## 

DAT 515 Final Project Milestone Two

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Third Star Financial Services currently has many unintegrated systems and applications in place in an attempt to capture and utilize data from its customers and agents. The company uses database management systems from both Oracle and MS SQL Server, but it does not have a single source of data for its customers. Third Star faces numerous issues due to this fact, from not knowing the size of its customer base, to duplicate data instances and overall poor data quality. The data warehouses that are produced from the various data sources are incomplete and are not optimized for proper reporting and analysis. Third Star fails to employ data governance across the organization. Rather, many individual business units and mid-level managers have taken it upon themselves to ineffectively compensate for this. The company requires intervention via an enterprise-level approach to restructuring the IT infrastructure and business processes.

Third Star currently has some components of standard enterprise data management which are ineffective for the following reasons:

* Oracle / MS SQL Server database management systems – aggregates incomplete data from various sources and fails to create a golden record of data
* Operating systems varied between UNIX/LINUX and Microsoft Windows – systems and applications vary across business units and locations, leads to inconsistencies
* Hardware supplied by HP and IBM – many locations experience network and bandwidth issues due to lack of a robust network architecture
* Congos reporting software – provides operational reports, unable to be used for decision making. Does not take advantage of data mining or dashboard capabilities

Third Star requires the following additional components in order to undertake standard enterprise data management:

* Data Hub – Centralized home for data that connects information sources to provide a golden record of accurate, aggregated, and timely master data.
* Governance Framework
* Data Quality Metrics
* Metadata Management
* Reference and Master Data Management – “Iimproving data quality and integration across data sources, applications, and technologies. Providing a consolidated, 360-degree view of information about important business parties, roles and products, for effective reporting and analytics.” (DAMA DBOK 172) Uses primary keys and interconnected relationships to avoid duplicate records and capture the maximum information for each record with the least storage and processing requirements.

With all of that said about the current state of Third Star Financial Services’ enterprise data management, the impacts of an improved infrastructure and business processes are clear. The first and most obvious benefit to operations is the improved workflow for the company’s agents. At the present time, agents do not have access to reliable information about customers. They do not know where the live, how to reach them, or what types of transactions they have made in the past. With a golden record of customer data, agents would have new resources to expand their business and to provide better services to their customers.

Another benefit that would come from a golden record of data would be for the headquarters. Since there is currently, no present single source of agent data for the entire company, there is no way for upper management to evaluate the agents and to identify business practices or other important information from the agents that leads to improved performance. With a golden record, it would be possible to find out what works and what does not work for agents, and this would provide more insights to standardize business processes.

Finally, the current state of enterprise data management leads to a massive disconnect across the entire organization. One of the main goals of the enterprise data management overhaul would be to decommission many of the current systems and applications, and replace them with ones that can be used by everyone regardless of business unit or location. This would create a much more consistent environment which is critical in a corporate setting so that information is provided by an individual source and so that communication flows through the appropriate channels.

References:

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