



For more insight into Citizant's Data-Centric Methodology, visit us at www.citizant.com

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Streamlining IT Decision Support Capabilities through Integrated Data

Providing a common-core of enterprise IT data across CIO components to reduce the cost and complexities of IT environments and maximize the return on IT investments.

The Business Challenge

In today's Federal landscape, significant focus has been put on Chief Information Officers (CIOs) to reduce departmental IT costs and complexity; promote technology reuse to meet business needs; and transform legacy infrastructure into agile environments using cloud and shared services. This has proven to be easier said than done. However, in the midst of modernization, a constant remains – the one true enabler and the thread that binds all IT management efforts together is the data.

CIO organizations require a high degree of integration and cross-pollination of relevant data assets to successfully meet mission objectives. Interestingly enough, a majority of CIO components develop, utilize, and distribute many of the same types of data for different activities and purposes. Looking more closely, however, we come to realize that what we had perceived as integrated data is really just duplicative overlap; what we've determined as being authoritative data is really just one version of the truth; and the data we've governed so diligently is unavailable, inconsistent, and oftentimes requires a level of manual manipulation to be usable. This all comes at a time when routine Federal data calls are the norm and the availability of funding is critically dependent on the accuracy of your data.

Citizant's Solution Approach

Citizant's *Integrated Data Approach to IT Decision Support* originated from our extensive experience supporting a multitude of CIO programs and initiatives within the Federal Government. This flexible and adaptive approach centers on the identification, integration, and management of commonly used datasets that span across multiple OCIO functional areas, referred to as Common-core IT Data.

Common-core IT Data are the fundamental information elements that all CIO components utilize to make strategic enterprise-level decisions and perform detailed analysis to support their respective IT management activities. The major challenges with Common-core IT Data is that it's not centrally stored or managed, and more often than not, locked away in a variety of stove piped spreadsheets, cuff systems, and redundant

databases. Citizant’s approach establishes a future-state construct (**Figure 1**) that will allow Common-core IT Data to be easily integrated, accessible, in a usable format, routinely updated, and centrally managed by an appointed data steward.

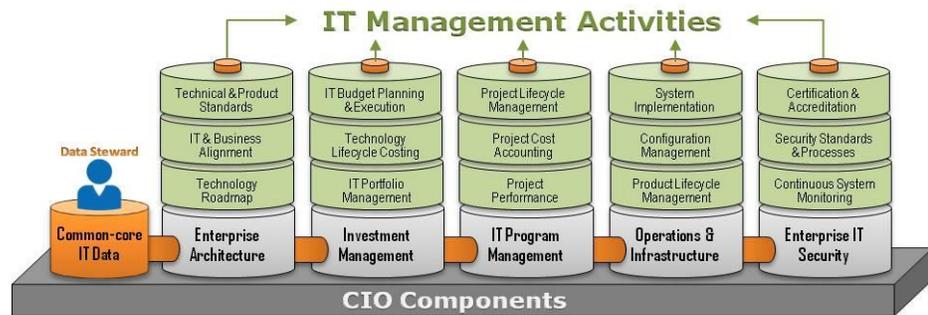


Figure 1 – Future-state of Common-core IT Data

Derived from lessons learned supporting a vast array of IT management activities within CIO programs, the following are prime examples of Common-core IT Data applicable to most Federal Agencies:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise Application Portfolio • System & Business Owners • Support Contractor / Vendors • IT / Business Investment Alignments • Application / System Descriptions • Number of / Type of System Users • Future State Product Versions • End-of-Life (EOL) Dates • End-of-Maintenance (EOM) Dates • Licensing Costs & Quantities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT Shared Service Catalog • Application Software • Database Management Systems • Programming Languages • System Interfaces • System Development Costs • Operation & Maintenance Costs • HW/SW Product Versions • Development Lifecycle Phases • Critical System Designations |
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Although specific adaptations of the *Integrated Data Approach to IT Decision Support* are tailored for each Federal agency, at a high-level Citizant prescribes the following steps:

- ✓ **Commit to the Common-core IT Data** – Change without commitment is likely to fail. In order to be successful with this integrated data approach, you need buy-in and agreement from all stakeholders. One way to establish this is by standing up a working group or advisory board to oversee the execution, facilitate collaboration, and help mitigate risks. More importantly, you must designate a Data Steward to be the primary liaison to address data quality and data-refresh issues.
- ✓ **Define your Common-core IT Data** – CIO components need to discuss and agree on what type of data is most important to them, what they need to use the data for, and what is the impact to their mission if the data is unavailable or inaccurate. What

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they will come to discover is the wants and needs in regards to IT data sets will not hugely differ between CIO components. The difference lies in how and when they plan to use the data.

- ✓ **Determine your data sources and owners** – Now that we know what we want as Common-core IT Data, we need to determine the best place to source it. A data source can be a number of things. Spreadsheets, databases, and applications are all valid sources and producers of data. And with any data source, there needs to be an owner who will play a critical part in helping to understand usage patterns and the actual processes in place to transfer the data from producer to consumer.
- ✓ **Sequence the needs and prioritize the data** – It's one thing to know the data you need and where to get it, but it's equally important to know when you need it. CIO components will need to lay out fiscal year IT management activities to create a life cycle and align the Common-core IT data to these efforts to develop a holistic picture of IT data consumption. They are then able to prioritize Common-core IT Data into categories enabling more robust data quality checks on high-priority data sets.
- ✓ **Store your Common-core IT Data** – Whether you have an elaborate Data Warehouse implementation using custom ETL scripts, or a scaled down database residing on a shared server, if it's accessible and meets the needs of your organization, it can be used. Existing purpose-built tools and authoritative data sources for specific data sets will still remain, but the goal is to get your defined Common-core IT Data into a managed central repository, with the ability to perform data analytics from multiple perspectives.
- ✓ **Manage the Common-core IT Data** – The informational value provided by Common-core IT Data is directly proportional to the effectiveness of how the data is managed, and therefore is the most critical aspect to this approach. Managing the data includes conducting iterative data quality and process compliance checks across data sources; continual evolution and revision of the Common-core IT Data set to meet changing business needs; administration and maintenance of the integrated central repository; and development of policy, procedures, and guidelines associated with the data lifecycle.

Citizant's Solution Results

Citizant understands that accessible and authoritative information increases the ability to meet mission objectives, enhances operational efficiency across the enterprise, and facilitates more accurate forecasting and strategic decision-making capabilities. Moreover, Federal agencies are better positioned to face reduced IT spending and budget cuts by capitalizing on existing technologies and selective IT investments, with greater transparency and accountability.

By adopting Citizant's *Integrated Data Approach to IT Decision Support* and leveraging the concept of a centralized Common-core, data is more consistent, reliable, and non-duplicative; the amount and duration of time-consuming agency data calls is reduced; Information sharing across the enterprise is repeatable and automated; and critical decision-support capabilities are enhanced by enabling a multi-perspective view of IT through the various lenses of CIO.

ABOUT CITIZANT

Citizant designs and delivers smarter, leaner business and IT transformation solutions to the U.S. government, employing leading experts in enterprise architecture; application development; business process re-engineering; and program management support.

Citizant has been independently appraised at the Software Engineering Institute's CMMI-DEV Maturity Level 3 and CMMI-SVC Maturity Level 2.