



VENDOR PROFILE

Talena – Always on Big Data

Ashish Nadkarni

Phil Goodwin

IDC OPINION

Big Data has become a crucial component of the IT toolkit used in modern businesses. In an effort to gain or maintain competitive differentiation, businesses everywhere are singularly focused on causality and correlation. Causality and correlation are only effective when there are plenty of data sets that can be concurrently operated on by modern data science algorithms. Thanks to cloud services, social media, and a vast mobile-user base, businesses can easily tap into newer data sources – some that they own and others they don't. To put it mildly, these data sources come in all shapes and sizes. Some of them are structured data sources that are preformatted to a schema and stored in an SQL database. Others are structured but cannot be preformatted, requiring the use of a NoSQL database. And then there is unstructured data that is stored in platforms like Hadoop. Regardless of how they go about conducting their "Big Data experiments," businesses everywhere now have a new set of problems – dealing with their Big Data applications. In fact, this problem has crept up so fast that CIOs everywhere now consider it to be one of their top challenges. Rising to the occasion are firms like Talena that have developed a complete end-to-end Big Data availability and management solution. Talena's solution seeks to provide a common availability framework across all Big Data application life cycles – regardless of how the data is formatted and stored. By utilizing such solutions, businesses can seek to transform their Big Data experience in the long run. They do this by enabling IT administrators, applications owners, and developers to support the following use cases:

- **Test and development (test/dev) management.** Provide "self-service" access to production data for DevOps and Engineering teams – regardless of the location or format – with appropriate data masking and sampling.
- **Backup/recovery.** Rapidly search and recover data at a granular level.
- **Archive/compliance.** Seamlessly integrate their Big Data environment to lower cost tiers such as public cloud storage as a service.
- **Copy data management.** Take a holistic approach to copy data management for Big Data – to create active data copies that can be centrally managed.

IN THIS VENDOR PROFILE

This IDC Vendor Profile profiles Talena Inc. – a supplier of Big Data availability solutions. Talena is based in San Jose, California.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

The reliance on Big Data and analytics applications as a mandatory way of doing business has ushered in a new set of challenges and problems. Examples of such challenges are:

- **Managing exabyte-scale data sets.** If managing primary copies was not bad enough with large data sets, the need to create multiple copies for test and development can quickly make matters worse – both financially and organizationally.
- **Managing infrastructure scalability.** Big Data sets pose a different set of requirements for storage, networking, and compute tiers. Optimizing each tier to collectively meet the service levels required for the applications is mandatory.
- **Insight into data.** Data without intelligence is just data. In the Big Data world, it is necessary to have full insight into postprocessed and archived data sets so that they can be analyzed again should there be a need for it.
- **Policy framework.** Big Data sets in regulatory and compliant environments pose an additional set of requirements – ensuring that consistent data retention and protection policies are applied to all data sets.

Suppliers like Talena, whose founders have deep experience in solving such challenges at other firms in the past, are now in a race to provide buyers with off-the-shelf solutions that tackle many of their most pressing Big Data challenges in a cost-effective manner.

Company Overview

Talena was founded in 2012 by Nitin Donde, Hari Mankude, Shailesh Parulekar, and Srinivas Vadlamani, with a mission to "make data universally available throughout the life cycle of Big Data applications." The founding team includes some of the early architects at Aster Data, Hortonworks, Couchbase, and 3PAR. Talena claims that it has integrated the best of Big Data processing with modern data management techniques to create the Talena software solution.

In several ways, Talena's solution enjoys a unique position in the market. It takes a "recovery centric" and "single pane of glass" approach to providing full-service data availability and life-cycle management capabilities for Big Data and analytics applications. In that respect, Talena differentiates its solution from other data protection/recovery solutions that handle data in an unintelligent manner or Big Data management applications that can only operate on limited data types.

As illustrated in Figure 1, Talena's solution seeks to serve as an "intelligent data availability broker" in Big Data environments. On one side, it can perform bidirectional (ingest and put back) communications with various data platforms like NoSQL databases, MPP database clusters, file servers, and Hadoop-based platforms. On the other side, it acts as the orchestration layer for creating and managing data copies, data protection/recovery, tiering, and availability, as well as secondary uses such as test/dev and postprocess analytics workloads. Talena's solution is built on the four pillars of protection, test/dev management, compliance, and archive.

FIGURE 1

Talena "Big Data" Deployment Model

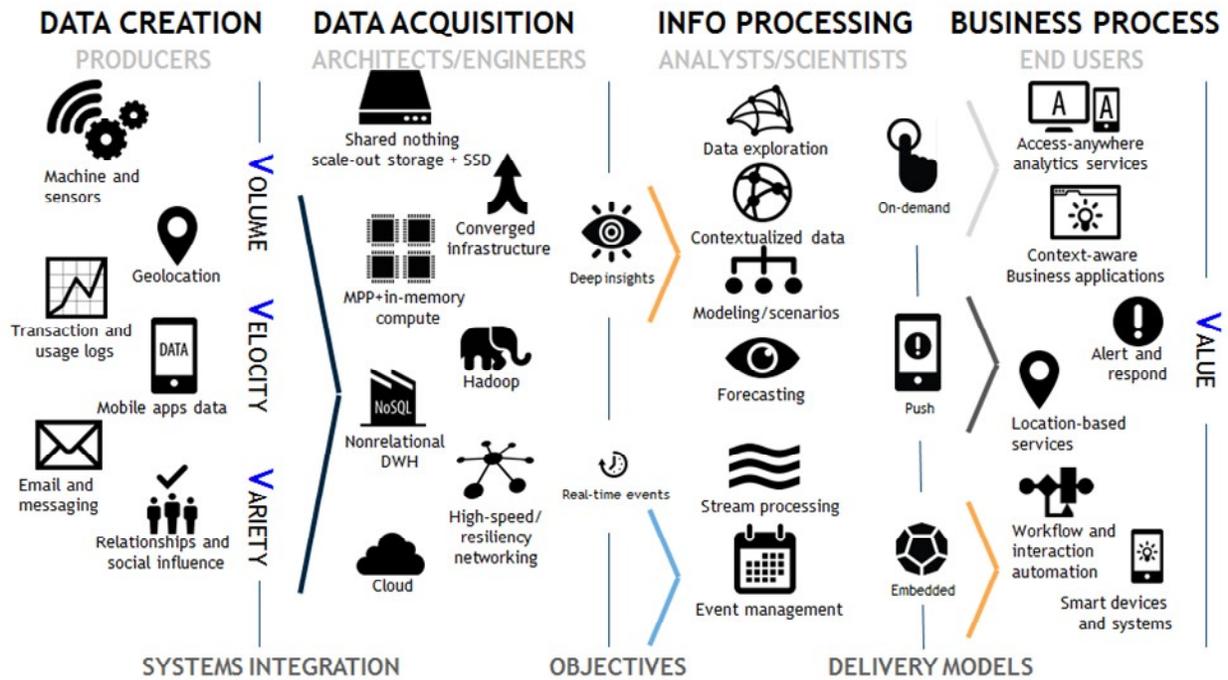


Source: Talena, 2016

Another unique value proposition of Talena's solution is the analytics capabilities it can provide for the structured and unstructured data sets that it aggregates. This means that the Talena solution can truly serve as a single resource for all gaining causality and correlation insights into aggregated data sets. As Talena adds more data sources to its broker list, it will algorithmically gain rich insight into the information contained in them. This means businesses can view Talena not just as a point product (which is the problem with data protection and data aggregation platforms in the market today) but as an invaluable component of their Big Data workflow, as illustrated in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2

IDC Big Data Workflow



Source: IDC, 2016

Company Strategy

With some marquee customers under its belt, Talena has clearly validated its value proposition in the market. It now plans to continue building its solution – which involves all the necessary 101s of delivering a quality product. For example, Talena's product road map calls for adding more data sources such as MongoDB and HBase and traditional enterprise data warehouses (EDWs). On the analytics front, Talena plans to make its insights more prescriptive and thus provide support for more workflows. In addition, Talena's machine learning will enable people to gain insight into their Big Data environments – for example, to actually understand when they might miss RPO/RTO targets and to predict how much data they'll see in their secondary storage environments over time. Needless to say, Talena's core strategy is to expand the company's footprint by way of deep partnerships with storage, compute, database, and application suppliers.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

IDC estimates that the Big Data technology and services market will grow at a CAGR of 23.1% between 2015 and 2019 and pass \$48 billion in 2019. One of the reasons for this explosive growth is the relatively low barrier to entry for new suppliers. Big Data and analytics, by its very nature, is an innovative industry, and the market has plenty of appetite for new products and solutions.

Talena has addressed a crucial void of robust end-to-end Big Data availability solutions. It emphasizes the importance of a single policy-based data management and governance framework for any Big Data environment – whose chief characteristic is (and will remain) the variety, velocity, and veracity of data.

Up until now, Big Data implementations in many organizations have gained notoriety as being skunkworks projects started by developers and application owners. Many of them fall below the radar of companywide data governance policies. Given the pace at which businesses are adopting Big Data and making it a crucial element of their business model, CIOs can no longer afford to let those implementations be done in a roughshod manner. Solutions from Talena will provide them with valuable tools to:

- Understand what data sources their applications have tapped into for analytics purposes
- Whether such data sets are managed and stored in a secure and compliant fashion
- Gain insight into the information contained in these sources
- Apply a common protection, retention, and disposal model to these sources

Ultimately, the goal for suppliers like Talena is to reduce the overhead posed by Big Data deployments and make such deployments capex friendly.

ESSENTIAL GUIDANCE

Advice for Talena

Talena may have struck a chord with CIOs at many organizations. It may have addressed one of their top challenges that until recently had no solution in sight – the challenge of data deluge and conformity in Big Data environments. Talena must now execute on its promise of delivering a complete solution that can be dropped into most Big Data environments and one that is modular enough to tackle the nuances of such environments.

As most CIOs will attest, Big Data environments are anything but cookie-cutter and, therefore, the main challenge for Talena will be to ensure its value proposition remains unchanged regardless of which environment it is adopted into. The values of an ecosystem/partner play and the ability to provide flexible delivery/licensing models cannot be emphasized enough in this context.

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- *Commvault Announces New "Data Management Platform"* (IDC #US25980515, October 2015)
- *Dell Acquires EMC, Gains Controlling Stake in VMware* (IDC #259634, October 2015)
- *Worldwide Storage in Big Data Forecast, 2015-2019* (IDC #259205, October 2015)
- *Still Waters Run Deep: Enterprise Data Lakes Revisited* (IDC #258526, August 2015)
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- *IDC's Worldwide Storage for Big Data and Business Analytics Taxonomy, 2015* (IDC #254025, February 2015)
- *Oracle Releases New Flagship ZS4-4 Appliance* (IDC #lcUS25329414, December 2014)
- *HP FY14: Small Revenue Decline in a Tough Environment* (IDC #lcUS25278514, November 2014)
- *Worldwide Storage in Big Data 2014-2018 Forecast* (IDC #250232, August 2014)
- *IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Object-Based Storage 2013 Vendor Assessment* (IDC #244081, October 2013)

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Global Headquarters

5 Speen Street
Framingham, MA 01701
USA
508.872.8200
Twitter: @IDC
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