Preface

"*Hey, you got peanut butter on my chocolate bar!*"
"*No way, you got chocolate in my peanut butter!*"

If you consider data management (DM) as peanut butter and XML as chocolate—and you like the combination—then you will easily understand what we are attempting to explain in this book. If you don't like the combination of peanut butter and chocolate, then pick your own favorite flavor combination. We like the yin and yang analogy, but you should go for some combination that works together. These analogies have helped the literally thousands who we have assisted or have seen us present on XML and DM topics over the past few years.

You may be confused by XML hype but nevertheless you are intrigued as to what it—XML, that is—is all about. You understand the basics of what XML can do, but you can't seem to find any guide as to how best to make use of it. Well look no further! You won't be coding much XML yourself, but as a director/strategic thinker/manager, you must understand your organizational requirements and conceive of how best to use XML to support the organization. You need to gain an understanding quickly of how to use XML to architect solutions to specific data-engineering challenges. The material we present is based on dozens of person-years of effort, creating and implementing the advanced DM concepts that we describe.

Your technical background also permits you to understand the importance of good DM practices to the organization. It has been a constant source of frustration that you have been unable to improve support of the organizational DM function; many have not managed to put together an effective approach given the current economic climate. The question is also, What should be done right now? What DM tools and techniques can you apply effectively in today's environment? Our extensive experience in these and related areas allows us to describe the new XML-enabled DM direction.

One question remains—how to decide what to read among the vast array of titles on the subject. There are (for example) at least four other titles that might be competing for your attention:

- *XML for Data Architects*
- *XML: A Manager's Guide*
- *XML Data Management*
- *Professional XML Meta Data*

These texts are either very technical or more narrowly focused on specific subjects. This book was necessary to describe how XML will make your job easier, give you increased DM capabilities, or save your organization resources.

Well, as a result of the happy mixing of XML and data management, by reading this book you will discover that significant synergies exist between XML and DM. XML and DM go together like yin and yang! Between the two of us authors, we have more than a decade of XML experience and—working on various Data Blueprint (http://datablueprint.com) projects—more than a half century of combined DM experience. XML, while not a silver bullet, does offer significant support to DM functions—support that will dramatically alter the level of investment required to produce positive return on investment. In short, XML will significantly lower DM implementation costs in a way that has not yet been imagined except by a very few organizations. This book will permit yours to be one of them.

Thank you for reading. Please enjoy your learning experience and do get back to us with any suggestions or corrections.

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