PROTEGRITY + Aflac

CASE STUDY

Aflac Partners with Protegrity & Snowflake on AWS

CLOUD-BASED SUPPLEMENTAL INSURANCE COMPANY SEEKS FLEXIBLE DATA PROTECTION SOLUTIONS

Aflac, the leading provider of supplemental insurance in the United States and a renowned Fortune 500 company, has made a massive impact on its customers' lives since 1955 and continues to do so today, paying cash benefits directly to its policyholders who get sick or hurt during life's toughest times.

Aflac has been a Protegrity client since 2017, initially protecting sensitive data on in-house platforms and workflows that were required to follow state and federal government guidelines and regulations for data protection. In 2020, Aflac asked Protegrity for assistance with a new initiative: to help provide data protection for a move to cloud environments, which were quickly being deployed to enable new business use cases and provide more flexibility and speed to end users.

> *Protegrity included us in early design and architecture for seamlessly integrating tokenization with our Snowflake partners. We have been engaged hand in glove with early adoption and putting the focus on cloud native solutions.*
>
> **-Matthew Hughes, Security Solutions Architect**

Challenges

- Initially, Protegrity had been refining Aflac's data security gateway (DSG) in order to accommodate Aflac's move to the cloud. But the DSG's traditional architecture didn't offer the native elasticity found in the cloud.
- The legacy infrastructure requirement for DSG made it difficult to scale up and down quickly and would have increased operational expenses, rendering it unacceptable for Aflac project leaders.
- What's more, with the Aflac business intelligence team moving analytics to the cloud created concerns about any potential delays, roadblocks or technical shortfalls that could jeopardize the high-visibility project's momentum.

Solution: Using Protegrity in Tandem with Snowflake on AWS

Working with Protegrity development teams, Aflac was one of the first organizations to take advantage of the new Snowflake architecture and serverless Lambda functions within AWS to complete Protegrity operations. It was a solution that combined the cloud-ready capabilities they needed to scale to the size required by a Fortune 500 company while allowing the insurer to take advantage of the established Protegrity Data Protection Platform already in production at Aflac.

Increased security requirements and regulatory pressures — coupled with the need to audit and report — can limit a firm's ability to take advantage of cloud-based services. To alleviate these changes, Protegrity for Snowflake combines Snowflake's superior data-warehouse capabilities with the ability to extend internal data-security policies to Snowflake to keep sensitive data private.

Key Highlights

Industry
Insurance

Challenge
- To move workloads to the cloud, Aflac needed to refine their Protegrity data security gateway (DSG) configuration and data management strategies.
- Working directly with the DSG provided limited flexibility for cloud operations and leveraged static data structures. These constraints would increase operational expenses and potential project delays, creating major roadblocks for improved data use.

Solution
- Protegrity made it possible for Aflac to improve their data use and scale data analytics activities by providing a collaborative solution with Protegrity, AWS and Snowflake.
- Moving these secure data processes to the cloud both improved operational efficiency and reduced costs while leveraging previous data security policies and procedures.

Impact
By taking advantage of Snowflake and Protegrity's integrated solution, Aflac could now access, manage and organize larger volumes of data quickly and securely. The improved performance presented new opportunities for their data use and opened new avenues for cloud migration.

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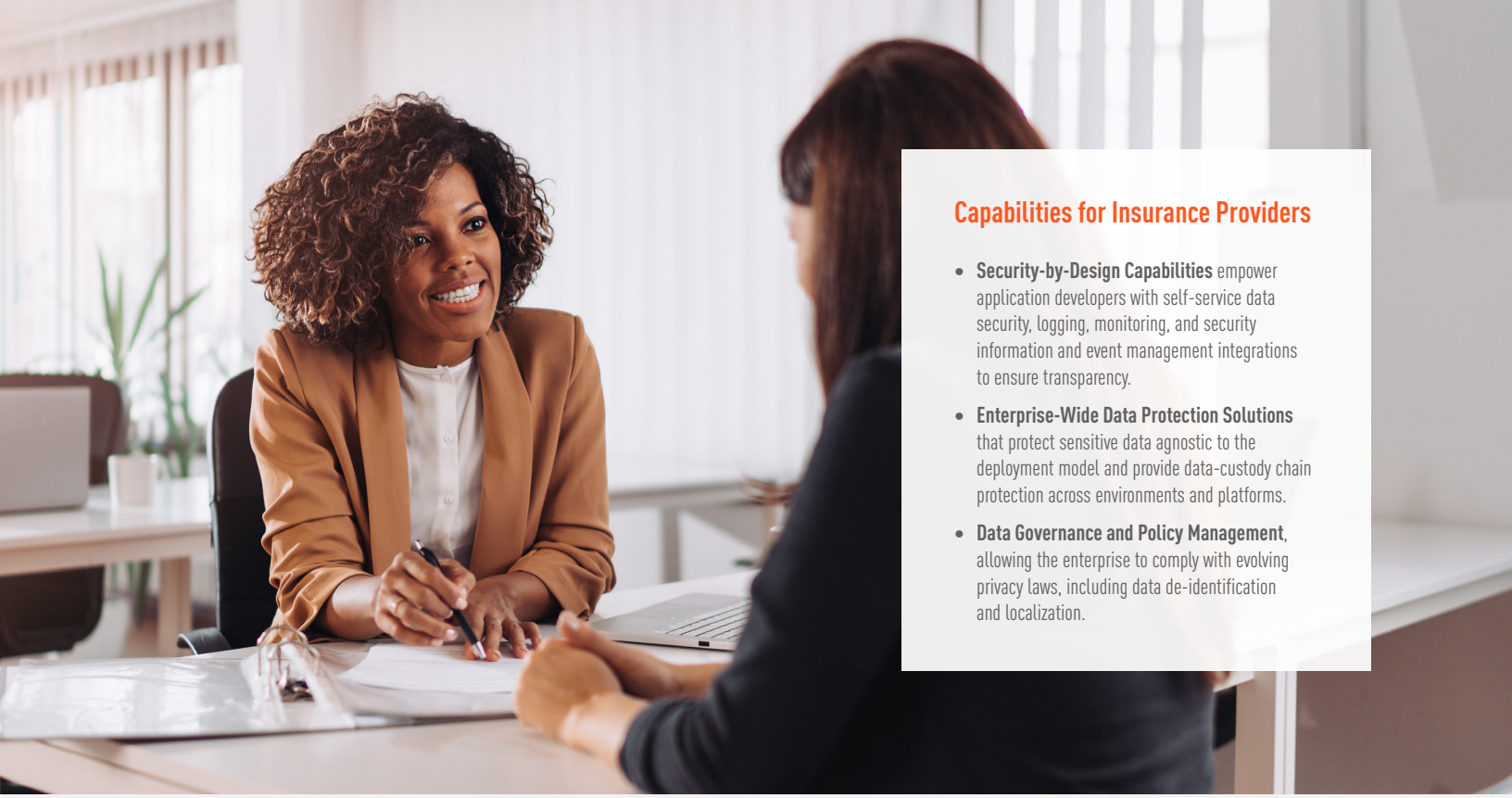

Capabilities for Insurance Providers

- **Security-by-Design Capabilities** empower application developers with self-service data security, logging, monitoring, and security information and event management integrations to ensure transparency.
- **Enterprise-Wide Data Protection Solutions** that protect sensitive data agnostic to the deployment model and provide data-custody chain protection across environments and platforms.
- **Data Governance and Policy Management**, allowing the enterprise to comply with evolving privacy laws, including data de-identification and localization.

Business Value

Transitioning to the cloud offers many benefits, and not just for data teams. End users enjoyed a seamless move to the new cloud-based tools, which opened new opportunities and improved efficiency for all parties. At the same time, usability and secure data access were improved even as operational expenses fell. Aflac was able to retain the same security posture it had established on-premises, thus providing continuity to both the business and InfoSec teams while freeing up more data to drive new cloud-based applications.

Technical Value

Deploying new cloud-based tools to elastically protect and unprotect data in operationally efficient environments allowed Aflac to retire costly on-premises legacy data stores.

Furthermore, the introduction of AWS Lambda Serverless functions in support of the Snowflake Cloud Data Warehouse with the Protegrity Data Security Platform allowed the technical teams to readily respond to unexpected data flows and explore new potential cloud-based analytics, machine learning and artificial intelligence initiatives.

The Perfect Fit

Once the solution was up and running, performance fears evaporated. In fact, the company's testing revealed that this new architecture was capable of easily handling scale. Aflac's technical teams found they were able to process billions of tokenization operations per week and process large Snowflake workloads with ease using the Snowflake Protegrity integration.

While even the company's most demanding architects were impressed by the numbers, the business units experienced the true benefits. The smooth integration proved non-disruptive to the end-user community. Functionality improved, operational expenses fell, and Aflac was able to retain the same security posture it had established on-premises. The success and performance of this deployment accelerated new efforts to enable more cloud-based initiatives.

> *I am very impressed with how the Protegrity AWS Lambda integration for Snowflake scales seamlessly to handle very large Snowflake workloads and how tokenization operations in Snowflake are transparent to the end users. The feedback from our Snowflake users has been very positive.*
>
> **-Gerard Lundy, ANI Lead Security Engineer**

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PROTEGRITY FOR INSURANCE PROVIDERS

For more than two decades, Protegrity, a global leader in data protection, has protected the sensitive data of the largest brands in the world, including dozens of insurance providers and three of the world's leading multinational companies.

Protegrity provides the only platform that lets enterprises decide which data should be classified as sensitive and allows them to control how they safeguard that data.

With Protegrity, payers and insurance providers maintain unrestricted enterprise access to all generally available data security technology, both now and in the future, including advisory services and 24/7 support.

READY FOR THE NEXT STEP? REQUEST A PROTEGRITY FOR SNOWFLAKE EXPLAINER FROM YOUR PROTEGRITY REPRESENTATIVE

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