Lavastorm

Agile Salesforce.com Analytics
Bridging the "Data Gap"

Innovation & the New "Data Gap"

As more companies innovate and shift online to cloud-based CRM & Sales systems, a "Data Gap" has emerged that presents a new challenge to traditional cross-enterprise data management & data analytics. Cloud-based applications such as Salesforce.com provide a tremendous amount of value & efficiency; however, they also introduce new challenges when attempting to gain business insight across disparate and now, architecturally divergent applications.

Linking data across these increasingly disparate systems to gain valuable business insight and ultimately, loading this insight back into the same application repository is essential in order to realize the full benefits of new cloud-based applications.

The Challenge of the "Data Gap"

Unifying disparate data sources & systems across an enterprise is not a new problem. In fact, it's a problem that has existed for decades and formerly involved multiple in-house databases, warehouses, and even spreadsheets. However, new Cloud-based applications further complicate this core problem due to the nature of the underlying architecture & access mechanisms, many of which eschew traditional data access technologies for newer web service interfaces.

The two prevailing responses to this "Data Gap" challenge have serious inherent limitations:

The Manual Approach:

Salesforce.com itself provides a couple of options when it comes to exporting & loading data through the Salesforce front-end. Its reporting infrastructure provides the ability to configure reports & export the results in CSV format for further use. Its "Data Loader" application provides the ability to load data directly into Salesforce.

Both of these approaches provide value but tend to be very manual in nature and are often time consuming & prone to error. More importantly, there are often additional steps required to get the extracted report data into a tool for analysis with other data sources and to prepare data for loading back in Salesforce. These manual approaches may be adequate for one-time, ad hoc activities but become highly inefficient for any sort of repetitive or automated needs.

The Programmatic Approach:

Salesforce data is not stored in a traditional database / data warehouse like most enterprise applications and the primary interface for accessing, extracting, and loading data directly to & from Salesforce is through a series of Application Programming Interfaces or APIs.

This introduces an additional layer of technical complexity – usually requiring development resources – that most business users & analysts have difficulty navigating due to the lack of required skills & knowledge.

These challenges decrease the efficiency and effectiveness of business analysts and, as a result, limit the full potential organizations can derive from their Salesforce.com environment.
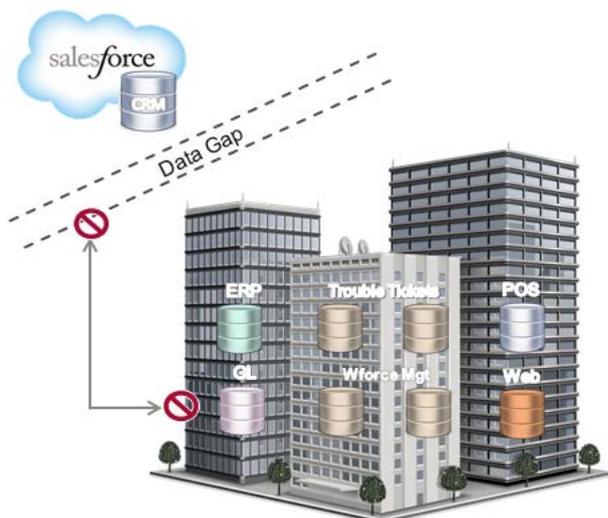
Unlock the Analytic Power of your Salesforce.com Data with Lavastorm

Lavastorm is an agile analytic environment that empowers business analysts to rapidly acquire, transform, analyze and visualize disparate data, and to discover new insights that they can use to drive business improvement. This powerful environment provides three fundamental components when it comes to leveraging a Salesforce environment:

> **Direct Access:** through a series of visual & configurable "nodes", a Salesforce instance can be accessed quickly & seamlessly through the exposed Web Service APIs without having to write a single line of programming code.

> **Unified Data View**: through its visual environment, Salesforce data can be rapidly acquired and federated with outside data sources to produce enriched, cross-enterprise analysis and insight.

> **Salesforce Enrichment**: key external data can be acquired, cleansed, prepared and loaded directly into Salesforce.com to further empower the end users, creating a highly-enriched CRM experience.

The result is an environment where analysts and business executives across the organization can interact with Salesforce data just like any other data source – such as a spreadsheet – to produce insightful & actionable analytics.

From Agile Data Management to Self-Service Analytics to Insight

With Lavastorm's agile, open, & customizable analytic environment, Salesforce data can be quickly acquired & combined with external data sources for full cross-enterprise analysis & insight. This provides the following benefits:

FEATURES	BENEFITS
Self-Service Analytics	Technical and non-technical users alike can create analytics, share and re-use analytic components for cross-functional collaboration that reduces cost, lowers risk and ensures consistency
Integrated View	A fully integrated and synchronized view of customer information across businesses processes, with information from all customer transactions available throughout the organization
Low cost, High ROI	Lavastorm is a low-cost alternative to infrastructure-heavy approaches as no database or data warehouse is required. It's also quicker, less expensive, and more flexible than developing a custom solution through IT.
Power of a Platform	Lavastorm is not a point Solution; it's a platform that can be leveraged to solve an extensive array of data problems (ETL, Data Cleansing, etc.) and process analysis.
Cross-Enterprise Insight	Enables analysts to provide critical, on-demand insights using all the available information (regardless of where that information is stored) as well as fully automated periodic reports.