Christmas Data Governance

To: The Board of Christmas Inc

From: Data Governance Lead

Subject: End of Year Summary

As it's getting close to Christmas, it's time for the annual summary newsletter from the Data Governance team, here at Christmas Inc.   As usual for us, it's been a busy year ensuring that the data we collect here is accurate, timely, understood, secured and available when needed, to support our organisation's mission statement of "Delivering sustainable joy".

We have focused on three primary initiatives this year.   These are Taxonomies, Data Literacy and Data Quality.   This report will review each in turn.

Taxonomies: We've been diligent in capturing, documenting, sharing, and using standard taxonomies at Christmas Inc this year.   These Taxonomies (or sometimes referred to as code-sets) can range from the very simple (refer to my article entitled "Children: Are they naughty or nice?" in the company journal) to the complex.   The most complex taxonomies in use at Christmas Inc are the Toy Taxonomy that classifies every known toy, past, present, and future, from every culture into a single integrated code-set, and the Geography Taxonomy that identifies every possible chimney location. Having consistency and structure in these two code-sets has revolutionised our record keeping process and lifted our Toy-to-Child success ratio by 5% over 1 year.

Data Literacy: The Data Governance team at Christmas Inc have been working hard all year to lift the general understanding of data and how to work with it (referred to as Data Literacy) with all the staff and management.   Whilst we've made good progress with the management, and the elves are showing great signs of improvement, we've really struggled to get the Reindeer to engage and understand the data they have available to them.   Particularly, Rudolph is going to be a problem into next year, as he only sees things in red.

Data Quality: Data Quality is paramount here at Christmas Inc to ensure that the correct children receive the correct gifts, and we avoid delivering the same present to the same child two years running.   It's so important to us here that we check everything twice.   This culture of data quality has served us well in the past, but its lacked focus.   We're over-investing in quality testing on processes that don't need it (such as how our reindeer fly or how the Santa letters arrive when there is no post office here) and as a result, are skimping on the more critical processes.   This year, the Data Quality team have worked on scientifically evaluating the value of data quality and have built dashboards that compare the effort invested versus the data quality uplift across all our processes so that we can target the team's efforts next year on the processes that will deliver the most benefit.

Well, that's a wrap for this year.   Whilst everyone else is going off on holidays we are going to be at our busiest, so I wanted to get this summary report in everyone's hands before the workload peaks.

Be safe out there whilst delivering sustainable joy to the world.

Best Regards,

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