

# A Plane In Flight

Centralizing data within HealthSpring has become one of the greatest challenges the company has faced over the past eight years. While some deliverables have been met over these eight years, actual results have fallen far short of expectations. Simultaneously during these efforts, additional focus has been placed on centralizing and standardizing reporting across markets - two efforts set in motion, even though one requires the other for success.

One of the most common analogies used within HealthSpring to describe the relationship of creating centralized reports without a centralized database is: "It's like building a plane while in flight and knowing all along it's going to crash." This statement is commonly heard throughout board room meetings and echoed throughout the business users, and yields the question, "Why are we in this situation?"

To understand, we must explore the history of HealthSpring's venture into the creation of a centralized business intelligence database. The following summary was taken from the IT IRIS website and was written 5/17/2007:

<b>Pre 2002</b>	EIS Data Warehouse - data warehouse package provided by MHC; written in PICK.
<b>2002 - 2004</b>	Pursued Meta Data as a Data Warehouse Platform; Meta Data indicated they could use 28 descriptions of data and move across any object; after 1 ½ years project appeared to fail due to lack of usable user interface; no way to present data.
<b>2004</b>	Cognos Decision Stream was brought in as the Meta Data Application was not working; no progress was made.
<b>2004</b>	IMI - Intengration Management Inc (Leon Dowling) was asked to re-create the current EIS Data Warehouse; failed as the code in MHC was too complex to re-create; spent over a year working on the analysis; at a certain point the project was cancelled.
<b>2004 - 2006</b>	IMI started over with a dimensional model for data warehouse; after 1 ½ years current extracts were moved to a Staging database and had created 9 dimensions; flaws by the analysts were identified in the dimensional model and they were not able to validate; EDR Data Warehouse lost credibility; contention with IMI persisted between analysts and Leon Dowling; team stepped back and validated the Staging Extracts; staging tables started being used as production downloads to other servers and Access databases; ability to grow the data warehouse in this form was limited as it was already taking 9 hours over a weekend to build and data was only at a weekly level.
<b>2007 - Present</b>	Eliminated contract support; brought development in-house beginning February 12, 2007; involved all markets in scope development of BIDW; converted existing staging code to SQL Server 2005 to take advantage of SQL's native ETL tool, SSIS; able to reduce load times from hours to minutes; BIDW will be at a daily level as no data will be more than 24 hours old; implemented SOX regulations with separation of duties and data from development to production; first release to be ready for QA on June 15, 2007; high level plan in place for future development and integration of data into the warehouse.