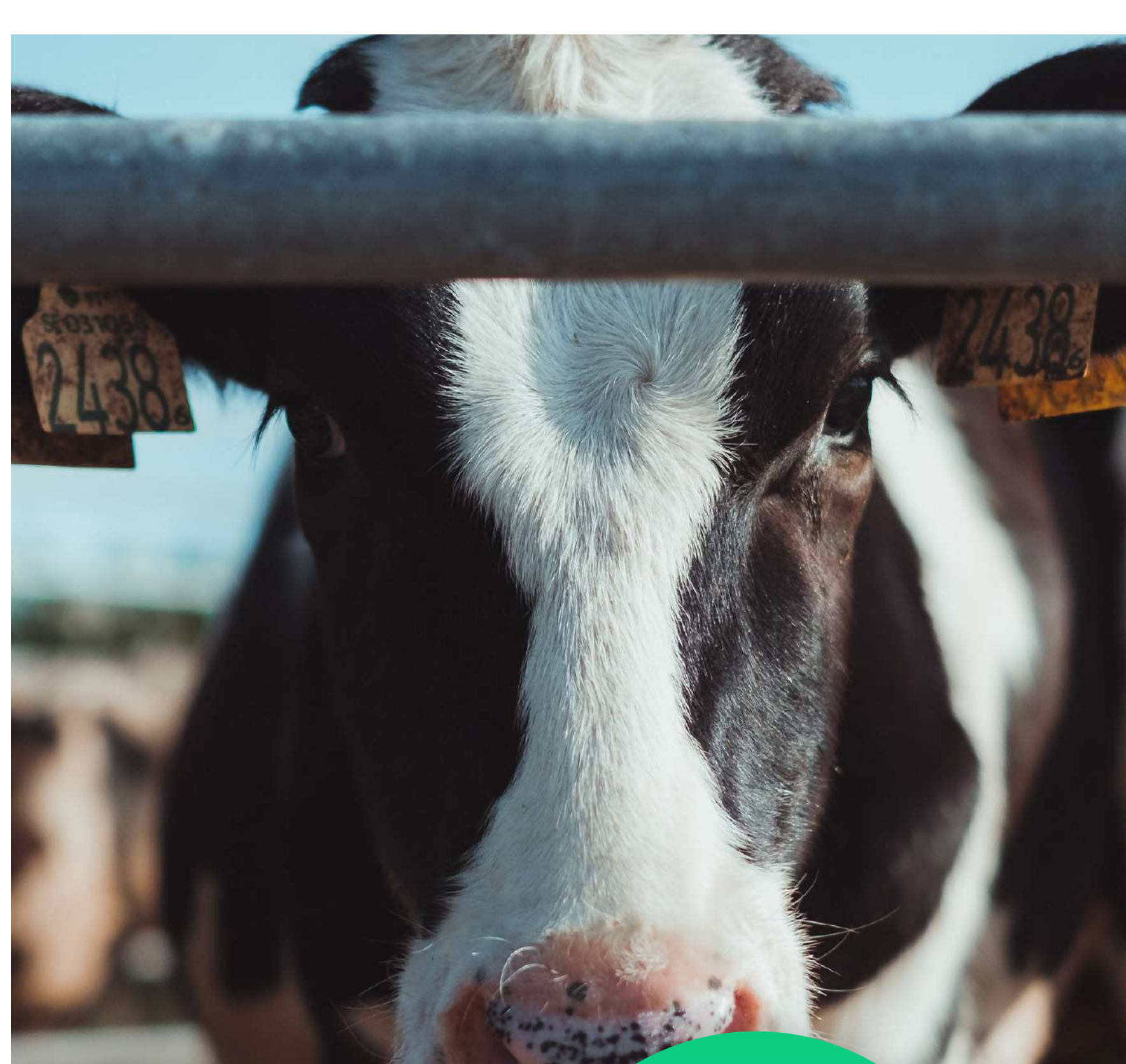


# Innovating legacy systems after M&A to disrupt markets

The recent turmoil in the M&A market led to many cases of holdings that acquire various companies in order to increase their market value and then resell them. At some point, along the way, an opportunity arises driven by data that not everyone capitalizes; it is an opportunity to look for synergies when consolidating some of the different companies.

Here is an example from real life. URUS is a holding made up of eight companies that specialize in the dairy industry. We are going to focus in what happened with three of them: VAS which provides technological solutions for dairy farms; Genex that sells advanced genetic and reproductive solutions; and Alta Genetics which is a consultant on genetics and herd management. URUS' objective was supported by Making Sense. The idea was to streamline the genetic management of herds and modernize and accelerate the decision-making processes used by the managers of livestock and dairy companies throughout the United States.



## Look at the big picture

The first step is to change the mindset. Technology cannot play a satellite role within the company or be a tool to support operations. It must be at the core of the business.

The second step is to put data at the center. For years, organizations stored data from recorded transactions in huge quantities. Recently, the data volume has multiplied ad infinitum, driven by social media, mobility, the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, and many other factors. The World Economic Forum estimated that by 2025, 450 exabytes per day would be generated worldwide. It is equivalent to three trillion music records, to have an idea of the magnitude.

The old data storage strategy makes no sense in this new digital scenario. Today data are the main strategic asset, and it is essential to know how to turn them into a competitive advantage. It is of the essence to understand how to store, protect, manage, and make them meaningful and available to the right people at the right time and from anywhere.

## A list of challenges

On the one hand, while some markets are very busy and there are hundreds of success stories to serve as benchmarks, other cases, such as the one mentioned as an example (animal genetics), are extremely complex and require a higher level of involvement and training by the technology partner's team. That is the only way for the partner to deliver a truly value-added solution.

After that, it is time to deal with the data: cleaning them up, guaranteeing the highest quality, checking how they integrate and creating processes to avoid manual data passing to the extent possible. Data integration can become more complex as data volumes increase (nowadays it is not uncommon to find companies that are supported by mountains of unexploited data) or when the sources increase (that is, the companies that are part of the holding and all the clients-users of the eventual digital platforms that may exist).

## Reimagining the legacy

Along the same lines, the need may arise to implement analytical tools that are easy to use, that make the most of the available data and that eliminate the principle that is often associated with legacy systems: feasible but difficult (or, even worse, impossible). We all know that legacy tools themselves are complex. They are usually very limited when adopting new technologies and a considerable hurdle when scaling the business. Or, as this case shows, when having to find the synergies necessary to launch a new proposal. That is why the project must always be accompanied by a process of modernization that will release the potential that might be generated by the solution.

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