

BELONG

SENIOR BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE SPECIALIST USES ALATION TO DEMOCRATIZE DATA.

Belong Q&A

How is data used at Belong?

Angela Fraga, Senior Business Intelligence Specialist: Belong offers fixed broadband and mobile plans that are simple and easy-to-understand for all Australians. At Belong, we are motivated to share knowledge, with the common goal of better supporting/serving our customers in a way that is genuine and most relevant to their individual needs. Belong is a business of Telstra, Australia's largest telecommunications company.

Data for us is the lifeblood of the business. It infuses every facet of decision-making: it enables us to make smarter decisions around the services we provide, the networks we manage, the ways in which we delight and satisfy our customers, and in wisely navigating a competitive environment.

What are the key data initiatives at Belong?

Angela: We have a corporate initiative to democratize our data. We want to ensure that every person in the business has a lens over our data assets and insight on how to best leverage the information to better improve their work and the services we provide to our customers.

We are currently going through a digital transformation to better enable us to identify where our data is, how it's being used, and how it relates to business outcomes so that we are well-placed to support current and future customers. A large part of this is creating and maintaining a coherent taxonomy that helps the business speak the same language around Belong's enterprise-wide concepts and measures that will benefit our customers.

How does Alation help?

Angela: Belong identified Alation as best-placed to store both our business knowledge and technical metadata as it helps us integrate, centralize, access, and collaborate around fundamental concepts stored in disparate source systems, individuals, or teams.

Alation allows our data Experts and Stewards to draw a holistic picture of the context – definitions, relationships, and rules – for enterprise-wide business concepts such as the Customer or a Service. The ability to map these to their granular, technical objects lessens any ambiguity and guess-work. Paired with the ability to collaborate in-tool with the experts, these build trust and help in the creation of quality metrics for our business to make informed decisions based on the data.

Any staff member of Belong can easily access the data catalog, learn how to best leverage existing data with confidence and agility, and discover new ways to use our data assets – tasks that otherwise would have been manual, time-consuming, and/or prohibitive without a data catalog.

What's the data environment like at Belong?

Angela: Our analytics platform sits in AWS. We have an S3 data lake, a Redshift data warehouse, Tableau as our front-end dashboard and visualization tool, and flavors of Spark and Hive to enable big data and ad hoc querying. As we add new technology, stand up better systems, and equip our people to adapt to an ever-changing business landscape, Alation has quickly become an important part of our ecosystem for common understanding, adaptive change and effective implementation.

Are you using the Alation – Tableau connector?

Angela: Yes. All Gold Standard reporting in Tableau, which is used to track Belong's KPIs are flagged within Alation. These are linked to specific [Business Glossary](#) terms, the relevant data objects, as well as to experts and technical owners. This makes it easy for anyone in Belong to search for these reports and gain a 360-view – used primarily as a starting point to approach the experts, gain understanding, and even improve on our existing assets.

Belong+ Alation

At Belong, Alation is enabling us to:

- Democratize the data company-wide through easy access and collaboration to all our data objects
- Speak the same language around enterprise-wide business concepts using the Business Glossary and other article templates
- Maintain and build a unified, trusted space for data definitions where changes are monitored and approved by the right stewards
- Onboard any new employees with a one-stop-shop for all important reports, concepts, and measures
- Help contextualize our data with a business-focused view of all data assets

The focus on our data – knowing where it is, how it's used, and leveraging its potential – is all about understanding our customers better so that we can provide the best customer experience that meets their individual needs.

How does Alation help Belong continue to be data-driven?

Angela: A nuanced yet singular view of our data helps our business users drive the right outcomes for our Belong's customers using coherent, complete, and trusted descriptors for what information can be leveraged. As we seek for our activities to be compelled by data rather than by personal feeling or intuition, finding meaning and knowing the etymology of our data assets help to galvanize our data governance activities, paving the way to successful data utilization across Belong.



Alation... [is] a lens into how the business uses data and it will create new ways in which we can actually use it.

— Angela Fraga, Senior Business Intelligence Specialist

Facts

Industry: Telecommunications

Data Environment:

- Data Warehouse: Redshift
- Business Intelligence: Tableau