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DATA INTEGRATION
and Governance for
the **MODERN**
ENTERPRISE
2021

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Best Practices Series

Enhancing
DATA
INTEGRATION
and Governance for
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ENTERPRISE

Best Practices Series

Data flowing in from an abundance of sources brings many challenges. The tasks associated with managing data in a variety of formats and contexts can be overwhelming. In addition, there's the need to ensure that data is timely and sources are trustworthy. In other words, data integration has become everybody's job.

There are three main business considerations when taking in the data needed for today's digital initiatives—that the data can support real-time or near-real-time digital business initiatives, that it meets compliance standards, and that it is trustworthy and up-to-date for business purposes.

In the process, data management itself is changing. It's no longer about standing up databases and populating data warehouses; it's about making the data the constant fuel of the enterprise, accessible to all who need it. As a result, organizations need to be able to ensure their data is viable and available.

With the massive move to digital that took place recently, plus the continuing rapid evolution to reliance on digital workflows and customer interactions to stay competitive, it's time to bring data governance in line with the realities of today's intensifying data scene. A majority of enterprises in a TDWI survey found that 66% of executives said their data governance programs were not ready for the challenges of the 2020s. Issues encountered include rogue datasets (72%), managing self-service data practices (56%), ensuring quality in data and metadata (53%), convincing employees to adhere to governance policies (46%), keeping the data governance bureaucracy lean and agile (45%), and creating governance policies that are clear and usable (43%).

Solutions found to be popular in addressing today's data governance issues include software tools for automating processes and procedures (72%), data cataloging (71%), data

lineage (68%), metadata (67%), master data (64%), and data quality (62%), this also according to the TDWI survey.

The following are ways to develop and support modern data governance approaches to align data to business requirements:

Make data governance a business priority. Digital data governance should be a part of all corporate planning and decision making. Too often, it has been managed as an afterthought or as a one-off initiative. There should be collaboration and communication between all parts of the enterprise, as the data coming in from many sources is likely being maintained and validated by many teams from different parts of the organization. Ideally, the CEO and other executive leaders should be promoting data governance and data analytics initiatives.

Take the lead with data governance efforts. Digital data governance requires

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collaboration and input from all data owners and sources inside and outside the enterprise, and there is only one category of individuals who can manage all aspects of data leadership—data professionals such as data managers, administrators, and engineers. Along with the participation of data professionals, a comprehensive digital data governance initiative needs the involvement of people with various roles from across the enterprise. This includes C-level executives as well as line-of-business leaders.

Adopt forward-looking methodologies that bring greater cohesiveness to all aspects of the data lifecycle. It's critical to automate the flow of data through the enterprise. With the rise of big data and sophisticated applications that select and run on this data, there is too much conducted manually. Vendors have developed more automated solutions to address data challenges, but enterprises need to remain a step ahead. DataOps, an emerging methodology, ensures a flow of curated data across the enterprise, enabled by the automated and collaborative integration of data engineering and operations management functions.

Implement the latest technology to support digital data governance. As enterprises move to greater reliance on digital processes, they require technology tools, platforms, and approaches that can move information quickly and effectively through their organizations and out to decision makers. To accomplish this, it's important to support ease of access, as well as intuitive processes for data change management. This includes technologies and interfaces to identify errant information. Core to this is a data catalog that facilitates the just-in-time

discovery of data assets as required by the business.

Focus on continuous improvement. As with all aspects of delivering IT services, data managers must strive to maintain a loop that incorporates ongoing user feedback and can adjust for data selection, quality, and timeliness. There are many moving parts in a responsive data architecture, extending from data lakes to data warehouses to storage. Even with a high-quality, well-tuned system, the business around it, as well as relevant compliance mandates, will constantly be changing and shifting. Technology and circumstances will evolve and the data infrastructure needs to keep pace with them.

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Identify the exceptional decision makers and those who will be effective stewards of data. There are many people and departments that touch data as it moves through the enterprise—it's important to enable those who can bring value to data to also have easy access, such as subject matter experts and top-level decision makers. Digital data governance helps provide decision makers the data needed for their jobs.

Educate and enlighten the enterprise on the advantages of digital data governance. Next-generation applications—modern data analytics, AI, and machine learning—bring new powers of insight to decision makers. Data governance advocates need to promote the advantages such technologies bring, as well as the role of governance in ensuring these capabilities. At the same time, data governance will mitigate investments in expensive technology investments that may deliver questionable value.

Measure all aspects of data activities. There needs to be an accounting of the value data is delivering to the enterprise weighed against the cost. Compensation and incentive systems should also reflect the gains made by innovation through data analytics. This may call for evaluations beyond traditional ROI and KPI metrics to enable data-driven organizations to quickly understand the impact of decisions and initiatives.

THRIVING IN THE DIGITALLY ENRICHED 2020s

Forward-looking data integration and governance initiatives will go a long way in enabling today's enterprises to succeed in the 2020s' economy. There's no question that data—enhanced with leading-edge technologies such as advanced analytics, AI, and machine learning—is the best path to business success in the digitally enriched 2020s. Evolving to digital data governance requires attention to the many aspects of data management and provisioning, along with compliance with corporate policies and procedures and global regulatory mandates. ∎

—Joe McKendrick

How Bad Data Quality is Costing Your Organization Money…and How to Fix It.

While 90% of C-Level executives across the Fortune 2000 cite data as a critical business success factor, only 5% of them actually trust the data they have.

When trusted data is available quickly and in a useful and accessible format, it provides the foundation for intelligent decision-making. Unfortunately, far too many firms are weighed down by bad data that negatively impacts the bottom line and—from an opportunity perspective—the top line.

One of the key challenges data and ops teams face to overcome this 'data gap' is demonstrating the business value of improving data quality to executive stakeholders. Building a business case depends on finding actionable insights into where data challenges exist, understanding how to remediate them, and mapping the action plans to business improvement outcomes.

To meet this challenge, Syniti, the world leader in Enterprise Data Software, recommends its Data Jumpstart: a packaged software solution that provides turnkey improvement recommendations to help organizations understand the impact of data quality in driving growth, increasing margin, speeding new product introductions, and maximizing the value of major initiatives such as M&A and Digital Transformations.

Data Jumpstart is a fast, cloud-based data 'x-ray' of a business that can deliver fast data quality insights and visibility into related business upside. Syniti calls this capability **inside-out data intelligence**. Its findings connect data quality to actionable insights that help drive financial and operational performance. A unique offering in the data industry, every Data Jumpstart customer will leave this engagement with a focused strategy for how to create positive business impacts through data.

Powered by the world's first knowledge-based data management platform, the Syniti Knowledge Platform, Data Jumpstart gives organizations insights into precisely where data quality is impacting their business. With embedded best practices, proven data quality reports, and cultivated data intelligence dashboards, businesses can expect a clear roadmap for how future data quality improvement initiatives can impact key business metrics such as EBITDA and working capital.
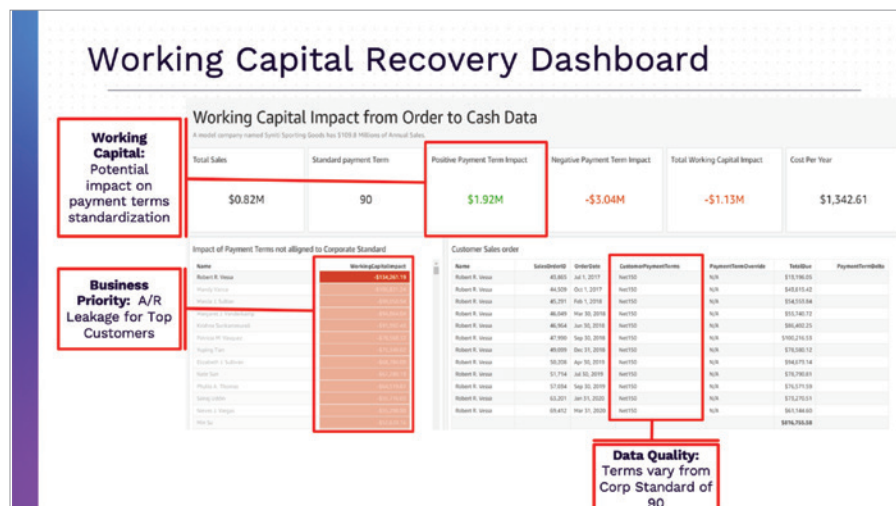
By framing data quality transformation programs in business terms rather than 'data-speak,' Data Jumpstart creates that much-needed link between data quality improvements and financial, operational, and quality KPIs to build a compelling business case for action. With knowledge of where your biggest data deficits are, and a business case primed with empirical analysis to show the anticipated benefits, you'll have the key to unlock the resources to make your organization's data an asset you can trust and leverage.

Click here to learn more about how you can put data quality to work with Syniti Data Jumpstart. Data Jumpstart is a low-risk, high-impact way to identify business opportunity in your enterprise data in just three weeks.

Click here to connect with a Syniti Expert now. Ask us about the improvement recommendations you can get from this packaged, cloud-based software solution.

Click here to access a free analyst report: *Bad Data is Killing Your Business Transformation Efforts: A C-Suite Guide to Stop Talking and Start Doing.* ∎

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