The Uprising of Self Service

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DSC 200 Computer Systems for Data Science

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October 24, 2021

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Big Data changed the way companies were able to leverage information from their customers and other avenues to make informed business decisions, but the process did not start off seamlessly. Data Lakes were able to be leveraged by IT departments alone which caused issues for company analysts. The initial process of retrieving data to complete analyses included requesting data from the IT department and this could take an extended amount of time due to the fact that IT departments couldn't keep up with the simultaneous increase in data and requests from analysts looking for real-time data (Gorelik, 2019, p. 98). Analysts were only able to run reports specifically created by the IT team and any updates to the reports required a multi-tiered approach to complete which effectively slowed down the analysis process. Another issue which arose was effective communication with the IT team regarding which data elements were required. One doctor at a medical research facility went through multiple attempts to leverage the correct data through his IT department only to end up taking SQL courses on his own enabling him to leverage the data required (Gorelik, 2019, p. 97). These limitations, as well as continually increased demand led to the rise of self-service environments for Big Data.

Self-service for Big Data "can be defined as a simple form of business intelligence (BI), where business users are empowered to access relevant data, perform queries and generate reports themselves with the help of easy-to-use self-service BI tools." (Pal, n.d.). Essentially this removes all of the lag created when analysts and other business professionals need to leverage data but are stuck waiting on the IT department to deliver results, and allowing those IT departments to focus of other areas. Self-service analytics can democratize big data, empower business users, allow data science teams to focus on core analytics tasks, and enable teams to

work together for better productivity (Pal, n.d.). Though this sounds like the perfect solution,

there may be some risk involved encompassing a lack of experience of the users, their

limitations, software and tool errors, data inconsistency, and a lack of governance of the system

and protocols (Pal, n.d.), but, with the right measures in place, most of these can be mitigated

with proper planning and implementation. Overall, self-service for Big Data appears to be a win.

References

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