You have probably invested significant amounts of time, money and energy in IT over the course of many years. Individually all the various systems appear to be operating largely as designed, but you know that the management information you receive presents an incomplete and inaccurate picture of your organisation.

Working with some of the world’s largest public and private organisations, our experience shows that the problem is a lack of coordinated information management. Key business data is collected, processed and held within departmental silos, often serving a specific local purpose and process, but cannot then support the wider information needs of the business. Trying to bring data together at a higher level reveals errors, gaps and duplications, and informed decision-making based is almost impossible. Sound familiar?

Organisations are now recognising that their data must be managed as an enterprise asset. They understand the need to weave information management strategies, policies, procedures and solutions throughout the fabric of their operation so that raw data becomes timely, relevant and actionable information.

Entity’s two stage approach can help you establish the enterprise information management (EIM) solution to best support your strategic objectives.
The success of an EIM solution will usually involve affecting change throughout the organisation. This depends on establishing a clear vision of how the organisation already uses and manages information and providing a baseline that informs the design of the desired target state. In Stage One, Entity’s Information Management (IM) Review defines the existing baseline position and the target state.

Baseline

To determine the baseline position, Entity’s consultants examine the organisation from a number of viewpoints.

Executive View

Working closely with your senior executives, initially the focus centres on the organisation’s vision and objectives to determine a set of goals for the EIM solution that are aligned with the overall strategic direction. Through a series of interviews, many other dimensions are considered such as the strength of executive sponsorship, existing models of governance and oversight, risks and risk tolerance, the cultural readiness to embrace and effect coordinated and cross-functional change, opportunities for demonstrating early successes to increase motivation and buy-in, and potential areas of support or resistance.

Operational View

Using either interviews or questionnaires, detailed insights are gathered from staff who either have responsibility for the various core systems or else rely on them to carry out their roles. The collated results help to identify any general areas that could be improved, to determine business requirements, and also to highlight specific system-related issues. Where appropriate, short targeted deep-dive explorations with business unit owners may be undertaken to provide additional evidence in support of high level findings.

Technical View

Subject matter experts within IT are consulted about the existing strategy, policies, standards or procedures relating to a number of technical areas. This includes a review of the existing technical infrastructure and technical roadmap. The consolidated findings include a capability maturity assessment that presents a measure of the baseline position from a number of dimensions.
Target

Entity consultants define an EIM strategy for the organisation based on best practice data management principles. This includes policies and standards and the appropriate data governance structure to embed sound information management practices across and throughout the operation. A specification for the supporting data architecture is also developed.

The target state describes how the organisation – its business units, processes and decision-making functions will be enhanced by the EIM programme. A new target position is established for each of the dimensions assessed within the baseline. The goal is to improve the maturity of the entire operation in each of these dimensions, and ensure the success of all initiatives for exploiting information.

The following figure illustrates the value of operating at higher levels of information management maturity.

Roadmap

A roadmap is developed to map the incremental steps required to move from the current baseline position to the desired target state.

The roadmap delivered from the IM Review represents the overall transformation in terms of manageable bite sized projects, which are prioritised to realise benefits swiftly, rationally and realistically. In Stage Two, this transformation becomes the subject of an EIM programme that provides a framework for governing the entire series of projects.

The projects are typically varied in nature, ranging across the delivery of technical infrastructure and shared services, the instigation of organisational change, through to business focused projects that directly exploit the new capabilities of the emerging enterprise information management platform.
Each project comprises both Design and Rollout activities.

**Design**

This phase includes a detailed analysis of the requirements within the scope of a particular project, and delivery of the specifications and models necessary to build and rollout out the new capabilities.

Working outwards from the business objectives, the design activities capture the business and technical requirements, build the enterprise data model and business glossary, assess data quality, define new organisational structures, develop specifications for technical and functional components, and plan the testing scenarios covering all changes.

Other key elements covered during Entity’s design phase include the development of the procurement approach, data discovery and confirmation of the target enterprise information architecture design.

**Rollout**

During the rollout phase, each project delivers its capabilities in alignment with the designs. Every rollout represents an advance in the organisation’s capacity to capitalise on its information. These advances will affect business units, systems, processes and people to a greater or lesser extent, and over time all the changes will contribute to a fundamental shift in the way information is managed and used throughout the organisation.

“Flowing complete, accurate, timely data to the people and processes that need it is the lifeblood of a modern organisation.”  
Ambuj Goyal, IBM
IS EIM AN EASY OPTION?

In a word, no. It is no surprise that some of the largest enterprises and governments are struggling with this. Effective information management requires changes across the whole organisation. This means breaking down the walls of independent data silos and departments to allow everyone to work together in the interests of the organisation as a whole.

With the appropriate insight, skills, investment and support it can be achieved. Forward thinking organisations are successfully implementing their roadmaps, measuring the quality of their data and improving governance, policies and procedures.

Whether your strategic drivers include regulatory compliance, risk management, increased sales, or improved customer or citizen service, the benefits to your organisation will be numerous.

SUMMARY

The ability to exploit information and to treat it as a corporate asset is arguably the defining feature of the modern successful organisation – both now and in the future.

An effective enterprise information management strategy is the foundation for meeting the emerging challenges of Big Data. The competitive advantage derived from accurate and reliable data, real-time business intelligence, advanced trend analysis and predictive modeling is in reach of organisations that embrace information management as an enterprise-wide responsibility.

For any organisation, large or small, the journey from where they are now to a trusted enterprise information management platform sounds impossible. This need not be the case if you start with a properly defined and executed enterprise information management review.

HOW TO START?

Entity is a specialist Enterprise Information Management consultancy and solutions provider, operating throughout the EMEA region.

Many clients then go onto to select Entity to help them implement the identified future target state. Entity can also become involved as a specialist implementer for in-flight programmes or to provide assurance to clients for information management strategies or solutions from other providers.

An IM Review from Entity gives you a fixed-price start that will enable you to assess your next steps and to move forward with confidence.
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