

Connecting the Dots at Box

Box taps SnapLogic's self-service integration to process more than 15 million transactions daily

The Box Backstory

Like another great technology startup, enterprise cloud company Box was born in a dorm room. Launched in 2005, Box tallies more than 41 million users and 59,000 businesses worldwide, all of them trusting Box to management their content in the cloud.

Company Overview

Headquarters: Redwood City, CA
Industry: Cloud Storage
Employees: 1,400
Annual Revenue: \$303 million

Challenges

- Disparate applications created disjointed information
- Incomplete data prevented the business from making informed decisions
- Manual data integration process required time and efforts

Results

- ✓ Rapid data integrations into a cloud data warehouse
- ✓ Increased visibility in customer data with built-in data flows
- ✓ Real-time insights achieved with automated data flows

Benefits

- ✓ Self-service integration and analytics increased user productivity
- ✓ Comprehensive data and analytics improved decision-making
- ✓ Uncovered opportunities to improve business operations

Applications Integrated

Anaplan - Concur - Eloqua - HDFS
 - NetSuite - RedShift - Salesforce -
 Tableau - Workday - Zuora

The Challenge

While the Box platform presents tremendous efficiencies for its users, internally the company was challenged by the need to efficiently integrate the many cloud-based applications - such as Salesforce, Zuora, NetSuite, and Tableau - to help make informed business decisions across departments.

The challenges were manifold, given the company's vast array of business applications and the many ways in which they needed to integrate. "We rely on multiple applications covering sales, marketing, consulting, financials, and people, each serving a distinct purpose," said Alan Leung, Box Senior Enterprise Systems Program Manager. "Within each function, there could be a dozen different applications just in that one area."

Users had to manually upload and download data from one application into another, absorbing substantial time and effort and stealing focus away from high-value pursuits. The goal was to find a platform that vastly reduced manual processes, and that supported the fluid flow of data across the company's disparate cloud-based and on-premises applications into a data lake. The platform also needed to be user-friendly, and provide data aggregation, warehousing, and analytics capabilities.

In 2014, Box subscribed to a platform provider that appeared to fulfill the company's many needs but ultimately failed its high expectations. "The skill sets required to use the platform were way too high; you had to be a software programmer to efficiently use it," said Leung. "We had about six integration links built after one year, a fraction of the integration capabilities we wanted."

The hunt for an iPaaS continued, and Leung knew what he was looking for. "It all comes down to agility - how quickly and efficiently you can develop an integration from Point A to Point B," he said. "That's when I discovered SnapLogic."

The Solution

SnapLogic was unique in the market. The iPaaS vendor offered a fully unified platform for application and data integration at much faster speeds and greater efficiency. A user simply chooses among SnapLogic's more than 450 pre-packaged connectors, called Snaps, to link different cloud-based and on-premises applications, building data flows between these silos. Both structured and unstructured data can be aggregated and analyzed to inform business decisions.

SnapLogic offered the self-service integration functionality that Leung had sought. "It's all point and click," he said. "There's no programming involved. We've lowered the bar of entry for virtually anybody to leverage the platform."

Consequently, users can rapidly extract useful information from the data lake. "Instead of taking five to six hours to push 150,000 records to an external endpoint, we were able to push three times that volume of information to the external endpoint in about two minutes," Leung said.

Business Outcomes

Since implementing SnapLogic in mid-2015, not a single interface has been built internally. "We just haven't had the need; the tools do it for us," said Leung. "We've got well over 170 automated 'Snaps' on the platform to date, connecting endpoints in a unified, integrated environment, whether the data is event-driven, in batch, in the cloud, or on-premises. We're scaling to enormous data volumes, analyzing more than 100 million records in a recent integration.

The efficiencies are extraordinary. But even more significant is the impact on operations. "Due to the enhanced ability to quickly analyze and make sense of our data, we can rapidly pivot our operations to sieve opportunities across every aspect of the business,

box

“We’ve connected 40 applications and are processing more than 15M transactions daily. That’s astronomical given that we’ve only needed 1.5 FTE developers to support it.

Alan Leung

Box Senior Enterprise Systems

from finance, sales and marketing to even legal and engineering," he said. "To be able to harvest and maintain all this business data in one place - and perform much better analytics - has become vital in our competitive, high-growth environment."

Down the line, Leung said that more "Snaps" gradually will be implemented. "Data needs to be delivered to a user in the right place at the right time in the right volume," he added. "I have a vision where all the friction involving data is removed, a day where no one has to jump through a hoop in the effort to move the business forward."