

Not born in the USA: data platforms and analytics vendors from across the pond

AUGUST 23 2017
BY MATT ASLETT KRISHNA ROY JAMES CURTIS

The US – and Silicon Valley in particular – is a well-known breeding ground for startups. But data platforms and analytics companies continue to take root and flourish in the UK and other regions of Europe and the Middle East. In this report, we highlight EMEA's emerging and incumbent data platforms and analytics specialists.

The 451 Take

There are some skeptics who see big data and the current interest in artificial intelligence as a Silicon Valley phenomenon. That is clearly not the case. The EMEA region has a rich heritage in fostering innovation in data processing, data management and analytics. Additionally, startups in EMEA continue to drive innovation in emerging technologies such as machine learning, as well as new approaches to age-old challenges such as master data management and data governance. Even when companies relocate their headquarters to the US for sales and marketing purposes, the engineering talent and the company culture very often remain rooted in the company's country of origin.

Context

When one thinks of geographic centers for data platforms and analytics innovation, Silicon Valley

obviously springs to mind – especially the University of California, Berkeley, and Stanford University, along with Massachusetts and the numerous advances from MIT. However, Europe and the Middle East have also been hotspots for data and analytics innovation.

Israel, in particular, has a proud tradition of fostering innovation in data platforms and analytics, thanks in part through military-led investment in computing and information systems. France also has a particularly strong history of innovation in data management, but there are examples of success stories and potential success stories from across the region.

Below, we take a look at the leading incumbents to have emerged from EMEA, as well as the new breed of upstarts, and how they are using their geographic roots to their advantage. Our report is intended to discuss the current crop of emerging vendors in EMEA, but is not meant to be exhaustive.

Analytics and performance management

Dataiku and DMWay are good examples of machine-learning startups looking to gain a competitive edge in the vibrant but crowded machine-intelligence sector by using their respective geographic locations for competitive differentiation. Dataiku is registered in France (albeit with New York headquarters), and DMWay operates out of Israel.

Business intelligence veteran Panorama Software, which has made a foray into predictive BI in the past year, is a member of the analytics establishment that originally hailed from Israel. Sisense is an example of a newer vendor with roots in Israel.

Sisense recently shifted its focus to enterprise visual analysis. All of these vendors have used the fact that they weren't born in the US to land multinational or non-US clients, employing their 'local' expertise and knowledge to good effect to win business in territories where it is often harder for their US rivals to penetrate.

Israel is home to Anodot, which, like Dataiku and DMWay, is another emerging machine-learning-driven analytics startup. Unlike Dataiku and DMWay, which are data science vendors with offerings for end-to-end advanced analytics and push-button predictive analysis, respectively, Anodot is looking to disrupt the analytics sector with a business-incident detection play. Anodot is seeking growth in Europe in 2017, and the rest of the world in 2018.

CoolaData is yet another Israeli vendor with the potential to shake up analytics using its platform for visual behavior analytics. Cortical.io is another emerging machine-learning young gun using its international presence to single it out from the crowd. The startup is based in Vienna, Austria.

Analytics companies also continue to call the UK home, even though most have subsequently expanded into other countries in order to add an international revenue stream (and more often than not, crack the all-important US market). Text analytics stalwart Linguamatics is a prime example of a vendor in this category.

Linguamatics, which delivers text mining that is based on natural language processing, is headquartered in Cambridge, UK, but has a longtime US office in Marlborough, Massachusetts. Business intelligence player Phocas Software and advanced analysis company Pi Limited are further examples of UK analytics firms that have spread into other countries, while retaining UK roots.

Indeed, it's generally a common strategy to start out on home turf and expand geographically into EMEA and the US – irrespective of a vendor's origins or product purview. For example, self-styled cognitive search and analytics company Sinequa is well established in France, where the company started out, but it also has sales coming from the US and elsewhere. Dutch BI vendor Pyramid Analytics continues to do business in The Netherlands, despite international expansion.

The same can be said of German open source predictive analytics player KNIME (Konstanz Information Miner), Denmark's TARGIT, Italy's Engineering Group and Thoma Bravo-owned Qlik Technologies. Qlik started life in Lund, Sweden, and continues to have an extensive global direct presence, despite being owned by a US private equity firm for more than a year.

Of course, SAP is the big name in analytics with over four decades in addressing the needs of companies operating in EMEA. Fellow big guns IBM, Oracle, SAS Institute and Microsoft also have extensive experience in addressing the requirements of prospects and clients in multiple different geographies. SAP is, arguably, the least US-centric of the analytics and corporate performance management (CPM) giants, having always kept its headquarters in Germany, although the company has expanded to multiple North American locations.

SAP has also made some notable acquisitions to expand its ability to serve organizations that aren't US-centric, as the company's acquisition of French BusinessObjects in 2007 exemplifies. Germany's Jedox and Swiss-headquartered BOARD International are other notable CPM vendors that didn't grow up in the US.

Jedox [continues](#) to double down on its ambitions to be a global performance management vendor. BOARD [landed](#) its first external financing in 2016 in part to pick up growth in the company's international BI and CPM business.

Finally, it is worth noting that Europe has also been the focus lately for CPM acquisition activity. Italian-born CCH Tagetik was snapped up by Dutch information, software and services company Wolters Kluwer earlier in March 2017. Germany's prevero was snagged by Unit4, a Dutch application provider for services organizations, in July 2016. It could be argued that these deals were as much about acquiring products and technology as they were about customer acquisition, since Tagetik and prevero both had solid European installed bases.

Data management

Combining differentiated technology with a customer and employee foothold outside North America makes for an attractive acquisition target. So many EMEA-based data and analytics vendors find themselves getting acquired before they can hope to emulate SAP's size and strength. A prime example would be data integration specialist Sunopsis, which was [acquired](#) by Oracle 11 years ago.

Perhaps the largest data management vendor to have emerged from Europe in recent years, therefore, is Talend, which was founded in France in 2005 to build a commercial business around its Talend Open Studio open source ETL tool. Despite relocating its headquarters to California, the company retains its European roots with a substantial number of customers and employees still located in France and Germany (home to SOPERA, which it [acquired](#) in 2010), and it should not be forgotten that the company is listed on the Nasdaq as a foreign issuer following [its IPO](#).

Another data management specialist that has followed Talend from France to California is master data management vendor [Semarchy](#). We use the term 'followed' purely chronologically, since Semarchy's CEO, Salah Kamel, has done it all before as cofounder and CTO of Sunopsis.

MDM and data governance continues to be a strong sector for EMEA startups with Paris-based [Orchestra Networks](#) also competing with Semarchy on the first front, and [Collibra](#) blazing a trail for bringing business users into data management initiatives with its data governance software.

Although Collibra moved its base of operations to New York shortly after raising its series B round of funding in late 2015, the company has its roots in Brussels, Belgium. It is also worth mentioning that

Informatica, while very much a US organization, snapped up UK-based data-governance specialist [Diaku](#) in February.

Although European vendors are not necessarily at an advantage compared to their North American rivals in responding to European regulations, one might reasonably expect the looming threat of the General Data Protection Regulation ([GDPR](#)) to drive further innovation in data management and data governance.

Data quality is a related area in which the UK has been successful over the years. Experian established its Experian Data Quality business in part through the acquisition of UK-based X88 Software in 2014, while Oracle [snapped up](#) UK-based data-quality provider Datanomic in 2011. Belfast, Ireland-based Datactics continues to fly the flag for independent UK-based data quality vendors.

Data warehouse automation has traditionally been a strong area for EMEA-based vendors with [TimeXtender](#), which has its roots in Denmark, as well as Netherlands-based BIReady, which was [acquired by Attunity](#) in 2014. Data replication specialist HVR is another company with Dutch roots, although it is currently [headquartered](#) in San Francisco.

A new area for innovation where EMEA-based vendors are blazing a trail is [ETL/ELT as a service](#) from SaaS applications. This space includes North American vendors such as Stitch and Fivetran. It also includes Alooma, which originated in Israel but has [set up headquarters](#) in California, as well as Blendo, which is registered in Delaware but has its roots in Athens, Greece, and had a brief foray into Tel Aviv, Israel.

Xplenty is yet another [Israeli vendor](#) operating in the ETL/ELT-as-a-service sector. The UK is represented by Matillion, as is Germany thanks to the [recent launch](#) of DataVirtuality's Pipes code-free ETL service.

Data platforms

As in data management and analytics, the largest database startup to emerge from EMEA in recent years was also acquired – with Sweden's MySQL being [snapped up](#) by Sun Microsystems in 2008. A result of Sun then getting acquired by Oracle was the launch of MariaDB, based in Espoo, Finland, initially to provide an alternative source of support for the MySQL database, and later focusing on the [MariaDB alternative](#).

Finland is home to Codership, the developer of the Galera multi-master clustering technology for MySQL and MariaDB, as well as [Aiven](#), the cloud database firm focused predominantly on PostgreSQL, InfluxDB,

Grafana and Kafka. Despite being relatively unheard of outside of Europe – or even its native Finland – the company has somehow amassed several hundred customers in about one year.

Log management is a sector with multiple EMEA startups. Although [Graylog](#) has moved its headquarters to Houston, the company has its roots in Hamburg, Germany, where the bulk of its engineering staff remain. Logtrust [has relocated](#) its headquarters to the US (Sunnyvale, California), but retains a substantial presence and its legal home in Madrid, Spain, where it was founded. Meanwhile, Logz.io, which [bills itself](#) as a 'hosted ELK (Elasticsearch, Logstash, Kibana) as a service' provider, is based in Tel Aviv, Israel.

Another company with its roots in Tel Aviv is in-memory [data grid/cache specialist GigaSpaces](#), although it has long since moved its headquarters to New York. Stockholm, Sweden-based Varnish may be considered a potential competitor for certain use cases, although it is primarily focused on web-caching.

Another European vendor with interests in the in-memory data-processing space is Software AG, which is based in Darmstadt, Germany, although its in-memory data-processing expertise came courtesy of its 2011 [purchase of Terracotta](#). Software AG is also home to the Apama event processing and streaming analytics technology. Founded in Cambridge, UK, in 1999, Apama was acquired by Progress Software in 2005 before being [picked up by Software AG](#) in 2013.

In the streaming and real-time analytics space, London-based [ITRS](#) is looking to expand beyond financial services and Europe, with its Valo streaming analytics application, as well as its original Geneos financial services data monitoring and analytics application, and ITRS Insights for IT operations analytics.

Herzliya, Israel-based iguazio is focused on real-time data processing, although with a [converged platform](#) that includes multiple data-processing services via stateless applications, along with a combined distributed in-memory data processing and storage engine. Stream processing is also a primary focus of data Artisans, based in Berlin, which is building a business around the Apache Flink open source distributed data stream processing software.

On the NoSQL front, Germany-based ArangoDB is driving what the company calls its 'native' multi-model database strategy that includes key-value document and graph data models. London-based OrientDB also offers a multi-model database that the company maintains can work with document, graph, key-value, geospatial and reactive models. Clusterpoint also peddles a multi-model NoSQL database. The company recently relocated to London from Latvia, where it maintains a strong customer presence; however, the firm

is looking to expand elsewhere, particularly to Europe and North America.

Newcomer ScyllaDB (pronounced Sill-a), with dual headquarters in Herzliya, Israel and Palo Alto, California, pitches an alternative open source Apache Cassandra. Graph and semantics are also represented. Barcelona, Spain-based Sparsity Technologies focuses on managing and querying large graph datasets with its Sparksee (formerly DEX) offering. Ontotext, based in Sofia, Bulgaria, leverages its GraphDB offering, based on a triplestore, to work with atomic fact data.

Headquartered in Berlin, EXASOL has seen some good growth competing in the highly competitive data warehousing space. The company is noted for its performance-based strategy and loyal customer base. Also positioned in the data warehousing sector is Kognitio, a company based in the UK that has been around for nearly 30 years. Kognitio began with an in-memory massively parallel processing database, but has ventured into SQL-on-Hadoop territory recently.

We have also identified a number specialty database vendors, covering a broad array of database architectures. Madrid, Spain-based LeanXcale drives a type of hybrid processing architecture to handle both OLTP and OLAP workloads. Kx Systems is another, and while the company is currently headquartered in the US (Palo Alto, California), its parent holding company is Northern Ireland-based First Derivatives. Kx Systems is well known and established within the financial services market with a time-series and streaming-based engine called kdb+.

Based in Sweden and with development offices in Poland, Starcounter leads out with an architecture that combines an in-memory object-oriented database with an integrated application server – all based on virtual machine technology. Berlin-based BigchainDB is carrying on the mantra of blockchain technology, which has received a good deal of attention recently; while Dooplex takes up the reins on cloud-based services for big data, based on a collection of open source projects falling within the Hadoop ecosystem.

Finally, we have seen significant interest in GPU technology, particularly as a means to power databases to take advantage of the parallel processing that GPUs provide. For instance, SQream Technologies, with offices in Ramat Gan, Israel, as well New York, peddles a database that is built from the ground up and is largely disk-based. It caters to datasets over 15TB. Another is brytlyt, which is based in the UK. The company is differentiated by the fact that its database is a PostgreSQL clone that the company has developed to take advantage of GPUs.

Matt Aslett

Research Director

Krishna Roy

Senior Analyst, Data Platforms and Analytics

James Curtis

Senior Analyst, Data Platforms & Analytics

M&A ACTIVITY BY SECTOR
M&A ACTIVITY BY ACQUIRER
FIGURES SHOWN INDICATE NUMBER OF TRANSACTIONS

COMPANY MENTIONS (PRIMARY)

No primary company

COMPANY MENTIONS (OTHER)

Aiven Alooma Anodot Apama ArangoDB Attunity BigchainDB BIReady Blendo BOARD International Brytlyt CCH Tagetik
Clusterpoint Codership Collibra CoolaData Cortical.io data Artisans Datactics Dataiku Datanomic DataVirtuality Diaku
DMWay Dooplex EXASOL Experian Information Solutions Experian Data Quality First Derivatives Fivetran GigaSpaces Graylog
IBM iguazio Informatica IO ITRS Group Jedox KNIME Kognitio Kx Systems LeanXcale Linguamatics Logstash Logtrust
Logz.io MariaDB Corp Matillion Microsoft Massachusetts Institute of Technology Nasdaq Stock Market Inc Ontotext Oracle
Orchestra Platform Ltd Orchestra Networks Orient Technologies Panorama Software Phocas Pi Limited prevero Progress
Software Pyramid Analytics Qlik SAP SAS Institute ScyllaDB Semarchy Sinequa Sisense Software AG SOPERA
Sparsity Technologies SQream Technologies Stanford University Starcounter Stitch Sun Microsystems Sunopsis Talend TARGET
Terracotta Thoma Bravo TimeXtender Compagnie Financière Tradition UNIT4 Wolters Kluwer X88 Software Xplenty

CHANNELS

Cloud Transformation Customer Experience & Commerce Data Platforms & Analytics Managed Services & Hosting Systems &

Software Infrastructure

SECTORS

All / Cloud / Infrastructure as a service / General

All / Information management / Data management / Data warehousing

All / Application software / Business intelligence / Analytics