

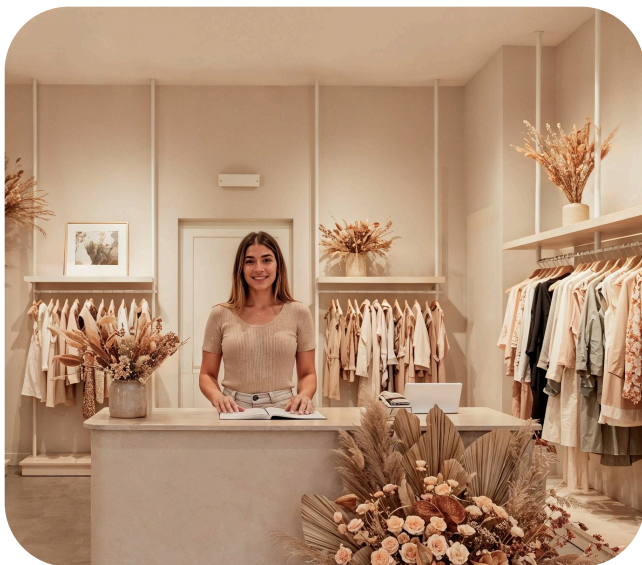
Data & AI Maturity Assessment for a Global Luxury House

Transforming a fragmented data landscape into a governed, value-led AI roadmap through a structured, evidence-backed architecture assessment.

Overview

QBurst conducted a structured, 6-week evidence-based assessment across five Data & AI dimensions to evaluate the client's enterprise architecture alongside its shift to a composable, headless architecture.

- **Structured Evidence-Based Assessment:** Evaluated 20 sub-dimensions on a 5-level maturity scale, cross-checking findings across stakeholder interviews and architecture documentation.
- **Two-Horizon Sequenced Roadmap:** Translated maturity gaps into a sequenced roadmap covering Horizon 1 (quick wins within 12 months) and Horizon 2 (optimal state in 1 to 2 years).
- **Impact-Driven Maturity Uplift:** Established a single, shared baseline for business and technology leaders, projecting the largest maturity uplift in governance and data foundations to support high-value use cases like intelligent search and AI-augmented clienteling.



Client Profile

A French global luxury fashion house with a strong international boutique presence. Renowned for premium craftsmanship, exclusivity, and elevated customer experiences, the brand serves high-value clientele across major luxury markets worldwide.

Challenges

Despite executive interest in AI, the organization faced five key foundation gaps:

- **AI Driven by Perception, Not Outcomes:** Initiatives were selected for brand impact or senior sponsorship rather than clear revenue, cost, or client value links.

- **High-Friction Access to Data:** Client, product, and operational data were locked in regional and divisional silos, relying on manual extracts and reactive quality fixes.
- **Experimental AI Without Operational Rigor:** Lacked a standard path from model development to production, with no model monitoring or drift detection.
- **Governance Gaps Around GenAI:** No acceptable-use policy, bias checks, or explainability standards existed to protect creative assets, brand IP, and client data.
- **Capability Concentrated Outside:** AI skills were fragmented, vendor dependence was high, and AI literacy across business and creative teams was limited.

QBurst Solution

We delivered a time-boxed assessment in four stages across five specific Data & AI dimensions, cross-referencing interview findings against written documentation:

Assessment Stages

1. **Discover:** Stakeholder interviews across digital, data, platform, and business teams; review of architecture docs, in-flight plans, and transformation drivers.
2. **Assess:** Scored 20 sub-dimensions across a 5-level maturity scale (Awareness, Active/Pilot, Operational, Systemic, Transformational), verified by two independent evidence sources.
3. **Gap Analysis:** Outside-in evaluation of core challenges, observed gaps, and required target capabilities.
4. **Target States & Roadmap:** Modeled As-Is, quick wins (12 months), and optimal (1–2 years) state.

Data & AI Maturity Framework Dimensions

- 1. Strategy:** Assessed alignment of AI to business KPIs, funding model, use-case portfolio and prioritization, and executive sponsorship.
- 2. Data:** Ease of data access, data quality management, feature reuse, lineage, and lifecycle management.
- 3. Engineering:** Data science environments, MLOps and deployment automation, model monitoring, inference scalability.
- 4. Governance:** AI usage policy, risk and bias assessment, explainability, regulatory readiness (e.g., EU AI Act).
- 5. People:** AI talent model, organizational structure, AI literacy, change management.

Key Findings & Core Insights

Data & AI emerged as the least mature layer across Experience, Platform, Infrastructure, and Data & AI, but carried the greatest potential upside.

- **Strengths to Build On:** Strong executive sponsorship, a scalable cloud infrastructure capable of absorbing variable inference loads, and momentum from in-flight global client and product data programs.
- **Gaps to Close:** Lack of ROI/P&L linkage, siloed datasets, manual quality fixes, missing MLOps/monitoring, unmanaged "shadow AI" risks, high vendor dependence, and low internal AI literacy.
- **Core Insight:** The primary barrier to AI value was not technology, but the absence of governance, trusted data, and a value-based selection model.

The Two-Horizon Roadmap

Architected a "strict rules, flexible implementation" principle—a region-governed, federated lakehouse with non-negotiable global security, privacy, and quality standards alongside regional market autonomy.

Horizon 1: Quick Wins (Within 12 Months)

- Introduce a feasibility vs. business value scoring model for AI use cases with business owner-signed KPIs.
- Publish a GenAI acceptable-use policy and establish an AI ethics forum with clear rules for large language models.

- Stand up a centralized, governed data platform with role-based access control leveraging in-flight data programs.
- Launch an AI literacy program catering to tech teams, managers, and creative/content prompting skills.
- Assign change agents to every AI initiative from day one.

Horizon 2: Optimal State (1 to 2 Years)

- Implement automated data quality checks, a feature store, and standardized business metrics.
- Establish standard data science environments with version control and CI/CD pipelines for model training/deployment.
- Deploy model monitoring dashboards covering accuracy, usage, and drift.
- Build bias checks and explainability into ML pipelines alongside legal reviews of AI contracts.
- Form a hub-and-spoke AI center of excellence to set central standards while enabling local regional delivery.

Impact

- **Single, Shared Baseline:** Provided business and technology leadership with one evidence-based view of Data & AI maturity across divisions and regions.
- **Largest Projected Uplift:** Moved Data & AI from the least mature architecture layer to broadly on par with the rest of the enterprise estate.
- **Investment-Ready Priorities:** Established a defensible, gap-linked basis for sequencing and funding enterprise technology decisions.
- **Clear Path from Pilots to Production:** Connected core data foundations directly to high-value use cases like intelligent search, real-time personalization, and AI-augmented clienteling.
- **Transformation Baseline:** Established the official baseline for the client's multi-year target architecture and investment roadmap.