Case Study

Redwood Logistics Accelerates Data-Driven Insight with ALTR and Aptitive

ALTR's complete data security solution allows sensitive data to be migrated, stored, and shared in Snowflake

REDWOOD®

Redwood Logistics, one of the fastest growing logistics providers in the US, has provided solutions for moving and managing freight for more than 20 years, connecting customers to the power of supply chain management, technology, and the industry's brightest minds.

HEADQUARTERS: Chicago, IL
FOUNDED: 2001
WEBSITE: redwoodlogistics.com
INDUSTRY: Logistics

Many of us never thought about how the items we buy get to the store or our doorstep until the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the global supply chain. Suddenly we heard news stories about boats piled up in the Port of Los Angeles, couches taking months to arrive, and difficulty finding everything from toilet paper to **tombstones.**

Chicago-based logistics company Redwood Logistics was well-prepared to help their customers handle the turbulence. With more than 20 years' experience providing solutions for moving and managing freight to customers across industries, the company's revolutionary Logistics Platform as a Service (LPaaS) model allows shippers to mix and match partners, technologies, and solutions to meet their unique supply chain needs.

The firm realized as early as 2005 that moving information was just as important as moving freight. Today, they help customers focus on their core businesses by informing their transportation decisions with data-driven, cost-saving insights.

"It's not hard to see the impact that data has had on Redwood," said Cole Kardys, VP of Data and Analytics, Redwood Logistics. "We've always wanted better insight into how we're doing as a company, and how we're doing against expectations. The speed in which we could answer these questions needed improvement with a forward-facing data model. We needed to be able to track against goals in near real-time."

Using data to keep a close eye on the business was key to proactively responding to the recent supply chain disruptions. "We can use wait times at ports and the impacts of international transportation along with our deep industry knowledge to develop a plan of attack. Our investment in enabling access and visibility into data makes that possible."

Building a modern, scalable data infrastructure

Redwood's ongoing efforts to advance and use data, as well as prepare for future growth, resulted in a partnership with the consulting firm **Aptitive** in 2019 (now merged with leading cloud enablement company **2nd Watch**), accelerating the transition to a modern architecture and data warehouse.

One of the team's challenges was pulling all their data together while enabling the ability to quickly spin up access to new data sources and different operational systems. They had to do this while new opportunities and questions arose, and then integrate that with existing data.

"We needed a flexible and dynamic architecture to respond to an ever-evolving and ever-changing data landscape," explained Kardys. The project included consolidating data from acquired companies as well as migrating an on-premises data analytics platforms to the Snowflake Data Cloud with Tableau analytics.

"The ability to scale up and down cloud resources without the challenges we used to have with on-premises databases makes it much easier to integrate new data from disparate data sources," explained Matthew Norris, Database Business Intelligence Architect, Redwood Logistics. "It helps us get up to speed on new projects and new data sources faster than ever before."

Aptitive built Tableau dashboards to make data available to internal users to deliver a better view of operational effectiveness across the business.

"We've always had the utmost confidence in Aptitive as a thought leader in the data architecture space, and it just makes it easier to work with them, knowing their vision aligns with ours," said Kardys.

"The effort was really collaborative," said Norris. "Our internal team worked closely with Aptitive on design and development, so we ended up with a product we knew intimately and could expand on very easily."

Sensitive data creates a roadblock

A critical part of the project was migrating sensitive data to Snowflake to address two unique use cases. The first was the monthly financial and accounting allocation across different costs centers in the company. The second was a broader initiative around margin contribution.

Naturally, the idea of bringing sensitive payroll data from secure on-premises systems into the cloud created some concern. It was essential to Redwood that this data be extremely secure.

"Our leadership was looking for a solution that put them in control of sensitive data. They needed to be able to manage who could access this data, and have the visibility to ensure its protection," Kardys explained. "It came down to protecting it or simply not using it.'"

ALTR helps Redwood overcome the sensitive data hurdle

Aptitive suggested ALTR might deliver the focused yet complete data security solution Redwood needed.

"Redwood is a big fan of keeping things simple," explained Fred Bliss, CTO at Aptitive. "No one wanted to add more complexity or infrastructure that would slow things down. We were also looking for a solution that was purpose-built for and 100% integrated with Snowflake. ALTR was the natural choice."

"No matter how we sliced it, no other solution we looked at would stop us as Snowflake admins from granting ourselves access to the data. While some companies may be comfortable with that, we were not willing to compromise," Kardys said. "ALTR, though, brought us a unique solution that prevented that access and made everyone at Redwood feel comfortable."

Only ALTR delivers the specific combination of features necessary to solve the challenge:

- **TOKENIZATION:** Sensitive payroll data is tokenized before ingestion into Snowflake.
- **ACCESS CONTROLS:** Data access controls allow only approved users to access tokenized data.
- **REAL-TIME ALERTING:** The finance team is alerted via Teams message almost instantaneously whenever data is accessed.

Whenever sensitive data is used, an alert is sent to key stakeholders. If one of them is accessing the data, all is well, and the activity goes on as normal. If it's not one of the approved users, the team can immediately restrict access.

"The separation of the data governance from the data administration was very important to everyone," Norris said.

"We really liked the idea of tokenizing data and storing it outside our system. It's much more secure than other options we were looking at."

> "A successful project for us means we enable our business users to see where they are now, see what they need to execute on to improve that position, and determine if the actions they're taking are moving the needle. We feel great about the solution and the package as a whole."
>
> — COLE KARDYS,
> VP OF DATA & ANALYTICS,
> REDWOOD LOGISTICS

The whole package

With ALTR's complete solution for data tokenization, access control, and real-time alerting, Redwood can be confident its information is secure.

Start Now

Complete data control and protection.

ALTR is the only automated policy enforcement and data security solution that allows you to easily, quickly and powerfully control and protect sensitive data so you can maximize its value while minimizing the risks. Try it for yourself today by visiting **get.altr.com/free**.

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