



BUSINESS CASE

Standardizing on One Survey Platform

How Consolidating Survey Licenses Saves Money, Provides Data Governance, and Increases Flexibility for Users





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THE BUSINESS SUMMARY

There are currently 355 different survey software providers to choose from according to G2, so it's really no surprise that most corporations use many different tools to meet their needs.

The proliferation of web-based applications has allowed IT and InfoSec departments to feel more comfortable permitting people to use the solution that best suits their needs—a trend called democratizing software. It reduces the management burden on IT while giving freedom to its users.

The downside, however, is the existence of several pockets of individual licenses at full retail price with little to no IT or Infosec oversight. Although many democratized software products don't require Infosec involvement, survey software is not one of them. Most surveys contain personally identifiable information (PII) that must comply with various data privacy laws, such as GDPR and CCPA. So not only do individual licenses not benefit from volume discounts or additional services (such as premium support and

training), they have the potential to expose the organization to data privacy violations. When you standardize and consolidate on a single platform, you can easily save 25% or more on subscription costs and provide the data governance to keep you out of trouble. And if you choose the right survey platform, you can still deliver an individual user experience without requiring too much IT support.





THE CHALLENGE

The biggest challenge is that survey software is not seen as a corporate application. Surveys often collect sensitive information, even unintentionally. This scenario creates pockets and silos of information across the organization that are tough to find, audit, and effectively manage to corporate data policies.

It is difficult to secure and govern data when you don't know where it is. Data collected through apps that have been opened without IT oversight could be misused, used in violation of corporate policy, stored improperly, or accidentally deleted, all in violation of retention policies that could result in corporate liability. There are GDPR and CCPA regulations that can result in massive fines for companies not protecting customer data.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Assess survey platforms to find those that provide cost savings over what you are paying today.
- Investigate the survey platforms that allow IT to centrally manage and apply corporate data policies.
- Evaluate survey platforms for ease of use as well as for the freedom for users to create the solutions they need while allowing IT to apply guardrails to protect the organization.
- Choose the best survey platform that meets the above criteria.





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BACKGROUND

The Changes Democratization Brought To Business

Democratization of enterprise software has taken two forms: web-based applications that can be used without IT review; and low-code software that is easy to customize. In addition, web-based applications that do not fall under IT purview, are often bought as single-seat licenses, which are always more expensive than procurement could negotiate.

LOW-CODE SOFTWARE AND CITIZEN DEVELOPERS

Low-code software allows citizen developers to customize applications to solve real business challenges in creative ways that improve the bottom line without additional costs. This allows non-programmers to show their creativity in unique ways, using the tools they have on hand.

For example, employees at one company created an internal employee travel recommendations site to help others traveling out of town. The system functions like an internal Yelp, giving reviews and quotes about restaurants, hotels, and more.

One large oil company used their survey solution to automatically collect feedback from their refineries, allowing them to reduce their relatively high Total Recordable Incident Rate (TRIR) to 0.00.

Low-code software offloads the demands on IT programmers, so they can focus on larger and more complicated issues.

WEB-BASED APPLICATIONS

A Web-based applications (also known as Software as a Service or SaaS) have allowed people around the world to access the kind of software that used to be prohibitively



BACKGROUND CONT.

expensive, limited, or require huge IT initiatives to implement. Many of these are simply productivity tools to help people do something quickly, such as mind-mapping, photo-editing, file-conversion, email, and social media.

However, several web-based or SaaS applications, including survey software, should be treated as corporate applications. This is because the information collected by the apps could be sensitive and subject to regulatory compliance. The challenge is that few enterprises recognize the risk, resulting in multiple siloes of unregulated and unprotected data that could result in multimillion-dollar fines.

The smallest infringements under GDPR can result in fines of up to €10 million (\$12.2 million) or 2% of the firm's worldwide annual revenue (whichever is higher). CCPA fines carry civil penalties of up to \$7,500 (€6150) per violation, and there is no ceiling on CCPA fines (according to Riskconnect.com)

One company ran an internal survey and found that almost a quarter of all employees had access to survey tools. Altogether, the company was using 15 different tools, usually in single licenses, resulting in hundreds of siloes of information with no oversight and no leveraged procurement power.

While initially this democratization lightened the load for corporate IT, the company had to consolidate and standardize on one platform to get the control IT needed and the cost structures that procurement desired. Standardizing and consolidating allows them to centrally provision the corporate-approved survey solution to everybody, leveraging common corporate templates for brand consistency, while keeping relatively tight reins on costs.

THE EFFECT ON PROCUREMENT

While it is often easier to allow employees to find the tools that work best for them, this can lead to unexpected costs and a lack of centralized administration that allows procurement to control costs. Saving 25 – 30% off full retail price for individual licenses isn't the only benefit of consolidation. By standardizing on one solution, the volume of seats you can group together dramatically improves your negotiating power and your ability to get better support, personalized training, and more.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conduct a survey to discover how many people are using survey tools in your organization.
- Research how many different survey tools are being used and why.
- Survey users to find out how many citizen programmers are customizing tools to get their work done.
- Select a single survey solution based on the factors that are most important to you and your users.
 - a. Easy-to-use
 - b. High user-adoption rate
 - c. Flexible, low-code design that allows people to customize their use of the application
 - d. Ability to centralize data storage and information security
 - e. Ability to centrally administer InfoSec data security policies
 - f. Ability to work with the solution provider as a partner to secure the best value
 - g. Ability to centrally provision, support, and train on the survey platform



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CHALLENGE

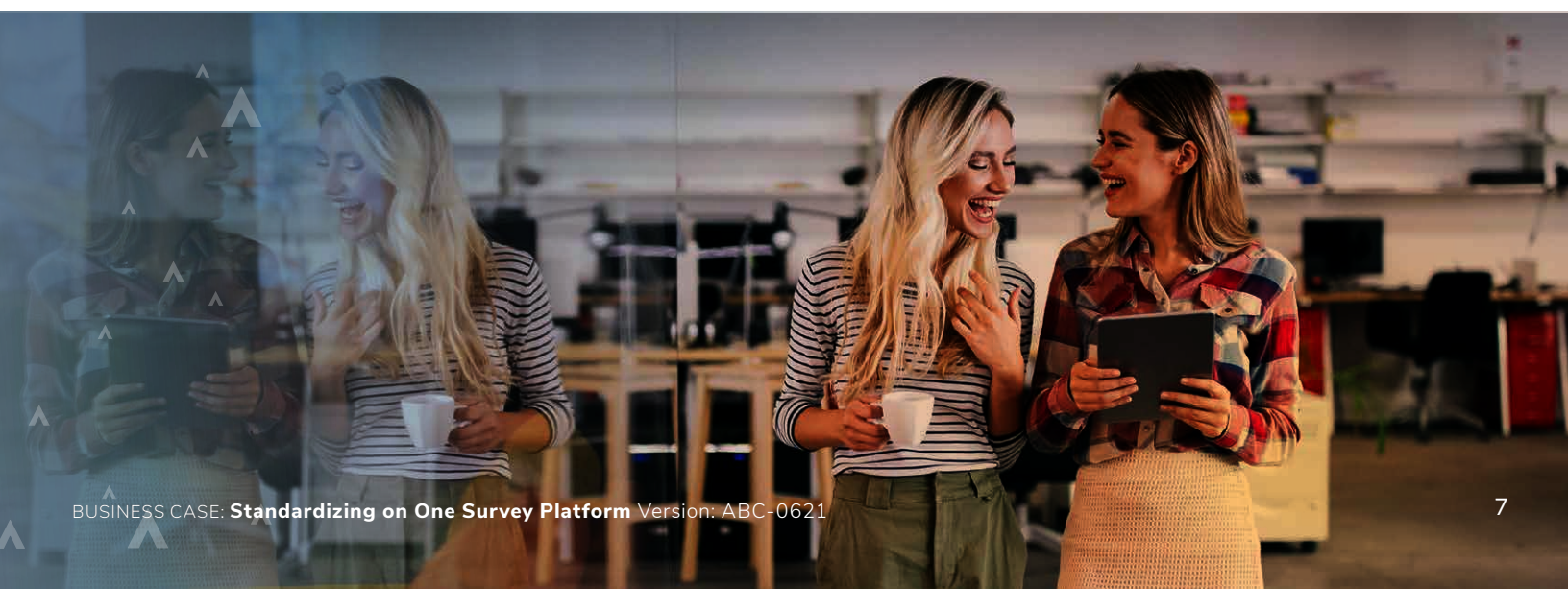
The Risks of Ungoverned Survey Data

Even without directly soliciting sensitive information, surveys can often collect information that is sensitive. This can include personally identifiable information that falls under GDPR and CCPA regulations, creating both IT/InfoSec and financial risks.

THE IT/INFOSEC RISKS

The problem arises when IT and InfoSec have no idea where the different silos of ungoverned and unprotected data reside. This makes it difficult to apply corporate data policies, such as role and department permissions. Consequently, anybody who has opened an account on their own can collect information via surveys, even if their job title and description doesn't allow for access to that kind of data.

Ungoverned data is a nightmare for IT and InfoSec, because in addition to having silos of information scatter throughout the company, if somebody leaves with one of those silos, that data breach—which might remain completely unknown—becomes a serious problem. When a customer has completed surveys on three different platforms and then requests their data (which GDPR and CCPA allow), the company must respond in a timely manner with all of the data collected. Failure to comply gets expensive quickly.





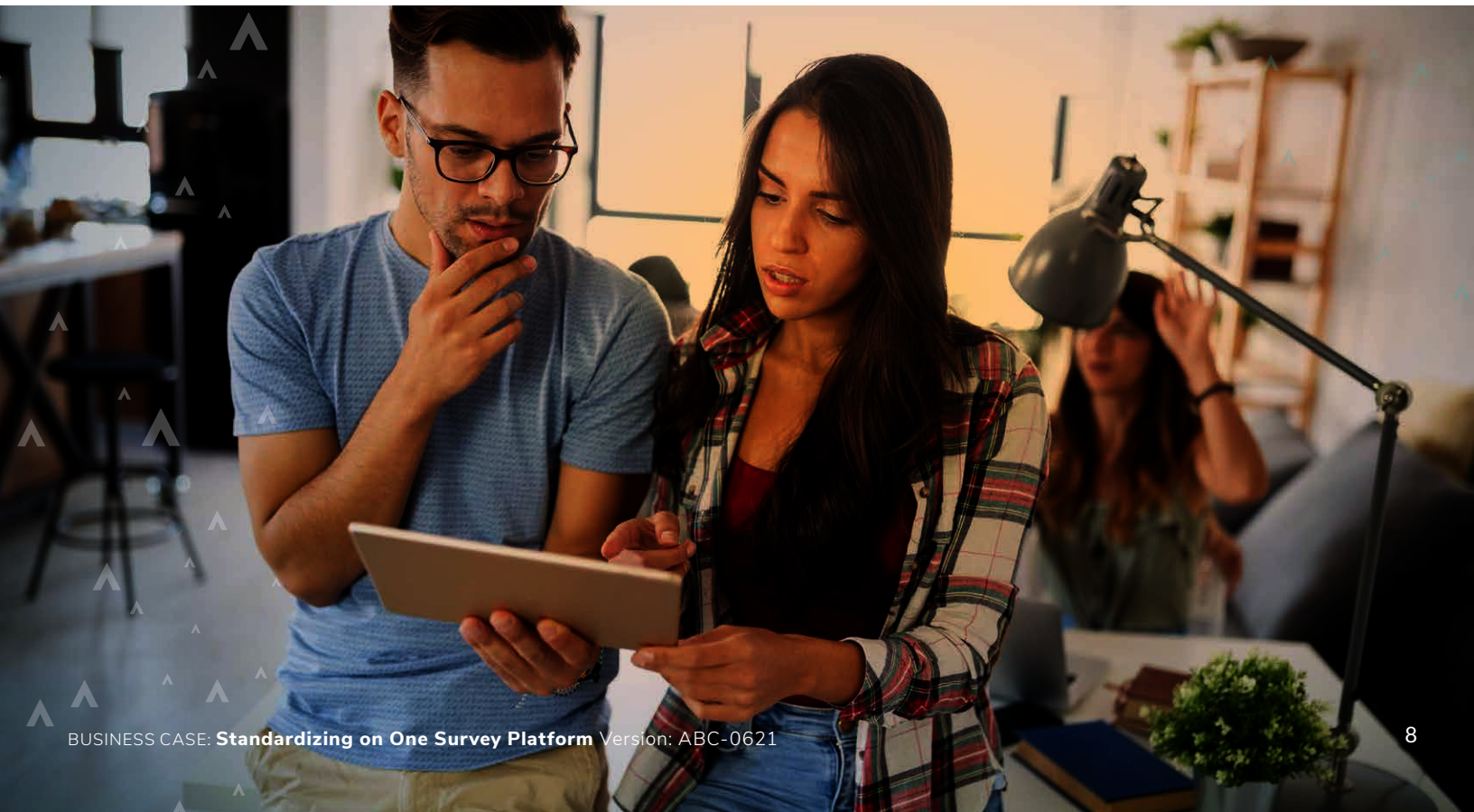
THE FINANCIAL COSTS AND RISKS

The cost of having hundreds or thousands of individual seat licenses—one company found ten thousand employees using single-seat licenses—adds up quickly. Even at \$50 a month, 10,000 licenses cost \$500,000 per month and \$6 million per year. Saving 25 – 30% off full retail price for all those individual licenses could save \$1.5 million. Additionally, consolidating thousands of licenses dramatically improves negotiating power and your ability to get better support, personalized training, and more.

The risks and costs of being found in violation of regulations such as GDPR and CCPA are very expensive. Any GDPR infringements can cost you up to €10 million (\$12.2 million) or 2% of your firm's worldwide annual revenue (whichever is higher). For those doing business with California residents, CCPA fines start with civil penalties of up to \$7,500 per violation (such as a single record in a data breach). The CCPA fines add up quickly in the case of a data breach exposing 2000 records (\$15 million) and there is no ceiling on CCPA fines (according to [Riskconnect.com](https://www.riskconnect.com)).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Quickly switch any personally expensed survey subscriptions to corporate cards and discontinue the practice of expensing software purchases.
- Simplify data oversight and security by standardizing on one survey platform that allows IT and InfoSec to centrally apply guardrails and administer corporate data policies.
- Reward employees for standardizing on and quickly adopting a single survey software platform by offering free training and standardized templates to make it faster to use and rewarding people for fastest or most creative use.
- Make it seamless to sign up and start using by centrally administering and provisioning all licenses.





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SOLUTION

The Benefits of Consolidating and Standardizing

Based on the risks outlined in the previous section, it is easy to see the benefits of consolidating and standardizing on one survey platform for both IT and procurement.

THE BENEFITS FOR PROCUREMENT

Depending on the size of your organization, consolidation can have a huge impact on the bottom line. Saving 25 – 30% on even 100 licenses at \$50 to \$150 adds up quickly. If you have thousands of users, the savings jump dramatically.

Additionally, you have better negotiating power when you're talking about dozens, hundreds, or thousands of seats versus single-seat installations. You can negotiate for premium service, add-ons, professional services, and more. Plus, when you centralize procurement, administration, and provisioning, you can more easily control costs. You can require manager approval for licenses, and then distribute costs across departments according to usage.



THE BENEFITS FOR IT AND INFOSEC

When you standardize on one survey platform, it is much easier to centralize controls and apply corporate data policies. You can apply corporate data policies according to role and responsibilities, so that personnel files, Personally Identifiable Information (PII), or other sensitive information are only available to people with the proper authority.

Taking your users into consideration will greatly help with the standardization process. Select a platform that is easy to use and flexible to meet multiple needs. One of the easiest ways to find such a solution is to look at user-adoption scores. High user adoption means that employees enjoy using the solution, and it means that you are not creating more shelf-ware. Not only is shelf-ware a waste of money, but it also often leads to a repeat of the problem you are correcting—multiple isolated silos of unsecure and ungoverned data.

Centralizing also simplifies the provisioning and de-provisioning of users, so that you aren't paying for unused seats or providing access to people who have left the company. The other large benefit is that you can protect and secure the data much easier when it's centralized. Protecting survey data like other enterprise data helps with audits and consumer privacy claims.

One company standardized on a single survey platform and was able to remove PII from millions of survey results with a single line of code. This helps companies protect themselves from GDPR and CCPA regulations by eliminating sensitive information where it's not needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Coordinate between IT and procurement to understand the current costs of individually expensed survey software.
- Discuss the potential ramifications of data security and privacy controls with executives, such as your CIO, CFO, and CTO.
- Work with IT and InfoSec to apply centralized guardrails for collecting, reviewing, and reporting survey feedback.
- Collaborate with key survey software users to understand their current and future questions and reporting needs.
- Look for the solution with the highest user adoption, plus the power and flexibility you need to meet all your users' needs





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RECOMMENDATION

Why Standardize on Alchemer

Alchemer, formerly SurveyGizmo, is the survey platform of choice for companies of all sizes—from enterprises with hundreds of thousands of employees to small research firms with just a handful. The reason is that only Alchemer delivers the power and flexibility users need, the ability to centralize governance and management that IT requires, and the cost-savings procurement desires.

Founded in 2006, Alchemer provides a flexible and powerful survey and feedback management platform that enables businesses of all sizes to rapidly collect, report, and act on feedback to find, get, and keep the best customers.

REAL CUSTOMER, REAL RESULTS

Alchemer helped one of the largest international online travel companies standardize on the Alchemer platform across several business units, and in the process, they realized a 30% annual savings. The IT manager responsible for the project was focused on providing the IT guardrails the organization needed to comply with GDPR and other regulations, so he was genuinely surprised when people responded that they preferred Alchemer to the solution they had been using.

CENTRALIZING DATA GOVERNANCE

Alchemer also makes it easy to centralize IT governance and data security when you standardize. Because the solution is web-based, IT and InfoSec can easily apply the corporate data policies you already have in place, so that people can only view the information that's appropriate for their role and responsibilities. This alone will dramatically reduce your exposure when it comes to sensitive data.

Additionally, centralizing data governance makes it easy to apply new rules. After standardizing on Alchemer, Mozilla, creators of the Firefox Web Browser, removed PII from millions of surveys with just one bit of code. Because the data is all in the same place, applying corporate data security is also easier. This practically eliminates the risk of data being exposed, misused, or lost.





REVIEWERS LOVE US

Alchemer is repeatedly voted the solution that's the Most Implementable and with the Highest User Adoption by actual customers on the popular software-review site, G2.com. Which means we can get you standardized on our platform quickly and painlessly, and, once we're implemented, users love us.

Recently FinancesOnline gave Alchemer its Expert's Choice, Best User Experience, and Supreme Software awards in the survey-software category.

CUSTOMERS LOVE US, TOO

“ The Alchemer platform is staggeringly brilliant. We use it to manage one of the world's largest automotive research projects and we wouldn't attempt it with anything else.

John Pimm, Head of IT, IRC

“ Very simple to use! It is a fantastic platform that does it ALL!! I have found that the logic systems are exactly what we need for complex forms. We use Alchemer for many needs; simple to complex surveys, elections, needs evaluations, data repositories, tallies and so much more. Once I started using it, all my clients switched over.

Heather D., Senior Manager & Executive Director at a small business

“ I like how simple it is to create surveys, and the “prefabricated” reports are concise and easy to understand. I really appreciate how easy it is to export data for internal review. The ability to coordinate my team has made managing a start menu far simpler as my team has expanded.

Amanda S., Senior Communications Specialist, Platforms & Services at a large enterprise

Want to know more?

To learn how we can save you money, provide data governance, and make your users happy with minimal IT involvement, call or talk to us today at 1.800.609.6480 or visit www.alchemer.com/standardize-on-alchemer/ today.