GoodData

How Data as a Service fuels enterprise scalability

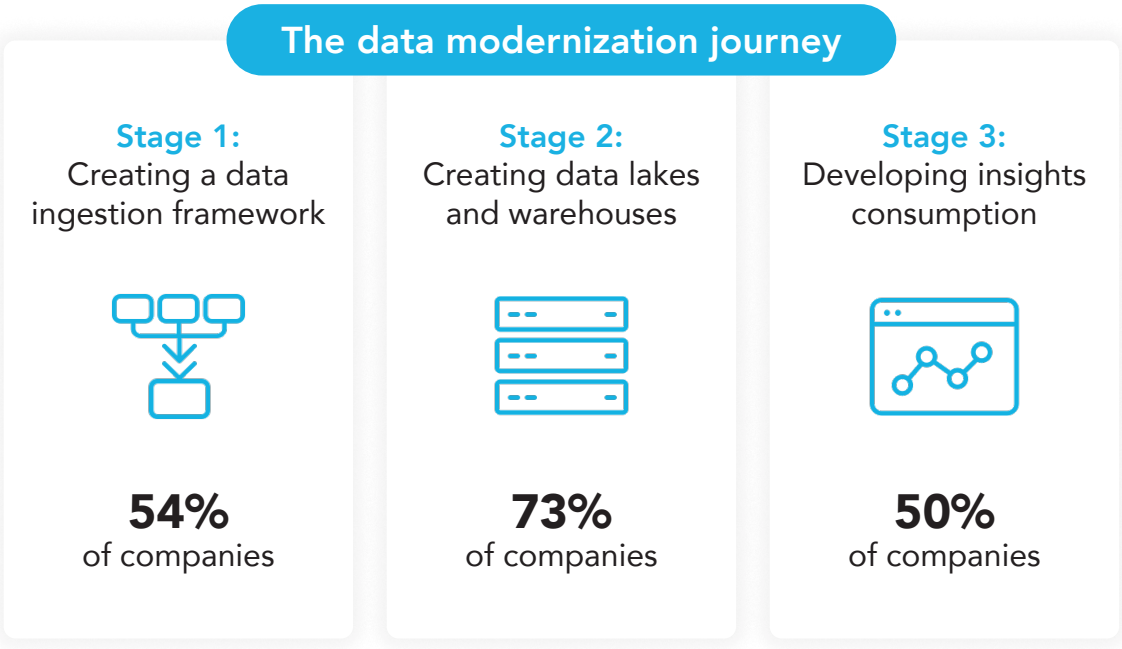
Companies today are well aware of the importance of data and analytics — but most face the same, formidable hurdle: scaling analytics at their company. Traditional business intelligence tools have historically failed to make data easy to access, interpret and take action from. Even the next evolution, embedded BI — which puts analytics into the context of a business application — isn't able to scale insights across the company.

This inability to scale data and analytics internally is holding companies back from scaling their business. **In fact, 85% of executives agree that the lack of access to data insights is hampering their ability to scale.** Not only do employees lack the insights to make data-informed decisions, but data is also a gateway for adopting emerging technologies like artificial intelligence. In one study, 72% of companies who are successfully using AI reported **data was a critical foundation.**

The key to scaling your analytics and your company is to embrace Data as a Service (DaaS).

DaaS adds value for customers — and drives revenue

Most companies today are at some point along their data modernization journey, whether it's migrating to the cloud or building data lakes and warehouses to store data.



Source: GoodData and Pulse Data Priorities Survey, Q1 2021

Insights consumption is the next step in the modernization journey.
But companies are challenged to make insights consumption successful.

In many cases, the tools they have invested in are failing to scale. That's because these tools often require a background or training in statistics, databases and data analysis.

So, while today's BI tools have positive applications for the data and analytics teams at an organization, they leave out the other 90% of users who don't have the technical background to effectively use these tools. As a result, many business users looking to leverage data for their purposes will revert to spreadsheets to try to manipulate the data in a tool they're familiar with. In fact, a recent Harvard Business Review report found **88% of managers use spreadsheets to analyze data for decision-making.**

"It takes time to build out formulas, and the metrics may be inconsistent among different people," Dan Vesset, Group Vice President of Analytics and Information Management at research firm IDC, said in the report. "Governance gets lost when that happens."

Instead, these users need a tool that doesn't require specialized training, but will empower them with business insights. A survey of business users suggests the **top features of a data insights solution** are ease of use (78%), reliability (92%) and accuracy (91%).

Businesses share top 3 insights consumption challenges

- High level of data duplication (67%)
- High infrastructure costs (61%)
- Slow response time and minimal access to real-time data (47%)

Source: GoodData and Pulse Data Priorities Survey, Q1 2021

Companies looking to build out an insights consumption layer to close this gap face additional challenges. According to **a recent survey from Pulse and GoodData**, most companies grapple with a high level of data duplication, high infrastructure costs and a minimal, slow access to real-time data.

"Developing insights consumption is hindered by the time and cost to build; it competes against our external facing revenue generating applications and solutions for resources," said one software VP in the survey.

Today, the process of pivoting and customizing data often falls to the IT team, who field requests from business users asking for custom reports. The resulting bottleneck not only strains the IT teams, but also slows decision-making, frustrates business users, and ultimately hinders company agility and scalability.

"There's an ongoing shift to give more direct access to these line-of-business people whose primary job is not to analyze data," IDC's Vesset says. "They have a need and desire to sometimes pivot data a little bit, look at it from different dimensions, and explore it more — but they can't. It's what's driving their frustration and is why there's this underlying demand for self service tools."

How DaaS solves for analytics scalability

The key to scaling analytics at a company is to make it easy for users to access and analyze data — without needing extensive training in statistics and data analysis.

What does DaaS actually mean? **Read here to find out**

Enter the semantic layer. It's a unique feature of DaaS solutions that serves to unify the meaning of a company's data. In the process of implementing it, organizations identify what data to focus on, and then turn that data into "business terms" that are easily accessible to users. In effect, this helps to scale data literacy across the organization.

Closing the data literacy gap

Put simply, literacy is the ability to understand and interpret data effectively.

- 87% of organizations say they will be more successful when frontline workers are empowered to make important decisions in the moment.
- 21% of employees are confident in their data literacy skills.

Not only does the semantic layer promote company-wide access — eliminating those weeks of lag time, the frustration of business users — but it also increases data governance. Today, data insights are often siloed by department. Definitions of business-critical terms like "Absolute Margin" and "Profitability" can vary slightly based on the way data queries are written. With the semantic layer, companies can create consistent definitions for these terms to promote consistency in insights business-wide.

Semantic layers enable consistency and accessibility

DaaS with GoodData: Reusable metric defined as simple expressions

Absolute Margin (MAQL)
SELECT *Total Premium Collected - Total Claims Paid*

Profitability (MAQL)
SELECT *Absolute Margin / Total Premium Collected*

BI with other tools: Time-consuming single-use queries

Absolute Margin (SQL)

```
SELECT (total_premium_collected-total_claims_paid)
            AS absolute_margin
(
  SELECT
    customer_id
    SUM(premium_amounts) AS total_premium_collected
    SUM(claim_amounts) AS total_claims_paid
  FROM premiums
      LEFT JOIN claims
          ON claims.customer_id=premiums.customer_id
) customer_data;
```

Profitability (SQL)

```
SELECT (total_premium_collected-total_claims_paid)/total_
premium_collected AS profitability
(
    SELECT
      customer_id
        SUM(premium_amounts) AS total_premium_collected,
        SUM(claim_amount) AS total_claims_paid
      FROM premiums
        LEFT JOIN claims
            ON claims.customer_id=premiums.customer_id
) customer_data;
```

In addition to promoting data literacy and governance, a DaaS platform can also overcome other key challenges to scaling analytics organization-wide by enabling the following:

- Reduced data duplication and infrastructure cost
- Accelerated response and real-time data
- Cost-effective data asset development
- Development of prescriptive analytics
- Flexible hosting, from cloud-native to on prem
- Analytics accessibility via mobile and web apps

Altogether, DaaS provides an end-to-end service that aggregates, stores, cleans, and cohesively interprets data, allowing for enterprises to embed analytics into workflows and processes. By making insights consumption easy and scalable, it supports analytics development at scale and helps turn data into a revenue generator.

How scaling analytics can scale business — and revenue

Companies today are collecting more data and investing heavily in storing that data in the cloud and in databases. But most companies are **only utilizing a fraction of that data**. A DaaS platform not only ensures companies can utilize more of their data — it also makes it accessible to business users in a consistent, easily accessible format. And enabling advanced analytics, Mckinsey estimates, can **unlock $9.5 trillion to $15.4 trillion of value** across industries globally. And the ability of data to bolster company scalability can come in two forms: internal and external.

Scaling data internally can lead to a host of benefits, increasing data literacy across the organization, and powering data-driven decision-making company-wide. And over time, the data will improve their decision-making — and by extension, improve business outcomes.

Scaling analytics in the enterprise: DXC Technologies

DaaS helps companies ensure data flows through every department: from IT to sales to marketing, providing appropriate and actionable insight for each. A majority of companies today don't have self-serve analytics capabilities for their data consumers. But among those that do, the value is clear: **71% report using the self-service platforms daily** or weekly.

Take DXC Technology, for example: To continue to grow its business, the company knew it needed to create a more robust sales and marketing engine. But with 80,000 employees across 70 countries, centralization and governance were two key hurdles. Regional marketing and sales teams were using disparate automation and CRM tools. They lacked consistent data sources and KPIs to track progress. And while they had already invested in some reporting capabilities, the tools were limited to analyzing data within one domain.

> **"What we needed was a picture of the whole universe of data,"** said Christopher Marin, Director of Digital Marketing Ecosystem & Analytics at DXC.

So they chose to invest in and implement a DaaS solution — and within 90 days they were up and running with a fully-integrated digital ecosystem. They began to be able to organize around key metrics company-wide like Marketing Qualified Leads (MQLs), Marketing Sourced Pipeline, Marketing Assisted Pipeline, and Total Contract Value. And since launching the DaaS platform, the company has seen a 206% increase in MQLs alone.

206% **increase in marketing qualified leads since implementing DaaS**

And over time, the availability of marketing and sales teams has helped increase data literacy across these teams — and contributed to a broader data culture organization-wide.

Myths of scaling data governance

Scaling data doesn't mean allowing unrestricted access to internal and external data consumers. DaaS platforms ensure data security and control access to sensitive information. Conversely, DaaS also prevents the highly restrictive nature of traditional data governance methods: Data definitions still make sense to the business user, and insights can be customized to fulfill each organization's needs.

Scaling analytics for customers and partners: GreatVines

Scaling analytics capabilities also drives strong customer relationships. While many companies today provide data and insights to customers, this often creates a strain on internal data teams who are tasked with packaging and delivering reports. Moreover, many companies don't have the necessary tools to provide the robust data that customers are looking for — as was the case for GreatVines, a sales management services provider for the beverage industry. The capabilities they had were quickly proving insufficient, and CEO John Collins saw an opportunity to gain a competitive advantage in the industry.

"Distributors want to work with companies that provide the best insights," Collins said. "We knew that if we were the only company providing the analytics that can give customers deep insights and point them in the right direction, that would give us a huge competitive advantage and open up a new revenue source."

So the company decided to invest in a cloud-based solution that could improve the metrics they were providing for companies — with a key caveat in mind: scalability.

> **"We wanted a solution that could start small and grow with us, without a big up-front commitment,"** said Collins.

The solution was a DaaS platform that allowed GreatVines to make data on the platform accessible to its customers in much more detail — and via a self-service portal. And they quickly saw the benefits:

1. The DaaS platform created new revenue streams for GreatVines, allowing it to create a premium add-on for customers interested in accessing advanced analytics. Collins says the company has grown ten-fold since implementing the platform.
2. Customer retention has increased thanks to these analytics since, as Collins predicted, the ability to provide analytics puts GreatVines ahead of the competition.

   10x growth at GreatVines since implementing DaaS

3. GreatVines has also seen its overall customer relationships improve. By providing suppliers and distributors with the analytics they need to drive revenue, customers are happy — driving not only repeat business but also referrals.

"We're enabling customers to see what works and what doesn't, backed up by real data, so that they can partner with their customers to come up with win-win solutions," Collins said.

Collins says GreatVines is continuing to scale the company's own capabilities as it grows, incorporating data and analytics into its long-term roadmap.

Driving enterprise scalability long-term

The need for data and analytics is only going to increase. Even though a majority of companies are not taking advantage of analytics today, some 92% agree that **analytics for decision-making** will be even more important two years from now. As a result, recent data suggests **99% of companies** are making related investments.

What will separate the data leaders and laggards, therefore, isn't just whether or not they invest in advanced analytic tools — it's whether they invest in the ability to scale analytics across the organization and as the business grows. Today's tools aren't meeting the mark on either score. By implementing a DaaS platform, companies can empower their teams with data-driven decision making today — for whatever comes in the future.

Want to learn more about how GoodData can enable your data as a service infrastructure?

Schedule a demo

Let's keep in touch! Join the conversation.
Follow along on: LinkedIn and Twitter

About GoodData

What is it that we do?

At GoodData, we believe that traditional data tools are no longer enough. Our Data as a Service (DaaS) infrastructure is the future of analytics: real-time, open, secure, and scalable. GoodData's leading cloud native analytics platform gives our customers the flexibility to build and scale any of their data use cases; from self-service and embeddable analytics, to machine learning and IoT — while maintaining the performance, cost-efficiency, and easy change management of such a central and integrated solution.

GoodData has teams and data centers in the USA, Europe, and Asia, with customers including leading software companies (SaaS), global financial and payment institutions, and multi-brand e-commerce platforms.

The GoodData advantage

Business:

1. One platform for all: Internal teams, client companies, external partners
2. Self-service analytics for business users
3. Your own branding
4. Predictable pricing to suit your business, no pay-per-user
5. The highest data privacy and security certifications

Technical:

1. Automated scaling to different departments and companies
2. Embedded dashboards in your application or software product
3. Streamlined multi-tenant change management
4. Abundant data-source options
5. Fully hosted or deployed as a container in your application