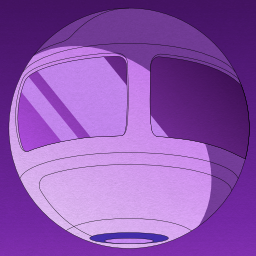
cyera

Case Study

From 170 Million to 500K: How a UK Fintech Company Built AI-Ready Data Foundations



How a fast-growing UK fintech built the data foundations to keep customer trust, cut risk, and get ready for AI, in a two-year partnership with Cyera.

99.9%
Reduction in sensitive data instances

170M to 500K
Sensitive instances, before and after

~2 years
Partnership, value within the first months

1 view
Unified across AWS, Snowflake, and files

"In financial services, trust is everything. The moment you lose a customer's trust is the moment you lose that customer. Partnering with Cyera was key to building and continuing to maintain that trust with our customers." - Director of Lending and Analytics, UK fintech company

The customer is a UK fintech scale-up on a simple mission: make it easier for consumers to finance a major purchase. As the company's data and analytics leader describes it, the company uses data and algorithms to decide who to lend to and how much, and to give customers a fast, certain answer. "Data is the lifeblood of a lending business," he says. It is also some of the most sensitive data a person will ever share: name, date of birth, address, and the kind of information most important to an individual.

That makes trust the whole game. The company already had a well-structured approach to protecting personal data. But as any fast-growing company captures more and more information, that data naturally spreads into the core data warehouse, across the wider ecosystem, and into documents and spreadsheets. The challenge the company set out to solve was knowing every single place personal customer information lived, who was viewing it, and where it flowed.

Company Profile: UK Fintech Company

About: A fast-growing UK fintech scale-up on a mission to make it easier for consumers to finance a major purchase, using data and algorithms to make fast, confident lending decisions.

Industry: Consumer fintech and lending

Headquarters: United Kingdom

Company stage: High-growth scale-up

Data estate: Core data in AWS with Snowflake as the data warehouse, plus documents and spreadsheets across the wider ecosystem

Products used: Cyera DSPM, for AI-driven data classification, bulk remediation, and alerting across the data estate

Trust Is the Whole Business

In financial services, trust is not a soft value. It is the business model. "If an organization loses the trust of consumers, then it's a very slippery slope towards not having a successful business anymore," the director of lending and analytics says. The company's customers hand over deeply personal information with every application and trust the company to keep it secure and use it appropriately.

"In a world of finance and financial services, trust is everything. The moment you lose a customer's trust is the moment you lose that customer."

The Challenge of Growing Data

The company's core data sits in AWS, with Snowflake as its data warehouse, and the team has worked hard to keep a small number of well-trusted, dynamic data sources. Even so, sensitive information has a way of appearing in new places as a business scales. "There were always potential for that data to flow into different databases or different data sources," he says, "both within our data warehouse, but also our broader ecosystem, so documents and Excel sheets, for example." What the company needed was a way to scan its entire data ecosystem, find those instances, and minimize exposure to any potential data leakage.

Why Fintech Company Chose Cyera

The company evaluated a range of data security providers. What separated Cyera was focus. "A lot of other providers perhaps go very broad," he says, "but Cyera went deep. They had a real focus on what matters." Two other things sealed it: cultural fit, a shared conviction about the importance of consumer data, and the speed and adaptability to build new functionality alongside the company's own product.

From About 170 Million to 500,000

The company began working with Cyera about two years ago and saw traction within the first few months. The headline result came from that first full scan of the estate. "We identified somewhere in the region of 170 million potential sensitive instances," the director of lending and analytics says, and through identification and minimization, "today that is down to just 500,000 instances." In his words, that is a reduction of 99.9% of those sensitive instances, a result he calls "well ahead of our expectations and industry standards."

Speed made it possible. The company holds many millions of rows of customer information, and Cyera's AI-driven scanning classifies it rapidly and flags potential incidents to the engineering team. "A rapid search and identification solution is game-changing," he says. Just as important is what happens after a finding. With bulk remediation, the team can fix a large set of sensitive data at once rather than one record at a time, which "saves many, many hours and days of engineering resource." A Slack integration pushes Cyera alerts into the channel where the company's engineers and analysts already work, so new sensitive data is spotted and remediated quickly. Dashboards and project views let different teams focus on the data that matters to them while keeping one secure picture of the whole estate.

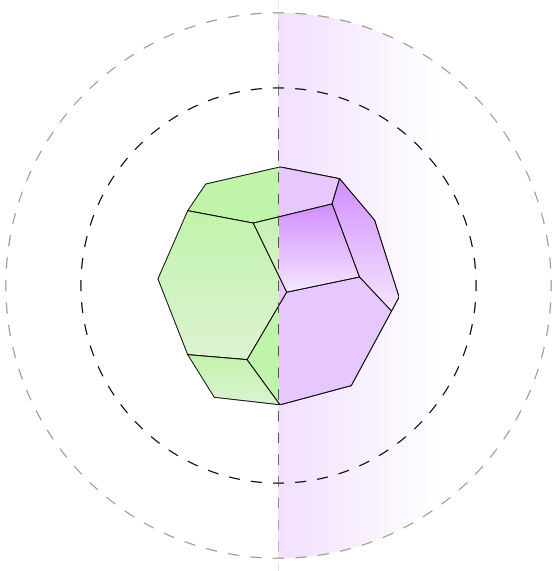
"It's like ordering your own bespoke kit car, and not having to wait months and months for it to arrive."

A Partnership That Builds

What surprised the data leader most was not a feature. It was the partnership. Several of the capabilities the company relies on, including bulk remediation, the Slack integration, and tailored user views, began as challenges the team brought to Cyera and were built together. Many are now generally available to every Cyera customer. “This is not just about buying a service,” he says. “It’s really about partnering with them.” That combination of depth and agility, going deep on data security while moving quickly to build what a customer needs, is what earns his recommendation:

“I would definitely recommend Cyera as a data security solution. They really understand what matters and have great technology to identify potential issues, flag those issues, and help you remediate them.”

Foundations for AI

The relationship has shifted from cleaning up the past to preparing for what is next. The organization's early use cases were about understanding and securing its existing data. Now the focus is readiness for AI. The data leader is blunt about the order of operations: any organization running “AI on top of shaky data is actually going to be in real trouble.” The safe path starts with the data. “It all has to be built on great data foundations,” he says. With those foundations in place, the company’s engineers spend less time on manual data review and more on building new products, and the company can move into AI with confidence that customer data stays protected. For a business whose growth depends on fast, trusted decisions, that is the point. As he puts it, using data to help customers get on the road quickly is one reason the team has been “one of the fastest growing fintechs in the UK over the last four years.”

“What I really like about Cyera is that they are not happy to just stand still with the product that they brought to market. I think it’s been a really great experience to partner with them, to build new features and functionality that builds out their products and offering, but also helps solve a lot of our challenges as well.”