

Mastering Data for Strategic Growth

A Test and Measurement Company's Quest for Growth Beyond \$1B Revenue

This global company builds test and measurement equipment and software for a broad and diverse number of industries. The company has continually surpassed revenue targets and is setting its sights toward their next wave of growth.

The Global Head of Business Intelligence believes that a central source of customer intelligence is critical to illuminate the right decisions and go-to-market strategies for the company to grow. They have successfully led a team through a project to 'master' the company's customer data to create a strong foundation for that intelligence.

Below, the company's Head of Business Intelligence discusses how they laid the groundwork for a central source of customer intelligence to shape the company's growth for decades to come.

DUN & BRADSTREET: *Why is master data and customer intelligence important to your company?*


COMPANY: Our company began nearly 50 years ago to help solve grand engineering challenges. Since then there have been many wonderful stories about how our company's technology has helped humanity. But recently we've crossed a milestone in revenue (\$1B), and if we want to get to the next level of growth, the recipe won't be the same. As a company, we are on a journey to transform ourselves and data is at the center of the transformation. I believe customer intelligence will fuel breakthrough growth for our company, complementing our incredible vision, IP, and new product lines.

DUN & BRADSTREET: *How do you think about organizing customer data and using it to make strategic decisions?*

COMPANY: We're in a B-to-B business with lifelong relationships, so many of our customers have been repeat purchasers for the last 15, 20, 30 years. With that history, we need to synthesize large amounts of data to understand, at scale, who our customers are, what they've purchased from us, and what they've told us about their priorities, preferences, and needs over the years. Of course, our customers' businesses have changed over the years as well: mergers, acquisitions, geographic expansion, and the like, making customer definitions complicated.

Master data capabilities are at the foundation of our

transformation to data-driven decision making. We have been having conversations about what a standardized customer account record should look like and concluded that revisiting this basic building block was a big strategic need. A robust record would in turn allow us to create an overarching segmentation and align our performance to different sectors, balance our customer portfolio, and identify which segments will feed our growth in the future.

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DUN & BRADSTREET: *How have you collaborated with Dun & Bradstreet to move toward your ideal customer intelligence system?*

COMPANY: We've had a longstanding relationship with Dun & Bradstreet and during the last year we accelerated it, working together to answer some important strategic questions for the company: What is the health of our customer base? Where is our acquisition engine succeeding (or not)? Where have we established the right footholds?

Our database at the time couldn't answer these questions because it had some core deficiencies, including significant duplication (some entities being represented 8-12 times!), even with records that were being managed through our enterprise-wide master data management (MDM) program. Not being able to understand corporate hierarchies meant that we couldn't clearly tell a true net new customer acquisition from a new purchase by a subsidiary of an existing customer.

We worked with Dun & Bradstreet to create an approach for mastering customer data that augmented our MDM program.

Specifically, we defined a structure for a standard customer record, and created a repository of structured records that could then connect with our analytical environment to tackle our immediate questions.

DUN & BRADSTREET: *Tell us more about this structured approach*

COMPANY: We used Dun & Bradstreet as our core source of entity definition and de-duplication, reducing the number of unique customer records in our data base. [Leveraging Dun & Bradstreet's D-U-N-S Number® as the unique company identifier](#) was fundamental to this work – it [provided the core structure to standardize data records and identify linkages \(hierarchies\)](#). Once we had this common denominator, we were then able to enrich accounts with additional insights from both Dun & Bradstreet and relevant third parties. This then helped us create a rich, interactive segmentation of our customer base along several dimensions. [With this, we could understand where we were strong and where we were weak](#). In both cases, there can be opportunities for growth.

Essentially, we were able to leverage what Dun & Bradstreet provides from a master data standpoint, so that we did not have to reinvent the wheel.

DUN & BRADSTREET: *How has this delivered value for the company to-date?*

COMPANY: We are now confident that we have a trusted view of our customers and how they are segmented. We've established capabilities that allow us to not only tell stories about each customer, but also link the customers together – either from an ownership perspective or a segment perspective. Clear knowledge of user identities, past purchase behavior, the products they engaged with, and other appended data from Dun & Bradstreet has been instrumental in bringing that to the fore. [This is supporting better functional decision-making and operational execution](#) – for example sales and marketing creating more precise and tangible execution plans by identifying the right potential opportunities, prioritizing customer tiers, and applying resources appropriately – as well as [strategic decision making](#).

In addition, with an understanding of our company's 'business operating model' and the key decision points along our strategy, planning and execution cycles – we methodically found the right points of intersection so that we could identify insights in a constructive manner. We've created repeatable solutions using customer data as foundation to guide the business around functional and strategic decisions.

DUN & BRADSTREET: *What is your next priority for enhancing the company's data capabilities?*

COMPANY: Our own data journey has been in figuring out the best approach to go from where we were to where we have to be to support business decisions that will drive growth, staying as agile and integrative as possible. We've laid the groundwork, and now want to scale our approach more broadly across the enterprise. Our top priority going forward is institutionalize our learnings into enterprise-ready systems. We've accomplished so much in our recent work with Dun & Bradstreet and are ready to take it forward. I'm proud and excited about how we will build on our new customer master data foundation and invest in other capabilities.

ABOUT DUN & BRADSTREET

Dun & Bradstreet (NYSE: DNB) grows the most valuable relationships in business. By uncovering truth and meaning from data, we connect our customers with the prospects, suppliers, clients and partners that matter most, and have since 1841. Nearly ninety percent of the Fortune 500, and companies of every size around the world, rely on our data, insights and analytics. For more about Dun & Bradstreet, visit [DNB.com](https://dnb.com). Twitter: @DnBUS