

# Customer Case Study: Vattenfall

Vattenfall reduces regulatory risk and powers new projects with Alation



- **Industry:** Energy & Utilities
- **Headquarters:** Solna, Sweden
- **Interesting Fact:** Vattenfall is aiming for net-zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2040

## Business Need: Harness the power of siloed data

[Vattenfall](#) is one of Europe's largest and most forward-thinking power generation and distribution companies. Their vision is to provide "fossil-free living within one generation." Fossil-free living primarily focuses on decarbonizing electricity production, but Vattenfall has developed an innovative process to power steel production with hydrogen instead of coal.

Vattenfall works and innovates in multiple energy sectors in Sweden, the Netherlands, Denmark, the UK, and Germany. To manage these complex operations, Vattenfall collects, analyzes, and bases decisions on data. The organization uses data to predict how much renewable energy from wind and solar will enter the grid, forecast the best timing for energy trading, and set consumer energy prices in an ever-fluctuating market.

Data is also critical to ensuring compliance with regulations, including the GDPR, in multiple countries and the EU, which imposes massive fines for the unauthorized use of personal data. Failure to comply with national energy and operational reporting requirements can also result in fines in the millions of euros.

## Business Results



**81% faster project development, from 3 months to 3 weeks**



**300 monthly users gain deeper data insights**

Vattenfall's data landscape had grown increasingly complex over the years. Although operating across borders and energy sectors required data sharing and collaboration, [data was locked in silos](#), and knowledge about the data was locked in the heads of individual SMEs. Leaders at Vattenfall realized they were missing deeper data insights and risking regulatory fines because people could not easily find trusted data for their reporting needs. To remain competitive, profitable, and innovative, Vattenfall needed to become more data-driven.



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**Sebastian Kaus**

**Data Governance Leader, Vattenfall**

## Objectives

Before they could fully harness the power of their data, Vattenfall first needed to:

- Create a single repository for trusted data
- Actively govern data to protect it from misuse
- Establish an enterprise-wide [data culture](#)

## Solution: A single source of truth for data

Vattenfall chose Alation as its [data intelligence platform](#) for [data search and discovery](#), collaboration, and data governance. Vattenfall curated the metadata from several business units and approximately 50 data sources—including SAP, [Snowflake](#), and [Databricks](#)—to create a one-stop shop for data. A business glossary helps define standard terminology to ensure that all users have a common understanding of critical business terms. SMEs can now share their expertise through articles in the catalog, speeding up the transfer of knowledge throughout the company.

“Before Alation, we saw a lot of silos and individual documentation—and the risks and inefficiencies associated with that,” says Sebastian Kaus, data governance leader at Vattenfall. “After implementing Alation, we see more collaboration, and we see more discussions. For the enterprise, Alation is the single source of truth.”

[Active data governance](#) features in Alation help ensure the proper use of data. People are guided to use data compliantly and educated in-workflow on the policies relevant to the data they handle. Vattenfall uses the catalog to implement policies and controls that prevent data misuse, including personally identifiable information (PII) tagging and masking.

“I always compare [data governance](#) to health and safety regulations,” says Kaus. Like safety rules that keep employees safe, data governance protects data. “It’s rules and regulations or best practices and guidelines that help us process our data in a safe and compliant way while ensuring that we also get the most value from it.”



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**Sebastian Kaus**  
**Data Governance Leader, Vattenfall**

## Results: Democratized, governed data improves productivity and reduces risk

Today approximately 300 people each month achieve faster data insights at Vattenfall because they can easily find, understand, and collaborate around the trusted data they find in Alation. Kaus notes that developers can launch new projects within weeks instead of months. "With Alation, we see a great increase in efficiency," he says. "We have clarity on our most important sources, especially the critical ones."

Collaboration sparks innovation. According to Kaus, "People...reach out to the colleagues listed on the data source. They can use it for something new or improve existing solutions by simply contributing with their knowledge."

Vattenfall uses Alation's data governance features to better manage risk. By surfacing policies and privacy tags in Alation, Vattenfall prevents misuse of customers' personal information and avoids millions of euros in GDPR fines. "The GDPR requires us to know where our data sits and how it should be processed," notes Kaus. "Because we store that information in Alation, it becomes much easier for us to be compliant." Alation also helps Vattenfall meet regulatory requirements that call for [quality data](#).

Insight, collaboration, innovation. That's what a strong data culture now enables at Vattenfall. "All data is knowledge, and knowledge is power," concludes Kaus. "It's important to us to provide access to and knowledge about data so people can make informed decisions. Alation provides exactly that."

## About Vattenfall

[Vattenfall](#) is one of Europe's largest energy producers and retailers. Headquartered in Solna, Sweden, Vattenfall has provided electricity in Sweden for over 100 years. Today, Vattenfall operates in Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, and the UK. The company has approximately 20,000 employees and 6.7 million customers. The company's stated goal and motto is "Fossil-free living within one generation."

### Data Environment

- Microsoft Azure
- Snowflake
- Databricks
- SAP