



MarkLogic becomes NTT Data's preferred NoSQL database

Partnership looks to expand MarkLogic's global footprint

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Paige Bartley



Ovum view

Summary

MarkLogic, a provider of an enterprise-grade NoSQL database with operational and transactional features, recently announced an expanded partnership with systems integrator (SI) NTT Data, which includes an undisclosed equity investment. With NTT Data currently positioned as the sixth-largest global SI, the partnership is poised to help drive market reach for MarkLogic. MarkLogic is now the preferred NoSQL database for NTT Data deployments, setting the stage for new go-to-market strategies for joint customer development globally.

MarkLogic becomes the NoSQL database of choice for NTT Data

NTT Data's recent strategic investment in MarkLogic is the extension of an existing partnership between the two firms. The relationship between MarkLogic and NTT Data dates to 2012, when the two companies originally targeted companies in Japan that were dealing with large-scale data integration and data management challenges. Initially, the partnership saw success in combining NTT Data's data utilization services with MarkLogic's NoSQL database platform, in part thanks to MarkLogic's native security and governance features that provided the granular control that was critical for regulated verticals.

With NTT Data's newly announced strategic investment, the goal is to expand the reach of this partnership globally. As part of the agreement, NTT Data has formally designated MarkLogic as its preferred NoSQL database platform. That will give it a strategic advantage in the complex, large-scale environments that typically are encountered by the SI. This complements MarkLogic's existing customer base and direct-sale strategy, which is heavily focused on serving the Global 2000 market and its accompanying requirements for data governance.

Partnership focuses on enterprise-grade features and security

The NoSQL database market is highly competitive, with a multitude of open source and commercial options available for the enterprise to choose from. Though MarkLogic competes for mindshare with the likes of MongoDB, its focus has long been squarely placed on more enterprise-grade security and governance features, placing it in competition with some of the more traditional relational database players in terms of sales. Features and capabilities of the MarkLogic environment, such as true ACID transactions, are geared toward supporting mission-critical applications, differentiating it from many NoSQL products on the market, which instead are often focused on use cases such as user session management. MarkLogic instead positions itself as an enterprise database that provides the security, manageability, and transactionality of incumbent SQL relational databases, but with far more flexible schema.

The recent release of MarkLogic 9 emphasized the company's commitment to hardened enterprise security and governance features in relation to the rest of the NoSQL market. The announcement of the NTT Data funding and strategic partnership deal came on the heels of the MarkLogic 9 release, which was announced at the MarkLogic World user conference in May 2017. The release focused on

data integration, security, and manageability: all features geared toward helping the enterprise eliminate data silos and achieve a fully governed data ecosystem.

Some of the features announced with the MarkLogic 9 release include:

- **Advanced encryption:** MarkLogic files on disk are encrypted at rest, preventing access from outside the MarkLogic environment; database admins can also choose which databases to encrypt and whether to encrypt logs. Keys can be generated either by MarkLogic or by an external key management system, allowing additional security and flexibility.
- **Element-level security:** Specific elements of documents can be selectively hidden from users based on role, rather than blocking access to entire documents (as would be the case in document-level security). Increased granularity allows for greater data protection, while freeing nonsensitive data for use in analytics.
- **Redaction and removal:** Sensitive data types, such as social security numbers, can be removed, redacted, or replaced with other values to prevent the exposure of vulnerable information. Redaction and removal enables the enterprise to share data safely and securely, either within the enterprise or with third parties.

The partnership with NTT Data takes advantage of these features by targeting potential enterprise clients that have particularly complex, mission-critical needs for their database. As the partnership looks to target international markets, features such as element-level security and redaction will be particularly helpful for organizations that need to comply with new regulations for the control of data, such as the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which mandates granular protection of personal information. For organizations that want to increase their use of analytics without running afoul of regulation, these features represent a critical safeguard for the defensible use of data.

SI backing strengthens MarkLogic offering in global markets

With the new investment, the partnership will look to leverage NTT Data's presence in markets both within and outside Japan, targeting verticals such as financial services, healthcare, government, and manufacturing. The partnership provides MarkLogic, a privately held vendor that is much smaller than Oracle, Microsoft, or IBM, with additional feet on the street from one of the world's largest SIs.

International regulation, additionally, will provide an opportunity for MarkLogic to buttress its case. For instance, the EU's GDPR, which goes into effect in May 2018, broadly affects any organization that interacts with individuals in the EU, and demands very fine-grained control for personal data. For the enterprise that is looking to leverage NoSQL technology while remaining compliant with GDPR, the options are limited; the NoSQL market largely offers simple open source platforms that lack enterprise robustness and security. The partnership with NTT Data, as well NTT Data's expertise with regulated verticals, will help MarkLogic reach its intended audience of large enterprise organizations within global regions such as Europe where data protection regulations are being implemented and adapted.

Appendix

Further reading

Hadoop, SQL, and NoSQL – No Longer an Either-Or Question, IT0014-002937 (September 2014)

"MarkLogic 7 adds Hadoop integration," IT014-002846 (December 2013)

Author

Paige Bartley, Senior Analyst, Information Management

paige.bartley@ovum.com

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