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What analysis need do the different user types have?

When the user population is mapped out, the next task will be to look into the analysis needs. Here it is not so much the detailed KPI's and calculations we are after, but more structural requirements: Do we need data in real time to cover the analysis need? If so, the Data Platform should be able to handle data updates with high frequency. Are there a high number of transactions or updates from many source systems like e.g. Point of Sales in stores, it will impact the data extracts when it comes to full load and delta loads. Is there a specific need for analysing historic developments or status updates over a time period, then we need to work specifically with timestamps and master data changes. Finally, there can be specific requirements to handling of who may see what impacting the security model.

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How should the Data Platform architecture be to support the business needs?

When we have gathered the business requirements it is time to choose the relevant Cloud Services that can give the requested functionality for the first version of the platform. In the Cloud we can add new functionality as the business needs evolve, but the fundamental requirements for each individual organization should be based on their characteristics. Looking into the cost impact of each type of service also play a part in this evaluation, securing the most optimal mix of functionality and cost for the architecture.

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How do you expect to deliver and maintain the functionality on the Cloud Data Platform?

Building a BI Organization with the adequate competences for building a Cloud based Data Platform and maintaining and evolving it in the future should be a part of the preparation for a Cloud Data Platform. Some organizations have a large BI Department and can develop a lot of the platform themselves after a proper training and knowledge transfer, others will have to acquire the competencies.

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How should the roadmap be to evolve the new platform and decommission the old?

The first project phase it typically decided as part of the initial planning - often a business area with an urgent need. The following phases can be obvious or a subject for discussion and prioritization for the management team. Most organizations need a roadmap with cost/benefit evaluations to plan the Data Platform development, including how and when the old solutions should be decommissioned.

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What setup is required to facilitate collaboration with the business and use of the Data Platform?

The last important factor an organization should consider before embarking on a Data Platform project is governance for the collaboration with the business when discovering the business requirements and design of reports and dashboards. Description of roles and responsibilities and ways of working between the business and the BI Team should be communicated together with a model for support and roll out of the solution.