



# Business Forecasting using 10x the Data at 20x the Speed

## The Role of Business Forecasting

Business forecasts influence decisions that have significant economic impact for companies. Analysts across the enterprise roll up forecasts to their executive teams estimating future sales, expenditures and profits. In a world that's so interconnected, global economic and political trends can have drastic effects on corporate profits. These factors have contributed to the emergence of business forecasting as one of the most important tools for enterprise planning.

## How Business Forecasting is Used

Business forecasting provides the opportunity to anticipate how the business can capitalize on or circumvent economic trends. Executives and business leaders work with analysts to answer specific business questions. Analysts then collect and analyze historical data relevant to those business questions in order to identify patterns that can be used to make decisions impacting marketing operations, financial operations, demand planning, supply chain, production and more. Typically enterprises will forecast for different time horizons like daily, monthly, quarterly and yearly depending on the business use case. At a minimum, businesses develop annual forecasts. Annual forecasts are able to smooth out sudden economic changes that can affect the business short term but have little impact on the long term. access data across the enterprise for analysis.

## The Challenges of Developing Business Forecasts with Popular BI Tools



### Amount of Data Available for Analysis

Forecasts are only as good as the data used to build them. The best forecasts include as much historically relevant data as is available. BI applications and supporting technologies like Microsoft Excel, Tableau, PowerBI and Microsoft SQL Server Analysis Services (SSAS) are limited by their inability to perform drill-down analysis with hierarchies, dimensions and measures on billions of rows of data. These data size limitations prevent analysts from delivering robust, timely forecasts resulting in costly and poor decision making for the business.



### Time to Decision

Successful businesses are able to respond to evolving market conditions quickly and confidently. These decisions allow businesses to take advantage of opportunities resulting in new revenue or cost savings. Companies can miss out on these opportunities due to the time it takes to go from data origination to insight. These time consuming processes include:

- Creating new dimensions, hierarchies and measures used to ask new questions of the data
- Inconsistency of KPIs reported across reports
- Adding new data sets for enriched analysis



*One of our top priorities was to have the ability to run rapid-fire, multi-dimensional analytics at large scale, directly from the BI tools our data users prefer. With AtScale, users can run live queries, straight to Google BigQuery at great speeds. This is not something that we saw anyone else able to deliver.*

— Maurice Lacroix  
BI Product Owner,  
bol.com



*AtScale's ability to automatically create and manage highly efficient aggregates is critical to our success. Before we had AtScale, query performance was too slow. To reach AtScale's level of efficiency and speed, we would have needed to devote significant time and resources to building aggregates by hand.*

— Mark Stange-Tregear  
VP of Analytics,  
Rakuten



## How to Overcome the Challenges of Business Forecasting with AtScale



### Decisions Driven by Enterprise Scale Data

Make critical business decisions based on all of your data versus just a subset of it. Connect your existing BI tool to your data via a live connection to capitalize on the scalability of your data warehouse to performantly analyze billions of rows of data. AtScale allows you to perform sub-second analysis on terabytes of data without data extracts or requiring help from IT.



### Consistency of Business Metrics and KPIs

AtScale's Universal Semantic Layer™ ensures that every BI tool, including Microsoft Excel, PowerBI and Tableau, is analyzing the same exact data with the same definitions, resulting in consistent metrics that are used to make enterprise-wide decisions without having to do costly KPI reconciliation.



### Accelerate Time-to-Insight by over 40 days

The average enterprise requires 45 days to deliver executive reporting. AtScale reduces the time to deliver an executive report by more than 40 days. Perform ad-hoc “what-if” analysis capabilities across BI tools, including Microsoft Excel, without the time-consuming data engineering work needed to prepare and deliver KPIs to executive decision makers.

To get a custom report of how AtScale can reduce your own time-to-insight, please see our [Analytics ROI calculators](#).

## Outcomes of Using AtScale for Business Forecasting

|  | Without AtScale | With AtScale |
|--|-----------------|--------------|
| Average time to develop new forecast                           | ~45 Days        | 1 to 3 Days  |
| Average time to refresh/update forecast                        | 5 to 10 Days    | <5 Seconds   |
| Average time to add new dimensions and hierarchies to forecast | 5 to 10 Days    | <5 Minutes   |

## ABOUT ATSCALE

AtScale powers the analysis used by the Global 2000 to make million dollar business decisions. The company's Intelligent Data Virtualization™ platform provides Cloud OLAP, Autonomous Data Engineering™ and a Universal Semantic Layer™ for fast, accurate data-driven business intelligence and machine learning analysis at scale. For more information, [www.atScale.com](http://www.atScale.com)