Standard Innovation

FREE WORKBOOK

Data strategy for music rights investors

A simple framework for setting your data strategy for anyone investing in music rights.

Inside:

The data strategy loop · How to choose your first use case · A ready-to-use strategy canvas

SEPTEMBER 2026

STANDARD-INNOVATION.COM

Thank you for downloading this workbook

Here are a few details that will help you get the most out of it.

Who it's for

If you're investing in or operating music rights and you know better data would make a difference but you're not sure where to start, you're in the right place.

You're probably part of a small team covering a lot of ground, and you don't want a big expensive project that takes years to pay off.

This will help you set a strategy that fits your business, starting small enough to show value early and laying foundations you can build on.

How to use it

This workbook accompanies episode 1 of our Catalog Value Chain series, so we recommend watching that first.

- Don't skip the introduction. It brings together the catalog value chain and our approach to data strategy from the episode.
- Work through it with colleagues who know the data and the day-to-day processes.
- Adapt it to fit your business. The questions are there to help you work things through.
- Use the work to make the case for budget, agree on next steps and check your progress.

CONTENTS

What's inside

The catalog value chain 4

The data strategy loop 5

How to get started 6

Choosing your first use case 7

The data strategy canvas 8

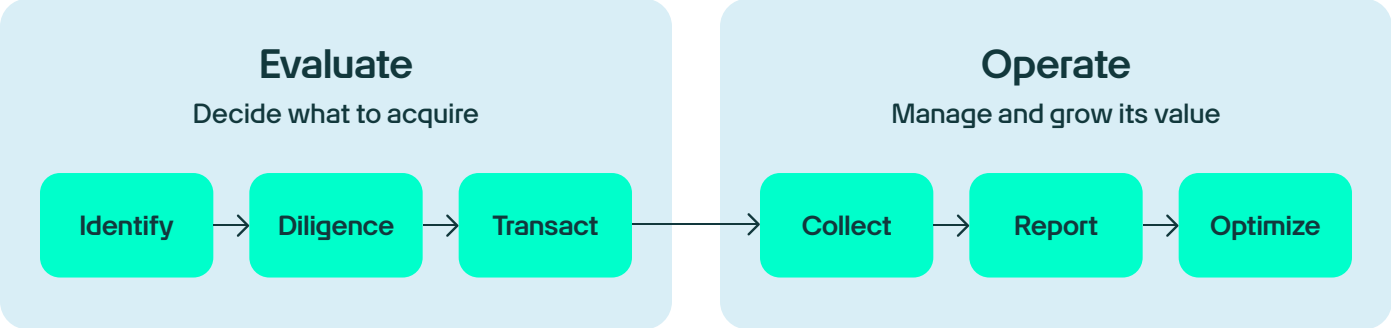
The canvas, filled example 9

Where we can help 10

The catalog value chain

Before setting your data strategy, it's useful to map out the processes it needs to support.

Our **catalog value chain** maps the full lifecycle of a catalog investment, before and after you acquire it, so you can see where improvements would create business value.



Creating symmetry across evaluate and operate

We've split the chain in two because teams typically use one set of processes and tools to evaluate a catalog, and another to operate it. That makes it harder to connect the underwriting case to actual catalog performance, and means the same work gets built twice.

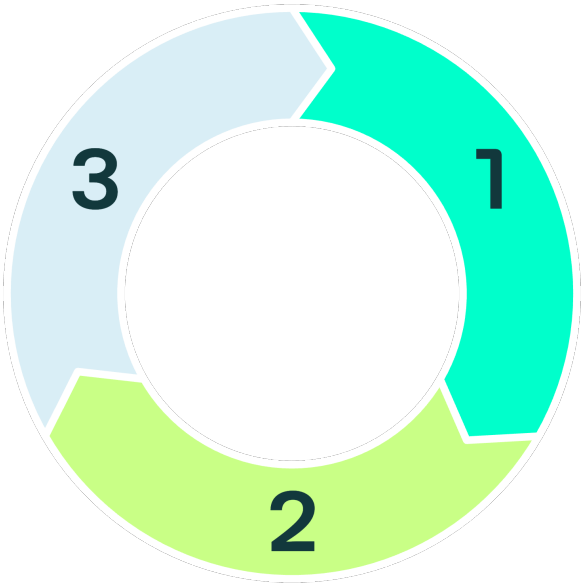
We recommend **creating symmetry between the two**, so the same data and tools support both. The foundations you lay then serve more than one part of the business. For example, the parsers you build for diligence can feed your reporting once you own the catalog.

What better data processes let you do

- **Deploy capital faster.** Move from a messy data room to an informed investment decision sooner, and put committed capital to work.
- **Operate at scale.** Manage more catalogs without multiplying manual work.
- **Report with confidence.** Give teams and stakeholders a reliable view of how catalogs are performing.

The data strategy loop

The right use cases, data and technology create a virtuous loop of progress.



Technology required

Identify the technology needed to access and use that data and deliver the use case.

Business outcome

Set out what the business is trying to achieve and narrow it down to a focused first use case.

Data required

Identify the data needed to deliver the use case, where it lives, what format it is in and who owns it.

You don't need to solve every problem at once. Start with one outcome, then work out the data and technology you need to deliver it. Each use case gives you foundations to build on, making the next improvement easier to achieve. As your ambitions grow, your data and technology will evolve with them.

How to get started

You'll find a blank canvas on page 8, a guide below to what each field is asking for, and a completed example after that.

First, the broader picture		These two you answer for the business as a whole.
1	**Ambition and case for change**	Why are you doing this as a whole? That's your north star. One clear sentence or paragraph, and make sure everyone's on board with it.
2	**Where to focus**	Three to five things you want to focus on, in priority order. Then pick one use case to start with. The next page covers how to choose it.
Then, your first use case		Everything from here is answered for the first use case.
3	**Objectives**	What does this use case need to achieve? Clear and measurable, and kept narrow so you can show value early.
4	**Budget**	What funds have you actually got available, and what's the return? That's your business case, and it scopes everything that follows.
5	**Data required**	What data do you need to deliver this? What is it, where is it, who owns it, and what size and format is it.
6	**Capability gaps**	Current versus future state. What can you do today, and what do you want to be able to do that this use case will solve for.
7	**Team**	Who owns what. This is the people, who's doing the work and who looks after it once it's running.
8	**Tech direction**	What does the technology need to do, and is it the right fit for your business? Tip: Own what's strategic and rent what's commodity.
9	**Roadmap**	Detail your first use case, then line up use cases two and three.
10	**Not doing**	Write the things you are deliberately not doing, so everyone can see what's out of scope.

Choosing your first use case

Once you know what you're trying to achieve, you can start with your first use case. It's almost always the most important one, because it sets the foundations for everything that follows.

Three things to look for

- **Focused scope.** Keep it small and well defined. This is where scope creep starts - it's far easier to add things than to take them away.
- **Early value.** Small enough to deliver quickly, because showing value early is what builds confidence and momentum.
- **Reusable foundations.** Something whose foundations the next use case can stand on, rather than something that serves only one part of the business.

Why the first build is the heaviest lift

The first use case is usually the heaviest lift. You're putting the team, strategy and technology in place, so the upfront effort will be disproportionate to the immediate value. Everyone involved should understand that some of this investment lays the foundations for future use cases, making them easier to deliver.

EXAMPLE

USE CASE 1

Royalty statement processing

HEAVIEST LIFT

Build parsers for eight statement formats covering roughly 80% of royalty income, and establish the supporting infrastructure.

→

USE CASE 2

Expanded statement coverage

EASIER TO EXPAND

Add parsers for the long tail of smaller payors, using the same infrastructure.

→

USE CASE 3

Revenue trend visualisation

BUILD ON THE FOUNDATIONS

Use the processed royalty data to understand how revenue is changing over time.

The data strategy canvas

Prepared by _____ Date _____

Broader picture

01
Ambition and case for change
One clear sentence or paragraph

02
Where to focus
Three to five, in priority order. Then pick one to start with

Your first use case

03
Objectives
Two or three, each one measurable

04
Budget
Funds available, and the return

05
Data required
What, where, who owns it, what size

06
Capability gaps
Current versus desired capability

07
Team
Who owns what

08
Tech direction
What does the technology need to do? And is it the right fit?

09
Roadmap
Detail for this use case, then list the next two

10
Not doing
Things you are deliberately excluding for this use case

The canvas, filled example

Broader picture

01

Ambition and case for change

We want to evaluate more catalogs each quarter, and report confidently on the ones we own, without growing the team at the same rate.

Today evaluation and operations run on different tools, so joining the underwriting case to actual performance is far harder than it should be.

02

Where to focus

1. Royalty statement processing. Chosen because it supports the diligence we do before we buy and the reporting we need once we own it.
2. Data room evaluation and gap analysis.
3. Portfolio level performance reporting.

First use case: Royalty statement processing

03

Objectives

Parse the eight statement formats that carry roughly 80% of royalty income.

One royalty table that both diligence and reporting read from, so the case and the performance come from the same numbers.

04

Budget

$XX,XXX

Take into consideration investment in existing technology and team.

05

Data required

Statements from eight payors in CSV, XLSX and PDF. Three years of history.

On a shared drive and in individual inboxes. Head of Royalties controls access.

06

Capability gaps

Currently rely on third party and manual processing.

No internal data team.

No data infrastructure.

Desire to stand up infrastructure to own our own data.

07

Team

Head of Royalties owns the data and signs off the output for existing catalogs. An investment analyst for new ones.

Partner builds the parsers and the pipeline.

Project owner: COO.

08

Tech direction

Cloud hyper-scaler (AWS, Azure or GCP), to decide.

Use existing BI tool.

Databricks for ETL.

Build deterministic parsers and store parsed outputs.

09

Roadmap

THIS USE CASE

Month 1: storage and warehouse up, data model agreed, first two parsers.

Month 2: remaining six parsers.

Month 3: validation against source statements, handover, first reporting cut.

NEXT

Then use case two, the long tail of smaller payors on the same parsers.

Then use case three, visualising trends in revenue.

10

Not doing

The long tail of smaller payors, downstream royalty payments, third party data augmentation.

Where we can help

We help music rights holders and investment funds plan and build the data and technology they need to deploy capital faster, operate at scale and report with confidence.

FREE TWO-HOUR WORKSHOP

If you would like a hand getting started, we offer a free two-hour workshop with your team. We work through your objectives, map your value chain and rank the challenges, so you finish with a first use case and our recommendation on where to begin.

Request a workshop