Foreword

When deciding whether to invest time and effort in reading any text, readers are facing an essential dilemma: Will I get more out of this than I invest reading it? In the data quality world, readers are faced with essentially three types of reference materials. First, there is some pretty vacuous practitioner guidance. This follows the form: Five Easy Steps to Achieve Data Quality. The fundamental problem is that almost nothing about data quality/governance is easy, and readers would be well advised to consider the cost of such advice before basing courses of action upon it. The second set of reference materials come from the academic literature, and while (in my humble opinion) more useful than the first, it is just not accessible to folks who are attempting to make a difference. Examples of these might include titles such as: “Improving data quality and data mining using multiple, noisy labelers.” Essentially the guidance requires an advanced degree to even determine whether it might be applicable. In addition, there is a pretty large gap with many academic practitioners solving problems in theory that have no basis in the real world.

Now there is a third option: Information Quality and Governance for Business Intelligence. This book is a combination of useful guidance and case studies that will help both practitioners find solutions to their immediate challenges and researchers find focus for their academic efforts. The editors have done a terrific job of selecting a number of specific foci at the intersection of practice and research and obtained some very articulate contributors to produce a highly readable yet rigorous contribution at the interaction of data quality and governance. However, let us not forget that all the work in these important areas would be for naught if we were not able to achieve some desired outcome. Whether you call it Business Intelligence, Advanced Analytics, or just useful organizational outcomes, the purpose of governing good quality data has got to be something tangible or one can ask the question: What was it all for? And while it is often said that the most useful outcome of a BI effort is another deeper question, readers can rest assured that taking the time to read Information Quality and Governance for Business Intelligence will lead them towards that next insight at a cost that will be well worth their time!

Peter Aiken
The Data Management Association International, USA
Peter Aiken, PhD, is acknowledged to be a top data management authority. As a practicing data manager, consultant, author, and researcher, he has been actively attempting to improve this area for more than twenty-five years. His expertise has been sought by some of the world’s most important organizations, and his achievements have been recognized internationally. In addition to examining more than 500 data management practices, he has spent multi-year immersions with organizations as diverse as the US DoD, Deutsche Bank, Nokia, Wells Fargo, and the Commonwealth of Virginia. As President of DAMA International (dama.org), his practice leadership is unquestioned. He has been a member of the Information Systems Department at Virginia Commonwealth University’s Business School since 1993 and jointly owns, with the University, Data Blueprint (.com) an award winning, data management/IT consulting firm. His latest book is The Case for the Chief Data Officer: Recasting the C-Suite to Leverage your most Valuable Asset.