



DataFlux Unifies Data Quality and MDM for Data Integration

New Platform Enables Unique Class of Information Management Technology for the Enterprise

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Summary

DataFlux, a provider of tools for data quality, master data management (MDM) and data integration, has introduced DataFlux qMDM Solution, an MDM platform that provides an integration point for the vendor's portfolio of tools for data management. The new platform has the potential to remedy a significant problem organizations have with data management: the lack of integration among tools. According to our benchmark research on MDM trends, organizations are investing in MDM: 49 percent of organizations said they have projects planned, and 27 percent have initiatives under way. However, the lack of tool integration is a barrier to deployment of MDM enterprise-wide. Ventana Research believes that DataFlux's entity-based data model can enable organizations to integrate MDM, data quality and data integration projects that separate lines of business have undertaken and that focus on only one type of data entity, such as customer or product.

Assessment

The processes and technology of master data management are designed to improve the consistency and quality of all of an organization's data, which is an important objective; half of the participants in our benchmark research on MDM trends cited MDM as a key component in their data quality processes. In many organizations, however, the deployment of tools and processes for data quality and related steps such as data profiling, cleansing and validation preceded MDM initiatives. In addition, while in some cases a central IT function manages these tools and processes, they frequently were deployed separately by lines of business to improve the consistency and quality of particular categories of data. Often in these cases, each tool has its own user interface and data model. As a result, IT organizations must deal with a data management "silo" problem not unlike that faced by business users seeking a single view of all their data.

One goal of an MDM initiative is to move away from departmental management of data and toward a centralized approach that allows an organization to address data consistency and quality for both analytic and operational processes from an enterprise perspective. We believe that a key part of any such undertaking should be to consolidate departmental tools for data quality and related processes and establish standard models and interfaces for integrating tools; this would also facilitate upgrades across the entire organization.

DataFlux addresses the challenge of multiple disparate data quality and integration tools with qMDM Solution, which brings together its Data Quality Integration Platform, master data services, data management workflows and a data stewardship console. The qMDM Solution uses an entity-based data model, which allows organizations to identify products, customers or other types of entities in a common way at a higher level. They can incorporate into the model different data entities, so organizations can begin to standardize models even if the entities are different. This is important for those attempting to expand MDM, data quality and data integration processes from a focus on customer data, which our research finds has been the highest priority, to address product, financial or other data entities. In addition, the model-based approach could make it easier for organizations to use MDM to improve data integration processes such as extraction, transformation and loading (ETL).

Market Impact

DataFlux is introducing two qMDM packages, for customer data and for product data. DataFlux is known as a provider of products for customer data quality and integration; the expansion into product information management (PIM) will bring DataFlux into more direct competition with PIM tool providers Full Tilt, Heiler and Stibo Catalog and information integration vendors that are expanding into PIM, supply chain management and operational data integration such as Informatica. While the two packages employ a common data model, DataFlux also provides features that are specialized for processes that use these respective types of data entities; for example, qMDM Solution for Product Data offers analytics for product management and the ability to enrich the data with industry-standard commodity classifications.

DataFlux is a wholly owned subsidiary of SAS, having been acquired in 2000. In October, SAS announced Project Unity, a plan to move development and support of all SAS data infrastructure-related products – those that address business process and data federation – to the DataFlux business unit. By giving DataFlux a more complete portfolio of tools, the move makes it directly competitive with IBM, Informatica, Microsoft, Oracle, SAP and other vendors. The Project Unity announcement detailed a phased consolidation and upgrading of the tools that will take place over the next two years.

Recommendation

MDM is an important tool for bringing down business costs associated with inadequate data quality, which can produce errors in product shipments, customer service and other business processes. While customer data is the top priority for MDM in many organizations, Ventana Research recommends that business and IT managers also address needs for MDM to improve product, financial and other data. Further, we believe that organizations should develop a strategy for consolidating and integrating MDM, data quality and data integration tools to reduce redundancy, cost and confusion in how they manage information. We advise organizations that are currently deploying MDM, data quality and data integration tools, or are considering doing so in the near future, to evaluate DataFlux qMDM Solution as an integrated set of tools that can accommodate data quality and MDM today and in the near future likely a larger set of the data integration needs of the organization.

Related Research Notes:

[Next Generation of Master Data Management](#)

Managing Metrics, Dimensions, Views and Hierarchies Is Critical for MDM

[The Challenge of Managing Customer Data](#)

Benchmark research finds creating a single source of the truth for customer information isn't simple

[High-Quality Master Data Is Vital to Business Success](#)

Siperian's technology supports enterprise-wide master data management and data governance

[Companies Slow to Implement Data Governance](#)

Research finds higher level of awareness developing for this critical business process

[Research Finds Companies Immature in Information Management](#)

Decades of IT investments aren't being fully exploited

[Information Management Addresses the Basics](#)

Demand by business drives advances in information technology

[A Single Source of Customer Data](#)

DataFlux enables customer master data management

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