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UNIFIED DATA

Tailoring a Big Data Strategy to Your Business



John Edwards, Technology Journalist & Author
6/4/2013
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As big data drives ever deeper into the business IT mainstream, organizations of all types and sizes are pondering their options. While there's no such thing as a one-size-fits-all big data strategy, several basic principles apply to virtually all businesses and will help lead to a smoothly functioning and highly productive big data initiative.

Understand big data

One doesn't have to be a big data expert to launch a big data initiative, yet it certainly helps to know as much as possible about relevant technologies and methodologies before deploying new systems and upgrading current data resources. Fortunately, the web is packed with big data information and insight, starting with Big Data Republic (of course) and extending to vendor white papers, case studies, tutorials, and an array of other content. Most important, check to see how other businesses in your field use big data.

Some degree of business-specific big data knowledge is essential for getting the most out of a big data project, primarily because information will flow in from many new types of data sources. Since social media and other emerging information channels weren't previously tapped for insight, a company that doesn't understand how to properly use the data it's receiving may fail to capture and store potentially valuable data for long-term analysis.

Set big data objectives

Embracing a new technology like big data analytics without having some clear goals in mind is kind of like putting a jet into the air before selecting the flight's destination. Businesses decide to leverage big data for a number of reasons, including new product development, enhancing customer service, building brand awareness, managing product revision cycles, and improving business processes. IT needs to work closely with key business managers to ensure that big data and business goals are on the same track and to identify areas stand to benefit the most from big data analytics.

A good big data strategy begins with an outlined path that defines the project's scope and goals, followed by a set of requirements based on specific business functions and targets. A big data strategy also needs to define how legacy IT systems will be replaced or repurposed as more funds are directed toward newer technology.

Plan for integration

Businesses that want to fully leverage big data's potential need to analyze new information sources within the context of the company's overall data environment. By integrating big data with traditional data, businesses stand to gain a full 360-degree view of the extended enterprise.

Leveraging big data to its full potential requires integrating Hadoop and other big data tools with traditional database environments, adding new data sources to all of the corporate information the business has built up over the years.

Use accurate data

Recent research conducted by Aberdeen Group shows that data accuracy is fundamental to business success. As reported in [Computerworld](#):

The research firm found that best-in-class companies (as defined by Aberdeen metrics) reported that 94 percent data accuracy was their organizational goal and that 1 percent improvement in data management practices was needed to reach this level. Industry-

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More from John Edwards



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average companies, on the other hand, reported a data accuracy goal of 91 percent, and required an 18 percent improvement in their data management to achieve this target. "Laggards," meanwhile, reported a data accuracy goal of 80 percent and needed 40 percent improvement in their current performance to reach that plateau.

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AlphaEdge, User Rank: Exabyte Executive
6/27/2013 | 3:42:59 PM

Re: clean data is a start to accurate data

I agree. Data quality is more important than the volume of data. Especially given that many organizations did not realize the importance of collecting some of the data in their early years. That could make their analytics run into some type of bias if the history of data is employed.

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SharCo, User Rank: Petabyte Pathfinder
6/10/2013 | 7:41:09 AM

Re: clean data is a start to accurate data

Sometimes, more of something doesn't usually mean that it's good or for the best. One example is data. Sure, you could terabytes and terabytes of data stored, but without some way to parse and analyze all that, then it's basically useless and a waste of resources to gather and store.

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Debera Harward, User Rank: Exabyte Executive
6/7/2013 | 7:03:33 PM

Re: clean data is a start to accurate data

Saul, You are absolutely correct data is useless until and unless it is clean . Collecting large amounts of data just for the purpose of using it in the business is of no use unless it is accurate , free of errors , free of duplicates etc . One can use algorithms for data cleansing as well.

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MDMConsult, User Rank: Exabyte Executive
6/7/2013 | 4:22:26 PM

Re: Tailoring Big data strategy

Intel recently launched with Supermicro, Big Data solutions with Intel Distribution for Apache Hadoop Software. The latest Hadoop-optimized system designs significantly reduce overall power consumption to help protect the environment and save customers money on their energy bills. Intel will have to rival competition in performance.

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Saul Sherry, User Rank: Blogger
6/6/2013 | 12:07:53 PM

Re: clean data is a start to accurate data

Good point, competition is the key element here, to come out on top you need your data to be in the best shape. So it might be a pain to get it cleansed and sanitized, but in the context, it's necessary to assume your competition are putting in the same effort.

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MDMConsult, User Rank: Exabyte Executive
6/6/2013 | 8:34:10 AM

Re: Tailoring Big data strategy

@netcrawl Especially in the initial emergent phases, being big data is a complex area are important. We have to define its objectives, identify these challenges and analytics to measure. Applying questions in the early phases is crucial.

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MDMConsult, User Rank: Exabyte Executive
6/6/2013 | 8:18:13 AM

Re: clean data is a start to accurate data

High performance for big data strategy requires having the right dedicated staff in the 21st century. Managing the right data culture, organization management standards, goals and partnerships for a company leads to even greater success. To stay ahead of competitors,

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organization today should be able to meet demands, whether by executing internal company objectives or being ahead of the overall growing big data market. better than rivals.

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Saul Sherry, User Rank: Blogger
6/6/2013 | 6:46:15 AM

Re: clean data is a start to accurate data

Bad data will only amplify the noise, it's true... one of the first steps on any data project needs to be cleansing - but will it ever be clean enough for a big data project?

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Saul Sherry, User Rank: Blogger
6/6/2013 | 6:45:15 AM

Re: Tailoring Big data strategy

It's kind of getting boring, but it's one we are going to have to smash if we are to make the most of big data (and small data, depending on the organisation)...

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Almost calls for a team of specialists who can come in and do both the cultural and IT part of the deal.

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mharden, User Rank: Exabyte Executive
6/5/2013 | 9:33:46 PM

clean data is a start to accurate data

Big data analytics is only going to be as good as the data that goes into it. I wonder how much of the inaccurate big data issues are due to dirty data.

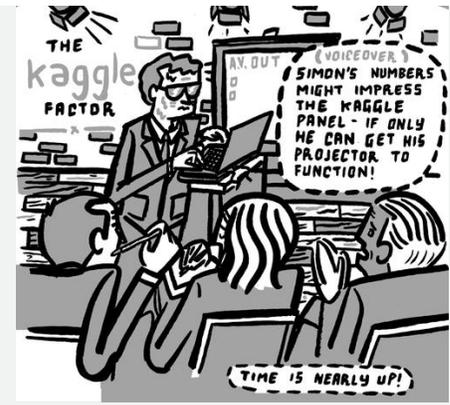
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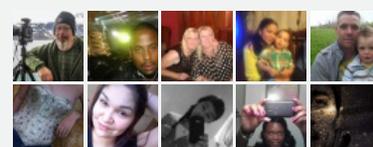
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