



The premier organisation for
data professionals in the UK

DAMA UK Newsletter

Spring 2009

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The CBT Workshop on 26 March 2009 at Bletchley Park is fully booked. There is a waiting list at the moment, please email your interest to Sue.

Committee elections are due to take place again this year. Anyone who is interested in joining the committee or nominating someone, please email Sue.

Nominations and a deadline for voting will be send out later this year and results will be announced at the AGM.

We are always looking for news and announcements for the newsletter. If you have something interesting you would like to tell us, please email Sue. Deadlines for next issue 31 May 2009.

Yes, its that time of year again, the 2009-2010 Membership year begins on 1 April 2009 and we will shortly be sending out invoices for fees.

If your contact or invoicing information has changed since March 2008, please inform Sue Russell as soon as possible. This helps to avoid long delays in payment of invoices and keeps the contact list up to date.

It is also useful if corporate members could regularly email staff changes to us in order for the list of people covered under the membership to be kept up to date. This ensures that all receive emails containing information on events, training and DAMA UK news.

DAMA South Africa - Alan Snow

Thanks for your words of encouragement which I put up on the screen at our inaugural meeting of DAMA Southern Africa, held in Johannesburg on Feb 18th.

It was my 5th DAMA launch (UK, Benelux, Netherlands, Germany and now SA), and this was by far the best. We had 120 delegates from 50 different companies, and Peter Aitken was our Guest Speaker. As usual, his presentation on 'Getting the best Business Value from your data' was well received. Peter was able to stay over for the weekend and we (the DAMA SA Committee and Peter) went to the Kruger Park on Safari. Peter flew home the next day, just in time for his Monday morning lecture.

No doubt he told his students that 'Yesterday I had breakfast with Zebra's and Lunch with the Hippo's.'

A formal Press Release will follow, but here is something we put out on the subject:

Link:

<http://www.itweb.co.za/sections/enterprise/2009/0903060809.asp>

New Butler Group Technology Audit Available

In November 2008, the Butler Group carried out a in-depth technology review of Troux 8, the leading suite of products from [Trouw Technologies](#), the leading vendor in the Strategic IT Planning and Enterprise Architecture software market. Butler Group deemed Troux 8 as **'an impressive solution that is well aligned with the requirements of large, distributed, and decentralized organisations'**

The audit also states 'Butler Group believes that the combination of modeling and analytics capabilities is the way forward for EA solutions. Troux addresses the aforementioned concerns through the dual approach of providing modules which are specifically aimed at the most common IT governance challenges, and analytics capability that provides the tools for capturing and using the data from systems that run the IT organisation'

You can download the report by clicking on this [link](#)



**Joint DAMA UK/BCS
DMSG event**



11 June 2009

**Understanding the Information Needs of
the Business**

**BCS HQ
Southampton Street
London**

For information on all IRM UK events,
please go to www.irmuk.co.uk, please note
DAMA UK members - 10% discount

DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE

MDM Master Data Management
Summit Europe 2009
20-22 April 2009, London

EAC Enterprise Architecture
Conference Europe 2009
8-10 June 2009, London

BPM Business Process Management
Conference Europe 2009
28-30 September 2009, London

BA Business Analysis
Conference London 2009
28-30 September 2009, London

DM&IQ Data Management & Information
Quality Conference Europe 2009
2-5 November 2009, London

DAMA Members Discount expires on March 20 - saving you \$250!!

Enterprise DataWorld

PROFITING from your Information Assets

APRIL 5-9, 2009 • TAMPA CONVENTION CENTER • TAMPA, FLORIDA

ANALYTICS EDITORIAL BY JOHN LADLEY

This edition of DSJ is the first of a two part series on analytics and data warehouse. We are focusing on these two topics because the former is going through a new wave of offerings and interest, and the latter, while required in some manner, has been around for nearly 20 years. Click on the IDSJ logo to access this feature and more.....



DataStrategyJournal
DATA SOLUTIONS FOR BUSINESS LEADERS



Why is Good Data Management Important to the Public Sector?

Ellen Fitzpatrick

Information and Knowledge Management Team at Leeds City Council

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Introduction

'Data management is the development, execution and supervision of plans, policies, programs and practices that control, protect, deliver and enhance the value of data and information assets' – DAMA International (Data Management Association).

For any public or private sector organisation, this means you have the necessary people, technologies and processes in place to deliver fit for purpose data which supports the objectives of the organisation.

In terms of importance, data management is typically positioned behind other types of resource and asset management such as financial management, property management or human resources. But the increasing volumes of data held and an ever-changing environment has made having an effective approach to data management more important than ever to public sector organisations.

Good data management is needed to ensure that:

- decisions are based on accurate data;
- data is held and handled securely;
- data is compliant with all legal and regulatory requirements;
- the organisation holds the data it needs;
- the organisation is not holding data it doesn't need;
- the data can be accessed and used when needed;
- an organisation's data is an asset.

Data management is an essential function which, when developed in consideration and support of other processes, underpins the activities of an organisation. The value of good data management can be demonstrated in a practical way by the following key corporate functions and activities.

Compliance

The Public sector is subject to greater legal and regulatory requirements than ever before. Non-compliance can result in financial and legal penalties as well as loss of trust and reputation.

Effective data management enables organisations to considerably mitigate the risks associated with non-compliance through ensuring that:

- Data is kept for the legally agreed timescales and is disposed of when required.
- The integrity of data is maintained, preventing data from being incorrectly changed or lost either through technical problems, human error or malicious intent.
- The accuracy of data is maintained and legal obligations to maintain the accuracy of personal data are met.
- Regular audit checks to ensure that data is compliant with legal and statutory requirements are more easily facilitated.

Data Management Check: Are you holding data that you don't need and are you holding data longer than you are legally required or allowed to?

Information Security

The Public Sector holds large volumes of personal and sensitive data. Recent high profile data losses have prioritised the introduction of robust data security processes and procedures to avoid data losses, both accidental and malicious.

Data management won't stop someone using a memory stick and leaving it on a bus, but it will mean that there are processes and procedures in place to ensure that the risks associated with such a loss are significantly reduced.

Performance data can be aligned with other appropriate datasets, e.g. risk management, to provide a more comprehensive and accurate picture of the current issues and challenges.

Data Management Check: How much time is spent in your organisation disputing the accuracy of performance indicators instead of acting on what the indicator is telling you?

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Why is Good Data Management Important to the Public Sector?

Ellen Fitzpatrick

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Information and Knowledge Management Team at Leeds City Council

The introduction of good data management practices will assist organisations in mitigating the risk of a breach in security through the introduction of:

Security and access rights: so that data is only accessed by authorised individuals.

- Data handling guidelines and rules: to inform the processes which dictate how the data can be stored, used, accessed and transferred.
- Technologies: to ensure that data is stored and handled using the most secure methods possible and to ensure that lost data can be retrieved.
- Business continuity plans: to ensure that the organisation is prepared for all identified risks and threats to the data.

Data management check: Is sensitive or personal data held by your organisation subject to robust security practices which address process, technology and people?

Information Sharing

Public sector organisations are being asked more than ever before to share information and work in partnerships to deliver improved, more efficient, joined up services. Every Child Matters, the 'Tell Us Once' initiative and the Shared Services agenda, to name a few, all require seamless sharing and integration of data. But data sharing is probably one of the most difficult inter-agency functions to achieve.

Although the sharing of data is usually politically difficult to negotiate, the demonstration of robust procedures for the handling and management of the data should assist the process considerably. Effective data management will provide assurances that there are procedures in place to ensure that:

First and foremost the data is secure. The security of data is always most at risk when it is extracted from a system and transferred elsewhere. Understandably security is the primary concern for organisations when sharing data.

Standards and formats have been agreed so that the shared data can be integrated and used with minimal effort.

- The right data is being shared.
- The data being shared is of good quality and therefore is of value and use.
- The data being shared has supplementary data (metadata) which provides useful information about the source of the data, the date of collection etc.
- Data Sharing Protocols are in place to ensure the details governing the processes are agreed and recorded in a formal way.

Data Management Check: If you are sharing data with another organisation are you sure that it is being transferred in the most secure way possible?

Business Intelligence

Increasingly the public sector is being asked to work in a more intelligent way, delivering quality services that deliver value for money and better meet the needs of taxpayers.

There is a requirement for information to be integrated from across systems so that analysis can be undertaken to provide meaningful intelligence on which decisions can be based. This can only be achieved if relevant, accurate data can be made available in the right format to the right people and at the right time.

Data management is integral to business intelligence activities and supports the process in a number of ways including:

- Ensuring the availability of accurate and relevant data to support evidence based decision making.
- Facilitating the delivery of the right data to the right people in the right format.
- Facilitating the integration of data from different sources to provide a comprehensive view of the activities and interactions of the organisation.
- Allowing organisations to identify the gaps in the information available to them and the potential difficulties or risks associated with not having it.

Data Management Check: Could you derive from a relevant system the ages of your youngest and oldest customer and would you believe it was accurate?

Leeds City Council's information and knowledge management (IKM) team was established in September 2005 following the recognition that information needed to be utilised more efficiently and effectively within the organisation.

Given this and in an attempt to raise the profile of information as a strategic asset that can add significant value to service delivery, the IKM team was established to drive a more strategic agenda forward.

This strategic agenda is concerned with delivering four outcomes as follows:

- To better support decision-making at all levels within the authority;
- To promote the efficient and effective use of information;
- To ensure compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements; and
- To protect the corporate 'memory'.

In working to deliver these four outcomes, the team's strategic aims are focussed on developing and delivering on four related issues. These are

- Document and records management;
- Business intelligence;
- Collaborative working; and
- Information governance

Ellie Fitzpatrick

I've worked for the IKM Team for over two years and following my MSc in an IKM related subject I've worked in the area of information management for over five years most of that in data management. My efforts in the IKM Team focus mainly now on developing the Council's approach to data quality and data governance.



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Performance Management

Measuring, reporting and improving performance is an essential function of public sector organisations. The overall objective being to improve performance whilst at the same time operating in an accountable and transparent way.

Like business intelligence performance management is a function that relies on data. Therefore in order to manage performance effectively there is a requirement for good data management to ensure that:

- Data supports the development of meaningful performance indicators and targets which are aligned to the objectives of the organisation.
- Accurate reporting against performance indicators can be undertaken so that a truthful account of performance can be provided.
- Analysis can be undertaken in order to extract valuable insights which will help to drive improvements.

Efficiency

The importance of good data management cannot be overemphasised where the issue of efficiency is concerned. The introduction of the Gershon Efficiency Review placed considerable demands on the public sector to make savings. Furthermore, the current economic climate is now imposing unexpected demands on organisations to operate more efficiently.

Effective data management practices can support the drive for efficiency by contributing to:

- The identification of potential efficiency savings. Without being able to put accurate costs and figures against activities and services the potential for efficiency savings cannot be accurately identified.
- The accurate measurement of the savings made and the associated impact on service delivery. Otherwise resources could be wasted on initiatives that aren't delivering the expected benefits.
- The identification of efficiency saving which can be made through improved data management processes. A key area for improvement and efficiency savings is often the current data and information management processes in place. Poor practices such as double-keying, searching for data and documents or working with the wrong version of data can have a significant impact on an organisation and could be surprisingly costly.
- The success of information system implementation. Large amounts of money are spent on the implementation of systems to support the delivery of services, however if there are problems with the data then the value of the system to the organisation will be significantly compromised.

Data Management Check: How much time is spent by colleagues in your organisation each week searching for data and documents or checking the accuracy of the data they work with?

Conclusion

Data management is an important support function which should rank as highly as human resources, financial management and asset management. In fact data management supports all management activities within an organisation by ensuring that people are working effectively with accurate information.

All public sector organisations have an approach to data management. But how effective this approach is in supporting the organisation in meeting its objectives, aims and responsibilities is something that should be given serious consideration.

Ask yourself these questions:

Does your organisation's approach to data management sufficiently address the technology, the processes and the people?

Is it a coordinated approach across the business and IT or have data management silos appeared?

Is data management given enough consideration when priorities are identified and resources allocated?

What recent failures within the organisation could have been reduced or even avoided if appropriate Data Management practices were in place?