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Experian Aperture Data Studio

The company

Experian's roots go back to 1826, but it was not officially founded until 1996 when distinct US and UK-based credit scoring companies were merged to form Experian under the ownership of Great Universal Stores. It was a decade later that the company was de-merged and became independent.

It is now headquartered in Ireland and is a public company listed in London, where it is a part of the FTSE100. The company has 17,000 employees working in 37 different countries.

In so far as Experian Aperture Data Studio is concerned, the company targets this at the use cases illustrated in **Figure 1**, which apply across industries and across the globe.

“ Like Excel on steroids. It is nice. That's good. ”

“ I'm impressed. Clean and easy to use, fast install. ”

What is it?

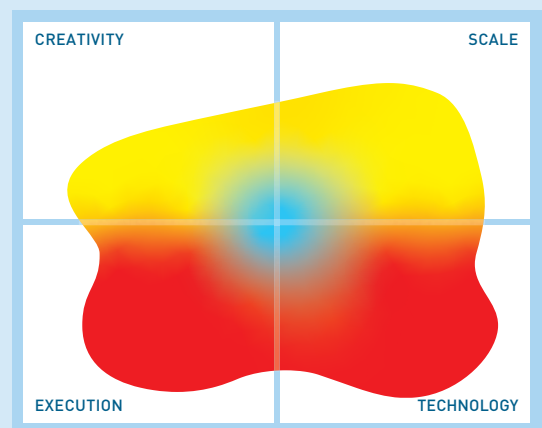
Experian Aperture Data Studio is a data quality and enrichment platform that was first formally released in 2018 to replace Experian Pandora, a product that Experian inherited through the acquisition of X88.

At heart it is a data quality solution that is able to perform in-depth data profiling and data quality analysis. The design elements of the product support all the sorts of functional requirements that are shown in **Figure 2**. The product is persona-based and, in the latest release (2.0) there is a strong emphasis on supporting

collaboration between the people who need to use your data for operational and analytic reasons and those that have a more technical relationship with and understanding of that data.

What does it do?

The functions that Experian Aperture Data Studio can perform are detailed in **Figure 2**. Notable are the enrichment functions that can leverage other



The image in this Mutable Quadrant is derived from 13 high level metrics, the more the image covers a section the better. Execution metrics relate to the company, Technology to the product, Creativity to both technical and business innovation and Scale covers the potential business and market impact.

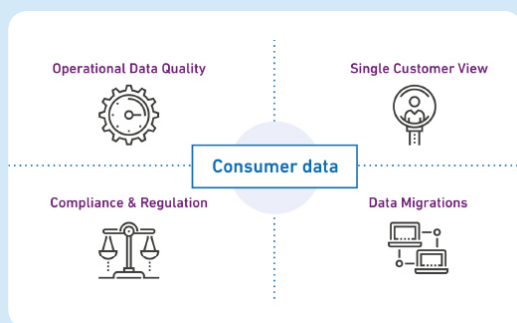


Figure 1 – Aperture Data Studio use cases



Figure 2 – Experian Aperture Data Studio functional components

aspects of Experian's data product portfolio for things like geospatial, demographic and credit-based information.

Experian Aperture Data Studio is browser-based, has strong data workflow capabilities and supports user personas. The product has been designed to work within existing technology stacks. Thus, for example, the product's data preparation capabilities which are largely targeted at operational rather than analytic environments are complementary to both data cataloguing and data governance solutions from third-party vendors such as Collibra. The software will store relevant metadata defining such integration.

Collaboration	★★★★★
Ease of use	★★★★★
Enrichment	★★★★★
Matching	★★★★

Performance	★★★★★
Profiling	★★★★★
RegComp	★★★★
Workflow	★★★★★

“It is very cool and very powerful. The things you are doing are pretty good, very top notch.”

As far as data workflow is concerned, Experian Aperture Data Studio separates data profiling (which is done on all your data, not just samples) from data loading.

Thus, data profiling is an explicit workflow step or action during data discovery, and therefore distinct from data manipulation and load processes. Moreover, during profiling you can now choose which columns to profile rather than profiling the whole table. Address and email verification can also be defined as steps within a workflow, as can functions you have written using the comprehensive Software Developer’s Kit (SDK). Further, it is worth commenting that you can explore and drill-down from a workflow without having to run a workflow, which is not the case with some other products. This means users can save time by checking the workflow without having to spend time running the file. Other features include the ability to chart results – compare data between runs and undertake version management for workflows. Exhaustive object versioning is a new capability introduced within the latest release and this also supports reversions. This new release also supports data workflow annotation to support more extensive documentation of workflows.

obfuscates credit card numbers. If you want to use something more sophisticated, such as format preserving encryption then there is an SDK that will enable this. Alongside spaces, Experian has also introduced support for pre-configured views, consisting of trusted data, that are specific to a particular space or sub-space, such as a “view for marketing” so that the marketing department only sees the data that is relevant to its function.

Also in this release are both a new user interface and the ability to define data quality and data matching rules for identifying duplicate records.

An example of duplicate matching rules is illustrated in **Figure 3**. These matching rules are applied when looking for and evaluating potential duplicates. While on the subject of matching, Experian Aperture Data Studio does not apply machine learning to the matching process itself, but it does apply machine learning to matching rules to obtain the best set of those rules.

Why should you care?

After investigating the first release of Experian Aperture Data Studio we wrote that “most vendors, in any market, try to meet modern requirements by bolting on extra capabilities. If that is simply a question of adding on a feature here or there, that is not problem. However, when it comes to fundamentals such as self-service and collaboration, these are not the type of services that are amenable to bolting on. Experian is therefore to be applauded for biting the bullet and developing a product suitable for the third decade of this century.” With the release of version 2.0 and the addition of the various capabilities described above, we have no reason to row back on this opinion.

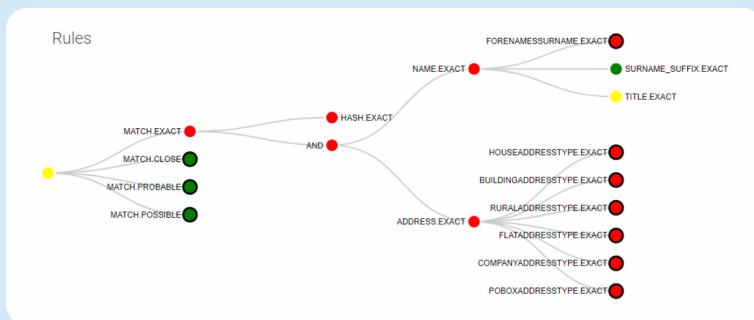


Figure 3 – An example of duplicate matching rules

As mentioned, Experian Aperture Data Studio is persona-based, and the latest release has a particular emphasis on business users and collaboration. In particular, the company has introduced the concept of “spaces”, where you can define and use functions that are specific to a particular area such as a marketing department. These functions may come out of the box (for example, a packaged set of functions for specific compliance purposes) or you can define your own. As an example, you might have a function that

The Bottom Line

Experian Aperture Data Studio is a modern application for data management and offers the sort of features that businesses require from such a solution. We said something similar in our previous review of the product but were forced to qualify our valediction because of the lack of some capabilities. With the release of version 2.0 we happy to remove that qualification: Experian Aperture Data Studio is a product we are happy to recommend.

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