



IAB Digital Data Solutions Certification Examination Blueprint

As you prepare for the Digital Data Solutions Certification (DDSC) examination, you are strongly encouraged to review the examination blueprint. This document presents the major content areas on the exam, and the share of questions each content area represents.

This certification program has been developed for Digital Data Solutions Managers working in digital media. A Digital Data Solutions Manager manages existing data supplies, expands product portfolios, and protects data users by establishing data policies, creating new data products, developing client data solutions, and activating data integrations. She often evaluates the integrity of data, builds business cases, and collaborates cross-functionally.

The DDSC credential is built on the belief that a successful and knowledgeable digital media data professional should have a foundational understanding of these four areas:

Establishing Data Policies. Companies with successful digital media data operations require clear policies governing its related rules and processes, to ensure data usefulness, integrity, and security. The data solutions professional works to define these policies, through her knowledge of the digital media ecosystem, the regulatory and legislative environment, and her organization's business goals. She evaluates data sources to determine fit with existing company policies and performs risk assessments to determine the financial, legal, and business impact of non-compliance. Where gaps exist, a digital data solutions professional will define steps to obtain policy compliance, educate relevant teams on data policy compliance, and communicate status to internal and external stakeholders. Finally, this professional audits products for data policy compliance and takes steps to help make products compliant.

Managing Data Supply. Once data policies are established and operationalized, a logical next step is determining which data the company will use. A successful digital data solutions manager defines her company's data needs, through knowledge of its business goals, existing data assets, external technologies, and market trends. She then selects data sources, scopes technical integrations, sets internal and external expectations and negotiates data-related contracts. Once these third-party relationships are established, the digital data solutions professional facilitates the ingestion and integration of data and maps the data to an appropriate organizational taxonomy. The digital media data professional manages quality assurance of the data supply and validates data integrity. Finally, she needs to know how to handle the business end of managing data supply, such as calculating and executing payouts with partners and monitoring and optimizing her company's related P&L.

Creating Data Products. In addition to comprehending the mechanics and business of data supply, a successful digital media data professional may also be asked to help create new data products. This involves defining market needs, performing feasibility analyses, building product requirements, and helping to determine a go-to market strategy for these new products. Sometimes, a customized solution is desired to meet a client's specific data needs. In these cases, a data solutions manager should know how to assess the opportunity and determine whether to pursue it.

Activating Data Integrations. This section relates to the process of successfully routing and connecting sets of data. A digital data solutions manager must scope integration requirements, execute integrations, and identify and resolve any technical issues. She also must effectively report on data delivery – by defining KPIs, designing reports to track them, and distributing those reports to relevant stakeholders.

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The following blueprint summarizes the content areas that will be tested, as well as their approximate weighting on the 100-question exam:

CONTENT AREAS		PERCENT OF EXAM
A	Establishing Data Policies	15%
1	Define Policies	
2	Evaluate Data Sources	
3	Perform Risk Assessment	
4	Define Steps to Obtain Compliance	
5	Educate Teams on Policy Compliance	
6	Communicate Policy Compliance	
7	Make Products Compliant	
8	Audit Products for Policy Compliance	
B	Managing Data Supply	35%
1	Define Data Needs	
2	Select Data Sources	
3	Scope Technical Integration	
4	Set Internal and External Expectations	
5	Negotiate Data Contracts	
6	Ingest Data	
7	Map Data to Taxonomy	
8	Manage Data QA	
9	Validate Data Integrity	
10	Calculate and Execute Pay-Outs	
11	Monitor and Optimize P&L	
C	Creating Data Products	35%
1	Define Market Data Needs	
2	Perform Feasibility Analysis	
3	Build Product Requirements	
4	Determine Go-To-Market Strategy	
5	Assess Customized Solution	
D	Activating Data Integrations	15%
1	Scope Integration Requirements	
2	Maintain Data Integration	
3	Report on Delivery of Data	

Detailed Content Outline

The following outline provides further detail around the knowledge, skills, and tools supporting the duties, tasks, and steps undertaken by digital data solutions managers working in digital media. This is the most comprehensive picture of the content that will be tested on the DDSC examination:

Duties, Tasks, and Steps				Knowledge	Skills, Abilities, and Attributes	Tools, Equipment, and Resources
A			Establishing Data Policies			
	1		Define Policies			
		a	Catalog current legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of digital ecosystem knowledge of the regulatory and legislative environment knowledge of the value of varying data types knowledge of your organization's business model knowledge of industry advocacy trends knowledge of legal language and concepts knowledge of vertical sensitivity (i.e., health, pharma, financial) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> attention to detail ability to use legal language and concepts ability to interpret legal language and concepts strategic acumen communication skills intellectual curiosity authoritative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> internet legal counsel contract templates privacy policies data governance frameworks compliant industry associations (NAI, IAB, DAA, OPA, ECCO) HIPAA, GLB, COPPA
		b	Catalog industry regulations			
		c	Catalog industry standards			
		d	Assess corporate policies			
		e	Influence corporate policies			
	2		Evaluate Data Sources			
		a	Evaluate if data fits into existing policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of data ownership knowledge of first, second, and third party data knowledge of identifiers (PII vs non-PII) knowledge of data attributes knowledge of data derivation (declared, inferred, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organizational skills attention to detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> data providers spreadsheet software database software internet
		b	Create new data policy			

Duties, Tasks, and Steps				Knowledge	Skills, Abilities, and Attributes	Tools, Equipment, and Resources
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of device specific policies knowledge of business policies knowledge of intended data usage 		
	3		Perform Risk Assessment			
		a	Evaluate financial impact of non-compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of data security knowledge of data security and handling best practices knowledge of industry MSA best practices knowledge of data integration methodologies knowledge of data use cases knowledge of industry contracts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organization skills attention to detail ability to apply risk management framework sense of urgency willingness to escalate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> industry contracts legal Research Ghostery Charles Firebug Chrome developer tools
		b	Evaluate legal impact of non-compliance			
		c	Determine public perception (PR) Risk			
		d	Simulate scenarios			
		e	Assessment of internal corporate data security practices			
		f	Assessment of external partner data security practices			
	4		Define Steps to Obtain Compliance			
		a	Form a compliance committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of methods for dealing with non-compliance knowledge of internal and external policies knowledge of how products function knowledge of how processes function knowledge of third-party auditors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ability to work with teams project management skills authoritative ability to stay objective impartiality 	
		b	Perform gap analysis			
		c	Influence process compliance			
		d	Execute technical fix			
		e	Select third-party auditors			
		f	Conduct third-party review			
	5		Educate Teams on Policy Compliance			

Duties, Tasks, and Steps				Knowledge	Skills, Abilities, and Attributes	Tools, Equipment, and Resources
		a	Create policy documentation for teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of policies knowledge of effective communication channels knowledge of how policies impact varying audiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communication skills writing skills documentation skills ability to use layman's terms ability to talk to different audiences patience ability to express the importance of policies cross-collaboration skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communication channels training developer training resources
		b	Conduct training on policies			
		c	Provide updates on policy changes			
	6		Communicate Policy Compliance			
		a	Create documentation around policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of communication channels knowledge of marketing communications knowledge of internal and external partners knowledge of the intended audience knowledge of lobby groups and associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communication skills writing skills cross-collaboration skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PR templates or boilerplate language PR resources
		b	Generate press release			
		c	Update policy statement			
		d	Allow for user opt-out			
	7		Make Products Compliant			
		a	Obtain list of products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of product architecture knowledge of policies knowledge of technical resources knowledge of technical processes knowledge of client needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> project management skills coding skills technical skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> policy documents Jira or pivotal tracker project management tools product documentation
		b	Assess level of product compliance			
		c	Conduct a gap analysis			
		d	Create a product roadmap			
		e	Identify resources			

Duties, Tasks, and Steps				Knowledge	Skills, Abilities, and Attributes	Tools, Equipment, and Resources
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of product management processes 		
	8		Audit Products for Policy Compliance			
		a	Scope the audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of auditing methods knowledge of testing methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ability to read technical documents attention to detail coding skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> product materials data flows access to source systems data architecture diagram access to policies
		b	Create test cases			
		c	Evaluate the level of compliance			
B			Managing Data Supply			
	1		Define Data Needs			
		a	Identify market trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of first, second, and third party data knowledge of the market knowledge of client needs knowledge of the digital ecosystem knowledge of the tech-scape knowledge of data attributes knowledge of user identification methods (cookie, device ID, IP address) knowledge of deterministic matching knowledge of probabilistic matching knowledge of the technical limitations knowledge of data sources 	analytical skills data analysis skills strategic acumen	IAB data usage and control primer spreadsheet software internet customer records internal data industry publications product documentation
		b	Identify trends in client demand			
		c	Identify trends in technology			
		d	Examine current data assets			
		e	Compare current data assets with market availability or opportunities			
		f	Conduct gap analysis			
	2		Select Data Sources			

Duties, Tasks, and Steps				Knowledge	Skills, Abilities, and Attributes	Tools, Equipment, and Resources
		a	Identify data sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of data providers (e.g., lotame, neustar, eXelate) knowledge of data sellers (e.g., V12, polk, dunhumby) knowledge of primary data sources (e.g., point of sale, auto registration, site visitation) knowledge of data collection methodologies knowledge of online and offline data sources knowledge of the process of aggregating online and offline data knowledge of attribution methodologies knowledge of tags knowledge of basic statistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> analytical skills strategic acumen decision making skills ability to discern the fidelity of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> spreadsheet software
		b	Assess compliance of data sources			
		c	Test data quality			
		d	Test data overlap			
		e	Verify match rate			
		f	Review data provider's taxonomy			
		g	Validate segments			
		h	Review data provider collection methodology			
		i	Perform data provider SWOT analysis			
	3		Scope Technical Integration			
		a	Review data source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of tags knowledge of integration methodologies knowledge of data migration processes knowledge of use cases knowledge of functional requirements knowledge of technical requirements knowledge of current infrastructure knowledge of needed infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prioritization skills ability to translate business requirements into technical requirements ability to interpret business implications of technical decisions ability to develop economic models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> access to engineering API documentation server-to-server documentation servers
		b	Review data constraints			
		c	Determine the frequency with which data should be ingested (i.e., adhere to SLAs)			
		d	Select method of ingestion (e.g., batch, pixel, server to server)			
		e	Exchange documentation			

Duties, Tasks, and Steps				Knowledge	Skills, Abilities, and Attributes	Tools, Equipment, and Resources
		f	Determine data volume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of financial limitations knowledge of compliance frameworks knowledge of downstream data usage 		
		g	Determine internal storage capacities			
		h	Determine server capacity implications			
		i	Conduct cost-benefit analysis			
		j	Determine feasibility of integrations			
		k	Draft SOW			
		l	Define project plan			
	4		Set Internal and External Expectations			
		a	Communicate timelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of roles and responsibilities of stakeholders knowledge of internal processes knowledge of client needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> project management skills ability to be realistic communication skills ability to keep a client happy prioritization skills ability to escalate sense of urgency political skills ability to estimate opportunity costs collaboration skills troubleshooting skills problem-solving skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> project management software communication tools (email, phone)
		b	Communicate budgets (cost)			
		c	Communicate dependencies			
		d	Communicate required resources			
		e	Communicate financial forecast (profit)			
	5		Negotiate Data Contracts			

Duties, Tasks, and Steps				Knowledge	Skills, Abilities, and Attributes	Tools, Equipment, and Resources
		a	Determine who's contract is being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of contract processes knowledge of procurement processes knowledge of common legal clauses knowledge of baseline economics knowledge of common billing terms and conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> negotiation skills communication skills legal acumen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> legal
		b	Define contract terms			
		c	Obtain contract template			
		d	Obtain internal signoff			
		e	Share contracts with other party			
		f	Review contracts			
		g	Obtain signatures			
	6		Ingest Data			
		a	Monitor traffic of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of integration methodologies knowledge of data formats knowledge of tags knowledge of expected results knowledge of downstream data usage knowledge of SQL knowledge of how to build a test case knowledge of data validation methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HTML proficiency decision making skills attention to detail communication skills ability to set expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> integration tools coding language querying language
		b	Verify the complete file was received			
		c	Check the file format			
		d	Confirm proper implementation			
		e	Communication ingestion status			
		f	Communicate with data partner			
	7		Map Data to Taxonomy			
		a	Identify appropriate taxonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of organizational taxonomies knowledge of marketing data points knowledge of the nature of data types knowledge of downstream data usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ability to interpret taxonomies ability to categorize data based upon a hierarchy ability to create taxonomies ability to maintain the hygiene of taxonomies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> taxonomy spreadsheet software
		b	Access taxonomy			
		c	Apply mapping rules to the data based on the taxonomy			
		d	Update taxonomy based upon data			

Duties, Tasks, and Steps				Knowledge	Skills, Abilities, and Attributes	Tools, Equipment, and Resources
		e	Create new taxonomic categories		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> attention to detail 	
	8		Manage Data QA			
		a	Verify data format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of client needs knowledge of tags knowledge of sync knowledge of ingestion methods knowledge of server logs knowledge of large files 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> troubleshooting skills communication skills attention to detail ability to manipulate large files ability to work with servers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> data specifications Linux
		b	Test the ingestion of data			
		c	Dedupe data			
		d	Confirm match rates meet expectations			
		e	Confirm total volume meets expectations			
		f	Optimize data sync			
		g	Perform ongoing monitoring of data			
	9		Validate Data Integrity			
		a	Examine partner content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of data hygiene knowledge of what constitutes clean user data knowledge of what constitutes bot traffic knowledge of data origin knowledge of what datasets should look like knowledge of data norms knowledge of downstream data usage knowledge of organizational policies knowledge of industry policies, regulations, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ability to evaluate data sources based on attributes ability to create a data confidence index ability determine if data meets expectations detail oriented communication skills common sense decision making skills documentation skills ability to discern the fidelity of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> databases human source QA automated verification tools trusted data set benchmarks
		b	Verify tags are specified correctly			
		c	Validate ID			
		d	Validate attributes that are associated with an ID			
		e	Determine if data meets expectations			
		f	Communicate validation results			
		g	Communicate cleansing techniques (so one can sell cleaner data)			

Duties, Tasks, and Steps				Knowledge	Skills, Abilities, and Attributes	Tools, Equipment, and Resources
				standards, best practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of whether or not the data source has any business rules knowledge of the impact of key decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ability to evaluate the value of data ability to use databases 	
	10		Calculate and Execute Pay-Outs			
		a	Review commercial agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of partner-level pricing agreements knowledge of internal billing systems knowledge of industry terminology knowledge of industry pricing models knowledge of industry best practice knowledge of financial or AP process knowledge of contractual language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ability to use spreadsheet software math skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> billing systems spreadsheet software
		b	Verify agreement terms have been met			
		c	Apply commercial terms			
		d	Review revenue expectations			
		e	Send invoices or payments			
		f	Report payouts			
	11		Monitor and Optimize P&L			
		a	Record revenue and cost by partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of opportunity costs knowledge of overall business model knowledge of optimization strategies knowledge of revenue attribution logic knowledge of organizational P&L metrics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ability to prioritize partners ability to interpret contracts ability to manage a budget math skills ability to calculate P&L strategic acumen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> spreadsheet software finance department reporting tools
		b	Analyze revenue and cost by partner			
		c	Perform forecasting activities			
		d	Re-evaluate with partners that do not meet expectations			

Duties, Tasks, and Steps				Knowledge	Skills, Abilities, and Attributes	Tools, Equipment, and Resources
		e	Identify ways to grow high performing relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of organizational budgets 		
		f	Prioritize partners based on profitability or inventory			
C			Creating Data Products			
	1		Define Market Data Needs			
		a	Read industry publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of the tech-scape knowledge of industry trends knowledge of commercial implications knowledge of internal capabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ability to build models ability to conduct financial forecasts forecasting skills predictive skills strategic acumen salesmanship ability to communicate a vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> peer review spreadsheet software financial modeling software industry publications internet BRD template
		b	Communicate with external clients, partners and providers			
		c	Receive feedback from internal market-facing sources			
		d	Document market data needs			
		e	Generate business requirement documents			
	2		Perform Feasibility Analysis			
		a	Perform cost estimation analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of integration costs knowledge of technology trends knowledge of capacity building knowledge of organizational core competencies knowledge of organizational policies knowledge of organizational market position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ability to estimate costs ability to think outside of the box ability to build a business case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> spreadsheet software
		b	Define a minimally viable solution			
		c	Review applicable policies related to products			
		d	Evaluate potential revenue			
		e	Evaluate data assets			
		f	Evaluate technology capabilities			

Duties, Tasks, and Steps				Knowledge	Skills, Abilities, and Attributes	Tools, Equipment, and Resources
		g	Evaluate human resources			
	3		Build Product Requirements			
		a	Document draft requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of the product lifecycle knowledge of product development methodologies knowledge of organizational stakeholders and decision makers knowledge of internal vetting and approvals process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> decision making skills ability to draft a product requirement document ability to write concisely ability to collaborate cross-functionally product management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> stakeholders wireframe product requirement template product management tools engineers designers
		b	Solicit feedback on requirements			
		c	Identify beta partners			
		d	Refine requirements from key stakeholders			
		e	Solicit approvals on requirements from key stakeholders			
		f	Deliver BRD to product team			
	4		Determine Go-To-Market Strategy			
		a	Define the audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of who the audience is knowledge of competitive intelligence knowledge of product specifications knowledge of product capabilities knowledge of operational workflow knowledge of localization knowledge of market awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communication skills storytelling skills writing skills analytical skills empathy training or teaching skills forecasting skills reporting skills qualitative analysis skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> presentation software industry publications spreadsheet software agency survey software
		b	Define use cases			
		c	Define distribution channels			
		d	Establish KPIs			
		e	Create messaging and materials			
		f	Train external-facing teams			
		g	Obtain feedback			
		h	Revise strategy per feedback			
	5		Assess Customized Solution			
		a	Define client's custom data needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of how organization's conduct cost benefit analyses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ability to build a business case influential conviction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> management support policy support
		b	Perform gap analysis			

Duties, Tasks, and Steps				Knowledge	Skills, Abilities, and Attributes	Tools, Equipment, and Resources
		c	Determine if resources are from operations or engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of product roadmaps knowledge of available organizational resources knowledge of organizational receptiveness knowledge of the market knowledge of the competitive landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fortitude decision making skills forward thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> spreadsheet software presentation software
		d	Hire outside resources			
		e	Determine ease and willingness to deliver custom solution			
		f	Determine potential organizational impacts of incubating the custom solution			
		g	Kill, incubate, or execute the solution			
D			Activating Data Integrations			
	1		Scope Integration Requirements			
		a	Identify where the data needs to go based on specified requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of partner documentation knowledge of specs knowledge of integration methods knowledge of expected results or outcomes knowledge of timelines for integrating data knowledge of policies knowledge of file transfer protocols knowledge of tag capabilities knowledge of API requirements knowledge of ID syncing across disparate data sets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> project management skills communication skills technical competencies negotiation skills ability to identify potential points of failure ability to perform a risk assessment ability to influence prioritization ability to manipulate and combine big data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> project management software channels of communication access to internal and partner systems access to teams (sales, engineering, technical, etc.) tools for querying big data
		b	Select technical integration with partner			
		c	Establish expectations with partners			
		d	Develop project plan with all stakeholders			
		e	Communicate plans to all stakeholders			
		f	Execute integration			
	2		Maintain Data Integration			

Duties, Tasks, and Steps				Knowledge	Skills, Abilities, and Attributes	Tools, Equipment, and Resources
		a	Verify with partner the setup is performing to expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge of SLAs • knowledge of contractual expectations • knowledge of timelines • knowledge of the difference between specs and expectations • knowledge of performance • knowledge of product functionality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • patience • communication skills • attention to detail • ability to understand SLAs • ability to interpret contractual language • willingness to escalate • technical acumen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitoring tools • dashboards • contracts • specs • scope
		b	Troubleshoot technical issues			
		c	Resolve technical issues			
		d	Confirm SLA adherence			
	3		Report on Delivery of Data			
		a	Define the stakeholders for reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge of who reports are being delivered to • knowledge of success metrics • knowledge of success criteria • knowledge of client needs • knowledge of baseline metrics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ability to identify outliers • ability to identify anomalies in data delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reporting software
		b	Define KPIs			
		c	Design report structure and delivery mechanism			
		d	Communicate results			
		e	Manage expectations			

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