

## **Investigative Analytics Software: Build Or Buy?**

At DataWalk we occasionally encounter customers who are considering developing their own software solution for investigative analytics, instead of purchasing an off-the-shelf solution such as DataWalk. An off-the-shelf product such as DataWalk<sup>®</sup> is available immediately, more cost effective, more robust, and far lower risk than building your own investigative analytics system. This is further discussed below:

### **DataWalk Works, While Most Custom Software Projects Fail**

Building custom software solutions is difficult. Various industry studies suggest that two-out-of-three custom software projects will fail, and that the failure rate increases with the scale of the project<sup>1</sup>. DataWalk provides a solution that works, that is available immediately, and that is effectively maintained and frequently updated with new functionality.

### **Building A Enterprise-Class Analytics System Is A Significant Development Effort**

Software companies which have developed Enterprise-class investigative analytics systems have required years of development work just to get to an initial release. For example, Palantir Technologies required three years to get their first product to market<sup>2</sup>, and DataWalk required a similar timeframe for an initial release. Importantly, industry experience shows that initial releases are not always sufficiently functional for production deployments with demanding customers, and that an effective solution is often achieved only after multiple releases and a series of learning cycles with multiple customers.

### **Building A Enterprise-Class Analytics System Is A Significant Technical Challenge**

A modern Enterprise-class investigative analytics system requires supporting large volumes of data, many different types of data, many users, a variety of analytical features, and stringent granular security. This requires significant development – and/or invention – of key technologies. Many companies that have tried, have failed. DataWalk has over ten patents pending and/or issued, and other vendors have similarly relied on technology invention to meet customer needs. It cannot be safely assumed that other development organizations can meet the challenge.

### **Maintenance Of Robust Enterprise-Class Custom Solutions Can Be A Significant Challenge**

Maintenance costs and efforts associated with custom products can be significant. Processes must be implemented, and resources must be in place, to manage and repair both bugs and enhancement requests. If a fundamental limitation of the software is discovered after the initial release, then the costs and time to re-work the solution can be substantial. In contrast, off-the-shelf products have already resolved any such issues.

### **Available Products Meet The Need Today!**

Some organizations must write their own custom software, as they have unique requirements that purchased products cannot address. This is not the case with Enterprise-class investigative analytics software, with available solutions including DataWalk, Palantir<sup>®</sup> Gotham<sup>®</sup>, and IBM<sup>®</sup> i2<sup>®</sup> Enterprise Insight Analysis.

## Buying Is Typically More Economical Than Building

Building a credible, functional, high performance Enterprise-class system will typically cost many millions of dollars. While other off-the-shelf software products can also be very expensive, DataWalk is a fraction of the cost.

In summary, purchasing an off-the-shelf product such as DataWalk will reduce risk, reduce costs, and accelerate successful implementation when compared to a custom development project.

1. For example, see <https://www.atlascode.com/blog/why-software-projects-fail/#:~:text=According%20to%20Standish%20Group's%20Annual,in%20partial%20or%20total%20failure.&text=Despite%20larger%20pr ojects%20being%20more,fa il%20one%20in%20ten%20times.>
2. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palantir\\_Technologies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palantir_Technologies)

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