

Alex Narayan

Engineering Manager - Data Platform

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Berlin, Germany · EU Blue Card

Summary

Engineering manager with 13+ years in data across database administration, Python development, SRE, and data platform engineering. Leads the team responsible for Blacklane's Snowflake/AWS data platform: ingestion, orchestration, governance, access control, and AI enablement for four stakeholder teams. Hands-on contributor.

Experience

Blacklane GmbH · Berlin

Engineering Manager - Data Platform · May 2026 - Present

Data Platform Engineer · Oct 2024 - May 2026 · *team-lead and people-management duties from Jul 2025*

Team of 3 engineers (staff, senior, junior) responsible for the AWS/Snowflake data platform.

People and delivery

- Own 1:1s, performance reviews, career development, and assist in hiring
- Coach engineers from junior to staff through pairing, clear expectations, and regular feedback
- Set the team's vision, roadmap, and sprint plans
- Organize the on-call rotation; act as the team's single point of contact for stakeholders
- Co-Manage six-figure annual vendor budgets (Snowflake, Fivetran); hold Snowflake spend growth to 10% for the current contract term despite multiplying data volume, through warehouse right-sizing and tech-debt removal
- Migrated the AWS EMR data warehouse to Snowflake, including the dbt project and related Airflow DAGs

Stakeholder Teams

- **Analytics:** provide and operate the Snowflake environment; set dbt standards, run dbt upgrades, and deliver Git training
- **Data Science:** provide Terraform and AWS infrastructure support
- **Finance & Pricing:** co-maintain a legacy Java pricing application
- **AI/ML:** align new AI initiatives with the existing Snowflake platform to avoid duplicate infrastructure

Platform, Governance, and AI

- Own the request workflow (Jira/Confluence service desk) for company-wide GDPR data masking in Snowflake and Omni; review the masking implementation
- Review the design and rollout of the company's first GDPR right-to-be-forgotten process across the data stack
- Govern access through layered RBAC (database roles composed into functional roles, PII denied by default) with Okta SSO onboarding; ~90% of engineers connect AI agents (Claude, MCP, Snowflake CLI) to curated production data
- Direct Snowflake Cortex cost and quality optimization: model benchmarking for classification and estimation, AI-function query rewrites, spend monitoring, and published guidance
- Own business-critical and regulatory data feeds: airline customer reporting, a regulatory feed to the Riyadh transport authority, and Salesforce reverse ETL
- Operate the company's sole Airflow instance (MWAA): ingestion DAGs and dbt-core orchestration via Cosmos
- Operate near real-time GPS ingestion (SQS, Kinesis, Data Firehose, S3) built to scale from ~50M records/day today to 500M+ without redesign
- Maintain AWS infrastructure in Terraform and 80+ Fivetran sources

Smartbroker AG · Berlin

Lead Data Engineer · Nov 2023 - Oct 2024

- Led 4 senior engineers across AWS and GCP
- Designed a central BigQuery warehouse, cutting insight delivery from days to hours
- Owned engineering practices: source control, linting, dev workflows, retrospectives, documentation, mentoring

Delivery Hero GmbH · Berlin

Senior Data Engineer · Jun 2020 - Nov 2023

- Redesigned hiring with pair-programming interviews in place of take-home projects, cutting time-to-offer from

1–2 months to 3 weeks

- Migrated a 5TB+ Redshift warehouse to BigQuery: fact/dimension modeling, partitioning, clustering, Airflow DAGs
- Contributed to the in-house Google Analytics 4 replacement as an engineer on the platform team
- Established cost-effective BigQuery practices (partition filtering, anti-pattern reviews)
- Built a GitHub Actions CI/CD pipeline for AWS Lambda (HR analytics)
- Raised code documentation coverage to 95%+; authored internal Git/GitHub guides and a [video course](#); trained teams on dataset use

Finleap Connect (formerly figo GmbH) · Berlin

Site Reliability Engineer · Oct 2019 – Mar 2020

Python Software Engineer · Nov 2018 – Oct 2019

- Migrated a 1TB+ product database to CockroachDB on Kubernetes, with export and validation tooling that saved days of engineering time
- Built a streaming data lake (Pub/Sub, Cloud Functions, BigQuery), increasing reporting capability 5x; built monitoring dashboards and advised on SLAs
- Developed features for the flagship banking API (Python/Flask)

CorVel Corporation · Portland, OR

Data Warehouse Engineer · Sep 2017 – Apr 2018

Database Administrator · Aug 2013 – Sep 2017

- Owned deployments across 21+ SQL Server databases and 3 environments; tuned queries, secured and performance-tested servers, and shared on-call
- Extended dimension and fact tables and the internal C#/SSIS ETL tool; resolved data-quality issues
- Built Python/C# tooling for DBAs, maintained source control, and trained engineers

Skills

Leadership: people management, hiring, performance reviews, roadmap and sprint planning, stakeholder management, vendor budgets, RFCs, training and public speaking

Data platform: Snowflake (Cortex, RBAC, masking policies), dbt, Airflow (MWAA, Cosmos), Fivetran, Omni, Streamlit, BigQuery, data modeling, ETL/ELT

Cloud and infrastructure: AWS (S3, SQS, SNS, Kinesis, Data Firehose, Lambda, EMR), GCP, Terraform, Kubernetes, GitHub Actions, Linux

Languages: SQL, Python, Java (maintenance)

Governance and AI: GDPR (masking, right to be forgotten), access control, data quality, MCP, AI agents

Education

BSc Financial Economics · Brigham Young University – Idaho · 2009 – 2013