

What Your Data Isn't Telling You: Understanding the Opportunity of Dark Data

THE FUTURE OF BI REQUIRES UNCOVERING YOUR HIDDEN DATA FOR GREATER BUSINESS VALUE, INCLUDING EFFICIENCY, INNOVATION, AND EVEN PROFITABILITY.

Gartner defines dark data as the information assets organizations collect, process, and store during regular business activities but generally fail to use for business opportunities. It's "dark" for multiple reasons. It might be located or abandoned in silos, stored in data repositories or user desktops, or buried in documents.

Unfortunately, many organizations are kidding themselves about how much dark data they have. A recent survey by IDG revealed that IT leaders classify only 25% of their organizational data, on average, as dark. That's compared to expert estimates that anywhere from 50% to 90% of data is dark.

Leaving even a quarter of your data untapped or hidden is a problem. Traditional business intelligence (BI) applications work on "known" data. Getting to the next level of value—the one your competitors may be mining right now—is the future of BI, and it means finding insights amid the "unknowns."

For example, sports media network ESPN wasn't able to tap into viewer sentiment to identify issues with pay-per-view broadcasts that might cause customer churn. The company deployed a modern BI solution that extracts keywords and data, analyzes sentiment, and summarizes the information so ESPN's customer care teams can take action.

"We now have this clear window into the issues viewers have and the severity of those issues," says [Doug Kramon](#), senior director of fan support and customer care at ESPN.

The results: Customer satisfaction rose by 9%, and customer self-service increased 200% in a 12-month period.

These types of outcomes go directly to the business's bottom line. To get to the next level of value, organizations must find ways to easily unlock their dark data and answer not just the big BI questions but the small ones too.

What Dark Data Looks Like: The Blind Spots in Your BI/Analytics

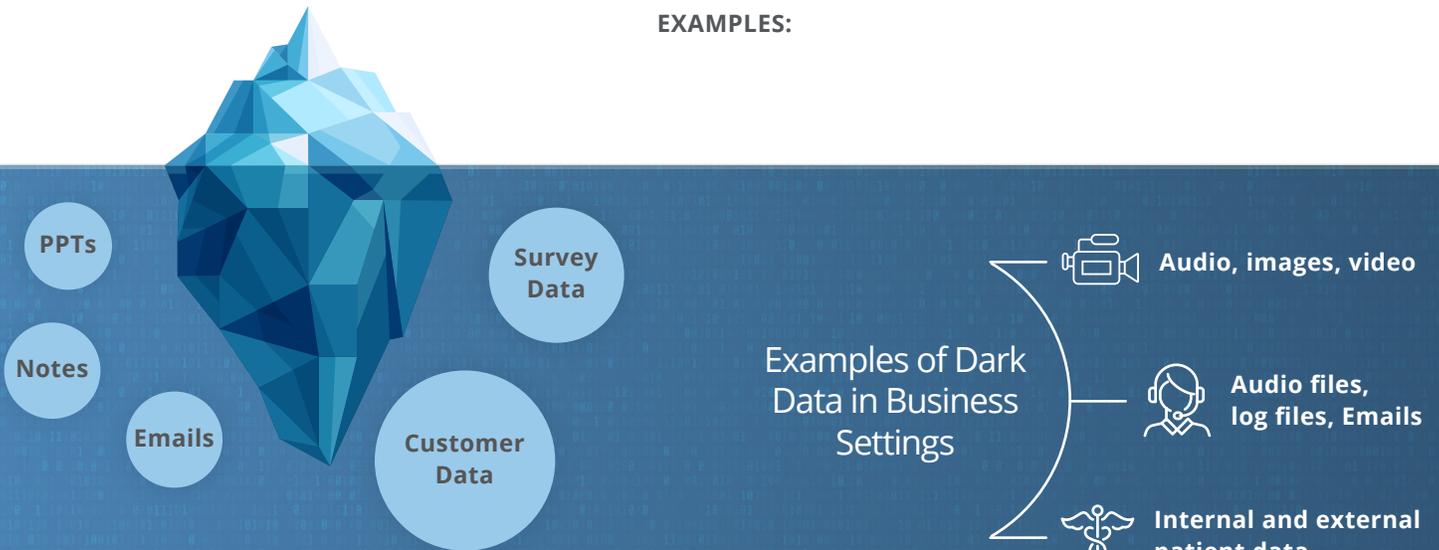
Investments in BI and analytics have increased the efficiency of plowing through reams of data, running algorithms to analyze and look for correlations, and ultimately gleaning actionable insights for better business decision-making. However, traditional solutions don't always integrate *all* data sources.

For example, 88% of the IT leaders who participated in a recent IDG survey agree that their organization's data isn't being used to its full extent. Furthermore, they recognize that dark data is having an impact on overall data quality and is inhibiting data integration projects.

So, where is the dark data?

Where Does Dark Data Hide?

EXAMPLES:



The Business Value in Dark Data

There are multiple opportunities to better achieve business outcomes with a modern BI approach. Here are a few examples of organizations that improved efficiency, innovation capabilities, and profitability by uncovering dark data.

The Efficiency Opportunity: Zillow

At online real estate marketplace Zillow, multiple teams had been digging through their Excel spreadsheets to collate advertising billing data. Not only was this method time-consuming but it also risked missing revenue information. Using Domo's modern BI platform, the company achieved a 90% reduction in billing time—going from 30 hours a month down to three hours.

Brandon Ankuda, senior analyst for Zillow Group's enterprise application team, says the quick-win project was so successful that the company started seeking other ways to shine a light on dark data—such as analyzing ticketing data and IT process runtimes.

"We're pulling data from our other automation platforms into Domo, so we can monitor their successes and failures," [he says](#). "We've leveraged Domo to better identify trends for what's going on between platforms or for what the platforms themselves just might not be great at telling us."

Zillow has expanded Domo throughout the enterprise, tailoring content to different teams. "It has really empowered users," Ankuda says. "One of our core values at Zillow is 'Turn on the lights,' which means enlightening people with data. It's what Domo has done for us."

The Innovation Opportunity: Swire Coca-Cola

"We've expanded a lot in the past few years," [says Jack Pelo](#), president and CEO of Swire Coca-Cola. "We're about four times bigger than in 2014."

The global soft drink manufacturer isn't at a loss for data, "but putting it all together and making sense of it is another thing," Pelo says.

Specifically, Swire Coca-Cola wanted to better understand consumer trends so it could quickly respond and innovate with new products.

"We have a lot of product introductions coming out, so we have to get early reads on how they're selling and how the consumers are accepting them and then make adjustments," Pelo says.

Also, the company is using the Domo platform to quickly glean innovative ideas via Domo's Freestyle solution, which enables consumers to make their own soda flavor. "What's cool is that we can see what people are consuming and use that



The Profitability Opportunity: Harmons

It's well known that retailers, especially grocery stores, run on tight margins. The ability to expose any area where product pricing adjustments can be made is valuable.

"We use Domo in just about all areas of our business—from the CEO to store managers," says [Todd Jensen](#), vice president of sales at Harmons, a 19-store grocery chain in Utah. "We can track sales every 15 minutes as well as our labor costs and gross margins."

For example, they're able to identify sales on individual products down to dollars, units, and margins. Jensen's team has regular stand-up, scrum-type meetings with his team where they visualize projects in Domo. "We look at sales ratios companywide, as well as gross margins and targets to see how we're doing."

Having this fast access to data enables everyone to react more quickly, whether that's getting a jump on product ordering due to customer sales or adjusting margins for improved profitability.

"It puts the data right in front of us, so we make decisions based on what is actually happening rather than emotional decisions," Jensen says. "We're able to do things that are better for our customers and better for the business."

Harmons is also able to get ahead of customer demand by exposing requested items that hadn't been tracked in years. For example, during the COVID-19 panic-buying phase, the chain ran a list of the top 100 items across all of its stores.

"We had that data in less than 30 minutes," Jensen says. "It really helped us with our ordering. For example, Spam went from an obscure item to being a top-three item."

The company also used Domo to build a vendor dashboard for a local bread supplier. "They could suddenly see what's selling and where the waste is," Jensen says. That has been a win-win: The insights have enabled the bread maker to increase production to produce the high-demand items on Harmons' shelves faster, and the grocery chain has the supply it needs in order to meet customer demand.

Uncover, Unify, and Capitalize on Dark Data

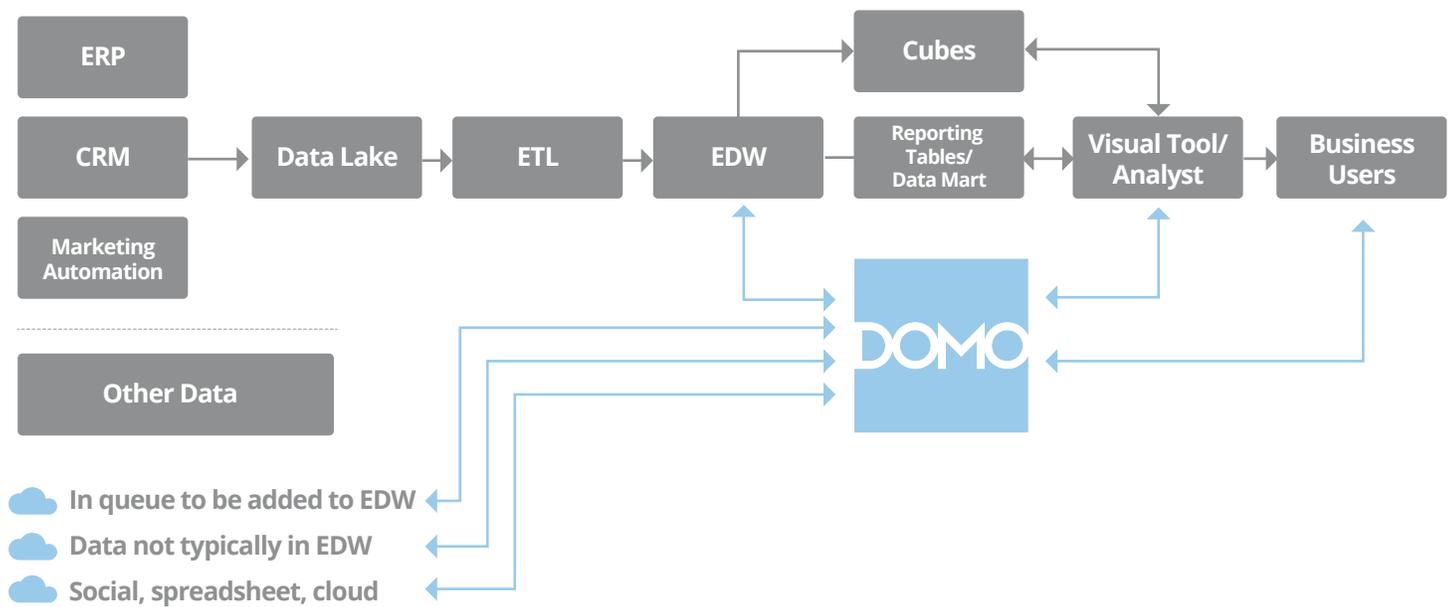
A modern BI approach means integrating data from disparate and often fragmented sources to uncover, unify, and capitalize on all data—including dark data. IT leaders recognize that the top benefit of improving data integration is improving visibility into or eliminating dark data, according to the recent IDG survey.

That means bringing together:

- **Data living with users** – Avoid the possibility of users' taking data "offline" to run analysis on their devices and applications.
- **Data living in legacy systems** – Eliminate all the manual work involved in getting data to flow from older systems directly to a data warehouse.
- **All data sources** – No matter where it's hiding or living, data can be uncovered with the right orchestration tools and connectors.

Organizations require a data layer, or a unified modern data platform, for this level of data integration. Whether in the cloud, in a data warehouse, on legacy systems, or on a user's desktop, this data layer automates the ingestion, cleaning, and blending of data, without the need to build new warehouses or lakes.

Domo Business Cloud Integrates And Unifies Data



A modern platform leverages the tools and technologies that bring dark data to light, such as through ETL data pipelines, connectors, and orchestration. In addition, it provides self-service functionality, so users can quickly access data in the context that is most relevant for them.

For example, whiskey and spirits supplier Edrington-Beam Suntory (EBS) was struggling to consolidate and migrate data from third-party sources, such as Excel, Salesforce, and CRM tools. These incompatible sources meant that sales reports often took three days to complete, due to all the manual work involved. This also led to outdated sales data insights that caused poor performance and the loss of accounts. Teams were duplicating sales calls, because of outdated data.

The company deployed the cloud-based [Domo platform](#) and built sales dashboards that provided rapid sales data and brand and market share information at a granular level. This was achieved through a combination of daily uploads and real-time data from plug-ins from third-party data sources.

“Since the implementation of Domo, there has been a 72% increase in productivity across the business,” says Paul Brennan, head of commercial capability at EBS. “One example of this is the average time spent on sales calls per day, which rose from 47 minutes to 65 minutes. This has bottom-line results, including EBS’s 33% increase in distribution over the last six months.”

The Next Level of Value

Rapidly getting data into the hands of business users requires the ability to integrate all data sources—cloud, apps, servers, data warehouses, and data lurking on users’ desktops and in legacy systems. By building a unified source of data truth, the organization can uncover the next level of business value.

This is the future of BI: answering big and small questions based on data gleaned from even the seemingly unlikeliest of places.

Start solving the dark data problem with true and holistic integration.

LEARN MORE

