



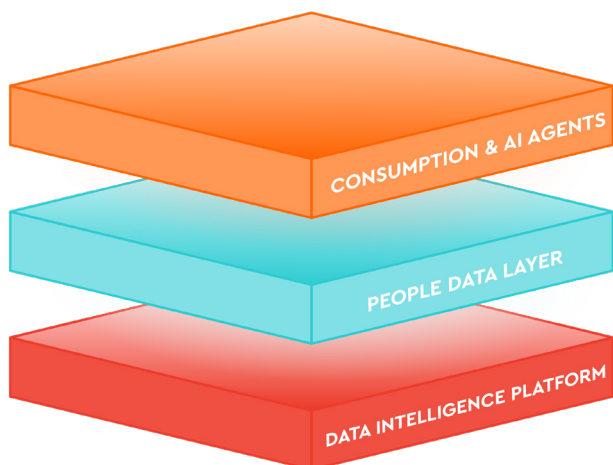
Whitepaper

The Essential People Data Layer for the Databricks Lakehouse

Unified Intelligence. Governed Semantics.
AI-Ready Workforce Intelligence.

Databricks provides the unified storage, compute, and governance foundation for the enterprise. Visier, a Workforce Intelligence Platform, extends that foundation with a specialized People Data Layer. Its semantic engine is designed to interpret the complexity of workforce data and make it BI and AI-ready.

Together, they solve the "Last Mile" problem of people analytics: turning raw, messy HR data into governed insights without burying data engineering teams in maintenance.



Faster analytics, AI-driven insights, and business adoption

Schema change resilience, historical accuracy, recursive security and semantics

visier

Unified storage, governance, and compute for analytics and AI

 **databricks**



The Technical Debt of People Data

While Databricks' Data Intelligence Platform unifies data, analytics, and AI, people data presents unique engineering hurdles that standard SQL and ETL tools struggle to handle efficiently.

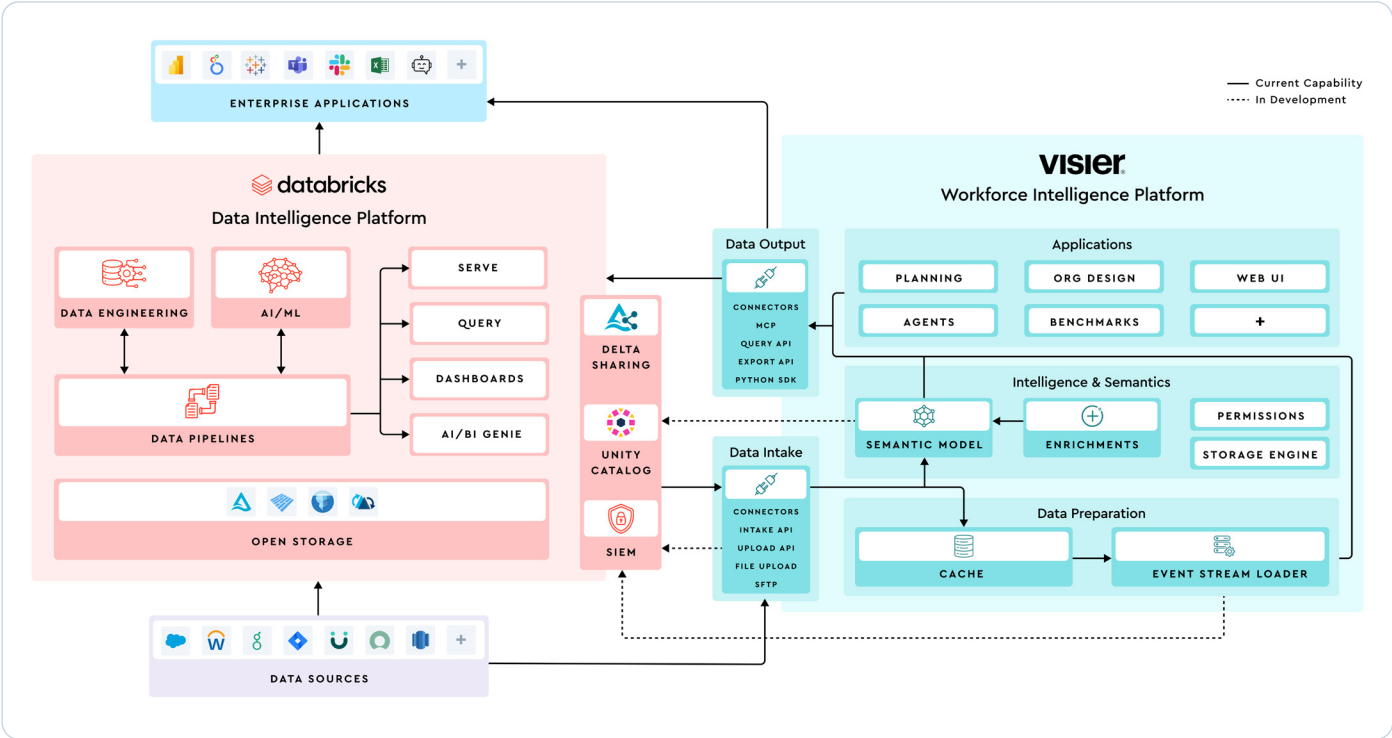
The Challenge	The Reality
Schema Drift	HR systems (like Workday) frequently change field definitions, breaking fixed-schema pipelines and forcing constant "break/fix" cycles for engineers.
Historical Accuracy	HR frequently backdates records (retroactive promotions, corrections). To report accurately, engineers must write complex "as-is" vs. "as-was" logic that breaks easily.
Recursive Security	People data requires dynamic, role-based and column-based security that follows reporting hierarchies. Enforcing this via SQL joins at query time kills dashboard performance.
AI Semantic Gap	GenAI models do not natively understand "tenure," "span of control," or context-aware security rules. Without a semantic layer, AI grounded in raw HR tables produces hallucinations and compliance risks.





Completing the Lakehouse Architecture

Visier is a Workforce Intelligence Platform that offloads the heavy lifting of people data management. It connects to Databricks as a governed consumer, makes people data usable for AI/BI, and exposes enriched data products and insights back to the enterprise.



Ingest	Harmonize	Enrich	Expose
Visier connects to the Databricks Lakehouse via Delta Sharing, or directly to source systems, ingesting raw data	Visier's engine normalizes data across disparate source systems, handling schema changes and standardizing definitions	Visier applies 3,000+ pre-built metrics, benchmarks, and temporal logic (handling reorgs and retroactive updates automatically)	Enriched data products are delivered through Visier's UI, AI agents, APIs, and MCP, and can be consumed by enterprise applications or flow back into Databricks

On the Roadmap: Native write-back capabilities are actively in development to push enriched data products directly into Databricks artifacts, ensuring the Lakehouse remains the single source of truth.



Eliminating the Maintenance Burden

Instead of treating people analytics as an open-ended engineering project, Visier offloads the domain-specific engineering challenges that typically bury data teams in maintenance. By handling these complexities, Visier delivers five critical advantages that keep your workforce data BI and AI-ready with less work.

Key Advantage	Description	Outcome
 Schema Change Resilience	HR schemas are volatile. Visier handles schema drift at the ingestion layer. When source fields change, Visier remaps them in the normalization layer, ensuring downstream logic, metrics, and dashboards continue working without engineering intervention.	Reduce constant break/fix work and free engineers from neverending maintenance.
 Accurate History, Every Time	Visier's specialized storage engine handles time-based logic natively. It automatically calculates "as-is" and "as-was" views, even when data is backdated or the organization goes through a restructure.	Finance and HR always see consistent metrics without analysts rewriting complex SQL window functions.
 HR Security Without the Latency	Visier applies complex row-level security (RLS), column-level security, and dynamic hierarchy permissions in-memory, rather than scanning tables during query execution.	Dashboards load in sub-seconds, even for thousands of managers, driving adoption where standard BI/SQL implementations often lag.
 Closing the AI Semantic Gap	Visier acts as the "semantic brain" for your AI. Instead of hard-coding HR logic into prompts or spending endless hours building features, AI agents can call Visier via MCP or consume Visier's AI-ready data products to get trusted, governed answers.	Prevent hallucinations and accelerates Time-to-AI by providing models with context-aware, reliable features.
 Lowers Total Cost of Ownership	Building a custom people analytics stack requires uncapped compute for recursive queries, expensive data science hours for cleaning data, and ongoing engineering maintenance.	Visier converts unpredictable maintenance costs into a predictable solution, reducing operational load by up to 70%.

Proven Performance at Scale

3 Seconds

AVERAGE TIME FOR A 400M RECORD QUERY, DELIVERING ZERO-LATENCY IMPACT.

1.67B Records

PROCESSED IN UNDER 2 HOURS, EASILY HANDLING MASSIVE DATA LOADS.

30.6B+ Rows

NORMALIZED DAILY TO RESOLVE COMPLEX HISTORICAL VIEWS AND SCHEMA DRIFT AT SCALE.



Extending Unity Catalog to the Workforce

Visier respects and extends the governance standards established in your Lakehouse, creating a seamless chain of custody from raw storage to executive insight.



Unity Catalog Enabled

Visier connects to the Lakehouse as a governed consumer using Delta Sharing, the open standard for secure data exchange. Unlike traditional methods that require complex file exports or custom API maintenance, Delta Sharing allows Visier to access live, governed datasets directly. This ensures that all data ingestion respects the access controls, lineage tracking, and auditing policies defined in Unity Catalog, maintaining the integrity of your security perimeter.



Contextual Security

Governance doesn't stop at the table level. Once data is ingested, Visier applies dynamic, row-level and column-based security that standard SQL cannot easily replicate. For example, while Unity Catalog might grant access to a "Compensation" table, Visier's security model ensures a manager can only see compensation records for their direct reports at that specific moment in time. This ensures data remains secure and compliant regardless of how or where it is consumed.

A Unified Architecture for Workforce Intelligence

For modern IT leaders, the question is no longer "Can we build this?" but "Should we?" Great engineering teams build differentiators, not utilities. Managing schema drift, restating historical timelines, and enforcing recursive security is undifferentiated heavy lifting that consumes valuable sprint cycles.

By establishing Visier as the People Data Layer for your Lakehouse, you convert unpredictable maintenance into a governed, scalable foundation. This frees your high-value talent to focus on what matters most: building unique innovation and strategic products on top of clean workforce data, rather than fixing the plumbing underneath it.

Don't let the complexity of people data be the bottleneck in your Data Intelligence strategy. Visier with Databricks delivers the best of both worlds: the scalable, open foundation of the Lakehouse combined with the domain-specific semantics required for accurate workforce insights.

[Contact us today](#) to discuss how Visier can accelerate your data and AI initiatives with your existing Databricks environment.

About Visier

Visier is the global leader in Workforce Intelligence that powers every people decision. Our award-winning, agentic AI technology surfaces the insights leaders need to plan, decide, and act with confidence in the moments that matter most. As the market leader in people analytics, workforce planning, organizational design, and manager effectiveness solutions, we fuel smarter decision-making for organizations across the globe. Our mission is to help businesses lead with insight at scale as they continuously transform.

Founded in 2010 by the pioneers of business intelligence, we have over 65,000 customers in 75 countries—including enterprises like BASF, Panasonic, Domino's Pizza, Experian, Amgen, eBay, and Ford Motor Company.

Discover more at visier.com