

DATA MANAGEMENT JOURNEY AT GENENTECH



ERIK BIERWAGEN

Principal Bioinformatics Software Engineer, Genentech, a Member of the Roche Group

Erik Bierwagen, Ph.D., has been active in scientific data management for his entire professional career. For the past 16 years while he has been at Genentech, he has been focusing on informatics solutions that help the organization both be more efficient in day-to-day operations and better leverage all of its data for scientific insights and better decision making. He has fully embraced the concept of FAIR data as a guiding principle for his work. He loves tackling big, challenging problems, both operational and informatics-related, that have vexed the organization for many years, and coming up with creative, impactful solutions.

Please describe your role at Genentech

My role is providing informatics solutions that broadly meet the needs of Research in the areas of in-vivo research, general laboratory informatics, functional genomics, and operations and support. My group strives to ensure that our data and information can be used seamlessly and impactfully across the variety of use cases within research.

You are very actively involved in data management, data science at the company. What are the key areas you are currently working on within this space?

The key business areas my group focuses on are In-vivo research, functional genomics, and general laboratory informatics. We are working on integrating the systems and the data so that both physical objects and information can seamlessly move across the wide-ranging areas that we are working on in Research. Key technological and strategic areas that we are working on are using event driven models to stitch together commercial and bespoke solutions.

Are there any challenges you & your team are trying to overcome in this area?

Breaking down the operational and backend silos that have been created over the course of the past few decades. We want to get beyond the traditional interpretation of Conway's law that systems' structure represent the organizational structure of the company. We need to consider our Research organization as a single organization and have our systems reflect that unified organization.

In your opinion, what are the most important factors behind a company's successful data strategy?

First of all, I think it is having the mindset and the courage to tackle problems across the whole organization and solve them at the broadest level possible. Second, I think it is critical to truly collaborate with the scientists and leaders so that value is brought at all levels, from those using the systems on a day-to-day basis all the way to senior leaders who need the systems for critical decision making. Such collaboration requires that both parties, informatics and science, are held accountable for the success of the project, and that the workflows and systems work seamlessly to support each other.

What would you like to achieve at the 18th Annual Pharma IT & Data Congress?

I would like to share our recent successes, and also learn from other people's and organizations successes. I think it would be fantastic to find areas for collaboration with other attendees.

Erik will be presenting in our 'Cloud Computing, Data Management, Storage, IoT' Stream at the Pharmatec Series.

For more information on the event [CLICK HERE](#)

