Customer 360 for data leaders

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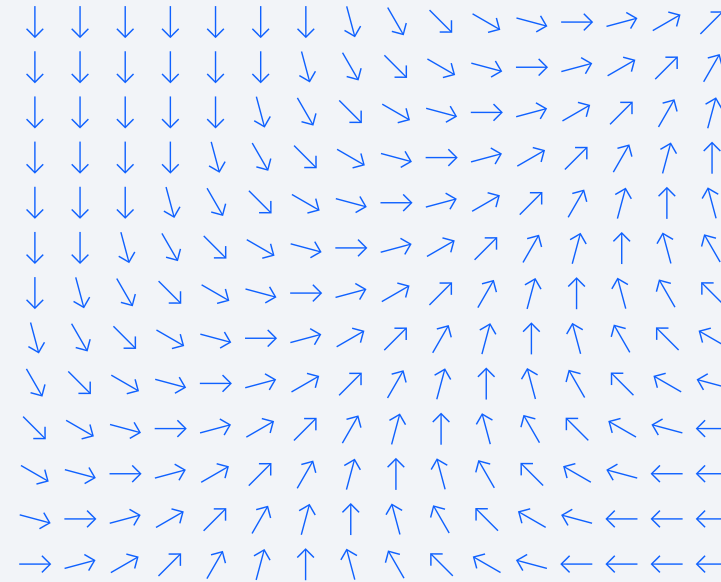
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Introduction— a data fabric approach to customer 360

According to a survey of 3,000 CEOs by the IBM Institute for Business Value, improving the customer experience is the #1 business priority of the highest performing enterprise organizations.[1] This will likely include taking advantage of analytics for hyper-personalization and next-best-offers, while infusing compliance, privacy, and fraud identification capabilities for better overall customer care. Accomplishing this relies on a simplified, governed, single view of a customer across multiple data sources.

To help achieve this, a data fabric architecture helps ensure quality data can be accessed by the right people, at the right time, no matter where it resides. This data fabric architecture provides a strong foundation for 360-degree customer intelligence, enabling a customer centric approach with multicloud data integration, data governance and compliance, and MLOps capabilities.

Having a 360° view of customers is essential because whether you operate in a B2B or B2C environment, your customers expect you to be knowledgeable about their needs and history with your company during every interaction. All touchpoints must provide consistent, well-informed service. Traditionally this has been difficult to achieve due to the scattered and siloed nature of their data, but embracing a customer 360 approach with a data fabric has the potential to unlock new opportunities.

In the following pages, we explore some of the primary components of a customer 360 approach, clients that have achieved their customer 360 vision, and provide some resources to help continue the discussion such as a free trial.
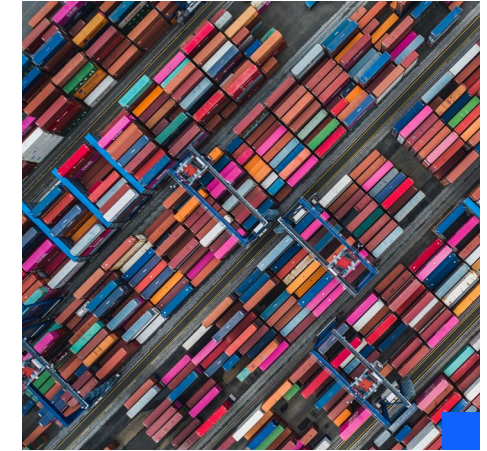
02

Why establish a 360° view of customers?

Organizations are looking to use the data they already have, bringing in data of different types from a variety of sources, in order to capture a complete understanding of individual clients and customers. The goal is to retain or convert their customers and prospects, adding value to the varying conversations and touchpoints the customer has, all while utilizing analytics to speak and target intelligently.

The challenge, then, is how to connect your data in such a way that you have robust, high-quality insight available to delight each individual customer at every touchpoint, while also balancing compliance requirements. A customer 360 approach is the answer.

Creating this all-important 360° view requires breaking down silos in order to develop an integrated view of all your data that's in near-real-time and ready for analytics. Doing so will allow you to apply AI and automated analytics rather than searching for data, augmenting knowledge about your customers across your environments. This way you won't just be collecting data, but rather connecting data to create a complete customer profile. This connection instead of collection across data types and sources (including data marts, warehouses and CRMs like Salesforce) creates a self-service, ready-for-analytics view of the customer. It creates a customer view that's high-quality and easily accessible—but only by those who should have access. Only then is it ready for use in the analytics and AI models which will be needed to inform customer interactions.

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Creating a 360° view requires breaking down silos in order to develop an integrated view of all your data that's in near-real-time and ready for analytics.

03
The building blocks of a 360° view

It is critical that you bring together disparate data into a single 360° view of customers and processes for users to collaborate and innovate. Customer 360 solutions let you build these accurate views of customers at scale, quickly, for better self-service and data stewardship.

At the heart of customer 360 is data governance, which provides a singular view of critical entities typically stored and potentially duplicated in siloed applications. Governance helps achieve customer-centricity or product-centricity by providing that trusted, 360-degree view of organizational data that gives you the capability to easily find, reconcile and consume data and identify relationships within context across a variety of use cases.

In addition to governance, automation helps to resolve multiple siloed records to a customer entity, and this simplification for analytics, ML or customer care enables self-service access for business users to achieve accelerated insights, customer personalization, and compliance. This automation across connected sources brings timely, quality data to downstream applications, like customer care applications, to bring the customer 360 degree view to action.

The components you need to develop a 360° view include:

– Data preparation and connection: Connect and transform raw data into data that's ready for matching across multiple data sets, using a self-service data preparation and/or ETL tool.
– Data matching: Automap customer attributes for an intelligent matching algorithm that you can tune and train to deliver a trusted, unified source of customer data.

– Entity resolution: The process that resolves entities and detects relationships. The pipelines perform entity resolution as they process incoming identity records in three phases: recognize, resolve, and relate.
– Data cataloging: A catalog tool will let you access, curate, categorize and share data, knowledge assets and their relationships, wherever they reside.
– Data virtualization: Enable a single view across multiple silos without data movement, connecting key sources of customer data at the time of analysis, saving time through self-service access and removing the need for complex data pipelines.
– Data visualization: Understand the quality and distribution of your data, and quickly transform data to be ready for analytics.

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04
Data fabric—a
holistic approach

A data fabric is an architectural approach that simplifies data access in an organization to facilitate self-service data consumption. It brings together capabilities like those listed previously as part of a unified architecture, avoiding the cost and complexity of integrating a plethora of point solutions. Instead of a fragmented group of products that have been stitched together, a data fabric offers a single, holistic solution that is built to work seamlessly.

According to Forrester, "The key objective of data fabric is to accelerate business use cases such as customer 360, customer intelligence, risk analytics, and IoT analytics. To support this, an end-to-end data management capability that includes ingestion, transformation, preparation, discovery, data catalog, integration, governance, and security is essential."[2]

By connecting key sources of customer data at the time of analysis, rather than re-collecting it, you can save time and money with self-service empowerment of end users. With data governance capabilities integrated with your data fabric, you can deliver a comprehensive customer view that delights with the highest levels of service.

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Customer 360 success stories

A large global bank ⤵

Operating across multiple countries and compliance regulations, this global bank was looking to analyze customer information downstream to enhance their digital experience while also augmenting their customer profiles. Looking to have a complete, 360-degree view of their customer that was easily accessible and ready for analytics, but also meeting privacy standards, the bank turned to IBM customer 360 solutions to:

– Analyze and understand customer information for a specific region to build better offers and identify opportunities
– Enhance their ability to use machine learning models, specifically extending modeling capabilities for compliance, Know Your Customer (KYC) compliance guidelines, and risk analysis for global operations
– Build a "delivery engine" for digital channels for hyperpersonalization

These customer 360 capabilities allowed the bank to create a view of their customers in near-real-time across a variety of sources, that also maintained the privacy of the individuals.

05
Customer 360 success stories

A large transportation company ↷

With worldwide reach specializing in the sales and building of buses, trucks, and engines, this large transportation and manufacturing company was looking for a way to quickly analyze customer information. Hoping to personalize their customer experience, the company faced the challenges of having data in multiple internal sources as well as looking to weave in third party data.

They turned to IBM customer 360 solutions to:

- Quickly analyze and understand "Ad hoc" customer information from other systems
- Create the preconditions to speed-up integration with various internal data management systems
- Add additional attributes from external data in to enrich existing customer data

Through these solutions the company can integrate and match their data, developing new insights with the addition of external/third party data.

06
Consider these components

IBM's holistic and open approach to data fabric integrated services allows your organization to compose and re-use data services for diverse use cases, reducing time to implementation and value creation.

The IBM® data fabric approach delivers integrated yet modular capabilities to deliver automation, augmentation, and agility in implementing several data fabric use cases, including customer 360, customer intelligence, analytics for upsell/cross-sell, targeted marketing, fraud detection, risk analytics, real-time analytics, operational insights, and analytics and insights in specific industry verticals. The platform and components IBM delivers these capabilities with are detailed in this section.

IBM Cloud Pak for Data
IBM Cloud Pak® for Data is a platform built specifically with a data fabric architecture in mind in order to predict outcomes faster and allow you to collect, organize and analyze your data, no matter where it may reside. The platform thus helps to improve productivity and reduce complexity by building a data fabric that connects siloed data distributed across a hybrid cloud landscape.

Learn more about
IBM Cloud Pak for Data →

IBM Match 360 with Watson
IBM Match 360 with Watson® on IBM Cloud Pak for Data seamlessly consolidates data from disparate sources to establish a single, trusted, 360-degree view of your customers. It includes cloud-native, machine-learning-assisted, self-service analytics and matching tools that deliver business insights so you can ensure that your users and systems have a total view of your data. With a seamlessly integrated, cross-solution cloud experience, your users can discover master data directly in the space where they expect to consume it.

IBM Match 360 works with existing Master Data Management (MDM) capabilities, including IBM's MDM suite. It combines MDM's trusted master data views at the operational level with third party sources to create a data layer that's ready for analytics.

Learn more about IBM Match 360 with Watson →

06

Consider these components

IBM Watson Knowledge Catalog

IBM Watson® Knowledge Catalog is a data catalog tool that powers intelligent, self-service discovery of data, models and more. The cloud-based enterprise metadata repository activates information for AI, machine learning, and deep learning. You can access, curate, categorize, and share data, knowledge assets, and their relationships, wherever they reside. Through rule-based data masking, the customer's sensitive data is protected and only made available to those with permission to see.

Learn more about IBM Watson Knowledge Catalog →

IBM data virtualization

IBM provides both software and as-a-Service data virtualization capabilities to enable a single view of customer data across silos. Data virtualization breaks down silos and queries multiple sources to integrate and enforce governed data access.

As part of IBM's as-a-Service data fabric architecture, IBM Watson Query is a universal query engine that executes distributed and virtualized queries across databases, data warehouses, and data lakes. Providing data virtualization capabilities, Watson Query is the tool of choice for quick, easy integrations to data sources.

Watson Query enables the creation of a real-time, 360-degree view of the customer by integrating the different data sources containing information about the customer, allowing users to gain a complete view of the customer. Through Watson Query's ability to enforce Watson Knowledge Catalog's policies, governance and data protection is applied.

Learn more about IBM Watson Query →

Developing a single, data-based, 360° view of your customer in real-time allows you to create a personalized experience that gives you a competitive advantage.

07
Create your
ideal customer
360 solution

If you're ready to get a more complete view of your customers, we encourage you to take advantage of a few resources. Foremost is the free trial, which will provide hands on experience with a data fabric designed for this use case. Second, review the information on our customer 360 website to learn even more about the benefits. And, finally, reach out to one of our experts either by scheduling a time online, talking with your IBM representative or reaching out to one of our business partners.

Check out the other three data fabric use case ebooks:

Multicloud data integration
Data governance and privacy
MLOps and Trustworthy AI

01 The 2021 CEO Study," 2021. https://www.ibm.com/downloads/cas/WVPWGPYE

02 Forrester, The Forrester Wave™: Enterprise Data Fabric, Q2 2020