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Top Comment

A data lake is an intermediate step between a source and a data warehouse that is used to hold raw data.

Let's say I make a twitter bot for r/dataengineering called "Data Engineers Cursing": it runs once an hour downloads all comments in all threads of this subreddit and tweets any comment that contains some list of curse words: ['shit' 'fuck' 'damn'].

Let's say after running the script for 6 months I want to expand my list of curse words or I want to support other languages. If I just did source -> ETL -> Data Warehouse I could only make those changes going forward. If instead I had done source -> data lake -> ETL -> Data Warehouse I could retroactively re-process the data.

This need to retroactively re-process data and use data that you didn't think you needed is very common today.