

## Delivering Value from Big Data from Day One

If you believe the hype, every vendor is a Big Data vendor and whatever data they deal with uniquely is Big Data. While you should disdain the hype, don't disregard the real underlying shifts happening in the value attached to data.

In the past, data storage costs were so high, a lot of data that was of dubious potential use was just discarded. Now, with the falling costs of storage and with the heavy competitive impact of being able to mine every piece of information about customers and users, emphasis has shifted from systems to data and analytics.

As an example, think of all the data from systems that power a service like Google's email service or a retailer like Walmart. Whether it's an online service, or shoppers in a store using a mobile app, users leave a footprint – data about response times, user experience, user preferences is being generated all the time as customers tap away at their mobile devices, play games, click on ads, buy gifts and more. Harnessing this data can be invaluable to providers of products and services – but there are few technologies that can gracefully handle the volume, variety and velocity of machine generated Big Data in a timely manner to make it truly useful.

The classic [volume, variety and velocity definition of Big Data aside](#), what is really on the rise is the ability to make sense of not just large datasets, but the ability to do so at a very fine granularity. Not all "Big Data" solution vendors can get you there quickly.

One pre-requisite for the Big Data technology you choose is that it should be able to handle any kind of data, easily, without a lot of pre-processing or normalization. Another requirement is that it should start to yield value quickly and without a lot of development effort. And of course, there is the requirement that it should scale effortlessly to analyze several terabytes and petabytes of data.

The real question any organization needs to ask is, "What do I want to know about my customers that will help me provide a more effective product or service?" Extracting the right analytics out of their machine data should then be simple, if the processing is handled with a mature query language and the right visualizations. Having to write complex code, MapReduce jobs and integrations with visualization tools can make this task a lot harder, time consuming and difficult to maintain, than it needs to be. As the world changes to handle dynamic, real time information, so should vendor technologies.

Splunk, a platform for machine data, allows you to harness the power of machine generated Big Data, rapidly, without requiring large investments in ETL tools, or personnel to write MapReduce jobs. Machine data, such as logs, events, performance metrics, yields definitive records of not just system behavior, but user behavior, experience and preferences. Splunk, with its schema-on-the-fly approach, can help you make sense of any-structured data, from any source and quickly provide visualization, correlation and analysis capabilities. Accelerate getting value from your Big Data with Splunk.

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