

Do you Really Need a Data Warehouse?



Many executives, once their data systems get large enough, wonder how they can sift through all their data at a faster pace.

And they think to themselves, "Maybe we should get a Data Warehouse. That ought to speed things up. And then, I can do . . . *trend analysis!*"

Unfortunately, most writings on Data Warehousing discuss matters of technical jargon, such as comparing ETL tools, Dimensional Data Modeling best practices, Inmon vs. Kimball method, and other concepts that most executives could care less about.

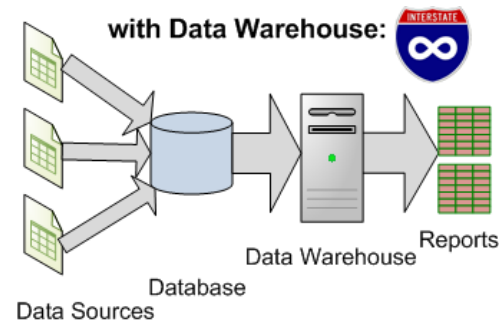
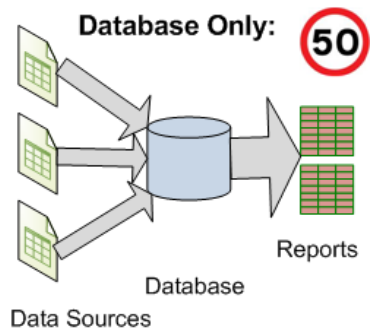
The executive, having learned nothing useful after 2 hours of research, turns to an IT manager and asks how long it will take to build a Data Warehouse – often expecting an answer like, "2 weeks." Instead, after hearing "6 months" in response, a thud is heard throughout the office as the executive's jaw drops and hits the carpet.

Allow me to save your jaw from hitting the ground. Here's what you need to know – 98% lingo-free.

www.jasonwisdom.com

1.212.706.3071 P

1.212.706.3072 F



A *Data Warehouse* is a special kind of database, derived from (and an extension of) an existing database. It is useful for retrieving and summarizing lots of data **very fast**.

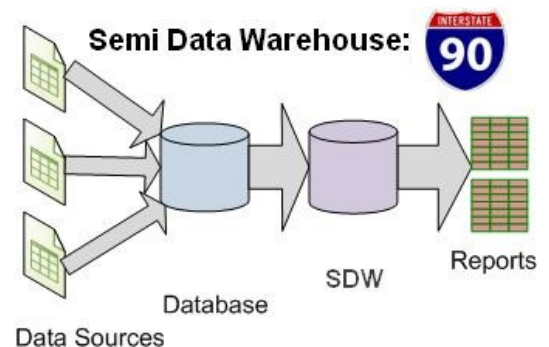
A Data Warehouse requires a time and effort to get working right. Two months absolute minimum for a mid-size company, 6-12 months for enterprise-level. If you can live with **fast** reporting, instead of very fast, there is another option.

A Low-Cost Alternative

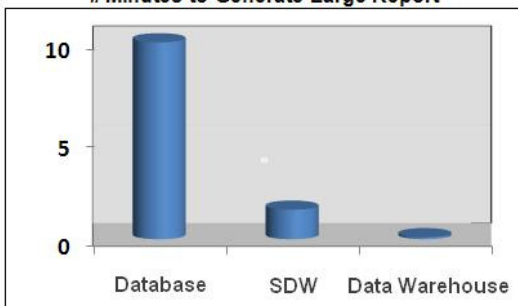
There is no official name for this; I call it the "**Semi Data Warehouse**" (SDW).

Here are some quick facts about the SDW:

- The SDW is a hybrid of the Database and Data Warehouse concepts.
- The SDW is still an extension on top of the current Database.
- The SDW still requires planning, programming, and sometimes extra servers.
- The SDW offers more powerful reporting abilities than a regular database.
- The SDW is not as powerful or feature-rich as a full-scale Data Warehouse.
- The SDW's big advantage lies in the cost and time savings with setup:
 - A **Semi Data Warehouse requires 1-2 weeks** to create and start using.
 - A **Full Data Warehouse requires 2-12 months** to create and start using.



Minutes to Generate Large Report



The Semi Data Warehouse uses a *flat data* format that makes it fast and easy to create reports. Regular databases store data in a *normalized* format, which requires little disk space, but makes for slow reports. The Semi Data Warehouse creates a pre-gathered set of data, into flat data tables, so reports can be built and refreshed *much* faster than from normalized tables.

Again, the Semi Data Warehouse will give you *fast*, and not very fast, reporting. A large, normalized report may take 10 minutes to run; the same report from a Semi Data Warehouse may take 1 minute; a properly configured Data Warehouse will take 2 seconds. If the Semi Data Warehouse solution is fast enough, you do not need a Data Warehouse. If it is not fast enough, you *do* need a Data Warehouse.