

Unified Analytics Made Simple

Learn the basics of how a unified data foundation helps businesses turn scattered information into opportunities for strategic advantage



Overview: Unified analytics made simple

This resource kit for business and technical leaders explains the fundamentals of unified data and shows practical next steps for getting more value from the data you already have.

PART 1

Why unified data matters

PART 2

How to get started

PART 3

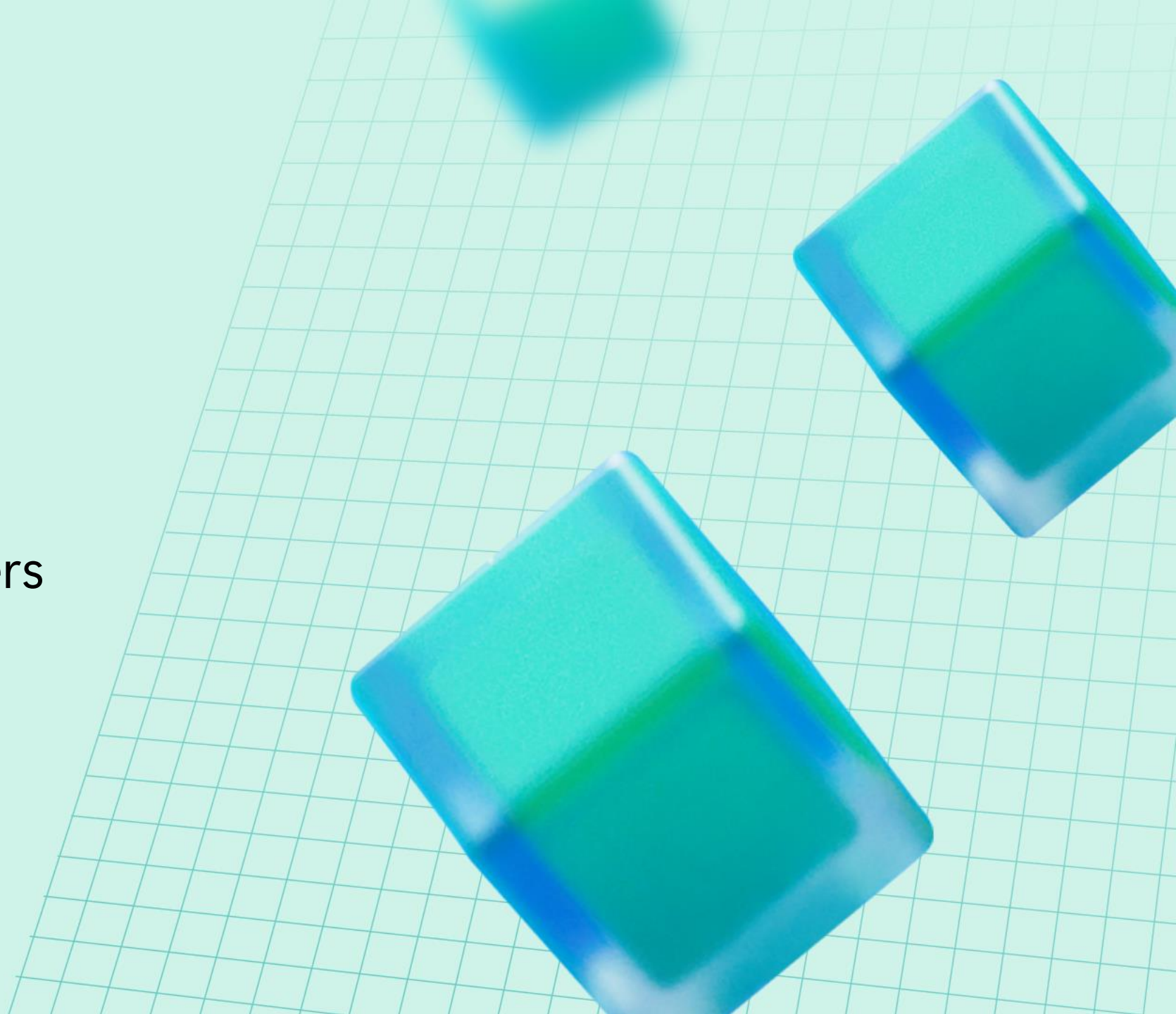
Ready to get started? Access helpful resources

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

- ✓ Learn why unifying data is important for your business and how to maximize the value of your data to achieve more
- ✓ Understand how Microsoft Fabric can bring together data integration, analytics, governance, and AI
- ✓ Explore how Microsoft Fabric helps solve everyday business challenges
- ✓ See the value Microsoft Fabric creates with real customer stories
- ✓ Learn how to get connected with a trusted partner and try out Microsoft Fabric for free

Part 1

Why unified data matters



Unified data brings scattered information together into a connected consistent view

Unified data brings information from across your business together, making it easier to find, understand, and use. It provides a single, governed data foundation that connects data across sources, enabling seamless collaboration, insights, and AI experiences from the same trusted data. Several key characteristics help make this possible:

→ Unified data is...

Connected

Brings data together across clouds, applications, and business systems.

Accessible

Makes information easier to discover, share, and use across teams and tools.

Current

Keeps data up to date so insights reflect what's happening now.

Reliable

Provides a consistent view of data, helping everyone work from the same information.

Secure

Protects sensitive information while helping maintain compliance.

→ And without it, you might be experiencing challenges like this:

Your customer, financial, and operational data live in different places, making it difficult to get a complete view of your business.

The information you need exists but finding it often takes manual work or help from key people.

When reports are built on last month's data, teams are making today's decisions with yesterday's information.

Different people arrive at different answers because reports are built from separate data sources.

As data volumes grow, it becomes harder to control who has access and ensure critical information is protected.

Fabric unifies your data and it helps turn it into business value

Fabric **not only unifies your data**, but it also brings together the analytical capabilities needed to **transform** that data into insights, decisions, and the foundation for AI powered solutions.



Databases

Store and manage operational data alongside the rest of your data in Fabric.



Data Factory

Connect and prepare data from different sources.



Analytics

Prepare, model, and analyze data to uncover deeper insights.



Real-Time Intelligence

Understand and act on data as events happen.



Power BI

Turn data into interactive reports, visuals, and insights.



IQ

Give data business meaning and context for people and AI.



Fabric platform



Copilot

Chat with your data, uncover insights, and get help completing tasks with AI.



OneLake

Create a unified foundation for accessing and sharing data.

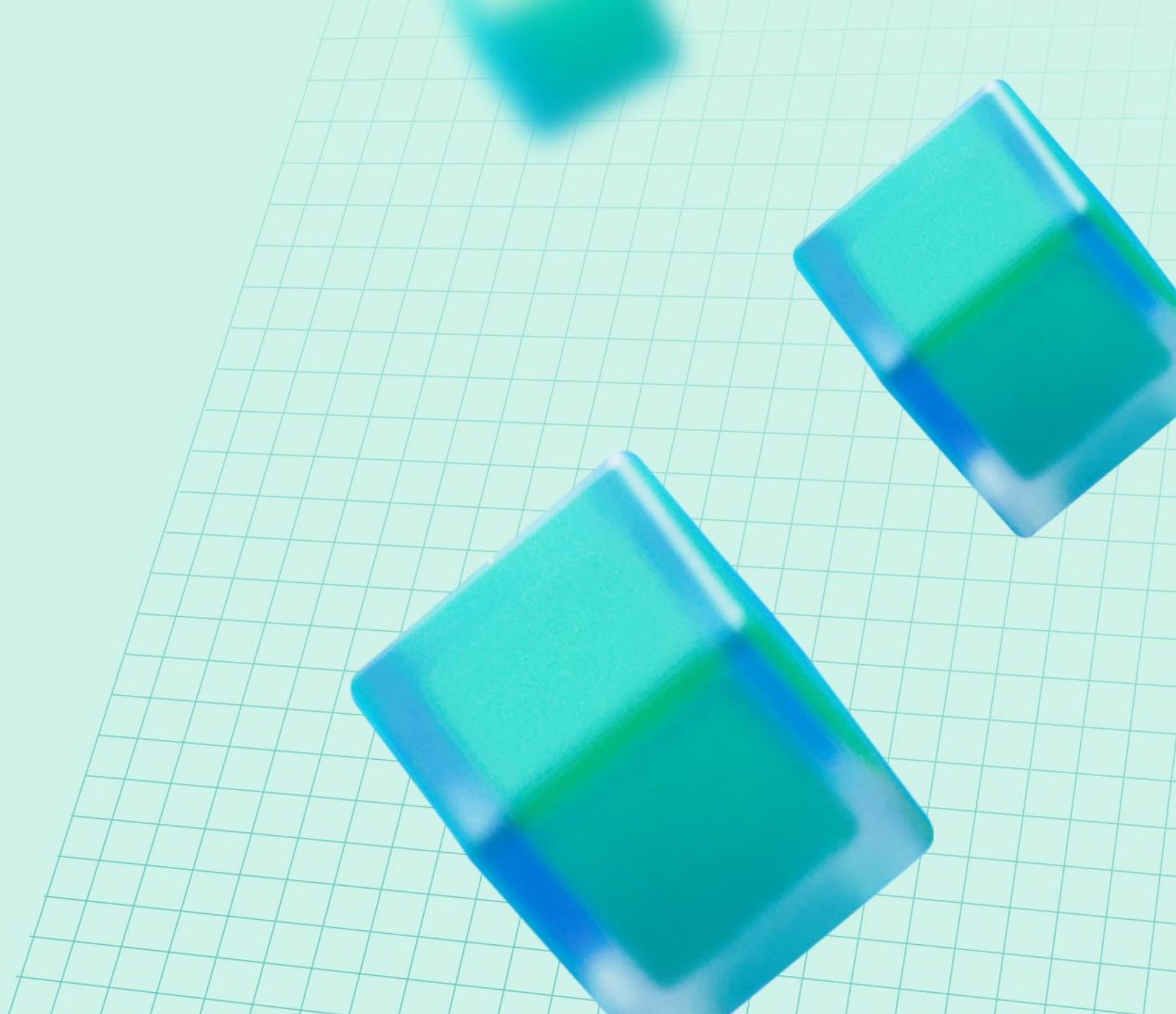


Governance

Keep data secure, discoverable, and governed.

Part 2

How to get started



Start with the business challenges that matter most

Fabric brings together data, analytics, governance, and AI in one platform. Start by solving your most pressing business challenge, then explore more capabilities as your needs evolve.

BUSINESS PAIN POINT	FABRIC CAPABILITY	
What is most important for your business? 1. Connect disconnected data across your business 2. Give employees easier access to trusted information 3. Reduce manual work and improve team productivity 4. Respond to changing business conditions in real time	 1. OneLake <i>Connect your data</i>	Provide a single source of truth for your data: Start by connecting the data you need today and expand over time. OneLake helps centralize, govern, and share data across the business, providing a scalable foundation for reporting, AI, and future growth.
	 2. Power BI <i>Visualize your data</i>	Uncover insights on business performance and opportunities: See sales, inventory, and customer trends in live, interactive dashboards, so spotting what's working (and what isn't) becomes a daily habit, not a quarterly exercise.
	 3. Copilot in Fabric <i>Do more with less</i>	Give everyone on your team the opportunity to work with data: Let Copilot handle the routine work—cleaning data, building pipelines, writing queries, drafting reports—so the people who know your data spend less time wrangling spreadsheets and more time on what grows the business.
	 4. Real-Time Intelligence <i>Act in the moment</i>	React to changing business conditions swiftly before it impacts how you serve customers: Set alerts on live data—inventory running low, web traffic spiking, a delivery slipping—and get notified the moment it happens, with suggested next steps. Even a small team can act in minutes, not days.

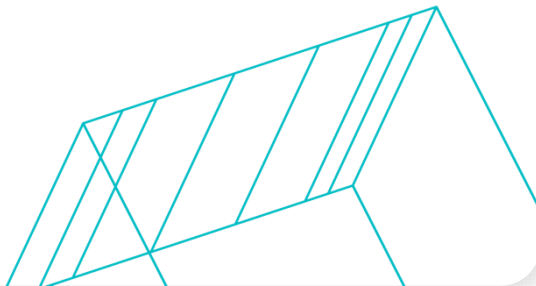
Add additional workloads as your business grows

See what's driving changes in your business as they happen with Real-Time Intelligence

When information is scattered, answers are delayed. See how using Real-Time Intelligence helps you get answers faster.

BUSINESS PROBLEM

Online orders suddenly dropped 18% this morning and customer complaints are increasing. You need to know immediately whether a payment, inventory, or website issue is causing the problem.



FABRIC SOLUTION

1

Capture

- ✓ Stream sales, inventory, and customer activity as new data is generated.

Real-Time Intelligence monitors continuously changing business data and detects an unexpected drop in online orders. At the same time, shopping cart abandonment begins to rise, triggering an alert so your business team can investigate before the issue grows.

[Learn more](#)**2**

Analyze

- ✓ Explore real-time data to identify changes and patterns that could help explain declining sales.

With the business context provided by Fabric IQ, you can use Copilot to analyze information across relevant data sources and understand what changed in business terms. You discover that a top-selling product is unavailable in several locations, customer demand remains steady, and inventory shortages are driving the decline.

[Learn more](#)**3**

Act

- ✓ Monitor key conditions and trigger alerts when something important changes.

Copilot summarizes the findings, highlights the supporting data, and recommends areas that need immediate attention. Operations teams replenish inventory, customer service responds proactively, and business leaders can take action before the issue impacts more customers.

[Learn more](#)

CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT

Bringing disconnected data together improved visibility by 85%

Challenge: Southern States Material Handling (SSMH) is a leader in material handling solutions across the U.S. But with data scattered across SQL Server, SharePoint, and other systems, managers struggled to consistently track key performance indicators such as profitability and resource use, while inconsistent data quality hindered reporting.

Use case: SSMH connected data from existing sources into OneLake, using Fabric to clean it and create role-based dashboards. With unified data, the company improved operational visibility by 80%, enabling it to cut inventory costs, improve labor use, and raise customer ratings.

Business outcome:

- 90%** data accuracy
- 85%** better visibility
- 8% to 10%** reduction in inventory costs

[Read the full story here](#)

Southern States
TOYOTALift
MATERIAL HANDLING SOLUTIONS • SINCE 1952



500-1,000 employees



Industrials and manufacturing



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We are building a system that will lead to even better results across our operations.

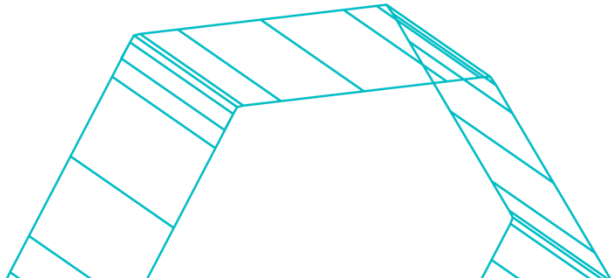
—Delano Gordon, SSMH CIO

From data to action: How Fabric supports faster, smarter decisions

Growing businesses want insights to flow freely without losing control of who can see sensitive information. See how OneLake provides a single, secure foundation across teams.

BUSINESS PROBLEM

Managers, analysts, and finance teams want access to the same critical data, but sharing it creates security concerns. Are teams working from trusted information?



FABRIC SOLUTION

1

Discover

- ✓ Connect people with the information they need.

A department manager needs answers about product sales but isn't sure where the latest data lives. OneLake automatically indexes organizational data, making trusted information easier to find and use.

[Learn more](#)

2

Govern

- ✓ Create a shared source of truth.

As reports spread across teams, different groups start working from different versions of the same data. OneLake Catalog helps track lineage and governance so everyone works from consistent, trusted information.

[Learn more](#)

3

Protect

- ✓ Share data confidently across teams.

Finance, operations, and sales teams need different levels of access to business data. OneLake applies security controls and protections at every layer, helping ensure users see only the information they're authorized to access.

[Learn more](#)

CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT

Reclaiming 50+ hours a week frees teams for planning, forecasting, and AI

Challenge: Acme leadership wanted trusted, daily financial and operations reports, but its data was scattered across four operational systems and multiple files. The small analytics team had to spend hours each week preparing data, validating reports, and reconciling differences.

Use case: Acme used OneLake to establish a single governed data foundation that supports those daily reports but didn't stop there. Real-time visibility into production performance helps supervisors identify issues as they occur rather than after scheduled reporting cycles. Governed, real-time data will also support AI assistants that employees can use to investigate issues, summarize trends, and solve problems as they occur.

Business outcome: **50+** hours per week reclaimed from manual data preparation
50% more self-service reporting for business users

[Read the full story here](#)

200+ employees



Manufacturing

[Click the video to watch Acme's story](#)

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The quicker we can get data to the people who need it, the better.

—Franklin Noranbrock, Business Intelligence Manager

A strong data foundation makes future growth easier

Unified data is only the beginning. As your business grows, you can add deeper capabilities without rebuilding your data foundation.

→ **Need one trusted view of the business?**



Begin with OneLake

Connect your data with a unified foundation, creating a single source of truth for your business

→ **Need faster insight?**



Use Copilot

Use natural language prompts to chat with your data and generate insights

→ **Need awareness of changing conditions?**



Activate Real-Time Intelligence

Even a small team can act in minutes, not days

→ **Need to share insights across the business?**



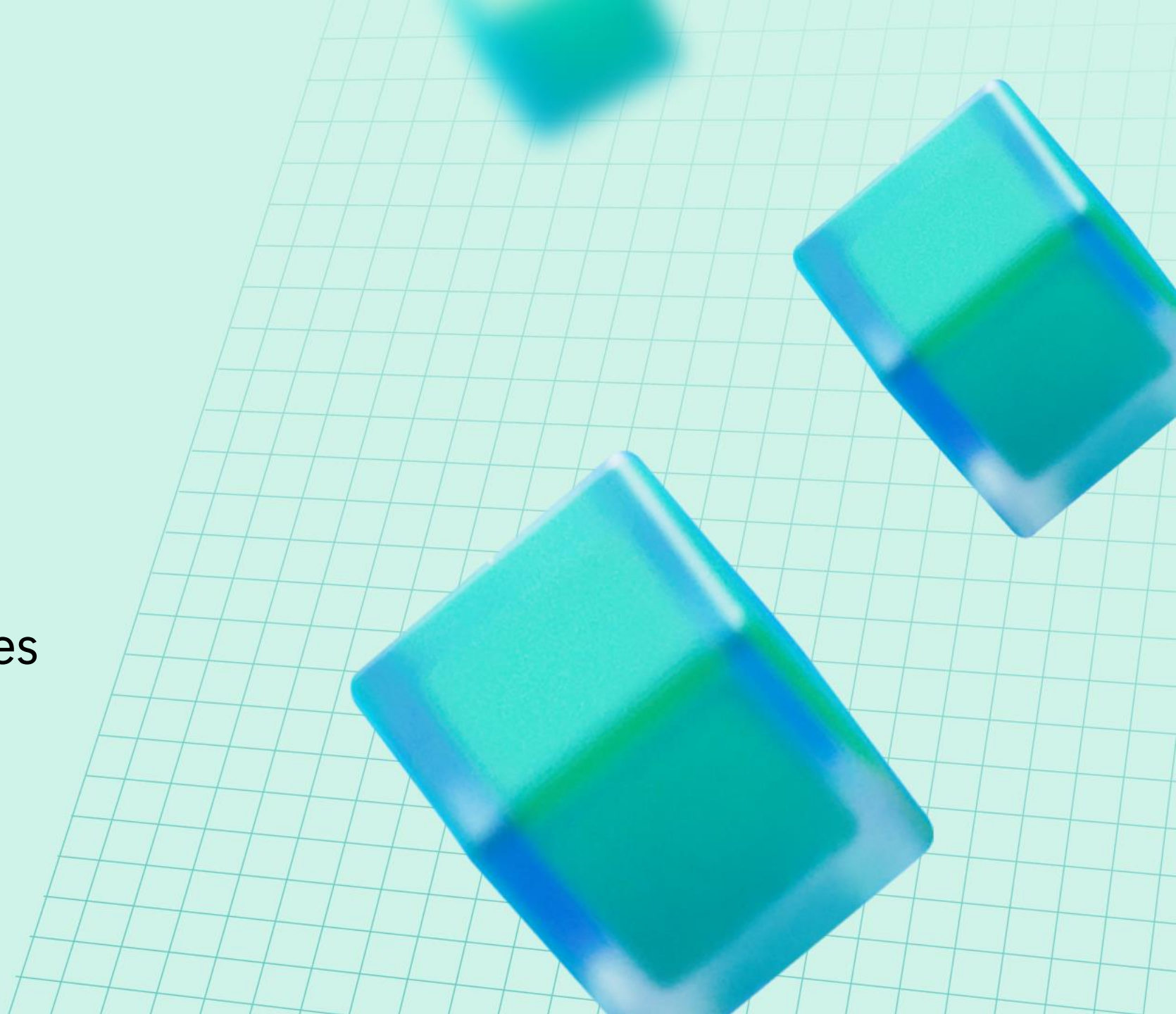
Use Power BI

Help teams visualize performance and make confident decisions

Part 3

Ready to get started?

Access helpful resources



Resources

Ready to get started?

Start a free Fabric trial

Set up an account and get started.

[Explore the free 60-day trial](#)

Get expert help

Find a partner

Work with a trusted Microsoft Azure partner who can help you move forward with confidence.

[Get connected now](#)

Get guided training

Attend **Fabric Analyst in a Day**, a free, instructor-led workshop where you can get direct experience using Fabric.

- ✓ Bring together data from multiple sources
- ✓ Uncover meaningful insights
- ✓ Create impactful analytics solutions

[Find a workshop](#)