A Road Map for Enterprise Data Management

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Chapter 13. The Road Map

We are pleased to announce our new **Road Map for Best Practice** in Enterprise Data Management

**What?**

- A Road Map with the **six Stages** shown on the left.

**Why?**

- Many large organisations do not have an agreed Strategy for Enterprise Data Management.
- 30% of all Projects fail because there are no links between Projects and Strategy.

**How?**

- Delivered over the Internet and consists of these Components:
  1. Best Practice Guidelines, Databases and Answers to Questions
  2. Templates and Tutorials
  3. A Self-Assessment Checklist and Questions to help you position an organisation at a Stage in the Road Map
  4. Participation in our Database Answers Community

- **Email me** if you have a **Question**.

You can check out **the Slideshow** of features of the Best Practice Road Map.
Chapter 2. Data Governance

Introduction

This Introduction to Data Governance is presented as a series of Questions and Answers. If you have a Question that is not addressed here, please feel free to email us your Question.

The material is taken from our White Paper entitled "An Approach to a Data Management Data Strategy (June 6th)"

What.1: What is Data Governance?

Data Governance is concerned with ensuring Compliance with corporate policies and procedures for Data Management.

It can be defined simply as ‘Doing things right’ by complying with the appropriate rules, policies and procedures.

These will all be designed to make sure that data used throughout the Enterprise is good-quality data, certainly when it appears in Performance reports.

It’s worth checking out Wikipedia on Data Governance

What.2: What is Data Governance?

Data Governance can be defined simply as ‘Doing things right’ in Enterprise Data Management by complying with the appropriate rules, policies and procedures.

These will all be designed to make sure that data used throughout the Enterprise is good-quality data, certainly when it appears in Performance reports.

It’s worth checking out Wikipedia on Data Governance

What.3 : What is Best Practice?

Successful Data Governance requires successful completion of many Tasks, most of which are not technical and all of which are complex and challenging. The process of initially establishing Data Governance will always take much longer than anticipated. Therefore, management of expectations is very important.

It is necessary to aim for collaboration and buy-in from the start.

This buy-in must be top-down and bottom-up. The top-down buy-in manifests itself by, for example, a realization that ‘Data Quality is an Enterprise Issue’. The bottom-up buy-in is important because quality of Source data is critical and must be good, otherwise any Data Governance issue will fail.

Auditing, for example, of database changes, is a basic requirement.
What.4: What is Data Lineage?

Data Lineage can be defined as being able to trace the derivation of all items of data that appear in any important Performance Reports and Management Information.

That includes:
- Who owns the original source data
- What validation and transformations are applied to the data in its life cycle

Why.1: Why is Data Governance important?

- The CEO needs to be able to put hand-on-heart and say 'This Data is Good'
- It is also very important that Users have confidence in the data in their Reports.

Why.2: Why should my organisation have a Data Governance function?

The existence of a Data Governance function is a measure of the maturity of Data Management within an organization. The first steps should be to establish a thin slice of Data Governance from top to bottom.

If you are active in this area, you should consider joining a professional organization. This helps you to network with your peer group and will encourage you to keep up-to-date in knowledge and professional practice.

Here are two organizations that are playing active roles in Data Governance:

i) The Data Governance Institute - Membership starts at $150 for individuals.

ii) The Data Governance and Stewardship Community of Practice - $150/year. It includes coverage of some very useful Case Studies.

It also maintains a Data Governance Software Web Site and a Sarbanes-Oxley Web Site.

How.1: How do we get started?

- Establish Policies, Procedures, Roles and Responsibilities
- Look for candidates
- Aim for results in 6 months and interim results in 3 months.

How.2: How do I verify the derivation of all data (the Data Lineage') in my Reports?

This requires the use of an Information Catalogue that will record the source, processing steps and final delivery in a Report. The transformations in the processing Steps must be specified in both the processing language, for example SQL, and in plain, unambiguous English so that the Data Owner can sign-off on the Data Lineage.

This 20-page PDF document describes the Road Map from the Data Governance Institute.
How.3 : How do I get a top-down view of Data Management in my organisation?

Answers to this question are at different levels:
- Data Governance at the top-level
- Master Data Management at the mid-level
- Data Integration at the mid-level
- Data Owners and Sources at the lowest level
- Information Catalogue mandated as the central repository of all this information
- Appropriate procedures in place to control all of these factors.

How.4 : How do I verify the derivation of all data (the Data Lineage') in my Reports?

This requires the use of an Information Catalogue that will record the source, processing steps and final delivery in a Report. The transformations in the processing Steps must be specified in both the processing language, for example SQL, and in plain, unambiguous English so that the Data Owner can sign-off on the Data Lineage.
Chapter 3. BI+ Performance Reports

http://www.databaseanswers.org/bi_plus_performance_reports.htm

What.1: What are Business Intelligence and Performance Reports?

- This Stage produces and delivers Performance Reports to management
- It must be responsive to requests for change.
- Users requirements are always evolving
- Therefore the approach and supporting software must be flexible

- Report Templates supported by the appropriate Generic software are required.

- This Stage delivers Performance Reports that meet the requirements of all levels of management.
- There is a need to be responsive to requests for change.
- User Requirements are always evolving.
- Therefore the approach and reporting software tool must be flexible.
- A sensible approach is to develop Reporting Templates supported by the appropriate Generic Software.

What.2: What is Best Practice?

Performance Reports take data from Data Marts and many of the same considerations apply when it comes to determining Best Practice.

One difference is that is necessary to have a clearer understanding of the business operations and how the right kind of Performance Reports can provide insight to the business users.

This leads to the need for a management education process to be in place so that the evolution of Performance Reports can be planned in a logical manner, from basic summaries, to KPIs, Dashboards and so on.

Why.1: Why is this Stage important?

- The value and benefits of Reports are always a major part of the justification of the cost of designing and installing a Database.

How.1: How do we get started?

- Here’s a Kick-Start Tutorial :-
- Step 1. Assess the level of Maturity of the Users concerning KPIs, Dashboards, etc.
A Road Map for Enterprise Data Management

- Step 2. Check availability of Master Data Models and Data Marts
- Step 3. Check availability of Report Specifications and SQL Views for Reports
- Step 4. Tailor the Approach accordingly
- Step 5. Aim for results in 6 months and interim results in 3 months

- [http://www.databaseanswers.org/bi_plus_performance_reports_questions.htm](http://www.databaseanswers.org/bi_plus_performance_reports_questions.htm)

If you have a Question that is not addressed here, please feel free to [email us your Question](mailto:). 

How.2 : How do we measure progress in Business Intelligence ?

Check for :-
- a Statement of User Requirements
- ideally with specifications of Templates
- Software Design Patterns.

How.3 : How do I combine Excel data in my Reports ?

Data in Excel Spreadsheets is structured in tabular format which corresponds exactly to the way in which data is stored in relational database.

Also Spreadsheets are commonly used and the data frequently needs to be integrated with other data within an organization.

Therefore we would expect to find a wide range of solutions are available to solve this problem.

Here is a small sample :-
- An ODBC connection can be established for a spreadsheet.
- Informatica allows Spreadsheets to be defined as a Data Source.
- Microsoft’s SQL Server Integrated Services provides for Excel to be defined as a Data Source.
- Oracle provides a facility to define EXTERNAL table which can be Spreadsheets.
- Salesforce.com provides their Excel Communicator.

How.4 : How do you always meet your Chief Exec Report requirements ?

In order to respond to this situation appropriately, it is necessary to have an Information Catalogue, a Data Architecture and Data Lineage.

The solution then involves the following Steps :-
- Step 1) Produce a draft Report for the Chief Execs approval
- Step 2) Trace the lineage and perform a ‘gap analysis’ for all new data items.
- Step 3) Talk to the Data Owners and establish when and how the data can be made available.
- Step 4) Produce a Plan and timescale
- Step 5) Review your Plan with the Chief Exec and obtain this agreement and formal sign-off.
- Step 6) Deliver !!!
How.5: How do I produce Integrated Performance Reports for senior management?

The key action here is to establish a unified Reporting Data Platform. This will involve aspects previously discussed, including MDM, CMI and will certainly involve Data Lineage.

Senior Management will want to take a view of the integrated data and not focus on details of derivation. Therefore, we have to follow the MDM approach with Data Lineage for each item in the Integrated Performance Reports.

Key Performance Indicators ('KPIs')

Question: What are Key Performance Indicators ('KPIs')?

Key Performance Indicators ('KPIs') are in common use and represent one aspect of Best Practice.

A variation of this approach are Key Quality Indicators, ('KQIs') which are used to monitor and manage Data Quality.

Dashboards and Scorecards are often used in association with KPIs.
Chapter 4. Data Marts

- http://www.databaseanswers.org/data_marts.htm

What.1 : What is a Data Mart?
- Data Marts are a Repository of summary, total and detailed data to meet User Requirements for Reports.
- They always have a standard structure, called Dimensional Data Models, which means that it is possible to use Generic Software and adopt a common Approach based on Templates. Describing a Data Mart is a good way to get User buy-in because they can easily be explained in a logical manner which is very user-friendly.
- A Data Mart is a Repository of total and detailed data to meet User Reports requirements.
- It always a standard structure which means can have generic software and a common approach based on Report Templates. A Data Mart design is simple and can be described to get User buy-in.

What.2 : What are Data Mart Templates?
- Data Marts have a common design of **Dimension** fields and **Facts**.

Templates are important because they represent a tremendous Kick-Start approach to the design of Data Marts for a specific business area. They are produced by exploiting the common design of Dimensions and Facts.

A range of Data Mart diagrams is available in the Case Studies on the Database Answers Web Site. You can Email us for more information.

Why.1 : Why is this Stage important?
- It provides a single point of reference for all the data available within the organisation for producing Reports

How.1 : How do we get Started?
- Get a broad understanding of User’s Data Requirements
- Establish a common view of the Data Platform
- Determine the available Data
A Road Map for Enterprise Data Management

- Reconcile standards, reference data
- Choose the product or use bespoke SQL
- Use Templates and agree design with Users
- Populate Templates with sample data
- Get sign-off on demo specs in 1 month, aim for results for champion in 3 months and final results in 6 months.
- Adjust timescales in light of experience

http://www.databaseanswers.org/data_marts_questions.htm

If you have a Question that is not addressed here, please feel free to email us your Question.

How.2: How do we measure progress with Data Marts?

- Check the level of Users understanding.
- Check for existence of Templates.

How.3: How do I improve the performance of my Data Mart?

Every DBMS produces what is called an Execution Plan for every SELECT statement.

The steps to improving the performance involve checking this Execution Plan against the Indexes that exist, and making sure that the Query Optimizer has used the appropriate Indexes to obtain the best performance.

This is a specialized area where DBA’s spend a lot of their time when they are looking after production databases where speed is a mission-critical factor.

Data Marts are always created to support Business Intelligence, which includes Performance Reports, Balanced Scorecards, Dashboards, Key Performance Indicators and so on.

Best practice always requires user involvement and a generic design to support a flexible approach to meeting changing requirements. Users will always want changes to their first specifications of their requirements.

The insight that they obtain from the first Reports helps them identify more precisely what their long-term requirements will be.

Therefore flexibility is important.

A well-designed Data Mart will anticipate the areas where flexibility is required. The design process should always follow two steps:

- Production of generic design for the Data Mart
- Implementation of the design with a specific Data Mart software product.
Chapter 5. Data Integration

http://www.databaseanswers.org/data_integration.htm

What.1 : What is Data Integration?

Data Integration is concerned with combining data from various Sources into one consistent stream.

It provides an essential Single View of Data, for example, a Single View of a Customer.

It also provides a natural point at which Data Quality can be addressed.

At this Stage, Data Quality can be assessed and a Single View of a Customer can be achieved.

- When Data Quality is of a uniform good quality, it can be integrated and made available as a consistent View.
- This will be supported using a Glossary, as described in the Information Catalog Stage.
- The current incarnation of Data Integration is Master Data Management (MDM).
- Data Integration provides a one view of the truth for things of importance to the organisation, such as Traders, Products and Movements.
- It provides a natural point at which data quality can be addressed.
- When Data is of uniform good quality it can be integrated and made available as a consistent View.
- This leads naturally to Master Data Management (MDM).
- Details of the Integration, such as mapping specifications, are held in a Glossary, which is described in Stage 6.

Why.1 : Why is this Stage important?

- It provides one view of the truth
- It offers a point at which Data Integrity can be measured and User involvement obtained to improve Quality until it meets User standards.

How.1 : How do we get started?

- Data Profiling is a good starting-point for determining the quality of the data and drafting some simple validation and transformation that can be used to get started. For example, replace LTD by LIMITED (or vice versa), and ‘&’ by AND.
- The Design Approach requires Data Models for the areas of the within Scope.
A Road Map for Enterprise Data Management

- It will also require Generic Data Models to support one view of the truth for major entities, such as Traders or Customers.
- This one view will be implemented as Master Data Management (MDM).
- Get a broad understanding of the data available
- Establish a common view of the Data Platform
- Get a broad understanding of Data Sources
- Determine the available Data
- Choose the MDM product
- Determine strategy for Clouds – e.g. Reference Data available globally
- In 1 month, produce Generic Data Models
- In 3 months, confirm GDM with sample data and Facilitated Workshops and choose MDM product.
- In 6 months, implement MDM and publish GDM and CMI on the Intranet.
- Adjust timescales in light of experience

Data Integration covers a number of Steps, each of which can have its own Templates.
Examples are included here for Data Profiling and Mapping Specifications.

How.2 : How do we follow Best Practice

- These Steps define a Tutorial of Best Practice :-
  - Step 1. Define the Target which is usually a ‘Single View Data Model’.
  - Step 2. Define the Data Sources
  - Step 3. Define the Mapping Specifications from the Sources to the Target.
  - Step 4. Define the Data Platform
  - Step 5. Identify Standards to be followed.

This Tutorial is described in detail in a separate document, entitled Data_Integration_Tutorial.doc

http://www.databaseanswers.org/data_integration_questions.htm

If you have a Question that is not addressed here, please feel free to email us your Question.

How.3 : How do we measure progress in Data Integration ?

Look for the existence of the following items :-
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- Generic Data Models
- An Enterprise Data Platform
- Identify the Data Sources
- Selection of a MDM Product
- Implementation of a Customer Master Index or appropriate alternative

How.2: How do we teach Young People Data Modelling?
Database Answers has a Tutorial on Data Modelling for Young People

What.1 What is the difference between Conceptual, Logical and Physical Data Models?
Wikipedia has some useful entries on Conceptual Models, Logical Models and Data Models.

Conceptual Data Models do not conventionally show Foreign Keys and are very useful for making clear the Entities and Relationships in a Data Model without any Keys or Attributes.

They are very useful for discussing Requirements with Users because they show only the basics.

Logical Data Models add Foreign Keys and Attributes.
They are very useful for publishing a complete statement of the data involved.

Physical Data Models are very close to the Database design.
They are very useful for discussions between the Data Analyst, DBAs and developers.

Question 4: What does ETL stand for?
Wikipedia has an entry on ETL which is worth a look.

ETL stands for Extract, Transform and Load.
- Extract means Extracting data from Data Sources.
- Transform covers many tasks, including –
  - Selection of the data of interest
  - Validation and clean-up of the selected data
  - Changing the format and content of the data
  - Loading into the designated Target.

In practice, there are three options for implementing ETL:
- Develop bespoke SQL
- Use a commercial package, such as Informatica or Microsoft’s Integration Services
- Some combination of these two.
  For example, developing basic SQL to clarify the Requirements and then looking for a commercial product to meet the Requirements.

Question 5: How do I establish a Strategy for Data Quality as an Enterprise Issue?
A successful Strategy must include both organization and technical aspects.
Typical Organization aspects are :-

- Commitment from senior management
- Establishing the slogan "Data Quality is an Enterprise Issue" as a top-down edict.
- Identification of the 'Top 20' Applications and Data Owners across the Enterprise
- Agree sign-off procedures with Data Owners and Users

Technical aspects

- Establish Key Quality Indicators ('KQIs), for example Duplicate Customers records
- Agree target Data Quality percentage
- Define KQI Reports and dashboards
- Develop SQL to measure KQIs
- Define procedures to improve KQIs

**Question 6: How do I handle multiple types of Database, such as SQL Server and Oracle?**

The key to handling multiple types of Database is to thing of them in terms of an Integrated Data Platforms, where all types of data are presented in a common fashion.

This then defines the logical requirement.

There is a then a number of options to physically meet this logical requirement.

The Enterprise-level option is to use an appropriate commercial product, such as Informatica

**Question 7: How do I obtain a Single View of the Customer?**

This requires a method of matching Customers, de-duplication and the maintenance of a Customer Master Index, ('CMI') supports a Single View of a Customer.

When there are many sources of similar data, such as Customers, there are frequently duplicate records.

For example, in the US, John Doe could be also called Jon Doe, Johnny Doe, Mr.J..Doe and so on.

In the UK, Joe Bloggs could also be called Joseph Bloggs, Joey Bloggs, Mr.J.Bloggs and so on.

The rules for recognizing and resolving this kind of problem has led to the development of software for De-duplicating records.

This process is informally referred to as ‘de-duping’, especially by people who do a great deal of it.

Best Practice is to look for a commercial product, rather than to write your own bespoke software because it usually takes longer than expected and commercial products can be quite cheap.

This page on the Database Answers Web Site is an excellent starting-point for reviewing "De-duping"

**Question 8: What is Data Lineage?**

Data Lineage can be defined as being able to the trace the derivation of all items of data that appear in any important Performance Reports and Management Information.

That includes :-

- Who owns the original source data
- What validation and transformations are applied to the data in its life cycle
A Road Map for Enterprise Data Management

**Question 9: How do I verify the derivation of all data (the Data Lineage’) in the Reports?**
This requires the use of an Information Catalogue that will record the source, processing steps and final delivery in a Report.

The transformations in the processing Steps must be specified in both the processing language, for example SQL, and in plain, unambiguous English so that the Data Owner can sign-off on the Data Lineage.

**Question 10: What is Master Data Management (MDM)?**
One of the major components in Master Data Management (‘MDM’) is Customers. MDM can be defined a ‘Providing a Single View of the Things of Importance within an organisation’

Master Data Management applies the same principles to all the ‘Things of Interest’ in an organisation.

This can typically include Employees, Products and Suppliers. We have discussed ‘A Single View of the Customer’ and MDM involves the same kind of operations as a CMI.

That is, identification and removal of duplicates, and putting in place to eliminate duplicates in any new data loaded into the Databases.

There is a wide choice of software vendors offering MDM products. De-duplication and Address validation is a niche market in this area.

On the Database Answers Web Site, there is a Tutorial on Getting Started in MDM

There is a sister Web Site devoted to the topic of MDM-As-a-Service

Chapter 6. Data Sources

[http://www.databaseanswers.org/data_sources.htm](http://www.databaseanswers.org/data_sources.htm)

What.1 : What are Data Sources ?

- Data Sources include all major places where important data is created or used, including :-
  - Applications
  - Databases
  - Spreadsheets

It also includes Information related to each Stage in the Best Practice Road Map on People, Roles and Responsibilities.
A Road Map for Enterprise Data Management

This Information is stored within an Information Catalog.

- A Repository record Data Sources for all major Applications, Databases, Spreadsheets and so on.
- data and information related to each Stage in the Best Practice Road Map
- This includes details of People, Roles and Responsibilities, Applications, Databases

Why.1 : Is this Stage important?
- Because it provides the starting-point

How.1 : How do we get started?
- Step 1. Agree initial content and revise at regular intervals.
- Step 2. Identify individuals responsible for data gathering and dissemination.
- Step 3. Take a bottom-up Approach and focus on working documents, such as Invoices.

Chapter 7. Information Catalog

- http://www.databaseanswers.org/info_catalog.htm

If you have a Question that is not addressed here, please feel free to email us your Question.

What.1 : What is an Information Catalog?
- It is a common Repository for all data and information related to Data Management within the Enterprise.
- The design will usually reflect the Project and Enterprise and will change over time, typically from Spreadsheets to Access Database and then Oracle.
- Therefore a flexible design is required, perhaps based on extendable Tables.
- Contents will include details of People, Roles and Responsibilities, Applications, Databases
- It will be published over the Intranet with access privileges for CRUD to designated individuals
- It is updated by nominated individuals and made available to other individuals on a Publish and Subscribe basis.

An Information Catalog is a common Repository for all data and information related to Enterprise Data Management.

As a result, it can play a very important role in Data Integration.

The design will usually reflect the Project and the culture within the organisation and change from time-to-time.

Initial format will often include Word documents and Spreadsheets, and these might migrate to a Database.

Therefore a flexible approach is required, which will usually be based on Extendable Tables.

The contents will include some of these things :-
A Road Map for Enterprise Data Management

- Applications
- Databases
- Details of People, Roles and Responsibilities
- Mapping Specifications for Data Integration
- And so on

It will be published over the corporate Intranet with clearly-defined privileges for who can create, update, access and provide feedback on the content.

What.2: What other names are used for an Information Catalog?

It can also be called a Data Dictionary or an Information Repository. Wikipedia has an entry for a Data Dictionary that is worth checking out.

Wikipedia also has an entry for Information Repository which describes something different.

An Information Catalogue can be used to record every activity and decision of importance relating to Data Integration at each Stage. It can play a role from the beginning, by recording Data Owners and Data Sources. Then during the Data Integration Stage, it can record details of Tables, Fields, Rules for Validation, Mapping and Translation. In the Reporting Stage, it can be used to record definitions of Report Templates and specific variations of the Templates for specific Projects. In the Data Governance Stage, it can be used to record decisions and agreements reached in critical aspects of Data Management.

The best use of the Information is to be deployed over an Intranet and/or in the Clouds so that individuals throughout an organization can share the Information, comment on issues and so on.

Some commercial products are available, listed here alphabetically:

- **ASG Rochade** “The world’s leading Metadata Repository” –
- **Computer Associates Repository** for Distributed Systems
- **IBM Repository**
- **IBM SOA Repository**
- **Oracle Enterprise Repository**
- **Unisys** used to market a product called Universal Repository but a search of their Web Site revealed nothing, except that Sybase acquired the rights to it back in 1998.

The selection of a commercial product should include the ability to exchange data and metadata.

This can be achieved by XMI or by the SQL that creates the Tables.
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Why.1 : Why is this Stage important ?
• It provides a single point of access to details of all progress, objectives, milestones and so on.
• It contains the details necessary to support Data Lineage by tracking each data item from origin to destination.

How.1 : How do we get started ?
• Step 1. Agree the format for the initial Information Catalogue - e.g. start with Spreadsheet, migrate to Access then online Database and finally 'In the Clouds'.
• Step 2. Agree initial content and update procedures.
• Step 3. Agree Publish and Subscribe procedures.
• Step 4. Identify the individuals responsible for data gathering and dissemination.

http://www.databaseanswers.org/info_catalog_questions.htm

How.2 : How do we measure progress with an Information Catalog ?
Progress with an Information Catalog involves identification of the following things :-

• Paper-based documents
•
• A Database-supported version
•
• Individuals in place to maintain the Catalog
•