5 Signs Your Organization is Becoming Data-Driven

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Adopting a data-driven culture is priority number one for many organizations. However, it can be challenging to know whether this shift has been accomplished. Becoming truly data-driven isn't just about the technology. A company must create a data-driven culture to go along with any new solutions. When organizations take the time to nurture a data-driven company culture from boardroom to mailroom, they can unlock the true potential of data.

These are the five biggest signs that a shift to a data-driven culture is under way.

1. The First Sign: Data Democratization

The old way: C-suite/IT kept data locked away creating data silos.

Data can be risky. Governance in the era of big data is a challenge. However, all departments should become shareholders of the data they need to make decisions. Waiting for weeks for reports to be built stymies marketing teams and puts decision making behind.

Companies building a data-driven culture understand that each department needs usable dashboards with data at their fingertips in real-time. Team members interact with data on an ongoing basis for real-time insight and become collaborative in decision-making thanks to dashboards with clear visualization.

Making the shift:

- Move data out of the board room - and away from IT only resources
- Use a solution that allows flexible governance - down to the granular level
- Encourage departments to access data directly through self-serve portals - that do not require technical expertise to operate

2. The Second Sign: Data Quality

The old way: Importing data regardless of source, form, or function meant that 80% of processing was spent just cleaning.

Poor quality data impedes workflow and creates operational inefficiencies. A process for ensuring data quality is a significant step towards becoming data-driven. Companies can break down data silos, ensuring everyone has access to the right data, and build in workflows to ingest the correct data for the query.

Making the shift:

- Only ingest data needed for focused results - consuming lots of data isn't the point
- Automate quality control - meta-data in-place, appropriately tagged, accurate, and documented
- Reduce the skill required to clean and ingest quality data - democratize its availability

3. The Third Sign: Real-time Decision Making

The old way: Decision-making centered around past events, past data, and past trends. Companies unable to be ahead of the curve because all decisions were past-focused.

Now that companies have data — collected from legacy sources and new solutions — they want to use it to produce the valuable insights promised to them. Truly data-driven companies have access to real-time insights thanks to data-in-motion. Whereas past data models relied on what happened in past years to predict the next quarter or two, companies and departments can now make decisions based on real-time customer behavior and market decisions. *This does two things:*

1. Removes weight from business operations: Even behemoth enterprises are able to operate with flexibility and improve response times to any and all disruption.

2. Improves customer satisfaction: Businesses can respond in real-time to customer needs and innovate new products or services that customers don't even know they need yet.

Making the shift:

- Move away from locked up data - static data has no value tied up in silos, all or nothing governance controls, or divorced from context
- Create a fully extendible unified solution - so data can remain in-motion
- Shift to a modular system that grows or contracts as operations demand - rather than forcing operations to fit the tools.

4. The Fourth Sign: Removing the Tyranny of Meetings

The old way: Endless meetings about data. Talking about data. Discussing what to do with data. Top-down strategies built from the boardroom and communicated through a meeting in which data is on paper, and no one sees insights.

A data-driven organization doesn't need endless meetings to discuss data. Through accessible dashboards, departments spend time using data instead of just talking about it. Even better, that data proliferates throughout the organization and not just the boardroom.

This doesn't mean all talk about data is off the table. The issue with meetings is that they're often past-focused (see the third shift), steering decisions back towards value insights that might be several weeks or even months old. Instead of focusing on meetings about data, a data-driven organization spends time utilizing data.

Making the shift:

- Ensure dashboards and applications are user friendly
- Provide governance - that unlocks data for all relevant needs

5. The Final Shift: Only Necessary Tools

The old way: More tools seems better, but companies end up investing in tools that no one uses. With each technology overhaul, there's downtime and retraining involved. The end result? A wealth of available tools that no one checks.

One of the biggest lessons learned in the past few years is that more tools isn't the answer to digital transformation. Part of digital transformation is a reckoning of technology; organizations with data-driven culture take a frequent stock of tools to make sure employees are using them and receiving value.

Making the shift:

- Eliminate chasing shiny new tools - find ways to integrate and use existing solutions
- Deploy a Data Fabric - create a unified environment that delivers and accelerates data value

Living the Data-driven Reality

A data-driven company culture embraces the real-time flow of data. It breaks down silos and encourages everyone in the company to access the data they need. If this change isn't happening quite yet, it only takes a few shifts to nudge the company in the right direction.

Modern's DataOS® platform provides a framework that unlocks data, ensures quality, and manages governance down to the granular level. DataOS breaks data silos and powers organizations with secure, governed, and high-quality data - all in real-time.