Name of Speaker: Josh Hogan

Title of Lecture: Master Data Management (MDM): What is it?

Date of Lecture: 12/12/13

Introduction

Josh Hogan grew up in Idaho. He has a degree in Chinese and likes to sing bass or baritone in a quartet. He was the first person hired at NuSkin in business intelligence. He has taught at Provo College and UVU. He has several certifications in Oracle and data management. He will be speaking to us about how to manage data.

Summary

Josh began his lecture by defining master data management, and how we manage the data across a company or an entity. He began by talking about some of the challenges. The first challenge is that the same data in an entity may be called the same thing. His example was with what to consider an “order”? From the marketing stand point, it should be when someone places an order, from a financial stand point it should be when the customer places, the money, and from a supply chain point, it is when the inventory leaves the warehouse. Josh said that the 80 percent of the work is getting people to understand the same definitions.

He then began to point out that there are many different types of data to manage. Each department has its own data to manage. Financial data, looks different than marketing data, and inventory data looks different than location data and all of that looks different than customer data. So the data that we need to master, is that that data that is used across the company as a whole.

Josh then took a moment to start talking about customer data. Even though the data may say something, the analytics of it can be quite confusing. An example he gave was of an address. He pointed out that often products in ecommerce are shipped to one place, but when analyzing that for marketing use, it could appear that you have sent a variety of types of products for all sorts of people to the same address, what then is marketed to that house hold.

Obviously more fields are needed to make the analysis effective. So what data do you look at to make it more affective? Josh started talking about the name field and how cross culturally, this can be a challenge because the format of the name is different. So it takes time to think about what factors can be influencing the data.

He then spoke about quality and making sure that the data fit certain aspects. The first was completeness, the second accuracy, the third reasonableness, fourth consistency, fifth duplication, sixth integrity, seventh timeliness. He mentioned some tools that help to make sure that data fits these categories.

Reflection

In general the speaker appeared to be very knowledgeable about the topic of data. He provided some good clues into what it takes to start thinking about master data management. It was interesting to hear his examples about factors that have influenced the data. I particularly liked his insight on how different managers from a company were in a meeting arguing about an issue. However, the main problem is that they were all using the same words to represent different things. Once they learned how to talk about the same data or information it was easy for them to resolve their differences.

I also like the criteria that he used to begin talking about data quality. The categories of completeness, accuracy, reasonableness, consistency, duplication, integrity, timeliness, in my mind came down to the question of does it logically make sense. This is a good point from this lecture because it seems like there are many problems that could be solved by making sure the data that we work with fits these categories.

As a result of this lecture, I think I will be better at managing data because I will be more vigilant about what information I put into a database, and how I put that information in there. I will consider more the nature of the data and am I using it correctly. For the most part, I agreed with the speaker’s position and thought his insights were valid. I would have liked him to be not so monotone.

Conclusion

In conclusion, he taught us about what we needed to know to start having better data. There were some good things to remember as we continue to have more and more databases in our companies.