

Transforming Data for Digital Success

Case Study ▶ How Blue Altair helped IAA embrace a modern data management platform.

“Blue Altair’s expertise in the Data Management space was instrumental in modernizing IAA’s data platform.”

– Subbu Viswanathan, Director, Engineering – Data, IAA



IAA Holdings, LLC (IAA) is a leading provider of salvage vehicle auctions and related services. Leveraging leading-edge technology and focusing on innovation, IAA’s unique multi-channel platform processes more than 2.5 million vehicles annually. Headquartered near Chicago, IL, IAA has over 3,600 employees and over 190 facilities throughout the US, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

In 2020, IAA engaged Blue Altair to conduct an independent assessment of its current technology and provide recommendations for upgrading its business intelligence and reporting capabilities as part of its digital transformation initiative. Over the subsequent three years, Blue Altair partnered with IAA on their data management journey, helping to successfully improve their customers’ digital experience. “We were honored to be IAA’s trusted partner in this effort,” said Ranga Iyengar, Blue Altair’s Managing Director of Data Management.

Problems and Challenges

IAA faced several challenges that necessitated a strategic overhaul, including the need to enhance decision-making speed and technology performance which were hindered by the limitations of its legacy platform. This included transitioning to a cloud-based solution to optimize their infrastructure costs.

“The Blue Altair team partnered with IAA in assessing the data platform landscape and evaluated multiple cloud offerings. They have a solid technical and leadership team that were vested in IAA’s data platform evolution,” said Subbu Viswanathan, Director, Engineering - Data, for IAA.

To achieve this transformation, IAA would need to embrace new data management capabilities, including data governance and master data management. Implementing these new capabilities would deliver many of the desired outcomes for IAA, including advanced analytics with contemporary visualization tools, democratizing data access for both business users and data scientists, and developing a global enterprise reporting solution for their subsidiaries in the US, UK, and Canada.

Solution and Approach

To address these challenges, Blue Altair implemented a phased approach, which was first implemented for the US subsidiary, laying the foundation for including other subsidiaries in the future. This phased approach consisted of a thorough Business Intelligence (BI) Assessment, an analysis of the data platform, and a Proof of Concept (PoC) to compare select data warehouse technologies.

In the first phase of the project, our BI Assessment covered the current state of the BI / Data Platform to include people, processes, and technology. The data was then analyzed and a recommendation for the future state and proposed roadmap was created to assist in IAA's overarching data management strategy.

The execution of a PoC in the third and final phase was crucial to identifying the best data warehouse technology for IAA. Based on the earlier phases of the project, Snowflake and Microsoft Synapse were selected as the top considerations for IAA's data warehouse technology and were included in the PoC, ensuring a tailored selection based on IAA's specific criteria.

Following the PoC and selection of their data warehouse technology, the project then focused on the migration from the on-premises enterprise data warehouse to the cloud-based Azure Synapse platform. This migration encompassed converting over 900 reports from SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS) to Power BI and a customized data archival process was developed to optimize warehouse performance.

While the cloud migration was ongoing, a scorecard and a subsequent PoC-based vendor selection identified Microsoft Purview as the platform of choice to support IAA's future state data governance and master data management capabilities. Blue Altair then implemented the Microsoft Purview solution and assisted IAA in establishing a comprehensive data governance program.

“Blue Altair assisted in migrating several hundred reports from the legacy framework into the modern data platform. Additionally, their team performed a complete assessment of IAA’s Data Management capabilities and implemented an initial phase of Data Governance.”

– Subbu Viswanathan

Impact and Conclusion

Blue Altair continues to collaborate with IAA, providing ongoing managed services support, including the optimization of the cloud data platform and the migration of additional reports and processes.

“With their commitment to excellence and attention to detail, Blue Altair assisted IAA in implementing this platform providing new data management capabilities, improved speed of decision-making, enhanced technology performance, and near real-time intelligence. Having Blue Altair as a valuable and trusted partner along with IAA's Engineering team was one of the best business and technology decisions!” said Viswanathan.

Through a strategic data management journey encompassing data assessment, cloud migration, and data governance implementation, IAA achieved a more efficient, secure, and scalable data infrastructure. The successful collaboration not only addressed their immediate challenges but also positioned them for future growth and compliance in an ever-evolving competitive landscape.



About Blue Altair

Blue Altair is a niche, industry-recognized business and technology consulting firm that assists our clients with digital transformations. We offer Assessment and Strategy, Technology Implementation, and Managed Services in API Management and Integration; Data Management; Digital Application Development; and Data Science and AI.

Our Client Success capability ensures a higher-than-industry rate of successfully delivered projects, with a primary focus on program and project management, business analysis, and quality assurance. Blue Labs, our innovation hub, is where we use cutting-edge technology to build offerings that deliver accelerators and solutions. Our culture is the heart of our existence, and our core values are the key drivers for our handpicked, top-tier performers.

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