

ESTES

www.estes-express.com

INDUSTRY

Freight Transportation



PROFILE

Estes Express Lines, founded in 1931, is the largest privately held freight transportation company in North America. The company has more than 10,000 employees, a fleet of more than 8,500 tractors and 34,000 trailers, and a network of more than 270 terminals, with coverage in all 50 states, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and the Caribbean. Estes Express Lines offers a comprehensive suite of freight shipping services to deliver shipments where and when they are needed and provides online tools and applications designed to make shipping as easy as possible.



The Denodo Platform not only reduces data entry and errors, it also helps us get the right data to the right people at the right time. It helps us make the right decisions about every piece of freight, not only to move it most efficiently but also to provide the best experience for our customers and the safest, most streamlined experience for our drivers.”

— Todd Florence, CIO at
Estes Express Lines

Read about Estes Express Lines’ use of the Denodo Platform in the [Wall Street Journal](#)

Estes Express Lines Leverages the Denodo Platform to Streamline Freight Transportation and Provide Customers with Up-to-the-Minute Updates

Estes Express Lines is the largest privately held freight transportation company in North America. Every day, thousands of customers rely on Estes to deliver time-critical freight shipments across the United States, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and the Caribbean, and for over ninety years, the company has been known for its dependability. Estes cannot afford to let this reputation fade.

Business Goal: Accelerate Shipments while Improving Customer Intelligence

The freight transportation industry has been slowly undergoing a digital transformation, but this need has been exacerbated by the recent pandemic, with its associated surge in e-commerce activity and rising consumer awareness of the trackability of packages. Estes Express lines wanted to differentiate from the competition by digitizing key services, so the company could improve delivery times and provide customers with up-to-the minute information about their shipments via online tools and applications.

Like many other companies in the freight transportation industry, Estes was gathering data through myriad different processes including paper bills of lading; manual data entry into different phones, laptops, and other devices; and storing data across multiple discrete cloud and on-premises systems and applications, all of which impacted delivery times due to duplication, errors, and incomplete data on package progress. Even if the company could save two minutes from every pickup by streamlining data access, that would save a tremendous amount of time, resulting in a substantial monetary benefit. Also, improving the flow of data was necessary to provide customers with better, faster access to information about their packages.

Streamlined data access would also improve the lives of Estes drivers, who do not consider data entry to be the core part of their job. Because drivers are the backbone of the freight transportation industry, Estes needed to do what it could to make their days as frictionless as possible.

These data-entry and data-access challenges cascaded throughout the Estes data infrastructure. IT was spending time physically moving data before it could be put into production; time, money, and resources were spent on redundant hardware and code; data security was handled separately by different teams; and business users depended on IT to furnish their data requests. To access the data they needed, business users had to first put in a request to IT, and that process alone was sometimes taking over three days.



Estes Express Lines needed a way to reduce data entry and duplication and to accelerate and simplify data access. This would not only improve transportation efficiency but also enable the company to provide customers with such features as up-to-the-minute updates, delivery notifications, and intelligence about the condition of their delivered packages.

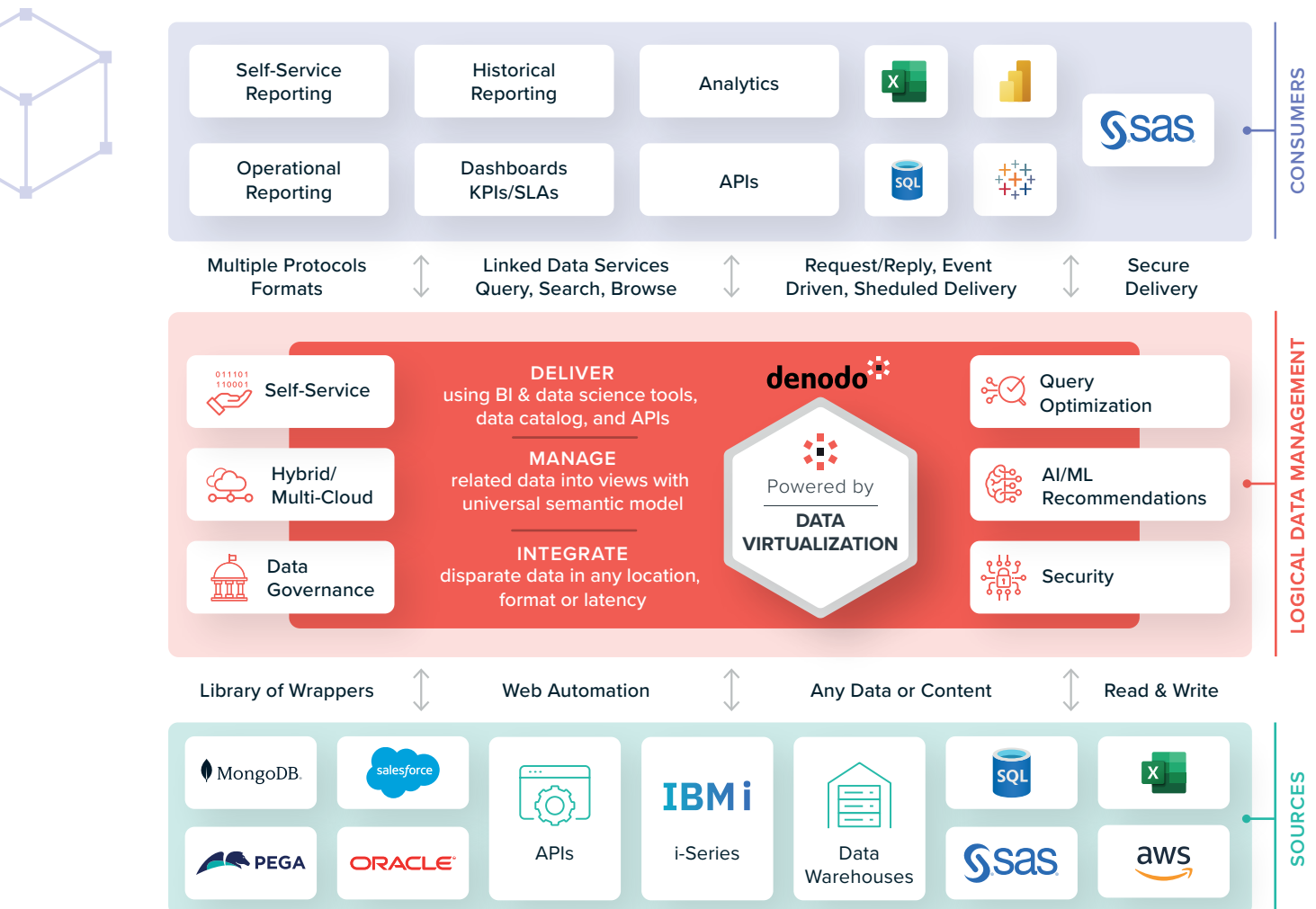
The Solution: A Single Unified Data-Access Layer

Leveraging the Denodo Platform, a logical data management platform powered by data virtualization, Estes Express Lines established a data fabric over the company's disparate on-premises and cloud data sources, for a single unified data-access layer. Data virtualization enables logical, real-time connections to data across the different sources, leaving the source data in its original locations. Traditional data integration approaches, in contrast, rely on physically replicating data. "With the Denodo Platform's data fabric," said Todd Florence, CIO at Estes Express Lines, "we can provide data in a fraction of the time, because we're virtualizing the data and mashing it up, as opposed to moving it around."

With the Denodo Platform in place, Estes drivers can enter data only once, be it through the scan of a bill of lading at pickup or through an update at any stage in a package's journey, and that data will be immediately available to any authorized user connected to the data fabric. Estes Express Lines leveraged the Denodo Platform to enable "digital twins" of all packages in transit, similar to the "digital twins" in manufacturing. Stakeholders can quickly obtain the status of any package just by looking up its "twin."

The Denodo Platform streamlines shipments by integrating data from GPS systems, telematics, and mounted cameras, eliminating a wide variety of manual tasks, such as logging hours.

Implemented as a unified data-access layer above Estes's disparate data sources, the Denodo Platform abstracts data administrators from the complexity of accessing the different underlying data sources. Estes Express Lines leveraged this architecture to establish intermediate semantic layers above the company's data sources, and several of the company's "citizen development programs" can now safely build and modify business-focused data solutions in these semantic layers, in an iterative manner, without impacting any of the underlying data. This architecture also enables Estes to modernize legacy systems without impacting day-to-day operations.



Benefits

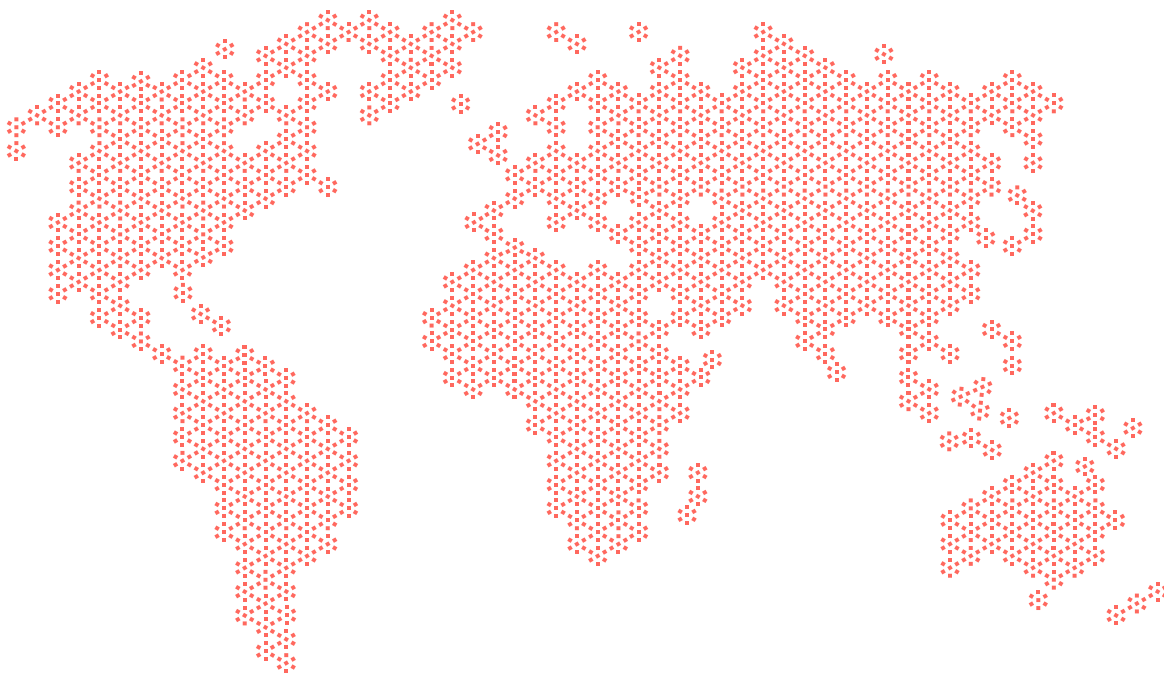
The Denodo Platform enabled Estes Express Lines to provide seamless, real-time access to data across the company's disparate data sources.

At the same time, Estes stakeholders found that the Denodo Platform was extremely easy to implement compared with other solutions, and that it quickly demonstrated its capabilities. "The Denodo Platform has completely revolutionized the way things are done at Estes," said Bob Cournoyer, Senior Director, Data Strategy & Services, at Estes Express Lines. "When our company completed the proof of concept (POC), we were completely blown away by what Denodo's data fabric was able to accomplish, and because of its ease-of-use, we were able to get our first project up and running in just 6 weeks."

Ultimately, the Denodo Platform enabled Estes Express Lines to meet its business goals. "The Denodo Platform not only reduces data entry and errors," said Florence, "it also helps us get the right data to the right people at the right time. It helps us make the right decisions about every piece of freight, not only to move it most efficiently, but also to provide the best experience for our customers and the safest, most streamlined experience for our drivers."

With the Denodo Platform, Estes Express Lines was able to:

- Reduce manual data entry, duplication, and errors
- Seamlessly integrate data across disparate sources, in real time, improving not only data-access speed but also data quality, with the ability to quickly address issues
- Enable "digital twins" that let stakeholders see exactly where shipments are, to optimize customers' experiences
- Empower business users with self-service access, enabling them to perform strategic analyses in days rather than the weeks it required previously
- Deliver APIs in days, rather than the 4-6 weeks it required before, with the Denodo Platform's GraphQL support
- Save 10% in infrastructure and labor cost by eliminating the need to duplicate, copy, or store data across multiple platforms for specific project needs



Denodo is a leader in data management. The award-winning Denodo Platform is the leading data integration, management, and delivery platform using a logical approach to enable self-service BI, data science, hybrid/multi-cloud data integration, and enterprise data services. Realizing more than 400% ROI and millions of dollars in benefits, Denodo's customers across large enterprises and mid-market companies in 30+ industries have received payback in less than 6 months.