

Perform a

Data Audit

Don't just execute an audit to identify **what** issues exist, probe deeper to unravel **why** they exist.

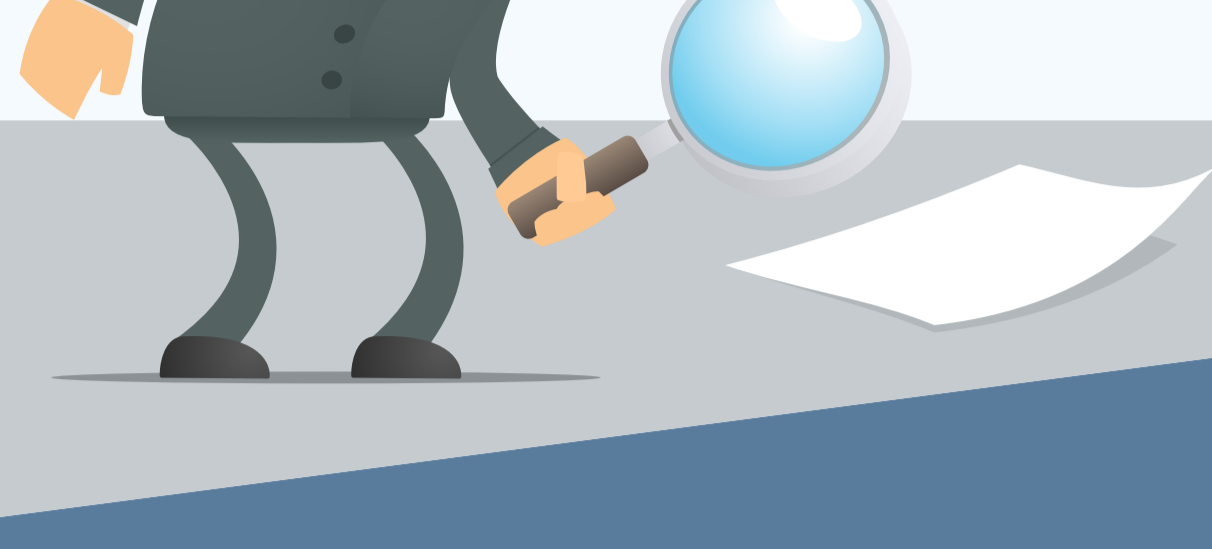
You need to take action!

Data issues are deeply rooted and extremely complex. Not only do organizations have trouble choosing a starting point for bad data, but they also have difficulty finding the root cause of the issue. As a result, data audits can be long, tedious initiatives, which offer little insight into the data issues.

← Missing

Business pains

- There is uncertainty as to whether the data is complying with laws and regulations.
- The business has trouble executing its main business processes due to bad data.
- Employees get different answers from what are supposed to be the same data sets.
- There is a genuine inability to make good business decisions because the data is of such low quality.
- The business is experiencing severe dissatisfaction from customers, partners, and suppliers alike due to the bad data and it is eroding the business's reputation.
- The business is leaking money as a result of duplicate mailings, time wasted finding new customer information, etc.



The business continues to complain to IT that the organizational data is inadequate for its operations.

IT pains

CIOs and IT departments feel that they need to step in to alleviate pains caused by bad data.



The business insists that IT is responsible and that it take measures to rectify the issue, but clean-up efforts are futile; regardless of the tools IT employs, the data gets dirty again almost immediately.

IT has spent countless person-hours shifting through data to resolve issues, wasting time and money.

Don't try to solve a case without interviewing your witnesses and questioning your suspects.

- Info-Tech's methodology for a data audit equips you with a step-by-step approach to optimize your audit efforts through combining technical aspects with end-user interaction.
- Often organizations attempt a data audit without recognizing the sheer importance of end-user experiences and knowledge.
- For an effective audit you cannot solely rely on running reports through information systems and evaluating your SLAs, you must also interview the end users.
- User profiling will help you understand how the process works and how data is created and curated.
- A combination of technical profiling and user profiling will help you understand where issues are and why they exist.



- An annual data audit initiative will continually revise and fine-tune ongoing practices, processes, and procedures for the management and handling of data within the organization.
- You can't do everything at once. Pick a process, see some early victories, gain momentum, and repeat.



Steps for Success

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Understand the benefits of a data audit

• Today, data is considered the lifeblood of the organization. Business decisions are no longer guided by intuition, but instead by data analytics. Across all major industries, data-driven decisions have been proven to outperform human intuition. If data is treated as an asset, it can deliver insight and drive business success.

• In order for organizations to use their data effectively and benefit from it, performing regular data audits is essential.

• Data audits help manage risk. A thorough data audit provides knowledge about where your assets are, who uses them, and how they are used, stored, and accessed.



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Structure the project

A completed Data Audit Project Charter will set the team up for success by helping to acquire stakeholder buy-in:

- Project Drivers – What made us decide to conduct an audit?
- Goals & Objectives – What are we aiming to achieve here?
- Project Scope – Where are we going to start?
- Project Participants – Who is going to be involved?
- Data Auditor – Who will be responsible for seeing the data audit through from beginning to end?
- Metrics – How do we measure success?



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Prepare for the data audit

The data audit project team must:

- Create a context diagram to capture data sources
- Document the necessary stakeholder information
- Locate business process stakeholders
- Schedule data audit interviews
- Inform database administrators of technical assessment
- Discuss results of assessment

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Conduct a data audit

The data audit project team must:

- Tailor the interview guide to suit interview candidates
- Conduct interviews
- Complete the Data Source Assessment Tool
- Update the data context diagram
- Summarize key data issues



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Analyze and review data audit results

The data audit project team must:

- Perform a root cause analysis
- Discuss the root causes for trust, availability, compliance, and security issues
- Brainstorm solutions for improvement



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Create a corrective plan

The data audit project team must:

- Identify data sources that are underperforming
- Identify immediate opportunities for improvement
- Assess performance for each activity group
- Discover next steps

