

# Taking the pain out of data migrations

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## Data migration is risky

Data is at the heart of every organization. And data migration projects are important undertakings for many businesses as they underpin the success of many strategic initiatives, such as system modernization, implementation of new packages, system consolidation following a merger or acquisition, and many more.

Yet, despite the importance of data, half of all data migration projects fail to meet their objectives, with many of those being abandoned after their budgets run out. The visible costs of a failed or delayed migration project are usually dwarfed by the substantial cost of lost business opportunity or regulatory fines.

The majority of companies carry out data migrations either using manual techniques or using a variety of software tools, which are rudimentary and disjointed or technically complex and expensive to adopt. Unsurprisingly, the results they experience are poor.

Meanwhile, increasing volume, velocity, and variety of data, combined with accelerating time pressures from the business, make data migration objectives even more difficult to attain. The main causes of failure for data migration projects are incomplete analysis, poor collaboration, and a disjointed, technically complex approach.

Project leaders often ignore key requirements such as the need for adopting a rigorous methodology, the right technology, and robust data quality principles. Omissions like these cost organizations heavily in the form of unplanned project delays and costs, not to mention the frustration from business leaders as the planned go-live date for the target system slips by months, often years.

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38% of enterprise application projects exceed their budgets and/or miss their target dates. Data migrations make up 30-40 percent of these projects.

– Bloor Research<sup>1</sup>

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## Mastering the data migration

Overcoming the challenges associated with data migration projects is possible if you follow best practices. Simply put, the more planning you put in up front will help to alleviate some of the pain points later on. To help you get started, we've identified some quick tips below.

### Plan, plan, and plan some more

Do not underestimate the importance of pre-migration planning. This includes assessing the viability of your migration with a pre-migration impact assessment, involving business and IT users in the planning, and identifying your key project resources and when they will be required. Additionally, you'll want to create a structured task work flow and delegate clearly, so that all stakeholders are aware of their responsibilities. It's also a good idea to create sufficient process documentation and training materials to support all parties during the migration.

When you're planning for the project, it's also necessary to create a communication process for all stakeholders and to publish your project plans in advance. This includes sharing high-level project milestones and document templates with your broader team. Once the plan is effectively communicated to all parties, you can begin to finalize third-party supplier agreements, gain access to legacy datasets, and define the hardware and software requirements you will need to be successful after the migration.

### Assess the landscape

Now, before you begin moving files, it's necessary to conduct a thorough landscape analysis. To begin, we recommend creating a simple catalog, such as a project Wiki, of all the information you have retrieved on the data under assessment. You'll also want to identify the high-level objects and relationships that will be linked during the migration and create a strategy for system retirements. At this stage, creating conceptual, logical, physical, and common models is necessary to understand all aspects of the migration from the deeply technical to how the business community runs operations today and how they wish to run operations in the future.



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“Lack of visibility into data quality issues was cited by respondents as a major cause of failed projects.”

– Bloor Research

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### Design, build, and test the solution

In order to successfully execute a migration project, it's critical to test the solution before deploying it. To do this, you should create a thorough specification of how the source and target objects will be mapped, down to the attribute level. You should also create a solid design for any interface that is required to extract the data from your legacy systems or to load the data into the target systems. In addition, it is crucial that you define how you plan to manage the various data quality issues that may be discovered during the landscape analysis phase.

Keep in mind that the team managing the migration execution might not be the team responsible for coding the migration logic. We recommend that you publish the transformations and rules that were used to map the legacy and target environments to increase transparency and ease communication. Now that you're ready to begin, you can test the migration using sample data or, even better, by conducting a full-volume data analysis.

### Where the rubber meets the road

Once you've tested the migration and ensured that you have the adequate hardware, processes, documentation, and stakeholders in place, the next step is to execute and validate the migration. This includes demonstrating to the business sponsors and independent auditors that your migration is compliant with all rules and regulations. You'll also want to independently validate the migration to ensure that the process has delivered the data with sufficient quality to support the target services.

Remember, your migration isn't over when you've finished moving the data. You'll also want to retire your old systems and ensure that you've fully documented the pre-conditions that need to be met prior to decommissioning. Wrap up your project by documenting and publishing the processes and technologies you've adopted to measure data quality as an ongoing program.

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Companies stated “**business engagement**” was the most important factor of data migration success.

– Bloor Research

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## Taking the pain out of data migration

Comprehensive functionality allows Experian's data quality management platform to provide a one-stop solution for data migrations, eliminating the associated risks, shortening project timelines, and ensuring costs remain under control.

Experian helps you to overcome the usual barriers to data migration success and supports the management of the project while providing better quality results and a full audit trail. Experian's data quality management platform can be installed on commodity hardware and provides valuable data insight within minutes. What's more, it has been designed to be used by technical and non-technical staff, facilitating easy adoption across the organization.

## Strengths of Experian's data quality management platform

### A single tool

A single tool is used for all tasks, from analyzing data and performing root cause analysis to building out migration rules interactively. This allows teams to focus on results rather than technical complexities. No other software is required, so there are no compatibility or integration issues.

### Collaborative

Simple to use, Experian's data quality management platform allows both technical and non-technical team members to work together, sharing screens, holding interactive online meetings, documenting findings, and creating reusable rules and reference data.

### Unrivaled analysis

Proactive, high performance analysis of full data volumes across multiple systems allows us to provide a unique global view of enterprise data. Implicit rules and data relationships are discovered and analysis of values is carried out automatically highlighting potential issues.

### Managed and measured

Issues are managed directly within Experian's data quality management platform. Migration readiness is measured regularly and consistently using user-specified rules. Migrated data is reconciled to legacy source data.

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"One of our own specialists estimated the data migration at a government department would take **200 days** of effort. We completed it in **5 days** using Experian's data quality management platform."

– European DQ & DI lead, a global SI

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## Experian's data quality management platform provides a range of benefits

- Quick and easy to adopt
- Minimal time to results
- Easy, efficient team collaboration, communication, and tracking
- Low total cost of ownership, no maintenance, and no administration
- Single solution gives consistent results for business and technical team members
- Best use of business experts' time
- Optimal implementation due to business-focused prioritization of migration tasks
- Data quality infrastructure and processes established for the migration can be re-deployed as the core of an enterprise-wide data quality management process

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"The **speed** at which we could get projects signed off and approved was unreal. Our first insurance customer was **absolutely amazed** with the **productivity**. Very, very powerful."

– Charles Thomas, CGI

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## Business-enabled solution for data migrations

With Experian's data quality management platform, you'll have powerful data analysis, transformation, and cleansing capabilities within a single, collaborative platform. Its simple issue resolution and rule-based readiness monitoring supports good project management.

Technical and non-technical team members can collaborate to:

- Perform cross-system landscape analysis, identifying data overlap, helping to scope the migration, and providing initial readiness estimates
- Investigate issues automatically discovered by data profiling and outlier analysis, relationship and redundancy analysis, and consistency (functional dependency) analysis
- Identify, prioritize, categorize, and measure issues, allowing early, objective decisions on how and when to address them
- Interactively build and test transformation and cleansing rules using real data in an agile process known as "prototyping," providing massive productivity and quality gains compared to any other development techniques
- Use the platform's internal repository as a "staging area," if required
- Monitor data quality at the source and target during the project to measure readiness
- Compare and reconcile source and target data to prove the process
- Provide a low-effort, simple data archiving solution for legacy data after the migration

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"Immediate visibility into what is really happening with our data has presented incredibly valuable insights. Experian's data quality management platform is quick, and it's very intuitive."

– Speedy Hire

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## Conclusion

Given that 38 percent of enterprise application projects exceed their budgets and/or miss their target dates, of which data migrations make up 30-40 percent of these projects,<sup>2</sup> it's no surprise that the mere mention of a migration would send IT and business folks into a frenzy. While there are many reasons why data migration projects could go awry, you can ensure your project runs smoothly by following the best practices we've outlined. This includes planning extensively for the upcoming migration project, clearly defining the process and responsibilities, and testing the migration against full volumes of your data.

Our data migration and management solution combines business-minded usability, unrivaled performance, and the richest selection of capabilities to accelerate your organization towards data management maturity. Combining robust data profiling and discovery capabilities with an easy-to-use interface, it empowers your business users to understand the data they have and to better prepare for migrations.

For more information on how Experian can derisk your data migration projects, download our product sheet.

[Read now](#)

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"For its architecture (which includes performance), we rate Experian's data quality management platform as the **best in the market** ... [with] global search, full relationship discovery, and extensive profiling capabilities."

– Philip Howard, Bloor Research

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Start your data migration journey on the right foot. Learn about the top four data migration pitfalls and how to avoid them.

[Get the tip sheet](#)



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