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Airflow & dbt

The hipsters of data integration meet Azure

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About me



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- Principal consultant @ Solvership, HR
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- In Solvership since 2016
- Uni lecturer on data and database-related courses
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Airflow & dbt walk into a Microsoft Data Platform conference…





From Drag & Drop to Git push - The evolution of data integration

















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And the data engineers discovered… YAML?

- Pipelines are now code
- Workflows are Git-based
- Data now has CI/CD
- Automated testing transformations
- Data observability & lineage



Moving from pipeline-based ETL to code-based ETL

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But we are already in Azure… why should we care?

ADF & Fabric have pipelines and transformations

Why would we go with those data engineering hipsters?



Orchestration is not ETL



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Airflow: the scheduler that refused to be an ETL tool



- DAG-based orchestration
- Python-defined workflows
- Extensible operators
- Pluggable execution
- Cross-system coordination



dbt: ETL redefined



dbt is a transformation **framework**

- ELT-first philosophy
- Models as modular SQL
- Ref() dependency management
- Jinja templating (SQL + logic)
- Automatic lineage
- Built-in testing
- git-first development

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Didn’t we forget something?



There was time before Microsoft Fabric even existed



- Azure Data Factory
  - Does data movement
  - Orchestrates pipelines
  - Managed PaaS
  - Enterprise governance
  - Included monitoring

Your friendly cloud data integration helper



Airflow… but slightly attached - and more managed

- ADF and Airflow **work well together**

- But, be aware of
  - Separate runtime experience
  - Two different UIs
  - Multiple control planes
  - Additional configuration overhead
  - And still not fully unified with analytics layer



And then came Fabric…

Unified

- Shared storage
- Multiple processing engines
- Multiple analytical engines
- Inside a same workspace

So why is this important for our story?



… and made Airflow a first-class citizen

- Airflow finally fits into the Native Fabric workload
  - Runs inside Fabric workspace
  - Managed runtime
  - Integrated identity & security
  - Workspace-level governance
  - Unified monitoring experience
  - Git-enable development



… so the other hipsters moved in as well

dbt inside Microsoft Fabric

- runs against Fabric Warehouse and Lakehouse
- SQL-first transformation framework
- Brought Jinja templating & macros
- Introduced built-in testing & lineage
- Aligned with git-based development
- Aligned with enterprise governance



So, how are those hipsters sewn into Microsoft Fabric?



Control plane



Orchestration



Transformation



Storage



Semantic layer



Consumption



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Enough theory… show me how those hipsters work!





Demo 1 – Airflow in Fabric

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I am still not convinced, didn't you mention there are more hipsters?

Yeah, show us those hipsters!







Demo 2 – Airflow & dbt in Fabric

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Thank you for the attention!

