



## Overcoming the Top 2 Challenges with Manual Reporting

Never has the old adage been truer, time is money—and for most businesses, a lot of time is spent dealing with data. If any part of your data management is manual, you are likely dealing with at least two big challenges: **Wasted time and inconsistencies.**

The biggest problem? This challenge is cyclical. Time spent trying to reconcile data from multiple sources means less time is available to actually analyze the information—but having this information available would offer insight into how the data should be organized. In fact, industry research shows that business users are spending more than 70% of their time just integrating and consolidating data, leaving the least amount of time for discovery.

Not sure this applies to your business? Here are some key indicators to consider when deciding whether you are dealing with the top 2 challenges:

- Are your business users able to quickly and efficiently gather the information they need?
- Can they use that data to ask follow-up questions and actually get answers?
- Do they need to go through IT every time they have a new query?

If you can answer yes to one or more of those questions, you are likely dealing with data challenges. The problem with manual reporting is that no two people, no two teams and no two departments are going to see data the same way. Sure, your teams know the difference between an apple and an orange—but do you have one team referring to the orange as an orange and another team referring to it as a citrus fruit?

Let's take this illustration a step further. You now have both oranges and citrus fruits being counted in your database, even though they are the same thing. Now someone goes to pull a report, but they only count the oranges, not realizing there are citrus fruits to be included, too.

This may seem like an oversimplification, but it highlights the actual problem—securing access to accurate data is complicated! Which is why downstream data integration and manual reporting are too risky. Not only are your business units spending countless hours entering the data, their methods of entry are likely inconsistent—and you can't afford to risk making business decisions on bad data!

How do you overcome the challenges of wasted time and inconsistencies? Automate your data entry and reporting. With automation and effective upstream data integration strategies, you accomplish goals specific to your data challenges:

- Increase the time spent analyzing and decrease the time spent assembling.
- Establish consistent processes across your different business units and functional areas.

When data management is automated, errors are eliminated. In fact, the solution to wasted time and inconsistencies is pretty clear: when you put clean data in, you can pull clean data out.