

CASE STUDY

Transforming Data into Insight: How TalkTalk Leveraged ER/Studio to Boost Data Efficiency, Enhance Accuracy, and Reduce Costs

TalkTalk

20% Reduction in Time-To-Market for
Data Products

40% Reduction in Manual Tasks
Related to Poor Data Quality

“ER/Studio has broken down communication barriers between IT and business. With its easy-to-navigate interface, everyone can understand and contribute to the data architecture, aligning goals across the company.”

Phillip Powell | Data Architect at TalkTalk

Background

Established in 2003, TalkTalk has grown to become the leading value provider of broadband, voice and TV services in the UK market. Its broadband, phone, television, and mobile services include Simply Broadband, Essentials TV, Plus TV and the recently launched All-In SIM. Recently, TalkTalk embarked on a Make TalkTalk Simpler initiative. Part of the program was focused on optimizing the value derived from its vast sources of data to gain a clearer understanding of their customers in order to develop products to meet evolving demands.

Challenge

TalkTalk's rapid expansion through acquisitions led to a complex ecosystem of disparate systems across billing, CRM, and provisioning functions. According to Philip Powell, Data Architect at TalkTalk, the swift growth unexpectedly increased customer churn, largely due to a fragmented understanding of customer data spread across multiple platforms. As Powell described, the need to simplify customer engagement and gain a unified view of the customer experience became paramount.

"We realized that the company needed to move to a single platform; we needed a way to make customer engagement simpler," Powell explained.

To address these challenges, TalkTalk recognized that data modeling and governance would be crucial in centralizing data and maintaining accuracy in customer insights. With ER/Studio, TalkTalk could streamline its integration of new systems, organizing and consolidating data from multiple sources into a unified platform. This unified data model reduced redundancies, minimized silos, and improved data transparency, creating an organized framework to support customer insights and reduce churn.

Typically, TalkTalk relied on an ad-hoc approach for business data requests, with little interaction between initial requirements and final delivery. This lack of communication led to misalignment and unmet expectations. ER/Studio would help TalkTalk establish clear communication channels by enabling collaborative data models, shared business glossaries, and easy visualization of data lineage. These capabilities helped TalkTalk reduce misunderstandings between data teams and business stakeholders, ultimately allowing for more accurate, accessible, and business-aligned reporting.

By 2013, TalkTalk launched its "Getting Value from Data" initiative, focusing on simplifying data usage across four pillars: people, processes, products, and technology. Through ER/Studio's data governance and data integration tools, TalkTalk could meet its goal of leveraging data more effectively to drive impactful business decisions and create a single source of truth for their growing customer base.

Solution

Powell selected ER/Studio Data Architect as the enterprise modeling tool for TalkTalk, recognizing its potential to bridge the gap between technical teams and business stakeholders.

"ER/Studio was the bridge that allowed our technical team to communicate effectively with business users, aligning how entities related to our source system data," he explained.

With ER/Studio, TalkTalk gained a platform that fosters collaboration across departments, providing shared models and metadata to ensure decision-making based on accurate, comprehensive data insights.

ER/Studio's suite of features, such as automated modeling tasks, allowed TalkTalk to accelerate the analysis and optimization of its database and data warehouse designs. This automation streamlined routine tasks, freeing up time for Powell's team to focus on more strategic data initiatives.

ER/Studio also excels in logical-to-physical model replication, a functionality Powell found invaluable compared to other tools.

"ER/Studio's logical-to-physical replication was far superior to what I had experienced with other platforms," Powell noted, emphasizing its ease of use across technical and non-technical users.

Additionally, ER/Studio's intuitive user interface and sub-modeling capabilities facilitated smoother onboarding and training within Powell's team.

"The interface is straightforward enough that both technical and non-technical team members can navigate it comfortably," Powell shared.

He found that even new team members could utilize ER/Studio effectively after minimal training. Its sub-modeling feature enabled TalkTalk to break down large enterprise models into smaller, project-driven business models while sharing familiar entities across projects, enhancing collaboration and flexibility.

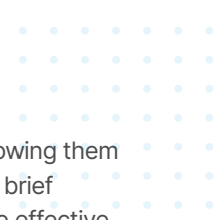
In summary, ER/Studio empowered TalkTalk to optimize its data modeling practices, align technical and business perspectives, and accelerate onboarding and project scalability.

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Phillip Powell | Data Architect at TalkTalk



Benefits



With the implementation of ER/Studio, TalkTalk's technology team achieved a streamlined approach to data modeling, allowing them to communicate data structures and attributes to business teams. This new alignment allowed business teams to submit brief descriptions of their requirements, which the technical team could rapidly convert into actionable, logical models for more effective querying and data reporting.

"With ER/Studio, we could visualize what they wanted and improve our engagement with the business," says Philip Powell, Data Architect at TalkTalk.

Key Milestones and Accomplishments

Improved Data Accessibility and Collaboration: ER/Studio enabled business users to engage with and use the data warehouse extensively, fostering a data-driven culture. Through improved targeting of customer bases and enhanced up-sell opportunities, TalkTalk reduced customer churn.

Significant Time Savings in Data Preparation: With ER/Studio, TalkTalk achieved substantial time savings, notably reducing the data-gathering phase for essential processes. For example, the data collection process for pricing decisions, which previously took three months, was reduced by two-thirds. This milestone exemplifies how ER/Studio's streamlined modeling approach accelerates data-driven decision-making, delivering insights faster and reducing time spent on iterative revisions.

Enhanced Development and Business Alignment: The IT and business teams at TalkTalk now collaborate throughout the development lifecycle, driven by a shared understanding facilitated by ER/Studio. This cultural shift has resulted in fewer revisions, more accurate project outcomes, and a shared understanding of business requirements.

Deployment of ER/Studio Repository for Enhanced Control: Recently, TalkTalk deployed the ER/Studio Repository, significantly improving version control and documentation management. This deployment has ensured that all teams operate on a consistent version of the model, reducing discrepancies and facilitating clear documentation processes. This roll-out marks a critical step toward organization-wide model consistency and clarity.

Planned Expansion to ER/Studio Team Server for Increased Accessibility: To extend access and visibility further, TalkTalk is preparing to deploy an ER/Studio Team Server, enabling business teams to independently access and search model diagrams via the Repository. "At the end of every presentation I've done, people ask if they can access the models. Our next goal is to make them viewable across the organization by simply logging in and searching the Repository," says Powell.

As TalkTalk continues to adapt to an evolving consumer landscape, ER/Studio plays a central role in transforming its data infrastructure to meet modern demands.

"We're stepping up another gear," Powell reflects. "We must fully understand and continually improve our data landscape."



IDERA's ER/Studio Data Modeling Tools

ER/Studio solutions help your organization and technical stakeholders map your complex data landscape, building a solid foundation for data governance. Create a business-driven data architecture to organize information, govern data, and unify the enterprise:

- Create enterprise-class data models.
- Align processes with business goals.
- Collaborate on glossaries and metadata.

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“As we continue to grow, ER/Studio is the backbone of our data strategy. It's flexible enough to scale with us, keeping our data organized, governed, and ready to support any new initiatives we take on.”

Phillip Powell | Data Architect at TalkTalk