"Above the Trend Line" – Your Industry Rumor Central for 10/2/2017

October 2, 2017 by Daniel Gutierrez

Above the Trend Line: your industry rumor central is a recurring feature of insideBIGDATA. In this column, we present a variety of short time-critical news items grouped by category such as people movements, funding news, financial results, industry alignments, rumors and general scuttlebutt floating around the big data, data science and machine learning industries including behind-the-scenes anecdotes and curious buzz. Our intent is to provide you a one-stop source of late-breaking news to help you keep abreast of this fast-paced ecosystem. We're working hard on your behalf with our extensive vendor network to give you all the latest happenings. Heard of something yourself? Tell us! Just e-mail me at: daniel@insidebigdata.com. Be sure to Tweet *Above the Trend Line* articles using the hashtag: #abovethetrendline.

Last week was pretty busy, as the Strata Data Conference 2017 was happening in NYC and we were on hand to take in all the action. Stay tuned for our show roundup later this week! In the meantime, let the big data scuttlebutt begin with some new funding news … – Panoply announced it has expanded its funding to a total of $13 million. The latest to join the round is C5 Capital with a $5M infusion. The firm joined the company's existing investors Intel Capital, Blumberg Capital and 500 Startups. The additional funds underscore continuing investor confidence in the Panoply Smart Data Warehouse™ benefitting data engineers, data analysts/scientists and business end users. The new funds support aggressive acceleration of sales, marketing and product roadmap advancement for the company's ETL-less smart data warehouse that expedites the journey of migrating raw data to analytics using machine learning and natural language processing. The additional funding will allow Panoply to execute strategies to meet and exceed the demands of today's big data revolution, including expanding the engineering team at an exponential rate to scale with customer demand … Optalysys Ltd., a start-up pioneering the development of light-speed optical coprocessors, announced the company raised 3.95 million U.S. dollars / 3.05 million British pounds from undisclosed angel investors. Optalysys will use the funds to manufacture the first commercially available high-performance computing (HPC) processor based on its patented optical processing technology. Because its coprocessor excels at rapid and accurate pattern recognition (required for Big Data processing) and mathematical model generation applications, genomic sequence alignment is the first of many application areas targeted by Optalysys … TigerGraph made announcements including its emergence from stealth, securing of $31M in series A funding, general availability of TigerGraph – a native parallel graph database platform for enterprise applications, and availability of both its Cloud Service and GraphStudio, TigerGraph's visual software development kit (SDK). TigerGraph's Native Parallel Graph Technology (NPG) powers real-time deep link analytics for enterprises with complex and colossal amounts of data. With investors including

Qiming VC, Baidu, Ant Financial, AME Cloud, Morado Ventures, Zod Nazem, Danhua Capital and DCVC, TigerGraph's $31 million in funding is one of the most sizeable financing rounds in graph database history. Formerly known as GraphSQL while in stealth, TigerGraph is a technical breakthrough representing the next stage in the graph database evolution – a complete, distributed, parallel graph computing platform supporting web-scale data analytics in real-time … Incorta, the real-time analytics platform that makes the traditional data warehouse obsolete, announced an additional $15 million in funding led by new investor Kleiner Perkins. Existing investors, including GV (previously Google Ventures) and former Oracle Executive Vice President Ron Wohl also participated in the round. GV led Incorta's $10 million Series A in May 2016. Rather than the traditional model of performing slow and expensive extract, transform, load (ETL) projects to combine data from different data sources, Incorta's Direct Data MappingTM engine—an industry first—instead combines large, complex business data in real time. Since data maps directly to source data regardless of its form or structure, Incorta's approach enables the development of highly secured, real-time analytic applications in only days, and reduces query times from hours to seconds—even at massive scale. With Direct Data Mapping, business users gain easy, secure, sub-second access to meaningful business insight.

On the new partnership, alignments, and collaborations front we learned that … Alation Inc., the collaborative data company, and Paxata, a leader in empowering all business consumers to intelligently transform raw data into ready information instantaneously, announced a partnership and integration that simplifies establishing trust in the data lake. No longer is an understanding of the physical location and structure of data a constraint for business analysis. Together, Alation and Paxata enable data consumers to quickly discover and profile data in both raw and compressed formats, so immediate trust in data can be established no matter how that data is distributed — within a single data lake, across data lakes on-premises or within hybrid or multi-cloud data lake environments. The integration between Alation and Paxata introduces a new "click-to-profile" data discovery feature that greatly reduces the time it takes to be able to understand and trust raw and compressed files. Users can start their data discovery in the Alation Data Catalog, find a trusted data asset and — with a single click — push it into Paxata's Self-Service Data Prep Application, where they can profile and prepare data for analysis. Alation's ability to automatically inventory data assets and collect their business context drives proactive recommendations for data governance and data usage that complement Paxata's ability to support the self-service data wrangling needs of the data consumer … West Monroe Partners, a business and technology consulting firm, and C3 IoT, the platform as a service (PaaS) leader for rapidly developing and operating AI and IoT software applications, announced their partnership to address the growing demand from CEOs across industries for digital transformation initiatives that leverage big data, predictive analytics, AI, and IoT. Through this partnership, West Monroe will extend its system integration, application development, program management, and change management services to support enterprise companies across industries as they adopt the C3 IoT Platform for digital transformation. West Monroe and C3 IoT are building on a proven partnership, having delivered digital transformations at companies such as Con Edison. Con Edison standardized on the C3 IoT Platform to power its digital transformation, which includes reducing operating costs, ensuring the optimal deployment and operational health of 5 million smart meters, and developing new products and services for improved customer engagement … Microsoft and Paxata, a leader in empowering all business consumers to intelligently transform raw data into ready information instantaneously, announced the general availability of the industry's first self-service information platform for Microsoft Azure. The current release of the company's award-winning Adaptive Information Platform includes one-click deployment

to launch Paxata within Azure HDInsight in addition to significant advancements through native support for the Microsoft Azure cloud. HDInsight customers gain the fastest time-to-insight with the lowest TCO using Paxata's self-service data preparation application to visually profile, clean, merge and enrich raw data into ready information. Paxata's Adaptive Information Platform for Microsoft Azure provides a number of advancements including: generally available support for running Paxata's Adaptive Information Platform on Azure HDInsight, a fully-managed cloud Apache™ Hadoop® and Apache™ Spark™ offering that provides optimized open source analytic clusters for Apache Spark™, Hive, MapReduce, HBase, Storm, Kafka, and Microsoft R Server backed by a 99.9% SLA; support for connectivity and persistence in Microsoft Azure Blob Storage, where customers can read and write to Azure Blob Storage and use it as a persistent store for Paxata platform-specific storage; and support for Apache Spark 2.0 … Keen IO, the data analytics platform company, announced it has partnered with SendGrid, a leading customer communication platform that drives engagement and growth, to provide organizations with real-time intelligence to measure and optimize the effectiveness of their marketing campaigns. The Keen IO for SendGrid app requires no coding, can be set up in less than one minute, and provides built-in analytics to assess and compare the performance of campaigns based on behaviors, attributes, segments and more. The integration with Keen IO provides SendGrid's more than 55,000 customers an analytics based high fidelity history of every email interaction they have ever taken. Beyond comprehensive performance metrics and visualizations for each campaign, including messages sent, opened, clicked on, revenue per email, etc., Keen IO provides deeper visibility into what works and what doesn't. For example, a retailer could run A/B tests with multiple subject line variants simultaneously. Since Keen IO can visualize the performance of each variant in real-time, the campaign manager can automatically identify those that are outperforming and allow them to run, while abandoning those that are not … Babel Street®, an advanced multi-lingual search and data analytics company, announced that it has formalized a partnership with the National Center for Spectator Sports Safety and Security (NCS^4) during its participation at the Project Stadia Sports Security Senior Management Training Course that took place at Interpol Headquarters in Lyon, France.

We also learned of an interesting pivot … Open Data Group, a private company that has spent the past 18 years innovating the way analytic and predictive models are deployed, has announced the evolution of their organizational mission from consultation to creating software products. These will allow enterprises to deploy more analytics with higher quality and greater efficiency than ever before. This shift to Analytic Deployment Technology helps enterprises make analytic deployment a core competency vital to competing successfully in today's business environment. Recently the industry has invested heavily in the world of analytics and data science. There are innumerable languages, analytic creation software environments, and open source technologies now available to empower analytic professionals (e.g. data scientists, mathematicians, statisticians, actuaries, etc.) to create the best analytic models possible. The problem is that there is still a struggle to move the models from analytic team creation to IT team production successfully. Today's deployment process creates new, complex challenges that must be solved in order for businesses to achieve ROI from their investments in analytics. Open Data Group is pioneering Analytic Deployment Technology with their core technology, FastScore™. This technology is a point solution that bridges the analytic deployment gap that exists today between Analytic and IT professionals. By embracing open source and integrating with any existing IT environment using a micro-services deployment approach, FastScore sits between analytic model creation and IT production environments, managing multiple input and output streams seamlessly.

A new survey by Dimensional Insight reveals the struggles CIOs face with data governance initiatives in the healthcare industry. A few key findings are included below:

- CIOs noted that improving trust in data was the leading driver (68%) for data governance adoption at hospitals.
- Despite this key driver, more than half (56%) of CIOs said their orgs had incomplete or non-existent governance processes in place.
- Lack of resources was both the biggest challenge that hospital CIOs faced during the data governance implementation process (57%), as well as the biggest reason for not adopting the capability in the first place (70%).

In the new customer wins category, we heard that … Supercomputer leader Cray Inc. (Nasdaq: CRAY) announced the Korea Institute of Science and Technology Information (KISTI) has awarded the Company a contract valued at more than $48 million for a Cray® CS500™ cluster supercomputer. The 128-rack system, which includes Intel® Xeon® Scalable processors and Intel® Xeon Phi™ processors, will be the largest supercomputer in South Korea and will provide supercomputing services for universities, research institutes, and industries. Located in Daejeon, South Korea, KISTI is a government-funded research institute designed to maximize the efficiency of science and technology R&D, and support high-tech R&D for the country's research communities. Since 1962, KISTI has served as a national science and technology information center and has provided information that researchers need to enhance South Korea's national competitiveness as a specialized science and technology research institute supported by the government. The new Cray CS500 cluster supercomputer at KISTI will support the organization's leadership position as a world-class information research institute … Cray also announced the Japan Advanced Institute for Science and Technology (JAIST) has put a Cray® XC40™ supercomputer into production. JAIST, a postgraduate university located in Nomi, Ishikawa, Japan and one of the country's premier academic research centers, is using its new Cray XC40 system as it primary supercomputing resource supporting computational research across the University. The three-cabinet Cray XC40 supercomputer is the latest in a long history of Cray systems used to advance scientific research at JAIST. Previous Cray supercomputers at JAIST have included the Cray T3E™, Cray XT3™, and Cray XC30™ systems. In addition to powering data-intensive research in a wide array of scientific disciplines at JAIST, the new Cray XC40 supercomputer will also help speed advancements in the development of new algorithms for highly-parallel computers and will perform large-scale simulations in nanotechnology and biomechanics.

In new people movement news, we learned that … MapD Technologies, a leader in GPU-accelerated data analytics, announced that enterprise software marketing expert Grant Halloran has joined the company as executive vice president and chief marketing officer (CMO), reporting to CEO and MapD co-founder, Todd Mostak. Grant brings to MapD twenty years of expertise in the software industry, most recently as Anaplan CMO through its hyper-growth period 2015 to 2017. In that time Anaplan grew its customer base 400% and global headcount expanded from 200 to 700. Prior to Anaplan, Grant served as global vice president and general manager of the Marketing and CRM Software group at enterprise software company Infor. Before that, Grant co-founded Orbis, a SaaS-based marketing software company that was acquired by Infor in 2012. Grant studied at Australian National University, where he earned a Bachelor of Commerce degree.

And finally, we received some commentaries about recent events in the industry, starting with the announcement from Salesforce about how they'll be applying Einstein to their forecasting capabilities. Andy Byrne, CEO of Clari, thinks what Salesforce SHOULD have done is redesigned their forecasting product to take true advantage of Einstein's AI capabilities — but the reality is, they can't given the architectural constraints. Instead, Salesforce did the bare minimum to the UX and simply added a column that shows deal scores and some future prediction capabilities. One of the biggest historical problems customers have with Salesforce is that the company makes announcements for products not ready to be used for literally 1-2 years after announcement. This is the SAME case. Andy argues the only way to solve forecasting is to address the larger opportunity-to-close (OTC) issue. Most importantly, he implores: how does this really move Salesforce's customers forward if they're still relying on manually imputed data from sales reps?

And regarding the MongoDB IP news:

When you compare the tech IPO market over the last few years, 2017 has been a strong one for startups, and it is indicative of a larger shift in the industry — particularly with regards to cloud technology," said Ramin Sayar, CEO, Sumo Logic*. "Now more than ever, the shift to the cloud and industry-wide adoption of other emerging technologies has created an opening for companies like MongoDB to move beyond legacy companies and databases and capitalize on the complex and evolving requirements of business applications. We have passed traditional IT and entered into a new age of connectivity where business and technology are inseparable, and old-guard companies cannot keep up. We need to bring continuous automation, intelligence and analytics to every part of the development cycle to understand our customers and the evolving trends of business applications. MongoDB is a valued partner, and Sumo Logic is proud to work alongside a company that is helping organizations think big about their software and data."*

MongoDB's IPO further validates the story, not only around open source technologies and their adoption by the enterprise but the vibrant commercial success of open source-focused businesses," said Joe McCann, CEO of NodeSource*. "Forrester Research points out that open source comprises 80 – 90% of the code in a typical application. All Fortune 500 companies today are utilizing open source technologies more and more and organizations, big and small, are building applications using open source as their foundation because it decreases costs while accelerating time to market. That's where companies such as MongoDB, NodeSource, and GitHub come into play. MongoDB's is a great example of the market continuing to see value and opportunity in open source technology and the commercial vendors who support it."*