

A large, stylized orange chevron graphic pointing to the right, serving as a background for the text.

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Customs Technology: Design for Analytics

Video Transcript

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We all hear a lot about analytics, big data, all the rest of that. I've been in the business for a long time and I sort of see trends come and go. And the words will change, but I know for a fact that this concept around analytics and really using information to understand what's going on is a true change in how businesses operate.

And there's no question that customs organizations have a tremendous amount of data in fact almost arguably we have too much data. It's really about getting the right data.

Filtering through all that data and getting to piece of information that tells us what we want to know. A great example is the contents of a box. How often do we really know what's inside a box based on, based on facts, based on the data that's been provided. When we look at the technology landscape, the technology that's out there today, with the amount of processing power, with the sophistication of the

tools allows an organization to process sort of incredible amounts of data. Both public data, private data, bringing them all together to answer the question we want to answer. I see examples of this in many different places. One example I see now which you know really kind of shocks me is, we now have clients that are looking at social expenditures, taking the data applicants provide when they sign up for a social payment or unemployment payment; these clients are now taking that information and going out into the public domain and try to assess whether this is legitimate data,

whether the person is maybe trying to get paid a little bit more, maybe they are not legitimately even available to get that payment, so marrying truly public data that's out there in the Internet, in the public domain with application data to try to identify fraud and non-compliance. So that's just one example and we see many opportunities across sort of all the functions of government.

When we look at customs, it's easy to say analytics offers a lot of power, but when we start to take that down and question, we say to ourselves: How do we design this into our system? How do we design this into the process? Really starts to change how we should all think about this.

So if you take a look at sort of the examples out there, I think one of the great ones is: How do we detect collusion between various traders in the supply chain? So how do we know, whether the traders are working together to maybe move goods, not pay the duties or maybe it's a security risk. What information do we need to get to be able to assess that? Do we have that information today? How do we change the process to get that information? Do maybe we have to go out into the public domain to get that type of information? And there are many examples of that I think, you know, there's a couple more shown there.

Can we get the information from the consumer, whoever is buying that good, directly from them? Can we get it directly from the manufacturer, the retailer? So we know it's inside that box. Be able to look at trends over the time etc. Being able to do this, design it into the processes, into the data we gather really allows us to fundamentally change how the process works and the value we get out of that.