

SummerSoC / 2025-06-17

Data Products and Data Contracts

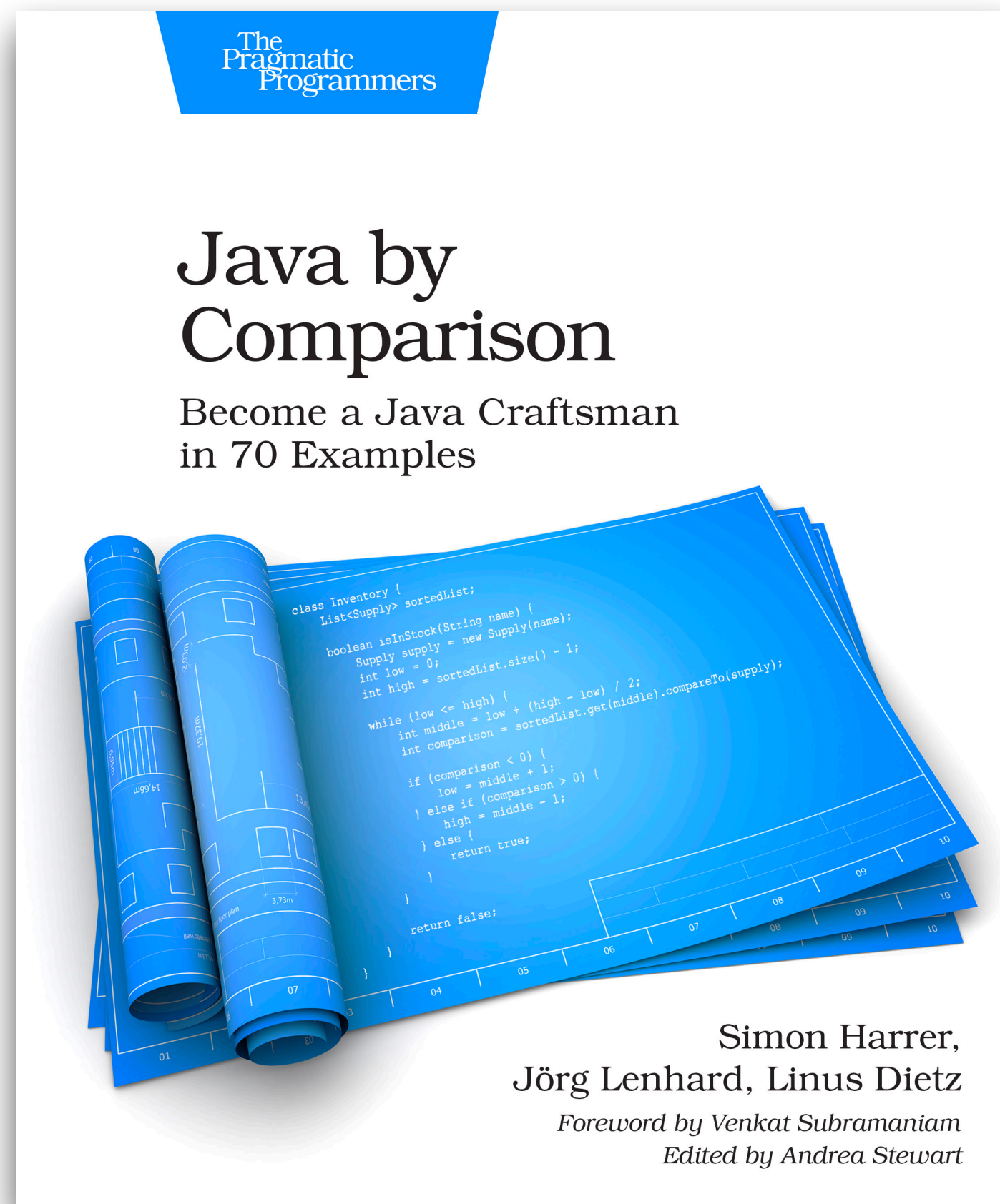
Open Standards & Implementations

Warning: There will be YAML!



DR. SIMON HARRER
/IN/SIMONHARRER

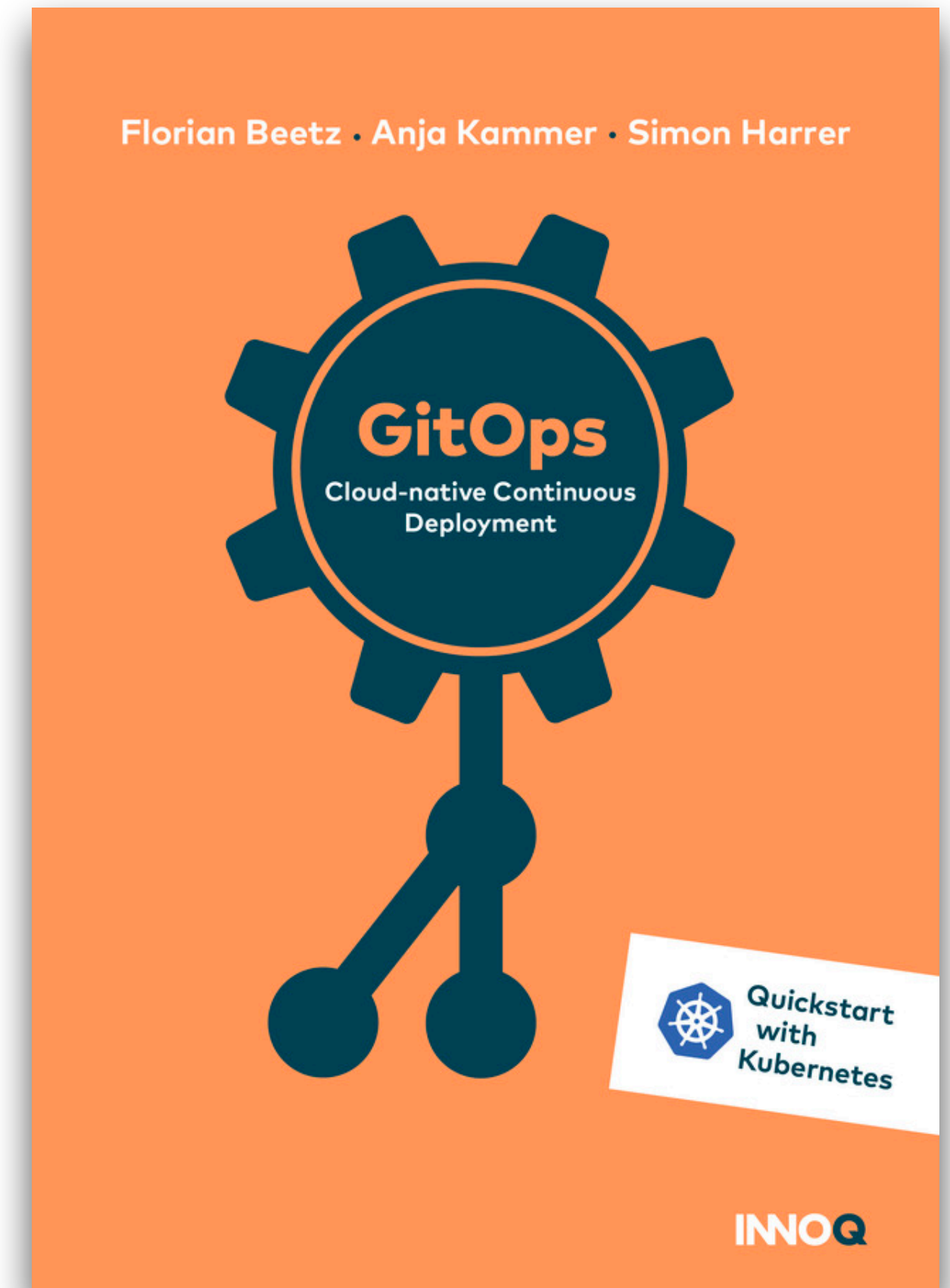
From Software Engineering ...



java.by-comparison.com



remotemobprogramming.org

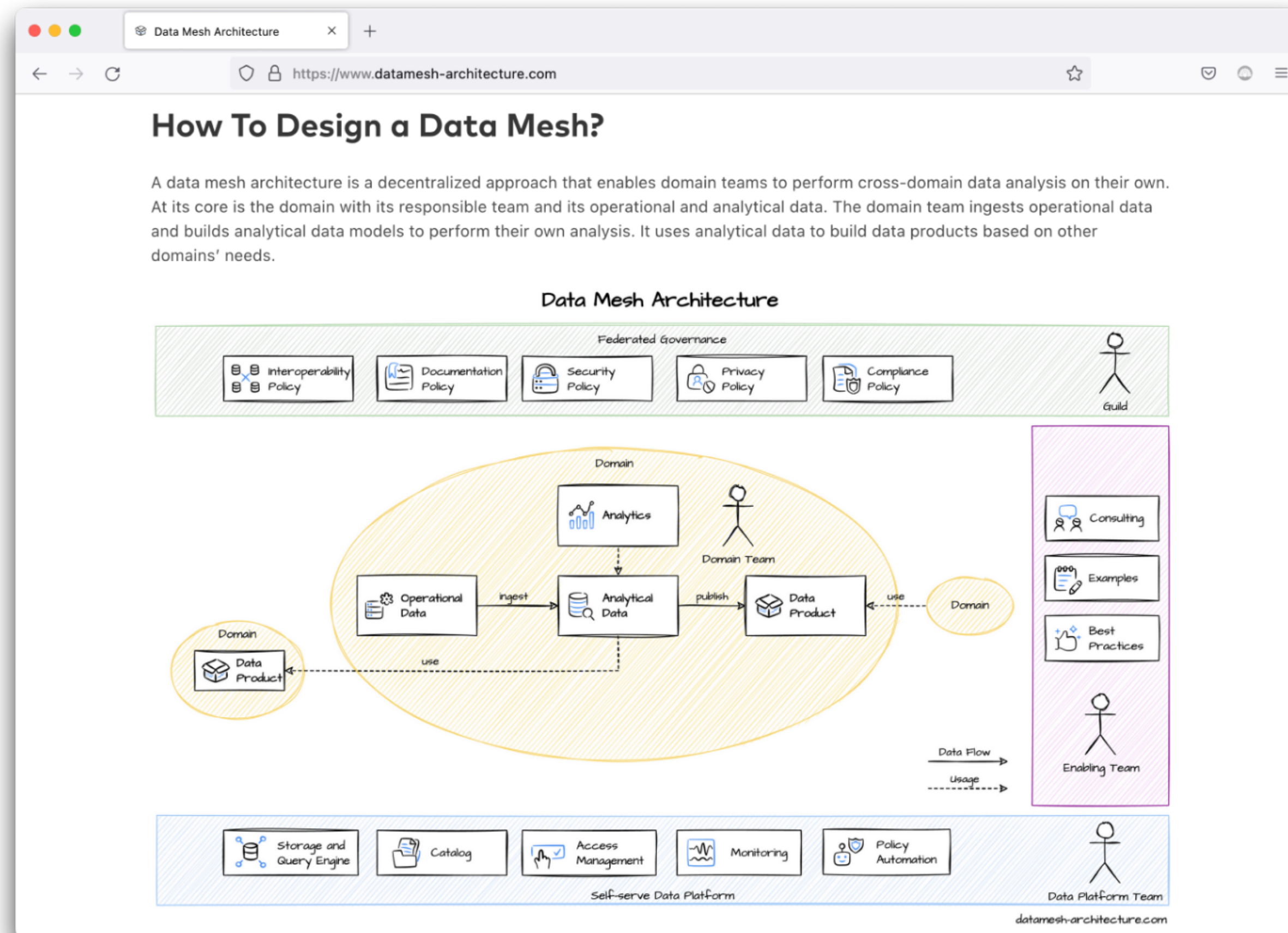


gitops.tech

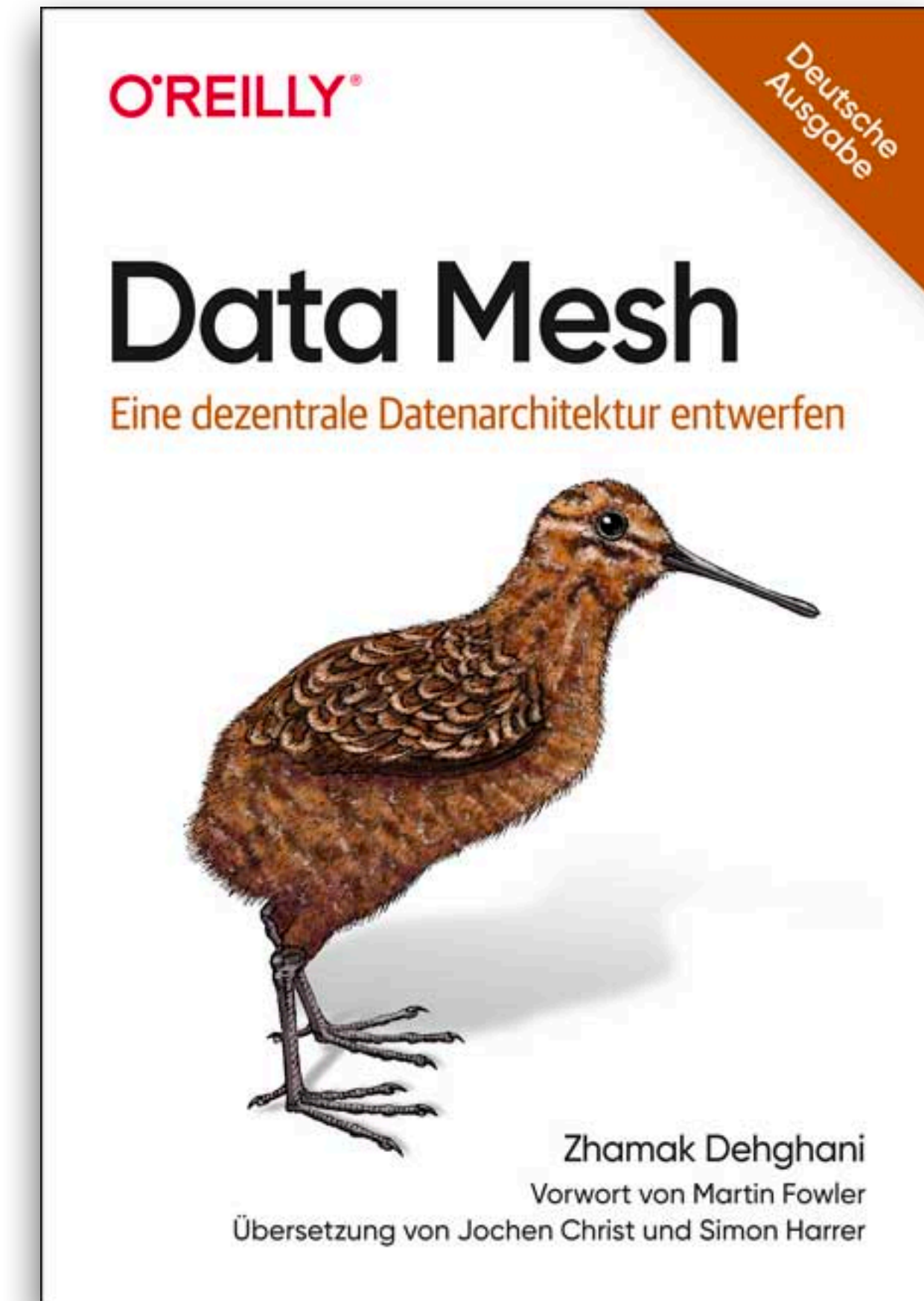


2021

... to Data Mesh ...

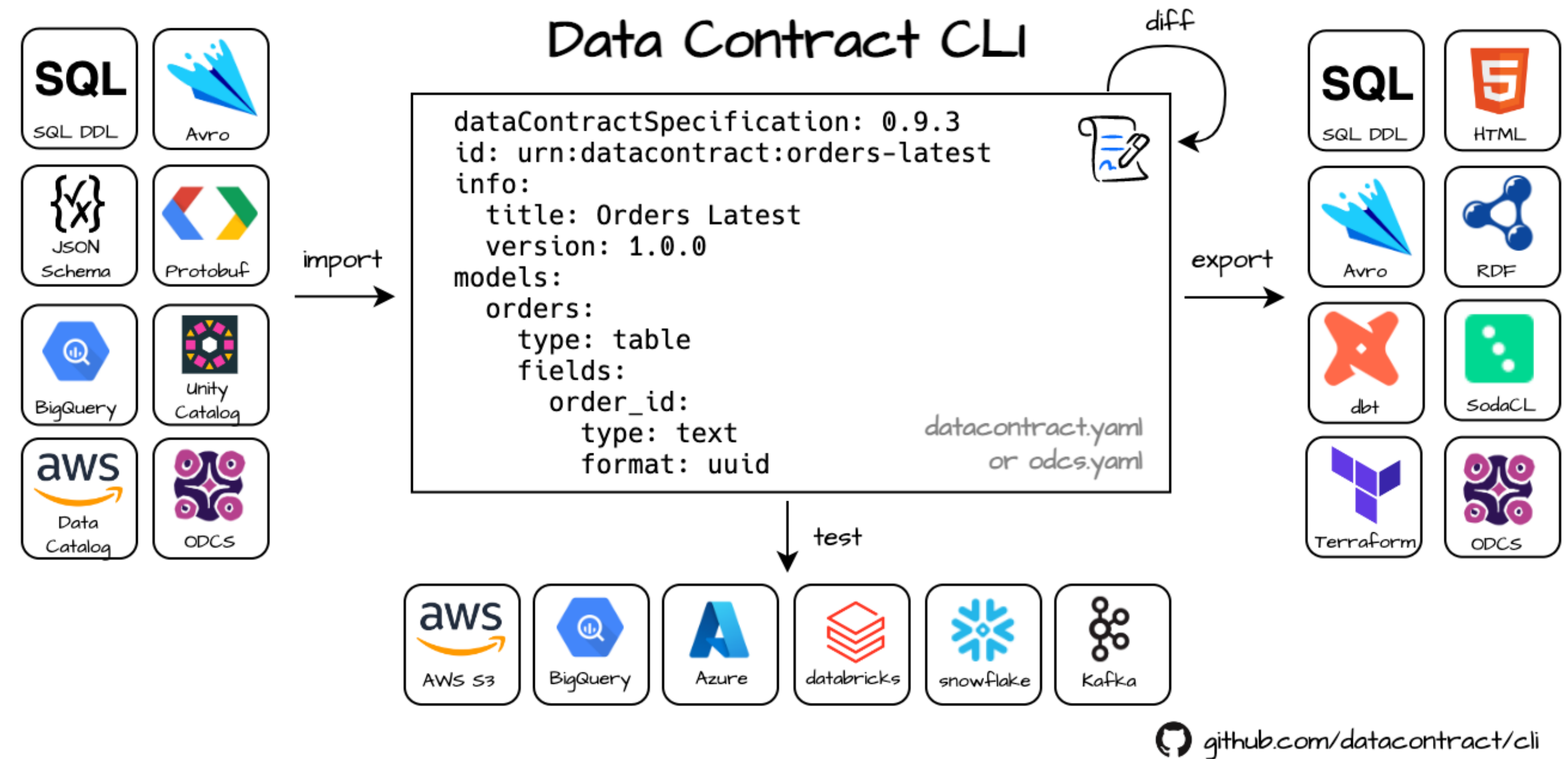
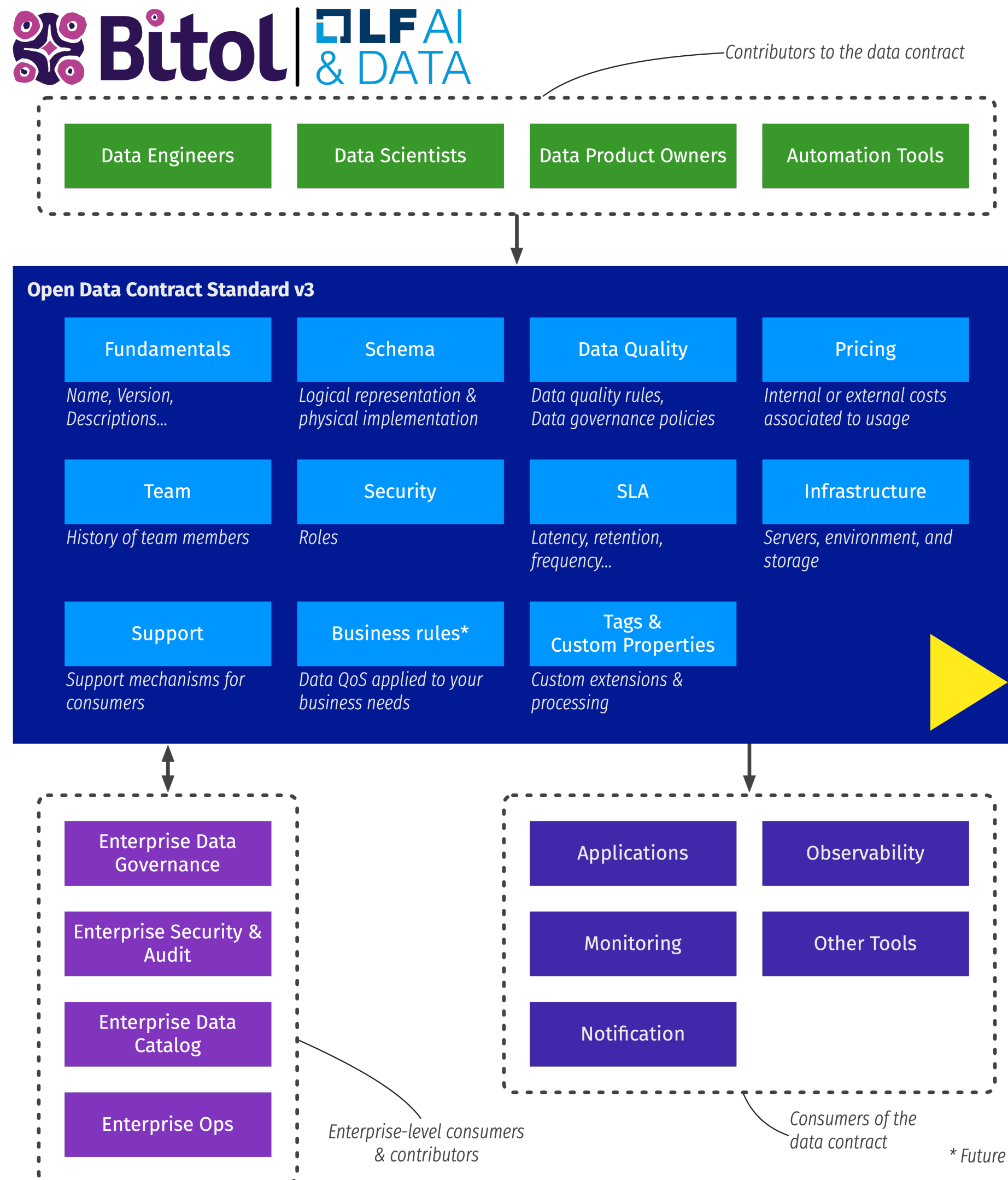


datamesh-architecture.com



oreilly.de/produkt/data-mesh

... to Open Standards and Tools



... to Open Standards and Tools



Data Engineers

Data Scientists

Open Data Contract Standard v3

Fundamentals

Name, Version, Descriptions...

Schema

Logical representation & physical implementation

Team

History of team members

Security

Roles

Support

Support mechanisms for consumers

Business rules*

Data QoS applied to your business needs

Enterprise Data Governance

Enterprise Security & Audit

Enterprise Data Catalog

Enterprise Ops

Enterprise-level consumers & contributors

Contributors to the data contract

SQL



Data Contract CLI

dataContractSpecification: 0.9.3
test

diff

export

datacontract.yaml
or odcv.yaml

SQL
SQL DDL

HTML

Avro

RDF

dbt

SodaCL

Terraform

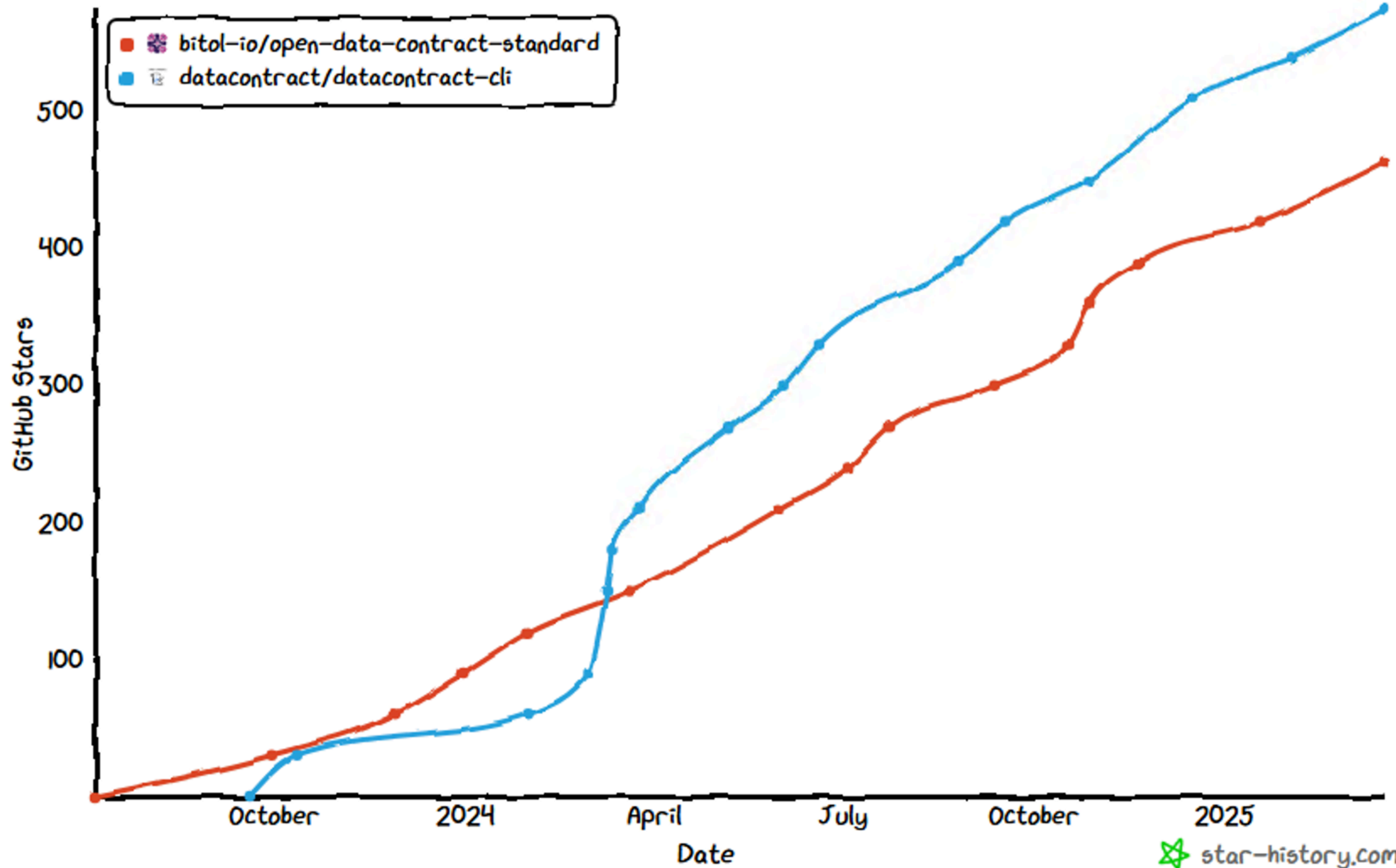
ODCS

Snowflake

Kafka

github.com/datacontract/cli

Star History



Consumers of the data contract

* Future

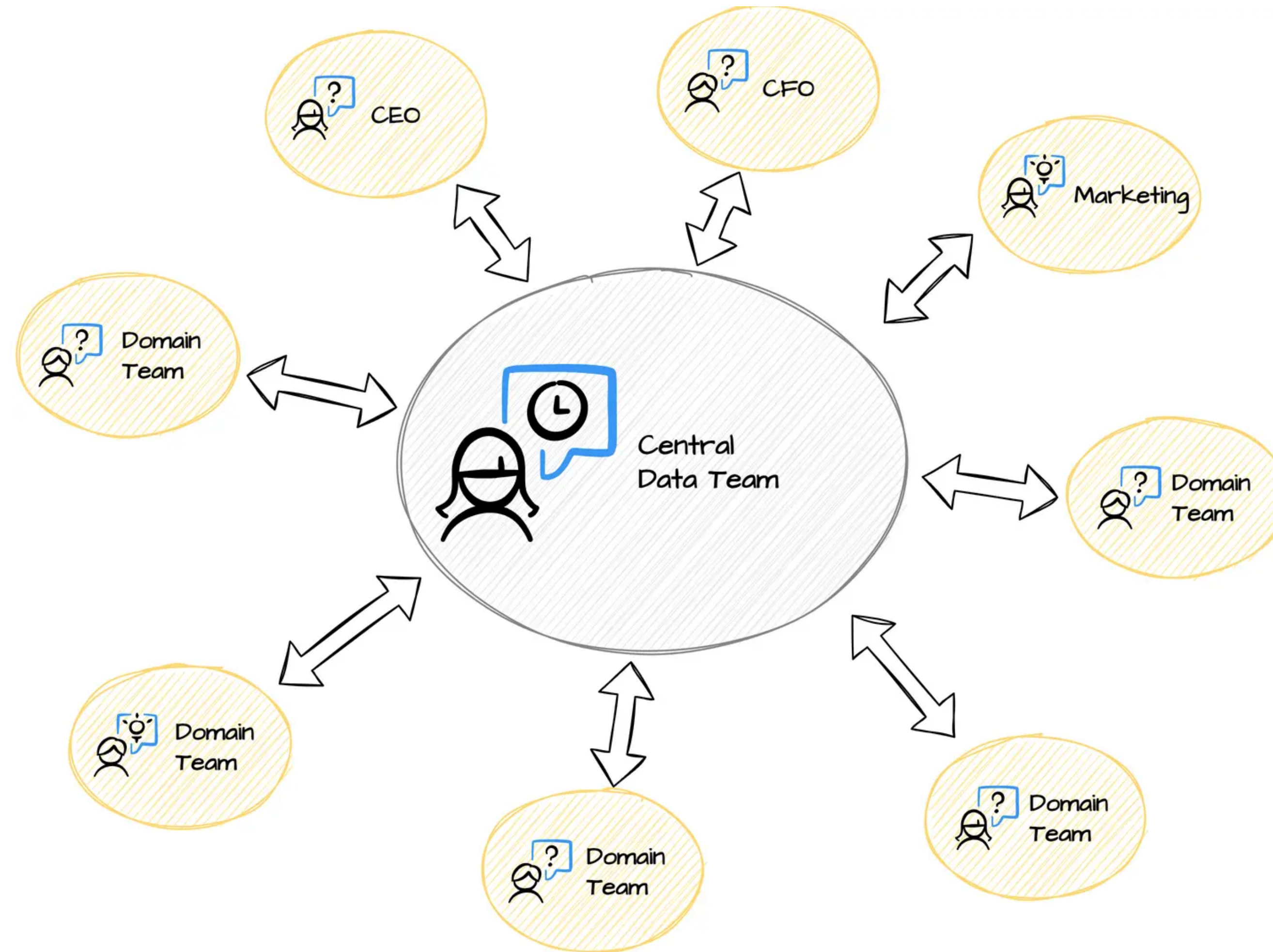
star-history.com

**I'll talk about data mesh,
data products,
and data contracts.**

And, if time allows, using AI in this space.

Part 1: Data Mesh

Status Quo



The Problem

Great expectations of data
Diverse and wide applications of ML and analytics

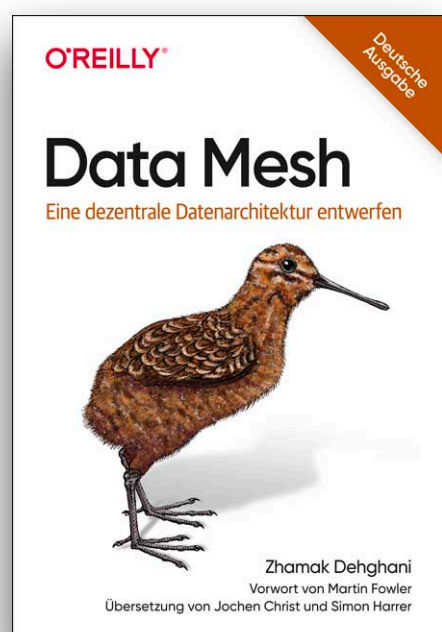
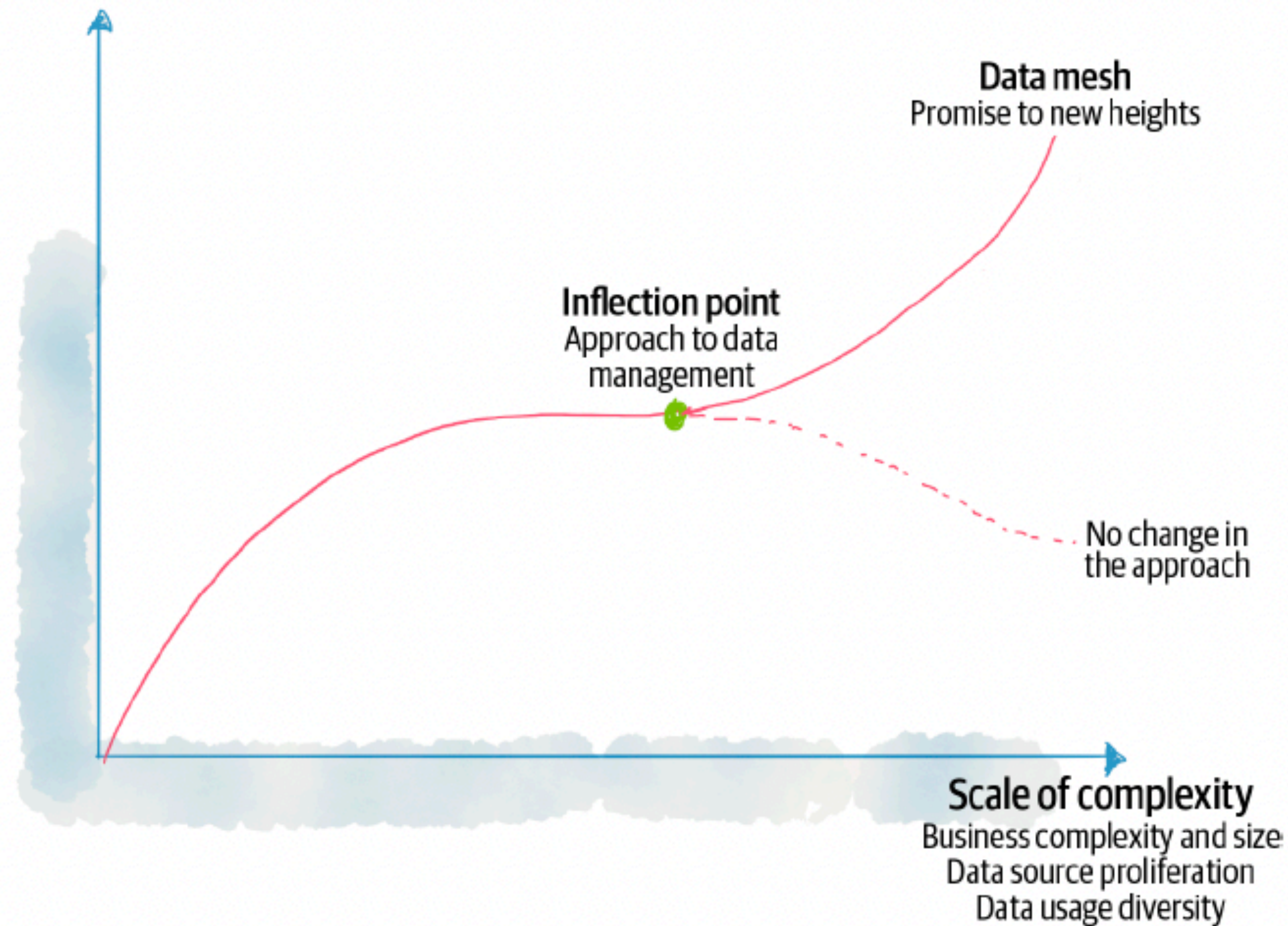
Great divide of data
Complexity risen from fragmentation of operational and analytical data

Scale
Large scale data source proliferation

Business complexity & volatility
Continuous change and growth of businesses

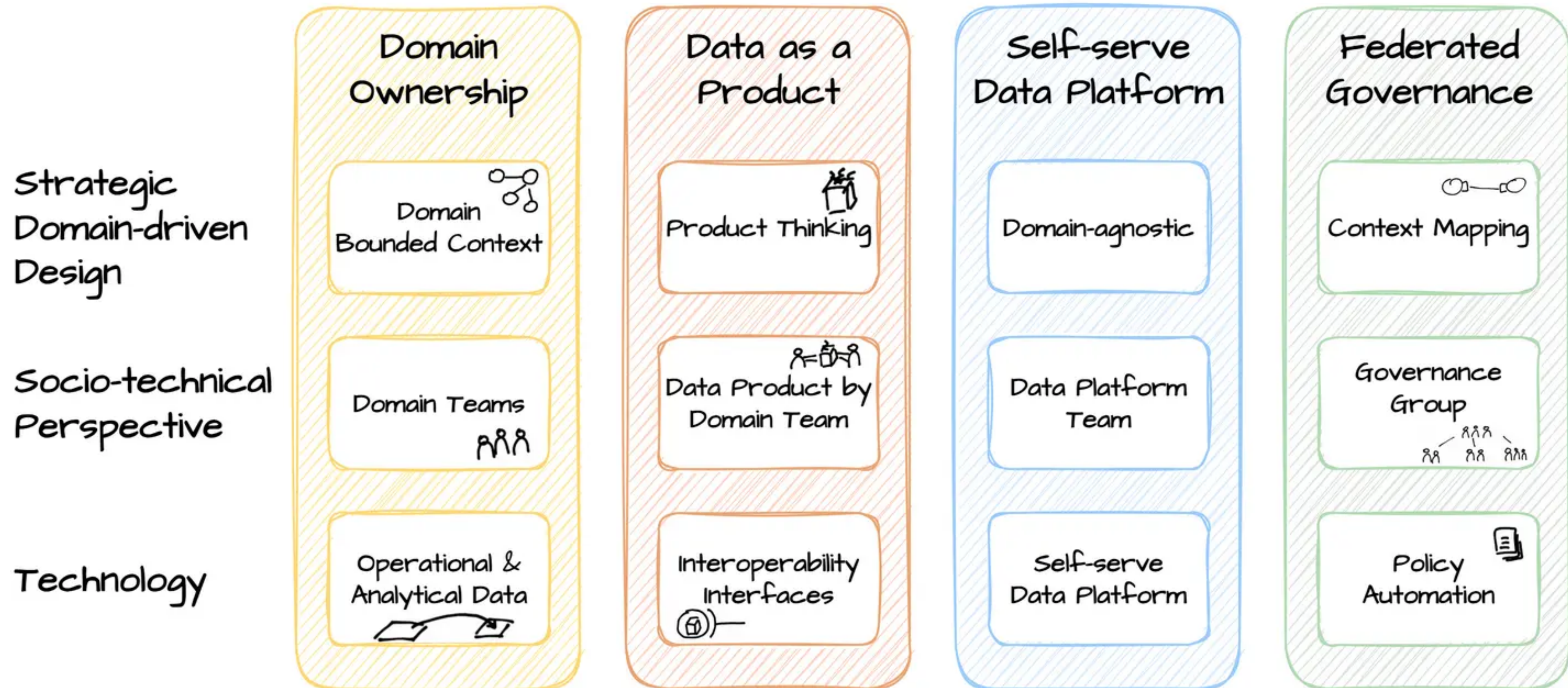
Discord between data investments and returns
Expensive data solutions lacking impact

Organizational impact
Agility in response to change
Get value from data

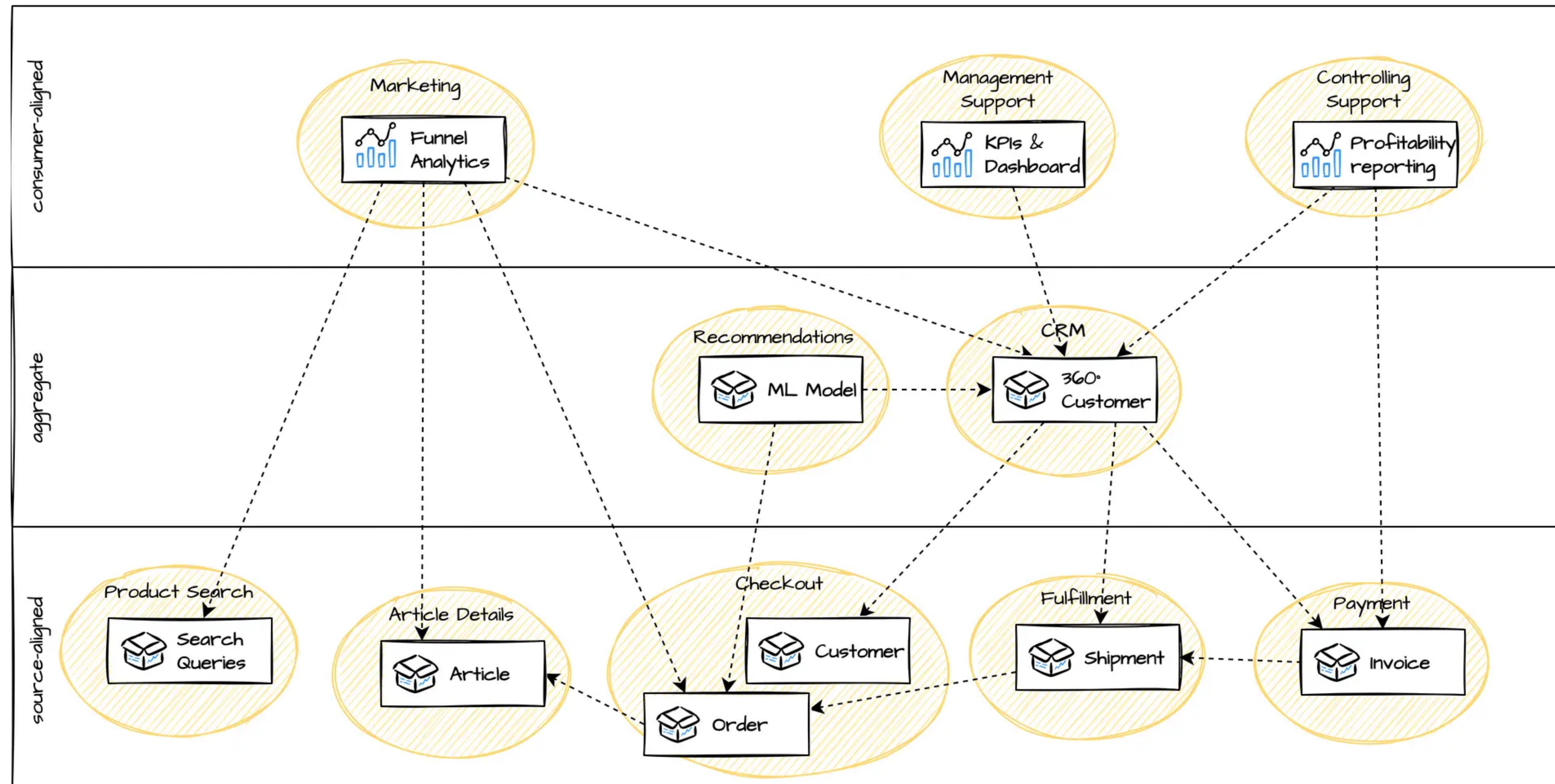


The Solution

What Is Data Mesh?

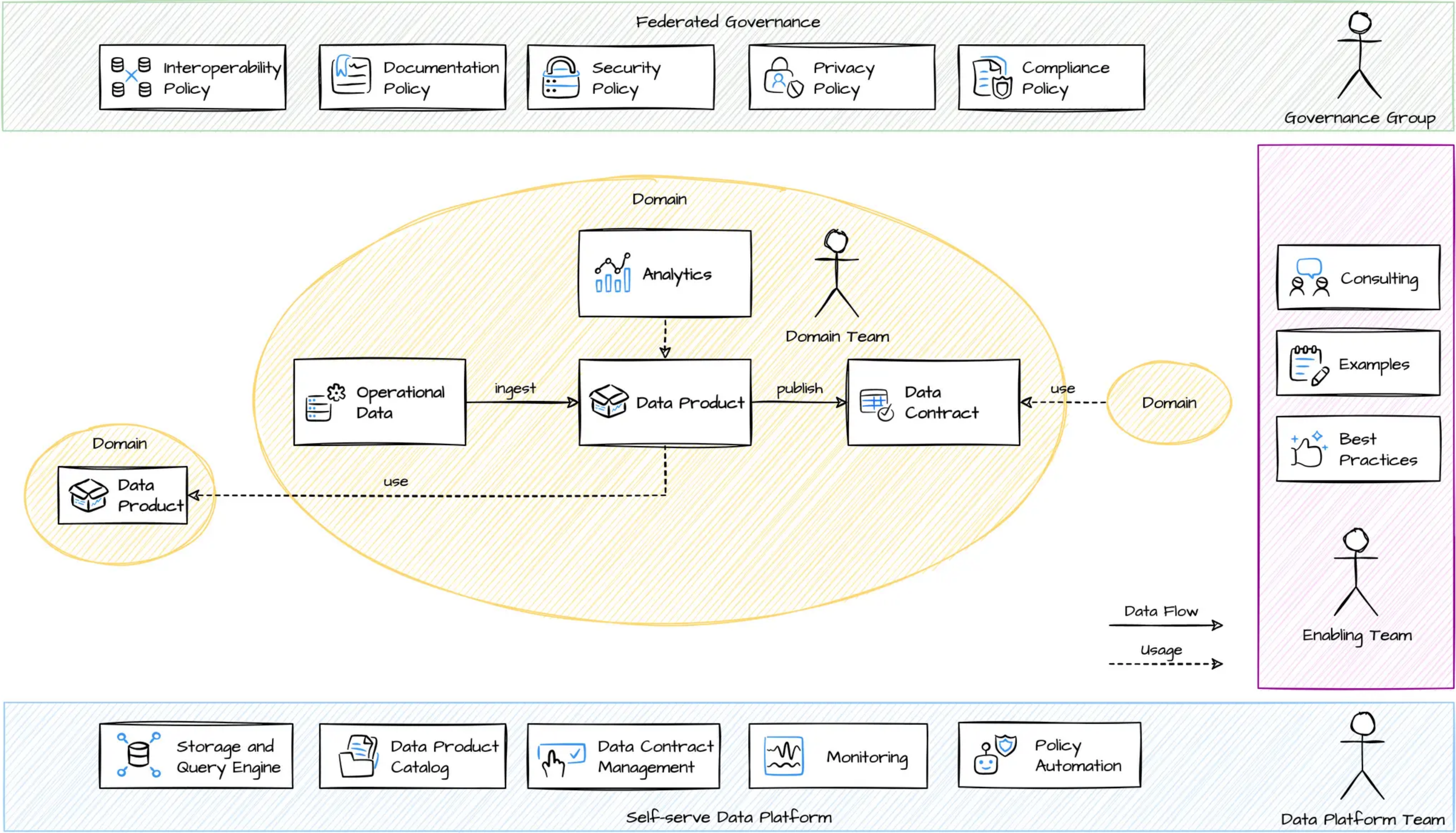


I brought a Data Mesh with me



The Architecture Perspective

Data Mesh Architecture



In summary: the vast majority of larger companies try moving towards the principles of data mesh.

But be aware of the name data mesh.



Part 2: Data Products

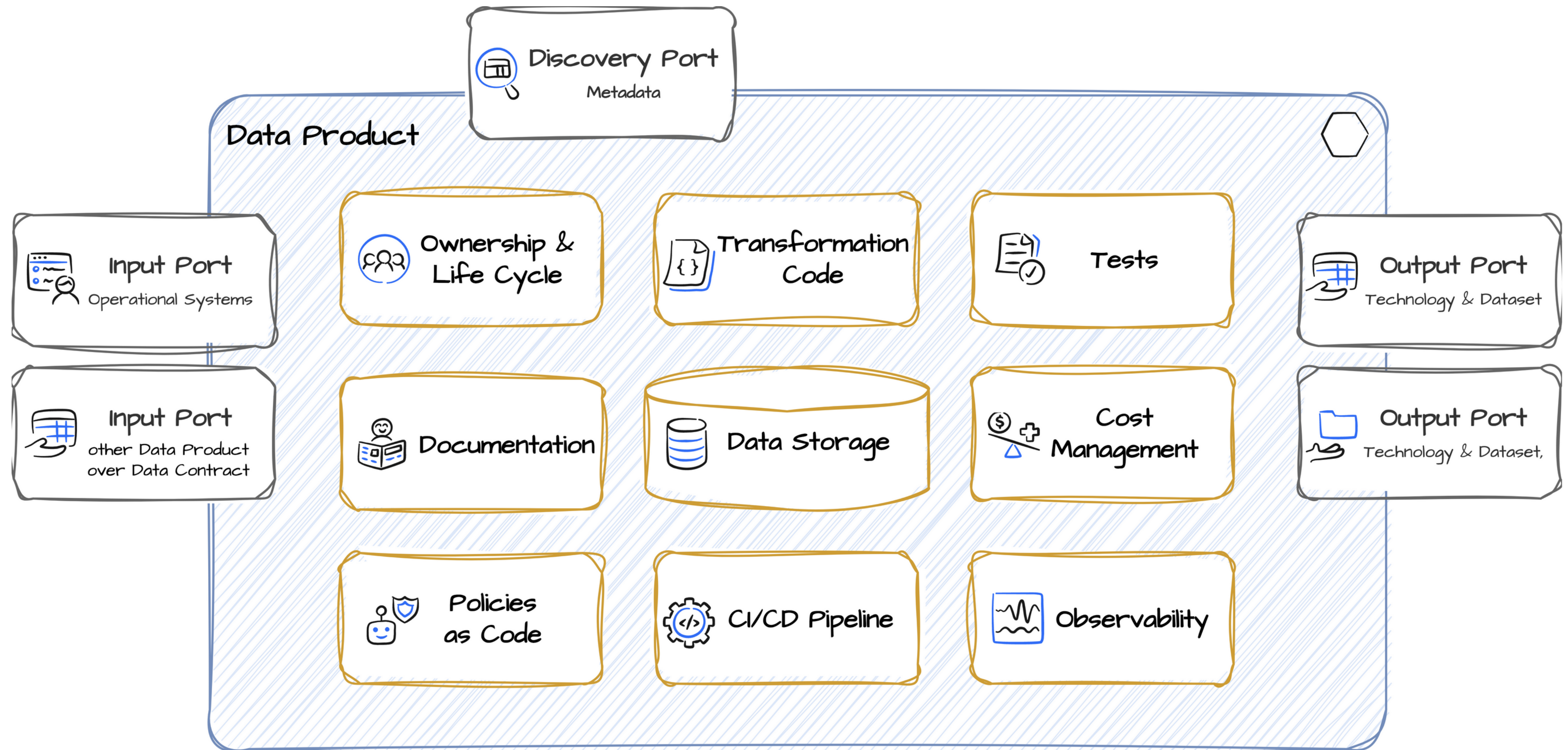
What is a data product?

My own practical definition:

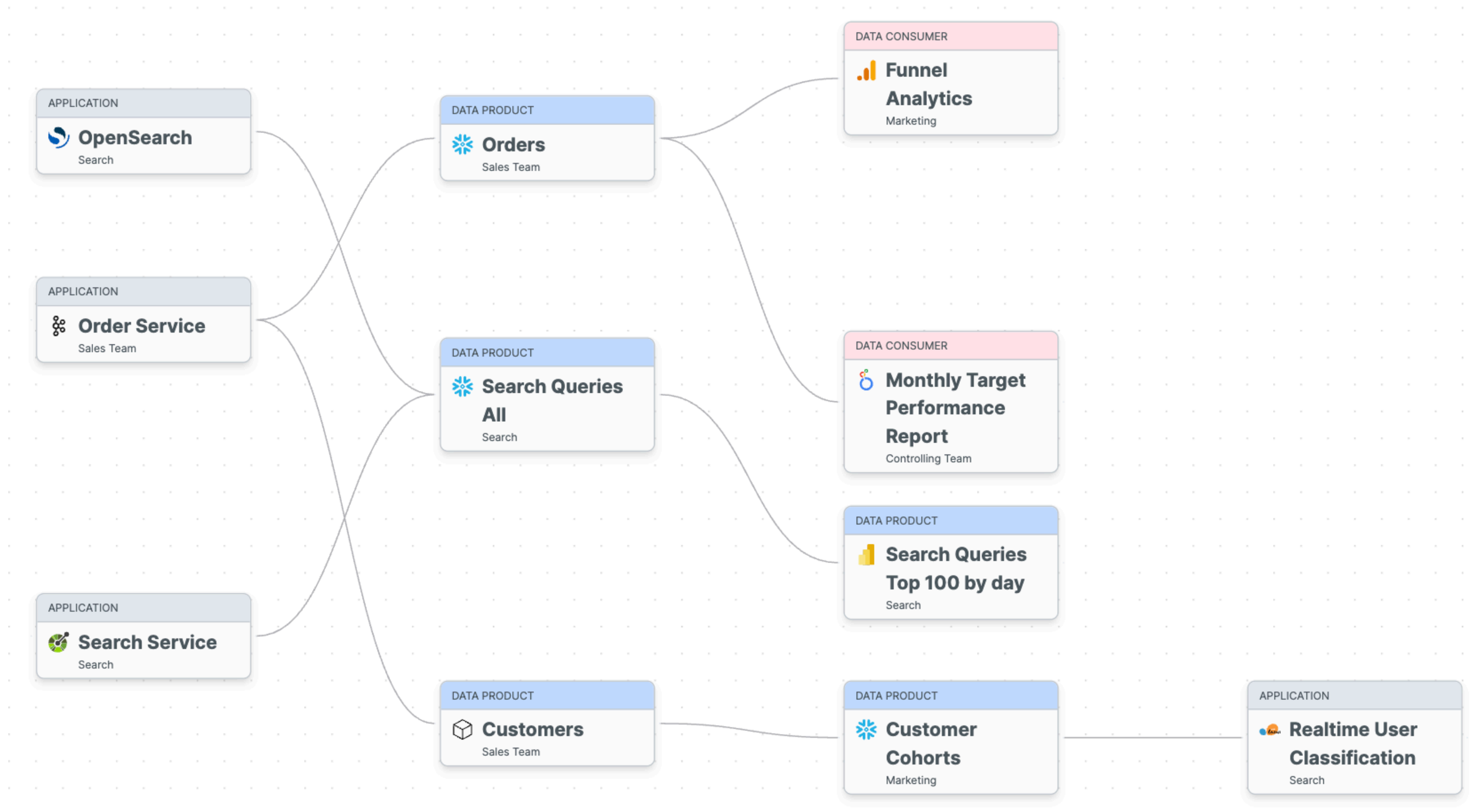
A data product is a logical unit
that contains all components to process domain data
and provide data sets via output ports.

(The view of a software architect)

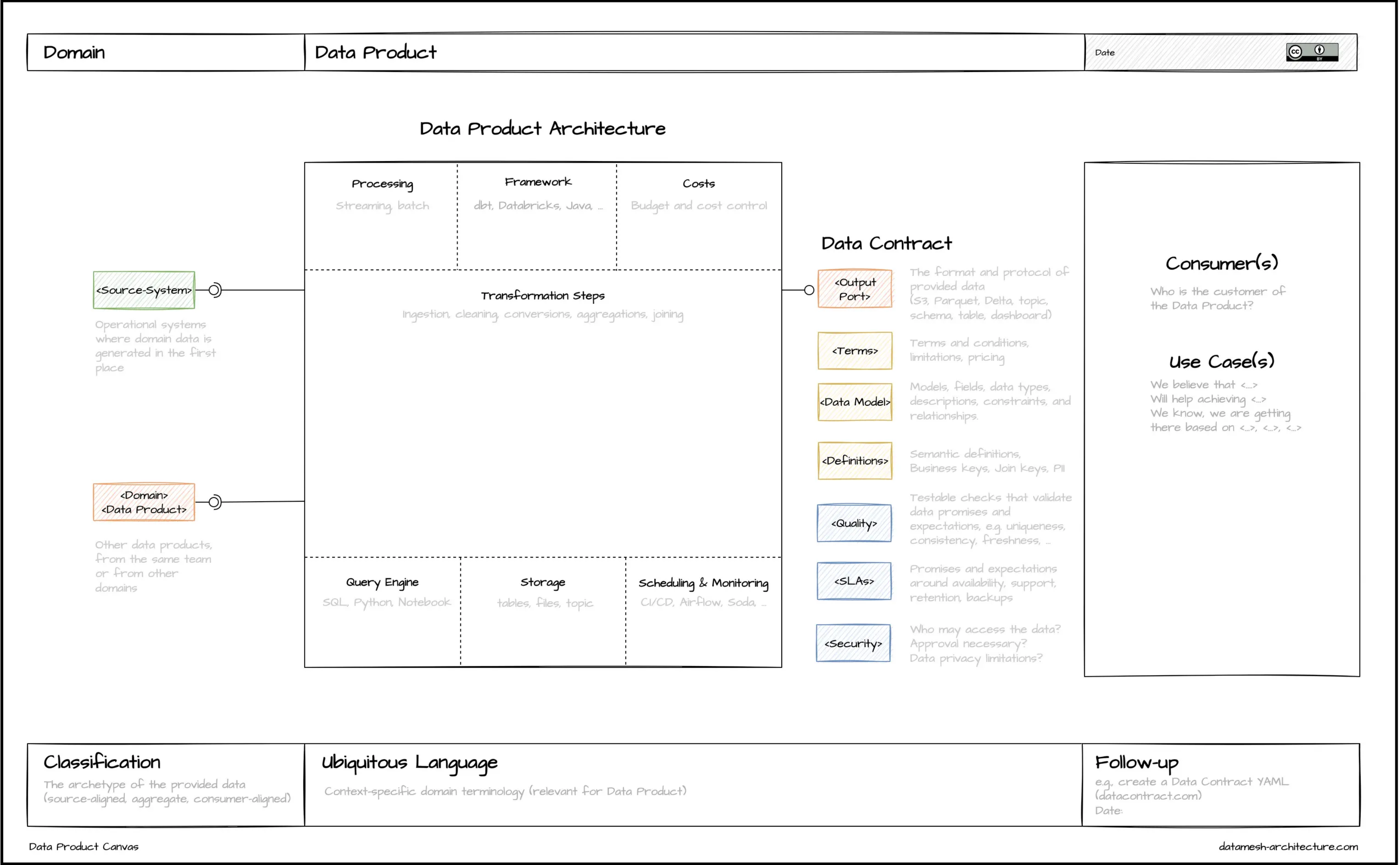
I see them as an architectural unit



That can form a large graph / mesh



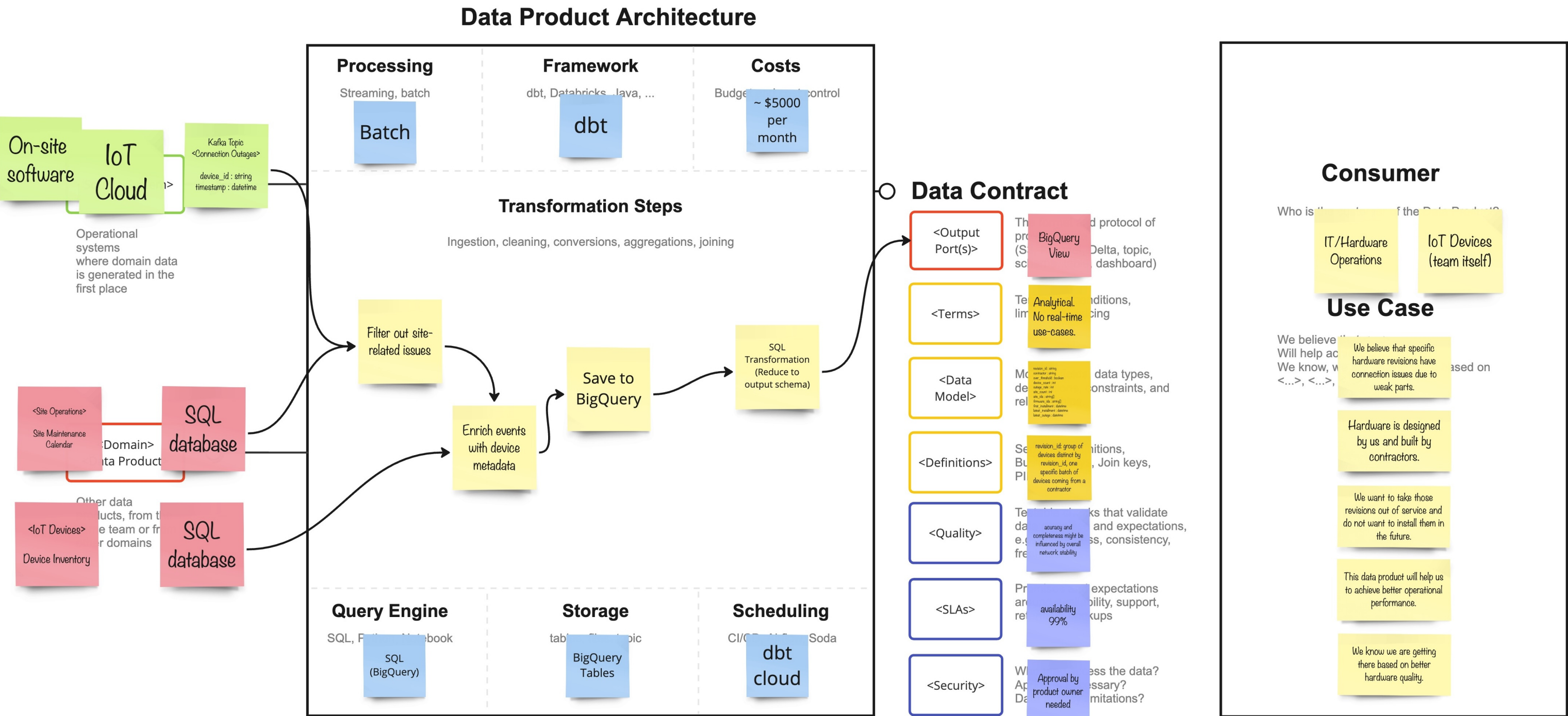
The Birth-Certificate



The Birth-Certificate

In order to enhance operational performance, our IoT device company plans to develop a data product that identifies hardware revisions prone to connection issues caused by weak components. By analyzing data from our designed and contractor-built hardware, we can remove these problematic revisions from service and prevent their installation in the future, leading to improved hardware quality and overall operational efficiency.

Domain <i>IoT Devices</i>	Data Product <i>Error prone device revisions</i>	Date <i>30.5.2023</i>	
---------------------------	--------------------------------------------------	-----------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------



Specified in YAML

```
dataProductSpecification: 0.0.1
id: shelf_warmers
info:
  title: Shelf Warmers
  description: Calculated shelfwarmers. Read about calculation in docs.
  status: active
  archetype: consumer-aligned
  owner: fulfillment
  domain: ecommerce
inputPorts: []
outputPorts:
  - id: glue_catalog_database_shelf_warmers_v1
    name: 'Glue Catalog Database: Shelf Warmers (v1)'
    description: All Shelf Warmers represented as a Glue Catalog table
    dataContractId: shelf_warmers_v1
    type: Glue
    status: active
    location: arn:aws:glue:eu-central-1:528115139298:table/fulfillment-shelf-warmers/shelf_warmers
    containsPii: false
    links:
      Athena Query Editor: https://eu-central-1.console.aws.amazon.com/athena/home?region=eu-central-1#
      Glue Table: https://eu-central-1.console.aws.amazon.com/glue/home?region=eu-central-1#/v2/data-ca
    custom:
      platform: aws
tags:
  - glue
  - athena
```

Data Product Specification
(<https://dataprod-uct-specification.com/>)

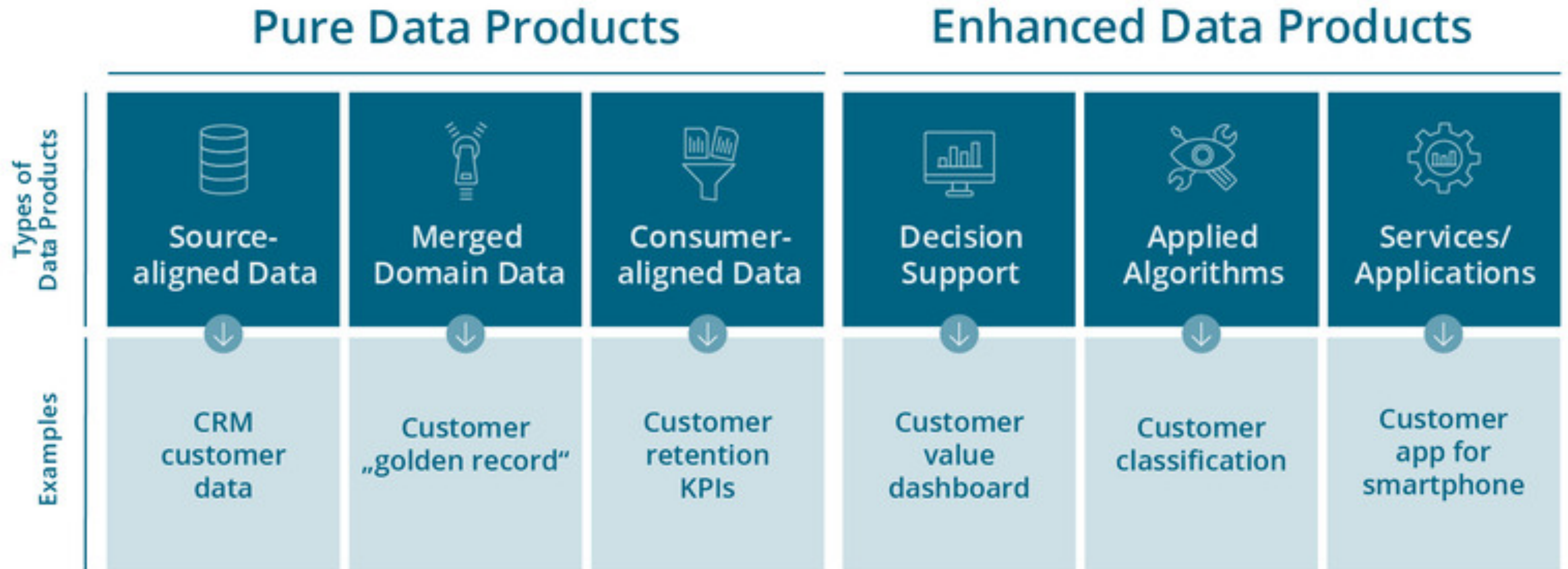
Created by INNOQ

Implementations

- Very different ways
- Depends highly on the data platform the company is using
- Typical: Group all code and YAMLS in a git repo per data product
- Examples:
 - Git repository with dbt that is scheduled in the CI/CD pipeline and runs queries in snowflake
 - Java Application sourcing data from a REST-API and pushing it on an AWS S3 bucket
 - Databricks Asset Bundle with pipelines written in Python
 - ...

All fine? Sadly, no.

Some call them "Pure Data Products"



**If you ask 5 different people,
you get 6 different answers...**

Major Differences

deployment unit (like a Docker container)

logical unit (like a git repository)

data set + quality (like a database table with metadata on guarantees)

anything that heavily consumes data (like a report or application)

And we haven't talked about any details, like access-request-workflows and breaking-change-processes...

And many formats as well

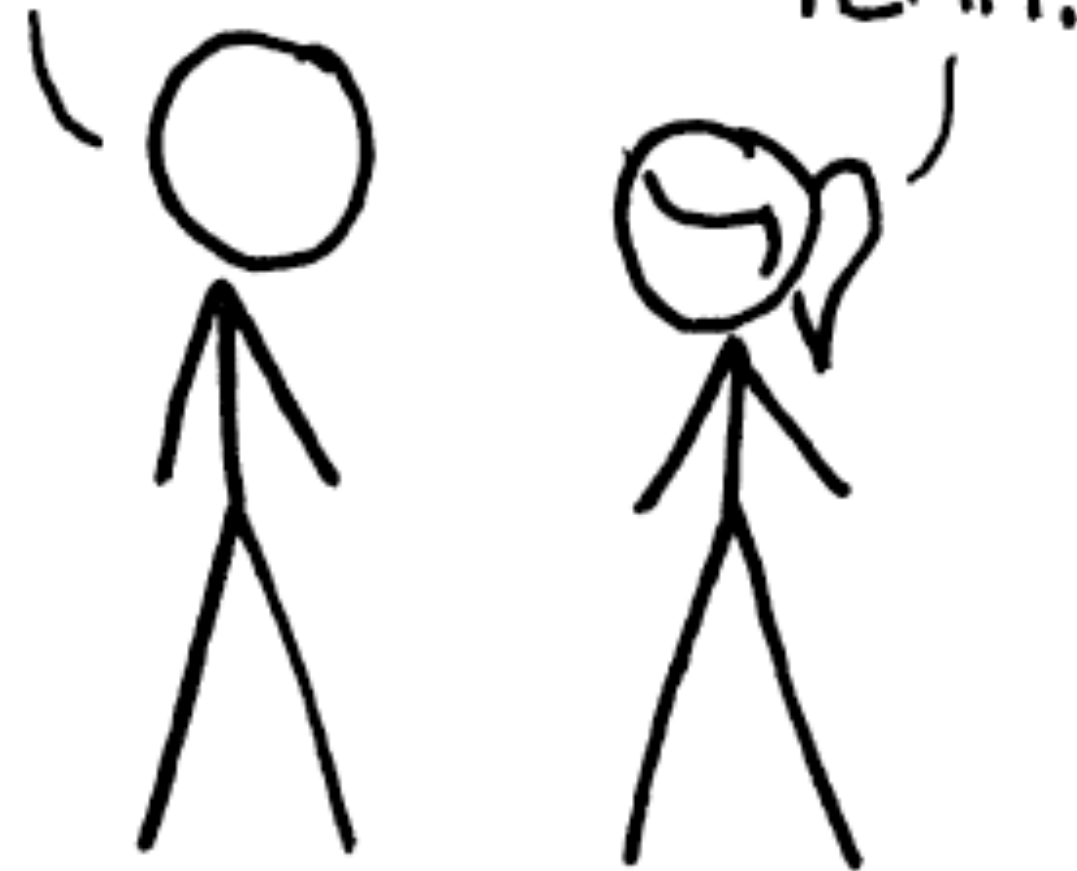
- From vendors and standard bodies that are similar: Data Products Ontology (DPROD from OMG), Data Product Descriptor Specification (DPDS from Quantyca), Data Product Specification (DPS from witboost), Data Product Specification (DPS from INNOQ), Open Data Product Specification (ODPS from LF) ...
- A popular one, the Open Data Product Specification, follows a different definition of what a data product is (data set + guarantees) ... which makes everything even more confusing. (<https://opendataproductions.org/>)
- There is no clear leader yet

Our Answer

HOW STANDARDS PROLIFERATE:
(SEE: A/C CHARGERS, CHARACTER ENCODINGS, INSTANT MESSAGING, ETC.)

SITUATION:
THERE ARE
14 COMPETING
STANDARDS.

14?! RIDICULOUS!
WE NEED TO DEVELOP
ONE UNIVERSAL STANDARD
THAT COVERS EVERYONE'S
USE CASES.




SOON:

SITUATION:
THERE ARE
15 COMPETING
STANDARDS.

The Open Data Product Standard

- At the Linux Foundation, Data & AI, as part of Bitol
- Bitol: standards around data products, data contracts, data mesh, ...
- Status: Work in Progress, release overdue ;-)

THE **LINUX** FOUNDATION PROJECTS

 **Bitol**

Roadmap

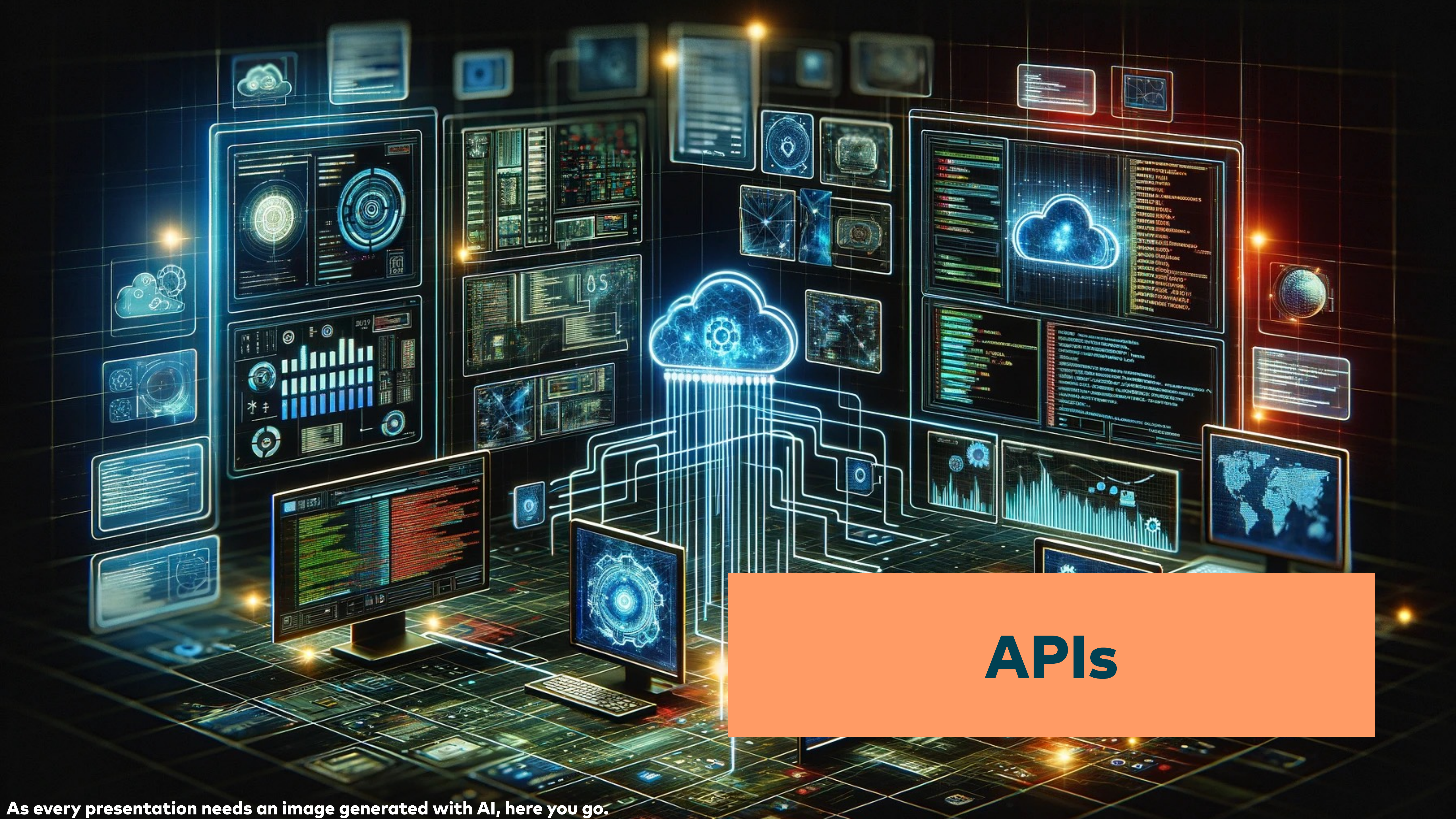
Here is a quick look at the Bitol roadmap.

ODCS	Open Data Contract Standard	v3.0.2	March 2025
ODPS	Open Data Product Standard		Q2 2025
ODMS	Open Data Mesh Standard		2025
OORS	Open Observability Results Standard		2025
OOCS	Open Orchestration & Control Standard		2025

**In summary: data product is a catchy term
Everybody wants to use it for their own agenda**

**And now you have to clarify the term before every
conversation...**

Part 3: Data Contracts



APIs

As every presentation needs an image generated with AI, here you go.

APIs

- REST-API specified with OpenAPI



- Messages and Events specified with AsyncAPI



- What about sharing large datasets? How to specify these APIs?
 - Examples: JSON on AWS S3, SQL tables on BigQuery, Iceberg files on Azure One Lake, SQL views on Snowflake, Delta Live Tables on Databricks, CSV on sftp

Existing Specs are Lacking

- data structure (string with length 5 is implemented with VARCHAR(5))
- data quality on columns (column is nullable, but only 3% null values max)
- terms and conditions (can I use the data for my use case?)
 - data classifications and PII anonymization
- Service-level agreements (freshness, latency, retention, ...)
- Semantics (what the column really is about)

So we need something that fills this gap.

Terminology

A data contract

is not a contract as a mutual agreement,

it is rather an offer to potential consumers.

Cardinality

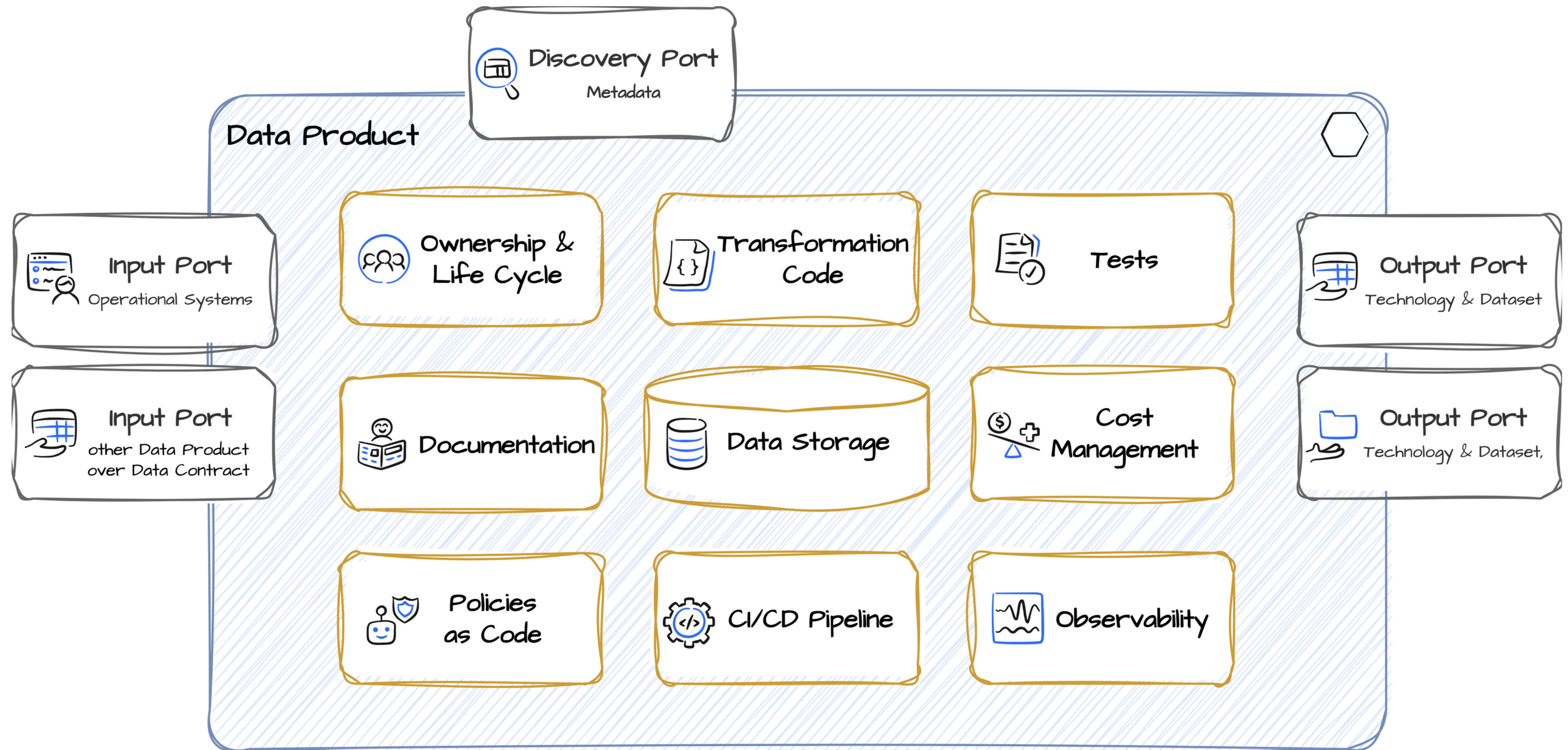
A data contract is a one-to-many relationship.

One data provider to many data consumers.

What is a data contract?

- Creates a link between a data producer and data consumers.
- Creates a link between business (logical representation of the data) and technology (its physical implementation).
- Describes meta meta data: rules, quality, and behavior.
- It's like an API Contract, but for data. And contains much more.
- **A data contract is the source of truth for your metadata.**

Data Contracts Protect Output Ports



What are the problems it solves?

- Normalizing and keeping documentation relevant.
- Bringing quality data in AI workflows. Describing service-level expectations.
- Easing data & tools integration.
- Ending painful data discovery.
- Enabling data product thinking.

Data contracts [..] are a bit like tax returns. You have to do them. Many people don't feel like doing them and some people even try to avoid them altogether. For us, data contracts form the foundation of a living data ownership culture.

*– David Brandstädter, Director Data Enablement
Lidl eCommerce*



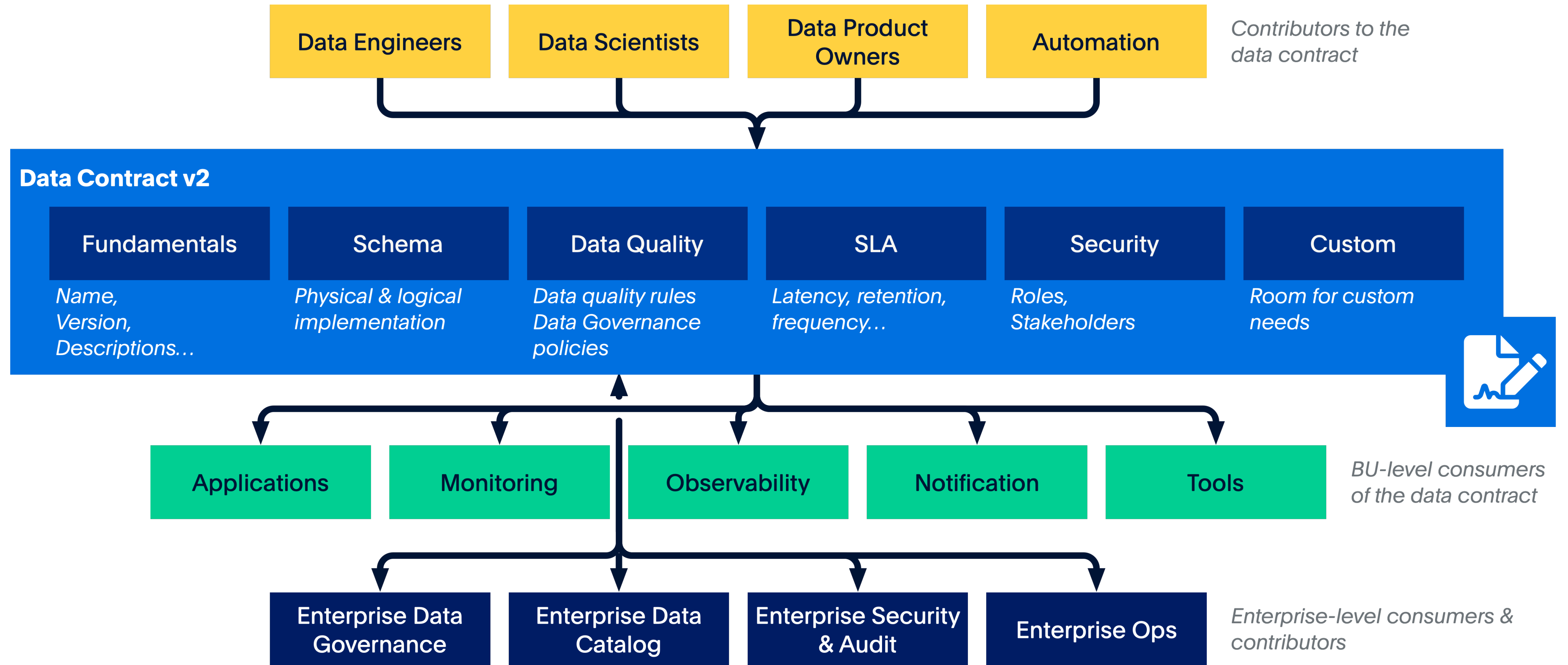
What happened ...

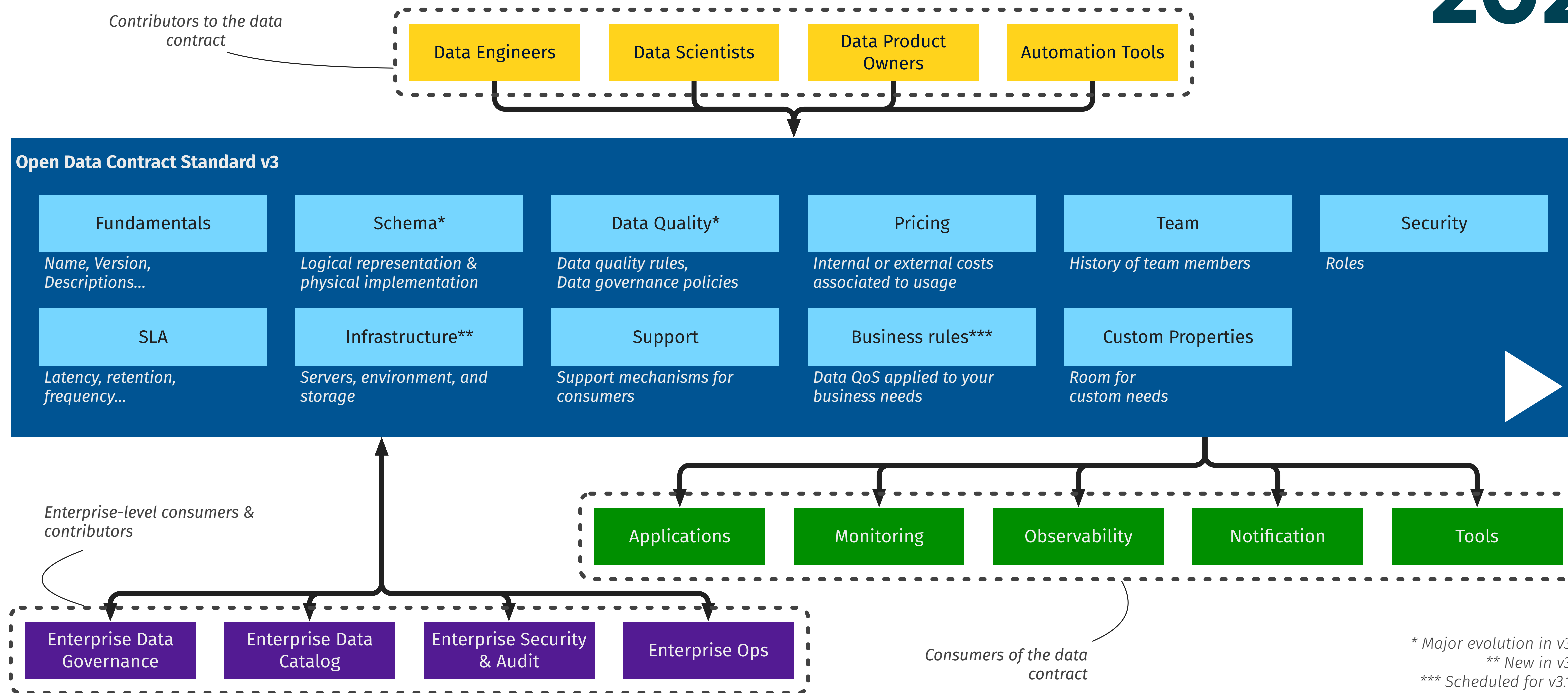
... with the rise of data products, the need for data contracts grew tremendously ...

... and many many company created their own data contract format ...

... and every vendor did the same ...

Open Data Contract Standard
to the rescue (this time just-in-time)

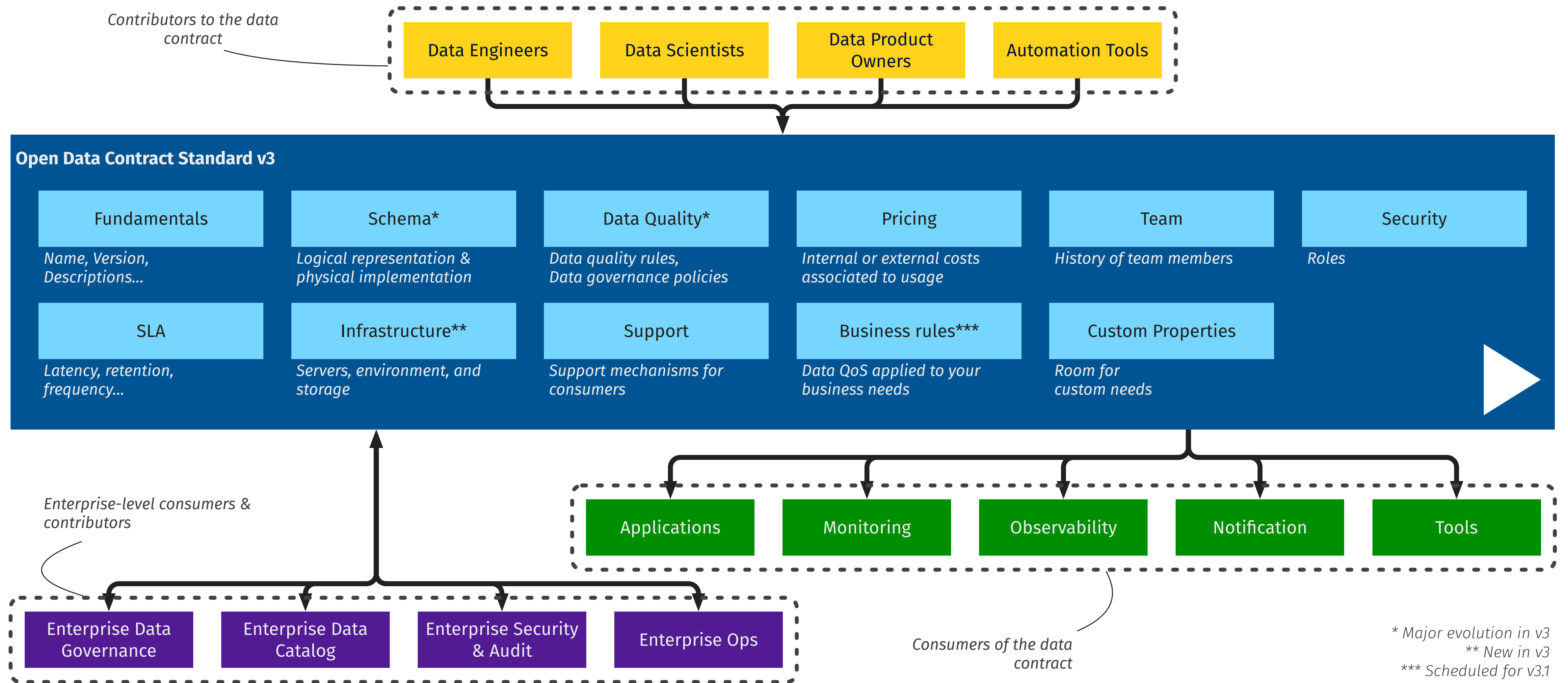




ODCS (Open Data Contract Standard) can be found & used at 30+ companies:

- **End users:** peer-to-peer payment leader, major cable company, major retailers, SMB to Fortune 500.
- **Software Vendors:** several data-oriented startups and vendors in Europe, NA, and APAC.
- **Service providers** in Europe and NA.
- **A going community** behind the standard.
- **Academia** (JADS, HTW).

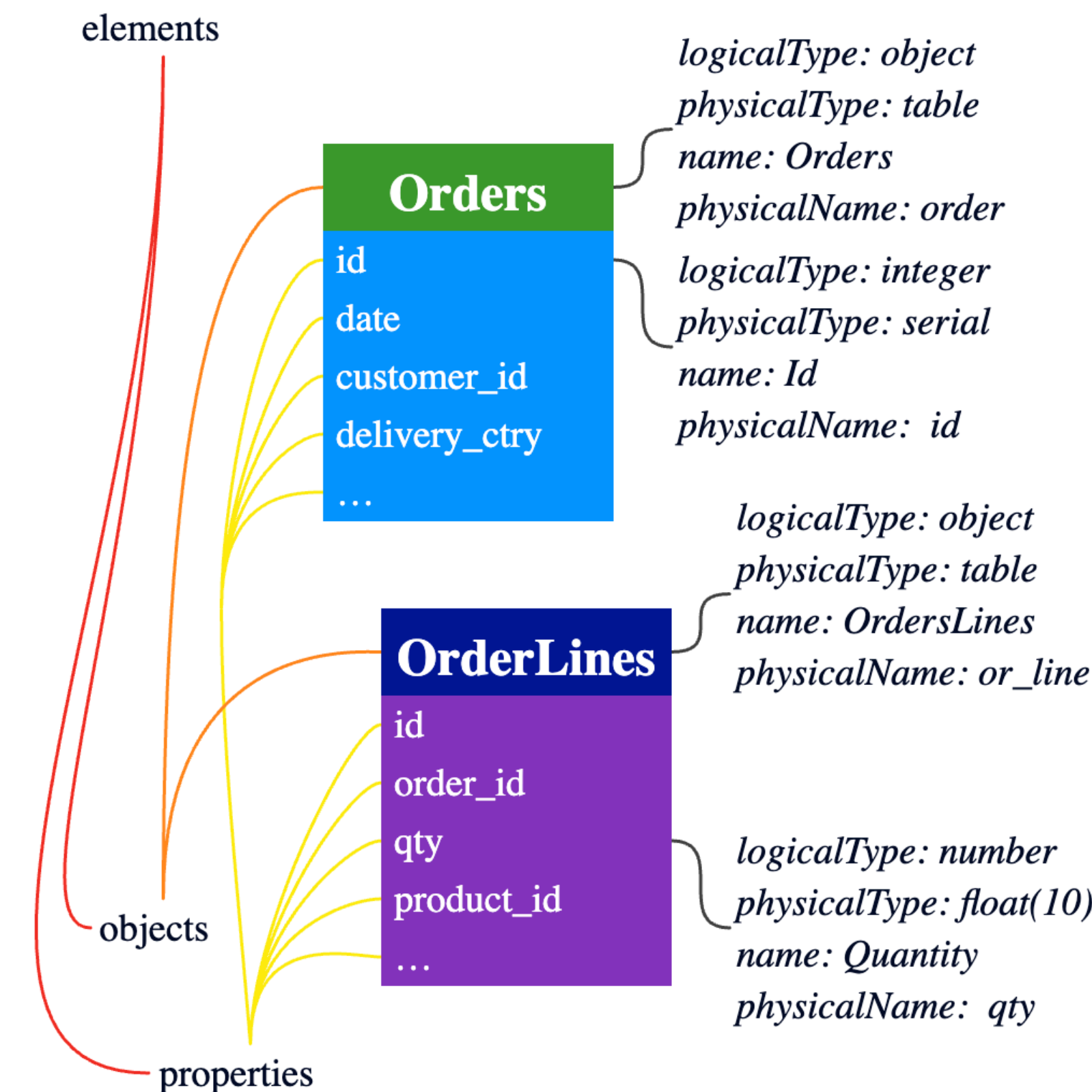
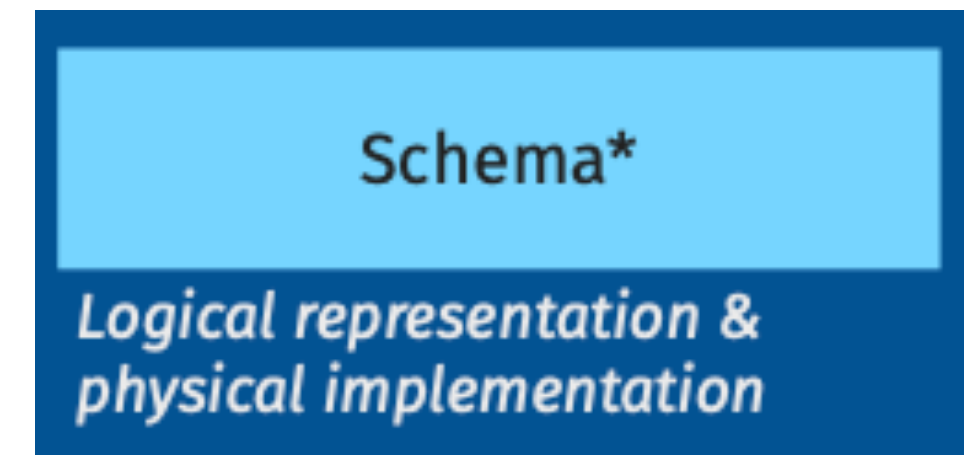
Industry-led governance.



```
apiVersion: v3.0.0
kind: DataContract
id: urn:datacontract:checkout:orders-latest
name: Orders Latest
version: 2.0.0
status: active
description:
  usage: |
    Data can be used for reports, analytics and machine learning use cases.
    Order may be linked and joined by other tables'
  limitations: |
    Not suitable for real-time use cases.
    Data may not be used to identify individual customers.
    Max data processing per day: 10 TiB'
```

schema:

- name: orders
 - physicalName: orders
 - logicalType: object
 - physicalType: table
 - description: One record per order. Includes cancelled and deleted orders.
 - properties:
 - name: order_id
 - businessName: Order ID
 - logicalType: string
 - physicalType: text
 - description: An internal ID that identifies an order in the online shop.
 - isNullable: false
 - isUnique: true
 - classification: restricted
 - examples:
 - 243c25e5-a081-43a9-aeab-6d5d5b6cb5e2
 - primaryKey: true
 - primaryKeyPosition: 1
 - customProperties:
 - property: pii
 - | value: true
 - tags:
 - orders



quality:

- type: sql

description: The maximum duration between two orders should be less than 3600 seconds

query: |

```
SELECT MAX(duration) AS max_duration FROM (SELECT EXTRACT(EPOCH FROM (order_timestamp  
– LAG(order_timestamp) OVER (ORDER BY order_timestamp))) AS duration FROM orders)
```

mustBeLessThan: 3600

- type: sql

description: Row Count

query: 'SELECT count(*) as row_count FROM orders'

mustBeGreaterThan: 5

```
slaProperties:
- property: generalAvailability
  value: The server is available during support hours
- property: retention
  value: P1Y
support:
- channel: other
  url: https://teams.microsoft.com/l/channel/example/checkout
servers:
- server: production
  type: s3
  environment: prod
  format: json
  delimiter: new_line
  location: s3://datacontract-example-orders-latest/v2/{model}/*.json
  roles:
    - name: analyst_us
      description: Access to the data for US region
    - name: analyst_cn
      description: Access to the data for China region
customProperties:
- property: owner
  value: Checkout Team
```

SLA

*Latency, retention,
frequency...*

Infrastructure**

*Servers, environment, and
storage*

Custom Properties

*Room for
custom needs*

Code Generation

- Java
- Python in Pydantic
- dbt Models and Sources
- SQL DDL and Queries

Test

- Compare contract with real data
- Breaking data detection in PR
- Breaking metadata detection
- Continuous Monitoring
- Consumer-driven Contract Testing

Metadata Distribution

- Metastores: Hive, ...
- Data Catalogs: Colibra, ...
- Data Contract Catalog: Data Mesh Manager, ...
- Software Catalogs: LeanIX, ...

Automate all the things!

Infrastructure Provisioning

- Output Port (S3 Bucket, ...)
- Input Port (dbt sources.yml)
- Transformations (anonymisation)
- Access Control (IAM permissions)

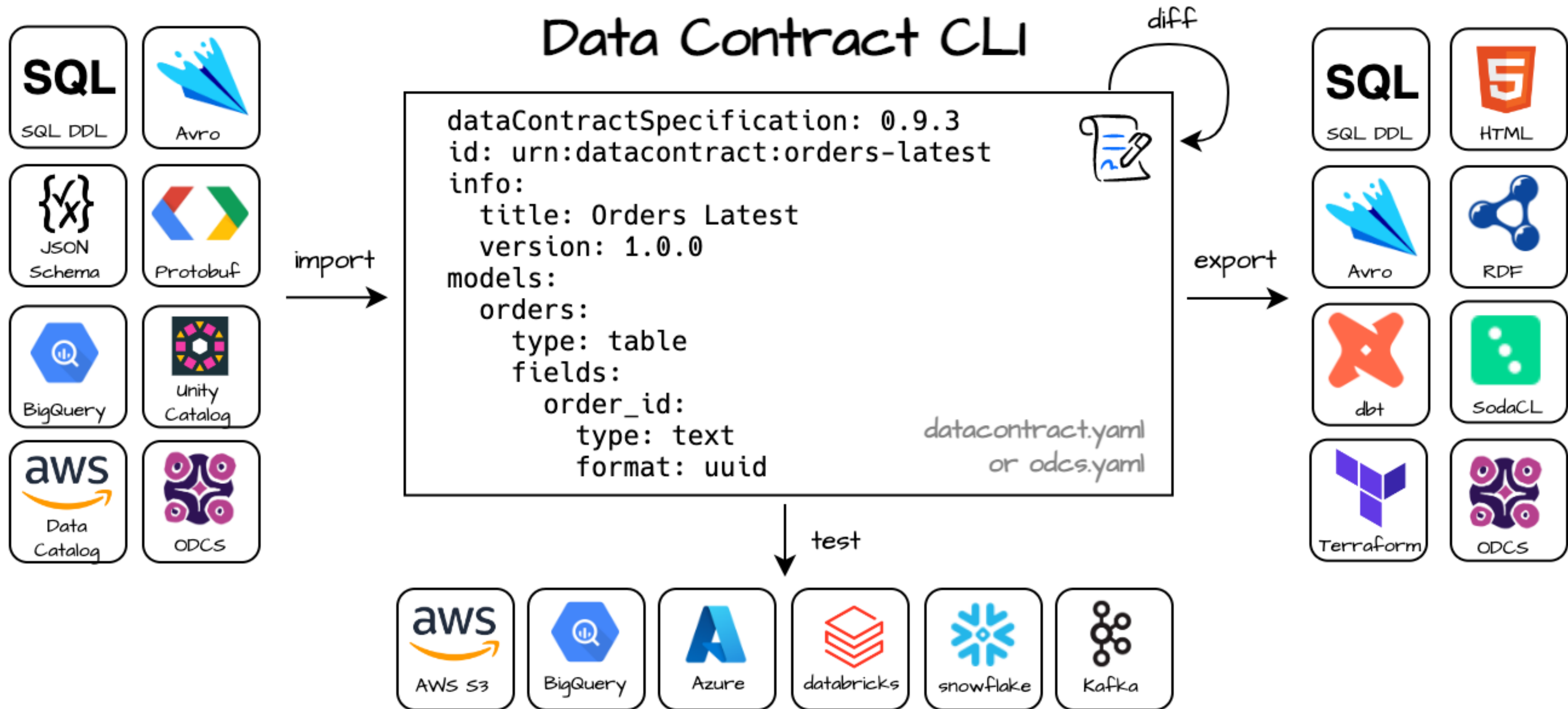
Collaboration

- Contract-First (in workshop)
- Data-First (import from ...)
- Semantics

Governance

- Policies (naming conventions, ...)
- Schema Evolution (Notice period)
- Usage Agreements
- Approval Workflows

Data Contract CLI



Usage: `datacontract [OPTIONS] COMMAND [ARGS]...`

The datacontract CLI is an open source command-line tool for working with Data Contracts (<https://datacontract.com>).

It uses data contract YAML files to lint the data contract, connect to data sources and execute schema and quality tests, detect breaking changes, and export to different formats.

Options

<code>--version</code>	Prints the current version.
<code>--help</code>	Show this message and exit.

Commands

<code>init</code>	Create an empty data contract.
<code>lint</code>	Validate that the datacontract.yaml is correctly formatted.
<code>test</code>	Run schema and quality tests on configured servers.
<code>export</code>	Convert data contract to a specific format. Saves to file specified by `output` option if present, otherwise prints to stdout.
<code>import</code>	Create a data contract from the given source location. Saves to file specified by `output` option if present, otherwise prints to stdout.
<code>publish</code>	Publish the data contract to the Data Mesh Manager.
<code>catalog</code>	Create a html catalog of data contracts.
<code>breaking</code>	Identifies breaking changes between data contracts. Prints to stdout.
<code>changelog</code>	Generate a changelog between data contracts. Prints to stdout.
<code>diff</code>	PLACEHOLDER. Currently works as 'changelog' does.
<code>api</code>	Start the datacontract CLI as server application with REST API.

DEMO

Modern Data Governance

Responsibility

Data Product Owner

Data is owned decentralized by business & IT experts where data is generated
Product owners are responsible for what happens with their data

Concepts & Tools

Data Contracts

Define the syntax, semantics, quality, and terms of use as YAML

Data Marketplace

Data discovery with a self-service access request workflow

Global Policies

The conventions and rules of play for data on the data platform

Automation

Contract Enforcement

Test that data products correctly implement the data contract

Automated Permission Granting

Give table access based on access request approvals

AI-based Policy Checking

Check that policies are correctly adopted by data product owners

In summary: data contracts bring API thinking and specification into the data world.

**Swagger was first released in 2011 and is everywhere today.
ODCS was first released in 2025 and will be everywhere in ???**

My prediction: This will be huge!

Bonus-Part: Data Governance with AI (with Arif)

Modern Data Governance

Responsibility

Data Product Owner

Data is owned decentralized by business & IT experts where data is generated
Product owners are responsible for what happens with their data

Concepts & Tools

Data Contracts

Define the syntax, semantics, quality, and terms of use as YAML

Data Marketplace

Data discovery with a self-service access request workflow

Global Policies

The conventions and rules of play for data on the data platform

Automation

Contract Enforcement

Test that data products correctly implement the data contract

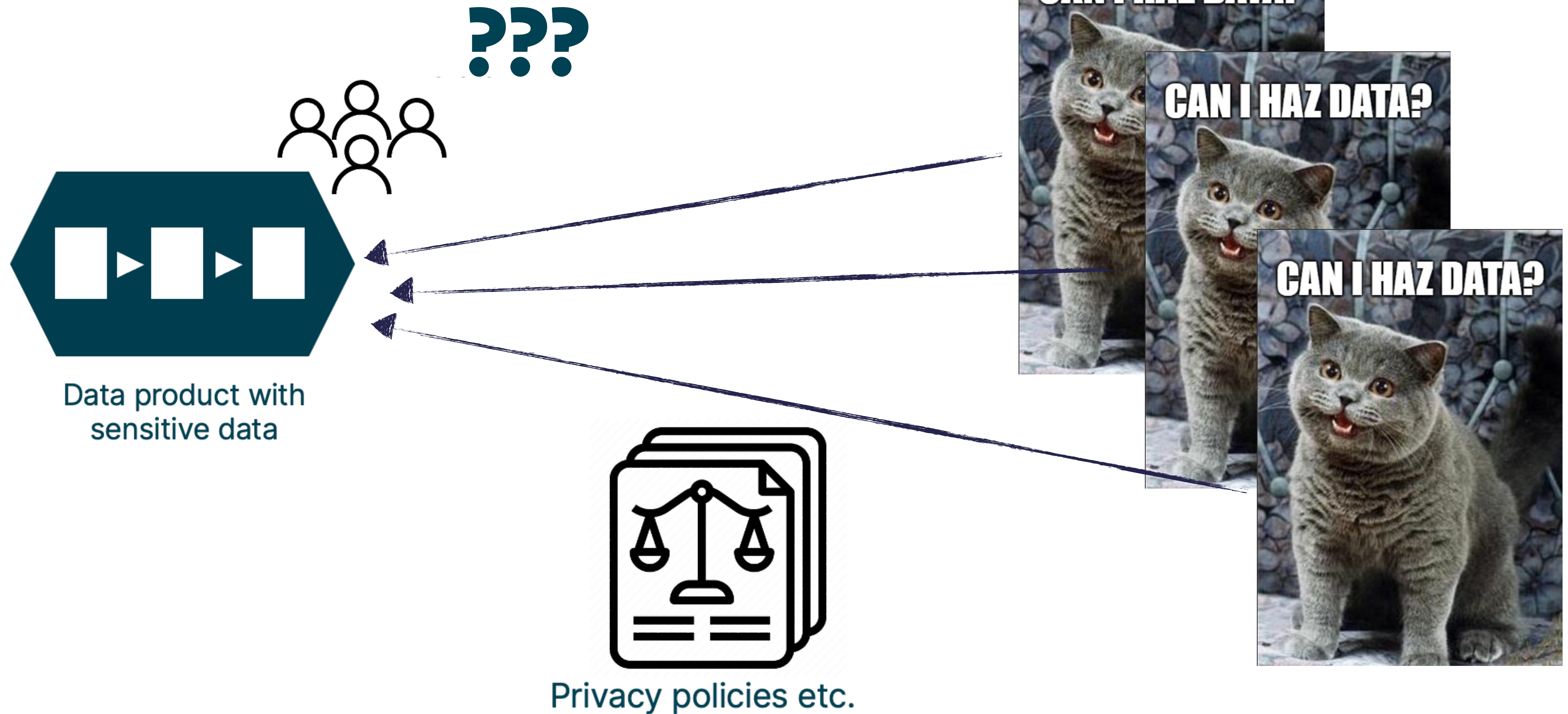
Automated Permission Granting

Give table access based on access request approvals

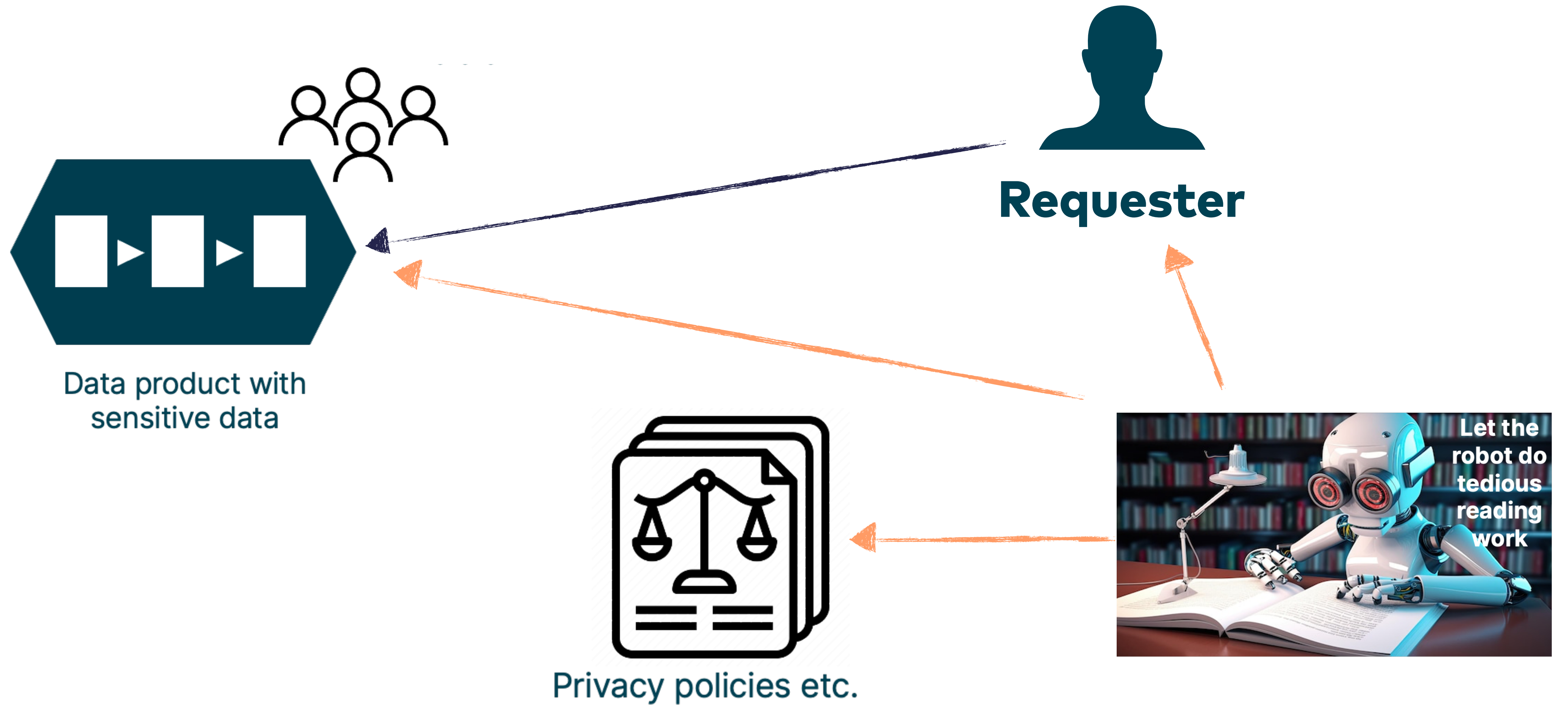
AI-based Policy Checking

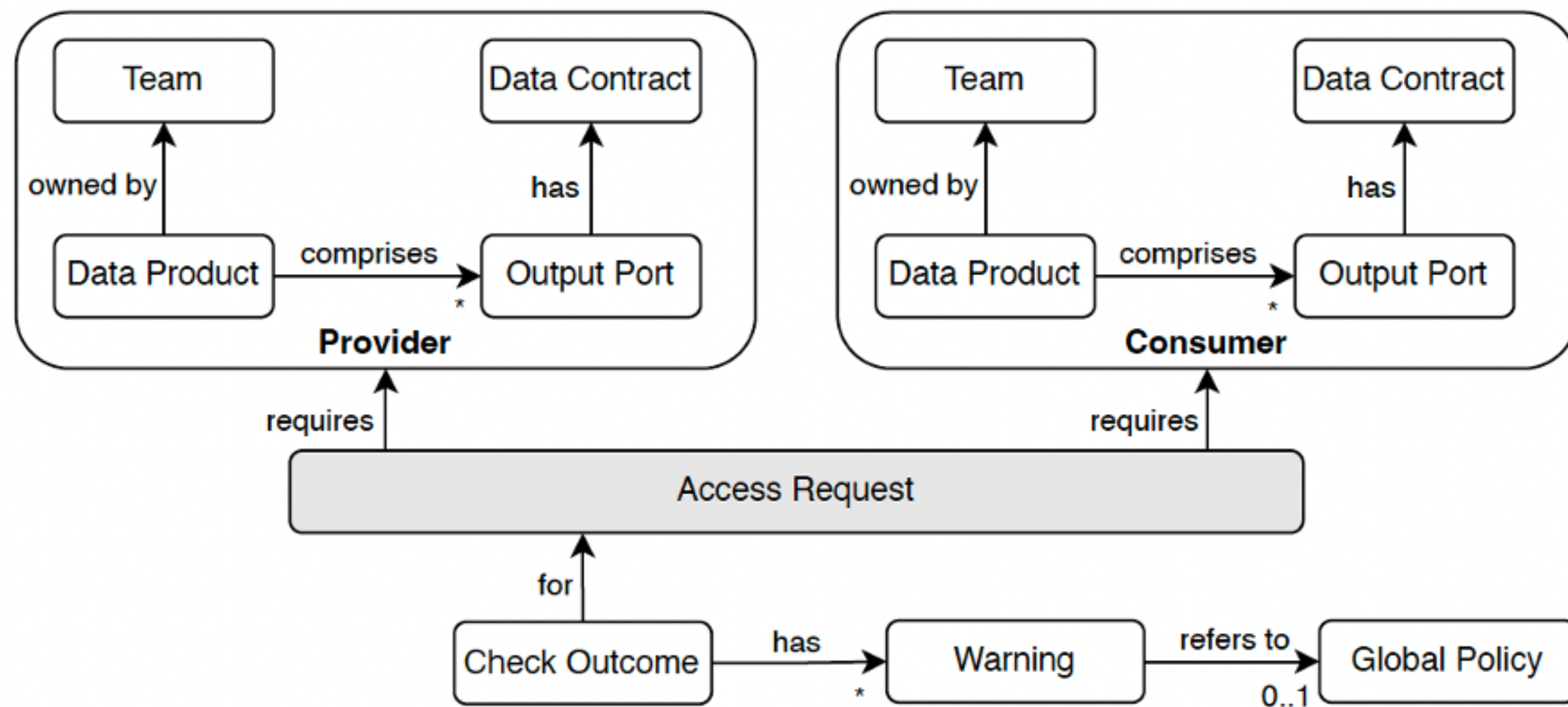
Check that policies are correctly adopted by data product owners

Use Case: Data Access Requests



LLMs to the rescue!





System prompt

- 1) **Task.** We describe the main task: analyzing access requests.
- 2) **Persona.** We asked the model to adopt the persona of a Data Governance Expert.
- 3) **Steps.** We describe the six steps how to analyze an access request.

User Prompt

- 1) **Access Request** that needs to be analyzed (YAML)
- 2) **Provider** side of the access request, including the providing data product, the relevant output port, the data contract, and the providing team (YAML)
- 3) **Consumer** side of the access request, including the consuming data product, all output ports, data contracts, and the consuming team (YAML)
- 4) **Global Policies** governing the data mesh (text).
- 5) **Detailed Instructions** about the task, the requirements, and additional constraints.
- 6) **Required Elements** of the output with an explanation. The structure of the required elements was enforced using the “Structured Outputs JSON mode,” cf. <https://platform.openai.com/docs/guides/structured-outputs>

Approve Access Request

Team **underwriting** requests access to data product **Benefit**.

As data product owner, you can approve or reject this request to grant access to your data product.

⚠ Attention needed

Data Governance AI checked this access request with your data governance policies and found these potential policy violations:

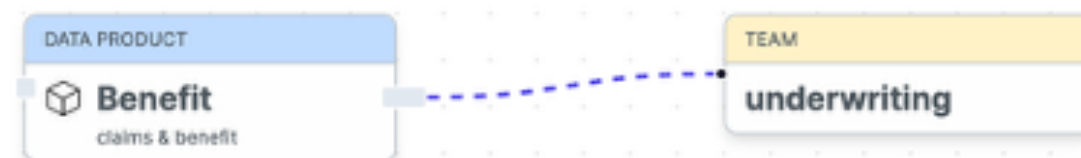
- **Datenschutzerklärung für Versicherungsverträge:** The access request involves analyzing historical claims data, which includes PII such as beneficiaries' names, reasons for claims, and payment information. This may violate the data contract's restrictions on handling PII. (Source: section 4.2 Besonders schützenswerte Personendaten) *Suggestion: Ensure PII is anonymized or aggregated before analysis.*

AI can make mistakes. Check important info.

Approve

Reject

enlarge



In summary: Data Governance perfectly fits to the strengths of LLMs and can help in federation data management.

Thank You! Want to learn more?

- Talk to me at this event, or later via LinkedIn [/in/simonharrer](#)
- Try out cli.datacontract.com with an ODCS data contract

- And, of course, give us a star on Github at

github.com/datacontract/datacontract-cli

github.com/bitol-io/open-data-contract-standard

