

It's not always easy getting the attention of the higher-ups—especially when it comes to executives and data. Data quality enables your CRM, marketing automation platform, and other systems to run effectively and efficiently. But you already know that.

The trouble is, your CEO might not quite get it.

So how do you convince them?

Ask the “Data Whisperer” himself, [Scott Taylor](#), Principal Consultant at [MetaMeta Consulting](#). He jumped on our podcast, the Data-Driven Marketer, and gave us some awesome advice about getting executives to listen to your data needs and resource you appropriately.

Here's what he had to say.

**We're still facing the same old issues and execs don't see it as a real problem**

## THE DATA-DRIVEN MARKETER

“ THERE MAY NOT BE MANY CEOs WHO SAY, ‘WE NEED BETTER MASTER DATA,’ BUT THEY DO SAY, ‘WE NEED TO GET CLOSER TO OUR CUSTOMERS.’ ”

- SCOTT TAYLOR

FEATURING:

**SCOTT TAYLOR**, PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT AT METAMETA CONSULTING

**EPISODE 07**

It’s tempting for non-techies to assume that modern technology has cleared up many of the data issues we’ve been facing for decades. Not true: We’re still haunted by the same problems we were fighting a year ago. Yet, when you ask execs about the issue, you’re likely to hear:

“Oh, that’s the Salesforce admin’s issue.”

Check this story out: Once, Scott sat in on a meeting where a CEO exclaimed, “I don’t need your master data services. I can push a button and get any data, any time, any way I want it.”

A bold employee at the end of the room stood up and said:

“Sir, I am that button.”

We’re going to guess that story sums up a lot of frustration you may be experiencing in your own organization!

So the question is:

“How can we level-up the conversation to grab the attention of the higher-

ups?”

Enter the Data Whisperer:

### **1: Change your vocabulary**

Many issues surrounding executive buy-in have to do with simple vocabulary. Simply put, leaders can't stand complainers. And when they hear what they perceive to be a complaint about “dirty data,” you're already starting off on the wrong foot. Instead, use phrases that align with their concerns.

For example:

1. Say “setting standards” not “cleansing data”
2. Say “applying a common structure for the customer” not “we have a data quality problem”

### **2: Talk about strategy**

## THE DATA-DRIVEN MARKETER

“ IF YOU JUST TALK ABOUT 'DIRTY DATA' IT SOUNDS LIKE  
YOU'RE **COMPLAINING**, AND NO LEADER WANTS  
TO HEAR SOMEBODY COMPLAIN. ”

- SCOTT TAYLOR

FEATURING:

**SCOTT TAYLOR**, PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT AT METAMETA CONSULTING

**EPISODE 07**

If you want to really grab the attention of the executives in the C-suite, start talking more about strategy and less about data (at least directly). Consider: “If we get better master data, we can get closer to our customers.”

Or, is your company currently discussing ABM or AI? Then make sure your data quality concerns link back to those specific issues.

And remember: The C-suite has their antennae up for strategic pieces of business, like IOT, AI, disruption, data-driven, digital transformation ... and the key thing is:

None of that works without high quality, well-governed, master reference data.

### **3: Align with these 5 pillars of data management**

Scott also offered what he calls the “5 pillars of data management.” Use these pillars to steer the conversation with executives (and win hearts and minds).

**1. Value** — Does the data we’re trying to manage have business relevance? Does it help us make decisions at scale?

**2. Structure** — Is there a common structure for the data? Structured data works harder than unstructured data.

**3. Connectability** — You must align the data across your own silos and externally with your partners.

**4. Coverage** — Does what you're trying to manage really impact your entire business?

**5. Quality** — You get this. But Scott's advice? Don't lead with the quality story because they'll end up comparing "data quality" to "product quality," which doesn't put you on the winning end when it comes time for resources.

**Lastly, remember: master data is the enabler**

Master data is the enabler. It doesn't do anything on its own, but it makes digital transformation possible. It helps ABM to run smoothly and efficiently and it creates the basis for AI to do its job. When data (particularly master data) is clean and efficient, it can team up with powerful software, like a marketing automation platform, to truly deliver.

This is why software looks great in demos—the foundational data is incredibly accurate.

But when a company purchases the software and plugs in their own—often dirty—data, the software doesn't perform. It's like putting bad gas in your car. It doesn't matter how great the engine is if the fuel isn't the right grade.

So get the right grade.

We hope you loved this blog post, which was based on our Data-Driven Marketer podcast, where we interviewed [Scott Taylor](#).

Check us out on [iTunes](#) or at [this link](#).

**Popular Searches**

[Data Orchestration](#)

[What Is Data Normalization](#)

[Data Deduplication](#)

[Compliance Ease](#)

[Data Automation](#)