One concept that stuck out to me from the reading this week was the problems with data management systems. In my current role I specifically deal with lack of data control and lack of data integration nearly on a daily basis. We work with models and analyses that have been created and stored over anywhere from a few months to several decades but finding what is needed for the specific problem at hand can be difficult. The author does a good job of summarizing the reason for this issue when they discuss how data ‘frequently do not receive the same degree of management attention as other important organizational resources, such as people and money’ (Watson, 2018).

For businesses to learn from the past and make better decisions for the present and future, they need to have an efficient data system so valuable time isn’t wasted in the search for the important information. This can be difficult to accomplish as information gets added to the storage ‘warehouses’ while proper care isn’t taken to ensure that the databases become cluttered and disorganized. Each user has their own way of structuring and storing their work so when multiple people with multiple approaches use the same databases it can become chaotic. The key is having a system wide understanding of data management and having alignment between all of the groups involved. This takes a change in mindset for the business from the top down, so that data management gets the proper management attention it deserves.

This ties into lack of data integration and redundancy, where data is spread out across several different systems. I think these issues all go hand in hand. As different groups in the same organization store information in separate locations and systems, a disconnect grows between them so that they aren’t able to fully feed off each other’s work. At the same time perhaps work that was already done may done again (redundancy) simply because there was no knowledge of the data structures or how to find the information in question. All of these issues cause the loss of time and money for organizations, reiterating the need for a focus on data management.

References

Watson, Richard T. “Managing Data.” *Data Management: Databases and Organizations*, Prospect Press, 2018, pp. 23–24.