

Can We Talk?

Innovative Responses to the Data Integration Challenge

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Framework and Hypothesis

- Three-part framework developed from research in foundations: *for data integration initiatives to take hold, the following components generally exist.*
 - Compelling business driver
 - Opportunity moment
 - Collaboration/coordination
- Hypothesis: The framework will hold true in nonprofits

Result: Modified Framework

For data integration initiatives to take hold, the following components generally exist:

- **Pre-conditions** that drive data integration efforts:
 - Negative/“push” factor
 - Positive/“pull” factor
- **Conditions** that determine success:
 - Collaboration/coordination
 - Ownership/leadership

Framework Components

- **Compelling business driver:** The need to integrate
- **Opportunity moment:** The desire to integrate
- **Collaboration/coordination:** The people and groups willing to work together to integrate
- **Leadership/ownership:** The people and groups willing and able to lead and own the integration effort

Research Trends/Themes

- Growing need/demand
- Heavy focus on “people” data
- Integration of existing constituent data
- Negative push factors are the top reasons for integration
- Emerging opportunities for IT providers
 - Specialists in data integration
 - Specialists within vibrant product ecosystems

Research Findings

- No “one-size-fits-all” solution
 - Alignment of IT solution with organizational principles
 - Web services layer
 - Data warehouse
 - State-wide taxonomy & data standards
 - Cross-sector data integration
 - Open APIs

Best Practices/Success Factors

- Communication is critical to success
- Double – triple! – the estimated timeframe
- Seek appropriate and affordable solutions
- Environmental factors matter (e.g., leadership, culture, business needs)

Observations

- The “how” vs. the “why” of integration
- Lack of incentives to build standards
- Integration is not always the right solution
- Nonprofits face large barriers to investment

Lessons from Other Sectors

Shared

- Business needs should drive the effort
- Environmental/organizational factors shape the effort
- Critical success factors / best practices

Lacking in NP Sector

- Capital investment and funding priorities
- Existence of standards setting bodies
- Formal structures for information governance

Theory of Change: Unified View of Information

Organizational
development / transformation

