



When your business is ready to grow, manual processes for data management can hold you back.

Digital Realty uses Semarchy to enable strategic decision-making at all levels of the enterprise.

---

Digital Realty is a data center solutions company that provides scalability, cross-connectivity, and colocation for a wide variety of data ecosystem products across its secure, network-rich portfolio of data centers. Digital Realty's customers include domestic and international companies of all sizes, ranging from financial services, cloud and information technology services, to manufacturing, energy, gaming, life sciences and consumer products. They own and operate over 150 data center facilities across North America, Europe, Asia and Australia, and by providing reliable, turn-key data infrastructure solutions they give their customers the freedom to focus on their own core

competencies.

Paul Balas is the Vice President of Information Delivery for Digital Realty, and he is responsible for the internal end-to-end information flows for the company. He works to ensure data security, data standardization, and the availability of critical data across various application platforms. "My job is basically to clarify the information that we use to make business decisions," Balas says.


### Manual Data Integration and the "Intellectual Debt"

When Balas joined Digital Realty, he knew the company needed a true Master

Data Management (MDM) solution.

"We have over fifty different internal systems," he says, "and there was no standardized way by which the data analysts were working together across those systems. There had been some manual attempts to integrate the data, but it was very much a decentralized exercise. V-LOOKUPs ruled the day, and that was basically how data was mastered and formalized within the company."

"The problem with this," Balas continues, "is that there's key data that ends up getting entered into the systems and replicated, but not consistently maintained. So it introduces a lot of confusion when you're having



conversations across functions about strategy, or how certain units are performing, or what we should be doing next. It becomes a real technical and intellectual debt for the company if you can't be confident in your data when you're trying to make decisions."

Balas had experience implementing MDM solutions before coming to Digital Realty, so he had a clear approach as he set out to evangelize the concept within the organization. "I used a simple argument with my stakeholders," he says. "We all knew we needed a single view of our customers, and that was the point of departure. We need a single view of our customers so we can segment our markets, and if we can't segment our markets effectively, we can't build and enable our go-to-market strategy."

Stakeholders within the organization immediately agreed with the need for an MDM solution. "When we had these business alignment discussions," Balas explains, "people understood the problem right away. They had

been living in the V-LOOKUP world so they were ready to embrace the concept."

At the end of 2015, Digital Realty acquired another large company, and Balas says this was an additional catalyzing event that helped the MDM initiative move forward. "The acquisition effectively doubled the number of systems we had," he says, "so now we had to figure out how to integrate the data from these two independent businesses. The MDM plan was under way regardless of the acquisition, but it certainly was synergistic from a project standpoint. The business case for master data was strengthened when we saw how MDM would allow the company to scale."

#### Rapid Time-to-Value with Semarchy

Balas had very clear criteria for the solution he would deploy at Data Realty. "Every single investment decision I make," he explains, "is based on time-to-value. Whenever I look for platforms that we're going to use as part of our tool kit, it has to be well-suited to its purpose, quick to implement, and it has to be easy to

pick up and use."

Because of these priorities, Balas says his product search was relatively focused from the outset. "If you have the implementation values that we do," he says, "most of the traditional MDM vendors have two strikes against them right away. First, the implementation times are anywhere from six months to a year, and second, the solutions are typically single entity. You either buy someone's product master or you buy their customer master. Instead, I wanted a solution that would give me quick time-to-value, that would be relatively easy to learn, and that would be a multi-entity solution built on a modernized architecture."

Due to his professional position and interests, Balas keeps a close eye on the state of MDM solutions. "I have done a lot of research over the years," he says, "and I have a number of connections in the space. When it came time to build our vendor list, I relied on my own knowledge and reports by research companies like Gartner."

Balas identified Semarchy along with two other vendors for his short list,

"It becomes a real technical and intellectual debt for the company if you can't be confident in your data when you're trying to make decisions."





“Semarchy is the vehicle that allows master data to make sense to our business stakeholders.”

and he spoke with customers of those vendors to help his evaluation. He says he asked about each vendor’s ability to implement and meet the criteria Digital Realty had for their solution. “A lot of people look in the wrong directions when they evaluate software,” he says. “If you simply focus on providers who are demonstrating your core criteria, you will be much better suited. I’m not interested in vendors who are trying to make their software be more than it should be just to capture incremental license revenue from their existing customers. I believe that a best-of-breed approach in modern software is the way to go.”

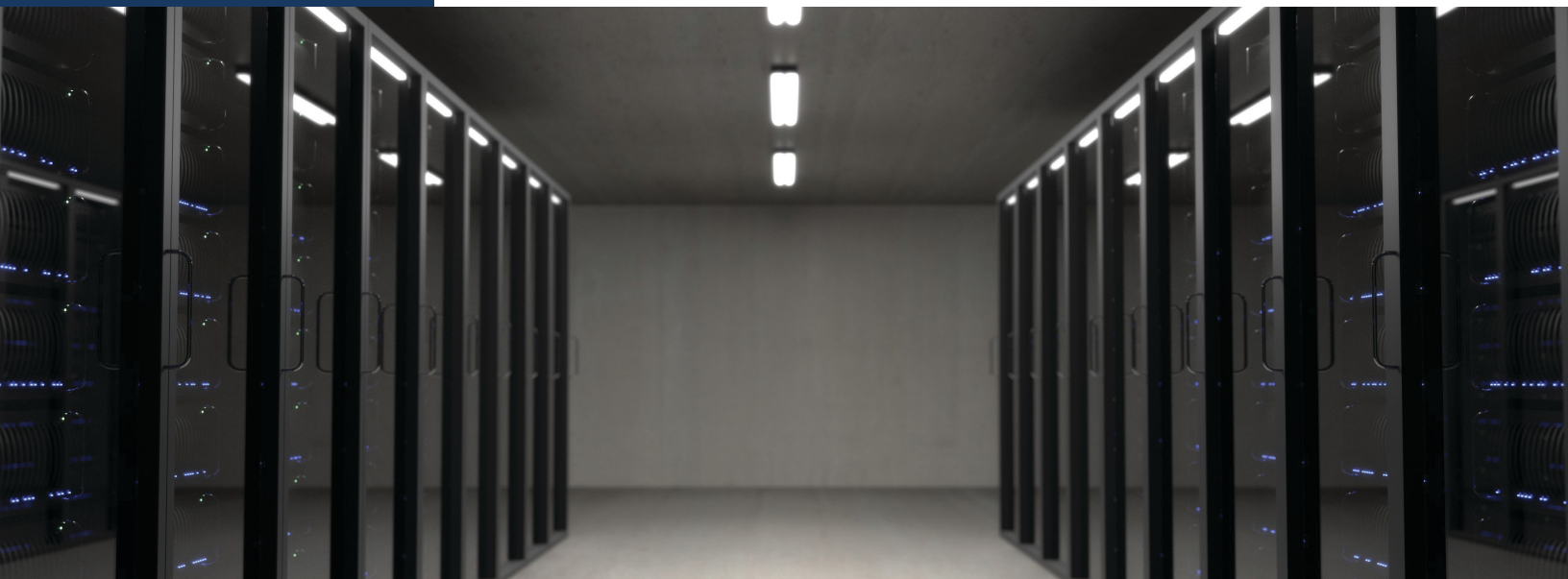
Digital Realty chose Semarchy because of the platform’s rapid time-to-value for multiple entities and its ease of use. Balas says he was very satisfied with the amount of time needed to implement the solution. “Most times when you invest in these types of systems, it is six months to a year before you can get value for the business. I was anticipating that Semarchy was going to be a factor of ‘X’ faster, and it was. It took just a couple of months to get our customer master up and running.”

After going live with the Semarchy solution in June 2016, Balas says the stakeholders saw immediate results. One of the original business drivers for Digital Realty was customer segmentation, and with the

customer master running, Balas says the system allowed them to do what they set out to do. “Semarchy enabled us to create our market segmentation strategy for the company,” he says.

“We’re rolling out a location master which handles the numerous attributes for all of our individual facilities. This will be the first time Digital Realty has had a holistic view of that data, and we’re able to manage it all in one place with good data governance.” Balas also says this location master is providing additional benefits to the business beyond simply having the data cleansed and managed. “The location master has married our operational and financial views of our properties. We have standardized on how those two worlds align. It allows us to more easily blend operational and financial measurements.”

Balas says a product master is coming soon as well. “We’re using Semarchy to enable a product life-cycle management ability for the enterprise,” he says. “From the inception of a product we’ll be able to configure and set it up with consistent attributes, and then throughout the life of that product we’ll have consistent monitoring and reporting of its performance. This impacts our ability to operate and manage profitability at a detailed level, even down to individual SKUs. And then we’ll also be able to roll



this data all the way up to the level of the business lines we use to report out to our investors.”

### A Tool for the Whole Enterprise

Digital Realty wanted a solution that would be easy to use, and Balas describes how Semarchy seamlessly fits into a tool stack that provides the company’s data stewards and business analysts with the power and flexibility they need. “Our data champions are spread throughout the company,” he says. “These are business folks who don’t necessarily need heavy technical training to accomplish their tasks.”

The company uses Semarchy as a transactional hub to maintain master data and relationships, and Balas says the tool integrates the multiple systems that house their various data types. The rest of their software set includes data wrangling software for ETL functions, data virtualization software, and Birst for business intelligence and analytics.

“Other MDM vendors have closed database models,” Balas says, “and that would be a problem for us given how we want to use all of these tools together. Semarchy has an open model, so that removes a layer of complexity in the architecture since we don’t need a

separate product to expose the model and access the data.”

Balas summarizes his experience with Semarchy by emphasizing the value the tool brings to the whole Digital Realty enterprise. “Semarchy is the vehicle,” he says, “that allows master data to make sense to our business stakeholders.”



Semarchy is the Intelligent MDM™ company. Its xDM platform is an innovation in multi-vector Master Data Management (MDM) that leverages smart algorithms and material design to simplify data stewardship, governance and integration. It is implemented via an agile and iterative approach that delivers business value almost immediately, and scales to meet enterprise complexity. The technology is in use at some of the most well-known B2B, B2C, consumer and product brands in the US and Europe, supporting all domains, styles, organizations, industries and use cases in one environment that adapts to evolving business requirements.

[www.semarchy.com](http://www.semarchy.com)

