

Event Recap: Shape Your Future with Azure Data and Analytics

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On December 3rd, Satya Nadella and other Microsoft executives held a digital event to showcase new capabilities coming to the Azure cloud platform. This was a highly anticipated event as we expected to hear about big advancements in data platform technologies like Azure Synapse. Missed the event? Don't worry, I'll recap the best parts for you here.

"Prioritizing data and analytics now is critical to building business agility and resilience for the future."






Tech Intensity

Satya began in this webinar by talking about "Tech Intensity". This encompasses an organization's ability to use technology to their advantage. Further, this can be categorized into two categories: Analytical Power (the ability to understand what happened) and Predictive Power (the ability to understand what is going to happen next).

"50% of Fortune 1000 companies don't treat data as a business asset."

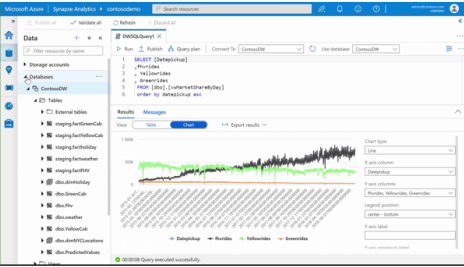
A common theme of this webinar was about the "Cloud Native Data Estate", which they defined as an organization's ability to build Analytical Power and Predictive Power. Microsoft Azure brings limitless power to data consumers by unifying the experience in Azure Synapse along with tools for data governance.

Later in the webinar, Judson Althoff, Microsoft's EVP of Worldwide Commercial Business, interviewed executives from Starbucks, GlaxoSmithKline, and Grab about how they use data to innovate and provide resilience through 2020's challenges.

		
<p>Starbucks is using COVID-19 case trends mixed with consumer behavior data to empower store managers to make decisions and plan for fluctuations in customer demand.</p> <p>This includes enhancement in demand forecasting, which helps to streamline and optimize supply chain and to manage costs to ensure us all that we can still get tasty cups of coffee each day. Nitro Cold Brew, anyone?</p> <p>Read more about Starbucks' AI for Humanity and DeepBrew platforms here.</p>	<p>GSK is using tremendous amounts of heterogeneous data to aid in the fight against COVID-19. They are using data to aid in the recruitment of vaccine trials - targeting areas of high infections and diverse demographics.</p> <p>In addition, they are employing genomics and bioinformatics capabilities to more rapidly develop and test biological targets, shortening the drug development life-cycle.</p> <p>Learn more about GSK's AI practice here.</p>	<p>Grab is a mobile tech company that combines commerce, delivery, and transportation services into a single, unified platform. They use data to build ultimate customer experiences and make more economic and social opportunities.</p> <p>They are now focusing on data literacy by building platforms and tools to democratize data decisions for non-data people.</p> <p>Learn more about Grab here.</p>

Limitless Analytics with Azure Synapse

Azure Synapse (formerly Azure SQL Data Warehouse) is a limitless analytics service that brings together enterprise data warehousing and analytics. It provides a unified experience for data workloads (ingesting, preparing, managing, and serving) to support BI and AI tasks. In this webinar, they announced that Synapse is now GA (generally available)!



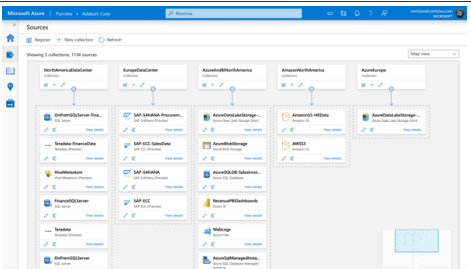
In addition, Azure Synapse provides a unified experience for integrating data through complex pipelines and analyzing such data using Power BI, Dynamics, and Azure Machine Learning. Synapse Analytics is now powered by a new, cloud-native, distributed SQL engine, providing both serverless and dedicated compute options for analyzing large amounts of data.

Finally, Azure Synapse is an industry first by executing all TPC-H benchmark queries at petabyte-scale. According to the webinar, no other cloud's service even comes close.

[Learn more about Azure Synapse.](#)

Data Governance with Azure Purview

Azure Purview was also announced in this webinar. It is touted as the "Unified Data Governance" service and is designed to help manage and govern your data, whether it is on the cloud or on-prem. Purview also enables users to find valuable, trustworthy data.



"Map all your data, no matter where it resides."
"Assess compliance risks and get an end-to-end view of your data estate."

In the demo of this new service, they showcased the ability to map all of your data sources, no matter if they are on Azure, on another cloud (like AWS S3), or on-prem. Each data asset can be scanned to check for compliance issues and sources can be verified to allow for users to gain trust into these data assets.

The presentation ended by highlighting a customer story by [Grundfos](#), a pump manufacturing company from Denmark. Grundfos uses Azure Purview to better understand and map petabytes of IoT data across the company.

GRUNDFOS		
145M	1M	16k
Data Assets Scanned	Data Assets Classified	Power BI Workspaces Scanned

On the roadmap, Azure Purview will be receiving quite a few more features in the coming months. From enhanced data cataloging to data quality checks to data policy adherence scans. This will prove to provide even deeper ways to govern and safeguard your most strategic data assets.

[Learn more about Azure Purview.](#)

How Can BlueGranite Help?

With a rich history of building data warehousing solutions and modern data lake-centric architectures in the Azure cloud, BlueGranite is set to help your organization modernize and strategize around data. Our end-to-end approach with Modern Business Intelligence (with Power BI) and Modern Data Platform (with Azure Synapse, Data Lakes, and Databricks) provides the perfect setup for increasing your analytical power.

In addition, our expertise in the integration of data to support AI use cases will help you transform your strategy by increasing your predictive power to understand what will happen next.

Read more about BlueGranite's Modern Data Platform work (including Azure Synapse) [here](#) and our Modern AI work [here](#).