# SnapLogic's latest Elastic iPaaS release adds hybrid links for Spark, Cortana analytics

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The company is cozying up to Microsoft with the latest release of its Elastic iPaaS. It now provides what the vendor refers to as a self-service data on-ramp to various Azure clouds. SnapLogic has also stepped up its big-data play with support for Spark.

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SnapLogic has been gaining traction in big-data integration. It recently announced the Fall 2015 release of its Elastic Integration Platform, which adds capabilities for big- data integration that now include Spark (an open source in-memory data-processing framework), a new Snap (preconfigured connector) for Cassandra (an open source distributed 'big' database) and support for Microsoft Cortana Analytics. SnapLogic is positioning this release as a self-service hybrid cloud integration offering, and it is intended to strengthen its position among Microsoft customers and others seeking cloud-based big-data analytics.

## THE 451 TAKE

It's been roughly two and half years since SnapLogic shifted gears and reengineered its platform with a new architecture designed to appeal to large enterprises that need industrial-strength reliability from their integration-technology vendors. SnapLogic's execution in that time slowed temporarily, but is now gaining speed. It claims success among enterprises that need logical and intuitive tools to design and execute complex integration processes across hybrid architecture. It seems to have entered the big-data- integration market at the right time, and is gaining acceptance among firms experimenting with big-data analysis and analytics tools. Our research indicates that large enterprises will begin to expect API design, development and management capabilities from their iPaaS vendors. For the time being, SnapLogic's partnership with 3scale satisfies this need. However, it may need to build out its own API technology and think of itself as an enabling middleware platform, especially as it ventures into the emerging and dynamic market for the Internet of Things (IoT).

## CONTEXT

In our last report on San Mateo, California-based SnapLogic, we discussed the Spring 2015 release of its Elastic Integration Platform. Then it updated its user interface and API monitoring, and added support for Message Queuing Telemetry Transport (MQTT), a machine-to-machine connectivity protocol enabling SnapLogic to play in IoT markets. By doing so, SnapLogic hopes to capitalize on IoT markets, which promise to deliver a flood of big data. Its IoT strategy represents a stepping-stone approach – the first stone is support for MQTT – but SnapLogic is not alone. Established IoT middleware specialists and various iPaaS and API management vendors are extending their platforms to similarly serve the integration and big-data management challenges of IoT. This may herald a coming IoT market 'land grab,' and SnapLogic has signed up to play.

SnapLogic is now engaged in more aggressive go-to-market efforts for its iPaaS. Its three-person sales teams increased from three in early 2015 to 13 teams today, and it opened new offices in Boulder, Colorado; New York; and Boston. SnapLogic plans to expand internationally in 2016. Three new ISV partnerships have been announced: 3scale for API management, Microsoft and Workday. Its staff has grown to 130 (up from 75 in 2014). SnapLogic is likely to report another investment round in the coming months. Current investors include Andreessen Horowitz, Ignition Partners, H. Barton Asset Management, Pharus Capital Management and Triangle Peak Partners. No new potential investors have been mentioned.

## STRATEGY AND PRODUCTS

SnapLogic's strategy is to appeal to large enterprises that need to simplify the integration challenges they face in the cloud era. Earlier tried-and-true technologies to enable application-to-application (A2A) integration (e.g., enterprise service bus and ETL) were not necessarily designed for integration across hybrid clouds. ETL is a slow batch-style approach for integration, and ESB is a complex approach to real-time integration. Both require considerable skills to enable and maintain integrations. SnapLogic's approach is to present a viable alternative to ESB and ETL, one that enables self-service capabilities for data ingestion, preparation and delivery from virtually any source – on-premises or in hybrid clouds.

Among the key enhancements to the Fall release of the SnapLogic Elastic iPaaS is a new Sparkplex data-processing platform. It takes SnapLogic integration pipelines (integration process designs) and converts them to run in Spark environments. This enables SnapLogic to be relevant in more use cases. Spark helps solve some perplexing big-data challenges. Sometimes analytic algorithms don't necessarily perform well in Hadoop ecosystems, and data ingestion can be a culprit. Spark is a data-processing framework that deals with this by simultaneously handling batch and streaming feeds in support of interactive analytics. A new Spark Snap (preconfigured connector) enables users to create Spark-based data-integration pipelines. Users can now run SnapLogic pipelines as either MapReduce or Spark jobs, depending on project requirements. The Fall release also adds support for WebHDFS (a RESTful API for the Hadoop Distributed File System), helping to deliver data to Azure DataLake (a data repository for big-data-analytics workloads).

Additional Fall release updates include improvements to the visual pipeline designer, making it simpler to use; account impact analysis, to provide administrators with visibility linking specific dataflow pipelines to users accounts; and a 'Multi-join' Snap, which joins two or more pipelines or streams. Indeed, no SnapLogic is complete without improvements or additions to its Snap library – enhancements were made to Snaps for DynamoDB, Active Directory, BigQuery, Oracle Bulk Load, JMS, REST Get and others. SnapLogic also announced new capabilities for delivering application and data integration for several Microsoft Azure services. They include Snaps for Microsoft Cortana Analytics Suite, Microsoft Azure SQL Data Warehouse, Azure SQL Database and Azure Blob Storage. SnapLogic also introduced what it refers to as a 'hybrid data-execution framework' called an Azureplex, which can be deployed on Azure resources and within Azure HDInsight (an Apache Hadoop cloud service), connecting distributed data sources for big-data analytics.

Perhaps the most notable capabilities of SnapLogic's Elastic iPaaS are its Ultra Pipelines. They are multi-step, multi-point integration processes that enable real-time data delivery to applications, and operate at high speed across hybrid clouds. SnapLogic's customers are using them (in a sense) as a fault-tolerant mechanism. They straddle and execute across firewalls. If a public cloud were to go down, the Ultra Pipelines would still run because they're running on-premises as well as in that cloud. Moreover, they are always active, eliminating the need for IT staff to manually invoke or schedule them – handy when hybrid infrastructure unexpectedly goes sideways.

## CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERS

SnapLogic reports several new clients, among them are AstraZeneca, Box, Capital One, Humana and Verizon. It refers to Adobe as a marquee account that uses SnapLogic to enable a self-service integration for more than 300 users. Adobe also used SnapLogic to replace legacy ESB and ETL, as well as the manual coding of MapReduce with 'SnapReduce,' enabling it to reallocate resources to realize significant integration ROI and cost savings. SnapLogic is also gaining traction as an integration enabler for several global systems-integration firms. Among them are PwC, Cognizant, Accenture and HCL.

## COMPETITION

As SnapLogic drives into the market to replace ETL and ESB vendors, it finds itself going up against rivals Informatica and TIBCO more frequently. Informatica's PowerCenter is a leading ETL engine, while TIBCO has a strong legacy ESB. Informatica Cloud has been around since 2006. It's among the mature iPaaS offerings that rival SnapLogic's Elastics iPaaS. Talend recently entered the iPaaS market with its Talend Cloud, making it a more direct rival, as well.

Other frequent iPaaS rivals include Dell Boomi and MuleSoft. SnapLogic is also being compared with specialty open source integration technologies, such as Apache Sqoop (bulk data transfer tool between Hadoop and databases) and Apache Flume (for capturing distributed log data). As SnapLogic gains a stronger foothold in the big-data-integration markets, it reports coming across Pentaho more frequently in competitive situations.

## SWOT ANALYSIS

**STRENGTHS**

With features like SnapReduce and Ultra Pipelines, SnapLogic's appeal has been growing among large enterprises that want to work with an entrepreneurial vendor that understands how to overcome the integration challenges associated with hybrid cloud architecture and big-data integration.

**WEAKNESSES**

One of the big-data-integration challenges on the horizon comes from the incredible market buzz and opportunity created by the IoT markets. While SnapLogic recently added support for the MQTT protocol, it really needs to think of itself more as an IoT middleware platform and make investments toward such ends.

**OPPORTUNITIES**

The new Fall release of SnapLogic's iPaaS better positions the vendor in the expanding big-data-integration markets, and should appeal to large enterprises seeking highly available data-integration technology that operates reliably across hybrid cloud architecture.

**THREATS**

It was wise for SnapLogic to cozy up to Microsoft customers with this new release before the various Microsoft product managers begin to think about how they should use Informatica's technology. Microsoft is a new strategic investor in Informatica, along with Salesforce, and it may change the playing field in 2016.