For week two discussion board, I wanted to look further into what a data audit is and when it can occur for organizations. When I think of an audit, I typically think of financial situations for companies and typically a negative things when it occurs. The actual definition of an audit is an official inspection of an individual’s or organizations accounts, typically by an independent body. Since we know the definition of an audit in general, the next step would be to understand how an audit operates within a data mind frame. Author Bonnie Massa describes a data audit as, “one of the most effective ways to identify a problem areas in your marketing, your data storage, and your overall business operations.” By being able to understand how your data is being utilized and how it is being managed as a whole, you can paint a picture of how your resources are being and possible improve your current state of your business.

Now, with performing the actual audit, it can be done in five steps. In the first step of the audit, it is important that you take into account all of the data assets that you may have yourself or that a third party is performing for you. By obtaining this list of applications that you are using for going through your information, it will give your company a perspective of how many tools are actually being used all together. Once you have an idea, the next step is to know where everything is stored and how we can access the data. Your goal is to find out where your data actually lives so you can more easily determine where it should live. (Massa, 2020) From this step, now you want to have opportunity to talk those that are using this data on daily basis to understand how they are using the data or any issues they may have while aggregating and organizing it. Within the fourth step, once you are now aware of all the information sources and how to obtain them, you must now determine which information provides the most positive results for your company. For example, a web based company would value email address above mailing addresses, while a company that drives profits through direct marketing would prioritize mailing addresses. (Massa, 2020) Lastly, for the final step, you want to track how your data is being used overall. In this last obstacle, you want to determine where there are any gaps in the usage of the data. If someone were new to your company, you want to ensure that someone can create a strong foundation when studying how your data is being used within the business instead of jumping into the deep end of the data and sprinting to obtain some sense of all of the information especially in determining which data is actually needed and used to complete a task.

References:

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