

DATA WAREHOUSING: PACKAGED SOLUTIONS

Packaged architectures are a quick way to jumpstart a Data Warehousing effort. The premise is simple: you **spend money** to **save time**.

The name of the game is to get something in front of users fast. Theoretically this generates goodwill with the user base, allowing the DW team to garner support early in the effort and secure funding (not to mention *demand*) for subsequent lifecycle development.

Without a package, a typical first effort can take about a year. This happens for two primary reasons: That first project will hold most of the tooling, setup, and configuration that later cycles won't need to deal with. It will also typically (though not advisedly) begin without proper strategic planning, which would help to remove long term decisions from the short term project.

But buyer beware . . . With a package, these issues don't go away.

Instead they save you time in other areas, accelerating work in the **Information Architecture, Development, and Information Delivery** aspects of the project. The "package" typically consists of

- (1) a data model for typical business analyses,
- (2) ETL code to populate the data model from various well-known ERP sources, and
- (3) a pre-configured interface for accessing and reporting from the data model.

Also called "analytics," packaged solutions have decided limitations. They may promise "out of the box" functionality, but very likely won't meet your users' specific needs. Vendor data models are proprietary, so you'll have no real basis upon which to judge between packages for best fit or for analytical quality of the model. If you customize the product to make it more useful, you'll pay a price in upgrade difficulties.

By definition, packages are designed in a generic fashion to fit a majority of business ventures, so while they have a lot to offer, they are not *intended* to meet your specific business requirements. They will require a customization strategy that balances product upgrades against the information growth needs of the business.

WHAT SISG CAN DO FOR YOU

The trick is in understanding what a packaged architecture really offers, and in knowing how to skillfully exploit its advantages.

The data architecture is arguably the most important aspect of the data warehouse. Nearly everything else in the lifecycle will depend on the design of the database. It will affect the work of every member of the team. More importantly, it will affect ease of navigation and intuitivity for the user.

You need a knowledgeable partner in your corner, helping to manage expectations and reveal/negotiate potential issues.

SISG professionals have firsthand experience with a variety of DW packages. We've seen behind the curtain. We know what's under the hood. Our consultants can help you sift through the marketing jargon to understand and evaluate what is truly being offered.

We also understand what your executives need to *gain* from the data warehouse investment. We can guide you through the implementation process to help you overcome the limitations, manage expectations to avoid user disappointment, and reap all the benefits the selected package has to offer.

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DELIVERABLES

The Packaged Solutions engagement is a specialized version of our Data Warehousing engagement. Please refer to SISG's **Data Warehousing** services brochure for a full discussion of the deliverables and benefits you can expect, regardless of whether you opt for a packaged solution. Depending on the selected package, you will also receive

- Installation and configuration of the warehouse application
- Customization as appropriate for your business
- Gap analysis between the user requirements and packaged deliverables

TIMEFRAME

The accelerated data warehouse lifecycle can usually be completed in 90 days to deliver packaged capabilities to the user base, followed by a scope of the second cycle to deliver full satisfaction of user requirements. This depends on the package, customization, cleanliness of the data, and the readiness of the organization to undertake the task. Please refer to SISG's **Readiness Assessment** for more information.

CLIENT BENEFITS

By allowing SISG to assist with the selection and customization of a packaged DW solution, our clients enjoy all the benefits of our typical warehousing engagement, plus

- Accelerated DW delivery
- Experience with packaged DW architectures
- Previous insight to assist you in judging their merit
- Realization of greater value from the package
- Better likelihood of satisfying user requirements

LEADING TECHNOLOGIES

SISG can support these and other leading technology solutions:

SOURCE/TARGET APPLICATIONS	DATABASE MANAGEMENT	DATA INTEGRATION /ETL TOOLS	ANALYTICS PACKAGES	META DATA MANAGEMENT	DATA ACCESS & ANALYSIS	WEB INTEGRATION
Oracle Financials	Oracle	Informatica Data Integration Suite (PowerCenter, Connectors, etc.)	Informatica Analytics	Informatica SuperGlue	Informatica PowerAnalyzer	IBM WebSphere Application Server
SAP	DB2/UDB	MQ Series, MQ Integrator	Jaros Analytics	ERwin	Actuate	IBM WebSphere Portal Server
Siebel	Informix	SeeBeyond	PeopleSoft EPM		Brio	BEA WebLogic Application Server
PeopleSoft	SQL Server	Tibco	SAP Business Warehouse		Business Objects	IBM Directory Server
Other custom-built applications	Sybase	Other JMS-compliant messaging toolsets			Cognos	

Our consultants are also proficient in the following core competencies:

ARCHITECTURE	PACKAGED DATA WAREHOUSE	INFORMATION DELIVERY
Normalized Data Modeling	Customer Relationship Management	Standard Report Design
Dimensional (star schema) Data Modeling	Supply Chain Management	Design for Multi-Dimensional Analysis
Advanced Data Modeling	Financial Management	Real-time Alerts
Extract, Transform & Load	Human Resources Management	Portal Integration
Real-time Application Integration	Weblog Analysis	

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