

# Alation + Databricks Unity Catalog:

Alation's Data Intelligence Platform and Databricks Unity Catalog create a powerful combination, making it easy for organizations to get self-service access to ALL of their governed data, and overcome the challenges of modernizing their data landscape. This enables AI-readiness with comprehensive data intelligence and enhanced visibility across your Lakehouse architecture for users at all levels.

Imagine your data stack is a digital library and the books inside represent your data assets. You need a catalog that contains the records and indexes of what books are available in your library, where to find them, and other books like them. Alation is your modern digital library catalog, providing a full wiki-like summary, allowing you to understand the book's content before even borrowing it. You also need a circulation desk to check books in and out, control access to who can check out which books and under what conditions. This is like Databricks Unity Catalog. This combination of visibility and governance illustrates the powerful combination of Alation and Databricks Unity Catalog.

## Alation

- **Data search & discovery** - Alation's business catalog excels in helping all types of users—including business users—find, understand, trust, and govern their data assets across the organization through a business abstraction layer. Intuitive search and discovery, access through business-friendly tools, and collaboration empower a data-driven culture across teams. All while gaining business context through articles and documentation, without having to access the underlying data.
- **Metadata management** - Through Alation you get detailed metadata management, including data lineage, usage statistics, and data relationships. This helps users understand where data comes from and how it is used.

## Databricks Unity Catalog

- **Data access control** - Databricks' technical catalog, Unity Catalog, focuses on managing and securing data accessibility with comprehensive technical metadata, allowing it to act as a control center. This defines and enforces policies across the modern data stack.
- **Secure governance** - Unity Catalog also ensures that data assets are consistent and secure across multiple environments, allowing stewards to track how data and AI/ML models are used. This ensures compliance through transparency.

This combination of best-of-breed technologies ensures you get the best of both worlds. Data search with full context and discovery and enforced governance across the modern data stack.

	 Alation	 databricks	Together
<b>Persona: Data Analyst</b>	✓ Business friendly search and discovery UI		✓
<b>Persona: Data Engineer</b>	✓ Reuse enterprise data asset	✓ Lakehouse federation to build multi source data pipelines	✓
<b>Persona: Governance Officer/Admin</b>	~ Governance officers will curate and add context to data sources across the enterprise	~ Governance Admins can register external data sources for Policy Management	✓
<b>Enterprise Data Sources</b>	✓ Alation pulls data from across enterprise data sources		✓
<b>Behavioral Intelligence</b>	✓ Alation pulls usage information, such as popular tables and columns, from SQL queries		✓
<b>Security Policy</b>		✓ Security Governance provided by Unity Catalog	✓
<b>Business Data Governance</b>	✓ Data users and Governance officers can curate business context on key data assets		✓
<b>Enterprise Lineage Metadata</b>	~ Alation enables enterprise end-to-end lineage visualization	~ Databricks Unity Catalog provides a single source for column level lineage, including external data sources registered in the lakehouse	✓

Figure 1: Alation provides a catalog of catalogs across the enterprise, providing a single-pane-of-glass view to knowledge workers.

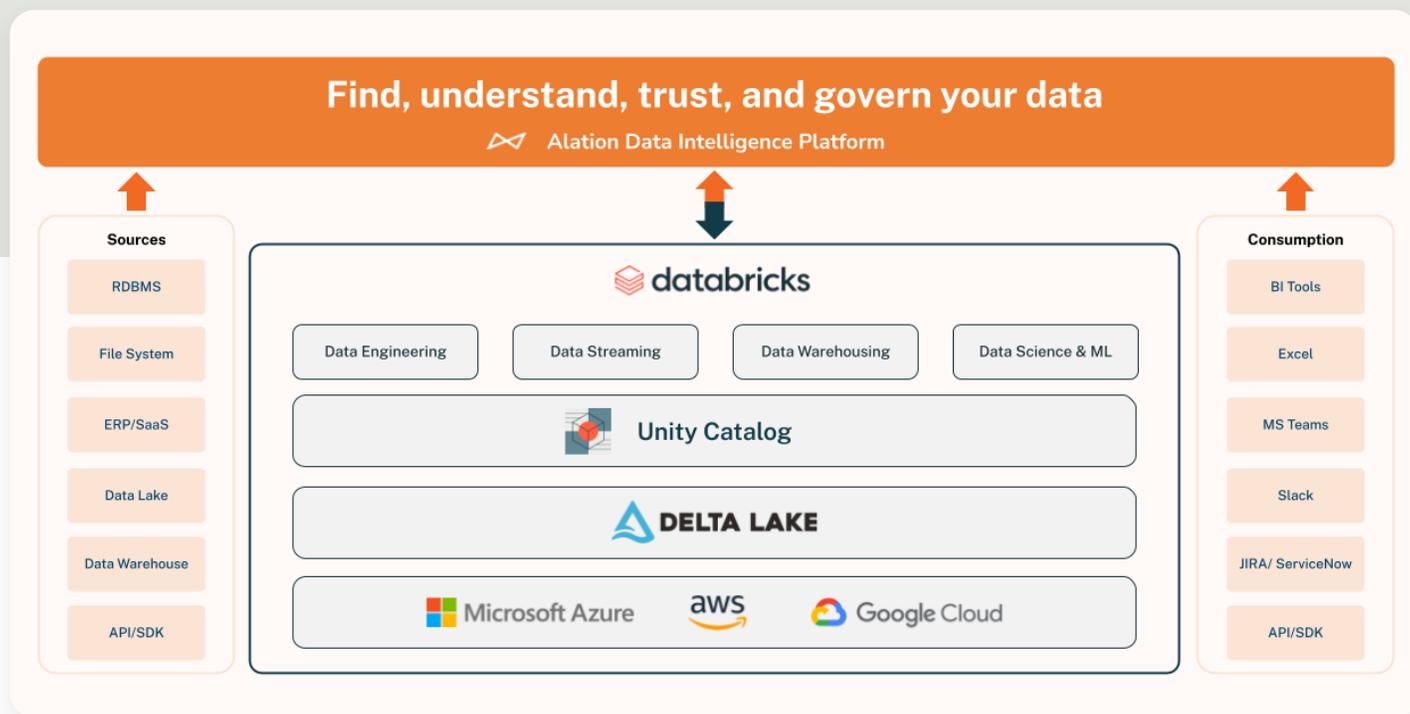


Figure 2: Alation and Databricks: Comprehensive data intelligence and enhanced visibility across your Databricks architecture and beyond for users at all levels

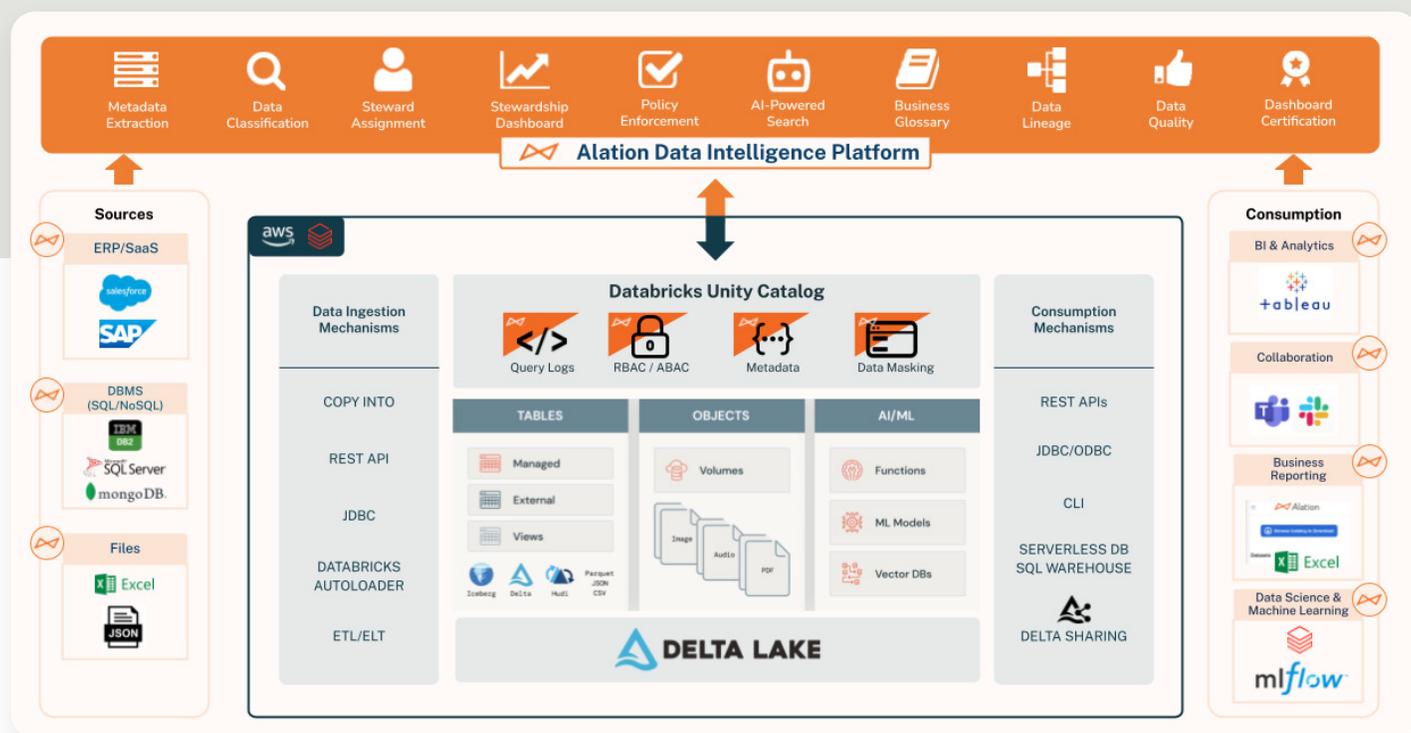


Figure 3: Alation and Databricks enable data and AI initiatives with trusted data and governance across the entire data estate.

## The Latest Enhancements for the Alation + Unity Connector

In a world of increasing data complexity, data users need a single source of truth to find trusted data easily and use it with confidence. With the latest connector enhancements from Alation's 2.2.0 release, joint customers have an easier and more streamlined experience in Alation.

- **Better User Experience** The enhanced user interface provides better navigation and multiple visual cues, making it easy to configure and manage Databricks Unity Catalog data sources.
- **Easy to Connect** The connector now provides a step-by-step process to connect to your Databricks Unity Catalog data source easily and quickly.
- **Additional Error Prevention Checks** We added checks to avoid obvious configuration mistakes and also included text to assist and provide cues while configuring.
- **Detailed Error Reports and Troubleshooting Support** The improvements make troubleshooting easier for metadata extraction and query log ingestion, as you can now have a detailed error report for both processes. The report contains a detailed error description and steps to resolve the issue.
- **Streamlined User Authentication** now supports authenticating with credentials the Agent has fetched from AWS Secrets Manager

## How to Get Started

The OCF Connector for Databricks Unity Catalog was developed by Alation and is available out of the box.

Create a ticket with Alation Support about receiving the Databricks Unity Catalog OCF connector package.

The connector should be used to catalog Databricks Unity Catalog metadata in Alation. It supports both cluster and SQL endpoints for metadata extraction and catalogs the three-level namespace (Catalog, Schema, Table) and objects from multiple workspaces using a single data source connection.

The connector supports Databricks on AWS, Google Cloud, and Azure.

Learn more [here!](#)

Alation is the leader in enterprise data intelligence solutions, enabling self-service analytics, cloud transformation, data governance, and AI-ready data. More than 550 enterprises build data culture and improve data-driven decision-making with Alation, including Cisco, DocuSign, Nasdaq, Pfizer, and Samsung. Alation has been named to Inc. Magazine's Best Workplaces list four times, is a 2022 UK's Best Workplaces™ in tech and Best Workplaces™ for Women, and recognized as a 2022 and 2023 UK's Best Workplaces™.

**For more information, visit [alation.com](https://alation.com)**

Databricks is the Data and AI company. More than 10,000 organizations worldwide—including Comcast, Condé Nast, Grammarly, and over 60% of the Fortune 500—rely on the Databricks Data Intelligence Platform to take control of their data and put it to work with AI. Databricks is headquartered in San Francisco, with offices around the globe, and was founded by the original creators of Lakehouse, Apache Spark™, Delta Lake, and MLflow. To learn more, follow Databricks on [LinkedIn](#), [X](#) and [Facebook](#).

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