

Turning Data into Results:

Unlocking the Potential of Central Government Data



The 2020 National Data Strategy^[1] set an objective for ‘transforming government’s use of data to drive efficiency and improve public services.’

But a 2022 Good Practice Guide from the National Audit Office^[2] highlighted the serious challenges departments must overcome if they’re to hit this goal.

Based on the NAO’s Guide, this practical summary is designed for leaders and data specialists in government departments, agencies and public bodies, to help you:

- Identify the core data issues that have held back progress in the past
- Access proprietary complex data structures such as SAP data.
- Define what’s needed to overcome these issues
- Make real progress towards achieving modernisation and transformation

Why focus on data?

The NAO affirms that ‘government wants more effective use of data and data-sharing across public services. Data is government’s biggest asset, and it is critically important to improve data to be able to share it better and exploit its benefits.’^[3]

Better use of data will enable organisations throughout the public sector to:



“Getting the right data in the right place at the right time

is a basic driver of value for money in government, making services work for people, improving government’s systems and processes, and supporting better decisions.

NAO

Pinpointing Data Challenges

Despite many successive initiatives, the NAO identifies that persistent and systemic issues continue to stand in the way of realising the value of government’s data’ assets. These issues are often rooted in complex data architectures and proprietary platforms such as SAP, including:

- Data sharing:** Technical limitations often restrict access to data
- Data quality:** Legacy data may lack authority and integrity
- Data standards:** Older systems are often incompatible with efforts to apply standardisation
- Data access:** Accessing raw data in older systems via modern APIs can be difficult
- Data analytics:** Using modern analytics tools is unlikely without resolving these issues

“Government knows it can do much more with data

for example greater sharing, personalisation of services, reducing the burden for citizens, analytics, and exploiting cutting edge technology.

NAO

What to do next?

The National Data Strategy sets out five steps that will lead to ‘greater consistency, integrity and interoperability, with data used widely and efficiently across government.’^[6]

1. Reviewing previous attempts
2. Embedding data standards
3. Taking a structured approach
4. Addressing legacy issues
5. Enabling data sharing

‘Identify the main IT systems that, if fixed, would allow government to use data better’^[7]

‘Ensure that whenever departments replace or modify these systems this is done with full consideration of how the systems will support better use of data in government.’^[8]

With legacy data responsible for so many barriers, it makes sense to explore how to tackle this issue – and the answer is simpler than you might expect.

We’re Here to Help

At Data Technology, we’ve joined forces with Qlik, a global leader in data integration and analytics, to help HMRC get more value out of the SAP data - reducing time, cost and complexity.

We’ll help you make real progress towards meeting the objectives of the National Data Strategy, while creating a data-driven foundation for delivering better citizen services, and more efficient operations.

Ready to learn more?

Read our briefing guide to unlocking SAP data with Qlik.



Like an initial chat?

Get in touch with a Data Technology expert?

“ ... in 2020-21 central government departments alone expected to spend

£456 billion on the day-to-day running costs

of public services grants and administration. This highlights the potential for efficiencies to be gained from the improved use of data.’

NAO

[1] National Data Strategy, 2020
[2] NAO: Improving Government Data: A Guide for Senior Leaders, 2022
[3] NAO: Improving Government Data: A Guide for Senior Leaders, 2022
[4] NAO: Challenges in Using Data Across Government, 2019
[5] NAO: Improving Government Data: A Guide for Senior Leaders, 2022
[6] National Data Strategy, 2020
[7] NAO: Improving Government Data: A Guide for Senior Leaders, 2022
[8] NAO: Improving Government Data: A Guide for Senior Leaders, 2022
[9] NAO: Improving Government Data: A Guide for Senior Leaders, 2022