



## DatabaseUSA Relies on Alteryx to Blend and Hone Vast Datasets – Ensuring Clients Get the Most Accurate Lists and Data Possible.

### CHALLENGE

DatabaseUSA wanted a flexible, locked-down ETL solution that would increase the quality and accuracy of their data while reducing the time and money spent on data processing tasks and related training. Responsible for millions of consumer and business records, the solution would need to be scalable, reliable and easily extensible.

### SOLUTION

Using Alteryx in a unique self-hosted environment, DatabaseUSA created an elegant workflow that easily blends hundreds of data sources, including from their call center and utility companies and ensures industry-leading accuracy with little to no coding required.

### Introduction

DatabaseUSA.com is a leading provider of business and personal mailing lists, email lists, sales leads and related database products serving most of the Fortune 1000. Their lists and online products are used by customers large and small for everything from marketing, analytics and customer profiling, to background checks, business verifications, employee queries and more – and have been highlighted on the television news program 60 Minutes. One of the few database providers who still compile their own complete databases from original sources, DatabaseUSA performs rigorous verifications online, via their call center, and by way of proprietary algorithms resulting in data accuracy upwards of 95%.

### The Situation

In the competitive landscape of database marketing, offering the ‘biggest’ lists alone is no longer enough. “Even though DatabaseUSA is only 4.5 years old, many of us are industry veterans with 10 to 20 years experience,” relates Jerry Dailey, VP of Product & Content. “That’s a lot of accumulated knowledge. We know firsthand that more data is not better – higher quality is better. To that end, we’ve sought to provide more features, greater depth and better data accuracy than any of our competitors. Alteryx helps us accomplish that.”

“Raising that bar of data quality (prior to Alteryx) was not easy,” recalls Erich Kaiser, VP of Data Processing and Special Projects at DatabaseUSA. “Our consumer database has details on 238 million individuals and 164K households. Our business database details approximately 14 million businesses... That’s a lot of data to process, check for accuracy and update on a monthly basis.”

With so much raw data as part of the monthly build process, hitting deadlines for fresh builds was a herculean task. To deal with this reality, DatabaseUSA sought individuals with high-level data expertise – but high-level expertise brings high-level cost.



## RESULTS

- **Deeper Insights.** Integrating hundreds of data sources, call center data, online data and utility data into one seamless and actionable workflow with clean, accurate data customers can rely on .
- **Hours vs. Weeks.** Alteryx compresses complex processes from weeks to hours, with the ability to deliver ad hoc requests on the fly as new business rules are tested in-house.
- **Intuitive Workflow.** Replaces scripts and low-level code with a simple drag-and-drop visual workflow.

“When we started out, to support our database builds we had to hire people familiar with a Linux environment and shell scripting,” Kaiser continues “but those people didn’t come cheap! Each hire cost us \$100K to \$150K and forced us to put all our eggs in one basket because of the intense specialization required. At the time, this meant a lot of new low level code had to be developed. We had no ETL; just flat files from hundreds of different sources, multiple directories, data from utility companies and call data from our call center. Every time new data was introduced, we had to custom code solutions to make it fit. Had we lost one of our key database personnel at the time, our database wouldn’t get built. So not only was our initial platform expensive, the knowledge required to build and maintain it was prohibitive and difficult to scale. That put a lot of pressure on us as a start up.”

Driven by the need for data accuracy, a scalable cloud solution, and the requirements of a strong ETL solution that would allow them to simplify and lock down their processes, DatabaseUSA actively searched for solutions before landing on Alteryx. “We did an extensive review and comparison of databases, platforms and tools,” recalls Dailey, “including SQL Server, SSIS, Clover and Melissa. But, ultimately, Alteryx did a better job of scrubbing and enhancing the data and providing the ETL we needed.”

### The Solution

“I had some familiarity with Alteryx already, because I had used it to move our data from Amazon to Rackspace,” continued Dailey. “Using Alteryx, I did it on a weekend and saved about \$10K in migration costs.”

While enthusiastic about Alteryx, Dailey and the team weren’t certain how much of the heavy-lifting Alteryx would ultimately be able to provide DatabaseUSA in the arenas of ETL and overall data blending. The results were outstanding.

“Initially we weren’t sure how far we could take Alteryx and thought we might have to use other tools to help us with our needs. But, so far, with the exception of our platform and server environment, we’ve now used Alteryx to do just about everything. Alteryx helps us blend in the data, clean the data, maintain the database relationships, input data, update data, test accuracy, and deliver the data the way we need it, when we need it.”

Kaiser agrees, elaborating that Alteryx’s successful integration into DatabaseUSA’s methodology stems from how well it handles tasks like standardization and duplicates. “Alteryx is being used where all of our data sources come together. For example, there are different ways that address data is represented: different layouts, different formats, different values and different fields. Data needs to be standardized and run through Alteryx to get everything clean and de-duped. Once this takes place it can then be brought into our own database to identify which records are truly new.”

DatabaseUSA was also impressed with how amenable the Alteryx team was in supporting their unconventional deployment requirements – namely, to a hosted server environment.

“We knew that typical customers accessed Alteryx via a beefed up computer that multiple users could remotely access,” Dailey said, adding, “but in keeping with our requirements and data sensitivity, we needed to run Alteryx on our hosted servers. The Alteryx team understood our needs and helped us make this a reality. As of now, we have two Dell rack servers, two application hosted servers and a data analytics database server with Alteryx in the mix.



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- Jerry Dailey  
VP of Product & Content  
DatabaseUSA

“One of the huge benefits of working with Alteryx is that we never really had a locked-down process before. Now if there is any anomaly during quality control, we know exactly what component to go back to and check based on what we’re seeing.”

- Erich Kaiser  
VP of Data Processing & Special  
Projects

## The Result

Since deployment, Kaiser has been impressed with how well Alteryx has risen to new challenges. “There are tools stronger in the ETL realm,” Kaiser adds, “but none near as strong for data quality and that’s key for us. All of our ETL work is now done by Alteryx. External sources are handled by Alteryx. Call center data is pulled through Alteryx. Scrubbing and assignment ... Alteryx.” Dailey agrees, adding, “Before Alteryx I used to have to do a lot of low-level custom coding. With Alteryx, using fuzzy matching we can apply several different types of matching algorithms on our data by simply changing a configuration setting. The type of development we had to do before was a lot more complex.”

Prior to Alteryx, DatabaseUSA dealt with each step in its build process as a discrete code issue. “We had transformations, merging, identification of duplicates, duplicate removal, assigning address standardization enhancements – each was its own challenge, and deadlines were easy to miss,” recalls Kaiser. “With Alteryx, you’re able to string these components together, create a build process and lock that process down. The value of this is, if there’s any anomaly during quality control, you know exactly what module to go back to and correct based on the discovery. The locked-down workflow and deeper insights Alteryx gives us is invaluable to make ready improvements for accuracy and offer new features – and we don’t miss deadlines.”

“Likewise, with our process locked down and simplified, database build processes have gone down from a month to a week – easily,” enthuses Dailey. Simplification of the workflow has also relieved the pressures and costs of hiring high-level expertise. “Using Alteryx means that I can now go out and recruit new, young computer engineering students, train them, and get them up to speed applying business rules in a very short time. We can accomplish more in two months now with Alteryx than we could in six months with our former environment, custom coding and expensive hires.”

## About Alteryx

Alteryx is the leader in data blending and advanced analytics software. Alteryx Analytics provides analysts with an intuitive workflow for data blending and advanced analytics that leads to deeper insights in hours, not the weeks typical of traditional approaches. Analysts love the Alteryx analytics platform because they can deliver deeper insights by seamlessly blending internal, third party, and cloud data, and then analyze it using spatial and predictive drag-and-drop tools. This is all done in a single workflow, with no programming required. More than 500 customers, including Experian, Kaiser, Ford, McDonald’s and 200,000+ users worldwide rely on Alteryx daily. Visit [www.alteryx.com](http://www.alteryx.com) or call 1-888-836-4274.

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230 Commerce, Ste. 250, Irvine, CA 92602  
+1 714 516 2400  
[www.alteryx.com](http://www.alteryx.com)