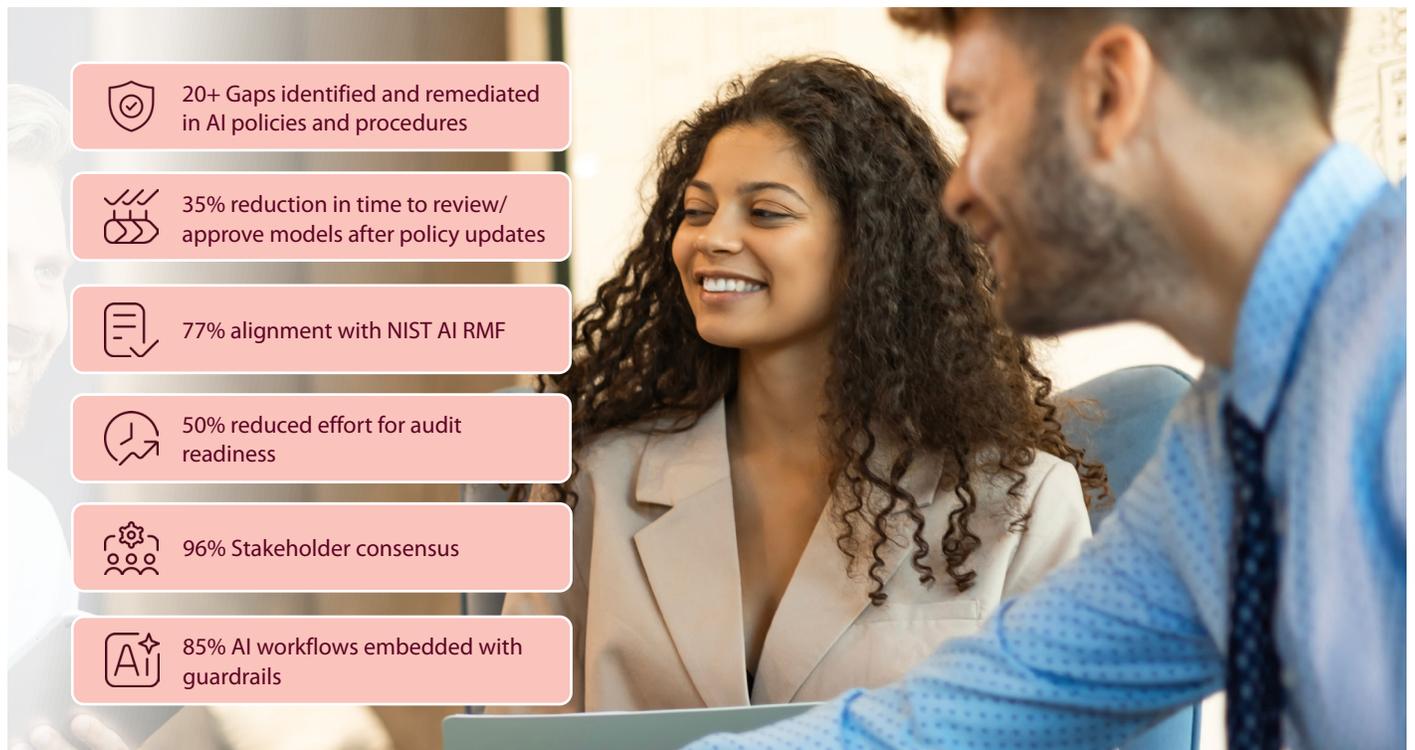
With the new governance framework introducing clear governance structures and monitoring mechanisms embedded into everyday operations, it fostered trust both among internal and external stakeholders. It also delivered streamlined processes, improved efficiency and transparency, and clarified accountability.

Jake could now rest easy knowing that he had robust operational guardrails to manage AI's risk and compliance requirements. With Sushila's strategic roadmap enabling continuous governance evolution and adaptability to regulatory changes, he also did not have to worry about the controls being agile and future ready. And so, with the now reduced need for manual oversight, and actionable dashboards enhancing decision-making and productivity, Jake and his data engineering teams could finally focus on innovation rather than firefighting compliance issues.

Key benefits

- 20+ Gaps identified and remediated in AI policies and procedures
- 35% reduction in time to review/ approve models after policy updates
- 77% alignment with NIST AI RMF
- 50% reduced effort for audit readiness
- 96% Stakeholder consensus
- 85% AI workflows embedded with guardrails

In the end, the outcomes of Jake's partnership with the Infosys Responsible AI Office and Infosys BPM team positioned the organization as a leader in responsible AI practices, reinforcing its credibility and compliance readiness. In due course, Jake too was recognized by his leadership for the strategic role he played in accelerating AI innovation across the enterprise.

Names have been altered to preserve the identities of the people involved.

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