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Top 5 Integration Use Cases to Empower Business Users

Modern organizations face significant data integration challenges due to the exponential growth of cloud-based data. The surge in projects fueled by the cloud, internet of things (IoT), state-of-the-art ecosystems, a growing number of apps, and other factors intensifies pressure on data integration initiatives. Many organizations require assistance devising effective data integration strategies to leverage data and other technologies across multiple platforms, such as SaaS applications, cloud-based data warehouses, and internal applications.

As digital transformations advance, there is a growing need for efficient and diverse methods of delivering data, encompassing both on-premises and cloud-based endpoints. Integration capabilities provided as a service have emerged as a robust solution to address the evolving demands of modern data integration.

The widespread adoption of SaaS applications among line-of-business (LOB) users is a significant driver for cloud-based integration solutions. With departments subscribing to SaaS applications, often without informing IT, business users want a simple way to exchange data and information across SaaS applications.

While numerous SaaS applications integrate with other standard technologies, integrating data stored in apps and enterprise systems typically necessitates IT assistance to bring data together and make it easily accessible. This barrier to data access creates blind spots for both on-premises and cloud data that isn't easily accessible to everyone in the organization who needs it. Enterprise systems hold crucial data that can provide insights into customer interactions, payments, support issues, and other business areas, yet this data is often isolated and safeguarded as mission-critical assets.

Integration for Empowered Teams

What's needed for effective integration is a solution that enables secure information sharing with all users, independent of engineering or IT resources. Empowering LOBs to access and integrate data securely and independently helps avoid the delays and bottlenecks typically associated with traditional integration methods. Ensuring critical information is immediately and easily accessible to all employees is essential for sustaining a competitive advantage, swiftly adapting to evolving business conditions in real-time, and building a data-driven culture.

Enabling departmental resources to access, integrate, and analyze data when needed is becoming increasingly standard. The demand for quick answers is rising, making a modern data platform with self-service data integration essential. Below are five typical use cases that can benefit from this type of platform:

1. **Data consolidation and access:** Data platforms with integration capabilities empower business users to access and leverage data stored in the data warehouse, as well as data on-premises and in the cloud. These platforms are equipped with pre-built connectors, data quality features, and scheduling functions, which greatly minimize the need for IT involvement. With the capacity to create tailored integration scenarios, business users can effortlessly retrieve pertinent data from the data warehouse and seamlessly integrate it with data from other sources. This self-service enables efficient data management and analysis, leading to improved decision-making and the delivery of valuable insights tailored to user needs.

2. **Process Automation:** Integration and automation are indispensable for businesses aiming to enhance efficiency and streamline operations. Through system integration and the automation of repetitive tasks, companies can accelerate data processing and analysis, enabling faster access to information. This access saves significant time and enables business users to focus on more strategic endeavors that demand domain expertise. As a result of this heightened productivity, employees can contribute more effectively to the organization's success. With automation, businesses can optimize workflows, minimize errors, and ultimately attain greater operational efficiency.

3. **Sales and Marketing Alignment:** Integrating CRM systems with marketing automation platforms ensures seamless data flow between sales and marketing teams, optimizing lead management and customer engagement. This integration enhances revenue generation processes and facilitates informed decision-making through real-time tracking and analysis of customer data. By aligning sales and marketing efforts, businesses boost productivity and team collaboration, achieving cohesive goals faster. Ultimately, this integration empowers business users to drive growth, increase revenue, and deliver exceptional customer experiences.

4. **Customer 360:** Integrating customer data from various touchpoints, such as website interactions, support tickets, and sales interactions, offers a comprehensive understanding of each customer. This holistic view lets marketing teams personalize marketing activity based on individual customer preferences and behaviors. Combining data helps identify patterns and trends to maximize marketing efforts and better control marketing budgets. Moreover, integrated customer data enhances customer service efforts, enabling businesses to anticipate and address customer needs effectively.

5. **Real-time Reporting and Analytics:** Integrating operational systems with business intelligence (BI) tools empowers business users to access real-time insights and reports, facilitating data-driven decision-making throughout the organization. Real-time reporting and analytics are indispensable for competitiveness in today's fast-paced market. This integration allows businesses to react quickly to market changes and elevate customer service by providing up-to-date information on customer health across the organization.

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Integrating Insights for Executive Impact

Data integration is a valuable investment in innovation for any organization. However, many executives prioritize solving immediate organizational challenges, making it difficult to justify spending on innovations that may not yield immediate results. This challenge is particularly pronounced when integration requirements are complex and the desired outcomes may take time to materialize.

Businesses that focus on data recognize the importance of having complete, accurate, and timely data for assessing business health. Executives with a unified view of their organization's data can use it to shape strategies, model potential outcomes, and discover new growth opportunities. Data integration facilitates real-time reporting and analysis, allowing executives to track key metrics, monitor progress toward goals, and quickly adapt to changing market conditions. With timely and accurate information, executives can lead their organizations successfully.

Leaders who leverage data can make more confident decisions and make a more significant impact in less time. Integration is a crucial enabler for companies that want to create a data-driven culture because it significantly improves the processes around collecting and aggregating data, making it easier for all parts of the organization to access data.

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By tackling the challenges posed by growing data volumes and shifting technology landscapes, businesses can empower users to connect and handle data autonomously, reducing their dependence on IT. Through a deep understanding of integration use cases, from data consolidation to real-time reporting and analytics, organizations can quickly extract insights from data, improve decision-making, and drive sustainable growth. Embracing data integration as a strategic necessity enables organizations to cultivate a culture of innovation, adaptability, and performance.

Actian is a pioneer in data integration, with decades of experience helping customers leverage data insights for better business outcomes. To learn more about how Actian helps accelerate data integration, visit **actian.com**.

About Actian

Actian makes data easy. We deliver cloud, hybrid cloud, and on-premises data solutions that simplify how people connect, manage, and analyze data. We transform business by enabling customers to make confident, data-driven decisions that accelerate their organization's growth. Our data platform integrates seamlessly, performs reliably, and delivers at industry-leading speeds. Learn more about Actian, a division of HCLSoftware: **www.actian.com**.

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