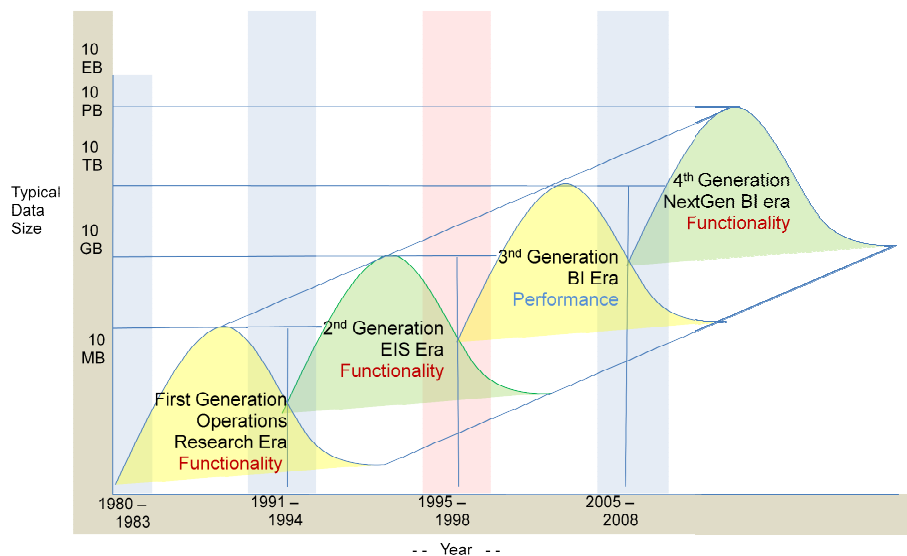


CS SOLUTIONS, INC.
Shaping Ideas, Building Solutions

A case for a repeatable process, by Mark Albala

For the past 20 years, the practice of data management has been trying to arm stakeholders served with an enterprise enlightened with data. However, the complexity, publication frequency and sheer volume of information have made this lofty goal just beyond the reach of served stakeholders. Industry leaders have coined this as BI 2.0, which in reality is a shift from a performance based focus to one garnering an additional level of functionality available to stakeholders.

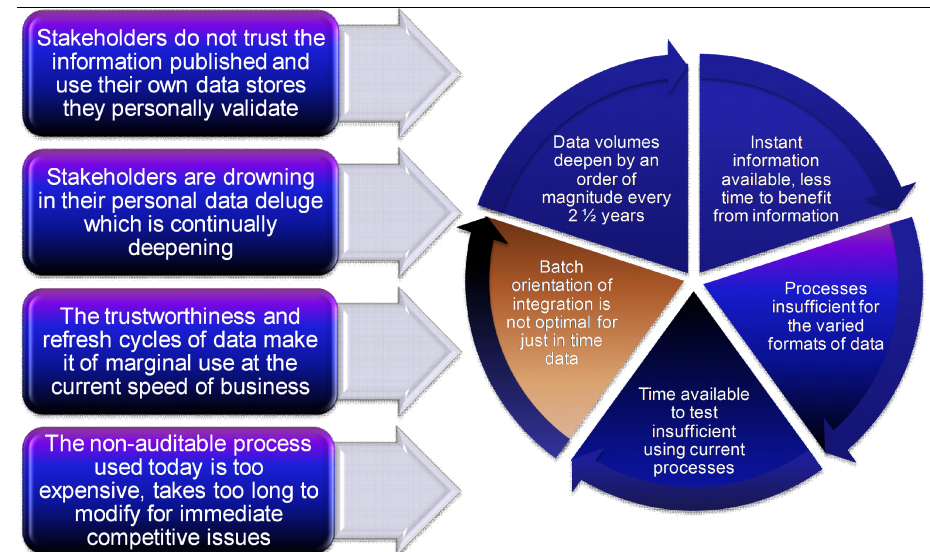


For the past 8 to 10 years, the data management practice has been focused on squeezing every ounce of performance out of the integration components of the data management stack. This is required to provide a single version of the truth to as many stakeholders as practicable. The refocus on functionality is due largely to the sheer volume of information

published. The processes used to integrate data are unable to scale for both the volume of data, the frequency of refresh rates and the high availability demanded by stakeholders.

Stakeholders have reported being underserved for some rather surprising reasons. The underlying being:

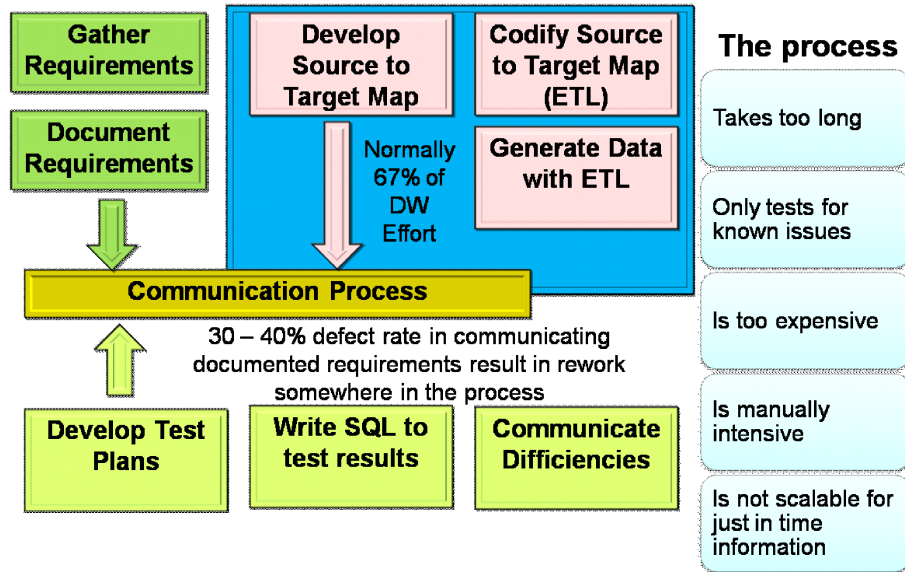
- The information available is not deemed trustworthy, which requires stakeholders to validate every component of information used in their analysis and decision making.
- This results in stakeholders keeping copies of validated data in their desktop tools as a timesaving vehicle.
- The time value of information cannot be derived while stakeholders do not have confidence in the published information.



At the heart of the challenge to attaining trustworthiness of information is the process used to integrate, test and publish information is batch.

A repeatable process which reinvigorates the image of trustworthiness in the published information is critical. The current batch processes employed to integrate, test and publish information is not scalable for today's needs.

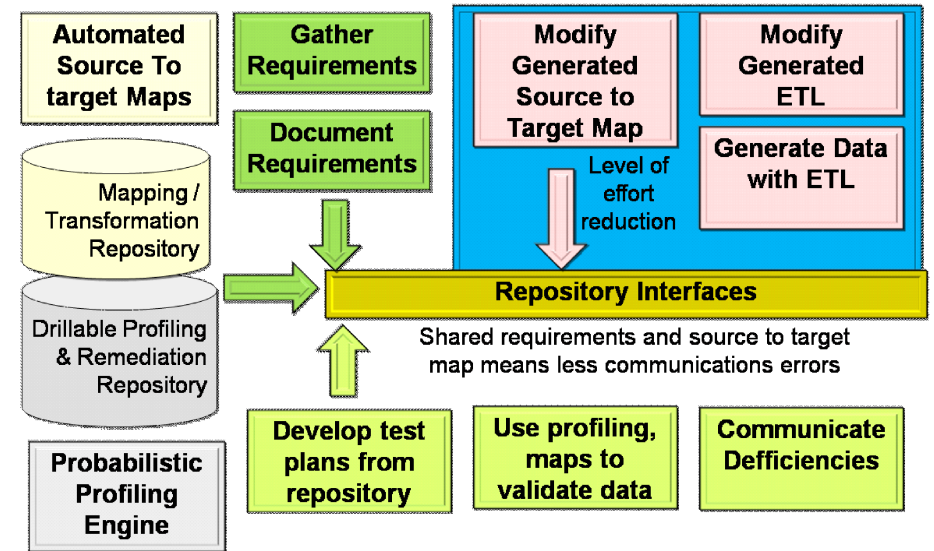
The primary attributes of the repeatable process are a highly scalable process that uses a higher degree of automation to make the process of integration, testing and publication a much less painful process than experienced in most organizations.



Most organizations employ a highly manual process to publish information which, at its heart, is a manual communication process which introduces a typical defect rate of 30% - 40% due to a difference in interpreting requirements from one functional team (business analysts, designers, developers, testers) to another. From a stakeholder perspective, this results in the process taking too long, being too expensive, and not being scalable for their operational needs requiring just in time information.

The solution is simple, but significant. Just like we went through the process of retrofitting our operational application suite from a batch orientation to an on-line solution, we must similarly retrofit our process used to publish information used in business intelligence and data management.

Some significant changes to the process used to publish information are recommended.



The process utilizes an automated facility to generate ETL code, to make the process much more scalable, a profiling engine to identify data anomalies prior to stakeholders and replaces the largely manual communication process with a set of common repositories accessible to all participants in the data integration, test and publication processes, thereby negating the reported defects caused by communication errors.

About the Author

Mark Albala is CS Solution's Vice President and Practice Executive for data management. He has over 20 years experience in various capacities of managing data for organizations both as internal management and as a trusted advisor to organizations. He can be reached at 201.895.1666 and at his email address (mark.albala@cssoln.com).

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CS Solutions has been successfully delivering data management solutions to their clients for the past 10 years. With their team of 300 consultants located in the US and India, CS Solutions provides creative out of the box data management thinking resulting in best of breed services at a reduced time to market and at right-shored prices.