

Embracing big data

What businesses can do to reign in and leverage information

It's a wonderful thing: with the advent of big data, companies can now access, analyze and leverage a flood of knowledge, and use it to improve decision making, performance and ideally revenues. Take the success story of online bookseller Amazon: their information gurus successfully tracked, gathered and analyzed the data not only of what their customers bought, but how they shopped, and created a sophisticated method to predict what books would sell most, putting many of their competitors out of business. Big data, it is important to stress, is not just for ebusiness; it's set to transform the offline business world just as profoundly. Think of it: we can now measure and therefore manage more precisely than ever before through the information we capture. We can make better predictions and smarter decisions. We can conduct better business, led by data and analysis rather than by old-fashioned gut instincts and guess work.

Yet harnessing big data is easier said than done. Extracting, storing and using that data to serve your customers and your business can be costly and challenging, especially when your legacy systems no longer have the capacity or functionality.

What are the key steps to conquering this avalanche of information – and realizing the benefits? Here are three recommendations to get you started:

1. Develop a sound strategy

Big data's power does not negate the need for vision or human insight. The best application of this insight would certainly be in the development of a data strategy for your organization based on your core business goals. Think of it as a simple plan for how data, analytics, frontline tools, and people will come together to create business value. The power of a plan is that it provides a common language allowing your senior executives, technology professionals, data scientists, and managers to discuss where the greatest returns will come from as well as pinpoint priorities and establish a starting point for your efforts. The development of a data governance strategy addressing privacy issues may also serve you well.

2. Assemble a strong team

Data scientists are one important part – but not all you need. Equally integral on your big data team will be subject matter specialists from your different business units who understand your goals, customers and data objectives, as well as developers and “data jockeys” from IT who know how to model and manipulate data using a mix of traditional SQL and newer big data toolsets. Ideally, your team members will have one of four essential skills: business analysis, solid analytical/statistical experience, data technology expertise, and visualization skills, which bring the data to life.

3. Invest in the right solution

The other key piece of the puzzle is settling on a strong solution that will help you retire outdated applications, reduce costs and allow you to leverage your data to its maximum value. HPE, a trailblazer in this new world of data has recently introduced their Structured Data Manager. It takes a unique approach to storing, managing and extracting value from data based on a robust selection of pre-built integrations to cloud storage, comprehensive information management systems and high performance analytics platform. The selection of a data management solution of this kind, offering excellent flexibility and quick return-on-investment, should be a priority for your organization

For more information and guidance on managing big data, visit [Orasi Software](#)

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Orasi provides quality engineering integration to our partners and customers, acting as the customer's single point of contact throughout the full lifecycle. Our team examines each customer's needs and selects the best mix of software quality engineering tools and processes to fit those needs.

Three Big Data Mistakes Not to Make

Avoiding the pitfalls in the mega-information age

Big data is here – and it is going to keep getting bigger. By 2020 there will be eight billion people on Earth, using 20 billion devices and communicating with 100 billion connected things¹. By that time, an estimated 1.7 megabytes of new information will be created every second for every human being on the planet².

Yet, despite all of the buzz, industry insights and large investments being made, CIOs and other leaders too often lose sight of their ultimate objective. Gathering a ton of data, after all, is meaningless without the right strategy, knowhow and tools. Many organizations get off on the wrong foot, failing to connect their efforts to their core business goals and values – and taking shortcuts that may compromise results. With a little awareness, thankfully, they can correct course, and begin to master the data deluge.

Here are three common mistakes companies make when trying to harness big data

¹ https://www.hpe.com/ca/en/solutions/empower-data-driven.html?jumpid=ps_xrzt3yevqf_AID-510018643&gclid=CLGvzqqwuc4CFUddMgodZtUGwQ&gclsrc=ds

² <http://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2015/09/30/big-data-20-mind-boggling-facts-everyone-must-read/#2bf8922a6c1d>

1. Failure to think differently

What worked in the past, doesn't always work in the present. When it comes to big data, it's tempting to think that "big" simply means large volumes and more transactions – and apply the same strategies. Many big data analytics initiatives, however, involve semi-structured and unstructured information that needs to be managed and analyzed in a manner very different from structured data in enterprise applications and warehouses. New thinking – and a new solution set is certainly needed to gather, filter, store, integrate and leverage a considerable percentage of your big data.

2. Failure to answer business questions

There's so much data being generated and collected, it can be overwhelming. CIOs and IT leaders too often lose sight of business requirements and their ultimate business objectives because they get caught up in the big data infrastructure planning. Big data teams need to work closely with business leaders to ensure tech aligns with corporate goals. Smart companies will start with the business questions they have and then look to the data for answers. It's a focused approach. Doing it the other way -- looking at your huge pile of data and trying to figure out what it all means is a surefire waste of time and effort.

3. Failure to invest in the right technology

As legacy databases continue to increase beyond their limits, and more companies face risks from data security to spoliation, a range of attractive solutions have entered the market. Going for the quick fix, the cheapest option, or the one with the shiniest bells and whistles will not serve your interests, and could compromise your data goals. Due diligence is needed to select the right solution that will retire outdated applications, reduce costs and allow you to leverage your data to its maximum value. HPE, a trusted name and trailblazer in the big data world has recently introduced their Structured Data Manager. It takes a unique approach to storing, managing and extracting value from data based on a robust selection of pre-built integrations to cloud storage, comprehensive information management systems and high performance analytics. This is the kind of data management solution that will off the best return on your investment.

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