



IMPACT REPORT

## Accenture Insights Platform powers its managed analytics-as-a-service capability

MARCH 28 2016  
BY KATY RING (/BIOGRAPHY?EID=635)

Accenture wants you to know that Accenture Analytics is not just people-powered: it is a people- and asset-powered service capability. Buyers looking for business outcomes are not necessarily focused on the technology stack that delivers those outcomes and they want faster time to results. This has driven Accenture's decision to design its own analytics-as-a-service offering that it launched in 2015 as the Accenture Insights Platform (AIP).

### The 451 Take

Accenture is taking a similar route to many of its competitors in the global systems integration space in developing an asset-based approach to providing managed analytics as a service for customers. However, its operational technology stack is particularly good, sitting as it does on top of the Accenture Cloud Platform. But the real strength of AIP lies with its applications design environment, which provides a way to build, deploy and run analytics apps on top of the stack. AIP also comes with a library of solution accelerators and apps that is better stocked than current offerings from most of its competitors. Accenture can deploy AIP in the cloud or on the customer's premises. This asset should win the company a good share of the advanced analytics market if it can a) get its sales approach right and b) ensure that people and processes are in place to support ongoing lifecycle management for the asset.

### Context

Accenture's analytics capability brings in about 11% of total company revenue, with more than \$3.5bn attributed to Accenture Analytics, and accounts for about half of the \$7bn the company earns from Accenture Digital.

Accenture has more than 2,600 staff dedicated to delivering analytics as a service, including more than 1,300 data scientists that have advanced capabilities in data science. In addition to its BPO and delivery teams, Accenture has 36,000 professionals in Accenture Digital. Accenture delivers analytics services via its global delivery network with 50

centers, as well as its Advanced Analytics Innovation Centers in Athens, Barcelona, Dublin, Madrid and Singapore, and its Analytics-as-a-Service Innovation Center in Bangalore.

The company is increasingly using analytics components in its R&D work and, consequently, an increasing number of employees are becoming analytics fluent.

## Strategy

Accenture has developed several assets upon which to develop its advanced analytics services. These include the AIP and its integrated design, build, run applications environment for analytics applications, and the App Catalog.

AIP has been in preview mode with customers since late 2014 and in early 2015, the company started working with a handful of beta customers. The platform was officially released in August 2015 and Accenture now has a robust roster of customers provisioned and running analytics on a daily basis.

AIP has a core analytics engine making use of Hadoop, as well as an execution engine for data ingestion and an applications design environment that originally came to Accenture via the acquisition of Italian i4C Analytics in April 2014. The company already had 20 apps built when Accenture acquired i4C and Accenture continues to invest in the platform and the development of apps. More than 90 apps are available, and this number is rising as the company develops more apps to satisfy customer demand across its business. Apps can be run on their own, too, in addition to being run through AIP. With AIP, Accenture goes to market as a single entity that can both write and use apps for clients and run them in a cloud infrastructure such as AWS, Azure and Google.

The asset supports Accenture in capturing data (batch or streamed), ingesting the data and storing it (in RDBMS, document stores and data lakes). AIP is language agnostic and so programmers with a variety of language skills can use it whether they develop in R, Julia, Python or SAS and SPSS. Visualization of the data can be delivered in traditional BI formats or via Tableau or QlikView.

Jean-Luc Chatelain, managing director and CTO of Accenture Analytics, says that because of the dominant design approach in the market around the architecture and infrastructure to process analytics, the company can take a curated approach to the AIP stack, predominantly using open source technology. The stack is continuously evolving as new open source components come out, with technology added to the stack or to a particular customer configuration as makes best sense. Accenture's added value is to provide the service wrapper to ensure that all the components work with each other, as well as enterprise-level security.

For example, the AIP stack has three 'buckets' of analytics infrastructure components: Core Analytics, where clients may, for example, elect not to use Apache Hadoop but to use Cloudera instead. Above this, there are some common options that can be brought into the stack for specific use-case scenarios. For example, a customer may not need a document store but may wish to use a key value store. Then above this, there may be specific industry add-ons that are designed for a category of customer within an industry.

The real gem in the AIP, however, is the applications design environment that enables programmers to design, build and run analytics applications. The applications design environment has more than 75 solution accelerators that can be used for repeatable use cases and each one has been validated in order to improve time to results.

The applications design environment has a persona handler built into it, so that the platform decides how it will behave depending on the user login. In this way app developers can see the code development environment; data scientists can see modeling input data, while the end user can see the relevant app screens using a day-to-day business workflow. Managers can view a screen showing the list of people that are working for them.

This persona capability gives the applications design environment the flexibility of designing analytics apps in real time so that they can be implemented continuously. The analytics apps can be developed generically using the same principles and then extended to create a more client-specific capability. Chatelain says the portal is as rich as Tableau but is not as interactive.

The analytics apps can be acquired in stand-alone mode to work with a customer's existing data warehouse to provide support for agile development and richer analytics. Alternatively, they can be used as part of a broader Accenture engagement.

Chatelain says that it is straightforward to exit the AIP analytics environment. Some customers use AIP for T&D and then operationalize the capability in their own datacenters. AIP is offered via a flexible consumption-based subscription model in which clients can scale up and scale down to meet their business requirements.

## Customers

Accenture Analytics is focused on answering customer requests that enable them to change their business in real time so that they can, for example, win new customers and optimize their operations. Basically, Accenture Analytics is in the business of selling insights to deliver outcomes. For example, one Italian utility was able to achieve a 30% improvement in forecast accuracy for the energy it is buying and selling, while a European insurance company is using Accenture Analytics for fraud detection and is improving detection rates by 8% every quarter.

Commercially, the analytics services are sold flexibly for a monthly fee based on which technology components are being consumed from the AIP stack and the number of users, as well as the capacity required for storage. A solution architect designs the capability for the customer. The agreements tend to have a 'stop and start' feel to them, with customers frequently opting to run for a few months, shut down and then restart.

Often AIP is a component within a broader contract that Accenture has signed with the customer. For example, it forms part of a \$130m contract signed with a life science company, as well as being a core capability for a \$54m deal with an auto manufacturer to manage warranties.

Customers can be up and running within 24 hours because of the instant-on provisioning that Accenture has, but typically a customer will take 2-3 days to use the service because client input sources need to be correctly identified.

## Competition

Accenture is encountering a range of competitors: in terms of an advanced analytics platform, AIP is competing with IBM's PureData for Analytics system and its BigInsights and BigSQL capabilities. Predix from GE is also gaining ground in the IoT space.

Indeed, many of Accenture's well-established competitors are also offering value-added services around their own assets. For example, Capgemini has its Insights-as-a-Service and Insights 360° offerings, based on its technology stack approach; Infosys has its Aikido strategy, which embraces platforms and analytics; Cognizant has its BigDecisions platform; and Wipro has its Data Discovery Platform.

The barriers to entry for new, disruptive entrants are low in terms of required asset investment because of the ability to deliver services from public cloud. Aside from the big management consultancies such as Deloitte and EY, this is also helping smaller players enter the managed services space, including Avalon Consulting LLC, Altoros Systems, Beyond the Arc, BJSS, CBIG Consulting, comSysto, DataMine Lab, LatentView Analytics, Lityx, Search Technologies, Sigmoid Analytics, Squares on Blue and Trace3. Meanwhile, modern telcos such as CenturyLink and Telefónica are buying and building their way into the market to make good the idea of selling analytics services around data gravity.

## SWOT Analysis

### Strengths

---

Accenture has expertise in a range of industries and a well-designed cloud technology stack underpinning its analytics platform. It also, by virtue of its global managed services heritage, offers enterprise-strength security and is able to support its services 24/7. Its key strength, however, lies with its integrated design, build, run environment that enables the agile development of advanced analytics and the number of solution accelerators and apps it already has to offer the market.

### Weaknesses

---

Accenture Analytics has one main weakness: it needs to 'educate its own soldiers' to be able to sell AIP and the advanced analytics service more widely.

### Opportunities

---

The opportunity for business development around advanced analytics services is very large, driven on the one hand by the data renaissance around IoT (telemetry) and on the other, the operational urge for customers to create the data-driven enterprise.

## Threats

---

It's still the early stages of market development for managed analytics as a service, but as the market matures, it is questionable whether it can support the volume of branded Hadoop-based platform stacks that vendors are launching. Without a product culture, it will be interesting to see if players such as Accenture can build significant market share around their platforms.

---

## Katy Ring (/biography?eid=635)

Research Director, IT Services

---

### M&A ACTIVITY BY SECTOR

Cloud / Platform as a service (0) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_selected\\_sectors=909](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_selected_sectors=909))

IT services & distribution / Systems integration (2201) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_selected\\_sectors=257](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_selected_sectors=257))

Information management / Data management (524) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_selected\\_sectors=115](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_selected_sectors=115))

### M&A ACTIVITY BY ACQUIRER

Accenture Ltd. (67) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_acquirers=Accenture+Ltd.](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=Accenture+Ltd.))

Amazon Web Services Inc. [aka AWS] [Amazon.com Inc.] (3) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_acquirers=Amazon+Web Services Inc. \[aka AWS\] \[Amazon.com Inc.\]](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=Amazon+Web+Services+Inc.+[aka+AWS]+[Amazon.com+Inc.]))

Capgemini Group (18) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_acquirers=Capgemini+Group](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=Capgemini+Group))

CenturyLink [fka CenturyTel] (14) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_acquirers=CenturyLink+\[fka CenturyTel\]](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=CenturyLink+[fka+CenturyTel]))

Cloudera (5) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_acquirers=Cloudera](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=Cloudera))

Cognizant Technology Solutions [aka Cognizant] (20) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_acquirers=Cognizant+Technology Solutions \[aka Cognizant\]](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=Cognizant+Technology+Solutions+[aka+Cognizant]))

Deloitte Consulting LLP [Deloitte LLP] (4) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_acquirers=Deloitte+Consulting LLP \[Deloitte LLP\]](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=Deloitte+Consulting+LLP+[Deloitte+LLP]))

Ernst & Young Global Ltd. [aka EY] (7) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_acquirers=Ernst+& Young Global Ltd. \[aka EY\]](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=Ernst+&+Young+Global+Ltd.+[aka+EY]))

GE Aviation (41) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_acquirers=GE+Aviation](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=GE+Aviation))

Google Inc. (193) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_acquirers=Google+Inc.](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=Google+Inc.))

IBM Corporation (163) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_acquirers=IBM+Corporation](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=IBM+Corporation))

Infosys BPO Limited [Infosys Technologies Ltd] (10) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_acquirers=Infosys+BPO](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=Infosys+BPO))

Limited [Infosys Technologies Ltd])

Qlik [fka QlikTech] (5) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_acquirers=Qlik+\[fka QlikTech\]](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=Qlik+[fka QlikTech]))

SAS Institute Inc. (12) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_acquirers=SAS+Institute Inc.](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=SAS+Institute Inc.))

SPSS Inc. (2) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_acquirers=SPSS+Inc.](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=SPSS+Inc.))

Wipro Ltd. (24) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic\\_acquirers=Wipro+Ltd.](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=Wipro+Ltd.))

Figures shown indicate number of transactions

#### COMPANY MENTIONS (PRIMARY)

[Accenture \(/search?company=Accenture\)](/search?company=Accenture)

#### COMPANY MENTIONS (OTHER)

Altoros Systems, Avalon Consulting LLC, Amazon Web Services, Beyond the Arc, BJSS, Capgemini, CBIG Consulting, CenturyLink, Cloudera, Cognizant, comSysto, DataMine Lab, Deloitte, EY, General Electric, Google, i4C Analytics, IBM, Infosys, LatentView Analytics, Lityx, Qlik, SAS Institute, Search Technologies, Sigmoid Analytics, SPSS, Squares on Blue, Tableau, Trace3, Wipro (</search?company=Wipro>)

#### CHANNELS

Cloud Transformation, Data Platforms & Analytics, Enterprise Mobility, Service Providers, Systems & Software Infrastructure (</dashboard?view=channel&channel=3>)

#### SECTORS

All / Information management / Data management (</search?sector=115>)

All / Cloud / Platform as a service (</search?sector=909>)

All / IT services & distribution / Systems integration (</search?sector=257>)