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# Information technology — Governance of IT — Governance of data —

## Part 1: Application of ISO/IEC 38500 to the governance of data

*Technologies de l'information — Gouvernance des technologies de  
l'information — Gouvernance des données —*

*Partie 1: Application de l'ISO/IEC 38500 à la gouvernance des données*



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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) form the specialized system for worldwide standardization. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC participate in the development of International Standards through technical committees established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of technical activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual interest. Other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work. In the field of information technology, ISO and IEC have established a joint technical committee, ISO/IEC JTC 1.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO and IEC shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

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For an explanation on the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/IEC/JTC 1, *Information technology*, Subcommittee SC 40, *IT Service Management and IT Governance*.

## Introduction

The objective of this document is to provide principles, definitions and a model for governing bodies to use when evaluating, directing and monitoring the handling and use of data in their organizations.

This document is a high level, principles-based advisory standard. In addition to providing broad guidance on the role of a governing body, it encourages organizations to use appropriate standards to underpin their governance of data.

All organizations use data, and the major proportion of this data is stored electronically across IT systems. With the advent of cloud computing, the realization of the potential of the “internet of things” and the increasing use of “big data” analytics, data is becoming easier to generate, gather, store and mine for useful information. This flood of data brings with it an urgent requirement and responsibility for governing bodies to ensure that valuable opportunities are leveraged and sensitive data is protected and secured.

This document has been prepared to provide guidelines to the members of governing bodies to apply a principles-based approach to the governance of data so as to increase the value of the data while decreasing the risks associated with this data. ISO/IEC 38500 provides principles and model for the governing bodies of organizations to guide their current use and to plan for their future use of Information technology (IT), and it is that document that is applied here.

As with ISO/IEC 38500, this document is addressed primarily to the governing body of an organization, and will equally apply regardless of the size of the organization or its industry or sector. Governance is distinct from management and thus we are concerned with evaluating, directing and monitoring the use of data, rather than the mechanics of storing, retrieving or managing the data. That being said, an understanding of some data management and techniques is outlined in order to enunciate the possible strategies and policies that could be directed by the governing body.