Harmonization is to create the possibility of combining data from more diverse data sources, both internal and external, into an integrated, consistent, and interactive Data Story, in a way that is of no concern or struggle to the user. Collaborative decisions is the sharing of pertinent data and insights, in real-time, while keeping context, for fast, data-driven decisions.

It’s here.
Introduction

In the modern world, data is a company’s lifeblood. Businesses need fast answers about their markets, their customers, and their competitors. More of this data exists than ever before, and in more places, too—from data repositories and flat files, to cloud-based applications and external premium, web, and public data sources.

Working with all this data should be easy. So easy that anyone in the business who needs information ought to be able to get it quickly, and then just as quickly analyze it to derive useful business insights.

Unfortunately, that’s almost exactly the opposite of what usually happens. A process that should be effortless is now full of friction every step of the way, making it slow and tiresome for a business to get to the answers it needs to compete.

Getting access to internal and external data often requires an expert with specialized knowledge of different data analysis tools and data platforms. Then, interpreting the data—for example with visualization—requires yet another set of specialized skills. Even with data and insights in hand, there is no easy way to collaborate on the results with others in the organization in a manner that allows everyone’s specialized knowledge to be brought to the problem at hand.

At ClearStory, our mission is to change all that. We have an entirely new approach to working with disparate data that removes the many points of friction that keep your organization from making effective use of the world’s constantly increasing amounts of internal and external data. ClearStory is for everyone, no matter what their job title. We enable your organization to take full advantage of your data assets, internal and external, making them easy to access, easy to bring together and visualize, easy to explore, and easy to collaborate on to reach new answers. The goal is to answer new questions from more data. The result is fast intra-day, daily, and weekly interactive insights that let you discover new insights and diagnose critical business trends continuously, without the need for constant dependency on IT or data experts.
Why be bogged down by different analysis frameworks and tools for different data types and sources, when a single solution can give you direct access to all your data, wherever it is?

Corporate data today resides in a number of different silos: relational databases, flat files, “big data” platforms, and even cloud-based repositories. There are also vast repositories of useful third-party information such as market intelligence data, demographics, weather data, point-of-sale data, and macroeconomic data. But each new source of data brings a new set of challenges and struggles, especially at scale or if frequently updating. As a result, much of this data is accessed and analyzed only at great cost. Worse, it is ignored altogether, with decision makers missing out on potentially crucial insights.

1. NOW

For the first time, ClearStory provides a single, consistent way to make use of all of the information contained in disparate internal and external sources available to today’s businesses. ClearStory’s unified analysis solution allows you to access all of your data, regardless of its location. Simply ask your questions and ClearStory harmonizes dozens of disparate internal and external sources via Intelligent Data Harmonization™ to let you discover the answer, quickly and intuitively via ClearStory’s visual and interactive Data Stories. Change is occurring in today’s business environment faster than ever. ClearStory lets you keep up with that change by bringing together disparate data sources so that you can speed your decision-making.
2. Why rely on last-generation technologies that slow you down with tedious data manipulation—when a data-intelligent analysis solution with built-in semantic knowledge can allow you to get answers to questions right away?

Traditional data analysis solutions have little or no semantic knowledge of the information they’re accessing. Data dimensions such as dates, currencies, geographical entities, custom product hierarchies, or other custom attributes have to be modeled and understood ahead of time by the user as part of the lengthy data manipulation and preparation process. When combining many sources of data, this is an even slower, more labor-intensive process. Change even the smallest part of your question, and you’ve got to do this data prep and data blending round-trip all over again. You end up spending most of your time thinking and preparing data on how to ask the question—rather than interacting with your insights.

Data Inference Speeds Access and Time to Insights

ClearStory ends all that. Deep data inference and semantic recognition of data is built into its underlying platform, giving ClearStory a deep understanding of the data accessed, from whatever source. You don’t need to specify the definition of a month, product category, location, fiscal year, or every precise custom dimension.

ClearStory’s built-in data intelligence allows data from multiple sources to be converged and harmonized on the fly with no additional pre-modeling. Because of ClearStory’s semantic understanding of data, the underlying platform knows that geographic information is best represented visually in interactive maps. Then it automatically constructs them to the appropriate level of granularity. With time-oriented datasets, it presents the appropriate trend lines, harmonized with other granular time-oriented data without requiring lengthy pre-modeling. When data is harmonized on the fly, the dimensions are understood which allows users to reach holistic insights in minutes. Since visualizations are instant, flexible, and effortless, the pace of new insights keeps up with the pace of today’s decision-making—allowing fast-cycle analysis across more diverse data sources.
Why wait days or weeks for data experts to perform your analysis when business users and data analysts can do it themselves in a fraction of the time?

Today’s data analysis solutions are often time-consuming, laborious affairs, especially when they involve many disparate sources. Data preparation and data blending has always been relegated to IT experts who go through tedious, complex data modeling cycles. An overworked IT department can mean that the simplest analysis projects might be delayed for weeks. As your data analysis and decision-making fall behind, your competitors pull ahead.

ClearStory was designed from the ground up to provide fast, easy access to disparate data sources and automate harmonizing disparate sources to speed insights. The platform takes advantage of sophisticated streaming and in-memory processing (integrates Spark), and includes innovations on data harmonization and convergence that greatly accelerate the analysis of internal and external data sources.

With ClearStory, anyone can access, prep, blend and harmonize data without needing to be an IT or BI expert. The underlying smarts of the harmonization engine is complemented with the elegance of a breakthrough user interface that business users and analysts can use. You have complete visibility and control of your data blending strategy across disparate data sets, resulting in a harmonized, holistic view. This intuitive, guided user experience puts you in the data analysis driver’s seat. The result is an extremely fast path to insights that includes more volumes of data across disparate internal and external data sources.
4. Why should multisource analysis with more data variety provide one-time, rigid answers, when it can trigger automatically updating business insights that continuously surface new discoveries instead?

Since data is always changing across a bigger variety of sources, our ability to ask questions of it should be just as adaptable. But today’s data analysis solutions are cumbersome, don’t scale to many sources of disparate data, and limit users to simpler questions. Analysis is left to a static, rear-view mirror view of the business and rigid dashboards that constrain deeper exploration and finding new insights. This single-serving, rigid approach to data analysis simply won’t suffice in today’s rapidly evolving business environment, where fast discoveries are necessary to stay ahead.

NOW

With its built-in data intelligence, rapid data access, and instant data harmonization as data updates, ClearStory’s solution means that questions can easily be iterated on and updated as new data comes in. You’ll have the freedom to ask the right questions, and then iterate on Data Stories on the fly as data changes and new data sources become available. No more static dashboards that are rigidly modeled and viewed at a single point in time. Instead, ClearStory provides a continuously-updating Data Story for fast discovery and diagnostics that change as your data updates so users can stay up-to-date on the latest insights and spot business opportunities, threats, and improve decisions faster.
5. Why should members of your team without an IT background be the last to see crucial insights, when a simpler user model can allow them to freely explore data, perform their own analysis, and make faster decisions? It’s time to remove the lag between IT and the line-of-business and make insights available immediately.

Too often, people in your business units who need information are forced to rely on perpetually busy experts to grant access to data or pose their questions for them. As a result, they find the process of getting and analyzing data frustrating, even intimidating. An over-reliance on IT and data experts has slowed the flow of information to the business and created 30-, 60-, 90-day lags in decision making. Such delays are not viable in today’s competitive environment.

ClearStory removes the need for IT and data experts to be involved in every step of reaching new insights. The ClearStory application interface is designed for anyone in the organization to see and work with data. The specialized syntax, skills, rigid dashboards, and other difficulties and complexities associated with traditional analysis solutions are eliminated. Instead, users are guided through the data access and analysis process via a new intuitive and collaborative user model that is similar to those used in popular consumer applications. Getting and using data becomes simple, fast, and even pleasant.
Why should exploring insights be a one- or two- person affair, when collaboration—across a department, or across the company—can result in smarter, faster decisions?

There are many people in your organization with specialized knowledge of particular business issues. The more of them that can be involved in a data analysis process, the more useful the process is likely to be. But existing data products tend to be designed to be used by only a few data experts, and even then, these products are struggle to work with. Having many people collaborate on an analysis, observe each others’ insights, and then fast-track decisions in a constantly evolving process is virtually impossible.

ClearStory has been designed to make collaborating on data and insights easy. Because the system preserves the “context” of each data analysis, it’s easy for everyone to see the thinking that went into the question and track insights as they evolve. No more static views, tracking emails, and inconsistencies. Users can contribute to the analysis, or take it in a new direction. What was formerly a dashboard approach on someone’s desktop—or a static report emailed around, is now an active group endeavor that brings together the best people in your organization for real-time insights and faster collaborative decisions involving both data and line-of-business domain experts.
Why live in a “Look but don’t touch” era of data visualization?

Up until now, business users have lived in a world where they get static dashboards that are hard-wired to a certain schema, allow for no exploration, and have pre-determined biases built in. Pre-determined biases in reports are killing the opportunity the availability of more data presents. As a result, insights are constantly lost and effective decision-making is impaired by blind spots.

Interactive, Collaborative StoryBoards present insights like scenes in a movie. It gives line of business users direct access to living insights where all key stakeholders can collaborate on observations. Every scene or ‘living analysis’ contains interactive narratives so observations are explained in context. With StoryBoards, you get relevant, timely, and accurate insights, speeding decisions and actions. No more emailing screen shots around, and no more loss of context that comes with those inefficient ways of communicating and collaborating. Most importantly, no more late, faulty insights fraught with blind spots, lack of context and missing information.
Conclusion

The data access and analysis technologies of the last generation simply can’t supply the fast answers to constantly changing questions that today’s businesses need to stay ahead. Every organization is in need of leveraging more internal and external sources of data, speedy harmonization, and driving iterative, collaborative Data Stories. ClearStory’s new Data Intelligence solution is a next-generation analysis solution that changes the rules for how companies can interact with data, allowing a powerful way to do ongoing discovery and diagnostic analysis.

ClearStory makes working with internal and external data and combining disparate data for holistic, rapid analysis, not only much faster, but also more intuitive, interactive—and highly collaborative.

More sources blended, more speed, more consumable. This is how ClearStory helps you make the most of your data assets, so your business can pull ahead.