

CIO CHALLENGES

DISCONNECTED SILOS OF DATA

CIO Challenges:

What are the main concerns facing Chief Information Officers in the modern era? At Orbus Software we have identified 8 major issues that CIOs are likely to struggle with when it comes to meeting the demands of the digital age. In this eBook, we will examine the problem of data becoming siloed across the organization.

As the supply of data has continued to explode around the world, so has the management of data become an increasingly important issue. From security and privacy issues to data-driven decision making, getting all your data in one place, with a single source of truth, could be vital for maintaining a competitive advantage and retaining the trust of customers & regulatory agencies.

This eBook looks at how data silos form in organizations and the benefits that businesses can realize through a single source of truth that unites enterprise information.

Key Stats

- 83% of executives said that their organizations have silos and that 97% thought these silos had a negative effect
- 72% of firms said managing multiple CRM systems across geographies and technology silos is moderately to extremely challenging
- 80% of the work involved in data science is acquiring and preparing data
- 1 in 4 organizations have more than 50 distinct data silos
- Data issues cost each business worldwide anywhere between \$9.7 million and \$14.2 million yearly
- 9 in 10 IT leaders point to data silos as their biggest obstacle to digital transformation
- Small and large disruptions — such as the COVID-19 pandemic — cause historical data that reflect past conditions to become obsolete more quickly



How does Data become Disconnected?

When addressing modern data issues, we must first address that the challenges faced cover a very wide range. This paper is focused on siloed enterprise data, which occurs when business data becomes isolated and contained within just one part of the business.

This can impact upon other areas of data management, but largely indirectly. Nonetheless, data silos have grave implications for implementation of strategy, preventing objective, data-driven decision making.

"iServer has allowed our organisation to easily catalogue and comprehend better our enterprise systems estate"

Lead Architect, Retail



Relentless Growth of Data

How do silos arise? Natural enterprise growth is one of the main culprits. As a company grows, it will acquire more applications and communication will become more difficult. Perhaps an overseas office decides they need a new application with better local support, and confirming with an IT team a continent away is simply not convenient. The end result is application data that may not integrate with other sources or be acknowledged by other parts of the business.

Other examples could be an acquired firm sticking with the technologies it has always used, or legacy technologies not being properly phased out across the business. Vendor policies are another area that could lead to silos. Software firms want to encourage users to stay within their ecosystem, which can result in complicated data formats or restrictions to import and export functions.

"[iServer] has been so helpful to categorize tools and their interdependencies in our organization. Managing a large dataset in several views has been made very easy"

DevOps Architect, Services



Hidden Data Prevents Objective Decisions

The implications of siloed data can be severe. Data-driven decision making relies on the data being accurate and true across the organization. If some information is hidden from decision makers, then there is no possibility of decisions being truly objective. Furthermore, the corruption can spread far beyond high level strategic decisions; every function of the business could make mistakes if they are unable to view a complete picture.

A marketing department cannot reliably track customer interest if some customer records are siloed. IT and Finance can both be stymied if some application costs are not made obvious. Entire sections of the business could end up forgotten if the problem becomes sufficiently out of control.

Silos Kill Collaboration

As data becomes siloed, so teams follow. Organizational silos are essentially fueled by data silos, breaking the first link in communication by preventing clear and consistent messaging. If two sides of a discussion have different data on the same topic, then it becomes very difficult for them to agree on anything. From this point, any number of issues can arise. Organizational infighting and battles over resources are rare, but the creation of data silos can be the seed from which such troubles grow. This can work the other way as well, as political infighting leads to the deliberate creation of data silos in order to gain an advantage.

Key Stats

- The US government estimates more than \$10Bn in savings from removing data silos
- The return on investment to data architecture can be significant (10-15% profit margin growth) according to Mckinsey
- 85% of decision-makers prioritize the use of data insights
- More than 70% of global data and analytics decision-makers are expanding their ability to use external data

Connect Data with a Single Source of Truth

The most common solution to disparate and isolated data is to establish a single source of truth (sometimes abbreviated as SSOT). As the name implies, a single source of truth means that all data is stored in a single location (note that this does not have to mean a single physical location), accessible to everyone and reflecting the last word on data accuracy. Maintaining a single source of truth does require effort, however, and will often fall under the remit of enterprise architecture.



Track Data and Relationships across the Enterprise

The most common way to establish a SSOT is via software and proper data governance; the iServer Suite is an example, offering a centrally governed and managed repository that can store all enterprise information. As the creation of an Enterprise Architecture naturally involves understanding the entire structure of an enterprise, including all of its data and the relationships between everything. This makes it possible not just to have a single source of enterprise data, but a source of truth, which prevents hidden data silos from persisting.

Seamless Integrations Make Getting Started Easy

That is not to say that gathering all enterprise data in one place is an easy job.

The proliferation of applications, different versions of applications and different types of data places an enormous strain on users and can act as a barrier to entry for non-architects. EA tools offer a number of solutions to this issue: first, integrations with key enterprise software can make it easy to rapidly import or export large amounts of data. The iServer Suite has a number of off-the-shelf integrations for software like ServiceNow and Jira, and was built from the ground up to align with the Microsoft 365 stack.

In addition to built-in integrations, many EA tools will offer an API for users to design their own customized integrations with other software, such as the REST API used by the iServer Suite.

One Orbus customer directly tracked \$8m of savings through iServer in 2021

Cloud Access Democratizes the Repository

Cloud-based EA tools can also simplify the management of data, giving users access to the central repository from anywhere, and removing the need for enterprise architects to act as 'gatekeepers' to the repository.

iServer365 enables business users to add or retrieve repository data through the familiar SharePoint interface, for example.

The iServer Suite for Enterprise Architecture:

A Single Source of Truth for Enterprise Information

Establishing a single source of truth, while apparently simple on the surface, can be challenging and resource intensive. Solving this challenge will require a specialist platform. The iServer Suite utilizes a web based, central repository to manage all enterprise content. Thanks to this central repository, CIOs will be safe in the knowledge that the repository stores the structure of every part of the organization and governs data flows and the application portfolio.

The iServer Suite has won Gartner's Peer Insights Customers' Choice for EA Tools for 5 years running, and was named a Leader in the EA Tool space by Forrester. It's not just a Single Source of Truth, either, providing a number of powerful features to assist with data management. Here's how the iServer suite can centralize enterprise data and remove data silos:

Unlocks the Full Potential of Microsoft 365

iServer365 has been built from the ground up to work with Microsoft 365, integrating directly with applications such as Visio and Excel. Repository data and Diagrams can be imported or managed directly through SharePoint and Teams with visualizations in dynamic Power BI dashboards.

Pre-built 3rd Party Data Integrations

The SolutionsHub provides turnkey solutions that can instantly integrate third party data with the centralized EA repository. Enable Jira, Cherwell, Azure, ServiceNow, and many other integrations at the click of a button.

Make smarter, faster decisions with Data Portfolio Dashboards

Quickly and easily understand your data portfolio through a series of interactive dashboards for the data portfolio, as well as other parts of your strategic portfolio which are linked to data. Answer key business questions

Customizable Integrations and Capabilities

Enrich your repository data via a REST API which enables users to build their own integrations with 3rd party software and customize their iServer365 experience. Orbus support is on hand to help with any requirements that users have.

Bring Your Data Under Control

Book a tailored demo today to find out how the iServer Suite will provide a single source of truth for the enterprise and destroy data silos

[Book a demo](#)

iServer reduced project lead times from a month to a few days at one major financial firm



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