

Speaking of Alpha

Shaping the Future of Data Management

**A conversation with John Plansky and
Spiros Giannaros**

STATE STREET®

Data is at the heart of every investment firm's operations. An effective data management strategy can help asset allocators and institutional investment and wealth managers uncover new insights, simplify their operating model and better serve their clients.



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Investment firms face many challenges when it comes to data management. The sheer volume of data can be overwhelming, while unstructured and streaming data present additional obstacles to extracting usable insights for making investment and risk decisions. Asset managers need new, innovative tools to curate and interpret the breadth of both internally generated and externally sourced data at scale.

Fragmented, siloed data also poses a challenge. Aggregating and reconciling data from multiple sources is time-consuming and complex, hindering timely investment decision-making and increasing operational costs. Multiple data streams often result in conflicting or unverified data — undermining investment professionals' confidence in their investment decisions. Data velocity also becomes a consideration. With trading decisions accelerating, post-trade timeframes and batch (overnight) processes are giving way to more real-time intraday processes.

Our Speaking of Alpha series features insights and commentary from [State Street Alpha](#) experts on data, operations, technology and services. In this article, John Plansky, global head of State Street AlphaSM and Spiros Giannaros, CEO of [Charles River Development](#) join Frank Smietana, Head of Thought Leadership at State Street Alpha for a discussion on how the launch of our [Alpha Data Platform and Service](#) is helping investment managers and asset allocators better manage their data.

Frank: What are some of the challenges institutional investment firms face when it comes to data management?

John: Simplifying the data environment is one of the biggest problems our clients face. With disparate data sources, having frictionless access to a single, enterprise-wide source of truth is crucial. This helps eliminate the need for multiple systems, while also reducing the complexity of reconciliations and increasing the timeliness and accuracy of data. A verified data set that's available in near real-time supports accurate and efficient decision-making.

Spiros: While there is more data available than ever before, many firms still struggle with accessing that data. This is because traditional technology was built with a focus on storing rather than consuming data. Legacy technology was largely focused on tabular data that lends itself to storage in relational databases. These tools are ill-suited for capturing unstructured and financial time-series data.

Firms also struggle with data governance. Regulations around personal information and geographic residency require solutions that provide transparency and auditability to ensure data is used appropriately. A third challenge involves data suitability. Business users require detailed context about their data. Otherwise, potentially valuable information can be underutilized or missed entirely.



Simplifying the data environment is one of the biggest challenges facing our clients.

- John Plansky

Frank: How is State Street helping clients solve these challenges?

John: To help investment firms seamlessly assemble and access data across both public and private markets, we launched our Alpha Data Platform, an end-to-end data management and warehouse solution. It offers enhanced data management through a cloud-native platform, delivered via State Street Alpha. The platform enables clients to access data across their front, middle and back office in near real time with self-service analysis and visualization capabilities to accelerate decision-making. The platform also helps ensure high-quality data, while reducing operating costs by outsourcing data operations.

Frank: In what ways are industry partnerships helping to bring data management to the next level?

Spiros: A foundational aspect of next-gen data management is interoperability with external technology providers. By partnering with industry innovators such as Snowflake and Microsoft® Azure, we can provide our clients with unfettered access to trusted data from across Alpha, as well as a broad spectrum of externally generated data available in the Snowflake Data Marketplace.

The platform also leverages product and engineering expertise here at Charles River Development, supported by State Street's technology scale and global service delivery teams for cross-region business connectivity. This introduces a whole new way to accelerate time to market that previously didn't exist.

Frank: How does the partnership with Snowflake promote interoperability?

John: Investment managers benefit from timely insights while simplifying the user experience for assembling and consuming this information. By combining State Street's vast asset management data with Snowflake's powerful Data Cloud and sharing capabilities, end users are better positioned to streamline their investment process and mobilize data for better informed asset allocation, trading and risk decisions.

Frank: What are some additional ways institutional investment managers and allocators can benefit from an interoperable platform?

John: Consolidating data environments and effectively streamlining business processes promotes a collaborative environment. Increased transparency is also crucial.

With insight into data availability, definitions, usage and lineage, investment professionals can reduce manual reconciliations and build trust with their investors and regulators.

Spiros: A framework for integrating third-party and client-specific data expands potential data sources, empowering managers to uncover new insights. The Alpha Data Platform's extensible data model allows for third-party integration — including external custodians — and enables data sharing across client and marketplace ecosystems.

Frank: Investment managers are on a relentless hunt for growth. How are data management tools helping them discover new insights?

John: Intuitive, self-service data exploration tools combined with third-party data marketplaces encourage platform use and accelerate time to new investment insights. A cloud-native data solution can dramatically improve a firm's ability to achieve scale and deliver on performance objectives.

Less time spent managing data can mean more time spent on the business activities designed to support a firm's growth, such as generating returns, servicing their investors and developing new investment products.

Spiros: The aim of the Snowflake Data Cloud is to help clients access, explore, share and connect their data. It's exciting to see how the Alpha Data Platform, leveraging Snowflake, will empower our clients to blend data from the Snowflake Data Marketplace with their own systems. By breaking down data silos across their organization, investment managers are in a much stronger position to extract value from their data.



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- Spiros Giannoros

For more information on Alpha and the Alpha Data Platform and Service,
visit: statestreet.com/alpha.

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