

[The MIT Information Quality  
Industry Symposium](#)

**Lyn Robison**

Research Director, Burton Group



**Title:**

Correcting the Misconceptions about the nature of Data that thwart Information Quality

**Abstract:**

Understanding the true nature of data has enabled Fed Ex and UPS to track packages across their disparate data silos, the CIA to “connect the dots” in the war on terror, and Bechtel to revolutionize their IT organization.

Data is more than the byproduct of computerized processes, and more than the property of applications. And, as the high failure rate of business intelligence projects indicates, data is more than a fungible commodity that can be easily replicated, aggregated, sliced and diced. When IT professionals harbor misconceptions about the nature of data, information quality becomes a chronic problem they can never solve.

When IT professionals understand the true nature of data, when they think of data as a record of reality, then business and IT professionals can use data to evaluate systemic risk on a macro level, manage individual assets on the micro level, and spot hidden opportunities for the future.