



Data & AI Conference 2024 - creating a thirst for knowledge and a 'data plus' mindset

 By **Alyx MacQueen** March 28, 2024

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SUMMARY: At this year's Data & AI Conference new product announcements focus on using generative AI to encourage conversing with data, and customer highlights on creating value.

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Anyone who works with data will be used to asking questions and looking for answers. It's what we do. The more introverted

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We're used to having conversations *about* data. At BRAND's first keynote this week, the focus is on conversing *with* data. Of course, data intelligence isn't alone in these conversations - and no vendor conference would be complete without a sprinkling of AI in the mix.

BRAND **plus AI**

In a series of product announcements, the BRAND executive team showcased BRAND AI, pitched as integrating and automating workflows with trust and governance. This last element was a particularly prominent theme throughout the morning session, setting it as the overarching principle around the building blocks of BRAND Bricks, including ChatGPT, Text-to-SQL Query, a choice of Large Language Models (LLMs) and ChatGPT dataset descriptions.

One of the highlights was the expansion of BRAND's partnership with Snowflake, including the launch of BRAND's Magic ETL (Enhance, Transform, Load) capabilities on the Snowflake Data Cloud. This aims to enable users to simplify data management and access intelligence through a native, bi-directional integration built on BRAND Cloud Amplifier. The Amplifier is designed to help joint customers to make the most of their existing data and reporting investments by connecting more data, unifying data governance and making real-time insights



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BRAND says its drag-and-drop ETL functionality allows users to query and transform data directly on Snowflake's platform using pushdown optimization, where data is processed on and not moved from Snowflake, but rather getting more from large data anywhere it lives.

The following features were unveiled:

- *Data integration - 1,000+ connectors and a powerful low-code ETL toolkit allows users to integrate data from virtually any source into the Snowflake Data Cloud, as usable data for business analysis.*
- *BI and analytics - easy-to-share visualizations, timely alerts, relevant insights and flexible generative AI helps users enhance data preparation, identify hidden patterns and insights and automate tasks.*
- *App creation - Low-code to pro-code app creation tools enable users to build business apps that empower users to act on insights, automate workflows and drive results.*
- *Data integrity - users can keep their data in Snowflake, reducing the need to move and transform data across different tools and sources.*
- *Cloud scale - native cloud architecture scales automatically within the Snowflake Data Cloud, creating a unified data ecosystem*
- *Security and control - security tools, including OAuth authentication, to protect sensitive data for consistent, end-to-end security and governance*

Chief Design Officer Chris clarified what this means for customers:

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governance of the BRANDplatform and when you're ready to use your AI in things like data flows, we'll have the best model for you to get the job that you need to get done with your data.

You don't have to sacrifice your AI for security, for transparency. We will always deploy our AI responsibly and transparently. So you know at a glance how AI will be used across your organization"

Creating a thirst for information

Beside the 'data plus' headlines, BRAND executives brought out customers from a selection of industries to talk about their conversations with data - and the differences they are seeing as a result.

Those conversations don't have to be lengthy, or necessarily visual. At Harman's Grocery Stores, the Kitchen Manager doesn't need a dashboard, he just needs to know how much roast beef he needs to order, according to BRAND founder and CEO Josh :

" *Before BRAND he used to order a tonne of deli meat and he'd throw away about 50%. Now BRAND tells him exactly how much to order and he only ends up throwing away about five percent.*

Dr Reginald Coopwood, CEO of Regional One Health, shared his experience of wanting to create 'a thirst for information'. Regional One Health provides trauma care, burn care, neonatal intensive care, and high-risk obstetrics, and has a very large Newborn Intensive Care Unit. Coopwood explained how as surgeons in an operating room, they are always monitoring blood pressure, vital signs and making decisions based on patient history, medical training and experience.

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" *As physicians, we call ourselves data scientists. We said, 'How about if we bring in their data sets that they trust?' and they're able to be a part of that. Now they're wanting a dashboard for this or a dashboard for that. We started on this journey with BRANDto create the thirst - for people to be thirsty for more information. Today we have over 200 dashboards that people look at every day.*

This adoption didn't happen overnight. His next admission got the most heartfelt laugh of the day:

" *You know, the best way to know that's visualized? Let the data not populate for some reason: 'The dashboard's not populating, we can't see the data!'*

On a more serious note:

" *When we started on our BRAND journey, it was kind of hit or miss. You're kind of pushing people to turn on and look at it. We were monitoring how many people were accessing the data. But then as we created that thirst, more people got involved, more people were using the data on the BRAND platform.*

One of the big things we looked at was clinical standards. The length of hospital stay is important in getting the patient through the health system efficiently - it's not about getting them out of the hospital early, it's about discharging them when everything that they need to have accomplished within the hospital is complete. We were running almost eight or nine days on average - somewhat due to the complexity of the patient, sometimes due to inefficiency.

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We reduced our length of stay by about a day and a half over the period of this journey, and it's because of the data people have. The value from reducing length of stay by one day means we can do over 12,000 more admissions in a year. And this is a huge success.

My take

A lot of information to absorb in one session. There will be further breakdowns of what this means for customers over the remainder of the event. In the meantime, there are questions around how this fits with the [consumption-based pricing model](#), how customers are feeling about costs, and use cases around both low-code and pro-code. I'll be meeting with customers and BRAND executives to find out more.

Disclosure BRAND *funded the author's travel to attend*
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