

Why a modern data hub is crucial for visualization and other analytic tools



There's a lot of interest in data visualization tools right now; and rightfully so. These products make it very easy for business analysts and others to create eye-catching dashboards that highlight key business performance information. However, the amount of work required by users to prepare and maintain the underlying data can be quite overwhelming.

Visualization and other BI tools need to possess functionality for data collection, transformation, maintenance and advanced analytics to ensure that core business information can be easily exploited by those who need it.

Today's enterprise needs a modern data platform (or hub) that can collect all types of data flexibly and make that data instantly available for analysis. There are many reasons why you would want to use a modern data hub when analyzing and

visualizing your data. Here are some of them:

- While information from ERP and other transactional systems can be accessed with today's visualization and reporting toolsets, the data structures of these systems are quite complex. As a result, users either have a difficult time getting to the data they need or understanding what they're looking at once they have it. Plus, not all of the data that analysts need resides solely in transactional applications. This includes plans, budgets, forecasts and other information that your employees, suppliers, customers and other third parties may provide. Even web- and cloud-based data like demographic information.
- In addition, using a modern data hub together with visualization tools and

other analytic / reporting solutions eliminates the potential risk of misusing or misinterpreting transactional system data. It also mitigates performance problems that may arise when reports are run directly against operational systems or when the tools are used to drill down to very low levels of detail within a large set of data.

- A modern data hub supports the integration and management of data derived from many different sources, regardless of whether the sources are internal or external to your business. With a modern data platform, high volumes of historical and near real-time data can reside in one easily accessible place with a common data model that communicates how all the data is connected to each other, processed and stored.

The first step is to collect, organize and transform your existing data sources into an analytics-ready state.



Being analytics ready means your data platform can ingest any type of data, no matter where it may reside and include a powerful transformation engine to ensure that every view of information is complete, consistent and trusted.

- Data can be reorganized within a modern data repository and presented to business users in terms they completely understand without having to know the underlying structure of all the source information.
- In addition, you may want to enhance the data to improve your analytics and reporting. This means your data platform needs mechanisms for completing, enriching and augmenting

information – like supplementing customer and product data with additional attributes that are not currently included in your ERP system.

- Another category of functionality your data platform must have is the ability to make your data actionable. It should provide the ability for users to drill down from their dashboards to the most granular levels of detail in order to drive greater insights and actionable information from them. Plus, it should include elements like alerts and notifications to automatically alert users to business situations that may require their immediate attention.

- A modern data hub should offer an efficient way for analysts to easily update the information driving their dashboards and reports with minimal work on their part, too.
- And last, today's modern data platform should provide for the automated distribution of information to ensure that stakeholders are getting at least the minimum information they need to support the decision-making process on a timely and regular basis.



The Modern DATA HUB for Secure Data Management & Ad-Hoc Reporting

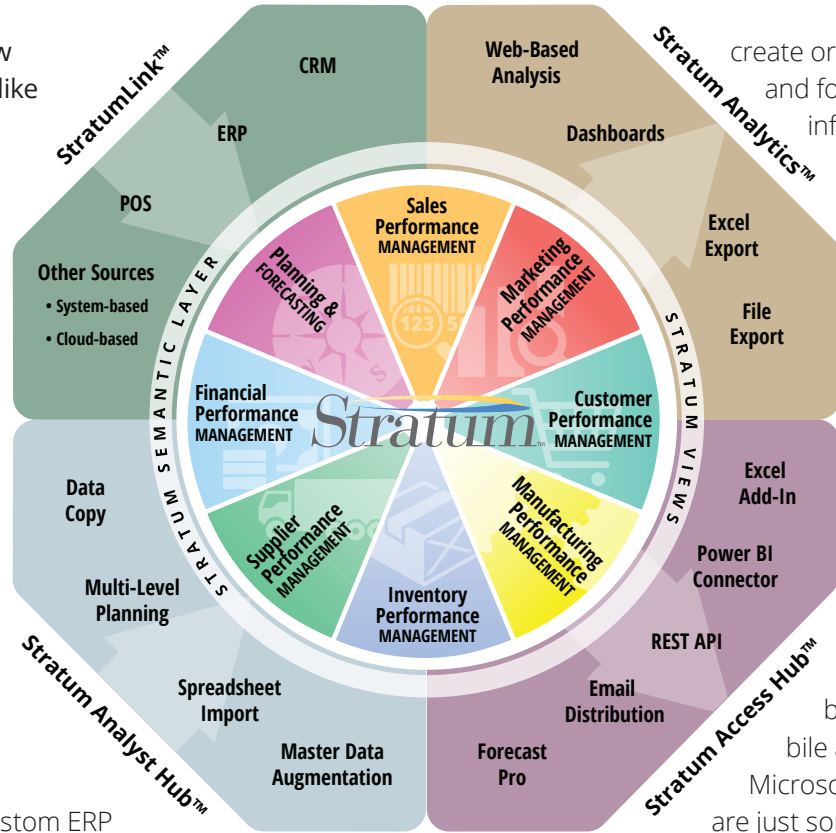
In order to navigate today's new data world, a modern solution like Silvon Stratum compliments and extends the value of data visualization tools like Microsoft's Power BI. And it makes self-service BI a reality through pre-built analytics and data management functionality that lets you collect data from multiple applications, databases, spreadsheets, and documents into one interface that gives business users the quick insights they need to better run their organizations.

Total Integration with ERP Systems, Other Data Sources

Data from both standard and custom ERP tables, multiple ERP systems, spreadsheets (and other external sources) can be easily integrated into Stratum for contextual analysis using Silvon's StratumLink and Excel Data Import. All the data in Stratum is housed in a centralized data hub that is optimized specifically for analytics, with built-in tools for organizing, aligning and updating the data with ease. As a result, users don't need to know how the information is organized ... and your IT staff won't be burdened with user requests for help.

User-Controlled Data Imports

Analysts and citizen data scientists can also import their own data into Stratum quite easily to explore it in detail. Users can



create or import Sales Plans, Budgets and forecasts. Customer sentiment information, POS and weather trends are just a few data points that users can easily bring into the Stratum data hub for the purpose of analysis, comparison – even collaborative planning and plan maintenance.

Flexible Report Distribution, Alerting & Integration with 3rd-Party Tools

Powerful web-based analysis, highly visual dashboards, automatic alerts, report broadcasting capabilities, mobile access, and integration with Microsoft's BI and reporting solutions are just some of the options that Stratum provides for delivering consistent sets of information to business users.

In addition to detailed on-line analysis, business analysts and users have the ability to distribute information out of the Stratum data hub. Reports and Alerts can be sent to users or exported information can be used in Excel, Power BI, Microsoft Reporting Services and other 3rd-party tools. Having this ability provides better reporting accuracy because everyone who accesses Stratum is working with the same enterprise data (or version of the truth) that reflects the performance of your business.

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